

GODDESSES AND GHOSTS:
Virginia Woolf and Jane Ellen Harrison

by

JEAN MILLS

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in English in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

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Abstract

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Jean Mills

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This study proposes to adjust the thinking of Virginia Woolf scholars in terms of the boundaries and origins of Woolf's intellectual and political views by definitively positioning her in dialogue with the theories and practices of Cambridge classicist, Jane Ellen Harrison. While Jane Harrison is known to historians of anthropology and those searching for the origins of Structuralism, she is more frequently remembered as the intellectual leader of the Cambridge Ritualists, a community of scholars pushing the disciplinary boundaries of Classics as they created new fields in anthropology and archaeology. Harrison's pioneering work on the matrifocal origins of Greek religion, especially *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (1903) and *Themis: A Study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion* (1912) marked only the beginning of the profound effect Harrison's ideas had on Virginia Woolf. In addition to charting markers of Harrison's feminist mythography throughout the trajectory of Woolf's writing life, I argue that the questions preoccupying Harrison resonated with Woolf as she adapted these ideas to her own intellectual pursuits. What is the relationship of the family and women to the state? What are the sources of violence and war? What role can gender play in effecting social change? What are the roots of patriarchy and the possibilities of

alternative social systems? How do universal structures, like language and time, function and govern culture? And what role can art play in changing our lives? I hope that by restoring the connections between these two major feminist intellectuals to show the significance of the questions they grappled with to their own time and the relevance of their ideas to contemporary audiences today.

DEDICATION

For
My Daughter,
Abby
'little goddess' 'walk-in spirit'

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More than anyone I wish to thank my intellectual mentor and friend, the DISTINGUISHED feminist critic and acclaimed Virginia Woolf scholar, Jane Marcus. Jane introduced me to the existence of Jane Harrison and was first to write on Harrison's connection to Virginia Woolf. In the following pages, my scholarly debt to her is obvious, as my work basically elaborates on a conversation she began back in 1977. My personal debt, however, is the more profound, because I owe her for challenging me intellectually (and politically) from the moment I stepped into her seminar in the Fall of 2001, for believing in the ability of education to transform her students' lives, and for giving me the courage and confidence to speak and write, not as "a ghost," but in my own voice. Jane Marcus also introduced me to Eleanor Roosevelt biographer, the renowned historian, and legendary political activist, Blanche Wiesen Cook, who supported and encouraged me both personally and academically from the beginning. Her advice to me to "be bold" and her example as a writer, an educator, and scholar continue to remind me to be impatient with injustice and unafraid of speaking and writing out my ideas. I would like to thank Distinguished Professor and extraordinary writer, Wayne Koestenbaum for shining the light of his knowledge, his talent, and his stellar personality upon me. His famous seminars, especially his Lyric Essay classes, gave me the space and opportunity to take risks in my writing without (inordinate) fear of reprisal. Collectively, I thank all three members of my committee for reading, reading, reading, and for making me feel as though I belonged in their learned community.

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NAM MYOHO RENGE KYO

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“All I can do is succeed at my own art.”

--Jane Harrison

“All I can do is write [...] fight with the mind.”

--Virginia Woolf

“The step out of the actual into the remembered and the hoped for is really a leap of tremendous genius, it is the beginning of all generalization, of all imagination, all science, all art, all religion, all philosophy.”

--Jane Harrison

“The emotion of fear and of hate is therefore sterile, unfertile. Directly that fear passes, the mind reaches out and instinctively revives itself by trying to create. Since the room is dark it can create only from memory.”

--Virginia Woolf

Introduction.

Goddesses and Ghosts: Through h[H]ope and *Paris*

This essay completes a sentence for me, one started more than fifteen years ago with someone else's words that demanded, "I Hate Virginia Woolf." Or rather, I should say, this essay allows me to write "a new sentence," but in my voice. It is reflectively uttered, with the benefit of intellectual role models and decades of feminist scholarship, and so with a softening, almost a sighing, of perspective that comes with the passage of time, I politely and respectfully begin to say.

As an undergraduate, in the Fall of 1983, I was mentored as a fiction writer by a successful novelist, who, in his amiably dissolute but writerly way, brought New York City's publishing world—agents, editors, and mostly male writers—to Mount Holyoke's all-women college. I became his protégé ('the next female Jay McInerney?' 'a criss-cross between Anne Tyler, Carson McCullers, and Woody Allen?'), and, before I could say "*To the Lighthouse*," at the one bar in South Hadley, Massachusetts, he began to order for me. His drink, Jack Daniels, became my drink, when, one evening, our guest lecturer, the Bronx novelist, Richard Price, handed me a shot, and the topic of conversation turned with almost sputtering vituperation to Virginia Woolf. In addition to we three, me, Price, and my mentor, there was an agent, an editor from Putnam Books, and two hard-nosed New York City journalists at our table. Above heartfelt proclamations of love ("Jean and Lisa 4 Ever") and boasts of Mount Holyoke's status over Smith, ("MHC rocks," "Smith Sucks") carved into the wooden booth at The College Inn, these grown-up, professional men became upset, and clearly afraid of Virginia Woolf. They railed against a new community of pioneering feminist scholars I had never heard of, dubbed "the lupine

critics,” who were fighting to put Virginia Woolf’s work on the syllabus. They threatened to form their own group, not in opposition, but it seemed to me, in retaliation, with what the French call *le haine* in their eyes, and assigned me the task of coming up with t-shirts that would read: “I Hate Virginia Woolf.” It was a job I kept delaying, and never quite got around to, until the matter, in a dissolute writerly kind of a way, eventually dropped.

Having long been a student of “don’t hurt me,” I hid my distaste and filed my discomfort and the memory of that evening away, until some fifteen years later, as a nonmatriculated student, returning mother, and former ghostwriter, I found myself seated at the far end of the table in a seminar conducted by the veritable pilotfish of the “lupine critics,” Jane Connor Marcus. I never shared this story with her, but I felt my guilt and shame by association, and secretly wanted to assure her that I would NEVER have made up those t-shirts in a million years. In fact, I became newly determined to demonstrate to her that I did indeed *love* Virginia Woolf.

When I was at Mount Holyoke in the early 1980’s, there were no annotated editions of either of Virginia Woolf’s two major essays, *A Room of One’s Own* and *Three Guineas*, and I never had a class that included one of her novels. I remember reading *Three Guineas*, without the photographs, and with no notes to the intricacies and allusions of this complex text, and becoming frustrated by her meandering argument and what seemed to me to be, stylistically speaking, about a thousand loose ends. Jane Marcus re-introduced me to *Three Guineas*, to its radical politics, the genius in Woolf’s rhetoric that links her argument to the restored photographs of Britain’s heads of state, and to the artistry of Virginia Woolf. She included Woolf’s masterpiece *To the Lighthouse* and the novels *Jacob’s Room*, *Mrs. Dalloway*, *The Years*, and *Between the*

Acts on her course lists on Modernism, and introduced me for the first time to a little known poem called *Paris*, by a poet named Hope Mirrlees¹, which Virginia Woolf published, setting the type by hand, in 1920 at The Hogarth Press.

The poem, in particular, intrigued me, because two years before I had my encounter with the “I Hate Virginia Woolf” writers in 1983, I had studied T.S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land* with Eliot scholar, Christopher Ricks, at Trinity College, Oxford. I was immediately struck by the poem’s similarities in style, imagery, and tone, and by the fact that *Paris* was written in 1919 – 1920, three years before Eliot’s modernist milestone, but that Ricks had never mentioned it. In his chambers after hours, it was all-Eliot, drunk or sober, and an insistence (what American undergraduate would deny it) that Bob Dylan (Ricks’ bastard? twin passion) was indeed a poet. The poem, which Virginia Woolf called “very obscure, indecent, and brilliant,” became for me a lodestar, a touchstone, and a way in, as I came to my subject—Virginia Woolf and the classical anthropologist, Jane Ellen Harrison—ultimately, through h[H]ope and *Paris*.

My hope (lower case) had been to pass a doctorate level class, prove my worth as a scholar, after more than fifteen years away from academia, and gain admittance to The Graduate Center of the City University of New York. After running the gauntlet of that first class, I discovered references in *Paris* that were as Virginia Woolf said “very obscure.” “The Year-Spirit,” the curiously reproduced constellation of Ursa Major, The

¹ In addition to *Paris*, Hope Mirrlees is the author of the novels *Madeleine: One of Love’s Jansenists* published by Hogarth Press in 1921, which is suggestive of Harrison and Mirrlees’ intimate relationship; *The Counterplot* (1924); *Lud-in-the-Mist* (1926); *A Fly in Amber: Sir Robert Bruce Cotton* (1963); *Poems, Cape Town* (Gothic, 1963); *Moods and Tensions: Poems* (1976); and the articles: “Quelques Aspects de l’art d’Alexis M. Remizov” in *J. de Psychologie Normale et Pathologique* January 15-March 15, 1926; “Listening to the Past” in *Nation & Atheneum* 11 September, 1926; “The Religion of Women” in *Nation & Atheneum* 28 May 1927; “Gothic Dreams” in *Nation & Atheneum* 3 March 1928; and “Bedside Books” in *Life and Letters* December 1928. The science fiction writer, Joanna Russ, wrote “Zanzibar Cat” (1971) in homage to Hope Mirrlees.

Great Bear, as a cryptic, dedicatory epigraph at the end of the poem, and its opening line “I want a holophrase” turned out to be my initiation into the cult (there aren’t too many of us) of the great “J—H—” the mysterious, ghostly scholar of pre-Phidias archaic Greek art and pre-Olympian Greek goddesses, haunting the grounds of the fictional Fernham College in Virginia Woolf’s homage to Jane Harrison, *A Room of One’s Own*. The references, like scarifications upon a relic, are the more obvious marks on the poem of Jane Harrison’s scholarship and passion for learning, by Hope (upper case) Mirrlees, who as it turned out was Jane Harrison’s former student and *intime* of eleven years. In an enduring gesture of her respect for Harrison’s intellect, “the giant upon whose shoulders we all stand,”² Hope wrote Jane’s work like a shadow into nearly every line of *Paris*, and as a kind of “last word” on their personal relationship and love for each other, encoded in an epigraph that comes, not at the beginning, but at the end of the poem, in symbols rather than words, of the constellation of The Great Bear, one of Mirrlees’ many pet names for Harrison. Jane Marcus confirmed my findings as well as my desire to do more work on the poem when she assured me that once I began reading “the Great J—H—” I would be “lost among the stars.”

I began my research then for this current project with the opening line of *Paris*, “I want a holophrase.” It is a term Mirrlees borrows directly from Harrison’s major work on the social origins of Greek religion, *Themis* (1912), in which Harrison unveils the “hidden shapes” behind Greek rituals and examines the psychological aspects of language. As a mature woman scholar in her sixties, Harrison was an early advocate of Sigmund Freud’s work in England, which “is only the best example of her amazing

² This is Hope’s dedication to Jane Harrison [translated from the Greek] in her second novel *Madeleine: One of Love’s Jansenists* (1921).

willingness to remain open to new thoughts or, what is nearly as good, to recognize her prejudices as such and compensate for them” (Ackerman 72). She also had a literary gift and passion for words, knew eleven living languages and five dead languages (Vicinus 152), and regardless of her subject consistently reached for linguistic examples in order to illustrate her points. She explains “holophrase” as follows, a passage that echoes with Bernard’s “little language unknown to men” in Virginia Woolf’s *The Waves*, her “abstract mystical eyeless book”(D 3: 203 11.7.28) that in a letter to the composer Ethel Smyth she said she wrote “to a rhythm and not to a plot.” Harrison writes:

Language, after the purely emotional interjection, began with whole sentences, *holophrases*, utterances of a relation in which subject and object have not yet got their heads above water but are submerged in a situation. A holophrase utters a holopsychosis. Out of these *holophrases* at a later stage emerge our familiar ‘Parts of Speech,’ rightly so called, for speech was before its partition. (473-474)

She goes on to give an example of a Fuegian holophrase, *mamihlapinatapai*, which means “*looking-at-each-other,-hoping-that-either-will-offer-to-do-something-which-both-parties-desire-but-are-unwilling-to-do*” (474). According to Harrison, a holophrase was a primitive, pre-literate, fixed meaning-making representation in language for a larger, complex set of ideas, a theory that pre-dates Kristeva’s “semiotic” or preoedipal level of language. Far from being impersonal, she states, “the holophrase shows us man entangled as it were in his own activities, he and his environment utterly involved” (474). A holophrase, and the larger holopsychosis, then, for me, represents a kind of longing for intimacy, that is inclusive of but which extends Kristeva’s “project from the purely

female desire to rejoin the mother” (Marcus, LP 7), with a more universal choral consciousness, an intimacy with what Harrison refers to as the Unbounded Whole, a verbal exposure, (similar to those expressed by the six choral voices in *The Waves*), striving to defeat death and reanimate life through language. It is a meaning-making tool that the speaker in Mirrlees’ poem yearns for (“I want a holophrase”), as she begins her mythic passage via the French Underground Railway, through the streets of Paris, on May 1, 1919, during the signing of The Treaty of Versailles, and three years before T.S. Eliot’s more celebrated embarkation and quest for meaning and redemption in April, “the cruelest month” in 1922’s *The Waste Land*.

After discovering *Paris* in Jane Marcus’ seminar, I saw the original in The Berg Collection of The New York Public Library³. It is an unassuming little book, and I was immediately struck by how tiny it was, with a trim size of 4 ½” wide x 6 ¼” long; how fixed, single, and whole it was in its holiday wrapper of green and red diamonds, with a plain, white, raised label reading on two lines PARIS HOPE MIRRLEES on its cover, and how it gave no hint of the bigness of the history and politics inside—how like a holophrase, itself, a physical rendering of this longed-for intimacy, both pre-language, through language, above and below language, “utterances of a relation in which subject and object have not yet got their heads above water but are submerged in a situation” (T 473-4). For *Paris*, as its lines connect the reader to its European politics, history, music, and the arts, connected me to it, and my intellectual past to my hoped for intellectual

³ Hogarth Press printed 175 copies in all, 160 of which Virginia Woolf made last-minute corrections on by hand (Briggs 84). In addition to The Berg at The New York Public Library, there are copies in the special collections of Princeton University, the University of Delaware, and Columbia University. U.K. holdings were not available at this writing. Three pages of proofs can be found in the E.J. Pratt Library, Victoria University, Toronto.

future, to the theme of peace-making, to Virginia Woolf and Jane Harrison, to goddesses and ghosts.

Chapter One, The Great “J—H—herself,” brings Harrison into resonance with Virginia Woolf, and introduces the reader to key moments in Jane Harrison’s life and work, as they relate to Virginia Woolf and the modernist text. Here, we are introduced to the trajectory of Harrison’s career, the contributions made by her three major works, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (1903), *Themis: The Social Origins of Greek Religion* (1912), and *Epilogomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (1921) and an analysis of her writing style and scholarly production. The chapter positions Jane Harrison as the elder intellectual mentor of Virginia Woolf, examines some initial parallels between the two authors, and explores the nature of female mentoring in Woolf’s work, as the reader becomes familiarized with Harrison’s body of writing and her reputation as a scholar and public intellectual.

In Chapter Two, “Of the Nymph and the Noun,” I argue that Harrison’s connection to Woolf begins through her Greek education under the tutelage of Janet Case. The discussion examines the methods employed by Janet Case to teach Woolf Greek, and suggests that these “ardent theories” were in fact inspired and developed by Jane Harrison’s unorthodox techniques for teaching Greek at Newnham College. This historical connection further deepens the tie between Virginia Woolf and Jane Harrison, as it categorizes Woolf’s desire for Greek myth and ritual as driven by Harrison’s pedagogy as well as by her research and political views. Here, Harrison, Case, and Woolf are presented within the broader historical context of the university movement and

academic politics of the late nineteenth century and turn of the twentieth, as it looks at Harrison's reputation as a Classical scholar, the hostility she encountered as a result of her sex, and at her stature as a rebel, as an example and role model for Woolf. The chapter decidedly places Woolf, not within Bloomsbury, but within a circle of independent women thinkers, of which Jane Harrison is the center, acting as it were, as Woolf's literary "Year-Spirit," who will hand off her legacy, and which I read as being "ingested" in an intellectual *omophagia* (the ritual eating of raw flesh) by Woolf, and re-created in her art.

Focusing on her novels and her two Greek Notebooks, *The Agamemnon* Notebook and *The Libation Bearers* Notebook, I explore in Chapter Three's "Ancient Ritual and the Modernist Text" Virginia Woolf in relation to her contemporaries and within the context of Modernism's "mythic method." I then give readings of Woolf's fiction, charting the Harrisonian markers, in particular, the goddess figure of Themis, the Law-Giver, who presided over the assembly above, below, and beyond Zeus, a figure which also functions as a principle of Jane Harrison's thinking and politics in Woolf's work. In Chapter Three, I also read Woolf's *Jacob's Room*, *Mrs. Dalloway*, and *The Waves* as Woolf's Aeschylean trilogy and protest against violence and war.

Chapter Four, "In Praise of Peace and "Unknown Women,"" explores Woolf's two major essays *A Room of One's Own* and *Three Guineas* alongside the Harrisonian works that inspired them, "Scientiae Sacra Fames" and "Epilogue on the War: Peace with Patriotism," analyzing where their feminism and pacifism dovetail and diverge, establishing both writers as major modern public intellectuals.

Chapter One.

The Great “J—H— herself”

“Jane Harrison with her originality and her penetration into the world of Ancient Greece brought glamour into scholarship.”

--F.M.Wilson, “Friendships” in *A Newnham Anthology*
(Ed. by Ann Phillips, Cambridge University Press, 1979, 67)

In her Prefatory Note to *Ancient Art and Ritual*, Jane Harrison writes “The point of my title and the real gist of my argument lie perhaps in the word “*and*” –that is, in the intimate connection which I have tried to show exists between ritual and art. This connection has, I believe, an important bearing on questions vital to to-day” (v). She agrees that “the title of this book may strike the reader as strange and even dissonant” and asks “What have art and ritual to do together?” It is her aim, in this explanatory text meant to articulate *Themis*’ major themes, published a year earlier in 1912, “to show that these two divergent developments have a common root, and that neither can be understood without the other.” “It is at the outset,” she writes, “one and the same impulse that sends a man to church and to the theatre” (9-10).

Similarly, in the spirit of the word *and*, I aim to show the intimate connection between two major feminist intellectuals, Virginia Woolf and Jane Ellen Harrison. It is a project I come to from the murky, chaotic waters of my emotions, a woman’s intuition, a grope, a hunch, encouraged by the work of Jane Marcus, who was the first to suggest a link between Woolf’s sources and Harrison in her essays on *The Years* and *The Pargiters*, first published in The Bulletin of the New York Public Library in 1977 and reprinted in the now classic *Virginia Woolf and the Languages of Patriarchy* (1987), that whenever

Virginia Woolf thinks about the Greeks in relation to her work, she does so through Jane Harrison's pioneering scholarly work on the matrifocal origins of Greek religion.

The impulse, furthermore, that sends Woolf to the theatre, to the performance and art, let's say, of her fiction, which is rife with Greek cosmology, also sends her to the "church" of Harrison's politics, her feminism, pacifism, and her radical views on religion and family life. When I say *church*, however, I mean in the sense of the word's earliest beginnings, from the Greek, *kyros*, which I translate as "power," rather than "of the Lord" or "master", and as akin to the Latin *cavus*, or "hollow," more at "cave," for Harrison's "church" or "cave"⁴ is not based on the sermonizing, sin, or conversion that shaped her childhood, but resonates with Woolf as the *locus*, or power base, of her yearned for "human intercourse," a notion Virginia Woolf considered as a serious form of social action.

In "Why?" in *The Death of the Moth*, Virginia Woolf pleads that questions "be asked openly in public," and contends that lecturing (I speak, you listen), "incites the most debased of human passions—vanity, ostentation, self-assertion, and the desire to convert."

Why not bring together people so that they can talk, without mounting platforms or reading papers or wearing expensive clothes or eating expensive food? Would not such a society be worth, even as a form of education, all the papers on art and literature that have ever been read since the world began? Why not abolish prigs and prophets? Why not invent human intercourse? (227-234)

⁴ Indeed, Harrison called her room at Newnham "her cave", because she claimed that the guardians of Plato's cave in his *Republic* were Orphic initiates, a topic she favored over the more highly regarded Olympians (Robinson 187).

She finds this open-air forum of ideas in Jane Harrison's research, her political essays, and in the example of her life, as a professional woman scholar.

As a founder of myth-ritual criticism and the leading member of the intellectual Cambridge Ritualist school, or The Cambridge Group of Classical Anthropologists as they were called at the time, Harrison is most notably remembered for her three foundational texts on the matriarchal beginnings of the Olympian Gods: *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (1903); *Themis: A Study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion* (1912), and *Epilogomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (1921), each of which Virginia Woolf read. Woolf knew Jane Harrison personally from 1904 until Harrison's death in 1928. Her *Ancient Art and Ritual* (1913) was given to Woolf as a Christmas gift, inscribed by the author in 1923 (Marcus, LP 195). She owned a number of Harrison's books, including *Aspects, Aorists and the Classical Tripos* (1919) on the structure of Russian linguistics and was familiar with Harrison's lectures on religion, art, women's rights and war, later collected as essays in *Alpha and Omega* (1915). In her letters and diaries, Woolf's allusions to Jane Harrison demonstrate a deeply-held respect for her scholarship, intellect, and political views.

She first met Miss Harrison "and all the other learned ladies at Newnham" (L.1.145) in 1904, and one can imagine the private exhilaration of a young, intellectually curious Virginia Woolf encountering the renowned professional woman scholar, who had traveled to Greece, published and lectured on Greek art and archaeology, and smoked a pipe on the steps of the Parthenon. It was a relationship that continued off and on for the next twenty-four years, with their contact increasing once Woolf added the role of publisher to her own accomplishments in the founding of The Hogarth Press. She writes

of “Jane” in a letter to her friend, the artist, Jacques Raverat, the husband of Gwen Raverat, nee Darwin, whom Jane Harrison knew well, describing her as “a gallant old lady, very white, hoary, and sublime in a lace mantilla” who “took my fancy greatly.” In the letter, she not only realizes that she shared the same “superb high thinking agnostic ways” (L.3. 58) with Jane Harrison, but she also likes the way she looks. Both Woolf and Harrison are shocked and dismayed by the trend among the younger generation, especially at Oxbridge, who are flocking to patriarchal religion and converting to Catholicism in droves. The exchange recorded by Woolf reveals an instant camaraderie and good humor between the two:

“Alas,” she [Jane Harrison] said, “you and your sister and perhaps Lytton Strachey are the only ones of the younger generation I can respect. You alone carry on the traditions of our day.” This referred to the miserable defection of Fredegond [Shove] (mass; confession; absolution, and the rest of it.) “There are thousands of Darwins” I said, to cheer her up.

“Thousands of Darwins!” she shrieked, clasping her mittened hands, and raising her eyes to Heaven. “The Darwins are the blackest traitors of them all! With that name!” she cried, “that inheritance! That magnificent record in the past!” “Surely”, I cried, “our Gwen is secure?” “Our Gwen” she replied, “goes to Church, (if not mass, still Church) every Sunday of her life. Her marriage [...] may have weakened her brain. Jacques is, unfortunately, French. A wave of Catholicism has invaded the young Frenchmen. Their children are baptized; their –“ Here I stopped her. “Good God,” I said, “I will never speak to them again!” (Letters 3, 58).

The story continues with Woolf in high spirits and good fun claiming that she was ready to end her longtime friendship with Raverat over the issue, when she thankfully received his letter assuring her that his wife “Gwen is a militant atheist.” “The world renews itself” wrote Woolf, who at once sent word to “dear old Jane” who met the news with relief and “a little inconsistently, “Thank God.”

A month before Harrison’s death in April 1928, Woolf remembers having “tea with Jane, raised in bed, with her old white head lifted up, on pillows, very aged & rather exalted” (Diaries 3, 176). On her last visit, she describes her as “like a very old person, whom life has tossed up, & left; exalted, satisfied, exhausted” as she heads home “to work & work, as hard as I can” (Diaries 3, 180). When Harrison dies, Woolf comments on the funeral arrangements, which followed a typical script from the Protestant liturgy of Jane’s Northern, nonconformist relations, and represented a system of thought that neither Woolf nor Harrison shared. Afterwards, Woolf wrote in her diary “[...]as usual the obstacle of not believing dulled & bothered me. Who is ‘God’ & what the Grace of Christ? & what did they mean to Jane?” (Diaries 3, 181).

In his autobiography *Downhill All the Way: An Autobiography of the Years 1919-1939*, Leonard Woolf remembers Harrison as,

One of the most civilized persons I have ever known. She was also the most charming, humorous, witty, individual human being. When I knew her she was old and frail physically, but she had a mind which remained eternally young. (26)

Virginia Woolf’s lifelong admiration and respect for Harrison is further supported when, in “The Intellectual Status of Women,” she uses Jane as an example of the “advance in

intellectual power” by women since the sixteenth century, in her response to Desmond McCarthy, who argued in *The New Statesman* that women were intellectually inferior. She also asked Harrison to write her memoir, *Reminiscences of a Student's Life*, which she published at The Hogarth Press in 1925, and her most famous feminist manifesto, *A Room of One's Own*, based upon two essays she read to the Arts Society at Newnham and Girton Colleges in October 1928, was intended as a tribute to Jane Harrison, who died in April of that year.

While Jane Marcus was the first to allude to Harrison as a source of Virginia Woolf's work, Robert Ackerman was the first to resurrect Jane Harrison's work based on its own merits, when he wrote his Ph.D. dissertation *The Cambridge Group and the Origins of Myth Criticism* (New York: Columbia University) in 1969. When I interviewed Professor Ackerman in June 2006, at Clare Hall, Cambridge University, he remembered his director trying to persuade him to choose another topic, because “they [the Cambridge Ritualists] were wrong.” After reading *Prolegomena*, however, Ackerman fell in love with Jane Harrison's writing style, the passion, intellect, and generosity she brought to her subject, and her original mind. Like any good researcher who is told “no,” he resolved to at least entertain the possibility of “yes,” to keep the conversation going, to make note of the imperfections, but also explore what the Cambridge Ritualists “got right.” In the book *The Myth and Ritual School: J.G. Frazer and the Cambridge Ritualists* that grew out of his thesis, Ackerman notes that “reading anything by or about Harrison, one is struck forcefully by her intellectual power and her passionate nature” and he counts her as “one of those rare and fortunate persons who recognize no barriers between specialist knowledge and everyday life, and who bring to

both an extraordinary energy and integrity” (70). He writes that she seems to have possessed “a burning insistence on following the truth wherever it leads. One believes it to be true of her as of few others” (73). Although I discuss the Ritualists’ contributions and the reception of their ideas below, what the Cambridge group “got right or wrong,” whether Jane Harrison saw Dionysus as coming from the east or from the west, for example, is of secondary importance to this study, which is more interested in Harrison’s contributions, in particular, and how her theories and her politics find their way into Virginia Woolf’s work.

Furthermore, this essay does not pretend to write her life. However, a brief look at the biographies published so far provide context to Harrison as subject. Robert Ackerman, although he is a cultural and literary critic and not one of her biographers, *per se*, remains, in my view, one of the best writers on the details of Jane Harrison’s life to date. Shockingly and disconcertingly, Harrison is frequently disparaged by her biographers in an effort to diminish one’s subject I have yet to come to grips with. As of this writing, the tone and views of her biographers are in serious need of updating and too often do a disservice to a woman whose work continues to be recognized by scholars studying classical Greek thought and culture, today, and should be, but too frequently is not, included as a crucial stepping stone in the creation of the disciplines of archaeology and anthropology. Anabel Robinson’s *The Life and Work of Jane Ellen Harrison* (2002) has good information, but is in need of a serious analysis of Harrison’s work, thought, and influence. Sandra J. Peacock’s psychoanalytic *Jane Ellen Harrison: The Mask and the Self* (1988) is rife with inaccuracies; the highly regarded Newnham Classicist Mary Beard’s *faux* biography *The Invention of Jane Harrison* (2000) is unbalanced and unfair,

in my view, and reveals an uncomfortable anxiety in its author in terms of its rhetorical tone; Hugh Lloyd Jones' brief profile of Harrison in *Cambridge Women: Twelve Portraits* (1996) is smug and limited in scope; and in his book *The Dons*, Noel Annan lovingly sings the praises and accomplishments of nearly every male educator at Cambridge over the last 200 years, but feels compelled to comment on Harrison's sex life when he writes in a kind of St. Pauli Girl adspeak that "She liked good-looking, brainless girls as well as her favourite student, Jessie Stewart [sic], her first first" (237-8). When I pointed out this passage to the archivist at Newnham she retorted, "he'd be hard-pressed to find a 'brainless girl' at Newnham. Jessie Stewart, notwithstanding, Hope Mirrlees [Jane's former student and later companion] spoke at least four languages."

After her death, both Hope Mirrlees and Jessie Stewart attempted to write Harrison's official biography. The Jane Harrison Papers at Newnham College Archives are filled with notes and pages of manuscript of Hope Mirrlees' false starts and Mirrlees' and Stewart's increasingly divergent views on how best to move forward with the book. Perhaps because she was too close to her subject and unable to talk candidly about their intimate relationship, Hope Mirrlees' efforts never materialized and the project was ultimately abandoned. Jessie Stewart went on to publish some of Harrison's surviving letters in *Jane Harrison: A Portrait from Letters* (London: 1959), but these do not represent the entire collection or a faithful transcription of much of the original correspondence. An accurate rendering of Harrison's papers with annotations is due, and such a project is said to be in its early stages, but underway, by the Classicist Anabel Robinson. An interesting question is why Harrison's biographers appear to be threatened by her. Why, for example, does Mary Beard, by all rights Jane Harrison's successor as

the leading Classicist at Newnham College, feel she has to kill off the woman under whose portrait she eats lunch in the Faculty Commons room? In any case, there are no full-length studies which adequately convey the importance of Harrison's work to modernist writers, which this project is an attempt to begin to rectify.

Early Life and Work

A glimpse into Jane Harrison's early life gives us a degree of insight into many of the passions and preoccupations we find in her major work. She was born 9 September 1850 to an upper-middle-class Northern Yorkshire family of Nonconformists. Her father was a timber merchant with business connections in Russia, and as Anabel Robinson notes "though it was Greece that inspired her life's work, her life began and ended with ties with Russia" (15), a subject she returns to later in life, when she translates the laugh-out-loud funny *The Autobiography of Avakuum* (1924) and Russian folktales, *The Book of the Bear* (1926), with Hope Mirrlees in Paris. Harrison's mother died from puerperal fever within days of giving birth to Jane, her third daughter. The children were cared for by an aunt, until her father remarried their governess, Gemimi Merredith, whom Harrison would later describe in her memoir as "the fervent semi-revivalist type" (19). In a passage that reveals the seeds of her atheistic principles fully illustrated in Woolf's letter to Raverat above and her early love of languages, she writes of her stepmother:

She gave us Scripture lessons every Sunday. Her main doctrines were that we must be "born again" and that "God would have our whole hearts or nothing." I think I early felt that this was not quite fair. Why, if we were to

care for Him only, had He made this delightful world full of enchanting foreign languages? (19)

As Virginia Woolf in “A Society” questions “Why, why did my father teach me to read?” Harrison, who learned to read at an extremely young age, in *Reminiscences*, cannot remember a time when she did not know how. One of “the daughters of educated men,” Woolf taught herself from the books in her father’s library until she could take Greek classes and later study with private tutors, which she paid for out of her own pocket. Like many women of her class in late- Victorian England, Harrison was basically educated by a series of governesses, who, though frequently surpassed by Harrison’s abilities, quickly discovered their pupil’s talents and linguistic gifts. At the age of seventeen, after years of navigating the conflicts that arose between her desire to cobble together an education and her social and domestic responsibilities and strict religious training from her stepmother, Harrison was accepted into Cheltenham Ladies College, where she claims she was “summarily dispatched in dire disgrace” (27). Her older sister Lucy gave evidence to bolster this claim, because in notes given to Hope Mirrlees after Jane’s death in the Jane Harrison Papers she relates a juicy piece of gossip that the real reason Jane was allowed to attend the school was because she had fallen “madly in love” with a local curate. She writes that “their chief opportunity for flirting was choir practices where Jane played the organ. It began to be noticeable that Mr Houseman seemed to have a great deal to say to the organist, and was for ever popping behind the red curtains” (Mirrlees biography notebook, JH Papers). In any case, Harrison was sent away to school in 1867 and never returned to Yorkshire for any extended period of time. After doing well at Cheltenham she returned to her family, which had since moved to Wales, to teach her younger step

siblings as was expected of young women who had received an education. It was not until 1871, at the age of twenty-one, that she received an annuity of £300 from her mother's inheritance, like Virginia Woolf's £500 a year from her aunt, and used the money to travel abroad. During this time she continued to study in natural philosophy and chemistry for the University of London Examination for women and earned a "special certificate of higher proficiency" in 1871 (Robinson 33). A childhood friend, Mary Paley, who was one of the original five students to attend the newly established Newnham College, claimed that Harrison was "the cleverest woman in England" (qtd in Robinson 33), and encouraged her to take the Cambridge University Examination for Women. Harrison said she would take it "for fun," but ended up winning the scholarship.

Arriving at Cambridge in 1874, among the first generation of English women to earn a college education, she distinguished herself in her studies. At Newnham she found a fellowship of women, who were intellectually curious with whom she made many life-long attachments, including Ellen Crofts, who introduced her to the Darwin family, through her marriage to Frank Darwin, and Margaret Merrifield who would go on to marry A. W. Verrall, Harrison's teacher and the translator of Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, from which Harrison taught and Virginia Woolf used to learn Greek (see Chapter Two).

Upon graduation from Newnham, she was passed over for a teaching post for being "insufficiently 'sound'" (Ackerman), despite scoring high on the classical trips. Devastated by the college's lack of support, she traveled abroad and studied at museum collections on Greek art, visited archaeological sites and worked with some of the preeminent German classical archaeologists, honing her skills in the analysis and interpretation of vase fragments and artifacts. These are many of the same vase fragments

and museum collections that contemporary archaeologist, Joan Breton Connelly studies in *Portrait of a Priestess* (2007), and yet, Connelly does not mention Jane Harrison at all. She thanks the classicists she worked with in the last decade, as if her study happened in a vacuum, without predecessors or historical role models, Harrison being the earliest example, which quite literally made her work possible. Connelly, who won a MacArthur “genius” grant for re-interpreting the Parthenon frieze, and whose book has been prominently featured and reviewed is the most recent example of the continued oversight of Jane Harrison’s contributions, especially by women working in the field today. I look forward to comparing Jane Harrison’s detailed and meticulous readings of the same Greek vase fragments Connelly interprets in *Portrait of a Priestess* in a longer version of this current project. But it seems odd, to say the least, that she does not indicate the work of her predecessor. To dismiss such a body of scholarship is one thing. To ignore it is an act of historical amnesia.

In any case, in another path-breaking move, Harrison, rejecting the tradition she was trained in that believed “it was far more important to parse a word than to understand it” (R 57-8), learned and lectured by personal examination of the artifact itself. She studied vase fragments in Cambridge and the Parthenon Marbles and Greek art at the British Museum, but, after Newnham, worked steadfastly again on vase fragments in the museum collections of Berlin, Munich, Florence, Rome, Naples, Palermo, and Athens and later Copenhagen, St. Petersburg (her only trip to Russia), Vienna, and Constantinople. In an interview published 24 August 1889 in *Women’s Penny Paper*, she is asked, “You did not find being a woman in your way?” to which Harrison replied:

Not at all. A woman was a novelty in this field, and my being one was in my favour with regard to professional popularity. Indeed the kindness of foreign archaeologists knew no bounds. Although I had no access to lectures it was made up for by the personal kindness of the professors. In Greece I always meet with a cordial reception, and the papers chronicle my movements. I travel in the remoter parts riding on mules. (JH Papers)

Although she publicly puts a positive gloss on the restrictions she was forced to endure on the basis of her sex, one cannot help but wince at the “great J—H— ” being tolerated and accommodated and barred from the hallowed halls of the “experts”.

Invited to study at The British Museum by Sir Charles T. Newton (the Keeper of the Greek and Roman Antiquities at the time), who took a professional risk in asking her, she continued her analysis of vase fragments, becoming an expert at their interpretation, a skill that would serve her later work well, when she used the narratives depicted on these artifacts to demonstrate the rituals behind Greek myths. During this time she also began giving lectures at the museum on Greek art that quickly became wildly popular, complete with “oxy-hydrogen lantern illustrations,” or hand-painted slides, of primitive Greek art. She made it a rule never to lecture on an object she had not seen herself, “a difficult standard, but one to which she rigidly adhere[d]” (WPP 1889), and described her lectures as “working classes,” where students would have the opportunity to analyze “problem photographs.” She outlines a typical class, when she related in an interview that “when the objects cannot be seen, I give each student a photograph, and they give me their ideas at the next lesson. I thus have a working class. The plan answers excellently” (WPP). The photographs were on loan to the students, but if they decided they wanted to keep them

permanently, they had to pay 2 s. 6d. (Notes from JH Papers). Harrison's lectures are certainly an early example of today's interactive classroom.

In her memoir, she recalls learning the importance of bringing the actual artifact into the classroom or as evidence into her research after a scolding from her friend, Francis Darwin, who was a Cambridge botanist, and son of Charles Darwin, but Harrison had been augmenting her lectures with archaeological specimens and illustrations long before this memorable episode. In a lecture linking a *liknon* or "winnowing fan," a basket for sifting grain to Dionysus as a fertility god, she had no material example of such a basket, when Darwin had asked her what it was exactly that she was talking about. He exclaimed "*you are writing about a thing you have never seen*" [...] Oh, you classical people!" (57-8). Darwin ultimately went on a search and found an example of just such a "mystic fan" that was still in use in provincial France, which he sent to her in Cambridge. In the article that resulted from the lecture, published in *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 23 (1903), she reproduced an illustration of the actual basket.

But she had ultimately devised her public lecture methods on her own, and popularized them as her audiences quickly became so overcrowded she had to limit the classes to thirty per session. Her classes, which lasted until 1887, extended to schools and halls in the provinces, where she taught mainly mothers with young children⁵, members of the working class, and high-school-age boys. At South Kensington museum, she had audiences of 100-250 people, and at Toynbee Hall and the Midland Institute in Birmingham, nearly 1,000 attendees. Her largest audience was in Dundee, Scotland, where 1,600 men and women assembled to hear her lecture on grave-reliefs. She slowly

⁵ See also, Chapter 4, for a discussion of the demographics of her audiences and their relation to Harrison's feminist politics.

built a reputation as one of the most entertaining and knowledgeable public lecturers of her day, and points out that “in those early days, ten years ago, there was nothing of the wide interest of the present day. I have lectured to two or three people only, at the Museum, and see what audiences there are now!” (*Pall Mall Gazette* (1891)).

Advertisements publicized her talks along with her newly published book *Introductory Studies in Greek Art* (1885), which noted that the book was “lucidly conveyed” by “this gifted Lady.” She was heralded as a role model and the press instructed “Englishwomen ought to be proud that one of their sisterhood has accomplished so considerable a work, and done it so thoroughly” (notes from JH Papers). She was a brilliant and dedicated teacher, whose syllabi and pamphlets publicizing her lectures quoted Demosthenes, pleading with her audience “In God’s name, I beg of you to think.” Her interactive style of teaching also resonates with Woolf’s conversational style opening in *A Room of One’s Own* “But, you may say—” inviting participation (see, Chapter 4).

During these years, Harrison was also active in a number of professional societies. She was Vice-President of the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies from 1889 to 1896 and was elected Corresponding Member of the Berlin Archaeological Institute in 1896. She received honorary degrees from the University of Aberdeen (1895) and University of Durham (1897) as the first female recipient of such honors, but the fact that she was a woman continued to marginalize her intellectual efforts and scholarly ambitions. Despite having a long list of letters of recommendation and testimonials from many of the foremost scholars in the fields of Classics, Anthropology, and Archaeology,⁶

⁶ The list of her supporters is long and distinguished. Reference letters strongly and enthusiastically recommending her for the position were given by Ernest Babelon, Director of the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris Otto Benndorf, Professor of Archaeology, University of Vienna; Henry Craik, Secretary to the Scotch Education Department; Ernst Curtius, Professor of Archaeology, University of Berlin; Richard Garnett,

she was passed over twice for the Yates Professorship of Archaeology at University College, London. Each time she was one of two final candidates, but as Shelley Arlen records “In the 1888 search, two search committee members signed a minority report stating it “undesirable that any teaching in University College be conducted by a woman” (168). The 1896 all-male committee pointed out Harrison’s inferior education and that she “had not enjoyed the same opportunities for a thorough scholarly grounding in the details of the various branches” as had her male competitor (Arlen 168). At the final hour, when Harrison seemed just about to be appointed, “committee member W.M. Flinders Petrie put in a good word for the other candidate, his ex-student Ernest Gardner, and “that carried the day”, for Harrison had no such mentor on the committee (Calder, qtd. in Arlen 168).

Funding and a Change in Direction

Harrison was unable to focus her economic resources and intellectual energies on her major work until she finally received a research fellowship from Newnham College in 1898 at the age of 48, which gave her the time and space to write her first major text *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*. As she had said in an interview once, despite the popularity and public demand for her talks, “by nature I am more learner than lecturer” (Pall Mall Gazette), and the need to lower the level of the discourse so relentlessly for popular audiences also became a strain, pointing out that “the lecturer has

Keeper of the Printed Books, British Museum; Henry Jackson, Fellow and Praelector in Ancient Philosophy, Trinity College, Cambridge; Wilhelm Klein, Professor of Archaeology, University of Prague; Walter Leaf, Trinity College, Cambridge; E. Maunde Thompson, Principal Librarian, British Museum; Luigi Milani, Director of the Archaeological Museum, Florence; Arthur Sidgwick, Fellow and Tutor of Corpus Christi College, Oxford; Henry Sidgwick, Praelector in Moral Philosophy, Trinity College, Cambridge; A.W. Verrall, Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge; and Paul Wolters of the Kaiserlich Deutsches Archäologisches Institut in Athens. (JH Papers)

to make the subject as light and as varied as possible [...and] must be prepared to generalize a good deal, which is apt to result in much personal demoralization” (Pall Mall Gazette). The research fellowship changed her life, and she lived and taught at Newnham permanently until she left with “measureless regret” after the European War to live in Paris in 1922, discouraged by the failure again of women to be granted degrees, by the attacks on her work, and by the marginalization of her colleagues, who were not elected to academic positions she believed they deserved. In an undated letter, but likely in 1922, she writes to her longtime colleague and friend Gerald Murray:

It looks as if this wld be my last year in Cambridge. I retire forcibly the year after & I think it is better not to wait till one is hoofed out. Old Cambridge is gone. I felt that so at the praelections [public lectures given for a Chair to fill the position of the Regius Professor of Greek] ...write sometimes please. (JH Papers)

Her students felt her departure with deep sadness, and even the students, one of whom would later refer to herself as Harrison’s “failure par excellence” (see Chapter Two), was devastated by her move to Paris. Victoria Buxton wrote to her former teacher on 25 May 1922, “To think you are going away from N.C. is very desolating. You *are* it—to me. And I do wish it was to be London, not far-off Paris. Still perhaps you will be able to do more there, there are greater possibilities, & I wonder what language it will be next?” Harrison moved in with Hope Mirrlees and she turned her sights to Russian literature and the Russian language, which she learned quickly and well enough to teach it for a short time at Newnham before she retired.

In terms of her life's work on Greece, however, there is a notable difference in her writing style and the content and direction of her research, as Ackerman says, between her early and late work and before she arrives at this important juncture in 1898 with funding. Her early work includes *Myths of the Odyssey in Art and Literature* (1882), *Introductory Studies of Greek Art* (1885), *Manual of Monuments and Mythology* (1890), and *Greek Vase Painting* (1894).

A page of notes written down by Jessie Stewart in preparation for *A Portrait from Letters* provides an intriguing list of many aspects of Jane Harrison's early career (JH Papers).

love of brilliant generalization

rage for art in '80's

Rossetti her favorite poet

belief in beauty

creation of beauty higher than research and scholarship

poetry must be Swinburnian

the aesthetic movement made appreciation of Greek vase painting

possible

Jane's urge aesthetic not scientific

desired a pattern, not the truth

regarded Dorpfeld and Ridgeway as materials for pattern, i.e. her

aesthetic sense satisfied by conclusions elicited from masses of

data

Verrall made Greek literature living—

Jane made Greek religion living.

Some of these entries, such as “Jane’s urge aesthetic not scientific” or “desired a pattern, not the truth,” bring up aspects of Harrison’s work that often made her theories vulnerable to attack, especially from members of the discipline of the Classics, who found her prose style overly emotional and who were resistant to using Harrison’s anthropological methods in what had been for hundreds of years essentially textual and philological scholarship. “Love of the brilliant generalization” seems a bit of a back-handed compliment, unless she is referring to Harrison’s ability to write attractively and readably in visual terms, whether using metaphors, analogy, anecdote or the *mot juste* to create original, perfectly rendered images of Greek narrative and art. The list, however, does emphasize Harrison’s associations with the aesthetic movement of the 1880’s and 1890’s, a relationship first discussed by Ackerman and most recently taken up by Yopie Prins in “Greek Maenads, Victorian Spinsters,” where parallels between Walter Pater’s process and Harrison’s in the writing of *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (1903) are seen. Prins writes that “Pater described the Greek spirit as [...] “the father of longing and desire”(43), but goes on to show how Harrison’s work both dovetails and revises a Pater-based, Victorian Hellenism. In *Reminiscences of a Student’s Life*, Harrison records meeting Pater and describes him as a “soft, kind cat” who “purred so persuasively that I lost the sense of what he was saying” (46). Prins suggests that “Yet she recaptures the sense of what he was saying in another sense, as she recognizes in his writing a desire for sensation that also inspires her own writing” (61). Given the restrictions placed upon Harrison in her evangelical Christian household during her childhood where beauty was forbidden, it is not surprising that she would identify with

the aesthetic movement's credo as expressed by Oscar Wilde of "art for art's sake" and a Paterian determination to live life "as beautifully and passionately as possible" (Ackerman 79). Harrison's gestures towards aestheticism are especially applicable to her early work, and call to mind Virginia Woolf's experimental writings that can be linked to Pater, as well, and the fact that the young Virginia Woolf bought Pater's work. Stylistically Woolf echoes Pater with her idea of capturing "moments of being" in her prose, intense instances that climax into deeply felt flashes of insight, for example, in her shorter works "Slater's Pins Have No Points" which loads an intensely felt female mentorship relationship into a matter of seconds, or "The Mark on the Wall," another short story that expands and amplifies the meaning of a second.

In an early Harrison work, *Myths of the Odyssey in Art and Literature* (1882), for example, we find a tone and content akin to Pater's aestheticism. In the Preface, she writes:

May I add one word to the end I hope to attain? I believe the educational value of a study of archaeology to consist far more in the discipline of taste and feeling it affords, than in the gift of definite information it has to offer...the best gifts of archaeology,--the trained eye, quick instinct, pure taste, well-balanced emotion,--these we may be thankful if we gain in a lifetime. (xii-xiii)

At Newnham, Harrison had adored the Pre-Raphaelites, decorated her "cave" in Morris wallpaper and Burne-Jones photographs, and was "the dominating figure in a group of friends; like a Rembrandt picture, with a highlight on her vital imposing figure, tall, willowy, the tight-fitting olive-green serge of the days of the aesthetic craze, her hair in a

Greek coil” (qtd. in Prins, “Greek Maenads” 62), but by the time she writes *Prolegomena*, the content of her research has dramatically shifted away from Greek myths and art history to employing an anthropological approach to discovering the social origins of Greek religion, and when she becomes a mature interdisciplinary scholar who has retained the best aspects of an aesthetic sensibility, a gift for writing the eidetic image and an overall literary flair for writing the visual, in general (Ackerman 79).

Jane Harrison’s archaeological training and her trip to Greece with her friend, the art historian and later curator of the Tate, D.S. MacColl were also crucial to the theories and ideas she began to formulate in *Mythology and Monuments* and fully realize later in *Prolegomena*, *Themis*, and *Epilogomena*. “In Athens,” Ackerman notes, “Dr. Dorpfeld, the director of the excavations being conducted by the German Archaeological Institute, personally led her over the ruins of the ancient city, showing her how closely and strongly cultic reality stood behind mythic narrative (whether narrated in a story or depicted on a vase)” (83). She and MacColl traveled to other major classical sites, and Ackerman argues that it was “the Greek experience, combined with a readiness to rethink her basic approach to the past that led her to the theory of the precedence of ritual over myth” (83).

This trip to Greece was transformative for Harrison, and in her vibrant introductory essay to *Mythology and Monuments*, which was intended as a guidebook for tourists exploring the ruins and relics of Athens, she was suddenly able to write from a much broader canvas, with many more resources available to her from the fields of archaeology, evolution, and ethnography. Ackerman writes,

Her emphasis on topography and vases implies that myths are not importantly (or at least primarily) to be thought of as verbal constructions (which ultimately might be analyzed philologically) but as secondary developments of a cultic reality that was located in the physical existence of Greece (not in the Greek imagination) and which therefore had to be studied with that scene in mind. (82).

One is reminded here of Virginia Woolf's own "Greek experience" traveling with her sister Vanessa and her brother Thoby in the fall of 1906. Mitchell Leaska in his Introduction to Woolf's early diaries in *A Passionate Apprentice* notes the effect Woolf's traveling to Greece had on her writing style. He writes:

[...] Virginia flourished in the classical world. She was soothed by its order and symmetry, and began to pause longer over what she saw, catching the smallest details of people, places, manners, and morals. Something new was finding its way into the style in which she conveyed her impressions: whether she was describing a site rich in ancient history or creating a portrait of some fellow guest at the hotel, her writing was becoming more suggestive, and more resonant. [...] In Greece [...] Virginia was beginning to model her meaning in a way not evident in her earlier journals. (PA xxiii)

Rather than being "soothed by its order and symmetry" I would argue that during this trip Woolf becomes stimulated and intellectually challenged by the dramatic landscape, the ruins, the Dionysian underpinnings of the land and its literature that she has already encountered in Harrison's work on the female-centered origins of Greek religion, and its

orgiastic rituals and sacrifices to the dead. Leaska calls this “a new prismatic quality in its earliest stages of cultivation.” I see this sea-change in Woolf’s journal rhetoric as a shift away from the ideas of her Greek tutor Janet Case and towards the thinking of Jane Harrison (see Chapter Two), whose *Blue Jane* (as *Mythology and Monuments* was colloquially called), was essentially a tour guide to the monuments and ancient sites of Greece, and a standard for British travelers to Greece (Ackerman interview, June 2006), a text that in all likelihood would have accompanied Woolf and her party as they toured the “great congeries of ruined houses, on a hill side” (xxiii) in Mycenae.

A trim, thick, blue-covered text, *Mythology and Monuments* boasts the latest archaeological commentary with analysis and interpretations by Jane Harrison based on Dr. Dorpfeld’s and others’ most recent discoveries in Athens. She reveals her debt to his work and assistance, as well as marking the turn in her own work towards the importance of using archaeological evidence in her own projects. She writes:

During the spring of 1888 I had the privilege of attending his [Dorpfeld’s] lectures at Athens on the Dionysiac theatre [...] and the successive temples at Eleusis. Up to that time the study of topography had been to me a weary and most distasteful necessity; then, and not till then, I began to realize its close and intimate relation to my own special study, and I saw with constantly increasing clearness that the juxtaposition of shrines and cults must be a constant factor in the interpretation of both ritual and myth. With a rare generosity Dr. Dorpfeld has allowed me to make use of many of his as yet unpublished views [...] (xiv)

In addition to the latest out of Athens, the book is a treasure complete with fold-out maps, diagrams of Dionysus' theatre, and photographs of the ruins of the Acropolis, the City of Hadrian, the Street of the Tripods to the shrine of Demeter, and the west slope of the Acropolis, including the Areopagus and Academy suburb. Illustrations of vase fragments and photographs of artifacts showing the narratives of local rituals and cults of Athens fill the pages of the guidebook. Although the translation of Pausanias by Harrison's friend, and wife of her teacher Arthur Verrall, Margaret de G. Verrall, is the subtitle and claims to be the *raison d'être* of the text, it is Harrison's commentary that takes the reader along the route Pausanias adopted through the ancient city and which makes up the bulk of the book.

The Blue Jane also brings to mind Woolf's connection to the classical world, her sensual responses to the physical contours of the Greek landscape, its weather and climate, aspects which find their way into her famous essay "On Not Knowing Greek." She writes that "when we read Chaucer, we are floated up to him insensibly on the current of our ancestors' lives" (23), but in order to imagine the Greeks "we must annihilate the smoke and the damp and the thick wet mists" of England.

With warmth and sunshine and months of brilliant, fine weather, life of course is instantly changed; it is transacted out of doors, with the result [...]that small incidents are debated in the street, not in the sitting-room, and become dramatic; make people voluble; inspire in them that sneering, laughing, nimbleness of wit and tongue peculiar to the Southern races, which has nothing in common with the slow reserve, the low half-tones,

the brooding introspective melancholy of people accustomed to live more than half the year indoors. (24)

She points out that in order to appreciate Greek literature we must realize its “out-of-doors manner” that the poets and playwrights “were speaking to an enormous audience rayed round them on one of those brilliant southern days when the sun is so hot and yet the air so exciting [...] to an audience of seventeen thousand people perhaps, with ears and eyes eager and attentive, with bodies whose muscles would grow stiff if they sat too long without diversion” (25).

Harrison, in the preface to *Introductory Studies in Greek Art* (1885), considers the same question in terms of art that Woolf explores in “On Not Knowing Greek” in terms of literature. Why study the Greeks? Harrison writes:

The answer is, I believe, found in a certain peculiar quality of Greek art which adapts itself to the consciousness of successive ages, which has within it no seed of possible death,—a certain largeness and universality which outlived the individual race and persists for all time.(vi)

And in “On Not Knowing Greek” Woolf writes:

In spite of the labour and the difficulty it is this that draws us back and back to the Greeks; the stable, the permanent, the original human being is to be found there. Violent emotions are needed to rouse him into action, but when thus stirred by death, by betrayal, by some other primitive calamity, Antigone and Ajax and Electra behave in the way in which we should behave thus struck down; the way in which everybody has always behaved; and thus we understand them more easily and more directly than

we understand the characters in *The Canterbury Tales*. These are the originals, Chaucer's the varieties of the human species. (27)

In these examples, we again see the aesthetic touches in terms of rhetoric, as well as the intellectual excitement triggered by Greek discoveries. Greece and the classical world is a touchstone for both women writers, the embodiment of all that lasts and is of value to humanity.

The Cambridge Ritualists and Harrison's Major Texts

Harrison's first trip to Greece in 1888 was precipitated by a profound crisis outlined in her correspondence in which her lecturing style was criticized by D.S. MacColl, whom, in vintage Harrisonian willingness to see the other's point, she later befriends. Initially, however, his rebuke stung as he characterized her lectures as "performances of an overheated, sensationalistic, and superficial kind and related them to her desire to live her life as intensely and beautifully as possible" (Ackerman 79), very much like an aesthete, one might argue. The criticism caused her to re-think her methods and approach and to re-focus her considerable talents and intellectual energies to more rigorous scholarly objectives.

MacColl and Harrison traveled to Greece and collaborated on *Greek Vase Paintings* (1894), but when she returned to Newnham in 1898, she widened her intellectual circle as she began corresponding and working with the like-minded individuals who would soon make up the group that would become known as The Cambridge Ritualists. With Jane Harrison as their intellectual leader, the Ritualists were scholars, who were distinguished men in their respective fields: Gilbert Murray was

Regis Professor of Greek at Oxford; Francis M. Cornford, a young lecturer, later became the Laurence Professor of Ancient Philosophy at Trinity College, Cambridge; and Arthur Bernard Cook was Reader and then Laurence Professor of Classical Archaeology at Trinity College, Cambridge. When beginning work on *The Cambridge Ritualists* in 1969, Robert Ackerman quickly realized that the group was “best approached by focusing on the career of Jane Harrison, with Murray, Cornford, and Cook considered in their relationship to her” (67). He points to a number of factors for this strategy, beginning with Harrison’s “need for making passionate intellectual friendships” (68), but also the reality that “she had a broader conception of their common subject matter than any of the others” which intellectually stimulated them and influenced and encouraged each one in their own individual projects. Murray, whose correspondence with Harrison comprises the majority of her surviving letters, was best known for his *The Rise of the Greek Epic* (1907), *The Four Stages of Greek Religion* (1912) (later expanded into *The Five Stages of Greek Religion* [1925]) and for his work and translations on Euripides’ the *Bacchae*. He also contributed an “Excursus on the Ritual Forms Preserved in Greek Tragedy,” which Harrison included in *Themis* (1912); the young Francis M. Cornford, with whom Jane Harrison had an intimate friendship, despite their thirty year age difference, continues to be read for his work on the Greek philosophers. His books which fall under the Ritualist aegis include *Thucydides Mythistoricus* (1907), *From Religion to Philosophy* (1912), and *The Origin of Attic Comedy* (1914); A. B. Cook was not as prolific and although a gifted researcher, was the least talented of the group in terms of writing, which often went painstakingly slowly (Ackerman). He published a five-volume set called *Zeus* (1914-1940) and *The Rise and Progress of Classical Archaeology* (1931). As a group they

shared the same anthropological comparative approach to classics, but Harrison enriched and expanded their research “by introducing them to material to which they were largely strangers” (68). Ackerman writes:

Specifically, she was able to offer a wide and deep knowledge of Greek art and archaeology, and later of contemporary work on religion, psychology, sociology, and philosophy that was invaluable to Cook, primarily a classical folklorist; to Murray, primarily a literary and textual scholar; and to Cornford, primarily a student of ancient philosophy. (68-69)

These three men, of disparate backgrounds, areas of interest, and ages (Murray was ten years Cornford’s senior, and formerly a Greek professor at Glasgow without a Cambridge affiliation) were an unlikely band of close colleagues who “first came together in their affection for Jane Harrison [...and] each man in the group, especially in the early years, was closer to her than to any of the others” (69). In general, their work examined archaeological evidence and ancient artifacts in order to discover the origins of religion and literature. Harrison, however, in an unorthodox and bold move that resulted in the ground-breaking *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, proposed studying Greek religion not by looking at the Olympian gods, which had been the convention in classical study, but at the cultic deities that had come before.

By the time she returned to Newnham in 1898, Harrison was increasingly attached to using a comparative method to explore similarities and differences between cultures, an approach characteristic of the 19th century anthropology movement, used by ethnographers, archaeologists, folklorists, and anthropologists, like Andrew M. Lang and E. B. Tylor, whose *Primitive Culture* (1871) put forth the idea of “survivals,”

characteristics, objects, or attitudes that “survived” from one developmental stage to another. The comparative method was applied also by some philologists (Max Muller is perhaps the best example Harrison had read) that analyzed linguistic “survivals” in primitive cultures. For the purposes of her own research, as Shelley Arlen writes in “For Love of an Idea”: Jane Ellen Harrison, Heretic and Humanist,” Harrison adapted a version of structural-functionalism from anthropologist A.R. Radcliffe-Brown that “analyzed these forms to ascertain social and literary structures which in turn, they hypothesized, functioned to meet underlying preconscious, instinctual needs in mankind” (168). Indeed, the drive behind Harrison’s mature work was to plumb the depths of emotion, to look for the deeper patterns, “the hidden shapes” that exist behind our rationalizations in general, by looking at the rituals behind Greek myths. Inspired by French sociologist Emile Durkheim’s ideas on religion as a collective representation of the group, she posited in her essay “Unanimism and Conversion” that religion “is not the aspiration of the individual soul after a god, or after the unknown, or after the infinite; rather it is the expression, utterance, projection of the emotion, the desire of a group [...] Religion, in its rise, is indistinguishable from social custom, embodying social emotion” (50-51).

In *Prolegomena*, she brings her anthropological approach along with her sociological and psychological theories on religion to the ancient Greeks, a discipline, which, at the time, focused exclusively on the textual study of the Olympians in Greek literature. In this path-breaking book, not only did Harrison have the audacity to suggest the pantheon of Olympian gods and Greek myth was derived from ancient rituals, from the *dromenon*, or “the thing done,” by primitive local deities, she also identified these

ceremonies and social structures as matrifocal, that is, as she will point out later in her second work, *Themis*, not matriarchal as in hierarchical and dominant, but as female centered.

She writes that in “man-fashioned Olympus,” Zeus revised the Earth Goddess:

She who made all things, gods and mortals alike, is become their
plaything, their slave, dowered only with physical beauty, and with a
slave’s tricks and blandishments. (P 285)

Prolegomena disrupts patriarchal norms and challenges gender hierarchies, by privileging not the individual heroic Olympian goddesses and gods, but circles upon circles of women, the attendant maenads, for example, to the “young Zeus” or “new king” Dionysus. She writes that “Maenads means of course simply ‘mad woman,’ and the Maenads are the women-worshippers of Dionysus of whatever race, possessed, maddened or, as the ancients would say, inspired by his spirit” (P 388). She describes Dionysian orgies as “rites of possession and ecstasy in very barbarous fashion... *frightening the men out of their senses.*” She continues, “However much the Macedonian men disliked these orgies, they were clearly too frightened to put a stop to them” [because] “the women were possessed, magical and dangerous to handle” (P 397-98). With the help of archaeological evidence, the vase paintings and fragments she was expert in analyzing, Harrison revolutionized the Classics in *Prolegomena* by using materialist culture to theorize on the ancient “savage” ancestors of Greek myth, an approach that shocked the discipline because they feared that the joys of combing the ruins would displace the authority of the texts.

Prolegomena, itself, is a bit of a shape-shifter rhetorically speaking, and begins with setting out her literary objectives, a desire to more fully understand Greek poetry, but aims to achieve these goals through a study of the development of Greek religion. Its early chapters deal in the main with indigenous cultic rituals and festivals, but the later sections focus more emphatically on Dionysus and Orpheus as the reader is allowed to witness her mental processes and her confidence in using an open, improvisational style to explore her intellectual pursuits. In the Introduction to *Prolegomena*, she claims that

[...]literature is really my goal. I have tried to understand primitive rites, not in love of their archaism, nor yet wholly from a singleminded devotion to science, but with the definite hope that I might come to a better understanding of some forms of Greek poetry. Religious convention compelled the tragic poets to draw their plots from traditional mythology, from stories whose religious content and motive were already in Homer's days obsolete. A knowledge of, a sympathy with, the milieu of this primitive material is one step to the realization of its final form in tragedy. It is then in the temple of literature, if but as a hewer of wood and drawer of water, that I still hope to serve.(#)

Harrison's love of literature, her gift for writing, and her articulation of the debt she feels towards literature as the springboard for her serious scholarly work on the social origins of Greek religion, are also factors that endear her to Virginia Woolf's imagination.

Harrison's topic of reading the Olympians through a feminist lens, as well as her process that allows the material to shape itself as she and the reader seem to go on this journey together also gives Woolf a model of a kind of anti-lecture lecture that is collaborationist

and conversationalist rather than linear, methodical, and rationalist, a style of rhetoric, as we will see below, that she adopts in two of her most famous essays *A Room of One's Own* and *Three Guineas* (see Chapter 4). In a letter to her colleague, Gilbert Murray, whose work on Dionysus in Euripides' *Bacchae* with which she was becoming increasingly familiar, Harrison good-naturedly blames Murray for *Prolegomena's* strange twists and turns. When *Prolegomena*, a book she referred to in her correspondence with Murray as "the fat and comely one," was nearly finished on 10 September 1902, she writes:

It is rather dreadful, the whole centre of gravity of the book has shifted. It began as a treatise on Keres [daemons] with a supplementary notice on Dionysus. It is ending as a screed on Dionysus with an introductory talk about Keres. Whose fault is that? *Never, never* again will I ask you to lecture when I am writing a book, a nice sound one too, it was, till last autumn.

One of the great contributions of *Prolegomena* was that it challenged the convention in the Classics of treating Greek myth and Greek religion as one and the same thing, and forced them to look more seriously at the rites behind the myths, in other words, at the myths as more than a collection of entertaining stories (Ackerman). Another was asking the question of how Greek literature, Greek tragedy, in particular, related to the social reality of Greek life, a question she extends and complicates in *Themis*, where Ackerman points out, she "surpasses" Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*, a work of genius, she credits in *Reminiscences of a Student's Life* as a major influence⁷.

⁷ Nietzsche's work without the benefit of archaeological and anthropological methods and research forecasts the general hypothesis of the Cambridge Ritualists as well as Harrison's willingness to use

After the publication of *Prolegomena*, Harrison was called upon to defend her position, which she refused to do, because “it may be impossible,” but decided instead to offer an *apologia pro haeresi mea*, or at least to tell how she arrived at her findings. This strategy, far from apologizing, achieves the opposite result in that it furthers her theories and position. In the Proceedings of the Classical Association for 1907 (Volume V), (which is later reprinted in part in “Alpha and Omega” in *Alpha and Omega* (1915), one gets a sense of the nature of the attacks upon her work as well as her deft and eloquent handling of a hostile intellectual situation.

My friends have brought against me of late a somewhat serious charge. They tax me with some lack of reverence for the Olympian gods; for Apollo, for Athena, nay even for Father Zeus himself. My interest, I am told, is unduly focused on ghosts, bogies, fetiches, pillar-cults. I pay to them and to such like the attention properly due to the reverend Olympians. Worse still, in matters of ritual I prefer savage disorders, Dionysiac orgies, the tearing of wild bulls, to the ordered and stately ceremonial of Panathenaic processions. In a word, my heart, it would seem, is not in the right place. (1)

Despite the energy and resources it took to counter the attacks upon her work, *Prolegomena* changed the discourse and the way scholars spoke about Greek religion. Her ideas that the Olympians are late and the stuff of literature rather than religion, and that the Dionysian and Orphic Mysteries embodied Greek religion are now assimilated

nonrational factors as a means to discern human behavior, when he writes in *The Birth of Tragedy*, that there is in Greek tragedy “a Dionysiac condition, tending toward the shattering of the individual and his fusion with the original Oneness. Tragedy is an Apollonian embodiment of Dionysiac insights and powers [...] Dionysos *remains* the sole dramatic protagonist and that all the famous characters of the Greek stage, Prometheus, Oedipus, etc., are only masks of the original hero” (65-66).

into the mainstream, with historians of anthropology, archaeology, and structuralism seeking to re-examine her work.

In the meantime, however, the publication of *Themis: A Study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion* would only deepen the divide as its premises continued to challenge the authority of the Classics. In the Hymn of the Kouretes, Harrison discovers in the “temple of Diktaean Zeus” on Crete that even the “Father of Gods and Men,” the “archpatriarchal bourgeois” Zeus, came from matriarchal origins (xiv-xv). She had found a text that “embodied this very group-thinking, or rather group-emotion toward life,” in which worshippers “sink their own personality and ... by dancing to a common rhythm, above all by the common excitement, they become emotionally one, a true congregation, not a collection of individuals (45-6). In the Hymn of Kouretes, the young male dancers invoke Zeus as the “greatest Kouros, who was clearly a projection of the thiasos of his worshippers,” that is, as a projection of themselves as a group (xiv-xv), and the young God never stands alone or separate from the group, as their relationship is reciprocal and both his and their lives are interdependent.

In *Themis*, Harrison writes that

Nowhere save in this Hymn do we hear of Zeus with attendant daimones. He stands always alone, aloof, approached with awe, utterly delimited from his worshippers. One god only, Dionysos, and he but a half-bred Olympian, is attended by daimones. We can scarcely picture Dionysos without his attendant thiasos, be they holy women, Maenads, be they the revel rout of Satyrs. We think of this thiasos of daimones as attendants, inferior persons, pale reflections, emanations as it were from the god

himself. It seems appropriate that he should be surrounded by attendants [...] superior persons, high officials, always are. If this be all, how strange, how even unseemly is it that Zeus, the supreme god, Father of Gods and Men, should have no thiasos, no escort. The Hymn brings us face to face with the fact that Zeus once had a thiasos, once when he was a young man, a Kouros. When he grew up to be the Father, it seems, he lost his thiasos and has gone about unattended ever since. (12)

In *Ancient Art and Ritual*, a text that went far to explicate many of the theories put forth in *Themis*,⁸ Harrison writes that the Olympians express individual heroes and the epic poets celebrate “klea andron, ‘glorious deeds of men,’ of individual heroes; and what these heroes themselves ardently long and pray for is just this glory, this personal distinction, this deathless fame for their great deeds” (159). The Homeric Gods “the highly personalized, individualized god is fashioned on the highly personalized, individualized self, and the essence of the sense of self is separateness, or consciousness of the severance of one self from other selves, and of that self as subject and distinct from objects” (T 473).

In contrast, the more primitive “Year Daimon” or “mystery god” like Dionysus, “arises out of those instincts, emotions, desires which attend and express life” and are projections “rather of the group than of individual consciousness” (xii-xiii). The Year-Daimon or Year-Spirit embodies the necessary process of regeneration, or the passing of the old age into the new. Harrison writes that “The divine figures of Mother and Child reflect the social conditions of a matriarchal group with its rite of adolescent initiation; its

⁸ Harrison’s colleague and friend, Francis Cornford, claimed he could not understand *Themis* until he had read *Ancient Art and Ritual*.

factors are the mother, the child, and the tribe, the child as babe and later as Kouros [young man]” (T 41). This formulary is further supported by Murray in “The Excursus on the Ritual Forms preserved in Greek Tragedy,” which Harrison included as a chapter in *Themis*, and to which Murray returns in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 71 in 1951 long after Harrison’s death. In his essay, he explains Harrison’s use of the term *eniautos* meaning Year-Spirit and that the word *eniautos* literally translates as “recurrent vital day,” that seam or point in time which marks the dawning of an important age as “the arrival of each Eniautos is the beginning of a new Aion or Age” (120). In the Olympian version, Zeus is the eternal father, but Murray, in alignment with Harrison in *Themis* points to Hesiod, where the myth appears in its oldest form, that speaks of “another, and apparently more original conception, [in which] the series has no conclusion, since the Old Zeus gives way to a New Zeus, and he at the end of the year will pass it on to another new Zeus” (122). Dionysus, whose name means “Young Zeus, or Zeus the Son, the New King” not only is the Young God, he *is* the new age.

It is useful to return to Harrison’s concept of ritual then as a *dromenon*, an action that is “not merely a thing done, but a thing re-done, or pre-done with magical intent.” The *dromenon*, according to Harrison’s definition, is “a thing which, like the drama, is collectively performed” and its “basis or kernel is a thiasos [worshippers] or choros” (T xv). As Yopie Prins notes “the omophagia [eating of raw flesh] is Harrison’s most important example of a *dromenon*, enacted by maenads who therefore give new birth to the god they worship: indeed, in this striking development of Harrison’s argument, it turns out that “Dionysus is but his thiasos incarnate” (T 38). Not only do the maenads take his spirit into the body, but he is the very incarnation of their own spirit and thus

projected in song [...] In the collective performance of this cry, as a performative utterance, the god is called into being” (Prins 67).

Harrison is unafraid to make the analogy between this ancient paradigm and the structure of her own, indeed, our own times. She writes that “The social structure represented by the Olympians is the same as that of the modern family, it is patrilinear” whereas the “figure of Dionysus, his thiasos, and his relation to his mother and the Maenads, is only to be understood by reference to an early social structure, known as matrilinear” (xxi). The thiasos is the group of attendant worshippers, themselves daimones, such as Dionysus’ satyrs and Maenads, as we have seen, from whom he is never separate. For Harrison, the group marks the matriarchal deity, while the patriarchal god is essentially solitary.

Patriarchy, she contends, “would fain dominate all things, would invade even the ancient prerogative of the mother, the right to rear the child she bore... [it] usurps the function of the mother...” (T 495), and goes on to cite as examples the Olympian structure that narrates the birth of Athena as springing from Zeus’s head and Dionysius from Zeus’s thigh, about which Harrison writes, “the motherhood of the mother is obscured, even denied” (T 500).

Prins reads Harrison’s maenadic ritual as embodying multiple relations. In other words, she digresses from a feminist reading, rejecting the binarism of matriarchy and patriarchy. “Harrison’s emphasis on maenadic ritual is often interpreted as part of an argument about matriarchal culture prior to patriarchal mythology, but the maenad also destabilizes the binary opposition of patriarchy and matriarchy, by mobilizing relations between women beyond the maternal role: the power of the thiasos is that it can project

and embody multiple relations” (67). This position muddies the waters a bit, as Harrison’s views do indeed advocate a timeline that casts mother-centered cults as existing before the usurpation of the patriarchal pantheon of Olympian gods, but leaves out Harrison’s own insistence on these early cultures as “matrilineal” and “matrifocal,” and not “matriarchal.” Harrison writes,

It may seem strange that woman, always the weaker, should be thus dominant and central. But it must always be observed that this primitive form of society is matrilinear not matriarchal. Woman is the social centre not the dominant force. So long as force is supreme, physical force of the individual, society is impossible, because society is by cooperation, by mutual concession, not by antagonism. (491)

It is a view she echoes in *Ancient Art and Ritual*, when she writes that “a heroic society is almost a contradiction in terms.” In my view, then, Harrison’s argument places women, the maenads, in Prins, for example, as crucial functionaries in an inter-dependent relationship that is reciprocal and feminist, and inclusive of Prins, also, multiple, but decidedly, as Harrison discovered, matrifocal.

But what of this matrifocal figure? Who is she? Harrison leaves the figure of Themis until Chapter XI unformulated, devoting an entire chapter and the title of her book to an exploration of her significance. In Aeschylus’ *Prometheus Bound*, the playwright identifies her “but another form of Gaia” when Prometheus relates that his mother, “Themis/And Gaia, one in nature, many-named” has foretold his future, and Harrison points out that Themis, in Aeschylus, at least, is “envisaged as the oracular power of Earth” (480). She then brings in archaeological evidence, the narrative found on

a red-figured cylix from the Berlin catalogue, and her experiences in the Themis sanctuary on the south slope of the Acropolis, as well as the account by Pausanias of Themis' altar, in order to deepen our understanding of this complex goddess, a figure whose complete portrait once filled out by Jane Harrison, Virginia Woolf reanimates throughout her fiction (see Chapter 3). In the illustration, we see Themis seated as other gods come and go, but she with a vial of water in one hand and a sprig of laurel in another "is below and above all gods" as she "abides there seated" (480).

Harrison asks "But if Themis be but the projection, the impersonation of Earth and of the prophetic powers of Earth, why should she be above and beyond all other gods?" She explains that Themis is the embodiment of prophecy and not prophecy as the Olympians would have it, but "in the old sense of prophecy, utterance, ordinance, not in the later sense of a forecast of the future" but even more at ordinance than utterance. In Homer, she points out Themis has a dual role "she convenes and dissolves the assembly; she presides over the feast [...] over the banquet. When Hera enters Olympos, the gods rise up to greet her and hold out their cups in welcome, and she takes the cup of Themis who is first [...] It is the meed of Themis to convene and dissolve the agora; it is hers too to preside over the equal, sacramental feast" (482).

This relationship seems at first glance to cast Themis in an inferior or subordinate role, an impression Harrison is quick to dispense. She writes:

We think of Themis as an abstraction, as Law, Justice, Right, and, naturally, we are surprised that she who is above Zeus himself should be set to do the service of a herald, an office surely meter for Hermes or Iris. Why, we ask, with Hermes and Iris at hand, ready to speed over earth and

sea with messages and mandates, should Themis have to execute just this one office of convening the assembly? To preside over the banquet may be an honorable function, but to ‘range about all over,’ fetching up gods and demigods, is no more a mark of supremacy. (483)

In order to solve this dilemma, she turns to linguistics and philology to get to the source of the Greek word Themis, and reveals that both Themis in the Greek and the word Doom in English share a parallel development. “Doom,” she writes is the “thing set, fixed, settled; it begins in convention, the stress of public opinion; it ends in statutory judgement. Your private doom is your private opinion [...] but [...] it is the collective doom, public opinion, that, for man’s common convenience, crystallizes into Law” (483).

Themis, she has shown was worshipped initially in the plural. In other words,

[...] out of many dooms, many public opinions, many judgments, arose the figure of the one goddess. Out of many themistes arose Themis. These themistes, these fixed conventions, stood to the Greek for all he held civilized. They were the basis alike of his kingship and of his democracy. These themistes are the ordinances of what must be done, what society compels; they are also, because what must be will be, the prophecies of what shall be in the future; they are also the dues, the rites, the prerogatives of a king, whatever custom assigns to him or any official” (483).

Themis, in the beginning as a part of the tribe, “was all powerful,” but as her status is diluted by migrations, invasions, and disruptions, she becomes from “the debris of the shattered group-system” the polis, adapted from primitive impulses, associated

with Earth-worship and kinship. Harrison points out that Themis, like Antigone, “stands for kinship and the dues of Earth, Creon for patriarchalism incarnate in the Tyrant and for the Zeus religion that by that time had become its expression” (484). Themis “is the very spirit of the assembly incarnate” a figure barely discernible from the actual agora who is “trembling on the very verge of godhead.” And as Harrison portrays her, “She is the force that brings and binds men together, she is ‘herd instinct,’ the collective conscience, the social sanction [...] the social imperative” who exists “before the particular shapes of gods; she is not religion, but she is the stuff of which religion is made. It is the emphasis and representation of herd instinct, of the collective conscience, that constitutes religion” (485).

The third in the trilogy of Harrison’s “big books” on Greek religion, *The Epilogmena* (1921) is a forty page synthesis of many of the key ideas presented in her two previous works, *Prolegomena* and *Themis*, although, curiously, the book once again shape-shifts into a much larger topic beyond Greek religion to a discourse on religion, itself, with the added insights she now had in hand from her readings in Freud, Jung, and Russian philosophy. In her article “The Pillar and the Maiden” (1903), she is already using Freud, whom she had read in the German, to talk about the connection between primitive Greek rituals and our deeply-held impulses and emotions. She writes,

Finally it has been suggested to me that eikonism and aneikonism in their ultimate analysis represent the workings of those two factors of our being with which modern science is now and rightly, but so tardily, much concerned, the conscious and the subconscious. The subconscious makes for fusion, union, emotion, ecstasy; the conscious for segregation,

discrimination, analysis, clarity of vision. On the action and interaction of these two our whole spiritual vitality would seem to depend. It is a far-reaching thought. I believe it to be true. (Pillar and the Maiden 13)

Here, are early signs of the interrelations between psyche, myth, and the development of society and culture we find more fully realized in *The Epilogomena* in 1921.

The first two chapters delineate the distinctions she had made between primitive ritual and primitive theology, but the third chapter, “The Religion of Today” takes her into a new discussion on mysticism, the need for ascetism in the younger generations, philosophy, and psychology. She begins with an Orphic saying in the subtitle of her first chapter, which translates as “I have fled the evil, I have found the better” and ends by promoting the crucial importance of “the setting out of the soul towards a higher value” (E 38).

Harrison writes *The Epilogomena* from the vantage point of a post-war Europe, nine years after the publication of *Themis*, at the age of seventy-one. Just as “Old Cambridge was gone,” she understood that Europe would be irrevocably changed by the war in 1914, but “alien to her was the wartime glow of her colleagues and students [...and] she refused to blind herself to the fact that the war was savagery and a setback to civilization” (Wilson, Preface to *Themis* viii-ix). Her essay “Epilogue on the War: Peace with Patriotism,” collected in 1915 in *Alpha and Omega*, grew out of her unbending pacifist stance, a position she shared with Virginia Woolf and a work that gestures toward Woolf’s later pacifist polemic *Three Guineas* (see Chapter 4). During the war years, from 1914-1916, she traveled to Paris, at great risk, when she was referred to a specialist there for medical reasons. She also discovered Ecole des Langues Orientales, which taught

classes in Russian, and she and her companion, Hope Mirrlees, soon began to take classes. Harrison learned the language well enough to return off and on throughout the war to teach Russian at Newnham. However, by 1921 when she published *Epilogomena*, she was writing not only with the horrors of war fresh in her mind, but also with the physical distance afforded by what would become a permanent break with Cambridge. *The Epilogomena* gestures towards religion as the preservation of the group, much in the same way that primitive ritual invokes a singular individual, the young god, the Year-Spirit, but only in concert with the tribe, and only with the aim of the preservation of life. She ends with a quote from a letter by Keats to his sister-in-law in which he writes “I feel more and more every day, as my imagination strengthens, that I do not live in this world alone, but in a thousand worlds [...] There is an awful warmth about my heart—like a load of immortality.” And Harrison ends with a gesture at the responsibility spirituality places upon the young god in connection to the group, when she adds, referring to Keats that “yes, and [he also carried] an awful light about his head” (E 39-40).

After writing *The Epilogomena*, Harrison feared that the book was a failure and that it would not or could not be heard by a generation that had suffered as much as had the survivors of the European war. On July 30, 1921, however, Gerald Murray, whom she respected and admired, wrote to her that

The *Epilogomena* are a wonderful achievement. They ought to be read before, not after, your big books—they provide exactly the key that was wanted, and the unification. It is a very great thing to have got the statement of your whole position into 40 coherent pages. (JH Papers)

In the University Books, New Hyde Park, New York edition, 1962, *The Epilogomena* is usefully published as Murray suggested, *before* Themis in a two-in-one volume set.

Although the book does make good connections between Greek religion and myth, its contribution is more in its tone and passion, as it continues to reveal Jane Harrison as an original thinker, raising brave questions about the nature of religion, and staying open to new ideas brought about by the nascent fields of psychology and sociology.

Generally speaking, the Ritualists' work has been received in a negative light. Their ideas, however, were not dismissed because they were superseded by new evidence. The evidence had always been challenged and even admitted to with some very important caveats by the Ritualists themselves as being thin. Their contributions faded as the fields they helped to create—anthropology, archaeology, sociology, and psychology—became more specialized and self-contained. As pioneers they should be praised for doing the more difficult leg-work of venturing forth into new areas of inquiry, blazing trails, some more fruitful than others. However, *because* they were pioneers, and their work was new and radical at the time, they were also open to a great deal of criticism from succeeding generations. Furthermore, their work focused almost exclusively on the question of origins, a topic that with the advent of deconstructionist and social and cultural theory became of subordinate importance.

The Ritualists have not fared well in non-literary disciplines especially. Not surprisingly with their emphasis on traditional textual and philological study, the Classicists had been their most heated adversaries, with two exceptions. Ackerman cites George Thomson and T.B.L. Webster, but Thomson especially for whom Jane Harrison's work "remained alive and meaningful" as he "pursued precisely the path blazed by

Harrison in *Themis*” in his 1940’s brilliant classical studies *Aeschylus in Athens* (1941) and *Studies in Ancient Greek Society* (1949) (Ackerman 189). Anthropologists and folklorists, as the fields developed, moved away from theory towards treating myths and rituals as primary source material, although the Ritualists’ work continues to be of value, or should be, to those studying the history of these disciplines. Philosophy as a discipline today has little interest in the Cambridge group, however, the philosophy of culture, language, and ideas, “in man as a symbol-creating and –using being, and in phenomenology” (195) continue to find the Ritualists’ work useful.

Literary Criticism is the one field that has continued to value to a certain degree the Ritualists’ contributions for the very reason that their work, the exploration of the ritual structures that lie behind myths and how language governs culture, offers brilliant insights into literature as a whole. Since the 1950’s, critics have explored the contributions of the Cambridge Ritualists as a whole or in terms of its individual members on literature of the twentieth century, but they have more frequently dismissed, denied, or completely overlooked Jane Harrison’s influence on major modernist texts. It is a continuing controversy, as well as curiosity, that modernist critics persist in citing Harrison’s contemporary, Sir James G. Frazer’s *The Golden Bough*, but neglect Harrison’s more significant contributions. Martha C. Carpentier, who joins feminist critic Jane Marcus in supporting Harrison’s work, suggests that the publication in 1973 of John B. Vickery’s *The Literary Impact of the Golden Bough* overemphasized the influence of James Frazer, the author of the lengthy, data-rich, argument poor, *The Golden Bough*. Although he was a colleague of the Cambridge Ritualists, Frazer was its weakest contributor, and known among his peers as an “arm-chair anthropologist” or of the

“Covent Garden school of anthropology,” because he had “never once been on a field trip” (Vickery 40). Carpentier argues that Vickery’s study privileging Frazer continues to this day to overshadow Harrison’s work and distort the historical record.

For three decades, but as early as Marcus’ essays on Harrison and Virginia Woolf’s *The Years* in 1977’s *Bulletin of the New York Public Library: The Virginia Woolf Issue* (Winter), feminist scholars including herself, Martha Vicinus, Bonnie Kime Scott, and Melba Cuddy-Keane, and classicists such as Anabel Robinson have steadfastly remarked upon the value of Harrison’s work. However, the notion of Frazer as a dominant influence on modernist texts prevails, and few in academic circles have ever heard of Harrison’s name.

Robert Ackerman has tried to dispel Frazer’s shadow by stating the facts. He also discounts any link between the originality of her ideas and those of William Robertson Smith, who was an early proponent of the use of sociology in analyzing religion. He writes that:

Mythology and Monuments appeared in 1890, the same year as the first edition of *The Golden Bough*. The simple fact of contemporaneity seems conclusive evidence that any formulation [...] which has ritualist criticism emerging from under the shade of *The Golden Bough* is mistaken [...] Nor was William Robertson Smith any more of a factor in influencing her thought, for we should surely have had some mention of her having attended the lectures that were printed as *The Religion of the Semites*, and no evidence to that effect exists. Add to this the fact that she was in

Greece during part of the time that Smith was lecturing, and we may safely deny Smith any formative role in her ideas. (83)

While Harrison was certainly open to Frazer's use of the comparative method and anthropological approach, his research focused on the folk cults of Continental Europe, not on the Greeks, and his editions of *The Golden Bough* were filled mostly with data and very few ideas or theories.

In contrast, Jane Harrison was well-known and respected among her colleagues, despite the attacks on her work from the academic establishment. Her greatest contributions as a Ritualist are the introduction of the theory of the matrifocal beginnings of the Olympian Gods; her articulation of Dionysus as a Year-Spirit or eniautos daimon rather than the drunken, portly Bacchus (Ackerman), and her characterization of Themis, each of which have profound resonance in Virginia Woolf's writing.

But Harrison's work on her own and as a Cambridge Ritualist was interdisciplinary, involving archaeology, anthropology, sociology, psychology, linguistics, as well as her background in traditional classical study. Her scholarly contributions transcend the label of "Ritualist" or even "Cultural Anthropologist," as she was called, and no sooner is she assigned one label than the name does not quite fit and blends and blurs into perhaps another category, that too becomes inadequate and unable to hold her. The politics, her feminism, atheism, and her radical pacifist positions, ideas elaborated on in her collection of essays *Alpha and Omega*, are also both contained in and transcend the boundaries of her Greek work. It is truly in the body of her entire work, the Greek texts, but also her essays, her articles, and her memoir, and in the example of

her life as a public intellectual, that we find extraordinary parallels to Virginia Woolf both in historical and literary terms.

Chapter Two.

Of the Nymph and the Noun: Harrison, Case, and Virginia Woolf's Greek Education

“I have taken the plunge into tough Greek,
and that has so much attraction for me—Heaven knows why—
That I don't want to do anything else. I am really rather good at Greek.”

--Virginia Woolf, *Letters*, Vol. 1.177
(To Violet Dickinson February 1905)

“Knowledge is never, or very rarely divorced from emotion and action.”

--Jane Harrison, “Scientiae Sacra Fames” in *Alpha and Omega* (1915)

“She is full of tender humanities and a kind of cultured Christianity,
though she is too well educated to be a Christian.”

--Virginia Woolf on Janet Case, *Letters*, Vol. 1. 363.
(To Vanessa Bell 29 August 1908)

As Henry Alley writes in “A Rediscovered Eulogy: Virginia Woolf's “Miss Janet Case: Classical Scholar and Teacher,” in the early years of Virginia Woolf's Greek education, Janet Case “held both the predictable role of the calm, somewhat staid, classical tutor with the watchful eye, and the warm but parental confidant” (291), but that “sometime after April 1907, the tutelage ended, with Case feeling somewhat intimidated by ‘the new odd Bloomsbury life.’” What Alley calls the beginning of “friction and anger” between teacher and pupil “comes quite gradually in 1916 and 1917” not only due to the elder mentor's age, but also to “a kind of ossifying of what Woolf feared to be a rigid classical view of literature” (293). This intellectual parting of the ways referenced by Alley and by Woolf's own reflective assessment of her former tutor in her anonymous

obituary of Case signed simply from “an old pupil”⁹ in 22 July 1937 as “contemplative, reticent, withdrawn,” becomes a telling moment in Woolf’s understanding of the Greeks in relation to her work, and ultimately in the trajectory of her writing life, as she finds herself as early as 1907, I would argue, with her crafting of her Libation Bearers Notebook, more intimately engaged intellectually and politically not to Case, nor even to Bloomsbury, but to the “eternally young” at heart (L. Woolf, DHATW 26) Cambridge classical anthropologist, Jane Ellen Harrison, and her revolutionary perspective on the Classics.

There is, of course, an important caveat that needs to be attached to this argument, that despite Woolf’s eventual intellectual disengagement from Case as she moves towards Harrison’s multi-disciplinary approach to texts, I see this process as not only natural, but desirable in the Case/Woolf teacher/student relationship. It is also important to point out that Woolf’s embrace of Harrison’s work in no way diminishes Case’s role in Woolf’s Greek education, indeed, quite the opposite, and that my aim here is to add Harrison’s contribution to Case’s pedagogy, thereby connecting Woolf to Harrison via Case. Virginia Woolf adored Janet Case, despite the typical, gentle aspersions cast in Case’s direction as a bit of a grammarian and Victorian moralizer. In October 1903, she wrote to Violet Dickinson, with whom she carried on an intimate correspondence and romantic friendship, that “Case is as regular as a Clock. She’s a nice woman really—and sometimes puts her arm around Sparroy!! [one of Virginia’s many aliases in

⁹ Woolf’s obituary was first “rediscovered” by Jane Marcus in 1977’s *The Bulletin of the New York Public Library* (Winter 80:ii) and reprinted there in her essay “The Years as Greek Drama, Domestic Novel, and *Gotterdammerung*” (292-293). References from Woolf’s obituary on Case for this chapter were drawn from this source, as well as Alley’s article, and from the original in *The Janet Case Papers* at Girton College, Cambridge.

corresponding with Violet] [...] She is so exquisitely clean and healthy and normal. I feel she bathes one all over—not with talk only” (Letters Vol. 1, 100). On 27 November, she continued to Violet, whose picture she kept on her mantelpiece, “I began to write to you, and then Case knocked vigorously. She blushes like a maiden (I say nothing against her morals) when I say I am writing to you. She says ‘Miss Dickinson (you’ll be Violet soon) has such a sensible look in her eyes’ but I won’t listen to such stuff” (109). But the level of their closeness increases, as Woolf also confided in Miss Case during her father’s illness and eventual death in 1904, which she characterized as “all pure loss,” while cautioning her tutor that “You see I’m not in a pious frame of mind!” (L Vol. 1. 124) and it was to Janet Case that she related the sexual abuse she endured at the hands of her half-brother, George Duckworth. In discussing marriage and Case’s sister’s Emphie’s encounter with a male doctor, their conversation turned to “the revelation of all Georges malefactions.” On 11 [?] July 1911, she writes to her sister Vanessa:

To my surprise, she has always had an intense dislike of him; and used to say “Whew—you nasty creature”, when he came in and began fondling me over my Greek. When I got to the bedroom scenes, she dropped her lace, and gasped like a benevolent gudgeon. (L Vol. 1. 472)

But later on, in this same letter, we see Virginia capable of shocking Case’s more demure sensibilities, when she relates that “Janet C. said suddenly in the train “What are you thinking of, Virginia?” Imprudently I answered “Supposing next time we meet a baby leaps within me?” She said that was not the way to talk” (473). Nevertheless, her diary entries, early portraits, and letters demonstrate that she respected her tutor for challenging her intellectually and for putting up with her self-proclaimed ignorance and amateur skills

that she felt were more attuned to a love of Greek literature than to the practice of declining lists of verbs. Case, by all accounts, despite her greater emphasis on grammar, did at times achieve Harrison's balance of "emotion and action" in conveying a knowledge of the Classics to the young Virginia Woolf. An excerpt from Woolf's early portrait of Miss Case is worth reprinting here at length as an example of Woolf's intellectual curiosity and playfulness as well as for providing a glimpse into what her new instructor was up against in tutoring so "passionate an apprentice" as Virginia Woolf:

When I first saw her one afternoon in the drawing room, she seemed to me exactly what I had expected – tall, classical looking, masterfull [sic]. But I was bored at being taught, & for some time, only did just what was asked from me, & hardly looked up from my book – that is at my teacher. But she was worth looking at. She had fine bright eyes – a curved nose, the teeth too prominent indeed – but her whole aspect was vigorous & wholesome. She taught well too. My varied experience of Greek teachers makes me a good judge of their merits I think. She was more professional than Miss Pater though perhaps not so cultivated – she was more genial than Miss Clay & as good a scholar. [] But I am sorry to say – really now a little repentant – that she did not at first attract me. She was too cheerful & muscular. She made me feel 'contradictious' as the nurses used to say. After a time I found out her line of teaching, & rather set my back against it – at least I discovered certain opinions which she held very vigorously - & which when contradicted, were worth a good half hours discussion. I contradicted them, advanced life long opinions on the spur of the moment, & to my delight she took me quite seriously – or when I was in a lazy mood, drew her out; gave in at this point, led her on to another - & when she was fairly started on some theory of hers – let my mind stray. I began this system in pure idleness; it relieved the tedium of Greek grammar; & continued it from a genuine interest with a little malice mixed – I found out that she had theories of her own about the Furies; [] for six lessons I too had theories about the Furies: [] - & so with many other subjects. She was a person of ardent theories & she could expound them fluently. She used three adjectives where I could only lay hands on one – Aeschylus was strenuous, grand, impassioned & so on. But she was no sentimentalist: she had her grammar at her finger tips – she used to pull me up ruthlessly in the middle of some beautiful passage with "Mark the *ar*". I read a very lovely description of maidenhood in Euripides (?) for instance [] – how the maiden hangs like ripened fruit within the orchard – but the gates ajar, the passerby spies in - & does not hesitate to pluck. That was the sense of it, & at the end I paused with some literary delight in its beauty. Not so Miss Case. "The use of the instrumental genitive in the 3rd line is extremely rare" her comment upon Love! But that is not a fair example; & at any rate I think it really praiseworthy; aesthetic pleasure is so much easier to attain than knowledge of his uses of the genitive – I think it is true that she read with a less purely literary interest in the text than I did; she was not by any means blind to the beauties of

Aeschylus and Euripides (her two favourite writers) but she was not happy till she had woven some kind of moral into their plays. []

She was always expounding their ‘teaching’ and their views upon life & Fate, as they can be interpreted by an intelligent reader. I had never attempted anything of this kind before, & though I protested that Miss Case carried it too far, yet I was forced to think more than I had done hitherto - & interested accordingly. It was upon these subjects that she became eloquent. She would spend a whole lesson in defining the relation of Aeschylus towards Fate – or the religious peculiarities of Euripides. This was the side of the thing that most interested her - & to her great credit, she made me, at least, see her point of view. Then there was our grammar. Many teachers have tried to break me in to that – but with only a passing success. Miss Case went on to the root of the evil, she saw that my foundations were rotten – procured a Grammar, & bade me start with the very first exercise – upon the proper use of the article – which I had hitherto used with the greatest impropriety. She never failed to point out, with perfect good humour that my exercises were detestable – “I haven’t even attempted to correct this one” she said once – with the cheerful laugh, which spoke of an undaunted courage. I never once made her lose her temper, though I sometimes lost mine sufficiently to wish I could. [...] I am amazed at the amount she stood from me –

But in all these ways she was an excellent teacher. I feel besides, that she is a really valiant strong minded woman, in a private capacity. We strayed enough from grammar to let me see this. She talked on many subjects; & on all she showed herself possessed of clear strong views, & more than this she had the rare gift of seeing the other side; she had too, I think, a fine human sympathy which I had reason, once or twice to test – (APA 182 -184).

Woolf wrote this portrait fearing that it would be her last Greek lesson with Janet Case, who had tutored her at this point for a year and a half. At the end of the portrait, in her characteristic apologia and disclaimers for her writing, she states that she knows that the portrait is “most inadequate testimony to her – but under the circumstances of haste & discomfort, I can do no better” yet she hopes too “that our parting is not yet really final” (184). Her wish was granted as she was able to resume her Greek lessons with Janet Case in the Fall of 1903 as she reported to another of her important female role models, Violet Dickinson, on 2 October 1903, that “Case has started again.”

Although Case became her most meaningful tutorial relationship that eventually deepened into a friendship, Virginia Woolf began a formal study of Greek language and literature with a series of private tutors in 1897, beginning with George Warr, of the

Ladies Department of Kings College, where she attended Greek and history lessons when she was fifteen years old. Nearly a decade earlier, George Warr organized a fundraiser for the Kings College Lectures for Ladies by putting on what became known in the 1880's as "five o'clock antiquity" with a revue called "The Tales of Troy," which were basically scenes from *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* linked together by a common theme. The plays were performed in English on one night and in Greek on the second night (Robinson 82). In Professor Warr's production in 1883, Jane Harrison was given parts in the Greek cast and put on a performance at the home of Mrs. Freake, a wealthy patron who had a Greek theatre built inside her house. Hope Mirrlees describes Mrs. Freake as "a lady of great wealth but little culture" (JH Papers) who pronounced Homer 'Omer, and often proclaimed that the "demi-monde" would be there. As Anabel Robinson points out, quoting Mirrlees, "She meant "half the world," though some would have said she was right in both senses of the word, because "Bohemia was still an exciting and romantic world, from which occasionally fascinating creatures like Ellen Terry would emerge for a luncheon party" (Mirrlees' Notebook, JH Papers, also, qtd. in Robinson 82). Although Warr's "The Tales of Troy" were an amateur affair they attracted talent, a number of celebrities, and many leading lights in the Classical academic world. Mrs. Bram Stoker played Calypso on the English night, Lionel Tennyson, Alfred Lord Tennyson's son, played Ulysses on the Greek night, and Virginia Woolf's cousin, the volatile J.K. Stephen, the "well-connected young don about town, later to be in the front rank of celebrity suspects for Jack the Ripper" (Beard 39) played Hector. In Mirrlees' draft of her biography of Harrison, she recounts how the American Classicist, Charles Waldstein, joined the cast and instructed a young Eugenie Sellers, Harrison's friend, on how Helen

of Troy should be played. According to Mirrlees, Harrison remembered “and that ugly little man *became* Helen of Troy”” (JH Papers). Harrison played Penelope on the Greek night and went on to play Alcestis at Oxford in 1887.

The performance of Greek plays at Oxbridge was fraught with controversy, and Jane Harrison, while a student at Newnham, was in the thick of it. She was often at loggerheads with the college’s director, Miss Clough. Robinson writes that “aesthetic and ‘mannish’ clothes were her particular bugaboo. Harrison wore both” (45). In one incident, Harrison wore a garish, yellow-checked, plaid ulster, which was later celebrated in the pages of *Punch*, to advertise an exhibition by the painter, George Frederick Watts. The lyric read “Here’s Sir Frederick robed in scarlet, here’s Dean Stanley’s thoughtful face/And the lady in the Ulster has a certain kind of grace” (qtd. in Robinson 45). When, in 1877, Harrison and a group of students wanted to put on a Greek play, her reputation as a rebel did not help their cause. The play, Euripides’ *Electra*, would have been the first to be performed by women rather than men in drag, for the female roles. Miss Clough soon sabotaged their efforts, by ordering inspections of their costumes to make sure they were not revealing too much skin. The students eventually were forced to call off the production. It was not until 1883 at Girton, that Sophocles’ *Electra* was staged with Virginia Woolf’s future Greek tutor, Janet Case, as the first female lead in a Greek play at Oxbridge, in yet another instance of Harrison’s example paving the way for succeeding generations of women.

After George Warr, Woolf was tutored by Walter Pater’s sister, Clara Pater, in 1899, the same year her older brother Thoby entered Trinity College Cambridge with Lytton Strachey, Leonard Woolf, and Clive Bell. According to Woolf, Pater was

“perfectly delightful.” Clara Pater, in addition to being Walter Pater’s sister, was the first Classics Tutor and Vice-President of Somerville College, Oxford. She is often suggested as the model for Woolf’s piano teacher character, Miss Craye, in her short story “Slater’s Pins Have No Points” first published in *Forum*, January 1928 and reprinted in *The Complete Shorter Fiction of Virginia Woolf* (1985). In 1902, however, Woolf began a more serious and focused study with the Cambridge-educated Case, that continued off and on until 1909. Janet Case, as Woolf’s early portrait shows, was “masterfull” and there is no question that as both a teacher and later a friend Case provided Woolf with a political activist role model. On 1st January 1910, she wrote to Dear Miss Case:

Would it be any use if I spent an afternoon or two weekly in addressing envelopes for the Adult Suffragists?

I don’t know anything about the question. Perhaps you could send me a pamphlet, or give me the address of the office. I could neither do sums or argue, or speak, but I could do the humbler work if that is any good. You impressed me so much the other night with the wrongness of the present state of affairs that I feel that action is necessary. Your position seemed to me intolerable. The only way to better it is to do some thing I suppose. How melancholy it is that conversation isn’t enough! (L Vol. 1. 421)

This is one of the earliest examples of Virginia Woolf’s interest in politics. Her uneasiness around and ambivalence towards social activism is often noted throughout the course of her life, usually behind E. M. Forster’s assessment of Woolf as elitist, a lady, a snob, with “no great cause at heart,” a notion that is revelatory more of his own discomfort around social feminism, which Marcus characterizes, he thought of as a kind

of disease, “There were spots of it all over her work” (Forster, qtd. in Marcus, AA, 116). In addition to exposing Forster’s lack of vision in relation to Virginia Woolf’s political ideas, Marcus also questions the direction of influence in terms of her relationship with her husband, Leonard Woolf, who is often cast as the more prolific, politically active “animal.” She is convincing in suggesting that it was Virginia Woolf who was the more politically radical and relentlessly pacifist, left-leaning author. She furthermore sees Leonard’s editorial selections for *The Collected Essays* as politically motivated, because he left out essays she wrote for *The Daily Worker*, and “removed some of her ideas altogether” (117). It should also be noted, however, that any ambivalence she may have experienced around social reform was usually aimed at stereotypes of “do-gooder-ism” and was not without basis. Her cynicism, if it can be characterized as such, never stays for long, and is not surprising and even pardonable (more so I believe than the misogyny exhibited by Leonard Woolf and E.M. Forster) given the fact that her mother’s early death was connected to an illness she contracted during her efforts on behalf of the poor. Furthermore, the suffrage movement in Britain, during the time that the young Virginia Woolf is offering her services above, was a controversial and dangerous topic. Between 1910 and the outbreak of the European War, the campaign for women’s voting rights, led by the Pankhursts, was met with violent opposition both in the courts and on the streets. The potential for bloodshed in the cause to which Woolf was enthusiastically attaching her young self by offering her “humble” services was quite real. Unlike the Pankhursts and other groups of feminists, Virginia Woolf was not ever anti-male. She was a socialist feminist, wanting votes for disenfranchised working men as well as women. In any case, I read the last line of her youthful note to her tutor as a profound truth that shamefacedly

dogs our leadership and global politics today, “How melancholy it is that conversation isn’t enough!”

Janet Case was also actively involved with the emerging Women’s Cooperative Guild, lecturing on Moral Hygiene, Women’s Suffrage and Divorce Law Reform. In 1918, with Case as an early role model, Woolf chaired discussion meetings, a position she held for four years, at the Guild’s Richmond branch, organizing speakers on subjects ranging from labor, health issues, sex education, and peace. Years later, with the publication in 1931 of *Life as We Have Known It, By Cooperative Working Woomen*, a collection of letters by Guild members, edited by Margaret Llewelyn Davies, and printed by the Woolfs’ Hogarth Press, she lent her voice to their social causes by including, albeit reluctantly, an Introduction (Lee 355-4). The Introduction was based on an earlier essay she had written about her feelings of alienation surrounding a meeting she attended at the Guild in 1913. Jane Marcus does a detailed analysis of the revisions and motivations for those revisions in her essay “No More Horses” in *Art and Anger: Reading Like a Woman*, demonstrating that “Most of Virginia Woolf’s revisions were of a political nature and were meant to clarify her opinions about the relation of class to art.” The original was printed in the *Yale Review* in 1930, but heavily revised by Woolf for inclusion as an Introduction in the *Life as We Have Known It* collection. The original essay contained the now famous offending line that “It is not from the ranks of working-class women that the next great poet or novelist will be drawn,” but, as Marcus has pointed out, this version was cast in a particular tone, “narrated in the voice of an “irritable” middle-class visitor [...] annoyed by what seems to be a waste of all that working-class energy” (119). The final version did not include the controversial sentence and ultimately revealed Woolf’s

desire to form relations between the middle-class women of the Guild and the working-class ranks, to find a kind of common ground that would not treat the working class as “mistresses or customers” but more in terms of “perhaps friendship and sympathy” (“Life as We Have Known It,” CE 134-48). Marcus sees this revised essay as “another contribution to the propaganda of hope” (119) and points to the fact that Leonard Woolf ignored this version and published the earlier more caustic Yale Review essay instead as another example of his censorship and curtailment of Virginia Woolf’s political voice. This viewpoint, with which I agree, is further strengthened by my analysis of Woolf’s anti-war manifesto, *Three Guineas*, alongside Jane Harrison’s “Epilogue on War: Peace with Patriotism,” rather than alongside Leonard Woolf’s more pedantic and dogmatic, *Quack! Quack!* with which it has most recently been paired (see Chapter Four).

In another example of early role modeling for a young Virginia Woolf, Janet Case also positioned herself to the political left, as she advocated for Home Rule for Ireland and was a member of the Peace Pledge Union. In mid-life, however, she became chronically ill. She was forced to move in with her sister, Emphie, at which point she devoted herself to the countryside and wrote a regular column for the *Manchester Guardian* (notes from JC Papers).

What is of especial interest, however, in regard to this study is that Case’s methods for teaching Virginia Woolf Greek, the content of her curriculum, and the tutor’s ability to allow for the emotional along with the intellectual rewards of Greek literature, as the portrait above illustrates, were strategies and techniques developed and inspired by Case’s predecessor at Cambridge, Jane Ellen Harrison. As an educator, Janet Case’s career path has much in common with Jane Harrison, but only to a point, as Harrison

went on to become the larger light and to produce a more permanent legacy in research and classical education. Harrison to some extent may be seen as one of the first British women who were public intellectuals, inspiring Virginia Woolf as a lecturer and peace activist. Both, however, were among the first generation of educated women out of Newnham and Girton Colleges, Cambridge, and both, upon leaving (women were not officially awarded degrees until 1948) earned their livings as educators, Case as a private tutor, Harrison, initially as a public lecturer at high schools, for extension courses, and for the British Museum. In relation to Virginia Woolf's own education, Case's teaching strategies followed an unorthodox method for teaching Greek developed by Jane Harrison at Newnham College. In *The Life and Work of Jane Ellen Harrison*, classicist Anabel Robinson writes that Harrison "disdaining the heavy memorization of paradigms that was the hallmark of all traditional methods, [...] plunged her students straight into real Greek literature" (188). In 1905, a year after Virginia Woolf met Harrison at Newnham in 1904, Harrison described her "direct method," which she had been fine-tuning with her own students, who had some rudimentary knowledge of Greek, at the college since her appointment to a research position in 1898. She writes in a letter to her Cambridge colleague, classical anthropologist, Gilbert Murray:

I am trying an experiment with yr Hippolytus on a girl who has learnt Greek for one fortnight...I read a short chunk of it aloud to her—Greek & yr translation—then I just show her roughly how it fits in grammatically & she learns the Greek off by heart. After she knows it thoroughly we discuss the details but never before. She picked up the first chorus metres without any effort apparently—she is musical—she does not at present

know a single technical name, it is all by ear. To such base use do you come. JEH to GM [261] n.d.

In this example, Harrison was testing her method on a young woman with little or limited exposure to the Greek language. Generally speaking, however, she started her new students at Newnham (women who had some background in the classics before acceptance at college) not with Murray's *Hippolytus*, but with Aeschylus' *The Choephoroi* (or *The Libation Bearers*), one of the most difficult plays in the Greek language. She ultimately presented her teaching technique to the Curriculum Committee of the Classical Association with "a predictably mixed reception." Robinson points out that the method was remarkably successful with gifted students, but frequently "a dismal failure (if measured by examination success)" with the less linguistically talented. One of the less gifted students, Victoria de Bunsen, in a kind of foreshadowing of the sometimes unfair, blistering critiques by students of their teachers on ratemyprofessor.com, writes ruefully of Harrison and her controversial method:

Was she a good teacher? I am hardly the one to give an answer for she used to single me out as her failure par excellence [...] she tried the experiment of starting me straight away on the *Choephoroi*, expecting that the language would come with a rush from the sheer driving force of the subject matter. It did not" (Victoria de Bunsen, "Jane Ellen Harrison", *Newnham College Letter*, 1929, 69).

It is instructive to imagine what results a Greek lesson with Jane Harrison would have exacted if she had had the opportunity of sharing this "plunge" in person with the more highly motivated Virginia Woolf, a young mind hungry for a more formal education and

passionate about the literary aspects of Greek literature and their “lovely descriptions of maidenhood.” Robinson counts both de Bunsen and, undeservedly I believe,¹⁰ Harrison’s companion and former student, Hope Mirrlees, as examples of Harrison’s “failure [s] par excellence” when it came to this “direct method.” Although Robinson, herself a classics scholar, claims to have embraced a version of Harrison’s teaching method with remarkable success, and gestures towards Harrison’s legendary stature as a lively and wildly popular educator who “taught not to any curriculum [...] but taught on the edge of her own research” (188) in Greek art, language, and archaeology, she perhaps unwittingly leaves an overriding impression of Harrison’s teaching method as somewhat weak, ineffectual, and “rather daunting to an undergraduate” (190), a position which flies in the face of Harrison’s, by nearly all other accounts, exceptional abilities and contributions as a gifted teacher.

Ironically, in Yopie Prins’ “Otototoi: Virginia Woolf and “The Naked Cry” of Cassandra,” Janet Case is praised for starting off her students, ala Jane Harrison, with the challenging *Choephoroi*. Prins fails to credit Case’s “ardent theories” for teaching Virginia Woolf Greek as having been developed and inspired by Harrison’s strategies, placing both Case and Harrison in part of a broader trend at the turn of the century to teach “Ladies’ Greek” when women began entering universities and taking on classical study, when, in fact, Harrison did not teach “Ladies’ Greek” (i.e., without the accent), but from a method of her own making. But Prins does accurately, I believe, see Harrison as “the very embodiment of desire for Greek” for Virginia Woolf, a point first put forth decades earlier by Jane Marcus, when a connection between Harrison and Woolf was first

¹⁰ Hope Mirrlees went on to be a novelist, poet, and biographer. She was also linguistically gifted, read Greek and Latin, and spoke four languages, one of them Swahili.

suggested. In her diary, as we have seen above, Woolf portrays Case, in contrast to Harrison, as a bit of a taskmaster, who “procured a Grammar, & bade me start with the very first exercise.” Despite Woolf’s initial rebelliousness towards her tutor, in general, the diaries and letters give the impression that although Janet Case expected discipline and regular practice, Woolf wanted to live up to her standards of excellence. In another letter to Violet Dickinson in early April 1903, she records a distraction that she valiantly endures lest Miss Case observes her lack of attention to her work. She writes “A great flea jumped on to my Aeschylus as I read with Case the other day—and now bites large holes in me. I was too polite to catch him with Cases eye on me” (L Vol. 1. 72).

This is not to say, as Yopie Prins points out and as Woolf’s early portrait makes clear, that Miss Case did not leave “room for Woolf to read Greek with a more pure literary interest, for aesthetic pleasure” (168) as well, but rather to suggest that if Case left room for such readings, Woolf’s encounter with Harrison’s work blew off the roof and flung the windows and doors wide open. In other words, Virginia Woolf’s intellectual connection to Jane Harrison begins via Janet Case, because when Woolf writes in her diary “I have taken the plunge into tough Greek, and that has so much attraction for me—Heaven knows why—that I don’t want to do anything else,” it is the same “plunge,” an immersion in thinking and emotion, Jane Harrison assigned her students. And it is Harrison, whose lectures on Greek art complete with illuminated lantern slides of Greek vase paintings, showing the dramas Woolf was reading in her texts, who brought Greek culture to life for her students. Another colleague in the Classical Anthropologist circle of scholars, Francis Cornford, wrote of Harrison that “All her teaching glowed with the excitement of discovery: the gleam of an untravelled world

had never faded from the second aorist of the most eccentric verb” (qtd. in Robinson 72-3). Contradicting the credence given to Harrison’s “failure par excellence,” Victoria de Bunsen, Robinson seconds that “teaching and learning were for Harrison a joint discovery [...]” and “her teaching was as one scholar sharing something new and vital with another. She had no interest in simply imparting knowledge, and refused to teach the orthodox views. Rather, she would invite the student to join her in an adventure of learning” (190). Virginia Woolf’s connection to Jane Harrison begins through Janet Case, but ultimately expands into a full-fledged mentorship as Woolf’s awareness of Harrison’s example and her wanderings in the lore of Harrison’s published work increases. As she matures, her aesthetic and politics align and resonate with Harrison’s controversial theories, discoveries, and ideas, with each new text she writes, and it is to a Harrisonian perspective on the Classics that Virginia Woolf commits.

It is this intellectual fever and passion for learning and knowledge that Woolf identifies with in Harrison. Janet Case’s role is crucial and functional, but the portrait we have of her as an intellect and scholar rings at a different decibel for Woolf. In her anonymously published obituary notice cited earlier, Virginia Woolf writes of Case that “in her way she was a pioneer; but her way was one that kept her in the background, a counselor rather than a champion [. . .] she wanted no prominence, no publicity.” Case, who begins by being “more professional” than Miss Pater, becomes for Woolf “a noble Athena” who introduces her to Antigone, Electra, and the feminism of Clytemnestra. Case’s writing style and interests, however, are rooted in journalism and activism, and her “Greek,” according to Woolf, “was connected, naturally, seeing that she was the niece of Sir James Stansfield, the reformer, with the life, with the politics of her day” and

humanitarian activities. Case writes, for example, in “Women in the Plays of Aeschylus” (1914), that “Aeschylus gives his women brains as well as hearts. He believes in women” especially Clytemnestra, who “strips naked the unjust bias of men’s condemnation.” According to Case, Aeschylus is the Greek tragedian to whom we must turn in order to resolve the disparity we find between “the women of the Greek drama [who] seem at first sight a world away from the women of real life in 5th century Athens” and to whom we must look for an alternative perspective on feminism in her own time. She writes:

The sympathetic emphasis of Euripides, the anti-feminism of Aristophanes are evidence of the vitality of this question as a topic of controversy.

Sophocles reflects it. Aeschylus expresses it, so that the spirit of women is neither that of the epic, nor yet—far from it—that of the common voice of his own time, but has in it the freshness of a new ideal. (Women of Aeschylus, 5 from Janet Case notes Girton)

In her article, Case acknowledges her debt to Jane Harrison’s *Themis* in the margins (notes on Janet Case, Girton) and in her tiny, delicate edition of *Prometheus Bound* designed as a primer for her students, she cites Harrison’s *Prolegomena*. The challenges she encountered as a scholar, difficulties which faced women intellectuals, Case and Jane Harrison alike, emerge in sharp relief, doleful and dirge-like, when Woolf resumes her 1937 obituary notice of her beloved tutor:

The words, with their humorous appreciation both of the nymph and of the noun serve perhaps to explain why it was that she, who was both so sound a scholar and so fine and dignified a presence, never held any of those posts that might have given her an academic position and saved her from the stress of private teaching.

She enjoyed too many things—teaching a real scholar and teaching a real worldling, going in and out of pupils’ houses, noting their characters, divining their difficulties—she enjoyed them all too much and music and acting and pictures to concentrate upon one ambition.

Case becomes one of a long procession of pioneering women struggling to lead an independent intellectual existence with few or no role models to guide her in an environment still circumscribed by Victorian sensibilities and rigid social and economic constraints. Woolf’s further description of her tutor who was able to “read Greek with one hand, while she slices potatoes with the other” (Letters vol. ii) in addition to commending Case as an intellectual also points to the pressures women scholars faced to multitask and achieve the unmanageable if not the impossible—a high standard of intellectual work alongside the completion of burdensome daily domestic responsibilities.

In *Victorian Women Writers and the Classics: The Feminine of Homer* (OUP 2006), Isobel Hurst writes, quoting Vera Brittain’s *On Becoming a Writer*, which was published in 1947 that “the scales of opportunity still tend to be weighted against women, and any extra educational asset that a woman can acquire helps to redress the balance” (53). Classical training was considered as that “extra educational asset,” but it was and continued to be tied to economics and social class. Hurst writes that “a significant investment of time was required for an attempt to study those texts in the original languages. The classics were an irrelevance to working class women who came from an environment where the struggle to learn to read the Bible or English literature was difficult enough [...] Economic prosperity had allowed previously aristocratic ideals of womanhood to permeate lower down the social scale, so middle-class families were able

to display their status through the accomplishments of their daughters, to show that the women of the family passed their days with genteel leisure pursuits (modern languages, music, and art) and not domestic work; in these aspirational circles classical education was often reserved for boys” (53). Women who had literary ambitions often had to mask their desires through support for their brothers or younger siblings’ education or to simply learn in secret.

Hurst covers many of the Victorian women writers, such as George Eliot, the Brontes, Sara Coleridge, Florence Nightingale, Anne Thackeray Ritchie (Woolf’s aunt), and Jane Carlyle, many of whom Virginia Woolf would write about as a critic in essays and reviews throughout her career, as she identified with the necessity these predecessors record of having to both split the self, submerge their desires, but also combine the self, as both daughter and son in the family dynamic (62). Although Hurst sees this as complicating the notion of “separate spheres” and points to the example of Florence Nightingale, “who studied philosophy, history, and languages, including classical Greek with her father, ‘a serious private scholar’, while her sister Parthenope became her mother’s companion” (62-3), a daughter with literary aspirations in the Victorian household was forced into narrowly defined intellectual space. Hurst writes, however, that many of “the women writers who studied Latin and Greek were helped and supported by at least one male relative or friend” (60). Not so in the case of Jane Harrison, who, despite being a member of a privileged class, had to struggle daily against a fundamentalist step-mother and an absent father. Hurst also writes that Harrison’s ultimate good fortune in being admitted to Newnham “saved [her] some of the bitterness and guilt which rebellious Victorian daughters suffered” (92), a suggestion, I would

argue, which does not quite convey the breadth and depth of the struggle and battles Harrison waged as arguably one of the most “rebellious Victorian daughters.” The atmosphere of hostility, social ostracism, and public ridicule experienced by women scholars during these years makes Jane Harrison’s example and achievements exceptional and awe-inspiring, as her radical theories and discoveries on the matrifocal origins of the Olympians, many of which have now been assimilated into the mainstream discourse, left her open to excessive public scrutiny, humiliation, and personal attack.

Case and Harrison, as early role models for a young Virginia Woolf, were clearly products of the Victorian movement for women’s education, which, during the nineteenth century, was very much a part of a larger struggle for curricular and organizational change at Oxford and Cambridge Universities. Feminist reformers trying to expand job opportunities and educational opportunities for women inserted ‘the woman question’ into the debate of traditional liberal education emphasizing character development versus a “modern” approach favoring professional training and original research. The women’s colleges which began gradually but courageously against great economic odds, spartan conditions, and appalling cuisine, by the late 1890’s were accepted as a part of the university system, but with pervasive inequities and all the attendant biases of being a women’s institute for higher learning in a centuries old, male dominated academy. As Martha Vicinus writes in “An Independent Intellectual Life,” referring to the early trend of women’s colleges to focus on etiquette training and Victorian politesse, “the 1890’s saw a shift away from graciousness and bad food toward professionalization and bad food” (132). (Woolf also comments on the inedible food at Newnham in *A Room of One’s Own*, a condition that continued at the college through the 1920s, and, according to

this writer, through the summer of 2006!). Newnham and Girton Colleges, for example, struggled to be seen as power bases for learning where women scholars could pursue original research rather than training centers for good manners. In her article “Female Support Networks,” Blanche Wiesen Cook writes of the historical tendency “to ignore the crucial role played by the networks of love and support that have been the very sources of strength that enabled political women to function” (276). Harrison found just such a fellowship of support among women when she returned to Cambridge in 1898 as the first woman to hold a research fellowship, funds that were made available and meant to advertise the college as a locus for serious research. She writes nostalgically and poignantly about her attraction and need for just such a sisterhood. In *Reminiscences*, Harrison writes:

Family life never attracted me. At its best it seems to me rather narrow and selfish; at its worst a private hell[...]. On the other hand, I have a natural gift for community life [...]. If I had been rich I should have founded a learned community for women.

In her article “The Pictures of Sappho” in *Woman’s World* (April 1888), (formerly *Lady’s World*, but re-titled by Oscar Wilde when he was editor), Harrison emphasizes the importance of the collective and collegiality to a woman’s literary life, and ties these to, as Isobel Hurst points out, the same “social instincts which had allowed Sappho to flourish in ‘a woman’s world’ (275)—the reference to the magazine’s title suggests that the female readership forms a kind of intellectual community” (Hurst 91).

Similarly, in her essays and fiction, Virginia Woolf fantasizes about bonding with women as she continually tries to envision or recreate circles and networks of feminine

support. In “A Society” she creates Harrison’s “learned community for women” out of a gathering of women engaged in intellectual discourse and inquiry. Marcus traces these yearnings to her Quaker aunt Caroline Stephen, when she asks “With what personal pain and almost erotic longing for escape into a self-governing world of women does Caroline Stephen argue against the desire for freedom from family constraints” (116). Just the idea of the Quaker pacifist living alone enraged her family. The desire for community and independence from the restrictive moral codes and responsibilities of domestic life “haunt the imagination of [...] Virginia Woolf, in her dream of ‘a woman’s republic,’ her idealization of girls’ schools and women’s colleges because she never experienced this bonding, [and] her work in women’s suffrage, the Women’s Cooperative Guild, and the Women’s Service League and Library,” as well as in the female collectives outlined in *A Room of One’s Own* and *Three Guineas*, each demonstrate Woolf’s consistent striving for female-centered companionship, cooperation, and community.

It is also worth noting here that Virginia Woolf, who is often portrayed by her critics as a high maintenance, suicidal, “mad” woman, either sexually undesirable or cast aside by male suitors, was pursued by three different men (not including Lytton Strachey’s ill-conceived proposal and his callous retraction both made within the span of 24 hours) two of whom had deep ties to the Classics. Walter Headlam¹¹, who was sixteen years Virginia’s senior, was a Hellenist, Lecturer in Classics at Kings College, Cambridge and had courted her older half-sister Stella years earlier, unsuccessfully. Headlam, who was not especially well-liked by Virginia’s friends, was given a chance by

¹¹ Walter Headlam (1866-1908) was educated at Harrow and Cambridge and is noted for his exhaustive translation and notes to *The Mimes and Fragments of Herodas* originally published posthumously in 1922 and recently reprinted with an introduction by A.D. Knox who edited and expanded the edition after Headlam’s sudden death. The Mimes are comic scenarios of the more seedy characters of life and included portrayals of the bawd, the keeper of the whorehouse, and the purveyor of leather dildos.

her initially, because “He is one of the people who really cared for Father and Mother [...] and besides he is a true artist in his way, which attracts me more than anything else in people” (L Vol 1.163). She enjoyed a flirtatious relationship with him, but clearly also respected his opinion about her work. She enjoyed arguing with him, as well, and records instances of breaking up and making up to her confidant Violet Dickinson, who regarded him, according to Virginia, as a “flirt.” She writes, “I am having Walter Headlam, and I think that should be a private interview. I saw him at Cambridge last week [...] he had never got my letter and thought me fickle and cold and treacherous. But we made it up—a subtle phrase secret and ambiguous. How d’you think we made it up?” (294). She was saddened by his death a year later in 1908, but she had also begun a relationship with Walter Lamb, a young Classicist who left Trinity to become Lecturer in Classics at Newnham College, Cambridge, in 1906. (He became Secretary of the Royal Academy in 1913). Lamb was in love with Virginia and squired her around Cambridge, taking her to the opera and on romantic walks. Virginia fantasized about marriage and having his children (her comment to Janet Case revealing her inner thoughts that “Supposing next time we meet a baby leaps within in me?” was stated in relation to Walter Lamb, from whom she had just received three letters, insisting that she see him). She ultimately turned him down, preferring friendship. His sincerity and persistence, however, caused her a good deal of conflict and confusion. She wrote to Vanessa on 25 July 1911:

What to say to him, I don’t know. He wants to come here. I have written to say that I can only repeat what I said before, and that it seems not worth while to come up and hear that. However, as I said he could choose for himself, I must let him—this time.

With all my gross and inordinate vanity, my vampire like suction and (I know my faults by this time) I don't see that I can go on letting him praise me, unless I shall fall in love—and that seems as though one said unless I grow a beak. (472-3)

Her third suitor, Sydney Waterlow, had resigned from the Foreign Office, but had not yet divorced from his wife, when he proposed to her. In one of the most humane, I think, and clearly stated “Dear John” letters in literature, she writes on 11 December 1911:

I meant to have answered your letter sooner. I'm very glad you don't reproach yourself, because I'm certain that there's nothing to reproach yourself for. All you say I think I understand, and it seems to me very reasonable.

But I feel that I must on my side make clear what I didn't make clear that night. I don't think I shall ever feel for you what I must feel for the man I marry. I am very anxious that you should know this, so that you may take it into account. I feel that you have it in your power to stop thinking of me as the person you want to marry. It would be unpardonable of me if I did not do everything to save you from what must—as far as I can tell—be a great waste.

Please write and say whatever you wish to me at any time, and behave exactly as you wish. I hope we shall go on being good friends anyhow. (485-6)

These accounts reveal a rather active social life, considering the fact that during these years, she wrote weekly reviews for the TLS, was at work on a draft of her first novel, *Melymbrosia* (which would later become *The Voyage Out*), and also spent time traveling abroad. In other words, she was not alone. She was not necessarily interested in them sexually as much as she was interested in their work. She wanted real conversation, but

also feared that a marriage partner may try to dominate her intellectually. Despite her ultimate acceptance of Leonard Woolf's somewhat compromised and complicated proposal of marriage, orchestrated by Lytton Strachey, Virginia Woolf's diaries, correspondence, and work illustrate a woman whose most intimate, shared relationships were with women and with her work.

She sought out and found female role models in Janet Case and Jane Harrison, among others, but each of these examples also demonstrated the risks and consequences involved in pursuing an intellectual life as a woman. Far from the prestige and promise of future gainful employment associated with a young man's education, the path to higher learning for a woman was looked on with suspicion and a great deal of anxiety and fear that such a course of action would "unsex a woman" and lead to "the decline of the species" with "doctors convinced that time spent studying would drain maternal energy," cause "possible infertility, brain damage, or mental breakdown from overwork" (Vicinus 134). Alongside this irrational fear of education serving to masculinize women, was the equally disparaging contention and double bind that a woman's scholarly output would be overly feminized and inherently flawed by her emotional makeup. As Martha Vicinus points out, Jane Harrison was the best example of a scholar who was able to successfully integrate the intellect with the emotional aspects of being a woman, a notion supported by Harry C. Payne, who considered her scholarship "a successful synthesis of sex in intellect." Harrison's struggle for balance, however, was hard won, and her ability to wed passion with intellect, on the page in her highly attractive, readable prose and in the lecture hall, with her inspirational delivery and demeanor, were frequently attacked in the

press, and both her personal life and her work suffered a public hostility that relentlessly tried to marginalize her work and damage her reputation.

Although Ackerman suggests that because she was a woman, Harrison was allowed far greater emotive range as a scholar, it was a gift for which she was frequently and publicly disparaged. Ackerman writes that “because she was a woman I am sure (without being able to prove it) that to some extent at least her world found her behavior charming where the same behavior in a man would have been thought childish or bizarre” (71). He goes on to note her ability to “think in pictures—eidetic imagery” as “childish” and “primitive” and to categorize her natural gift at personifying inanimate objects like her books, for example, giving nicknames to her friends, or her playful fondness for bears as being somewhat “embarrassing.” He does allow that these characteristics “tempered a profoundly intellectual nature” and that “she was able to hold her own at the top of a male profession that at the time employed perhaps the most rigorous scholarly criteria of all the various divisions in the world of humane letters” (71-2). I disagree, however, with Ackerman’s characterization of these abilities in Harrison as “childish” and part of a female emotional makeup that was tolerated by male scholars. On the contrary, the overwhelming evidence of Harrison being taken to task for too much emotion in her work suggests not that she was “allowed” to be more emotional in her work than her male counterparts, but that she was targeted and marginalized *because* she was a woman. Hugh Lloyd-Jones in his contribution to *Cambridge Women: Twelve Portraits* (CUP, 1996) also implies, in one of his many back-handed compliments, that her attitude towards her work was “tolerated” because of her gender, that she had “a rare kind of imaginative flair that has been denied to many persons with a firmer grasp of Greek grammar and of

systematic thinking” (32), as if her theories and work had little to do with logic or sound reasoning. The present Cambridge Classicist, Mary Beard’s “biography” works the most strenuously of all, however, towards diminishing women and Harrison’s work. Mary Beard casts Harrison’s life and work as “mythology” itself, and investigates, or rather, as her rhetorical tone suggests throughout, gossips about, a kind of conspiratorial effort on the part of her friends and admirers to “invent” and perpetuate Jane Harrison’s “heroization” (8). As a famous and respected Classicist, Mary Beard has also been a career anti-feminist. Her dismissal of Jane Harrison is clearly part of a personal drama of denial—denial of her intellectual origins and denial of Jane Harrison’s pioneering work in her field. Beard’s project as she claims is to test the very nature and boundaries of biography as a genre, but what she ends up with, using Harrison’s body of work, as a scapegoat, is a volume of tickle and slap type prose that neither offers answers nor poses questions, other than the one the reader is left with at the end—why did she bother? Beginning with an excerpt from Gilbert Murray’s tribute to Harrison, which became the first in a series of memorial lectures given at Newnham in Harrison’s name, Beard begins her study with the following fragment: “An embarrassing eulogy to our ears, maybe.” “Embarrassing”? which part? And “maybe”? So she begins and it is as if the reader has overheard a catty remark at an annual roasting of a celebrity. I wish I could read *The Invention of Jane Harrison* as “provocative” as some of those who must have “clubbed together” to write flap copy for her have suggested, but provocation suggests stimulation or an arousal to feeling or action. It’s the kind of sensation one might experience after reading a Stein play, for example, and it’s a testament to the work if you want to throw the book across the room. But this never comes about, as she consistently undermines her

own project, sentence to sentence, paragraph to paragraph, until we are left with no feeling at all by the end of the book. The most accurate assessment, I believe, of *The Invention of Jane Harrison* comes from Elizabeth Loury, at the TLS, who called it (she meant it as a compliment) “pure biographical ouzo.” Isn’t that that Greek drink, made from the detritus of cheap grapes that numbs the inside of your mouth first, then your mind, before preventing you from forming a fist the next day? By the time I finished reading *Invention*, I not only couldn’t punch the book, I didn’t even want to, and all at the expense of whom? Jane Harrison’s work and scholarly reputation. By not writing a biography of Jane Harrison, Mary Beard denies her place in history. Jane Harrison becomes a joke, a figure of fun. Her genius is denied. Mary Beard enjoys the power and status Jane Harrison never had. I thought killing off one’s most powerful predecessors was only for Harold Bloom’s analysis of male writers. Yet, Mary Beard has yet to fill Jane Harrison’s shoes. Her book is, frankly, a disgrace as well as an attack on women’s history.

Shelley Arlen’s most recent article “For Love of an Idea: Jane Ellen Harrison, heretic and humanist” is one of the rare efforts among critics to examine the misogyny, motivation, and exceedingly emotional attacks on Harrison’s life and work from her contemporaries. Arlen writes:

Emerging as the leader of an intellectual school known as the Cambridge Ritualists, Harrison was a precursor of Structuralism and one of the founders of Myth-Ritual criticism, yet she is rarely credited with the work she created, inspired, and promoted. (165)

Arlen attributes this oversight to the inter-disciplinary nature of her scholarship and the controversial theories and discoveries she developed which posited the existence of matrifocal Greek cultures behind the myths. The excessive ridicule, rumors, and hostility she endured, however, were the result not only of her pioneering work, but also “her personal life and her views on feminism, religion, and political pacifism” (166). Although she was a popular lecturer and many of her contemporaries and male and female colleagues championed her work, Arlen demonstrates that “the outraged ones succeeded to a considerable extent in discrediting her” perpetuating a legacy of their own we continue to encounter today in many of her most recent biographers and “anti-biographers,” as in the case of the powerful and admired figure of Mary Beard, Professor of Classics at Newnham College, Cambridge.

Arlen’s essay shows that William Ridgeway and Montague Rhodes James, two of Harrison’s most virulent contemporary opponents, were also highly motivated to discredit her and examines their responses as “evidence that many of her harshest critics were not the disinterested seekers after truth they claimed to be, but rather had ulterior motives and private agendas in their rejection of her ideas” (167). William Ridgeway, Disney Professor of Archaeology and Brereton Reader in Classics at Caius College, Cambridge, was described in both *Cambridge Retrospect* and *Cambridge Review* in the following way:

capable of warm friendship and of unhesitating animosity. Nobody would call him unprejudiced, and he could provoke the mildest and most tranquil people.

He was always deep in politics, national, ecclesiastical, logic, and academic, restlessly fitting every new problem into his large framework of loves

and hates (T.R. Glover *Cam. Retrospect*, (CUP, 1943), 76 and D.S. R[obertson], *Cam. Rev.* 15 October 1926).

Although Ridgeway's theories on the origins of tragedy were far less valid than those of the Ritualists, his attacks upon their work, especially upon Jane Harrison's arguments, were well known and played out in the pages of the *Cambridge Review*, where during Spring 1911 it was noted that "[h]e brought some of his heavy guns to bear upon Miss Harrison" (*News and Notes*, *Cambridge Review* 16 Feb 1911; 23 Feb 1911; 9 March 1911). He had a reputation of being dramatic, dare we say it, emotional, as he ridiculed his adversaries and promoted his own ideas. As Arlen notes, "Ridgeway's animosity toward Harrison had political grounds as well: he had little tolerance for women in the academy, and he despised pacifists" (178). He was active in the National League for Opposing Women's Suffrage and a vocal opponent of women's education and their admission into university, and on 22 November 1920 wrote to *The Times*:

We do strongly object to any injury being done to the higher education of men by giving women a voice in the control of the men's curricula and examinations. [...] If women had full membership, there would be a tendency on their part to modify the curricula and examinations for the benefit of their own sex.

He firmly believed that women's education would adversely affect society as a whole, be a distraction to men at college, and be a harmful waste upon their nerves and psychological makeup.

Ridgeway was a belligerent adversary against peace activism, especially the U.D.C. (Union for Democratic Control) and viewed Newnham College, as a hotbed of

“Pro-German agitation.” In a letter to the *Cambridge Review* 14 February 1917, he wrote:

Another member of the Newnham staff also notoriously connected with the U.D.C. [...] who had recently made a speech at a public gathering at Newnham [...] glorifying the Hon. Bertrand Russell, who had recently been convicted and punished for seeking to stop [military] recruiting.

(224)

In this example, Ridgeway was referring to Jane Harrison who had spoken out on behalf of Bertrand Russell’s reinstatement in a bid for academic freedom, but as Arlen points out, Ridgeway was “incorrect on two counts. Harrison was never a U.D.C. member, and she did not press her pacifistic views in wartime” upon her students, unlike Ridgeway who denied any student who was a U.D.C. member access to his classes. Ridgeway, exhaustively and emotionally, attacked Harrison’s political views as immoral and her feminist theories on Greek ritual as “debauching young minds wholesale” (qtd. in Richard William Pfaff’s *Montague Rhodes James* (London: Scholar Press, 1980) 256).

Her other most vocal opponent was Montague Rhodes James, Provost of King’s College, Cambridge and its former Vice-Chancellor, who was a religious conservative, outspoken against women receiving degrees at Cambridge, and a known misogynist. In *Montague Rhodes James*, his biographer Richard William Pfaff quotes a poem about M.R. James written by a colleague who portrayed him as “James the Greater/ Who’s orthodox and woman hater” (62, 220). Although he claimed little interest in politics, he felt so offended by Harrison’s article in the prestigious *Classical Review* in 1917 “The Head of John the Baptist,” which applied her theory of the Year-Spirit to Salome’s dance

in a performance she had seen in Oscar Wilde's *Salome* in which Maud Allen played Salome. James wrote to a friend that he felt so offended he "instantly took a pen and dipped it in gall and flayed her" (qtd. in Pfaff, 255), and distorted her views in the essay as an outright attack on Christianity. His attack, which also parodied her rhetorical style and emotional scholarship, was supported by William Ridgeway, as the controversy played out in the pages of both *The Classical Review* and the *Cambridge Review*. As Arlen notes, however, "Harrison remained unmoved. She thanked James for his correction of minor inaccuracies which, she reminded readers 'nowise invalidate, or even affect, my argument'" and gesturing towards future generations of scholars wrote on 31 March 1917 in *The Classical Review*:

To me the keenest joys of science [...] are always perilous, and I hope to die commending these perilous joys to a generation better equipped, and I trust more valorous, than my own

Arlen does well to illustrate the power of the male academic establishment to "make or break a reputation," as she also places Harrison's critical reception within an "androcentric positivism" that claimed scholarly investigations should be conducted with dispassion and disinterest, which were not considered qualities of the female mind. Harrison eventually felt forced to abandon Greek scholarship, left Cambridge and London for Paris, and turned her sights to the study of Russian literature and language. Mary Beard continues in their misogynist vein.

Despite the attacks, Harrison read as a success in Virginia Woolf's eyes, becoming a role model of a professional woman and public intellectual unafraid to engage the emotional to the intellect to find her own voice. Furthermore, although Woolf

continues to be placed among the “*dramatis personae*” of Bloomsbury, she more accurately belongs within a community of independent women scholars with Harrison at its heart-center, a circle vibrating with a Harrison-inflected understanding of the Classics, marked by intellectual vigor, defiance, and love.

Chapter Three.

Ancient Ritual and the Modernist Text, Virginia Woolf's Novels

“[I]n the old ritual dance the individual was nothing, the choral band, the group, everything.”

“[a] heroic *society* is almost a contradiction in terms.”

--Jane Ellen Harrison, *Ancient Art and Ritual* (1913)

In the wake of the evitable catastrophe of the European War and the skepticism, anarchy, and disillusionment, in general, of the early decades of the 20th century, modernist writers turned to the narratives of mythology to find a literary method and structure to support their alienation. In 1923, in his review “Ulysses, Order, and Myth,” T.S. Eliot wrote of James Joyce:

In using the myth, in manipulating a continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity, Mr. Joyce is pursuing a method which others must pursue after him [...] they will not be imitators, any more than the scientist who uses the discoveries of an Einstein in pursuing his own, independent, further investigations. It is simply a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving a shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history [...] Instead of narrative method, we may now use the mythical method. It is, I seriously believe, a step toward making the modern world possible in art. (177-178)

Modernist writers sought to resist the aesthetics of the recent Victorian past and find a way to tolerate the registers of pleasure and pain in the unknowable present. In poetry, Yeats turned to the cult structures of the proto-Celtic hero Cuchulainn, Eliot to a Christianized Tiresius in *The Waste Land*, and Pound ultimately to the rhythms and songs of the East. In the novel, James Joyce pursued “the dying God” in the figure of Stephen Daedalus, D.H. Lawrence, “the brotherhood of the Olympians” in *Sons and Lovers*, and E.M. Forster, “the devouring female” in *A Room with a View*. In contrast to her male contemporaries, Virginia Woolf read myth and ritual structures, especially in Greek drama, through the feminist lens of Jane Harrison’s work. Unlike her male contemporaries who favored more popular versions of primitive religion and folkstory, Woolf’s quest brought her to Jane Harrison’s work to find an aesthetic which privileged balance and favored the female principle, not to dominate, but to regenerate, to resurrect collectivity over individuality, but outside what Harrison once called the “most dire and deadly of all tyrannies, an oligarchy of old men” (A and O 28-29). Although Yeats, Eliot, Joyce, Forster, and Lawrence each read and borrowed from Jane Harrison, Woolf relied most on the legendary female scholar’s interpretation of Greek myth, and is, in terms of her art, politics, and philosophy, Jane Harrison’s modernist daughter and literary heir.

In the same review, Eliot discusses myth and the meaning of “classical” in relation to contemporary fiction, and the desire to find strategies and techniques to satisfy or help navigate post- European War devastation. He writes:

One can be “classical,” in a sense, by turning away from nineteenth of the material which lies at hand and selecting only mummified stuff from a museum. [...] Or one can be classical in tendency by doing the best one

can with the material at hand. [...] And in this material I include the emotions and feelings of the writer himself, which, for that writer, are simply material which he must accept—not virtues to be enlarged or vices to be diminished. (176-7)

Although his analogy is meant to be dismissive of the old “mummified stuff from a museum,” it oddly captures the artifacts, the living materials of ancient cultures that Jane Harrison was after to inject “new life” into the classics. But Eliot, like Virginia Woolf in her essay on contemporary fiction that appeared the same year, “Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown,” share a similar modernist conviction, one I would argue that reasserts Jane Harrison’s earlier work and “emotional” prose style, that fiction should be the product of “the emotions and feelings of the writer” and from “the material at hand.” Woolf’s essay is a plea to contemporary writers “not to preach doctrines, sing songs, or celebrate the glories of the British empire,” but to explore characters, “to steep oneself in her atmosphere,” (101) and look at Mrs. Brown on her way to London, “as she is,” for as Woolf insists “all novels begin with an old lady in the corner opposite” (102) and need to turn away from the “artificial” and literary conventions of the Edwardians toward the emotional, toward “reality.” As she argues “Mrs. Brown is eternal, Mrs. Brown is human nature [...] it is the novelists who get in and out—there she sits and not one of the Edwardian writers has so much as looked at her” but have instead “made tools and established conventions which do their business,” which for contemporary writers, whom she refers to as Georgians, (such as Eliot, Joyce, Forster, and Lawrence), are instruments of “ruin” and “tools” of “death” (110). As she reiterates later in “Modern Fiction,” “For the moderns [...] the point of interest lies very likely in the dark places of psychology”

(MF 152) and that “the ‘proper stuff of fiction’ does not exist; everything is the proper stuff of fiction, every feeling, every thought; every quality of brain and spirit is drawn upon; no perception comes amiss” (MF 154).

When traditional norms had broken down after the war and “all human relations [...] shifted” (Woolf MBMB 96), Woolf’s male contemporaries reached for a reaffirmation of masculine hierarchies in mythic structures, and as Eliot writes, looked towards myth as “a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history” (177-8). The prescription for the “futility and anarchy” of the times was to be found in a mythic re-interpretation and revisioning of classical literature, but one organized around the masculinist principle of “controlling,” “ordering.” In *The Waste Land*, for example, as Jane Marcus notes, Eliot’s “mythic passages express pity for the suffering male” and the poet “appears to attribute loss of spirituality, order, communal purity, and joy to the influence of women, the masses, and Jews” (LP 37). For his “classicism,” Eliot also, perhaps not surprisingly, relies heavily on versions of Celtic and Continental folkstory popularized by *The Golden Bough* and Jessie Weston’s *From Ritual to Romance*. These sources would be familiar to contemporary audiences but are late arrivals, have nothing to do with the Greek sources favored by Woolf and James Joyce, and are basically perversions of earlier narratives that Harrison traced back through ancient Greek art, literature, and rituals of the Great Mother. Joyce’s *Ulysses*, for example, is a re-reading of *The Odyssey* but also along masculinist lines, focusing on the “heroic deeds” of the young god as separate from the mother, in other words, along Apollonian, or Olympian, structures. Virginia Woolf regarded Joyce as “egotistical” which is for her the worst form

of torture and a quality she loathed in her “tyrant father—the exacting, the violent, the histrionic, the demonstrative, the self-centered, the self-pitying, the deaf, the appealing, the alternately loved and hated father” that was “like being shut up in the same cage with a wild beast” and about whom she concludes that “nothing is so much to be dreaded as egotism” (MB).

Eliot further argued, curiously leaving Jane Harrison’s work out of his conclusions, that “psychology [...] ethnology and *The Golden Bough* have concurred to make possible what was impossible even a few years ago,” referring to the scientific, archaeological, and anthropological advances that were made and fostered the modernist embrace of myth. As Jane Marcus writes in “*The Years as Gotterdammerung, Greek Play, and Domestic Novel*,” “the “modern” is as indebted to anthropology as the Victorian is to history” (LP 36). But Eliot’s list of “scientific advancement” in “psychology,” “ethnology and *The Golden Bough*,” is limited, overemphasizes the influence of *The Golden Bough*, and ignores an understanding of these “scientific advances” as more of a gradual progression made up of a number of scholars, (most prominently and conspicuously, Jane Harrison), writers, and field workers responsible for this shift toward the possibilities of primitive religions and ancient rituals for the modernist text. With the exception of his comment that “Few books are more fascinating than those of Miss Harrison, Mr. Cornford and Mr. Cooke, when they burrow in the origins of Greek myths and rites” (Selected Essays, 1951, 62), he forgets to credit Harrison or the core members of the Cambridge Ritualists (of which Frazer was its weakest contributor), even though his graduate thesis “The Interpretation of Primitive Ritual,” in the King’s College

archives, relies heavily on Harrison's theories and on the translations and interpretations of the Cambridge Ritualists, in general.

Harrison was a self-described "disciple of Nietzsche" (T viii), who built on Nietzsche's work on the origins of Greek tragedy in *The Birth of Tragedy* (1871), but by way of scientific method and with the benefit of the most recent archaeological evidence. While Nietzsche, as Harrison notes, uncovered the Dionysian principles behind 19th century idealizations and rationalizations of the Olympian, or Appollonian, system, his views were marked by masculine deities exclusively. Harrison thought it surprising that, for his study of Dionysus, for any study of Dionysus, for that matter, he discussed neither Euripides' *The Bacchae* nor Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, instead favoring Aeschylus' *Prometheus*, whom Nietzsche considered the embodiment of a Dionysian hero. In contrast, Harrison's work pursued Dionysian ritual structures through the primary source materials of both *The Bacchae* and *The Oresteia*, because they were filled with Dionysian rites, and were an obvious place to start. She soon discovered that goddess figures, priestesses, and female archetypes were vital to these early rites. Buffeted further by archaeological evidence and her expertise in analyzing vase fragments, she discovered, too, that even Dionysus was a later manifestation born or merged with earlier matrifocal cults. Ritual for Harrison ultimately becomes the bridge connecting religion and art. Her examination and portraits of the goddesses and priestesses in Greek religion and Greek theatre, specifically Greek tragedy, have creative meaning and importance to modernist writers, but are no where more fully realized than in Virginia Woolf's work.

Harrisonian Themis figures, for example, pervade Woolf's novels. Harrison writes "behind Gaia the Mother, and above even Zeus the Father, stands always the figure

of Themis” (T xxi-xxii). It is important to point out here that when we discuss Themis, or any of the goddess figures in Harrison’s mythography, as Earth Mother, this is not the journalistic, sentimentalized, New Age, Earth Mother, conjured during the spiritual supermarket of the 1970’s and 1980’s, as the eternal nurturer or the caftan-wearing, comfy, sympathizer with all that ails you. Far from it, with etymological roots to the English word “Doom,” as we have seen in Chapter One, Themis, as both “behind” the Mother and “above” the Father, is a female manifestation of *both* Mother and Father. She presides over the assembly, was originally worshipped in the plural, as themistes, and embodies public opinion, public judgment, and public Law. As Carpentier writes, “She is “Doom,” but in the public sense, the judgment of the group, that constructs the laws of civilization, indeed, civilization, itself” (175).

The Novels

In the following sections, I consider the novels by Virginia Woolf, which have received none or very little attention in relation to Jane Harrison’s work. Although Mrs. Ramsey, in Woolf’s masterpiece *To the Lighthouse*, is perhaps the most obvious Themis figure in Woolf’s work, this novel has received good attention in relation to Jane Harrison in essays by Martha C. Carpentier and Jane Marcus. Harrison’s influence on *Between the Acts*, Woolf’s last novel, has also been discussed by critics in the last five years. I look forward to giving more in-depth readings of these works, along with *The Voyage Out*, *Orlando*, and *The Years*, in a book-length project that would allow for the space that these discussions would require. Here, I explore Woolf’s second novel, *Night and Day* and the works that I read as her Aeschylean trilogy and her social protest against war and violence, *Jacob’s Room*, *Mrs. Dalloway*, and *The Waves*, as well as her two

Greek notebooks, *The Agamemnon Notebook* and *The Libation Bearers Notebook*, which she wrote in 1922 and 1907, respectively.

Themis Figures in *Night and Day*

In Woolf's second novel, *Night and Day*, ritual dictates the unfolding of the book's narrative structure. Indeed, the writing of the novel itself was completed within a ritual of one half hour's worth of writing a day, during an enforced "rest cure" while recovering from an earlier illness. Beginning the novel in late 1914 or early 1915, she wrote the book to prove her own sanity, but she fretted over the prospect "of finishing a book on this method—I write one sentence—the clock strikes—Leonard appears with a glass of milk" (L to Lytton Strachey Feb. 1916). The "method," however, worked and she finished late in 1918, and published October 1919 under her half-brother George Duckworth's imprint.

Night and Day has been discussed as Woolf's "traditional" discourse on marriage and frequently read as a comparatively unsuccessful update of the marriage plot from novels of the 19th century which critics have often claimed it is trying to imitate. Missing the Harrisonian markers, E. M. Forster dismissed the novel as "an exercise in classical realism, and contains all that has characterized English fiction, for good and evil, during the last two hundred years: faith in personal relations, recourse to humorous side-shows, geographical exactitude, insistence on petty social differences" (Forster, *Virginia Woolf*). It has been read as Shakespearean comedy (Rachel Wetzsteon) and Mozartian opera (J Marcus), but never entirely (F.N.) in terms of the Harrisonian ritual structures the novel invokes. *Night and Day* is a ritual of courtship, but not one performed along traditional mores or conventions of the 19th century novel, as it is essentially a marriage plot about a

woman who does not want to get married, but who wants instead to be alone with her work. Before she breaks off her engagement with the poet and government clerk, William Rodney, she does so summoning ritualistic power and courage after she has “fixed her eyes upon a lightning-splintered ash-tree, and, almost as if she were reading a writing fixed to the trunk.” She then begins her declaration: “She did not want to marry any one. She wanted to go away by herself, preferably to some bleak northern moor, and there study mathematics and the science of astronomy” (ND 242). And by the novel’s end, the “marriage” she agrees to with the solicitor and would-be writer, Ralph Denham, is one based on an unspoken agreement to allow each other the space and time to work, as “books were to be written, and since books must be written in rooms [...] they sketched a habitation for themselves” (507), this after Katharine has gazed longingly and lovingly up at the feminist, political activist, Mary Datchett’s window from the sidewalk where “[t]hey stood for some moments, looking at the illuminated blinds, an expression to them both of something impersonal and serene in the spirit of the woman within, working out her plans far into the night” (506). The tacit agreement to allow each other the space to work and think exists alongside an underlying ambiguity, anxiety, and yearning for intimacy, a kind of Harrisonian holopsychosis, as Katharine tries to convey that she wishes “Ralph to understand that she followed the track of his thought.” Even though “she felt him trying to piece together in a laborious and elementary fashion fragments of belief, unsoldered and separate, lacking the unity of phrases fashioned by the old believers,” she realizes that “together they groped in this difficult region, where the unfinished, the unfulfilled, the unwritten, the unreturned, came together in their ghostly way and wore the semblance of the complete and the satisfactory” (506). The novel ends

with the uncertain couple “in their ghostly way” riding the bus, as Katharine continues to wonder “What woman did he see?” before they dismount and part upon the threshold of a “door half open” and “loosed their hands” (508). This is not a description of requited love, nor has the unfolding of the plot thus far been a quest for love in the conventional sense of “marriage plots” that have come before, but is instead, an examination of the process of a woman’s decision to marry with no clear-cut goal that has been reached. Indeed, she misses Denham completely, in a micro-version of Clarissa Dalloway and Septimus Smith in *Mrs. Dalloway* who never lock eyes, as she walks on The Strand repeating over and over in her head, a chant, “some lines which had stuck to her memory: “it’s life that matters, nothing but life—the process of discovery—the everlasting and perpetual process, not the discovery itself at all”(130), lines that invoke Bergson’s *duree*, as critics have pointed out, but also, a concept shared by Jane Harrison, who wrote about their shared credo, later published by Virginia Woolf in Harrison’s memoir *Reminiscences of a Student’s Life*: *nox est perpetua dormienda*. The novel, in terms of form, then, is in a sense a meta-marriage plot, a privileging of process over outcome, an examination as it were of the ribs of a ship, rather than the relation-ship, itself.

The novel is further distinguished from Victorian predecessors, because it is dominated by the central figure of Themis as embodied in Katharine Hilbery, a character, despite its many associations with Virginia Woolf, herself, she based on her sister, Vanessa, arguably one of the more Themis-like, Great Mother, figures in Virginia’s own life. *Night and Day* is dedicated to Vanessa, and Virginia wrote to Janet Case to “try thinking of Katharine as Vanessa, not me” (L 1916).

Read through a Harrisonian lens, the reader suddenly sees once again circles upon circles of women, where the sacred dance of the group generates a collective energy that subsumes the development of the individual and is presided over by Themis. I would also argue that *Night and Day* is not a *bildungsroman*, or novel of education, in the least, as neither Katharine nor Denham's characters crystallize into a defined new stage of development. Rather the transformations that do take place are for the good of the group, for the development and growth of the tribe, the society, of civilization, itself.

Katharine as a Themis figure (there are others, Mrs. Hilbery, who "made her house a meeting place for her own relations, to whom she would lament the passing of the great days of the nineteenth century [...] and weaved round them romances which had generally no likeness to the truth" (37-8), the suffragist Sally Seal, that "odd little priestess of humanity [...] who thought of nothing but her vision" (170), Mary Datchett, who relishes the single life, despite its consequences, whose pace quickens on her way to work, "so as to get her typewriter to take its place in competition with the rest" (80), and who seeks "to draw Katharine into the community" at her office over tea despite Katharine's "unlikeness to the rest of them" (86-8), and Joan Denham, Ralph's older sister, who gives her brother "ancient sympathy" (35) and presides over the women's circles of their own home, the drawing-room where Denham "heard low voices [...] saw women's figures, [...] and could even smell the scent of the cedar log which flamed in the grate" (28)), is not so much a character as an omnipresent feminine force that does not impose on the masculine, but seeks, not without difficulty, to integrate him into the circle. In the opening scene, Katharine is "mistress of a situation," presiding before the assembled guests over the ritual of afternoon tea, when the door is flung open and we are

introduced to the Young God, Ralph Denham, who “muttered something, which was indeed all that was required of him” (10). For Harrison, rituals reveal insight into the values and beliefs of the group, “what a people does, social custom, convention, collective action” (T vii). Throughout the novel, Woolf deploys character and plot through ritual as Katharine Hilbery directs the choreography and is established as Themis from the outset. As such, she is responsible for completing the circle, maintaining harmony, and bringing the Young God into the center of her community. Woolf writes:

Katharine stirred her tea, and seemed to speculate, so Denham thought, upon the duty of filling somebody else’s cup, but she was really wondering how she was going to keep this strange young man in harmony with the rest. She observed that he was compressing his teacup, so that there was danger lest the thin china might cave inwards [...] anyhow, he would not be easily combined with the rest. (11)

In Harrison’s mythos, the individual has but a slight conscious awareness of himself as distinct from his group. In *Themis*, Harrison writes that to disconnect from the thiasos, or worshippers, is death for the god. Olympians are “the last product of rationalism, of individualistic thinking” and “cut off from the very source of their life and being, the emotion of the thiasos, they desiccate and die” (48), whereas in matrifocal systems, the “mystery-god” is an expression of emotion and of group unity, “the impulse of life through all things, perennial, indivisible” (476). The Olympians are a celebration and privileging of rationality, of the individual as distinct from the group, unlike the more primitive “mystery-god,” “Year-Daimon,” (Harrison also calls this the Eniautos-Daimon, or “recurring vital day”), the Young God, such as Dionysus, who “arises out of those

instincts, emotions, desires which attend and express life” and are projections “rather of the group than of individual consciousness” (xii-xiii). In other words, “Broadly speaking, these Olympians represent that tendency in thought which is towards reflection, differentiation, clearness, while the Eniautos-Daimon represents that other tendency in religion towards emotion, union, indivisibility” (T xxi). In an Olympian construct, the ritual dance is overpowered by an individual or masculine god, but here the emphasis privileges circles, community, and the collective as presided over by a female principle.

Furthermore, every character in the book has an awareness of Katharine as a Themis figure. William Rodney, Katharine’s fiancée, describes Katharine as “the mistress of her little section of the world; but more than that, she was the person of all others who seemed to him the arbitress of life, the woman whose judgment was naturally right and steady, as his had never been in spite of all his culture” (240). He cannot imagine her entering a room, a sacred space, “without a sense of the flowing of robes, of the flowering of blossoms, of the purple waves of the sea, of all things that are lovely and mutable on the surface but still and passionate in their heart” (240). Katharine is clearly a goddess, but not an Olympian Athena or a Judeo-Christian Eve, she is Themis, “arbitress of life,” who presides over each and every communal gathering, in the drawing room at tea, but also, over the past “her time was spent in imagination with the dead” and future, as she, along with her mother, Mrs. Hilbery, who thinks in circles (she can write only about 15 minutes at a stretch), is in charge of her grandfather’s legacy, the relics of the past and his reputation in the future. She also presides over literature and art, at the reading of Rodney’s essay in Mary Datchett’s rooms, over the family gathering of her aunts, and ultimately over tea at Denham’s family home, where she is at first disgusted at

their unrefined tastes, but where she eventually increases her understanding of Ralph when she assures him “I thought you more wonderful than ever” (380), because she believes now that she has found, not someone to love in a physical sense, but someone she can talk to about her work. As Themis, Katharine desires to share and encourage the flow of creativity from Denham, as she also embodies public opinion, power, and social capital, as an “arbitress” and protectress of civilization.

Curiously, and another distinctive Harrisonian aspect of this unusual book, as Ralph Denham and Katharine Hilbery’s relationship unfolds, neither robs the other of power. Separate spheres are united into a larger whole, represented by their ritual encounter in Kew Gardens.

Soon a look of the deepest satisfaction filled them, though, for a moment, he did not move. He watched a lady who came rapidly, and yet with a trace of hesitation, down the broad grass-walk towards him. She did not see him. Distance lent her figure an indescribably height, and romance seemed to surround her from the floating of a purple veil which the light air filled and curved from her shoulders.

“Here she comes, like a ship in full sail,” he said to himself, half remembering some line from a play or poem where the heroine bore down thus with feathers flying and airs saluting her. The greenery and the high presences of the trees surrounded her as if they stood forth at her coming. He rose, and she saw him; her little exclamation proved that she was glad to find him, and then that she blamed herself for being late. (329)

She marvels at the beauty of their surroundings “the lake, the broad green space, the vista of trees, with the ruffled gold of the Thames in the distance and the Ducal castle standing in the meadows” and she pays “tribute” to the Ducal lion’s tail with her “incredulous laughter.” The idea of a distinctive, individualistic character, however, is lost. Katharine commands salutation, but she also merges with her surroundings, as the two characters are romanced by one another through their surroundings, in a seductive ritual that leaves the reader desiring a physical closeness, which never completely materializes. Ralph finally secures an attachment to Katharine by novel’s end, one that satisfies his ego, as it enhances his position, but not one that alters her status or catapults her into paroxysms of joy at having finally found true love.

That moment of physical closeness and emotional intensity is reserved for another creatively significant Themis figure, Mary Datchett, the feminist, New Woman, in whom Katharine recognizes an aspect of her self. In a scene charged with primal eroticism and connection, Katharine loses her sense of alienation and loneliness when she meets with Mary. At the reading of Rodney’s paper, Katharine feels so close to Mary that she has no need to even speak to her verbally. As Denham is left “as if he were tearing handfuls of grass up by the roots from the carpet” (57), Katharine is joined by Mary at a seat upon the windowsill, from which vantage point, “the two young women could thus survey the whole party” (57). “She was conscious of Mary’s body beside her, but, at the same time, the consciousness of being both of them women made it unnecessary to speak to her” (57). But they do speak, about professions for women, a topic which feels alien to Katharine “as if feeling her way among the phantoms of an unknown world” (58). She yearns to have a voice, to be able to assert herself knowledgably and politically. Her

conversation with Mary is intimate, but also based on respect and illustrates an interaction from which they each learn and profit, as they become progressively closer. “Katharine drew back the curtain in order perhaps, to conceal the momentary flush of pleasure which is caused by coming perceptibly nearer to another person” as they decide upon calling each other by their first names and gaze together at the moon and clouds and rooftops of London. Their “pleasure” is “destroyed” by a joke made by a man in the room behind them.

Furthermore, the novel is filled with Greek references from the Greek dictionary Katharine hides her math studies in to the Aeschylean bird imagery, which reappears throughout several of Woolf’s novels. In *Night and Day*, Denham has a trained rook “a wretched bird, with half its feathers out and one leg lamed by a cat” (27), Mary Datchett doodle-draws a picture of suffragist committee head Mr. Clacton as a “bald-headed cock-sparrow” (166). Katharine’s circle of “My aunts!” are filled with large-bird imagery as they lead an “incarnadined existence” with their “high-pitched, cooing note[s]” and function as attendant themistes to the Young God as they reveal the cultural and social beliefs of the tribe.

**Virginia Woolf’s Aeschylean Trilogy:
*Jacob’s Room, Mrs. Dalloway, and The Waves***

The Dionysian mystery God, or the Eniautos-Daimon and Year-Spirit, the Harrisonian Young God, is an idea Woolf returns to more vigorously and with greater political implications, in the three novels I read as Virginia Woolf’s Aeschylean trilogy, *Jacob’s Room, Mrs. Dalloway, and The Waves*, in the figures of Jacob, Septimus Smith, and Percival. Each of these “heroes” are not heroes at all, but more accurately Dionysian

Young Gods, or Year-Spirits, tragically trapped in an Olympian (or Apollonian, Nietzschean, hero-worshipping world). Both Aeschylus' *Oresteia* and Virginia Woolf's three novels work as their social protests against war and violence. Aeschylus' *The Agamemnon*, *The Libation Bearers* (or *The Choephoroi*), and *The Furies* (or *The Eumenides*) chronicle a moment of cataclysmic change, the moment of transition away from the collective towards the individual, away from matrifocal blood-law to the patriarchal Olympians and Greek democracy, but not without a significant caveat, which separates him from his contemporaries, that we need our communities of women from the past, we need our matrifocal history. As we follow the cycle of violence from *The Agamemnon* through *The Furies*, the *klea andron*, or heroic deeds of men, are countered by the complexity of Clytemnestra's motivations in killing Agamemnon in the first place, among other women-centered constructs he deploys throughout the *Oresteia*. It is no accident that Virginia Woolf's "sympathies [...] lie almost entirely with Clytemnestra" and that she can write in "On Not Knowing Greek," that "Clytemnestra is no unmitigated villainess [...] she says—'there is a strange power in motherhood.' It is no murderess, violent and unredeemed, whom Orestes kills within the house" (26-7), because she is reading the Greeks through the feminist lens of both Jane Harrison and her tutor, Janet Case, whose own "sympathies" defended Clytemnestra and many of Aeschylus' women as feminist-activist role models for her own contemporary times. For Woolf, Clytemnestra is not only avenging the death of her daughter, Iphigenia, sacrificed by Agamemnon in order to speed his way to war, she is also behaving as she must, for the good of the family, the community, and civilization, itself, as she has known it. As if the murder of their daughter were not enough to condemn him, Agamemnon also returns

home with his mistress, the nightingale-prophetess, Cassandra, notably another slave woman, and enters Clytemnestra's sacred space, the home, walking upon the carpets in a transgressive act equal to the pollution of her "temple". Aeschylus also makes the crucial gesture in *The Furies* to integrate women's history into his current society. He not only names the entire play after this terrifying group of women, he satisfies their desires for justice and peace by the end of the play. It is significant that only Athena can look upon *The Furies* (*The Eumenides*, formerly known as *The Erinyes*, or *The Kindly Ones*), the monster-goddess women from the ancient cults. Orestes, under the aegis of Apollo, is helpless and unable to face them, unable to face even himself. But Aeschylus shrewdly does not allow "the noble Athena" to decide everyone's fate, for to do so would appease only *The Furies*, and would be an implicit validation of the old ways over the new. Nor does he give the task to the Olympian Apollo, Orestes' mentor and protector. Instead, he has Athena set up the *aereopagus*, an impartial committee, that ultimately allows all parties to come away from the table at least partially satisfied in their dispute, and which also plays into the hands of the "new ways" he was both theatrically and politically responsible to affirm to his contemporary Greek audience.

Woolf's three novels also document a profound shift in ritual systems, but at a different point in human history, poised on the brink of catastrophic change. Like Aeschylus, Woolf's trilogy seeks to act as a corrective to a world that has gone too far in the direction of *klea andron*, but as a woman writing sunk deep inside the bell jar of a full-blown patriarchal world, I read her project as far more radical and brave, as she is operating in the face of greater opposition and in the crosshairs of much higher stakes. For Woolf to argue, as I am suggesting she is, for a more decisive return to a Harrisonian

understanding of the world as a collective, group energy that seeks to integrate and strengthen the individual in a formulary that has no end, because it is and must be regenerative, to position the Young God, our “recurring vital day,” in decades of death, mechanized warfare, cataclysmic loss of life, displacement, fragmentation, disease, and levels of unspeakable grief and horror that had exceeded thus far any other era in human history, was a profoundly radical and politically important act, as well as, a bold attack on the patriarchal establishment and its cultural control of our lives. She is in essence writing herself both into and against Greek literary tradition, as the female Aeschylus. With these three novels, Woolf, invoking Jane Harrison’s work and politics, is saying look at what hell, what violence, and bloodshed, this hero-worshipping “society” has wrought. Woolf’s “trilogy” not only diagnoses the problem, but seeks answers along Harrisonian lines, in a bid to insist that we reconsider how we integrate the individual into the community and learn how to balance conflict through conversation, dialogue, and cooperation. As Carpentier writes, both Harrison and Woolf’s “feminist visions reassert the transcendence of the female principle. Both associated merger and sensibility with femaleness, with the mother. Both associated individualism and rationalism with maleness, with the father. Both sought in their work to resurrect the primacy of mother over father, of mysticism over rationalism, of merger over separation, of collectivity over individuality” (173), statements with which I agree with the exception of “the primacy of mother over father” which does not quite accurately convey Harrison’s idea of matrifocal community versus patriarchy, a distinction she labors to make clear in *Themis*, and one I am arguing to which Virginia Woolf singularly adheres.

Indeed, in 1922, at the age of forty, the same year that *Jacob's Room* was published, Woolf, like Harrison at nearly the same age, was re-evaluating her approach to her Greek studies. Roughly around [date L 2. 196] she decides to begin The Agamemnon Notebook, Woolf's own crib translation of Aeschylus' play. Harrison was about to embark on a research fellowship at Newnham while in her forties, and Woolf, when she starts her Agamemnon Notebook, was determined to "read Greek now steadily" in a daily ritual because "at forty I am beginning to learn the mechanism of my own brain" (L 2. 208). To make the Notebook, which has now been put on microfilm by the New York Public's Berg Collection (Berg Reel 13) and which is also available on "Major Authors on CD-ROM: Virginia Woolf" (Primary Source Media, 1977), but which was at one time catalogued merely as "the little black book," she took shears to an 1831 edition of the play in Greek and used Verrall's 1904 translation, which had both the Greek and English to guide her own transcriptions by hand. Verrall's is the same edition she used to make the earlier Libation Bearers Notebook (discussed below) and the same edition used by Harrison who was Verrall's former student. In her essay, "Otototoi: Virginia Woolf and "The Naked Cry" of Cassandra," Yopie Prins does a thorough textual analysis and reading of Woolf's Agamemnon Notebook in terms of its creating an "interlingual space that allows us to read in multiple directions" not merely horizontally or in a linear motion between text and crib translation. Prins usefully characterizes Woolf's Notebook as "a theatrical spectacle in its own right" (165) and her "unauthorized glossolalia of Ladies' Greek" (173), assessments with which I agree, although I object to the overuse of the diminutive, dismissive term "Ladies' Greek" when discussing either Woolf or Harrison's Greek aptitude and ability, as, in my view, their understanding of the meaning behind the

great Greek tragedians rival the most renowned philologists of their day. Indeed, Jane Marcus suggests in a note in *Languages of Patriarchy* that Woolf may have contributed to the classicist, Walter Headlam's translation of *Agamemnon of Aeschylus with Verse Translation, Introduction, and Notes* whom she was dating at the time before his sudden death, and, according to Prins, he "may have intended to dedicate his translation to her" (173). Furthermore, Harrison, who was somewhat of a linguistic genius, to say the least, although insecure about her philological knowledge of Greek, did not study "Ladies' Greek" with Verrall and her other instructors while at Newnham College, and used her own innovative methods to teach from, as well, taking her off the beaten path, pedagogically-speaking, from Ladies' Greek. Prins also reads *The Agamemnon Notebook* as part of a tradition that "reflects back on a long history of translating Greek tragedy for the page and not for the stage" (165), which, in my view, connects it to an old-guard classical tradition, rather than the cutting edge, controversial, and radical approach practiced by Jane Harrison and conveyed to Woolf via Janet Case. I see *The Agamemnon Notebook* (and her *Libation Bearers Notebook*, discussed below) as an artifact embodying the vitality of an autodidactic female scholar's mind. The lively dance upon the page back and forth, between English and Greek, above and below, inside and outside the margins, marked by her changes and notations, false starts, and revisions seem to me more connected to a "performance" by Jane Harrison—to her colorful, charismatic, innovative, and vigorous approach to the Classics than to the classical tradition Harrison challenged that would prefer to "parse a sentence" rather than understand the meaning behind it.

One of the most intriguing sections of *The Agamemnon Notebook*, as Yopie Prins points out, is the Cassandra scene translated by Virginia Woolf as “the naked cry” in her essay “On Not Knowing Greek.” The “barbaric” speech of the kidnapped prophetess, Cassandra, is linked to the myth of the sisters, Procne and Philomela and the plaintive cry of the nightingale, which as Harrison notes “is as old as Homer” (MM: *The Blue Jane* lxxxv), but which “as would be expected in a Homeric myth, [has] nothing whatever to do with Athens” (lxxxvi). Athenians took Procne and Philomela as ancestors, yet they were purely poetic constructions, sprung from earlier nature myths that were “complicated by contamination and accretion” (lxxxiv), but they in later versions were sisters, one of whom was raped by her brother-in-law, Tereus, and whose tongue was cut out so she could not tell her story. She is able to sing, however, of her violation, when she is transformed in later versions as a nightingale and in earlier versions as a swallow. In her commentary in the guidebook *Mythology and Monuments* Harrison writes:

We are accustomed, burdened as we are with Ovidian association, to think of Philomela as the nightingale. Such was not the version of Apollodorus, nor, so far as I know, of any earlier Greek writer. According to Apollodorus, Procne became the nightingale and Philomela the swallow. It was Philomela who had her tongue cut out, a tale that would never have been told of the nightingale, but which fitted well with the short restless chirp of the swallow. To speak a barbarian tongue was “to mutter like a swallow” [...] (lxxxix)

This is why Clytemnestra refers to Cassandra’s strange speech in her “naked cry” as a barbarian speaking in a “swallow’s twitter.” The nightingale association comes through

the Chorus' mention of Procne's son, Itys or Itylus, from an earlier version. Tereus, the rapist, who as punishment is also turned into a bird, the hoopoe, is a later addition, although he, unlike Procne and Philomela, did have an historical basis, although a "somewhat ironical ritual" (lxxxiv). He was a leader driven to suicide due to the contempt of his citizens, who "made him a grave, and offered him yearly sacrifice using pebbles instead of barley" (lxxxiv). In any case, Tereus has been wrongly attributed to Aeschylus and is not earlier than Sophocles, although he does bear "one genuine Aeschylean mention of the Tereus story, and here the nightingale is "hawk-pursued"" (xc). Sophocles, however, played with the truth in making Tereus, a colorful bird, royal, martial in appearance who comes in the winter to pursue the swallow, when in fact, according to Harrison, "he shows his total ignorance of the hoopoe's character" because he is not a colorful bird, nor royal in bearing and "instead of pursuing the swallow, "a passing swallow frightens him" (xc). For Woolf, however, nightingales and swallows have profound resonance as prophets, as illustrations of the paradoxes and boundaries of speech, and of the ceaseless struggle for the truth to be heard, all associations she has drawn from the many versions of the tales she has encountered in her study of Greek and Greek plays, and which we see in the disembodied radio voice prophesying war in *Jacob's Room*, in the "Greek voices" that haunt the shell-shocked, Septimus Smith, in *Mrs. Dalloway*, and in the "phrasemakers," the six choral voices in *The Waves*.

Jacob's Room* and *The Agamemnon

Jacob's Room, the first in the "trilogy," is Woolf's critique and condemnation of the individual and family structure as instrument of a militarized, war-hero-worshipping

state, and shares many parallels with Aeschylus' project in *The Agamemnon*. Jacob is the anti-hero, Eniautos Daimon, who is undermined by an epic wave of violence. It is one that is of Olympic proportions grown upon Olympian values about to swallow him up and doom humanity, oddly, but in a masterstroke on Virginia Woolf's part, in my view, from outside the edges of the book. Like Orestes in *The Agamemnon*, Jacob is disconnected, undrawn as a character, absent, out of sync, and a pawn in the larger machine of war, violence, and death. It is as if Woolf flips Aeschylus' structure, however, by having Jacob's aimless, ordinary life play out center stage on the page in the theater of life while the violence and bloodshed, the theater of war, happens off-text. In *The Agamemnon*, we know very little of Orestes who has been sent away for protection by his mother, Clytemnestra, who kills his murderer father, Agamemnon, and Agamemnon's kidnapped mistress, Cassandra, in the central action of the play. In Woolf's anti-war novel, she refuses to write directly about the war, but focuses instead on the gift of Jacob's ordinary life. His violent and abrupt death in *The European War*, is a fact we understand only through the final scene in the book when his mother is left with the task of cleaning out her son's life-less, but ghost-filled room: "Listless is the air in an empty room, just swelling the curtain; the flowers in the jar shift. One fibre in the wicker arm-chair creaks, though no one sits there" (176), a passage Woolf foreshadows in her first description of Jacob's room when he initially goes up to Cambridge. His friend, Bonamy, is dumbstruck by the fact that Jacob has left everything as it was and seems disgusted that he could not see the consequences that were in store for him by going off to war. He asks of the air and of the things in the room, "What did he expect? Did he think he would come back?" His mother, who should be able to feel deeply the loss of her

son, but who, as a Themis-figure cut off from the Young God, and trapped as well in an Olympian construct, is only able to burst into the room, ready to also do her duty, her domestic duty—to clean. She has unwittingly already performed her duty to the state—sacrificed a son she hardly knew, and now is left holding his empty pair of shoes, as she asks Bonamy “What am I to do with these?” (JR 176).

Throughout the novel, Jacob seems to operate within Harrison’s holophrasis or a desire for intimacy that takes place as Woolf writes of Greek “on the far side of language” (ONKG 31), as he yearns to connect to Themis, to his mother, to women, in general, but without success, as he is out of step with his time, a motif Woolf consistently disrupts with the blending, foreshadowing, and reversals of narrative time throughout the book. His name, Jacob Flanders, associates him from the beginning with both his introspection and position as a Young God and with his imminent death on the battlefield. Jacob is the third biblical patriarch, who holds onto his brother Esau’s heel on the way out of his mother’s womb, and whose name is associated with “struggle with God.” In the Bible, of the two boys, Jacob is the more reserved and studious one, and his Ladder in the Book of Genesis represents the struggle between Heaven and Earth as angels tread up and down this bridge between two worlds. Flanders, echoing Flanders Fields, the burial ground in Belgium for dead soldiers, joins the other place names throughout the novel with military resonations, Scarborough, bombed by the German navy in a series of raids and the site of the first civilian casualties of the European War, Gibraltar, site of a British Naval base, the 20th Hussars, a British cavalry regiment, Marathon, the first major battle between the Greeks and Persians, and Salamis, in 480 B.C.E. the site of a navy battle between same.

In the opening scene Jacob is lost on the beach, separated from his mother, as both she and his brother, Archer, search for him. In addition to disconnection and dislocation, he is immediately tied to death even as a young boy. He tries to compose himself in the face of his circumstances when he discovers a skull on the beach “perhaps a cow’s skull, a skull, perhaps with the teeth in it” which sets him to “sobbing, but absent-mindedly” while he runs “farther and farther away” holding the skull in his arms” (JR 20). The skull later shape-shifts into a sheep’s skull, the jaw of which Jacob retains, but a symbol of death his widowed mother, Betty Flanders, insists he drop. Jacob refuses. At night, the sheep’s jaw lays at his feet while Jacob is “fast asleep, profoundly unconscious.” Outside his “child’s bucket was half-full of rainwater; and the opal-shelled crab slowly circled round the bottom, trying with its weakly legs to climb the steep side; trying again and falling back, and trying again and again” (JR 14) suggesting his entrapment and the absurdity of his life as he is held prisoner and used for corrupt purposes by a value system from which he is estranged.

As a boy, Jacob enjoys nature studies. He likes animals and birds, the natural sciences, but he is not an exceptional academic student, often falls asleep over unfinished books, and has never read a Shakespearean play all the way through (JR 47). Indeed, it is Shakespeare and not the Greeks who is knocked overboard during the erotically charged nude bathing scene between him and his schoolmate, Timmy Durant, as they boat together off the Cornish coast, while Jacob fantasizes about the Classical landscape of Italy and Greece. Jacob is unworldly and not intellectually curious, a fact that is drawn into sharp relief, when Woolf juxtaposes him beside her portrait of a woman student, “the feminist,” Julia Hedge, self-consciously trying to study at the British Museum. While she

waits for her books, she searches in vain for a woman's name among the great male writers and thinkers carved in stone around the massive dome "this great mind [...] hoarded beyond the power of any single mind to possess it" (108) above her head. The lives of great men stretched out across the "sheeted stone" of the dome bring forward the unfinished essay in Jacob's room "Does History consist of the Biographies of Great Men?" a question Virginia Woolf returns to more seriously in her tribute to the scholarly achievements in the life of a great woman, Jane Harrison, in *A Room of One's Own* and an issue that certainly preoccupied Woolf throughout her own life as the daughter of Leslie Stephen, the editor of Britain's Dictionary of National Biography, documenting the lives of Britain's "great men." (F.N.) In *Jacob's Room*, in the British Museum, Julia Hedge works passionately on a project that is all wrong, "if you let women work as men work, they'll die off much quicker. They'll become extinct" (106), in another false start I was both pained by and familiar with (having also awkwardly and self-consciously tried to focus on studying at the Bodleian Library at Oxford as a working class, financial aid kid), but which in Woolf's work, here, is a moment sprung from the lack of Julia Hedge's university education and centuries of women's oppression. While "she applied herself to her gigantic efforts," Hedge is jealous and overly aware of an unconcerned Jacob who is not only comfortable and welcome in his academic surroundings, but has all the permission in the world to be bored, for "what had he got to do except copy out poetry?" (106). Jacob reads on, but not for very long, because "the Phaedrus is very difficult." "Jacob's mind continues alone, onwards, into the darkness," as he, too, is a cog in the wheel of a larger machine, until he becomes distracted by the common, everyday arguments of the street, instead. He ultimately ends up in a friend's rooms where "they

were saying something that was far, far too intimate to be said outright” (110), when he walks in.

There is a sense of entitlement to Jacob’s life that has political resonance for Woolf, but also an ordinariness and banality that her entire novel laments losing, because for all his flaws, distinguished, but nondescript, he was alive, vital, a Jacob “who sat astride a chair and ate dates from a long box, [who] burst out laughing” (JR 44). He is stubborn and uncommunicative with his mother, but, Captain Barfoot, one of Betty Flanders regular suitors, “who was lame and wanted two fingers on the left hand, having served his country” (25), counts Jacob as his favorite, though he is not sure why, and Bonamy, his friend, thinks Jacob stupid and ridiculous, and yet ““there is something—something”—he sighed, for he was fonder of Jacob than of any one in the world” (140).

The difficulty of reaching Jacob is what is simultaneously appealing and lamentable about his character, and speaks to a fundamental human desire, evoked, fostered, and encouraged in matrifocal society, to connect. Woolf discusses the great gulf that exists between one human being and another, moored as she, too, was, and we as a culture and world today continue to suffer with, in a society that privileged competition to absurd extremes. She characterizes this gap as that “something which can never be conveyed to a second person save by Jacob himself,” a quality that “is always impelling one to hum vibrating, like the hawk moth, at the mouth of the cavern of mystery, endowing Jacob Flanders with all sorts of qualities he had not at all [...] Yet over him we hang vibrating” (73). He was a boy and then a young man, representative of an entire generation, communities of young men, about whom Woolf writes with the most bitter irony and overt condemnation of war: They were “simple young men, these, who

would—but there is no need to think of them grown old.” She then moves on to mundane details of how others in his circle of Cambridge friends were “eating sweets; here they boxed” [...] as they gathered together in common rooms with “legs, perhaps, over the arms of chairs; smoking; sprawling over tables, writing while their heads went round in a circle as the pen moved” (JR 43).

In *Jacob's Room*, unlike in her previous novels, the circles of men and circles of women do not cross or overlap, a motif of sterility she carries through in different ways in the remainder of the “trilogy” in *Mrs. Dalloway* and *The Waves*. Jacob is not only disconnected with the mother, he is unable to be integrated into any women’s circle. He is awkward in social settings, uncomfortably reticent, forever “passing the wrong plate.” Clara Durant, whom he “honours the most” has the ankles of a stag. He is unashamed of his misogyny, compares women to dogs, and is vehemently against having women at college, because they are distracting: “why allow women to take part in it? [...] No one would think of bringing a dog into church [...] a dog destroys the service completely. So do these women” and besides “they’re as ugly as sin” (33). Florinda, his prostitute, “entirely at the beck and call of life” (79), has the instincts of an animal, but is “brainless.” Nevertheless, “Jacob was restless when she left him” (79), and meets with her again, because “after all it was none of her fault. But the thought saddened him” and he protests a headache when they are meant to have sex, for “in spite of defending indecency, Jacob doubted whether he liked it in the raw” (82). According to Jacob, the feeling of disconnection is profound and “the problem is insoluble” (82), leading him to conclude that “It’s not catastrophes, murders, deaths, diseases, that age and kill us; it’s the way people look and laugh, and run up the steps of omnibuses” (82), in other words

the way we interact on a daily basis, the lack of communication between the sexes, between generations, between one human being and another.

He is the Young God unattended by his thiasos, frustrated, angry, and unmoved by the women in his circles, which leads methodically, rationalistically, inevitably to his Olympian proscribed death. The procession of women who hover near him, but with whom he never connects continues mid-novel when he leaves Fanny Elmer for his tour of Greece, with his guidebook (the Blue Jane?) in his pocket. In Greece, he is pestered by the circles of tourist women he finds there “Damn these women—damn these women!” (151). He bemoans their existence and their behavior, “without any trace of bitterness, but rather with sadness and disappointment that what might have been should never be” as he presses his guidebook to his hip, moves away from them, and “looked rather furtively at the goddess on the left-hand side holding the roof on her head” (151). Woolf does not leave Jacob’s own behavior, however, without comment, as she interjects the parenthetical “(This violent disillusionment is generally to be expected in young men in the prime of life, sound of wind and limb, who will soon become fathers of families and directors of banks)” (151), thus perpetuating the cycle of family dominance, power, and capital in terms of egotism. The only woman he becomes frustratingly, and fleetingly attracted to is Sandra Wentworth Williams, who is married, completely wrong for him, and unavailable.

Alongside or perhaps above this anxiety, the most intimate moments of bonding occur, whenever members of the same gender gather together, and this moment of self-actualization and fulfillment, according to Woolf, crystallizes into one of humanity’s greatest losses and the sacrifice of our ability to communicate holophrastically, on any

level of profound intimacy. When the group of male students breaks up, Jacob is left in his Trinity rooms with Simeon, who murmurs something partially inaudible about Julian the Apostate. Julian the Apostate was called “The Philosopher,” and was, not coincidentally, the last pagan Roman Emperor to reject Christianity. It is midnight and Woolf gives a ghostly Themis figure a walk-on, but dozing part, when she writes that around that hour “there sometimes rises, like a veiled figure suddenly woken, a heavy wind; and this now flapping through Trinity lifted unseen leaves and blurred everything” as Simeon murmurs the words “Julian the Apostate,” “[s]o, if the veiled lady stepped through the Courts of Trinity, she now drowsed once more, all her draperies about her, her head against a pillar” (JR 46), when Simeon says of this figure, “Somehow it seems to matter.”:

The voice was even lower that answered him. The sharp tap of a pipe on the mantelpiece cancelled the words. And perhaps Jacob only said “hum,” or said nothing at all. True, the words were inaudible. It was the intimacy, a sort of spiritual suppleness when mind prints upon mind indelibly. [...Jacob] swayed a little. He appeared extraordinarily happy, as if his pleasure would brim and spill down the sides if Simeon spoke.

Simeon said nothing. Jacob remained standing. But intimacy—the room was full of it, still, deep, like a pool. Without need of movement or speech it rose softly and washed over everything, mollifying, kindling, and coating the mind with the luster of pearl, so that if you talk of a light, of Cambridge burning, it’s not languages only. It’s Julian the Apostate. (JR 46)

But Jacob does move. He murmurs good-bye and leaves the room as his footsteps tap out a chant-like rhythm across the quadrangle as he returns back to his rooms. They “echoed with magisterial authority: “The young man—the young man—the young man—” (JR 46).

Jacob is also “the silent young man” (59), but in contrast to his brother growing up, he was “the handful,” as well, introspective, reserved, like his biblical namesake, but stubborn and often remote from his surroundings. At one point, he gets excited about a censorship issue raised by the garrulous Bonamy concerning an edition by Wycherly that excised the “indecent phrases” (70), but as he writes letters to the various magazines “he knew that no one would ever print them; and sure enough back they came from the *Fortnightly*, the *Contemporary*, the *Nineteenth Century*.” He tosses them into a black wooden box, like a Harrisonian Pandora’s box, because that is the place “where he kept his mother’s letters,” and “The lid shut upon the truth” (JR 70). The truth, the regenerative powers of Themis, is embodied in his mother’s letters, but they are trapped inside the box. Harrison read the Pandora myth as containing not the ills and destruction of all the world, but the secrets of recreation. Jacob keeps the box on his desk, but the lid is shut tight. Without Themis, Dionysus has no means of access to the wine and fruits of life, to a full-on connection to women and to men. When Jacob, as a boy, is asked to choose a going-away gift from his Latin tutor, Mr. Floyd, he chooses a volume of Byron’s complete works, a gift which associates him appropriately with both the historical Byron and the fictional Childe Harold outlaw. Byron’s anti-hero is an outcast, a brooding, refugee, unable to connect to his generation as he surveys the devastation of the Napoleonic wars. He is forever questing, but never arriving, a figure which privileges the

process, the struggle, rather than the destination, the attainment of the vision. Like Byron, himself, perhaps, but unlike the Byronic hero of his work, Jacob's process, his eternal quest as a Year-Spirit, is sickeningly truncated by war.

His mother, Betty Flanders, as a Themis figure also confined in a hero-worshipping world, doubts herself, her instincts, her "mother wit," despite the fact that she consistently reveals these qualities to the reader. As she pulls the two boys along she takes note of her natural surroundings:

[...]looking with uneasy emotion at the earth displayed so luridly, with sudden sparks of light from greenhouses in gardens, with a sort of yellow and black mutability, against this blazing sunset, this astonishing agitation and vitality of colour, which stirred Betty Flanders and made her think of responsibility and danger. (JR 11)

She is deeply connected to her world, but also fearful and suspicious of it and not completely in control of it. She asks her son, Archer, what she had asked him to remember, but the boy cannot recall what it was. "Well, I don't either," said Betty, humorously and simply" leading Woolf to comment:

Who shall deny that this blankness of mind, when combined with profusion, mother wit, old wives' tales, haphazard ways, moments of astonishing daring, humour, and sentimentality—who shall deny that in these respects every woman is nicer than any man?

Well, Betty Flanders, to begin with. (11)

Betty Flanders possesses all of these qualities, but not majestically or authoritatively, unless she is presiding over the sacred space of her home or connecting with another

woman. She questions herself, her abilities, and her perceptions. She is also, notably, not completely fond of Jacob, who is out of step with his mother at nearly every turn. She is “unreasonably irritated by [his] clumsiness in the house” (71), a factor Woolf attributes to one’s inability to perceive the intractable impermanence of the human condition. She writes:

It seems then that men and women are equally at fault. It seems that a profound, impartial, and absolutely just opinion of our fellow-creatures is utterly unknown. Either we are men, or we are women. Either we are cold, or we are sentimental. Either we are young, or growing old. In any case, life is but a procession of shadows, and God knows why it is that we embrace them so eagerly, and see them depart with such anguish, being shadows. And why, if this and much more than this is true, why are we yet surprised in the window corner by a sudden vision that the young man in the chair is of all things in the world the most real, the most solid, the best known to us—why indeed? For the moment after we know nothing about him.

Such is the manner of our seeing. Such the conditions of our love. (72)

In addition to this shadowy procession of people that the old woman, Julia Eliot in the final pages of the book sees “passing tragically to destruction” (168) in her mind’s eye after a riderless horse passes her by, the novel is filled with the ghostly figures of women as priestesses struggling to keep the Young God alive in a world which has no place for them or him. She lulls her children to sleep with fairy stories and images of mother birds feeding her children in their nest before checking on her younger son being cared for by an attendant themistes, Rebecca. Woolf writes, “The two women murmured over the

spirit-lamp, plotting the eternal conspiracy of hush and clean bottles while the wind raged and gave a sudden wrench at the cheap fastenings,” an image of priestess figures tending to the ritual preservation of life she repeats, chant-like, five lines down, when she writes, “Rebecca called her ma’m, though they were conspirators plotting the eternal conspiracy of hush and clean bottles” (JR 13).

Mrs. Jarvis is another ghostly woman, at forty-five years of age, a walker between the worlds, as she restlessly paces the moors at night:

Mrs. Jarvis was just the sort of woman to lose her faith upon the moors—to confound her God with the universal that is—but she did not lose her faith, did not leave her husband, never read her poem through, and went on walking the moors, looking at the moon behind the elm trees and feeling as she sat on the grass high above Scarborough. . . . [...] “If only some one could give me. . . if I could give some one . . .” But she does not know what she wants to give, nor who could give it her. (27)

Later on in the novel Mrs. Jarvis reappears to comment on Jacob’s letters and on death as she encourages Betty Flanders to come walk with her on the moor. The two women bond over a discussion of death as “they had climbed the dark hill and reached the Roman camp”: “The rampart rose at their feet—the smooth circle surrounding the camp or grave. How many needles Betty Flanders had lost there! And her garnet brooch” (132). It is an ordinary garnet brooch that Jacob gave her, Betty Flanders’ sacrifice to the Earth—ordinary things and the life of her son. Mrs. Jarvis tells her that she does not pity the dead for “they are at rest” and “we spend our days doing foolish unnecessary things without

knowing why” (131). But Mrs. Flanders murmurs and is uncertain as she turns over the turf with her toe:

Did the bones stir, or the rusty swords? Was Mrs. Flander’s twopenny-halfpenny brooch for ever part of the rich accumulation? And if all the ghosts flocked thick and rubbed shoulders with Mrs. Flanders in the circle, would she not have seemed perfectly in her place [...]. (132)

Their voices float above them, as “The moonlight destroyed nothing. The moor accepted everything” (134). But Betty Flanders, feels suddenly that it is “foolish to vex the moor with questions—what? And why?” (134), and so, out of step with her world and lost to her son, she is forced to change the subject.

Mrs. Dalloway and The Libation Bearers

The Young God tragically imprisoned inside an Olympian *weltanschauung* is fully realized in the second novel of the “trilogy,” the post-war, *Mrs. Dalloway*. But here the consequences of his position are manifested not in the aimless life in-text and subsequent death off-text on the battlefield of our “hero” as in *Jacob’s Room*, but in his psychological ruin and the abrupt shock, the anathema of the Young God’s suicide. And how extraordinary, I think, “What a lark! What a plunge!” that Woolf attached her 1907 notebook with her crib translation of Aeschylus’ *The Libation Bearers* to early draft pages (from November 9, 1922 to August 2, 1923) of *Mrs. Dalloway*, as it seems to me the problem in *The Libation Bearers* is the same problem in *Mrs. Dalloway*. What do we do now with all of these dead bodies? It is as if the texts of both *The Libation Bearers*

Notebook and *Mrs. Dalloway* perform a kind of ritual, regardless of intention, with the manuscript asking the translation, how do I perform this task? How do I write this novel? And how does the content of that novel unfold, tap out the rhythm, bang the drum, pour out the libations over the sacrifice? And who, after all, is being sacrificed and why?

In *The Libation Bearers*, Electra has been asked by Clytemnestra to perform a ritual over the grave of her father, Agamemnon. Clytemnestra has, according to the ancient law of her soul, killed Agamemnon in a bid to set right her family and her home. She has been plagued by a nightmare, in which her son, Orestes, while suckling at her breast is turned into a serpent that viciously bites her. She asks Electra to perform the ritual to appease the gods, but when Electra goes to the graveside of her father, she has no idea how to begin. In order to perform the ritual, she must ask The Libation Bearers, who are essentially slave women of a lower class brought to Argos as spoils of The Trojan War. Just as he will name his third play, *The Furies*, after a group of monster goddesses responsible for maintaining balance in the world, he names the second drama after a group of slave women (this is Greek democracy in action) responsible for the legacy and reputation of the dead. In each case these groups of women function as the Greek chorus, “the undifferentiated voices who sing like birds in the pauses in the wind” (ONKG), whose prophecies, although sometimes accurate and sometimes flawed, guide the actions of the drama and the fabric of the characters’ lives. For them, “life beats on” but “we nurse our lives with tears” (LB I. 31-32), after “they led us here as slaves” (LB I. 76). The high-born, Electra, must ask the servants for assistance in executing the ritual (just as Clarissa Dalloway asks her servants to help her perform the ritual of her party), when she says “I’ll need your help with this,/What to say when I pour the cup of sorrow?” (LB I.

85-6). And so too Woolf seems to be asking Aeschylus, but an Aeschylus she has read and understood through Jane Harrison, how do I write this book?

In January 2007 I went with my Greek translator, Dr. Elias Theodoracopoulos, into the Berg Collection of The New York Public Library to examine Woolf's Libation Bearers Notebook and to compare Woolf's translation of the text to the A.W. Verrall edition she was using as her guide. The Verrall edition is the same text used by Jane Harrison as an undergraduate at Newnham College, the same edition from which she taught as an instructor there, and the same edition she used as her guide for The Agamemnon Notebook (see above) which she began in 1922, the same year she attached this early 1907 Libation Bearers Notebook to the manuscript of *Mrs. Dalloway*. Dr. Theodoracopoulos and I also compared her version to more contemporary translations today, specifically ones by R.D. Lattimore and Robert Fagles. While she is clearly following along, using Verrall as a guide, her translations are not, in our estimation, taken down as dictation from Janet Case, but rather a product that relies on a great deal of refreshing accident and lively improvisation as she writes in her Notebook about Greek that "in the obscurity of the language lies its dramatic merit" (LB Notebook 4).

When Orestes is about to unwind the robes shrouded about the bodies of his mother and Aegisthus on the funeral bier, just as Clytemnestra had exposed Agamemnon and Cassandra to the chorus at the altar in The Agamemnon, he shouts "Behold the double tyranny of our land! They killed my father, stormed my fathers' house," (LB l. 964-5), it is a passage which a young Virginia Woolf translates as "Look now upon the twofold tyranny of the land murderer of my father, waster of my house." According to Dr. Theodoracopoulos, when Woolf is translating, she is looking more at the context of

the scenes, at the literariness rather than at a literal translation. Earlier, when Orestes is about to kill his mother, Woolf writes:

Here, Clytemnestra comes out, asks for a manslaying axe; “this evil has now reached such a point” one can only kill or be killed. Does she mean the whole tragedy in the house, in which case she is a passive instrument or her own private act, in which she is active and responsible?

“There is a cryptic chorus while the murder axe (is?) being done off or on? The stage. When Orestes comes on bearing an olive bough and speaks over the bodies of Ae. & Cly. (Notes from LB Notebook, Berg)

In her youthful Notebook, Woolf is grappling with the same complex questions she faces in the Mrs. Dalloway manuscript she has attached to it from the vantage point of a woman writing in her early forties in between the devastation wrought by two world wars. Who is responsible for the violence? And where do we draw the lines and set the levels of our moral compass in terms of responsibility? And how do we disentangle ourselves from this accursed net of violence and bloodshed?

In Aeschylus’ body of work, but in his trilogy especially, (and one could argue in Virginia Woolf’s novels, as well) there are no clear protagonists and antagonists. The men and women in Aeschylus are faced with impossible choices, as he seems to be suggesting that we, as a society, must develop systems to help us cope with these decisions. The *Oresteia*, as a whole, seeks a more civilized, humane path, instead of a cycle of perpetual blood, of violence breeding more violence. Aeschylus and Virginia Woolf ask the same questions, yearn for the same social systems that will replace an outdated rule of law with a new way of life, but it is an Aeschylus to whom Woolf has

been introduced by Janet Case, an Aeschylus intimately engaged with by way of the feminism and pacifism of Jane Harrison.

In *Mrs. Dalloway*, we open in a post-war world, a world that “has raised its whip” and asks a second time, in a sadistic portent of yet another conflagration, “where will it descend?” (MD 14). Clarissa Dalloway, as a Themis figure, embodies both mother and sister, Clytemnestra and Electra, as well, as her character runs parallel alongside, but never locks eyes with the returned war hero, the shell-shocked and psychologically maimed, Eniautos-Daimon, Septimus Smith, as they each try to navigate the remnants of their lives in a single day after somehow having survived that “little shindy of schoolboys with gunpowder” (MD 94). In contrast, in *The Libation Bearers*, Electra places her footsteps inside the footprints of her returned brother, Orestes, in one of the most exquisite scenes of recognition in all of literature. When she comes across a lock of Orestes’ hair that he has given as an offering to his dead father, Electra now must teach the Chorus, as she immediately identifies the lock as her brother’s:

Electra: Look at the texture, just like—

Leader: Whose? I want to know.

Electra: Like mine, identical,/ can’t you see?

Leader: Orestes...he brought a gift/in secret?

Electra: It’s *his*—I can see his curls.

[...]

Look, tracks./ A new sign to tell us more./ Footmarks ... pairs of them, like mine./

Two outlines, two prints, his own, and there, a fellow traveller’s.

Putting her foot into Orestes’ print.

The heel, the curve of the arch/
Like twins.

*While Orestes emerges from behind the grave, she follows
cautiously in his steps until they come together.*

Step by step, my step in his ...

We meet—

(LB ll. 174-210)

Electra and Orestes unite in their grief, but also run parallel to each other in the sense that Electra's emotions over the death of her father, her outrage at her mother are unwieldy and ineffectually extreme, while Orestes is left with weighing his circumstances more carefully. He is not so quick to commit matricide, but is compelled to by Apollo and by the Chorus, who misinform him about the true nature of the consequences of his actions. In "On Not Knowing Greek," Woolf looks at the nature of the women characters in Greek plays in particular, gives more dimension to the impossibility of their position, as well. She writes of Electra that although "her words in crisis are, as a matter of fact, bare; mere cries of despair, joy, hate" [...] it is not so easy to decide what it is that gives these cries of Electra in her anguish their power to cut and wound and excite" (ONKG 26). It is, Woolf argues, at least in part, that we know her as she knows herself "blunted and debased by the horror of her position, an unwed girl made to witness her mother's vileness and denounce it in loud, almost vulgar, clamour to the world at large" (ONKG 26). The Greeks, for Woolf, gave us the emotions, the complete, "original human being" (27), and to the Greek audience sitting on the hillside in the sunlight, the artist had to make sure that "every sentence had to explode on striking the ear, however slowly and

beautifully the words might then descend, and however enigmatic might their final purport be” (31), a fact not lost on Woolf, especially as she embodies the Greek choral voices she creates in the third part of her trilogy, *The Waves*, as we will see below.

Here, in *Mrs. Dalloway*, Septimus, like Orestes, is plagued by doubt and guilt and shame at being asked, forced to kill. Septimus is haunted by Greek voices, Greek words mediated through the wind and birdsong, mysteriously, ghostlike, because, as Virginia Woolf frequently reminds the readers of her essays, we, none of us, know what Greek really sounds like. Septimus’ role and function as the Young God comes to him in a Greek choral chant, from the birds, as he espies his dead friend, Evans, a hidden shape behind the veil of his perception:

Change the world. No one kills from hatred. Make it known (he wrote it down).
He waited. He listened. A sparrow perched on the railing opposite chirped
Septimus, Septimus, four or five times over and went on, drawing its notes out, to
sing freshly and piercingly in Greek words how there is no crime and, joined by
another sparrow, they sang in voices prolonged and piercing in Greek words, from
trees in the meadow of life beyond the river where the dead walk, how there is no
death. (24)

The ghost of Evans continues to haunt him, his conscience, “Evans was speaking. The dead were with him,” just as the servant calls out in the corridors of the House of Argos, “the dead are killing the living,” as Orestes reluctantly takes his cog-like position in the cycle of violence and kills his mother, Clytemnestra, and her lover. Septimus, as a Young God positioned upon the wrong circle, takes on the mantle of his role uneasily, with great torment and resentment, with none of the emotions he would have experienced had he

been connected and integrated into a Dionysian matrifocal wheel of life. Here, the “unseen bade him”:

Look [...] Septimus, lately taken from life to death, the Lord who had come to renew society, who lay like a coverlet, a snow blanket smitten only by the sun, for ever unwasted, suffering for ever, the scapegoat, the eternal sufferer, but he did not want it, he moaned, putting from him with a wave of his hand that eternal suffering, that eternal loneliness. (25)

Septimus struggles to maintain the boundaries of his identity, to hold onto himself by repeating, or rather muttering, the chant “Communication is health; communication is happiness, communication—” (91), but this is overridden by the more regular and daunting rhythm, Woolf repeatedly intones throughout the novel, that “once you stumble [...] human nature is on you” (90). “The communal spirit of London” is regarded as “one of the triumphs of civilization” by Peter Walsh, one of Clarissa’s thwarted suitors from her youth, who returns for Clarissa’s gathering of souls at her party. But this is countered by Sally Seton’s question and assessment of their position amidst the realities of the world they actually do live in: “what can one know even of the people one lives with every day? [...] Are we not all prisoners? [...] Despairing of human relationships (people were so difficult), she often went into her garden and got from her flowers a peace which men and women never gave her” (188). Sally Seton also draws her energy, her life’s blood, from nature, from the earth, and it is she who speaks the Harrisonian credo at the end of the novel, privileging emotion over reason, asking before she says good-night, “What does the brain matter [...] compared with the heart?”

Prophetesses and priestesses haunt the pages of the entire day. When Peter Walsh arrives at a crossroads walking through London, opening and closing his pocketknife, as he bemoans Clarissa's coldness towards him, he is interrupted by a disembodied voice with ritualistic and Greek choral functionality. It was:

[...] a quivering sound, a voice bubbling up without direction, vigour, beginning or end, running weakly and shrilly and with an absence of all human meaning into

ee um fah um so

foo swee too eem oo—

the voice of no age or sex, the voice of an ancient spring spouting from the earth; which issued [...] from a tall quivering shape, like a funnel, like a rusty pump, like a wind-beaten tree for ever barren of leaves which lets the wind run up and down its branches singing

ee um fah um so

foo swee too eem oo

and rocks and creaks and moans in the eternal breeze. (79)

The passage which follows, bears reprinting, here, at length, as it embodies the entire idea of Jane Harrison's *Themis and the Year-Spirit*, the eternal Greek cultic formulary, "the tragic rhythm of regeneration," found in *Prolegomena*, *Themis*, and later *Ancient Art and Ritual*. This disembodied voice shapeshifts into an ancient wailing woman and finally into her manifestation in her own hero-worshipping times as a "poor old woman!" (80), a wretch. Woolf writes:

Through all ages—when the pavement was grass, when it was swamp, through the age of tusk and mammoth, through the age of silent sunrise, the battered woman—for she wore a skirt—with her right hand exposed, her left clutching at her side, stood singing of love—love which has lasted a million years, she sang, love which prevails, and millions of years ago, her lover, who had been dead these centuries, had walked, she crooned, with her in May; but in the course of ages, long as summer days, and flaming, she remembered, with nothing but red asters, he had gone; death's enormous sickle had swept those tremendous hills, and when at last she laid her hoary and immensely aged head on the earth, now become a mere cinder of ice, she implored the Gods to lay by her side a bunch of purple heather, there on her high burial place which the last rays of the last sun caressed; for then the pageant of the universe would be over.

As the ancient song bubbled up opposite Regent's Park Tube station still the earth seemed green and flowery though it issued from so rude a mouth, a mere hole in the earth, muddy too, matted with root fibres and tangled grasses, still the old bubbling burbling song, soaking through the knotted roots of infinite ages, and skeletons and treasure, streamed away in rivulets over the pavement and all along the Marylebone Road and down towards Euston, fertilizing, leaving a damp stain.

Still remembering how once in some primeval May she had walked with her lover, this rusty pump, this battered old woman with one hand exposed for coppers the other clutching her side, would still be there in ten million years, remembering how once she had walked in May, where the sea flows now, with whom it did not matter—he was a man, oh yes, a man who had loved her. But the

passage of ages had blurred the clarity of that ancient May day [...] she no longer saw brown eyes, black whiskers, or sunburnt face but only a looming shape, a shadow shape, to which, with the bird-like freshness of the very aged she still twittered “give me your hand and let me press it gently” [...] “and if someone should see what matter they?” she demanded; and her fist clutched at her side, and she smiled, pocketing her shilling, and all peering inquisitive eyes seemed blotted out, and the passing generations—the pavement was crowded with bustling middle-class people—vanished, like leaves, to be trodden under, to be soaked and steeped and made mould of by that eternal spring—

ee um fah um so

foo swee too eem oo

(MD 79-80)

The “old wretch,” the battered beggar is the archetypal Themis, timeless, everlasting, another of Woolf’s working class priestesses, another member of her Aeschylean Greek chorus, members of the lower classes empowered with the voice of prophesy. In contrast to these female voices, in her blistering condemnation of the medical profession, she places the doctor, Sir William Bradshaw, in the realm of egotism, individualistic rationalism, and maleness. Bradshaw, along with Dr. Holmes, denies Septimus’ emotions, reducing his “madness” to “merely a question of rest,” a matter of “not having a sense of proportion” and “a question of law” (94). The war provides Bradshaw with a “stream of patients [...] so incessant” (93) as she names him a “ghostly helper, the priest of science” (92).

Clarissa Dalloway's position as a Themis figure is consistently drawn from the beginning of the day to end. The party upon which the entire structure of the novel turns is indeed her offering and bid to the preservation of life:

“That's what I do it for,” she said, speaking aloud, to life.

[...]all she could say was (and nobody could be expected to understand): They're an offering; [...] she felt if only they could be brought together; so she did it. And it was an offering; to combine, to create; but to whom?

An offering for the sake of offering [...] that one day should follow another; Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday; that one should wake up in the morning; see the sky; walk in the park [...] After that, how unbelievable death was!—that it must end [...]. (118-199)

Richard Dalloway, her husband, assesses Clarissa as possessing “something maternal” about her, as “He admired her courage; her social instinct” her “power of carrying things through” (60), but he has a feeling “that they were all gathered together in a conspiracy against him” (61). Woolf writes of Clarissa, “She must assemble” (182).

Clarissa is a Themis figure who, with a parasol, “handled it like a sacred weapon which a Goddess, having acquitted herself honourably in the field of battle,” files it into an umbrella stand, but she is one operating without her full powers. After repaying in her daily rituals with servants, family members, pets, and husband, what she calls “this secret deposit of exquisite moments” (29), her libations to her day, Clarissa ascends the stairs to her room feeling “alone, a single figure against the appalling night” and as she pauses on the landing, she experiences herself as “suddenly shriveled, aged, breastless” unable to “dispel a virginity preserved through childbirth which clung to her like a sheet” (30). She

feels disconnected from her husband as if she has failed him, a pervasive warmth “which broke up surfaces and rippled the cold contact of man and woman, or of women together” (31), and feels the greatest moments of bonding and community with women. She confirms that “she could not resist sometimes yielding to the charm of a woman, not a girl, of a woman confessing, as to her they often did, some scrape, some folly.” She feels “undoubtedly [...] what men felt” towards women, which she describes as follows:

Only for a moment; but it was enough. It was a sudden revelation, a tinge like a blush which one tried to check and then, as it spread, one yielded to its expansion, and rushed to the farthest verge and there quivered and felt the world come closer, swollen with some astonishing significance, some pressure of rapture, which split its thin skin and gushed and poured with an extraordinary alleviation over the cracks and sores! (31)

Her relationship with her girlhood friend, Sally Seton, is the most profound of her life, and the kiss between them recorded as “the religious feeling!” (35). Clarissa’s experience with women consists of moments of happiness in a world where “the secret signal which one generation passes, under disguise, to the next is loathing, hatred, despair,” a signal passed along by all of the great authors, “Aeschylus (translated) the same” (86). In a continuation of, but variation on, the corruption of the Themis/Eniautos-Daimon formulary from *Jacob’s Room*, Clarissa and Septimus never meet, never connect, although their parallel experience conjoin in a single sentence when at “twelve o’clock [...] Clarissa Dalloway laid her green dress on her bed, the Warren Smiths walked down Harley Street” as “Twelve was the hour of their appointment” (92). Without her abilities in full sail as they are in *Night and Day*, for example, she does not experience his

existence until his suicide, after he has jumped out of the window and impaled himself on the spikes of “Mrs. Filmer’s area railings” (146). The doctor, notably, brings the perversion of his death, the news of Septimus’ suicide, into Clarissa’s party, her bid for the preservation of life. It is not until this point, that Clarissa, aware of the Young God, processes his suicide as if it were her own:

Always her body went through it first, when she was told, suddenly, of an accident; her dress flamed, her body burnt. He had thrown himself from a window. Up had flashed the ground; through him, blundering, bruising, went the rusty spikes. There he lay with a thud, thud, thud in his brain, and then a suffocation of blackness. So she saw it.

As a goddess figure, she tries to explain his death, but as one trapped in a construct that does not respect her wishes or her abilities, she struggles with the way in which he dies, and questions if he has killed himself, “had he plunged holding his treasure?” (180). She strives to perceive his suicide as a “defiance. Death was an attempt to communicate; people feeling the impossibility of reaching the centre which, mystically, evaded them; closeness drew apart; rapture faded, one was alone. There was an embrace in death” (180). She experiences an awful fear and terror, the dreaded idea posited at the beginning of the novel “that it was very, very dangerous to live even one day” (8) especially in a post-war world “when millions of things had utterly vanished” (4), and now here she is at the end of the day, at the end of the novel, with a feeling of the “overwhelming incapacity, one’s parents giving it into one’s hands, this life, to be lived to the end, to be walked with serenely” (180). In a final bid of recognition, in her step toward fulfilling her function as Themis in full power, she tries to integrate the Young God’s suicide into her

experience at the party, that “somehow it was her disaster—her disgrace” (181). His death has been a perversion of the sacrifice of the Young God in the ritual preservation of life, because it has happened too soon and without purpose, but it is a wrong, she at least attempts to correct, by ingesting him, into her own identity: “She felt somehow very like him—the young man who had killed himself. She felt glad that he had done it; thrown it away” (182), as this will hopefully be the end of the cycle of violence, and she will be able to return to her party. She refuses to pity him, as “he made her feel the beauty; made her feel the fun” (182). But as Themis, Woolf knows, Clarissa “must go back,” “She must” after all “assemble” (182).

The Waves and The Furies

In this, the last of Woolf’s “trilogy,” her “abstract, mystical, eyeless” (L) book, written as she claimed “to a rhythm and not to a plot” (D) as a kind of “playpoem” (D 7 November 1928), *The Waves* is made up of six choral voices, or “verbal exposures,” who have assembled festival-like to reanimate the Young God, Percival, and defeat Death. As in Aeschylus’ *The Furies* (or *The Eumenides*), where the Furies take on the role of chorus and sing for nearly the entire drama in pursuit of Orestes, the six sound-pieces here lament the Year-Spirit’s passing, but celebrate this young and beautiful god through their assemblage as his thiasos, his worshippers, who have a ritual dinner, to honor him, and to make him “known,” for “Now is our festival; now we are together. But without Percival there is no solidity” (122).

The Waves has been read as a creation myth linked by Gillian Beer to Woolf’s Quaker aunt, Caroline Emilia Stephen’s religious tract *Light Arising: Thoughts on the Central Radiance* (Cambridge: W. Heffer, 1908), but this Christianized model, though

instructive, is not as useful in understanding Woolf's broader canvas, the way in which, when she sits down to write, she thinks big. She thinks in Greek proportions and is positioning herself among them. Reading Woolf's bold experiment in *The Waves* through a Harrisonian understanding of Greek ritual simply makes more sense. When Woolf writes in *The Waves: The Two Holograph Drafts* "I am telling myself the story of the world from the beginning. I am not concerned with the single life, but with lives together" (6), it is the ghost of the Great J—H— writ large that we must conjure, reanimate, before us, "vibrating at the mouth of the cave," and the place where we must look for Woolf's sources, her political and intellectual role models, for the literary blood in her veins. For the depth and length of the shadow of the Greeks enfolds, encompasses, includes, and out-darkens, the important, but much smaller umbrella-shelters cast by Shakespeare and the Elizabethans, Milton and the Romantics, Wagnerian and Mozartian operas, Bloomsbury, the 18th and 19th centuries, and Quaker aunts. As an artist, for Woolf, it is the Greeks, as interpreted through Jane Ellen Harrison, that hold the structure, the backbone, ribs, heart, and brain, of the entire breathing, vital, living organism of her creative production.

The choral voices assembled in *The Waves*, however, have not come together without a struggle or without an understanding, each, in his or her own way, of the importance of their task, to reanimate the Year-Spirit, through speech and as a disparate community, together. The indomitable and brilliant first feminist critic of Virginia Woolf's work, the renowned author, journalist, and photographer, Ruth Gruber, writes significantly of the two "characters" Neville and Bernard as representing two poles of literary traditions and styles, because her project is embarking on uncharted waters, and

assessing Virginia Woolf's rhetoric for the first time, without the benefit of Woolf's diaries and letters or her later works, *Three Guineas*, *The Years*, and *Between the Acts*, which at that point had not yet been published. Nevertheless, Gruber writes perceptively of Neville and Bernard's differences, seeing Neville as a "humanist" who "detests all vagueness and fitful connotations" and as a "lover of Roman ratiocination," whereas Bernard is "counterbalanced" by his "more feminine aesthetics and aspect of life" by "the irrational, chaotic experiences of life" (67) to which I would tailor to read as differences between matrifocal and patriarchal ritual systems. Neville represents order, tradition, rational Olympian values, while Bernard embodies Dionysian emotion, sensation, and the passions. But with *The Waves*, Woolf is functioning, herself, as Athena, setting up the areopagus in *The Furies* with a committee of voices who must interact as a collective energy, a consensus, as "lives together," who will convene to preserve life and continue civilization. In addition to Neville and Bernard, she has brought together, Louis, who is associated to ancient history and "the impulse to pull together the disparate facts of the past" (Hite, Molly, *Notes to The Waves*, 223). Jinny, Virginia Woolf's childhood nickname, is tied to the social and the sensual, Rhoda, who is linked to the Romantic, Shelley, but who fantasizes about Greek settings "white pillars, white figures" embodies the choric "I sink, I fall; I faint, I fail," and Susan, whose voice captures the torment and eternal conflict between her chant elements, from the Catalan ode, "I hate and I love," is steadfast, concentrated, but limited in her understanding beyond that of her chant. They are each flawed, but struggling towards, yearning for intimacy, connection to the Young God, in their articulation of his spirit, as they chant him into existence, via their voices, creating a kind of collective holopsychosis of vibrating sound. For sound, the sound of

the human voice, the sound of the waves, the sound of the universe, was crucial to her project, as, after reading a review in the *Times Literary Supplement* commending her “characters,” she wrote in her diary in an 8 October 1931 entry, “Odd, that they [...]shd. Praise my characters when I meant to have none.”

Louis, who is part of Harrison’s larger “unbounded Whole,” speaks of “himself” as transcending time and identities:

I have lived a thousand lives already. Every day I unbury—I dig up. I find relics of myself in the sand that women made thousands of years ago, when I heard songs by the Nile and the chained beast stamping. What you see beside you, this man, this Louis, is only the cinders and refuse of something once splendid. (127)

Louis tries to keep the pieces of history together, but it is the Dionysian Bernard to whom Woolf gives the final speech to “sum up” all the others. Bernard is referred to by Woolf as being in the habit of “phrase making” a line that has been connected to a reference much earlier in 1908 when Woolf writes that “This is what Adrian calls ‘phrase making’” (L I: 335), but which has curiously never been connected to Harrison’s “holophrases,” even though it is Bernard who articulates the principles at work in Harrison’s linguistic theory, of sounds, whole-concepts, that occur pre-language, before the divisive ‘parts of speech.’” Bernard is a visionary who knows about the perils of extreme individualism:

“But soon, too soon,” said Bernard, “this egotistic exultation fails. Too soon the moment of ravenous identity is over, and the appetite for happiness, and happiness, and still more happiness is glutted. The stone is sunk; the moment is over. Round me there spreads a wide margin of indifference. Now open in my

eyes a thousand eyes of curiosity [...]I can see a dozen pictures. But what are stories? Toys I twist, bubbles I blow, one ring passing through another. And sometimes I begin to doubt if there are stories. What is my story? What is Rhoda's? What is Neville's? There are facts [...] That is the truth; that is the fact, but beyond it all is darkness and conjecture." (143)

Each of the other voices struggle to preside over the different realms of land, animals, planets, ordinary objects, plants, time, past, and present, as they try to "hold" the vision of Percival, of what Jinny calls "youth and beauty, and something so deep sunk within us that we shall perhaps never make this moment out of one man again" (145). Rhoda sees "forests and far countries [...] seas and jungles [...] moonlight." Neville sees "happiness [...] the quiet of ordinary things [...] the petal falling from the rose." Susan sees "Week-days [...] whether it is April, whether it is November" (146). But Bernard sees the future:

We are creators. We too have made something that will join the innumerable congregations of past time. We, too, as we put on our hats and push open the door, stride not into chaos, but into a world that our own force can subjugate and make part of the illumined and everlasting road. (146)

But what of Percival, the Young God, who is spoken about, but who never speaks for himself? His name has been pointed to by critics as connected to Arthurian legend, as Percival, the "holy fool" or "the perfect fool," who finds the Holy Grail, which in later versions, becomes the cup from which Christ drinks in the Last Supper, and to the Wagnerian opera *Parsifal*, which Virginia Woolf saw at a much earlier date in 1909 at the Bayreuth Wagner Festival. He is also, like Jacob in *Jacob's Room*, modeled on Woolf's

beloved older brother, Thoby, dead from an illness contracted after their trip abroad to Greece in 1906. But Percival also finds its roots in the earlier proto-Celtic figure of Peredur, the perfect fool, who saves his sister from being raped.

Not despite, but through their own inarticulation, from their own infirmities, the communal six voices will recover what was lost to them, for holophrasis, far from being impersonal, indifferent, is speech at its most intimate, “man entangled as it were in his own activities, he and his environment utterly involved,” as Harrison writes (T 474). The sacrifice, “if sacrifice he performs, will be a sacrament partaken of, not a gift offered to a person” or to a state, for “man felt himself at first not as a personality separate from other persons, but as the warm excited centre of a group [...] the collective daimon is before the individual ghost, and still more he is before the Olympian god” (475). The Young God we have seen perversely separated from the Mother in Jacob’s Room and Mrs. Dalloway, is here regenerated by his thiasos, re-introduced to Themis, who is Gaia, the Great Mother, the “collective conscience” of the community, “the social fact and focus” (T 494), the life-blood of civilization, the universe, paid homage here by the gathering of voices, by the heartsound that is *The Waves*.

Chapter Four.

In Praise of Peace and Unknown Women:

I. *A Room of One's Own* and “Scientiae Sacra Fames”

II. *Three Guineas* and “Epilogue on War: Peace with Patriotism”

I. *A Room of One's Own* and “Scientiae Sacra Fames”

Next comes the wife's room, the drawing-room: not a room to withdraw into, by yourself, but essentially the room into which “visitors are shown” –a room in which you can't possibly settle down to think, because anyone may come in at any moment [...] One of the most ominous signs of the times is that woman is beginning to demand a study.

--Jane Ellen Harrison
“Scientiae Sacra Fames”

A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction; and that, as you will see, leaves the great problem of the true nature of woman and the true nature of fiction unsolved.

--Virginia Woolf
A Room of One's Own

In order to write *A Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf invoked not only the spirit of “the Great J—H— ” the ghost of the renowned female scholar haunting the grounds of Woolf's fictional Fernham College, but also Jane Harrison's essay “Scientiae Sacra Fames,” on women's access to knowledge, their “soul hunger” for scientiae sacra, the heart center of thought. Both essays were given as lectures before becoming essays in their final forms. *A Room of One's Own* began as two lectures, or rather, talks (“I give you my thoughts as they came to me”) (AROO 6), she gave for the Arts Society at Newnham College on October 20, 1928, accompanied by Leonard Woolf, her sister Vanessa Bell, and Vanessa's daughter Angelica, and for the ODTAA (which stood for “One Damn Thing After Another”) a student organization, on October 26, 1928 at Girton

College, accompanied by her lover, Vita Sackville-West. “Scientiae Sacra Fames” was given as a lecture, originally entitled “Women and Knowledge,” before The London Sociological Society on 28 October 1913 and on 8 November for the Cambridge Branch of the National Union of Suffrage Societies, and appeared in print in the *Newnham College Letter* of 1913. It was reprinted as “Scientiae Sacra Fames” in *New Statesman* on 1 November 1913 as a supplement on “The Awakening of Women,” a feature edited by Beatrice (Mrs. Sidney) Webb and also appeared in *The Times* 29 October 1913 and in the *Cambridge Review* 30 October 1913. It was later collected as “Scientiae Sacra Fames” in Harrison’s *Alpha and Omega* in 1915, a copy of which Virginia Woolf owned and read. Before giving her talks at Cambridge in October 1928, Woolf had visited Jane Harrison in April of that year on her deathbed in Bloomsbury, when she wrote in her diary of her seventy-eight year old intellectual mentor that she looked “exalted, satisfied, exhausted” (D 3. 180). *A Room of One’s Own*, Woolf’s feminist manifesto, is often looked at as a tribute to Jane Harrison after her recent death, and classicist Annabel Robinson in her article “Something Odd at Work: The Influence of Jane Harrison on *A Room of One’s Own*” (*Wascan Review* 22 (1987): 82-88), writes of Woolf’s concentration on “a room” as having Harrisonian origins, a point which I second but with the further exploration of rhetorical tone, audience, and the way in which these two essays speak to one another from intellectual mentor to modernist daughter about feminism, politics, and women’s writing. Harrison’s “Scientiae Sacra Fames” remains one of the earliest articulations of Woolf’s position that if a woman is to be able to write, she must have financial support and a room of her own.

Both essays adopt similar rhetorical tones and are careful to acknowledge their own “prejudices” and to side-step the argumentative pitfalls of being accused of having “an axe to grind.” Their rhetorical approaches also reveal the genius behind their mutual strategies. Harrison, as the university educated scholar, demonstrates her intellectual passion and openness to new ideas. Woolf, feeling both concerned about women’s education as well as alienated from her academic audience, employs “all the liberties and licenses of a novelist” (4), playing to her strengths. She wrote later on 8 June 1933 in a letter to her friend, the composer Ethel Smyth, that she used fiction as her medium for her presentations, because she feared that “If I had said, Look here am I uneducated, because my brothers used all the family funds which is the fact—Well theyd have said; she has an axe to grind; and no one would have taken me seriously” (L. 5.195). As Jane Marcus marvels in her own essay “The Proper Upkeep of Names” that originated as a talk at Newnham and Girton Colleges in October 1993 on the 65th anniversary of Woolf’s visits there, “Imagine Virginia Woolf, the autodidact intellectual, asked to speak at a university, feeling inadequate and even envious of those who study here” (11), as she accurately identifies Woolf’s “grudge” against the university and its neglect of the scholarly achievements of Jane Harrison as “ressentiment,” which “many brilliant and successful people of colour and women spend a great deal of energy smothering [...] in exactly the same way that Woolf’s narrator had to fling inkpots at the Angel in the House” (9). Elisions in the early drafts of *A Room of One’s Own* in relation to the passage on “the great J—H— ” also bear out Woolf’s sense of isolation from her academic audience as well as the deeply felt insistence about her project to implore women to sustain the legacies of their female intellectual role models. Jane Marcus writes of these early drafts

that “the words ‘I have no right to talk openly,’ crossed out [are] the poignant reminder that she is just as much a stranger at the women’s college as at the men’s” (12). Marcus continues that “crossed out also is her description of ‘the sort of mocking derision which women, when they have ceased to be young, & yet have won a great name; as Jane Harrison had . . . and never spend a penny on the proper upkeep of their name . . .’ – endure” (12).

In contrast to Woolf’s sense of alienation, Harrison was writing in “*Scientiae Sacra Fames*” from the vantage point of one of the first generation of Cambridge educated women. But she, too, was keenly aware of the inequities, consequences and personal costs of being a woman, pushing the boundaries of a centuries old discipline, and promoting a feminist position, in a male-dominated, hostile academic world. In addition to the grim and uninviting conditions of the women’s colleges, female students enjoyed no official status until they were admitted as late as 1948 and it was “a standard joke to tell of the dons who began their lectures with ‘Gentlemen,’ even during the two wars when almost all of their audiences were female” (Marcus, PUON 7). And yet, in the face of the profoundly bitter opposition to women’s education at Cambridge, Harrison addressing the nature of prejudice, in general, is able to write with an open intellectual mind and a genuine desire to discern the truth:

But still there remains in the minds of many thinking persons a prejudice to the effect that only certain kinds of knowledge are appropriate to women. I have the greatest possible respect for honest prejudices; they are the stuff out of which right opinion is ultimately, if slowly, moulded, they

are the genuine growth of a living emotion [...] our most enlightened views grow out of unreasoning prejudices. (119)

Adopting a collaborative argumentative stance, Harrison meets biased opinion head-on as fertile ground for new ideas. Woolf also provides a caveat to her audience, a rhetorical disclaimer, which paradoxically achieves her argumentative ends. She writes:

One can only give one's audience the chance of drawing their own conclusions as they observe the limitations, the prejudices, the idiosyncrasies of the speaker. Fiction here is likely to contain more truth than fact. [...] Oxbridge is an invention; so is Fernham; "I" is only a convenient term for somebody who has no real being. Lies will flow from my lips, but there may perhaps be some truth mixed up with them; it is for you to seek out this truth and to decide whether any part of it is worth keeping. (4)

In addition to avoiding a critique of her position as developing from "an axe to grind," Woolf's use of a fictitious voice, her extensive "allusiveness" to figures and entities both real and imagined or a composite of both, as Susan Gubar writes, "allowed Woolf to eschew tendentious didacticism, for throughout her life she found repugnant what she mocked as the loudspeaker voice, which was inhospitable to her temperament" (Introduction, AROO xxxvii). Hence, Woolf begins her essay, "But, you may say, we asked you to speak about women and fiction—what has that got to do with a room of one's own?" (3), as an anti-lecture, in the midst of a conversation, a question with a potential answer, engaging her audience in a mutual dialogue, we seem to co-create along with her. Jane Harrison also preferred learning to lecturing and employed unconventional

methods at both the podium and in the classroom, using interactive, dialogical methods ahead of their time that included slides, conversation, anecdote, and essays. Not only were her theories excessively attacked for elevating the role and function of women in Greek ritual and myth, demonstrating women's use of agricultural and horticultural tools in ritual as significant, and re-interpreting Pandora, for example, not as a catalyst for disaster, but as an Earth Goddess and "bringer of all gifts" (Mystica Vannus Iacchi, *J of Hellenist Studies*, 1903, 23), but she was also criticized for her "florid" literary style, an imaginative literary flair that was praised by her female readership and disparaged by male reviewers. With the publication of *Themis*, she was marked by the following descriptions from male readers: "subjective" "excessive sympathy" "propagandistic" "willful" "too dogmatic and cocksure" (qtd. in Arlen 172). When Harrison would respond to her critics, her behavior was deemed inappropriate and unladylike. Her responses to a particularly virulent critic, Lewis Farnell, for example, who Arlen writes "projected his antagonism to Harrison's atheism and feminism onto his critique of her work" (Arlen 173) were counterattacked by several of Farnell's friends who wielded a great deal of power and influence in the Classics at Cambridge and Oxford.

Similarly creating and embracing "the broken sequence," "the female sentence," Woolf employed distinctly unconventional rhetorical methods. In her Introduction to *A Room of One's Own*, Susan Gubar points out that "it is precisely because she refused to hammer home her points or deliver prescriptions like a doctor would drugs or a pedant rules or a judge pronouncements or a preacher sermons that *A Room of One's Own* evinces a tone many readers find whimsically playful, others cloyingly coy or frustratingly evasive" (xxxvii). Marcus notes that "like Jane Harrison before her, she

urges insubordination. She questions everything. Her gift to the audience is the abdication of her own authority as a lecturer as an example of the possibility of alternative, communal resistant thinking” (11-12). I see Woolf’s approach read through a Harrisonian lens as goddess-like, matrifocal, and here, too, in fiction-non-fictional form, as adopting a position, if it can indeed be bounded as such, as mistress of the shape-shifting pen, a strategy that challenges the way, not only women, but all human beings, “know” anything.

The rhetorical stance on both Harrison and Woolf’s part is a bold and original approach to the conventional, patriarchal “first duty of a lecturer—to hand you after an hour’s discourse a nugget of pure truth to wrap up between the pages of your notebooks and keep on the mantel-piece for ever” (AROO 4). It is also a sophisticated risk that has enjoyed a degree of success in terms of their feminist legacies, but which requested effort, both intellectual and financial, on the part of their largely female audiences at the time. A look at the demographics of Harrison’s popular lectures on Greek religion provided her with insight into the nature and politics of learning, and how gender issues fall along economic and class lines, as well, a thematic baton Virginia Woolf picks up and reveals in *A Room of One’s Own*, (and later, too, in *Three Guineas*), as she explores at length the money, “an unending stream of gold and silver” (10), lavish surroundings, “painters brought their glass for the windows, and the masons were busy for centuries up on that roof with putty and cement, spade and trowel” (11), and delicious food enjoyed at the men’s colleges, while the women’s colleges are over-run by rats and the students have to learn in dingy surroundings, eating dry biscuits and stringy prunes, “stringy as a miser’s heart and exuding a fluid such as might run in misers’ veins” (18). As Woolf

points out, “One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well” (18). In an interview of Harrison in *The Pall Mall Gazette* in 1891, we also gain a sense of who had access to which types of knowledge and why. Harrison was asked in the interview about the make-up of her audiences, to which she responded that they came,

From all the educated classes. A few men are interested, but the majority are women. Of these the mothers of young children are the most eager attendants. They have boys and girls growing up, and they want to share the interests of their children; they want to be able to talk to their boys, during the school holidays, about these things, or they want to assist them in their studies. Other mothers, again, come to learn so that they themselves may teach their children at home. This, however, applies chiefly to the London mother. In the provinces I have scarcely been able to watch the after-results of lectures sufficiently to formulate my impressions.

Harrison’s experiences as a lecturer exposed her to the singular plight of women as so burdened by domestic responsibilities that the purpose of their attendance was not for themselves, but to help others at home. She also makes note of the lack of intellectual curiosity among the leisure classes and the utter uselessness women, Woolf’s “daughters of educated men,” experience on a daily basis. It is an existence Woolf, in *Three Guineas* later on, will contend may be more onerous and oppressive than the experience of women in the working classes, because, according to Woolf, writing from her vantage point as a woman whose life was cruelly circumscribed by Victorian mores and a frequently enforced infantilization, at least working class women had a function, a use, a purpose, a

job. Here, in her interview, Harrison also raises and recognizes the intellectually disturbing plight of women in the leisure classes and their resulting psychological debilitation:

Then another large section of the audience is formed by the well-to-do women who have a good deal of leisure. They have nothing to do in the afternoon; their lives are somewhat dull and empty; they want some outside interest, and have not the energy to create one. To them the lectures come as a new amusement. They do not require very much, and the lecturer has to make the subject as light and as varied as possible. Also he or she must be prepared to generalize a good deal, which is apt to result in much personal demoralization—the hunger for generalization in half-educated women is a fact I have observed without quite understanding. The popular lecturer on Greek art often must feel that his attitude towards his subject and his audience is intellectually a somewhat squalid one, but he will have his good moments too when the flame he has tried to light for others brings its after-glow for himself.(2)

Harrison strengthens and extends her views of women's economic and class positions in relation to knowledge in "Scientiae Sacra Fames," tying her argument into the hierarchy of a paternalistic ritual system, in this case one from the "oriental gods" where there are usually two types, a "head-god" and an "under-god." Women play the same role, she contended, as the under-god plays, she does not think, she does. The head-god, Harrison tells us, "thinks and plans and wills; he sits aloof, supreme, inert." While the secondary under-god "originates nothing himself, but carries out the thoughts and behests of the

head-god. Although “gods among Orientals are usually male” women in British society embody all the characteristics of the oriental under-god in relation to knowledge. Illustrating the inferior position of women as helpmeets to husbands and fathers, educators to intellectually indolent sons and brothers, Harrison lists the female under-god’s duties: “A woman learns a little medicine that she may carry out the instructions of a doctor and soothe a patient; she learns modern languages that she may help out a linguistically dumb brother or husband when he takes his walks abroad [...] she becomes generally “well informed” that she may partly understand or—much more important—appear to sympathize with and admire man’s conversation” (116). This hierarchical, patriarchal structure is upended by the radicalism of both Harrison and Woolf. It is no accident that “J—H—”’s appearance on the grounds of Fernham is connected to the seasons, to the Year-Spirit, a change in the weather, when “all was dim, yet intense too, as if the scarf which the dusk had flung over the garden were torn asunder by star or sword—the flash of some terrible reality leaping, as its way is, out of the heart of the spring” (17). Woolf’s disruptions of the conventional lecture with her disruptions and interruptions in the text share a mutual bond of outsidership with her intellectual mentor’s radical theories and work. Furthermore, as Marcus writes, “It is October, ‘October, the birth of the year,’ [...] It is Michaelmas Term in Cambridge, the birth of the academic year. How differently Woolf’s elegy for the lost history of women writers echoes on these ancient stones” (3).

In addition to her experiences lecturing in London and in the provinces, Harrison’s own experiences, as a precocious young girl growing up in a household that vigorously resisted and curtailed her ambition to become educated, allowed her to apply

personal resonance in “Scientiae Sacra Fames.” Harrison discusses the killing of her dreams as a child to learn for the sake of learning, as we take note of the phrase “a home of her own” bringing into relief for Harrison issues of sex and marriage as tied to gender, but also perhaps a phrase that gestures, rhythmically, linguistically, towards Woolf’s variation of “a room of one’s own.” Harrison writes:

Some half-century ago a very happy little girl secretly possessed herself of a Greek grammar. A much-adored aunt swiftly stripped the gilt from the gingerbread with these chill, cutting words: “I do not see how Greek grammar is to help little Jane to keep house when she has a home of her own.” A “home of her own” was as near as the essentially decent aunt of those days might get to an address on sex and marriage, but the child understood: she was a little girl, and thereby damned to eternal domesticity; she heard the gates of the temple of Learning clang as they closed. (117)

Indeed, we hear “the gates of the temple of Learning clang as they closed” echo with Woolf’s own lack of a university education in deference to her brothers, and with her literal illustration of being chased off the grass to the gravel path by the gesticulating Beadle in *A Room of One’s Own* because as a woman she was “only admitted to the library if accompanied by a Fellow of the College or furnished with a letter of introduction” (6). Woolf writes indignantly at first about the experience:

That a famous library has been cursed by a woman is a matter of complete indifference to a famous library. Venerable and calm, with all its treasures safe locked within its breast, it sleeps complacently and will, so far as I am concerned, so sleep for ever. Never will I wake those echoes, never will I

ask for that hospitality again, I vowed as I descended the steps in anger.

(8)

But she then extends Harrison's position on the consequences of exclusion, in one of the most brilliant "fuckyou's from a daughter of an educated man, a bubbling up of Marcus' "ressentiment," by wondering, ironically?, if it might perhaps not be "worse to be locked in" (24). Indeed, Woolf must re-animate a fictional sister, Judith Shakespeare, as Harrisonian "under-god," to illustrate the intellectual abuse and secondary status of women denied opportunity and resources to realize their potential. The doomed life of Judith Shakespeare, who must hide her intellectual passions as Woolf and Harrison had to hide, reads like a Greek tragedy, as the young girl schooled to "not moon about with books and papers" suffers beatings, mockery, humiliation, rape, pregnancy, and inevitably suicide at the crossroads of the Elephant and Castle bus stop. It is a formulary which is the antithesis of Harrison's Year-Spirit, for as an intellectual genius, who happens to be a woman, Judith Shakespeare, in a patriarchal societal construct, must die—not for the good of the community, or for the advancement of humanity—but because she is irrationally feared, and relentlessly oppressed by a system of societal norms, in Woolf's case, by "England [which] is under a patriarchy" (33). Denied access to knowledge, Judith Shakespeare's intellectual potential withers and her ability to create becomes corrupted, distorted, and ultimately destroyed.

But "what is it lies behind the Golden Gates? What is the nature of this air too pure and rare for a woman to breathe?" Harrison asks. Women are barred from "the dear delight of learning for learning's sake a "dead" language for sheer love of the beauty of its words and the delicacy of its syntactical relations, the joy of tracking out the secret

springs of the human body irrespective of patient or doctor, the rapture of reconstructing for the first time in imagination a bit of the historical past” because to do so is considered unwomanly, and Harrison wants to know “Why?” Why she asks was “the Peri [...] ever excluded from Paradise” (118) and what are the sources of these prejudices against women’s access to knowledge, the sources of the fear of women’s knowledge? Harrison considers what types of knowledge popular prejudice (she also calls it “herd-opinion”) allows women to possess and cautions us to be aware that whenever such questions are raised about “whether women should or should not know this or that, the ghosts of these delicious old schoolmen gather round” (118).

Certain types of knowledge were allowed as “it is not that any particular knowledge or information is denied as unsuitable” and she points out that “Men only came to learn Latin and Greek by the accident of medieval tradition” (118), but what truly rankles societal norms is a woman possessed of “unstinted knowledge.” She writes that “Between feeling and knowing there is a certain antithesis; the province of women was to feel: therefore they had better not know. There is, as in all the most poisonous falsehoods, some grain of muddled truth” (118). According to Harrison in her interview, and making a point re-iterated by Woolf in *A Room of One’s Own*, the importance of intellectual stimulation for women was that it should take them out of themselves.

Harrison says:

I believe the great good is that lectures on Greek art create for these ladies an interest that is *non-personal*. You want to be a woman to know what the rest of that is. People talk of the good that lectures do by bringing people and classes together. I should like to talk of the good they do—for

women, at least—by sending them away from each other into a desert place, to think where you only can think—alone; and the more remote the subject, the more averse from modern association—as Greek art is—the better. And then, I am glad to say, there are some to whom these lectures are the beginning of serious study and of lifelong interest. (2)

Harrison elaborates on this idea of the “impersonal” in “*Scientiae Sacra Fames*” in her argument for using the “binocular” brain. She writes that “There is I believe between man and woman an intellectual difference which makes their co-operation desirable, because fruitful.” It is not a difference of “faculty” but rather “a difference of focus—of focus of attention [...] No manly strength or womanly tact will make them otherwise” as “Intellect is never wholly and separately intellectual. It is a thing charged with, dependent on, arising out of, emotional desire” (140). Harrison, in an illustration of her own undying passion for learning, writes of the process of intellectual discovery that “Anyone who makes even a very small mental discovery can note how, at the moment of the making, there is a sudden sense of warmth, an uprush of emotion, often a hot blush, and sometimes tears in the eyes. Who can say that a process so sensuous and emotional, or at least attended by concomitants so sensuous, is insulated from a thing as interpenetrating as sex?” (140-1). In other words, she writes, “To face the facts and the problems of life is characteristic of to-day. To see them clearly we need the binocular vision of the two sexes.”

These passages resonate with Woolf’s own desire for women to have a room in which to create, and to be able to create employing both the male and female sides of their brains. She writes, “it is fatal for anyone who writes to think of their sex. It is fatal

to be a man or woman pure and simple; one must be woman-manly or man-womanly. It is fatal for a woman to lay the least stress on any grievance; to plead even with justice any cause; in any way to speak consciously as a woman” (103), and she gives her detailed analysis of the second-rate Mary Carmichael’s *Life’s Adventure* as a novelist who nearly gets it right, holding the reader’s interest, because “Chloe liked Olivia perhaps for the first time in literature” (81). The unknown Mary Carmichael is made known by Virginia Woolf, because as one of the four Marys, she tried to do something new and original in *Life’s Adventure*, even if the finished novel was not of the caliber of a Proust or a Shakespeare. As Woolf points out, her great achievement was in mastering the “first lesson”: “she wrote as a woman, but as a woman who has forgotten that she is a woman, so that her pages were full of that curious sexual quality which comes only when sex is unconscious of itself” (91).

Harrison writes of the two aspects of intellect brought forward by both men and women as a man’s “insularity” and a woman’s sense of “tact” by which she means touch or contact. She realizes that “there is still a feeling in many minds that disinterested knowledge in a woman endangers exclusive family devotion” (122) a point she concedes. It is true, but this she says “is clear gain,” as she contrasts excessive male egotism as a pitfall to the objectives of science and knowledge. She writes that “A man would not say: “I must not devote myself to science; it might endanger my exclusive devotion to myself.” But without self-contempt he might say, and his wife agree with him, she had better not devote herself to art or science, lest the dinner and the children be neglected” (122). She casts aside the argument that women are not necessary for advancing knowledge, “though Sappho and Jane Austen may give us pause” (122), but we do not

have to worry too much about this either because “our present age is an age of co-operation, marked not so much by individual emergence as by interdependent, collective advance, and for this pre-eminent genius is not essential” (123). She is writing here before the outbreak of the European War, and on the crest of the wave of an anthropological movement, and as part of a community of scholars trying to effect change in a number of time-worn traditional disciplines. As she notes, “We must always remember that freedom to know has but recently been won for men. Almost as soon as they realized their prize they were willing to share it. Even about men the old, semi-magical questions is still asked, What *use* is this or that subject in education—that is, what immediate relation has it to action?” (123). Education at the turn of the nineteenth century and the desire to include women was very much in the forefront of contemporary and popular debate.

She writes, broadening the question, that “We used to be told that “a man does not want a learned wife,” “men do not want to talk to learned ladies.” The hopeful thing now is that thinking men and women nowadays do not ask what “a man wants,” but in what direction humanity is moving” (124-5).

Harrison concedes that though “specialization is intenser than ever” it is “conscious of its unity, its interrelations” (136), and she uses her own and her Ritualist colleagues as examples of how feminine principles helped re-invigorate the Classics, that through female “tact” or rather connection to both emotion and action, the disciplines were saved, the intellect and the intellectual community were enriched and enhanced:

My own subject, classics, which used to be a garden enclosed, and wellnigh a *hortus siccus*, is now saved. Thanks to archaeology, to

anthropology, it is now open to all the winds of heaven; its half-stifled life breathes afresh. By contacts we are saved. (136-7).

She also identifies psychology and sociology as fields whose life-blood depends upon the female attributes of the intellect: “And what is psychology, but the science of human behavior, of human reaction, of *contacts*, not insulations. Our whole morality is looked upon now, not as a system of heaven-sent virtues—truth, purity, constancy, obedience, what not—but as a balance maintained between the interests of the individual and the interests of the race, the better relating of the two” (137).

But, Harrison wonders, playing devil’s advocate, is it necessary biologically for women to be more given to “imaginative altruism” and are they capable of impersonal detachment? Women are more open to the social current. Men are more insulated, but is that an advantage? She asks, is it a part of our nature or is it socially constructed? Here, she seeks an answer by exploring the architectural construction and layout of the home, “which are to me deeply depressing” (128), as she outlines the women’s province as restricted to the social setting of the drawing room in comparison to the man’s “study,” his room of his own that Woolf writes into her essay. Of the man’s study, Harrison writes:

Then, at the back of the house, there is a hole or den, called a “study” – a place inviolate, guarded by immemorial taboos. There man thinks, and learns, and knows. I am aware that sometimes the study contains more pipes, fishing-rods, foxes’ brushes, and golf-clubs, than books or scientific apparatus. Still, it is called the “study” or the “library”, and the wife does not sit there. There are rarely two chairs—there is always one—possibly for a human being to sit on. Well, that

study stands for man's insularity; he wants to be by himself. The house where you don't and mustn't sit in the study is to me no home. But then, I have long known that I am no "true woman." (128)

The man expects his wife to keep him in touch with the world, because otherwise, he would go off to his room of his own forever, "and lose himself in his own specialism." The physical layout of the home emphasizes separate spheres, one which grooms and encourages a man to think, to learn, to know, and another which grooms and encourages a woman to serve and renounce the self. Harrison and Woolf both look on the ideal as being able to create from both the male and female aspects of the mind, Harrison's "binocular" vision, Woolf's androgynous creative brain:

Some collaboration has to take place in the mind between the woman and the man before the act of creation can be accomplished. Some marriage of opposites has to be consummated. (103)

Like Woolf, Harrison writes also of how difficult the ideal is to achieve. They both explore the impossible, insoluble bridge between the sexes, Harrison when she notes that "Each sex is conservative and irrational about the other. The reason is, of course, clear. From a centre of personal emotion it is hard to get far enough back to see clearly and judge sanely" (124). In other words, it is hard to see the experiment if you are the experiment. Like Woolf, Harrison recognizes the difficulties for women to embrace both action and emotion, insularity and contact, and that she often feels as if she were "writing in the dark," because "It is hard to shake oneself loose from these fossil virtues; they are bone of our bone, and the old skeleton still rattles" but "one thing is clear: we must avoid

dogmatism; we must adopt the method of experiment”, and she repeats, “we must experiment.”

Like Harrison, Woolf talks of the similar difficulties of one sex being able to re-create on the page the experience of the other sex. She writes that “Even so it remains obvious, even in the writing of Proust, that a man is terribly hampered and partial in his knowledge of women, as a woman in her knowledge of men” (82). Even writers with the reputation of, for example, Shakespeare, suffer from their lack of understanding of women, a state of affairs she attributes to women’s oppression by society, in general, and by their exclusion from knowledge and formal education. She writes “literature would be incredibly impoverished, as indeed literature is impoverished beyond our counting by the doors that have been shut upon women” (82). Woolf suggests that there is no language, for example, there are no words to say what it is that happens when a woman walks into a room. “How” Woolf asks, “should it be otherwise? For women have sat indoors all these millions of years, so that by this time the very walls are permeated by their creative force, which has, indeed, so overcharged the capacity of bricks and mortar that it must needs harness itself to pens and brushes and business and politics. But this creative power differs greatly from the creative power of men” (86). She then uses a Harrisonian “ancient lady” to further illustrate her point of the generational connection that occurs between women and how that “very ancient lady crossing the street on the arm of a middle-aged woman, her daughter, perhaps, both so respectably booted and furred that their dressing in the afternoon must be a ritual” represents a life, a story that has disappeared. “No biography or history has a word to say about it. And the novels, without meaning to, inevitably lie” (87-8).

Like Woolf, who was an atheist in her beliefs of pursuing a moral life without God, Harrison, too, is fearful of the spectre of an uninformed understanding of religion. She warns, speaking somewhat prophetically about our own times, that the greatest damage that can be done to civilization is to misperceive and misinterpret religion. In a paragraph worth quoting in its entirety, because it deepens our understanding of Harrison's controversial atheism and what she means by her use of the word "God" and of "religion," she writes, invoking Bernard Shaw and her colleague Gilbert Murray in *Four Stages of Greek Religion*:

I think it was Mr. Bernard Shaw who said somewhere that, if the great congregations of cowards, known as the Human Race, were to be made courageous, they must be made religious, and by religious he meant, if I remember rightly, the sense of being part of something bigger and stronger than yourself. Religion has never been denied to women. But the emotion of religion, this sense of being part of God, may be the deadliest danger unless informed and directed by a knowledge of the ways of God—i.e., the nature of the universe and that part of it which is man. A religious woman without knowledge is like a lunatic armed with an explosive. Moreover, imparted information avails little. She must have within her the scientific spirit, what the Greeks called *sophrosyne*, which knows and is quiet, which *saves* and is saved. (123)

Ultimately, Harrison points out the importance of working together, communally, on an intellectual or creative project with intelligent men. She writes that "Your thoughts are—for what they are worth—self-begotten by some process of parthenogenesis" (130), but then there comes a time when you want to separate and "disentangle" them from yourself

and your emotions in order to bring them to fruition. “To talk a thing over with a competent man friend is to me like coming out of a seething caldron of suggestion into a spacious, well-ordered room” and what she seeks within herself, as well as, outside of herself, “the male element in the mind [...] its power of insulation.” (131). Women although possessive of “inferior insularity” have “superior ‘tact’” (132) by which she means women are more closely tied to social currents, to family and communal settings, to the furtherance of the human race, which is of vital importance to the intellect as well, and appallingly underappreciated and undervalued, as she goes on to argue. She writes, that “It is intellectually useful to be able to insulate yourself” (133), but “it is also intellectually fruitful to turn on your searchlight,” to be “in touch” with your emotions and connections to the world, to others, outside of yourself. Furthermore, women “*can* detach themselves—they *are* individuals” and what is of crucial importance, however, is to use both of these qualities. She writes that, because science and politics are “co-operative, more democratic” (136) women are poised at an important moment in history to exercise greater freedom and influence on the world, because, according to Harrison:

the present day is [...] marked by an emergence, unparalleled in history, of the *racial* conscience. This shows itself in politics. The only human will to which we bow nowadays is the collective will of the people of which we are ourselves a part. It shows itself in religion, which of course embodies and reflects social fact. The only god we believe in now is immanent, not imminent; few people are satisfied now with the conception of God as King or even Emperor, as Lawgiver, or as External Creator—all

conceptions that have served their turn as the expression of primitive states of society. (136)

She proclaims, “Let man and woman both learn to know, to think dispassionately, to recreate imaginatively, to feel impersonal emotion, and then let them look and act together” and insists that “the holy hunger after knowledge [...] is but the latest, rarest utterance of the Will to Live” (141). She suggests that though Southern peoples made their gods, their icons, “a woman, a mother with a subordinate child, a son or lover as attribute of womanhood” and Northern races “always more virile—made of their god a man, or, the better to strengthen his manhood and emphasize the exclusion of woman—three men” she advocates that we remember instead “a sect in antiquity, small, despised, persecuted, who made their god in the image of neither man nor female, but a thing bisexed, immaculate, winged, and—this is the interesting thing for us—looking out on the world *four-eyed*” and chanting together (142).

Finally, the two essays converse intimately and successfully not only because we see so many of Harrison’s themes and positions resonating for Virginia Woolf in *A Room of One’s Own*, but also because Woolf’s entire essay is her attempt “to think back through our mothers” (75) to write down the voices of these unknown women, “all these infinitely obscure lives [that] remain to be recorded” (88), and to outline the historical progression of women writers, like Jane Harrison, to whom she is indebted. *A Room of One’s Own* acts as a corrective to the neglect of Jane Harrison’s legacy and the importance of women mentors for women students, and as Jane Marcus writes in “The Proper Upkeep of Names,” the essay “sketches a history of women artists and urges the reader to take on the task. We begin by filling in the blanks of her history. Thanks to a

generation of feminist scholars, how much more we know now about women of the past than she did. Her lectures and her book were a lesson in the proper upkeep of women's names" (13). In the final sections, Woolf lists books of note "books by the living" and "Jane Harrison's books on archaeology" as outstanding examples of women writers who contribute to the cultural discourse. But women writers also need more time, according to Woolf, before their work will bear results, and she asks for at least "another hundred years [...] give her a room of her own and five hundred a year, let her speak her mind and leave out half that she now puts in, and she will write a better book one of these days" (93). Woolf has successfully re-animated the ghosts and goddesses of Jane Harrison's life and work in *A Room of One's Own*, and has taken Harrison's "home of her own," an example of servitude and oppression and transformed it into an image of intellectual freedom, confidence, and defiance, as she proclaims "Lock up your libraries if you like, but there is no gate, no lock, no bolt that you can set upon the freedom of my mind" (75).

II. *Three Guineas* and “Epilogue on the War: Peace with Patriotism”

In the depths of my fanatical heart I dream of a day
when our army will go out, not to war, but, if need be, to martyrdom,
and when that army will consist of every man and woman in England.

--Jane Harrison, “Epilogue on the War: Peace with Patriotism”

Even here, even now your letter tempts us to shut our ears [...] to listen not to the bark of the guns and the bray of the gramophones but to the voices of the poets, answering each other, assuring us of a unity that rubs out divisions as if they were chalk marks only; to discuss with you the capacity of the human spirit to overflow boundaries and make unity out of multiplicity. But that would be to dream—

--Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas*

Jane Harrison wrote “Epilogue on the War,” originally titled “Peace with Patriotism,” the day after the Scarborough air raid, 16 December 1914, when German naval ships bombarded the northern Yorkshire port of Scarborough in addition to the villages of Whitby and Hartlepool. It is a historical “fact” about which her modernist

daughter, Virginia Woolf would have been proud, given Harrison's unfaltering pacifist stance, despite the bombing of her native Yorkshire and their mutual bone-deep love of the landscape and literariness of England. Harrison's radical pacifism is a position heralded and extended by Woolf in her pacifist manifesto, *Three Guineas*, documenting the rise of fascism in 1938 and calling for a social re-creation, a Harrisonian "unity out of multiplicity," and is a proclamation that echoes with Woolf's own defiant plea for peace that "as a woman I have no country; as a woman my country is the whole world." Curiously, Woolf's *Three Guineas* has never been read by critics alongside Harrison's essay, which in my view is its immediate first cousin, if not its long lost elder sister (albeit perhaps from a previous shorter marriage). "Peace with Patriotism" is after all a mere seventy-eight pages in comparison to *Three Guineas*, a book-length work and a decades-long project that includes Woolf's notebooks and an earlier incarnation as a novel-essay attached to the fictional, *The Pagiters*, which ultimately became *The Years*. Both essays, however, speak to each other intimately and profoundly, and moreso than any other text with which it has been paired, about the nature of violence, about the individual in relation to the state, and about their mutual insistence on peace-making themes. Both explore the sources of war, examine the function and excessive use and misuse of the concept of "patriotism," and seek out radical social alternatives founded on feminist principles of cooperation, resistance, and communal outsidership.

"Epilogue on the War" opens with Jane Harrison's shock and disbelief that "all these dons are enlisting" and she immediately experiences a violent personal reaction when "Rage, sheer red-hot rage, choked me and held me speechless" (221). She could not believe that her colleagues, the group of male geniuses with whom she had worked

and collaborated, “these men, whose passion it was to know the truth and teach it [...] these men, to me the pick of their country’s manhood” (221) would support the war, when they had insisted only moments earlier that they had “despise[d] the war”! (221). She notably begins her essay with a Greek epitaph, a line from Euripides’ *Alcestis*, (which Euripides borrows from Aeschylus), which translates as “many are the shapes of divine beings” to express the changing tides, intellectual aspirations, and politics of her esteemed friends. (F.N. w/ 5 lines) Their decision to fight rocked the foundations of Jane Harrison’s world as she pleaded with them to let us grieve together, but let us not be stupid together, too, especially “when the lust of conquest was maddening half Europe, when every human value hung in the balance, and all that made life worth the living was threatened” (221). War, according to Harrison, crushed values and diminished and destroyed learning, and her article is a defiant clarification of her stance as a public intellectual: “It is because, with every fibre of body and mind, I stand for Peace that I want to try and understand this ancient animosity” (223).

Just as Harrison tries to disentangle how it came about that “the don has turned soldier, and proudly, if a little shamefacedly, parades the uniform which, ten years ago, would have been to him *anathema*,” Woolf tries to disentangle the motivations behind women’s support of war in the public sphere on behalf of a nation that so vigorously curtailed their freedom in the private sector. Harrison also amplifies her discussion from matters “parochial,” the inexplicable advocacy of the dons of war to “questions international” and “on those momentous issues of War and Peace on which our whole being is now exclusively focused” (223). Woolf expresses her incredulity at women’s involvement in the ready, aim, fire formulary to the European War, two decades earlier,

which she carefully unpacks in 1938 while trying to answer an unanswerable question from a male correspondent: “How do we prevent war?” When she confronts one of the more controversial aspects of her argument, exposing women’s complicity in patriarchy and thereby their “consent” to fascism, she does so by sending us back and forth between endnotes, text, and her notebook archive, which become creatively and politically significant as Woolf’s rhetorical structure also once again seems to replicate the circular nature of a Harrisonian ritual. Although challenging to so many of our readerly assumptions, *Three Guineas* shimmies and shakes, vibrates and chants its argument into existence. In connecting the many strands of her *thiasos*, attendant, but critical sub-points, if you will, to the more central point of “how do we prevent war,” she “begins” with a discussion of women’s education, their position and function in the home, and the use of their bodies in sex and marriage. She writes that “It was with a view to marriage that her body was educated; a maid was provided for her; that the streets were shut to her; that the fields were shut to her; that solitude was denied her—all this was enforced upon her in order that she might preserve her body intact for her husband”(TG 48). Woolf’s notations in her scrapbooks reference this section with a clipping “Marriage service. Savages in tail coats.” with Woolf’s typed note “The woman has no worldly goods must therefore give her body [. . .] A solemn moment, really marriage.” (Silver 269). She extends the discussion in the endnote in terms of “the duplicity of delicacy” (TG 186) and marriage as the only profession open to women, which if we delve further into Woolf’s scrapbooks reveal her notations on “The Professions:/Lady Lovelace the Siren. The bird in the cage” (Silver 255). Returning to the text, Woolf connects the private hierarchy of patriarchy in the home with the public needs of the state. She quotes Lady Lovelace, who

wrote that women's efforts are consciously in favor of "our splendid Empire". . ."the price of which," she added, "is mainly paid by women." And who can doubt her, or that the price was heavy?" (TG 49). While Woolf sympathizes with the powerlessness of women's position in the home, she labels the dependency demonic when she links its relationship to the state. And she is gravely concerned with women's unconscious efforts, as well, on behalf of war. She writes:

How else can we explain that amazing outburst in August 1914, when the daughters of educated men who had been educated thus rushed into hospitals, some still attended by their maids, drove lorries, worked in fields and munition factories, and used all their immense stores of charm, of sympathy, to persuade young men that to fight was heroic, and that the wounded in battle deserved all her care and all her praise? The reason lies in that same education. So profound was her unconscious loathing for the education of the private house with its cruelty, its poverty, its hypocrisy, its immorality, its inanity that she would undertake any task however menial, exercise any fascination however fatal that enabled her to escape. Thus consciously she desired "our splendid Empire"; unconsciously she desired our splendid war. (58)

Three Guineas is a wake-up call to cast off the shackles of dependency, reclaim our sexuality, and start anew. In her analysis of the dialectical relationship between women and fascism, in particular the fascism of Mussolini, Hitler, and Franco, "Female Sexuality in Fascist Ideology," Maria-Antonietta Macciocchi cautions against keeping silent about women's roles in the political, social, and economic realities of tyranny. By keeping silent, dismissing, exonerating, or absolving, Macciocchi writes that we create "another

way of sending women into a vacuum, or, on the contrary, of creating a theology of women (which in any case runs into the same historical void).” She continues that “This vacuum is all the more serious in that, on the reverse side, fascism lay solidly like a huge disturbing carcass, on the politico-intellectual landscape” (67). In *Three Guineas*, Woolf aligns the tenets of patriarchy with a Brechtian sense of fascism which compared the relationship to “that between a protector, or pimp, and his whores [. . .whereby] the state acts as procurer and women become the prostitutes of capital” (Macciocchi 69). As she sends us back and forth between text, notes, and archive, Woolf brilliantly connects the dots of the oppression of women’s sexuality in the home with her larger concern, women as whores for the state. Woolf writes of the pimp/whore dynamic in the private home in terms of marriage, the dependent relationship between husband and wife, but the coinage also works seamlessly in the familial structure of an incestuous household as well, a dynamic with which Woolf was personally familiar (F.N.).

I think it is telling and not a fact to be dismissed or denied that both *Three Guineas* and “Epilogue on the War,” essays on radical pacifism, are marked by rhetorical “violence.” Harrison, in her “rage, sheer red-hot rage,” tries to use her reaction as a means for “fruitful analysis.” She cannot believe that it is now de rigeur and “possible [...] to utter the word *duty* unabashed” and “not even the youngest eyebrow is uplifted to mark the anachronism” (222). She tries to quell her indignation and violent reaction and reports that “as I went home rage died down, and it is rage, just as it dies down, that ‘gives, most furiously, to think,’” for she, as an intellectual, recognizes that “behind our shining armour of righteous indignation lurks a convicted and only half-repentant sinner [...] if the charge rankles, we may be almost sure some sharp and bitter grain of truth

lurks within it” (222), and it is out of this betrayal and angry reaction that she solidifies her pacifist position.

Virginia Woolf also had a deeply felt understanding of violence and injustice. In “A Sketch of the Past,” a section of her memoir *Moments of Being*, she describes how a childhood tussle changes into a beating she took at the hands of her good brother Thoby. She writes:

As a child then, my days, just as they do now, contained a large proportion of this cotton wool, this non-being. Week after week passed [. . .] Then, for no reason that I know about, there was a sudden violent shock; something happened so violently that I have remembered it all my life [. . .] I was fighting with Thoby on the lawn. We were pommelling each other with our fists. Just as I raised my fist to hit him, I felt: why hurt another person? I dropped my hand instantly, and stood there, and let him beat me. I remember the feeling. It was a feeling of hopeless sadness. It was as if I became aware of something terrible; and of my own powerlessness. I slunk off alone, feeling horribly depressed. (MB 71)

The scene resonates with her asking repeatedly, chantlike, throughout *Three Guineas*, “Why fight?” (TG 9). In *Virginia Woolf*, Louise DeSalvo rightly sees Woolf’s experience as an internalization of her powerlessness—“that she should, simply, take it”—and as a marker of the consequences of a failed, abusive social construction that outlines “the emotional contours” (106) of her life. I see the experience also as a marker of Virginia Woolf’s sanity and her brilliant use of a survival mechanism. Die another day. Lie down. Take it. So you can live to tell the tale. In a sense Virginia Woolf’s body of work

is her response to Thoby's pommelling, her "fight [back] with the mind" (CE 173, 174). I see *Three Guineas*, in particular, however, which she writes as a mature woman during her late forties and early fifties, as her response not only to Thoby, but to all her brothers, good and bad. The dramatic trajectory of Woolf's life from this early experience forward reveals a portrait of a woman for whom physical "non-being" becomes an imperative, as she finds a measure of peace in the sheltered concealment of the mind. Jane Marcus writes that "Woolf came from a culture and a family obsessed with female chastity, and she was obsessed with their obsession [. . .] it is a poignant and ironic measure of how one's politics can be more radical than one's life to note that she seems to have lived most of her life in physical chastity, and the powerful and moving images for her own creative processes are of the chaste imagination retreating to a nunnery" (79). In an endnote to her discussion of Woolf's chastity, she points out that Woolf "celebrates celibacy and the single life in contrast to other left-wing feminists of the time, Rebecca West and Emma Goldman, who advocated free love" (199). I believe Woolf's chastity was enforced by her early childhood sexual abuse. In a sense, as I have argued in "Violence into Speech" in the modernist online journal HOW2, Woolf's sexuality was murdered when she was seven, and, to my mind, *Three Guineas* is somewhat of a rhetorically violent response, an emergence from the nunnery meant, using her pen as weapon, to re-create her personal narrative, her world.

Contrary to the criticism that *Three Guineas* "did not deal with [. . .] women's capacity for martial belligerence" (Lee 670), Woolf sympathizes and even participates in militaristic desires as she condemns them as "hollow" and instructs us to be "disinterested," (Pawlowsky 3) neither to "incite [our] brothers to fight, or to dissuade

them, but to maintain an attitude of complete indifference” (*TG* 163). Furthermore, to deny the pervasiveness of Woolf’s “violence” not only robs *Three Guineas* of the delicious anarchism in both the content and rhetorical style of the narrative, but also silences Woolf’s history—the accidents in her own life of gender, social class, historical moment, cultural context, and familial dysfunction—and by extension the history of all women, as well. In *Three Guineas*, she is at one and the same time pacifist and militant anti-fascist. She seeks to expose patriarchy’s links to fascism, give primacy to peace, but also rejects both an “enforced pacifism” or an “enforced feminism” (*TG* 269) and remains unfaltering in her position against force of any kind, or what Jane Harrison calls *sich imponiren*, imposing one’s will onto another human being. Paying tribute to Woolf too narrowly as a parochial pacifist, rather than as the internationalist pacifism she advocated in contrast to her contemporaries, but which she shared with Jane Harrison, to my mind, makes her increasingly easy for critics to dismiss and ironically plays into the hands of the fascist agenda she sought to destroy. Her “violence” is hard to miss in *Three Guineas*, yet integrates itself within and between her pacificistic ends to such an extent that it seems somehow able to fly beneath the radar. Woolf’s rhetorical “violence” gives credence and voice to her pacifism and thus authenticates Woolf’s struggle for social re-creation, her extraordinary endurance under both the public and private auspices of a hostile, irrational world, and the remarkable complexity of her goals.

I would also like to object to the frequent criticism of *Three Guineas*, that her argument is limited because it is elitist and “did not deal with women outside her own class” (Lee 670), a position that has since been dispelled by an analysis of *Three Guineas*’ readership. I think the attacks on Woolf as elitist often speak more to a

stereotype of working class women as nonreaders who supposedly would not be interested in a book written by a woman outside their class. Despite the fact that Woolf addresses her polemic to “the daughters of educated men,” I believe she reaches out to the working class and successfully speaks not for them but in concert with them about the realities of exploitation and the status of women in relation to war. As Jane Marcus contends, “One may certainly argue that the daughters of educated men were not as oppressed as blacks or the working class. But Woolf defines this oppression and seeks an alliance with them (79). The letters Woolf received from working class women about *Three Guineas* bear out the fact that her attempts to address the collective “we”, all women, were successful, and as a woman who self-identifies with the working class as well, I can personally attest to the fact that there is nothing like a good book “by a woman with a brain” after a long debilitating day of work on a factory assembly line. As one working class woman put it in her letter thanking Woolf for both *A Room of One’s Own* and *Three Guineas*, “Oh for some more women with your brain” (Snaith L2).

Not surprisingly, she received her harshest criticism from members of her own class. Her husband, Leonard hated *Three Guineas*, which is also appropriate given the fact that he did not ask her for her contribution to his collection of essays on war, pretentiously titled (and largely forgotten) *The Intelligent Man’s Guide to Preventing War* and his *Quack! Quack!* published in 1937, a text also marked by Jane Harrison’s influence, and which he may very well have seen as being in competition with his wife’s response to the war a year later in *Three Guineas*. Patricia Laurence in “A Writing Couple: Shared Ideology in Virginia Woolf’s *Three Guineas* and Leonard Woolf’s *Quack! Quack!*” misses the mark in suggesting a “shared ideology” between their

political ideals and I disagree that in reading the two works together “we recognize the Woolf’s intellectual companionship”(130). If that were the case, then why would he not invite her to write in his edition on the war? Jane Marcus does an in-depth analysis of Leonard Woolf’s contributions, often his diminishment, of our understanding of Virginia Woolf’s political vision, in her early essay, “No More Horses.” Marcus writes:

Some critics of Virginia Woolf have felt that while they do not share Forster’s view of her complete lack of political sense, they will allow the influence of Leonard’s politics. Frankly, it seems to be the other way round. She was often considerably to the left of Leonard, and remained a pacifist despite his arguments that art and politics should never be mixed.
(AA 117)

Laurence tries to suggest that we too often apply contemporary understandings of words like “feminist” and “socialist” and “political” to Virginia Woolf, when historically speaking she would not have applied these labels to herself, and writes that “given that Woolf rejected the use of the word “feminist,” and did not (as far as I know) describe herself as a “socialist” or as being “political”, contemporary critics have been eager to lead her to the other side of the mirror into our times to apply the labels nonetheless” (125). Laurence rejects decades of meaningful feminist scholarship that adequately and competently demonstrates Woolf’s feminist and political vision. Though Woolf may have burned the word “feminist” in *Three Guineas* she does so ironically and to make the point of the crucial importance of the presence of a women’s college in a male dominated academic world. And while Woolf, as a literary artist, rejected many labels to describe herself, feminist perhaps being one of them, she certainly embraced, advocated, and

extended its principles. The pairing of Leonard Woolf's *Quack! Quack!* with Virginia Woolf's *Three Guineas* points out, wounds, and exposes the inferior cultural production, *Quack! Quack!* but also, in my view, seems to unnecessarily burden the genius of *Three Guineas* with a Leonard-chiseled ball and chain.

Woolf's lover, Vita Sackville-West, also didn't care for *Three Guineas*, and claimed that she did not "agree with 50% of it" (*LVW 1936-1941* 242). Queenie Leavis called it "Nazi dialectic without Nazi conviction" (qtd. in Marcus LP 79) and also felt that the photographs were "selected with malice" (Wussow 2). Anna Snaith's wonderful, intrepid research documents the many responses Virginia Woolf received which gives a much more thorough understanding of Woolf's readership, a group Woolf treasured and recognized as a "record of vanished moments and forgotten lives" (Snaith 9).

To be sure, the style and structure of *Three Guineas* is unorthodox and resonates with the circular ritual communities that pervade Jane Harrison's work, and dare I apply this to Woolf, but that they are feminist in principle and by nature. To the extent to which any book is an invitation to stand up and be shot at, I would characterize *Three Guineas* as an atom bomb in a homemade slingshot, and feel sure it set the patriarchal establishment's teeth on edge. The pocket that holds the "stone" is intricately webbed and uniquely crafted by Woolf as quintessential ammo-girl, or uber-ammo-girl (F.N.), and took nearly a decade to build. The "bomb" itself is the finished text complete with endnotes and photographs, but had yet to hit its target or to be successfully launched as counterattacks, insurgents from the inside? a feminist terrorist? a female copyeditor and unknowing dupe of a patriarchal/capitalist publishing regime? had dismantled the bomb by removing the photographs and by playing up an iconic image of Woolf as a crazy

suicide, rather than giving press or credence to the brilliance, glee, and sanity of her revolutionary ideas. Woolf's argument in *Three Guineas*, that human rights begin at home, a notion that streamlines the tenets of patriarchy with fascism, continues to make us uncomfortable today, as her image is increasingly associated with madness and the text of *Three Guineas* until the recently edited and annotated edition by Jane Marcus in 2006, had continued to be published maimed.

Like most bombs made in tubs, I think because they must be made in secret and in private, the idea for *Three Guineas* begins in the bath. On January 20, 1931, she writes in her diary that while bathing she has “conceived an entire new book—a sequel to *A Room of One's Own*—about the sexual life of women” (AWD 161-162). She calls it Professions for Women, which I see as a kind of cloaking device, masking for now her larger project, which by February 16, 1932 she has tied in to a militaristic desire to blow things up. Woolf has begun gathering her “facts” and continues on with the *Common Reader* “by way of proving my credentials” (AWD 174) and by February 1932 has “collected enough powder to blow up St. Pauls” (AWD 174). *Three Guineas* has its origins in oppression and its fellow-traveller, abuse. Her plan is to write “on being despised” She “wanted—how violently—how persistently, pressingly, compulsorily I can't say—to write” (WD 278). As late as October 12, 1937, working on what she hoped were the last pages of *Three Guineas*, she writes, “oh how violently I have been galloping through these mornings! It has pressed and spurted out of me. If that's any proof of virtue, like a physical volcano. And my brain feels cool and quiet after the expulsion [. . .] “I have deserved this gallop” (WD 276). What is significant here, and a relief to realize, is that Woolf as she emerges from the nunnery feels no shame and no guilt. She

has been satisfied, deserving, and renewed. *Three Guineas* may begin from the point of oppression, but its violence, its aim of destruction, is life-affirming and long overdue. (As my therapist once said, “a “murder” a day keeps the doctor away”). Her “gallop” consisted of a decade long construction of an apparatus, a secret weapon, with an intricate, unique, quiltlike design, a forerunner of the modern day hypertextual web archive, comprised of twelve volumes of reading notes, “including three fat scrapbooks” (Silver, *TG Before and After* 254) filled with news clippings, extracts, hand and typewritten notes, annotated quotations and master lists. When she finishes, her response to Vita Sackville-West’s criticism of *Three Guineas* as including “misleading arguments” triggers a defensive parry on Woolf’s part but also reveals the extent, enthusiasm, and seriousness with which she had pursued her research. After the book’s publication, she writes on June 19th, 1938, that “It may be a silly book, and I don’t agree that its a well-written book; but its certainly an honest book: and I took more pains to get up the facts and state them plainly than I ever took with any thing in my life” (LVW 1936- 1941 243). In addition to the finished product, she also crafted and re-worked a 12,000 word first serial excerpt of *Three Guineas* for the *Atlantic Monthly* that overlapped with the publication of both the British and American editions of the book. The endnotes in the book proper—there were 124 in all—were not yet completed at the time of serialization in May and June 1938 (Black 74, 76). Woolf was also writing her novel *The Years*, which initially was attached to *Three Guineas*, as a novel-essay, but which she then split to make two separate but still related texts by January 1933. When we think of *Three Guineas*, then, it is crucial to understand the finished product as a piece of a greater whole, Jane Harrison’s “Unbounded Whole,” and to acknowledge the scope,

breadth, and depth of Woolf's project/weapon, as we understand the work as being radically outside or at the edges of genre.

Furthermore, the finished product itself is distinctive on a number of levels in terms of its design. The text is buttressed by endnotes that turn the notion of endnotes on its end? ear. Generally speaking, endnotes in patriarchal texts function as a marker of authority, but have no "autonomous significance." Woolf's endnotes are a function of women's authority and very often can function on their own as fragmented essays. She advances the biographies of women in the endnotes in an attempt to construct a new order, a new vision based on sisterhood. The endnotes maintain a sustained dialogue between the text and the web archive Woolf has created in her reading notes and scrapbooks. Woolf has re-invented the text yet again and created *Three Guineas* as archive, or multi-leveled hypertext, where passages in the body lead you to endnotes, which lead you to clippings, to diary entries, annotations, and back again to the text. As we digest Woolf's radical argument in terms of content, in terms of form we experience the text in a revolutionary new way.

Ultimately, it is Virginia Woolf's feminism, and her passionate accumulation of women facts that give her the courage and confidence to admit to the violence of her mind, confront it, process it, revel in it, and use it to her advantage as a writer. She claims not to understand the militaristic impulse, "As it is a fact that she cannot understand what instinct compels him, what glory, what interest, what manly satisfaction fighting provides for him—"without war there would be no outlet for the manly qualities which fighting develops"—as fighting thus is a sex characteristic which she cannot share" (TG 163). But then immediately includes a long endnote that speaks favorably

and romantically of the female amazon warrior. She is in essence answering herself in the back matter of the book, when she writes “The following quotation shows, however, that if sanctioned the fighting instinct easily develops” (TG 269). Virginia Woolf is impatient with injustice, and the conflagrations that precede this contemplative qualification further reveal Woolf’s deep understanding of violence and the temptations of her own militaristic desires.

Rhetorically speaking, Virginia Woolf likes to “blow things up”. She also likes to burn things to the ground. The first thing she wants to blow up, if we turn to the notes that predate the text, is religion, as we have seen, “St. Paul’s.” The next thing she wants to destroy is the university. She likes matches. She writes that “education, the finest education in the world, does not teach people to hate force, but to use it?” (TG 43). She questions supporting a women’s college as well for “if we help an educated man’s daughter to go to Cambridge are we not forcing her to think not about education but about war?—not how she can learn, but how she can fight in order that she may win the same advantages as her brothers?” (45). She recognizes the same advantages as her brothers as the rewards and spoils of war, a system of rewards and punishments she deems intolerable and irrational. But because the university is tied to the war machine, she wonders if she shouldn’t suggest students “buy rags and petrol and Bryant and May’s matches and burn the college to the ground?” (48).

The outrageousness and irony of Woolf’s statements are irresistibly appealing and certainly, when Woolf is “violent,” she is the most fun to follow around. Her goal is social replacement, anarchy, and starting anew when she writes “what is the aim of education, what kind of society, what kind of human being should [it] seek to produce.”

She will only support the charity if he satisfies her that he “will use it to produce the kind of society, the kind of people that will help to prevent war” (49). Women’s colleges are complicit as well and tied to patriarchy. Therefore, “no guinea should go to rebuilding the college on the old plan; just as certainly none could be spent upon building a college on a new plan.” The money instead “should be earmarked “Rags. Petrol. Matches.”

Then, in one of the most assertive, punctuating, satisfying moments in creative nonfiction, she writes, “Take this guinea and with it burn the college to the ground. Set fire to old hypocrises. Let the light of the burning building scare the nightingales and incarnadine the willows. And let the daughters of educated men dance round the fire and heap armful upon armful of dead leaves upon the flames. And let their mothers lean from the upper windows and cry, ‘Let it blaze! Let it blaze! For we have done with this “education”!’” (49). She concedes her position, however, because even a university for women on the old plan has to be better than sending women back to a cycle of dependency upon their fathers and brothers, because “they would again be consciously and unconsciously in favour of war,” (TG 46) an argument she extends to women’s entry into the professions, because even if one could say the professions are simply another form of slavery, they couldn’t possibly be worse than the form of slavery of having to depend upon a father (TG 20). In another Harrisonian gesture, Woolf writes, “the aim of the new college, the cheap college, should be not to segregate and specialize, but to combine. I should explore the ways in which mind and body can be made to co-operate; discover what new combinations make good wholes in human life” (TG 43).

Before the next conflagration, she segues again into a discussion of domestic fascism and the manner in which men deny women’s poverty. Her arguments here

anticipate the contemporary perception today of women on welfare as lazy, shiftless, and conniving manipulators of a system designed by men. She excoriates “men of established reputation” like Mr. Joad and Mr. Wells, for asking “how can it possibly be [. . .] that you are so terribly poor? The professions have been open to the daughters of educated men for almost 20 years” then documents women’s wages in comparison to men’s, funding of women’s education in comparison to men’s, and the obscene 300 million pounds spent annually on arms (TG 68). It is at this point that she asks, “What other conclusion then can one come to but that the whole of what was called “the women’s movement” has proved itself a failure; and the guinea which I am sending you herewith is to be devoted not to paying your rent but to burning your building. And when that is burnt, retire once more to the kitchen, Madam, and learn, if you can, to cook the diner which you may not share. . .” (TG 66). Using her own dramatic trope of violence, she links the private realm, the kitchen, the home, to the public realm and to women’s failure, according to H.G.Wells “to resist the practical obliteration of their freedom by Fascists or Nazis” (65). In her pursuit of human rights, of the collective, global “we”, but in an ironic declaration, she also wants to burn the word feminism and rejects the idea of enforced feminism. She writes:

Let us write the word in large black letters on a sheet of foolscap; then solemnly apply a match to the paper. Look, how it burns! What a light dances over the world! [. . .]The smoke has died down; the word is destroyed [. . .]the air is cleared; and in that clearer air what do we see? Men and women working together for the same cause. 155

In addition to being the first to explore the private/public dichotomy in terms of fascism, her bonfires celebrate a new era, and anticipate the idea of human rights and peace as a human rights issue by decades. Woolf's argument pointing out the inseparable nature of the private individual in the public patriarchal realm is picked up by future generations. In 1979, for example, Macciocchi writes that "Fascism has shown in a dramatic way that women could be made to serve, in the sense of both regression and repression; they are caught in the grip of a state masochism intended to produce D'Annunzio type joy, through the negation of joy and in the 'Triumph of death' (69). Macciocchi uses Woolf's premise to show how state abuse is replicated in the individual and cheats women of their authenticity and sexuality. In 1994, Rhonda Copelon opened federal courts to international rights claims, establishing rape and other gender crimes against women as war crimes, and made the analogy between the structure of domestic violence in the home and terror tactics and torture as tools of domination by the state, a position which owes its foundation to Woolf's argument in *Three Guineas*.

Woolf's pacifist project is also tied in to the visual evidence of war, the realities of war on the body. The packet of photos of war dead she receives weekly from the Spanish government that she describes but does not display share a tandem, symbiotic relationship with the photographs of the patriarchal figures she does display. The initial mention of war-dead photos speaks to Woolf's use of the violent text image to focus our eye and to make sure we see both the absent image on the page and the photographs of the patriarchs in the way she wants us to. Unlike Helen Wussow who characterizes Woolf's selection of the patriarchal figures as "whimsical" (2), the placement of the photographs in the text as well as the dialectical tension between the photos and the word pictures on the page are crucial to Woolf's argument linking patriarchy to fascism and war. The photographs are carefully laid out. In addition to the excitement of the bonfire gatherings, one of the other amusing moments in the text is the placement of "A General" who happens to be the founder of the Boy Scouts, Baden-Powell, in all his finery, medals, and bows, between the word break ridic- and -ulous (30-31).

In the initial mention of the photographs of the dead children she points out the unrecognizability of the bodies as human. She writes:

They are not pleasant photographs to look upon. They are photographs of dead bodies for the most part. This morning's collection contains the

photograph of what might be a man's body, or a woman's; it is so mutilated that it might, on the other hand, be the body of a pig. But those certainly are dead children, and that undoubtedly is the section of a house. A bomb has torn open the side; there is still a birdcage hanging in what was presumably the sitting-room, but the rest of the house looks like nothing so much as a bunch of spilkins suspended in mid-air. (14-15)

The bombed out ruins and the dead children are violent images, which she invokes in the text, most notably when she burns things down: on second mention during the college fire (49), for a third time at the suggestion that women return to economic disadvantage (61) and a fourth time before burning down the building of the women's movement (64). The dead children continue to haunt the text until they are ultimately blended at the end with the image of Man. The photograph as transcript of reality is challenged when the photographs are of dead bodies, because the violence inflicted on the photograph's subject is so massive that the subject becomes unrecognizable, unreal, yet its use as a foil for Woolf's argument is masterful, as she uses these word pictures to inform the displayed photos, as well.

Woolf's tone in the passage above continues to haunt us today as her words were eerily adopted in an article in *The New York Times* by Michael Kimmelman, "Photographs That Cry Out for Meaning," on the destruction of Germany after the allied bombing in World War II. He writes:

We see a photograph of a seated woman.

I think. Is it a woman?

Assuming it is, she has a child on her lap. The child is perhaps 3 or 4 and wears an overcoat with big buttons. The woman's head is facing up (heavenward), her mouth wide open. (B7)

The pictures of German dead bodies and the controversy surrounding their display in a book by Jorg Friedrich "Places of Fire" speak to "a self-imposed silence by Germans after World War II about the effects of Allied bombing on German civilians and cities" (B7), but also echo our failure to heed Woolf's plea that "A common interest unites us; it is one world, one life" (TC 217). While the figure of Il Duce or the Fuhrer may stand before the photograph of the Spanish dead children, we stand before the photograph of the German dead children. As Woolf writes "It suggests that the tyrannies and servilities of the one are the tyrannies and servilities of the other [. . .] we cannot dissociate ourselves from that figure but are ourselves that figure" (TG 217).

Woolf's narrative voice nearly becomes the shutter speed of the camera as she juxtaposes the absent photos of the dead children next to the displayed photos of the patriarchs. She transforms the spectacle of war (the violence, but also the glorification of that violence in the form of finery, medals, ceremonies, processions, and memorials) into the specular (of I see). For the figures she represents in the photographs, unlike the gruesome dead bodies, are instantly recognizable or would have been to readers of her time for each one of them was alive during the time of publication (Staveley). This is one explanation for the decision not to include a caption on each, other than in the most general way. The captionless photos and her refusal to display the photos of the dead bodies also serve as her offer to her male correspondent that we see the same thing when we look at them, the horror, the evil, but they also suggest an implacable remoteness to the horrors of war, that terrifies Woolf, a fear and sense of powerlessness, she shares with

Jane Harrison, who discusses the same disconnection at work in any path to war.

Harrison writes:

We do not personally wage war; even the generals sit, not upon their chargers leading the attack, but secluded in their bureaus; even the men lie in their trenches, often unseen by and unseeing those other men they kill. There is horror enough, God knows! But not for us the personal horror of doing your own killing. Everything—war, commerce, politics—is nowadays huge, abstracted, remote. (256)

The networking, webbing, and circularity of Woolf's style and structure in *Three*

Guineas replicate the ideology of Harrison's position of co-creation and co-operation.

Harrison writes:

It is only a forward faith that can remove the traditional mountain. And what have we to substitute for competition? Only co-operation. Co-operation is a dull, tarnished word, tarred with the brush of utilitarian economics. But is it really a cold, dull thing to work together to know, to work together to discover, to work together to try and make the world a better place for all of us? How savage we are if we can only herd together, wolf-like, to fight! (257)

Like Woolf, Harrison also explores the qualities and instincts, psychological, biological, and social that might help to reveal the sources of violence and war, making a connection between man's "instincts" and the system of education that produces him. She points out the dangers of competition, jealousy, and the fostering of intolerance that the university system represents, encourages, and funds. Harrison writes:

And yet our whole education, our public school system, is based on two things: *sich imponiren* of the group—dare at your peril to be different, to have personal distinction—and neck-to-neck competition in work and in games. We teach our children to work, not that they may do their best for

sheer love of the thing done, but that they may do better than somebody else. Surely always an ugly thing, for someone else is hurt and minished.

If children are so reared, can we wonder that grown men are at war? (257).

Sich imponiren translates from the German as “to impose oneself.” Woolf, also, critiques the British education system at length and its connection to patriarchy and by extension, fascism, as she asks “What, then, is this “university education” of which Mary Kingsley’s sisterhood have heard so much and to which they have contributed so painfully?” (31).

All men in power, Woolf states, have had a university education, women, have paid into that fund, as well as the state, as Woolf chronicles “the fact of the immense sum of money that has been spent upon education in the past 500 years,” (TG 31) an education that works diligently and relentlessly to “sink the private brother [...] and inflate in its stead a monstrous male” (TG).

Like Woolf, Harrison examines the ways in which we validate and glorify war. She suggests that the soldier is finally vindicated when his job, the business of war, at last comes about. Invoking the rhythmic, dumb chant of a war song, meant to encourage the lemming-like march of soldiers to their deaths, she writes:

When Tommy goes off to the front, he sings, I am told [...] We’re here because we’re here, because we’re here, because we’re here.” And a very good marching song it no doubt is, for Tommy’s business is not psychological analysis. When the officer starts on the same errand, he has the immense personal joy—a joy, perhaps, beyond all others—of feeling that at last his profession, his particular job in life, has not only become suddenly real, but *the* reality of the moment—the

thing that counts. Consciously or unconsciously, that thought must set his heart aflame. (227)

And, Woolf, too, suggests that because the soldier is trained by profession not to think, because if he does, he will be killed, then we must do the thinking for him, an idea she returns to in her essay, “Thoughts on Peace During an Air Raid,” when she writes “so let us think for him. Let us try to drag up into consciousness the subconscious Hitlerism that holds us down. It is the desire for aggression; the desire to dominate and enslave” (245). In this later essay, she continues to ask her audiences to see the illogical nature of their question and response: “Who is Hitler? What is he? Aggressiveness, tyranny, the insane love of power made manifest, they reply. Destroy that, and you will be free” (245). Harrison also speaks of the fallacious, insane reasoning behind the idea that war can bring about peace, freedom, and be a benefit to civilization. She writes:

War is ennobling, we are told, so long as the rules of civilized war are observed—so long as we “play the game.” Civilized war! No such thing exists. War may be necessary—it is always barbarous. It is no real settlement of any difficulty—no real adaptation of national need to national environment. (257)

Both Harrison and Woolf, who add disclaimers in the beginnings of their essays that they may indeed not be qualified to speak on matters of foreign policy, given the fact that they are women and excluded from the education and political power so generously gifted to their male counterparts, however, they each feel qualified to speak, as human beings, on human nature. As Harrison writes, “the only way to allay this irritation is to track out the cause and try to find the human need that called for the reaction” (238), and if we are able to “show the meaning and function of patriotism, its wrongness and its rightness. When

we are truly patriotic, war will, I believe, end” (225). Woolf is also preoccupied with a definition of patriotism, and also with the motivations of war. She asks what drives the Air Force pilot up in the sky? “he is driven by voices in himself—ancient instincts, instincts fostered and cherished by education and tradition” (Thoughts on Peace 246). She questions “Is he to be blamed for those instincts? Could we switch off the maternal instinct at the command of a table full of politicians?” and then she fantasizes about a world being asked to turn off our maternal instincts:

but if it were necessary for the sake of humanity, for the peace of the world, that child-bearing should be restricted, the maternal instinct subdued, women would attempt it. Men would help them. They would honour them for their refusal to bear children. They would give them other openings for their creative power. That too must make part of our fight for freedom. We must help the young Englishmen to root out from themselves the love of medals and decorations. We must create more honourable activities for those who try to conquer in themselves their fighting instinct, their subconscious Hitlerism. We must compensate the man for the loss of his gun.” (247)

In order to compensate man for the loss of his weaponry, she turns to our basic human instinct to create, and idea she encounters as she listens to the planes overhead in the midst of an air raid. Woolf writes, “The emotion of fear and of hate is [...] sterile, unfertile. Directly that fear passes, the mind reaches out and instinctively revives itself by trying to create. Since the room is dark it can create only from memory” (247). In order to help men turn away from acting on their militaristic desires “we must give him access to the creative feelings. We must make happiness. We must free him from the machine.

We must bring him out of his prison into the open air. But what is the use of freeing the young Englishman if the young German and the young Italian remain slaves?" (247-8). Harrison also discusses the importance of extending pacifism across all borders as she bemoans the loss of the privileging of internationalism the loss of "the old ideals of the "citizen of the world" (238). Herd mentality and the projection of the state's needs upon the individual feed the fuel and psychology of war. War mentality instructs that "before all things be local, parochial, patriotic—i.e., dwell on your differences, and be prepared to fight for them; cultivate the small, combative herd-emotions, and for your religion [someone outside of yourself] will provide it for you. Your god must be the projection of [the state], as local as Javeh and as combative." This god, according to Harrison:

Demands, he necessitates, immediate unquestioning faith, faith so unquestioning that it is a mainspring of action, faith wholly dogmatic and non-intellectual, whose only function is to pull the trigger. Such faith is in its final analysis a local affirmation of self-confidence, "la croyance c'est la patrie." (238)

The War Spirit "above all, craves for action, and only for such thinking as is immediately translatable into action" (241). It is in fact anti-thinking and can only lead to and foster militarism. Harrison gives Dostoevsky as an example of a great writer, who uncharacteristically held reactionary views tied to the Russian state that abused him. She writes "Dostoevsky stands for patriotism, and reactionaries are all ardent patriots. There enthusiasm is national rather than international" (242). Dostoevsky "we have been perhaps not wholly surprised to find that the man who created these amazing figures was himself not only epileptic and dissolute, but also an arch-egotist to the verge of madness—[...]he appears in his letters, supremely a patriot in the narrowest sense. He

really hated the international ideal” and yet his own country in a mock execution had “Dostoevsky stood up in his shirt against the prison-wall to be shot” (244). He was then forced to live abroad where as Harrison writes “his utter inability to see any good in foreign lands would be childish if it were not the source of such poignant misery” (244). Despite his treatment, Doestoevsky, the reactionary, “anti-intellectualist, Collectivist of the small group, the nation, a patriot through and through” still loved Russia, and Harrison instructs we have to learn from all these reactionaries and nationalists. Everyone feels love of country. Germany’s love of country is now “alas! the handmaid of war” (245). For Harrison and her intellectual colleagues and “us older liberals,” patriotism “was not an inspiring word. It spelled narrowness—limitations. We aspired to be citizens of the world” (242). But through Doestoevsky’s example, she has learned that to be patriotic, to love one’s country is not harmful, it is the idea of *sich imponiren*, to impose oneself, that “sins worst against patriotism” (245). Doestoevsky, in other words, was an equal opportunity hater of “others” but he did not *sich imponiren* as he “was Russia for the Russian [...] He never tried to impose Russianism as a gospel or a panacea, and, [...] he never even tried to infuse the Russian spirit as the salt of the earth” (246). According to Harrison:

Sich imponiren is the very spirit of war; true patriotism, national differentiation, of peace. [...] War, which seems to be nurtured by patriotism—which seems the uttermost expression of it, turns at last on patriotism and slays it. The patriot loves his country because it is different from others, because of its local colour, flavour, smell, because of its living personality. But let that country “impose itself”, make

other countries obey its laws, accept its customs, adopt its very language, and all these distinctions, lovely and beloved, lapse into a grey uniformity. (246)

In “Thoughts on Peace in an Air Raid,” Woolf also yearns for a celebration of diversity, as she envisions a scenario, that if the Englishman shoots down the German plane, the two pilots will become friends as men, not soldiers, and the Englishwoman will make him tea. That, according to Woolf, “would seem to show that if you can free the man from the machine, the seed does not fall upon altogether stony ground. The seed may be fertile” (248), for “Unless we can think peace into existence we—not this one body in this one bed but millions of bodies yet to be born—will lie in the same darkness and hear the same death rattle overhead” (243).

Three Guineas yearns for a re-visioning of society along pacifistic communal lines invoked earlier by Jane Harrison in “Epilogue on the War: Peace with Patriotism” when she answers her correspondents that “we can best help you to prevent war not by repeating your words and following your methods but by finding new words and new methods. We can best help you to prevent war not by joining your society but by remaining outside your society but in cooperation with its aim. That aim is the same for us both. It is to assert “the rights of all—all men and women—to the respect in their persons of the great principles of Justice and Equality and Liberty”” (TG 170). And it is in this spirit of co-operation that Harrison writes that “we must live and let live, tolerating—nay, fostering—in the life of individuals and of nations an infinite parti-coloured diversity, and so at last win

Peace with Patriotism (259).

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