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The Nationality of a World State: (Re)Constructions of England in Utopian Fiction

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PhD English Literature

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis, submitted in candidature for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Edinburgh, and the research contained herein is of my own composition, except where explicitly stated in the text, and was not previously submitted for the award of any other degree or professional qualification at this or any other university.

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Maxim Shadurski, BA, CandPhil, MSc
16 September 2013

Abstract

This thesis examines the utopian writings of Robert Hugh Benson, H. G. Wells and Aldous Huxley in the context of contemporary and modern nationally conscious discourses. Focusing on the period of 1910-1939, the present study explores the terms and strategies whereby utopian visions of a World State, premised on religion or universal governance, engage with, and contribute to, constructions of England as a specific topography, with a political culture, social hierarchies, religious sensibilities, and literary tradition.

Informed by literary history, utopian theory, studies of national character and nationalism, the thesis argues that the writings of Benson, Wells and Huxley communicate an ascertainable reciprocity between these authors' utopian imagination and national susceptibilities. The thesis investigates the ways in which the studied fictions endorse visions of a World State, offering a mediated response not only to the contemporary condition of England, but also to England's topographic, political, and socio-cultural continuity. Of particular interest is a re-invocation of Southern England as either a fictional setting or a liminal environment for the emergence of a World State. The study also investigates the narrative anxieties about the retreat of Liberalism from the national political scene, being superseded by the restrictive regimes of a World State; and a fictional renewal of social hierarchies as nationally conscious models for efficient government. The thesis further accounts for the authorial engagements with continuity, examining Benson's investment in dynastic rule, Wells's hostility to revolution, and Huxley's redefinition of the 'English poetic mind' to oppose the dissolution of national literary traditions in a global future.

In exploring the extent to which alternative versions of England (Catholic, Cosmopolitan, Alien) dominate the visions of world unity, this thesis contends that the nationality of a World State manifests itself not in the universal ends that such visions seek to achieve, but in the nationally conscious means they press into service.

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My greatest debt is to my parents, Ivan and Anastasiya, without whose love, patience and faith, my utopian impulse would have been so much more impoverished.

Key to Abbreviated Citations

Works by Robert Hugh Benson

DA – The Dawn of All
LW – Lord of the World

Works by H. G. Wells

AD – After Democracy
AV – Ann Veronica
EA – Experiment in Autobiography
FMM – The First Men in the Moon
JP – Joan and Peter
MBST – Mr Britling Sees It Through
MLG – Men Like Gods
MU – A Modern Utopia
OC – The Open Conspiracy
OH – The Outline of History
STC – The Shape of Things to Come
TC – Things to Come: A Film Story Based on the Material Contained in His History of the Future The Shape of Things to Come
WB – World Brain
WWHM – The Work, Wealth and Happiness of Mankind

Works by Aldous Huxley

AH – Antic Hay
AMS – After Many a Summer
BMB – Beyond the Mexique Bay
BNW – Brave New World
BNWR – Brave New World Revisited
CY – Crome Yellow
DWYW – Do What You Will
EG – Eyeless in Gaza
EM – Ends and Means
MN – Music at Night
OM – On the Margin
OT – The Olive Tree
PCP – Point Counter Point
PS – Proper Studies

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Introduction

> *True genesis is not at the beginning but at the end,* and it starts to begin only when society and existence become radical, i.e. grasp their roots. But the root of history is the working, creating human being who reshapes and overhauls the given facts. Once he has grasped himself and established what is his, without expropriation and alienation, in real democracy, there arises in the world something which shines into the childhood of all and in which no one has yet been: homeland.
>
> Ernst Bloch. *The Principle of Hope.*

'The Nationality of a World State: (Re)Constructions of England in Utopian Fiction' examines the terms and strategies whereby the utopian imagination interacts with national consciousness. Focusing on the decades between 1910 and 1939, the study explores the ways in which imaginary forms of world unity, premised on religion or universal governance, engage with, and contribute to, contemporary and modern constructions of England. Marked by a continuing renegotiation of nations in the international arena, this period provides numerous occasions that vie to unite the world and at once reinforce its divisions. While the advent of flying and radio broadcasting render national boundaries porous, the First World War redraws them quite provisionally and to more detrimental effects. The flowering of European nationalisms, coupled with the bureaucratization of nationality in the form of passports, occurs simultaneously, as new opportunities for world unity present themselves. In seeking to comprehend these frequently opposed tendencies, the study situates the utopian imagination, which is globalizing in perspective, in the context of literary, political and intellectual accounts that problematize England's national specificity. Read in this light, the utopian fictions of Robert Hugh Benson, H. G. Wells and Aldous Huxley replace England with a global network of religious, economic, socio-political and cultural activity. However, despite the fact that England's distinctive profile thus becomes transfigured or largely forfeited in such alternative futures, some residual continuity remains vested in the southern topographies of London, Berkshire and Surrey. This symptomatic placement of the Home Counties at the centre of respective globalizing constituencies, albeit symbolically ambivalent, signals a wider conceptual, historical and contextual

problematic which spans the utopian imagination, the shifting national anxieties of the studied period, and individual authorial concerns.

1. Utopian Imagination: Between Global Community and Nation

This thesis is preoccupied with the ways in which projects of world unity retain a varying imaginative connection with England. In general terms, the study's primary concern is to open up an ongoing exchange of energies taking place within utopian fiction, which strives to accommodate the universal with the national. In the extensive body of the conceptualizations of utopia that inform the present investigation, some central and defining categories merit attention. These categories comprehend the unifying ends of the utopian imagination in varied, yet interrelated tropes, such as universality, humanity, and globality. Robert Elliott's study of utopia as a literary genre locates the origins of the utopian imagination in the transhistorical images of 'the Golden Age, the Earthly Paradise, the Fortunate Isles, the Islands of the Blest, the Happy Otherworld' (4). Indeed, all the aforesaid archetypal nodes are universal in how they make up for an undesirable and deficient present. Human aspirations that seek to 'overcome all difficulties by the imagination of possible alternatives' (Vieira 7) become a crucial driving force of utopia.

This distinctive force is elaborated by Ernst Bloch, later to become a conceptual and methodological touchstone or an analytical point of reference in the theories of Fredric Jameson, Ruth Levitas, Tom Moylan, to name only a few. In his seminal magnum opus *The Principle of Hope* (1938-47; 1953), Bloch imbues the utopian imagination with a psychological impulse that guides mankind to a fulfilled existence. Even though the concept of humanity's progress is essentially teleological, Bloch asserts that 'the human capacity for such an absolute concept of goal is the tremendous aspect in an existence where the best still remains patchwork, where every end again and again becomes a means to serve the still utterly opaque, indeed in and for itself still unavailable fundamental goal, final goal' (1375). Because the final destination (the *ultimum*) can only reveal a tantalizing horizon of unrealized potentialities, Bloch envisions this horizon as offering 'the progressive newness of history' (202). For Bloch, the category of newness, or what he calls *novum*, allows the utopian imagination to chart 'the always intended promised land, promised by

process' (205).[1] Just as Bloch connects the utopian imagination to an impulse that tends towards a better version of the world, Fredric Jameson embeds this impulse in what he terms the 'political unconscious'. Jameson's numerous interventions into utopianism yield a necessary distinction between localized, and therefore deceptive, social concessions, pipedreams, and 'swindles of the here and now', on the one hand (*Archaeologies* 3), and the ideas of universal social unity, on the other. In *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (1981), he stipulates that the 'achieved collectivity or organic group of any kind – oppressors fully as much as oppressed – is Utopian not in itself, but only insofar as all such collectivities are themselves *figures* for the ultimate concrete collective life of an achieved Utopian or classless society' (281). In accentuating collective solidarity as being central to human aspirations, Jameson's conceptualization endows all social groups with an ability to conjure up new forms of society. As the utopian imagination underpins the fabric of human desire for a transformed social order, scholars such as Tom Moylan, Barbara Goodwin and Keith Taylor are unanimous in their readiness to deploy utopian visions as 'totalizing lenses' (Moylan 10) that supply global-scale views of 'social organization and operation' (Goodwin and Taylor 207).[2] Such positions are indeed productive in determining the use value of the utopian imagination, which is oriented towards creating a global ecology for humanity's fulfilment. This understanding of the utopian imagination, assembled here on the basis of the above positions, defines this study's theoretical perspective: the tropes of universality, humanity, and globality are fundamental to the production of a world unity which takes various forms in utopian fiction.

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[1] Along these lines, *novum* takes centre stage as a defining principle in Darko Suvin's concept of utopia, which is based on 'cognitive innovation [...] deviating from the author's and implied reader's norm of reality' (64). This principle of cognitive estrangement permits Suvin to propose the unveiling of an alternative history as being guided by the utopian imagination. Taken up by Zorica Djergović-Joksimović, this reading produces a valuable and reassuring account of how utopia, be it a literary fiction, a political manifesto, or a philosophical tract, manages to prepare us, through both anticipations and warnings, for the newness that history is yet to unveil (21, 224).

[2] The notion of utopia as an epistemological tool for totalizing reconfigurations of reality lies at the centre of my previous research and publications. In putting forward a tripartite utopian model of the world which embraces outward form (topos), inner idea (ethos) and uniting substance (telos), my interventions have offered a structural matrix by which utopian fictions may be evaluated and understood for their social and cultural significance (Shadurski, *Utopias* 8-15; Shadurski, *Model* 40-7). This model forms the background of this current analysis of the utopian writings of Benson, Wells and Huxley, particularly surfacing in the discussion of imagined topographies (sections 1.1, 2.2, 3.1), political and literary culture (sections 1.2, 2.1, 3.2), and scientific discourses (sections 1.3, 2.3, 3.3).

The utopian imagination is frequently in contradiction to its concrete embodiment in fictional and communal practices. One such concretization has been proposed by Lyman Tower Sargent, suggesting that utopianism and nationalism 'are closer fits' as they both relate to 'imagined communities' ('Utopianism' 88). In conflating utopias with nations on the basis of a collective national memory which includes 'many eutopian and dystopian stories and experiences' ('Utopianism' 88), Sargent primarily draws on the theory developed by Benedict Anderson. The latter locates the origins of national consciousness in modernity, which brings about 'a half-fortuitous, but explosive, interaction between a system of production and productive relations (capitalism), a technology of communications (print), and the fatality of human linguistic diversity' (Anderson 42-3). Thus, print capitalism is deemed to exploit the vernaculars that pre-exist 'imagined communities', and thereby reinforce their territorial and cultural divisions. Anderson's postulate about the modern genesis of imagined communities has inspired Philip Wegner to put the ascertainable linkages between the utopian imagination and the nation-state to further lengths. In *Imaginary Communities: Utopia, the Nation, and the Spatial Histories of Modernity* (2002), he produces a sustained analysis of the ways in which utopian fictions (which he terms 'narrative utopias') conceptually prefigure the models of both the nation-state and the global community. Opening his account with Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516), Wegner observes that this inaugural text conceptualizes a community which is endowed with micro-level politics, popular authority, a distinct language, and a religiously tolerant mentality. According to Wegner, such anticipatory gauges of the utopian imagination, emerging in *Utopia*, help to 'usher in the conceptual framework or representation of space of "nationness" within which the particularity of each individual nation can then be represented' (55). However, despite its universality, this hitherto unavailable model bears the hallmarks of sixteenth-century English geography. Not only does the number of towns and cities coincide in England and Utopia, but the Thames also gives precedent to the tidal regularity of the Utopian river Anyder. These underlying coincidences are importantly reflected in More's famed pun on the word 'utopia', which suggests that an imaginary nowhere (*ou-topia*) may only ironically be a good place (*eu-topia*). Electing to frame his investigation with *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949), Wegner turns

his attention to George Orwell's disturbing projection of a globality which usurps England's distinctiveness. The critic maintains that, by reducing the 'play of utopian Possible Worlds elaborated in Zamyatin's narrative [...] to a single, homogeneous, monolithic enclosure, the "World" of Oceania' (Wegner 188), Orwell disowns the idea of world unity for its totalitarian implications. It follows from Wegner's argumentation that, while More warily anticipates the arrival of the nation-state in England, Orwell envisages a termination of English culture in the context of a global community. Regardless of the very concrete historical moments that generate such responses, these authors' anticipations of newness reveal their central concerns about the destiny of England. Just as a traditional, pre-modern England holds sway over More's imagination, England's threatened continuity afflicts Orwell.[3]

Wegner indicates, but never pursues, the resonances of this conflicted re-emergence of England, which traverses some of the utopian fiction, as he remains strongly committed to the idea that the narrative utopia and the nation-state emerge within the space of modernity. However, an intermingling of the utopian imagination and nationally conscious susceptibilities can be better understood through Anthony D. Smith's theorization, which seeks to balance out the 'modernist' approach to the nation.[4] A. D. Smith concedes that nations are indeed imagined communities, not natural features of the world. But the process of imagination is not arbitrary, as it builds on a shared fund of pre-existing ethnic material. In defining the nation as 'a named human population sharing a historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and

[3] In *The Lion and the Unicorn* (1941), Orwell expressly championed England's continuity: 'It needs some very great disaster, such as prolonged subjugation by a foreign enemy, to destroy a national culture. [...] England will still be England, an everlasting animal stretching into the future and the past, and, like all living things, having the power to change out of all recognition and yet remain the same' (78). This evocative example, steeped in organic metaphor, illustrates Orwell's investment in English cultural endurance, whereas *Nineteen Eighty-Four* bespeaks his deep-laid anxiety about the end of nations and national cultures alike.

[4] In an overview of the modern theories of nationalism, Andrew Escobedo critiques 'modernists', such as Eric Hobsbawm, Ernest Gellner and John Breuilly, for their arguments that 'nations are recent political inventions created by the elite classes to keep the masses under control. This means that the feeling of national belonging *does not lead* but rather *follows from* manipulative nationalist ideology, counter-intuitive as that may seem' (204). At the other end of this conceptual spectrum, Escobedo places the theories of 'primordialists', including A. D. Smith, who have contended the idea of early-modern nationhood as 'the experience and expression of national belonging', which guides the creation of nations. In Escobedo's words, 'modern nationalists cannot invent *any* old nation: history partially constrains their fabrications. This suggests more continuity between early modern and modern than the modernist view allows' (206).

duties for all members' (*Identity* 14), A. D. Smith resolutely plants the origins of nations in history. His primary emphases on territoriality, mythologies, memories, and culture allow an understanding of national consciousness as a set of historically grounded discourses which translate and broadcast the aforesaid elements of the nation. In order to illustrate the robust import that such discourses have over the present-day world, A. D. Smith admits that, despite the ever increasing opportunities for world unity, national consciousness does not ebb, only continues to flourish. He goes on to conclude, categorically though, that 'the nation remains embedded in the past that shapes its future as much as any present global trends' (Smith, *Nations* 158). This somewhat deterministic statement carries suggestive implications for our further discussion of visions of united humanity which are keenly conscious of national topographies and other constructions of the nation. If the modern world is so manifestly determined by nations as A. D. Smith deems it to be, national consciousness may equally exercise a certain degree of influence over the utopian imagination.

For the above reason, this thesis distinguishes itself from Wegner's study, not only in the selection of the utopian writings to be explored, but most importantly, in the conceptualization of the utopian imagination. This analysis situates the universalizing outreach of the utopian imagination in relation to local needs, as understood by Ruth Levitas. In her seminal *The Concept of Utopia* (1990), she supplies a reconsideration of how universal human needs can be only perceived as concrete manifestations that vary between societies:

> Most utopias are portrayed as universal utopias. This portrayal entails that they necessarily make claims about human nature as a means of legitimising the particular social arrangements prescribed. [...] The appeal to needs is made, in fact, to provide such a (pseudo-) objective criterion, rather than make explicit the values involved in particular constructions of individuals and societies, and present this as what it is – a matter of moral choice. [...] The utopian claim to universality, however, cannot be accepted; and this makes any definition of utopia in terms of content problematic (214).

The utopian imagination is thus re-oriented towards universally applicable, general guidelines that require specification in the context of local needs. The reverse side of such an arrangement is that the utopian imagination may have a concrete national underpinning, whenever local needs remain within the purview of the nation, and are therefore enmeshed in national consciousness. If viewed from this perspective, the utopian imagination is capable of producing imagined communities which are in

conflict about the values of a universally and even globally inhabitable future, while being co-opted to the content of local pressures, including nationally sensitive issues. In utopian fiction, this conflict can take the shape of an uneasy reciprocity between creative aspirations to transcend the nation, and at the same time retain some of its recognizable features in a newly emerging globality.

2. 1910-1939: Constructions of England

In seeking to comprehend the historical content of nationally conscious narratives that come into play with visions of world unity, this thesis focuses on the years between 1910 and 1939. This period, demarcated by the close of the Edwardian era and the start of the Second World War, saw the production of various constructions of England, explicitly concerned with its continuity, with the endurance of its appearance and culture, as well as with its people's character. The wide-ranging emphases on continuity, which galvanized national consciousness at the time, can be best understood in relation to some of the major transformations that were highlighted in contemporary political, intellectual and literary discourses. In many relevant ways, Virginia Woolf captured the onset of these seminal changes in her essay *Mr Bennett and Mrs Brown* (1924). Deliberating about the centrality of character to any novelist's creative endeavours, she famously asserts that 'on or about December 1910 human character changed' (Woolf, *Bennett* 4). While acknowledging the arbitrariness of her chronology, Woolf nevertheless connects the said change of human character to certain wholesale shifts in society: 'All human relations have shifted – those between masters and servants, husbands and wives, parents and children. And when human relations change there is at the same time a change in religion, conduct, politics, and literature. Let us agree to place one of these changes about the year 1910' (*Bennett* 5). As Woolf remains intentionally reserved about the specific events that could have caused any such change, her reticence has led Samuel Hynes to construe 1910 as the occasion for 'the radical change of consciousness' (4). Other commentators, such as Sara Blair, are more determined to historicize Woolf's choice of the year 1910 as signifying 'a definitive break with Victorian norms of sobriety and social control' (160). Because Woolf proposes the change of human character in retrospect, she might have had in mind not only the

end of the Edwardian age, but also a redefinition of England's political life and social boundaries which, having been initiated in or around 1910, gained momentum later. At the same time, Woolf's proposition to associate change with 1910 poses a number of problems. If human character is primarily implicated in domestic affairs, it becomes inextricable from the dominant concerns about continuity that engulfed British society and politics. Put differently, 1910 may have triggered change, but this change was to be filtered through the advocacy and practice of continuity.

A more specific, albeit less sanguine, picture of change and continuity is presented in C. F. G. Masterman's *The Condition of England* (1909). While Woolf uses the 'homely' example of a cook to demonstrate the awakening of a lower-class consciousness, Masterman voices anxiety about the rise of the multitude, which may render an 'onslaught on civilization'. By 'civilization' he implies the continuity of England that has been threatened by the redrawing of social and economic boundaries:

> A few generations ago that difficulty did not exist. England was the population of the English countryside: 'the rich man in his castle', 'the poor man at his gate'; the feudal society of country house, country village, and little country town, in a land whose immense wealth still slept undisturbed. But no one today would seek in the ruined villages and dwindling population of the countryside the spirit of an 'England' four-fifths of whose people have now crowded into the cities. The little red-roofed towns and hamlets, the labourer in the fields at noontide or evening, the old English service in the old English village church, now stand but as the historical survival of a once great and splendid past (Masterman 13).

Through a nostalgic invocation of the English countryside, this account laments an England in which the age-old relationships between aristocrat and peasant have become rather indeterminate. Like Woolf, Masterman brings to the fore the sense of thorough change, which has affected both town and country; however, he accentuates the fact that continuity can still exist as an enduring memento from the past. While Masterman's resonant construction of England's condition only lays out the ongoing change of continuity, the several decades that follow his account provide a major reconfiguration of certain time-tested relations. Jonathan Wild explains that the change of the social dynamic in England was particularly expedited by the objective needs that the Great War had created, when soldiers of lower birth had to be promoted to 'parity of rank with the sons of the aristocracy' (82). Since these newly sworn officers were not always comfortably integrated into post-war society as 'temporary gentlemen', Wild concludes that 'the war had disrupted the strict nature

of the dividing lines' (91). The interwar period witnessed further occasions for social mobilization through elite education for the middle classes, and through universal suffrage that came into full effect in Britain in 1928. However, despite all these historic developments, no one would argue that Masterman's fears about the ultimate collapse of the hierarchical continuity were not confirmed.

The constructions of England that were produced during the studied period are largely inseparable from the simultaneous changes affecting the political sphere. *The Strange Death of Liberal England* (1935) is not only the title of George Dangerfield's noteworthy reflection, but also another elegy for England's continuity. Whereas Masterman reads social disruption into the appearance of the English countryside, Dangerfield discerns upheavals in the political crisis of the Liberal Party, which had hit a dead end by 1910: '[B]efore them stood a barrier of Capital which they dared not attack. Behind them stood the House of Lords' (Dangerfield 21). As the Liberals could not act convincingly on either social welfare or upper-class privileges, their failures were accompanied by a renegotiation of the Englishman's time-honoured beliefs, such as liberty, free trade, progress, and reform (Dangerfield 20). However, the alleged eclipse of the above identifications, highlighted by Dangerfield, seems somewhat unfounded, especially in the wider context of the interwar years. The unifying roles of Liberalism as a dominant national ideology might have become defunct around 1910, but it is an undeniable fact that the Liberal Party had stayed in office until 1915, and played a prominent role in the later Coalition government. It was the seismic electoral gains of the Labour Party in the 1920s that brought a new political force to the fore of national life. Yet this major change in Britain's political landscape never jettisoned, only renewed constructions of England invested with continuity. In his study of the patriotism of the British Left, Paul Ward provides a detailed account of the ways in which Labour readily espoused the parliamentary system of government as 'the sole legitimate vehicle for the advance of socialism' (5). The Party's defence of the existing institutional framework occurred in tandem with the advocacy of English liberty, which figured strongly both in the campaigns against the House of Lords in 1910 and in Labour's patriotic rhetoric during the Great War. In projecting the extent to which Labour came to embrace an England of continuous government and liberty,

Ward additionally emphasizes the Party's reformist, rather than revolutionary, agenda, which 'drew again from the vocabulary of Englishness that had been used to brand anarchism, Marxism and syndicalism as foreign' (197). In her account of British political thought, Julia Stapleton further explains that, despite the gradual withdrawal of Liberalism from Britain's political stage and a 'sharp leftward turn', 'positive ideals of Englishness persisted throughout the interwar period. In particular, they were mobilized and further developed against the "foreign" extremist creeds of both left and right which appeared to be making dangerous inroads into intellectual opinion at home' ('Thought' 263). The above outline, painted in broad brushstrokes, identifies some of the general, mainstream tendencies in British society and political thought during 1910-1939. Elaboration on the relevant historical and socio-political contexts is provided in the chapters which follow.

The professed adherence to the notions of continuity in times of potential social and political rupture is arguably borne of an earlier tradition of Burkean conservatism, which was seen as a foundational source for constructions of England (Mandler, *Character* 24). Sharply pointed against revolution and foreign influence, Edmund Burke's ideas re-emerge in the contemporary discourses that seek to uphold English institutions as guarantors of liberty. In *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), Burke places the utmost premium on continuity, embodied in the English Constitution, and opposes the prospect of any disruptive change:

> By this unprincipled facility of changing the state as often, and as much, and in as many ways as there are floating fancies or fashions, the whole chain and continuity of the commonwealth would be broken. No one generation could link with the other. Men would become little better than the flies of a summer (95).

Indeed, Burke's investment in continuity and generational links signals an important organizing principle, a semantic core of constructions of England. However, as Peter Mandler observes in his history of the English character, Burke, like many of his contemporaries, defines the character of England, not by the character of English people, but 'by its institutions and its governing classes [...]' (*Character* 26). Along these lines, any re-emergence of Burkean rhetoric in later periods entails the institutional aspect of England premised on 'the slow, gradual, halting, fallible process of improvement' (Mandler, *Character* 25). In or around 1910, human character may have changed, yet the admirably persistent hostility to pervasive

radical change in the social and political fabric of contemporary England testifies to a much wider institutional allegiance to continuity than Woolf could permit.

Meanwhile, the emphasis on institutional continuity is complicated by England's relation to Britain. J. H. Grainger's observation is highly pertinent to this discussion, that until the outbreak of the Second World War '[t]he consciousness of Britain was predominantly English' (53). English hegemony over the geography, economy and demography of the British Isles resulted in the frequent identification of Britain with England. John Walton contends that in the early twentieth century, British identity manifested itself largely, if not exclusively, in institutional terms which included the royal family, Protestantism, empire, British English, and citizenship (520-9). However, all these institutions – with the exception of the Church of Scotland, the Scottish system of education, and a certain linguistic autonomy of Wales – had an unrivalled base in England, and were therefore representative of England. The subsequent use of England where Britain was meant primarily involved a construction of the model English character with wider implications for the British Isles. One such version of character can be found as late as Stanley Baldwin's collection *On England* (1926). Baldwin, who served as Britain's three-time Conservative Prime Minister (1923-4, 1924-9, 1935-7), opens his address to the Royal Society of St. George by thanking the audience for bearing with his deliberate use 'of the word "England" without some fellow at the back of the room shouting out "Britain"' (*England* 1). This conscious avoidance of 'that substitution that is so popular to-day' (*England* 1) feeds into Baldwin's celebratory eulogy for 'the great English race', whose exemplary features range from self-control to individualism, from love of home to love of humanity (*England* 9). Because the Englishman is deemed to be God's creation, Baldwin places the English character at the foundation of both England and the British Empire: 'It is these gifts that have made the Englishman what he is, and that have enabled the Englishman to make England and the Empire what it is' (*England* 4). The professed continuity, rather than change, of character undergirds this exclusionary reaffirmation. In presenting the English character as a universally prized inheritance, Baldwin legitimizes its superiority in wider British and imperial contexts.

A symbolic, though hardly thorough, overhaul of the meaning of England, vested in the ideas about the model national character, is provided in A. G. Macdonell's *England, Their England* (1933). The novel's underlying concern is twofold: in order to conceive of England, it must be first separated out from Britain and, by extension, empire. The narrative opens with a Scottish journalist Donald Cameron receiving a commission to write a book about England 'as seen through the eyes of a Scotsman' (Macdonell 40). Much as Cameron is later made privy to 'typical Englishmen' and stereotypical occasions, such as a game of cricket, he denies the existence of the English character as such: 'There's no such thing. [...] They're all different' (97). Instead, the protagonist more readily detects 'the real England' in the landscape, whenever it remains 'unspoilt by factories and financiers and tourists and hustle' (Macdonell 72), and whenever it grants a profound sense of continuity. Ending his English sojourn in the City of Winchester, Cameron is shown to step into an ever-lasting England which additionally mingles with his childhood memories: 'The English school, whose motto puts kindliness above flourishment or learning, lay among its water-meads, and all around was the creator, the inheritor, the ancestor, and the descendant of it all, the green and kindly land of England' (Macdonell 188). On many scores, the protagonist's allegedly foreign perspective results in indulgent sentimentality, rather than exacting critique, and indicates the Scotsman's ultimate inability to feel absolutely abroad in England. At the same time, *England, Their England* attempts to refocus constructions of England from the continuity of character onto the continuity associated with the landscape. While the former continuity enforces an outward-looking, yet exclusionary, England, the latter privileges an England whose outlook is introspective. In moving beyond the English character, Macdonell's novel tentatively suggests a distinction that has to be made between the institutional discourses of England (which are often coterminous with Britain at large) and an England whose landscape embraces, and pays homage to, its cultural uniqueness. This distinction is instrumental in making sense of the varying aspects of England with which the utopian fictions discussed in this thesis engage.

Researchers of Englishness find consensus in perceiving a link between the symptomatic 'turn inward' in English consciousness to the increasing problems that accompanied 'a particular, "God-given" mission' (Kumar 196) and Britain's

economic demise, spanning the period before the Great War and the interwar years (Stapleton, 'Citizenship' 151). These historic developments can be seen to herald a gradual decomposition of the discourse of character, which reached its nadir after the start of the Second World War. National character came to be viewed as 'the most effective hindrance to the next step in civilization, the formation of social units which will include many nations, leading eventually to a world federation of peoples based on the conception of one common humanity, pervading all, excluding none' (Fyfe 2-3). The above passage is taken from an essay with the telling title *The Illusion of National Character*, published in 1940. Perhaps in contrast to character, the continuities of landscape are less exclusionary. But the England they call on, as exemplified by Macdonell's invocation, can be emotionally more compelling than the rhetoric of character.

Having identified constructions of England in a series of frequently conflicted and shifting emphases on the continuity of institutions, character and landscape, this thesis distances itself from conceptualization of Englishness. Judging by the number of academic outputs dedicated to Englishness, this concept has enjoyed a most robust flowering over the last decade or so.[5] However, not only does the understanding of Englishness remain predominantly fuzzy,[6] but its application to the study of utopias would also involve a reading-back of various present-day implications into the period which was not directly concerned with what Mandler describes as 'attempts to define a national style [...]' ('Consciousness' 120). This study intends to read utopian fiction in the context of nationally conscious discussions of England, which in the early twentieth century emphasized continuity or responded to its disruption. Of central concern is the way in which contemporary and modern constructions of England might become constituent in alternative Englands unveiled in utopian fiction.

[5] Among the more seminal interventions, mention should be made of: Colls, Robert. *Identity of England.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002; Easthope, Anthony. *Englishness and National Culture.* London: Routledge, 1999; Gervais, David. *Literary Englands: Versions of 'Englishness' in Modern Writing.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993; Matless, David. *Landscape and Englishness.* London: Reaktion Books, 1998; Ward, Paul. *Red Flag and Union Jack: Englishness, Patriotism and the British Left, 1881-1924.* Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1998.

[6] As Arthur Aughey ironically remarks, 'to define Englishness comprehensively would entail the discussion of absolutely everything' (6). However, he further focuses his own definition on this very peculiar balance between continuity and change, which the present thesis attempts to comprehend on the basis of early twentieth-century constructions of England. Aughey observes: 'Englishness is indeed a construct, though not a product of the moment, and its political arrangements are not permanent fixtures, but ones that are modifiable by circumstance and by will' (10).

3. Benson, Wells and Huxley: Towards Alternative Versions of England

The choice of writers whose work is explored in this thesis has been substantially guided by the fact that their utopian fictions are immediately concerned with visions of a world unity which is nevertheless steeped in constructions of England. Undeniably, neither Wells nor Huxley, nor even Benson, ever seeks to produce a utopia that would directly endorse their nationally conscious loyalties, which are frequently absent. On the contrary, because these writers' affection for England is manifestly overruled by their utopian impulses, they genuinely espouse the idea of a world united on universally applicable principles. Whereas Benson and Wells construct their utopian projects from the ideologically competing positions of Catholicism and socialism, Huxley's ideological stance is more ambiguous, yet critical of the contemporary effects of global capital, political philosophy, and mass culture. During the studied period, none of these selected writers creates a claustrophobic island confine existing in isolation from the rest of the world; rather, their imagined communities operate on the principles of global travel and communications. At the same time, Benson, Wells and Huxley invariably grant England special status in the globalizing networks of the future: in their fictions, England figures as either an enduring, yet fragile, presence or a liminal pad from which a World State can be accessed. England's centrality to world unity is further problematized by the predominant use of strictly southern topographies ranging from the internationally prominent London to the purely vernacular Hog's Back. Such fictional settings in or around the Home Counties heighten the region's economic and political significance, with its utmost concentration of power and wealth. These settings are also concerned with the potential transformation of the celebrated English landscape, whose contemporary projection, as Alex Potts notes, 'is deeply involved in a mythology of Englishness widely current at the time' (180). If Benson, Wells and Huxley are preoccupied, each in his own way, with England's topographic parameters, how would they broach other national significations that may come to inflect their versions of England in a globalized world?

This study is primarily, but not exclusively, focused on the following utopian fictions: Benson's *The Dawn of All* (1911), Wells's *Men Like Gods* (1923) and *The Shape of Things to Come* (1933), and Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932).

Examination of these fictions additionally brings to the fore other literary and discursive writings that were produced in the same period: Benson's *Come Rack! Come Rope!* (1912) and *Initiation* (1914); Wells's *The Dream* (1924), *Things to Come: A Film Story* (1935), *The Camford Visitation* (1937), and *World Brain* (1938); and Huxley's *Eyeless in Gaza* (1936), *Ends and Means: An Enquiry into the Nature of Ideals and into the Methods Employed for Their Realization* (1937), and *After Many a Summer* (1939), among others. In extending its scope to the texts mentioned above, the thesis aims to acknowledge the broader contexts in which ideas of world unity are interlaced with constructions of England.

Recently critics like David Gervais and Pericles Lewis have described the literary consciousness of the early twentieth century as being paradoxical in how it fluctuates between cosmopolitanism and nationalism (Gervais 274; Lewis, *Modernism* 211). Some of the writings of Benson, Wells and Huxley may be viewed as rehearsing this contemporary tendency in ways peculiar to these authors' individual perceptions. Robert Hugh Benson (1871-1914), who had been raised in the family of Edward White Benson, the Archbishop of Canterbury, converted to Catholicism, in search of the universal communion. In *Confessions of a Convert* (1913), R. H. Benson admits that by this act of conversion he meant to eschew the provincialism of the Church of England.[7] Thereafter he has resolutely perceived the Catholic faith as a sole unifying force for 'the spiritual side of [men's] nature by a mystical recognition of their common humanity' (Benson, 'Cosmopolitanism' 357). The theme of the Catholic religion traverses much of Benson's fiction, surfacing in *The King's Achievement* (1905), *The History of Richard Raynal, Solitary* (1906), *The Sentimentalists* (1906), *Lord of the World* (1907), *The Necromancers* (1909), *The Coward* (1912), *Oddsfish!* (1914), and *Loneliness* (1915). Catholicism is also presented as an effective panacea for England's domestic ills. In his essay 'A Catholic Colony (A Suggestion)' (1910), Benson proposes a gradual reversal of England to its 'old faith' and pre-modern identity. Unlike G. K. Chesterton and

[7] Benson recorded that prior to his conversion, while travelling through France and Italy, he had felt disconnected from a larger community of believers: '[M]y contentment with the Church of England suffered a great shock by my perceiving what a very small and unimportant affair the Anglican communion really was. [...] Here was this vast continent apparently ignorant of our existence! I believed myself a priest, yet I could not say so to strangers without qualifying clauses' (*Confessions* 34).

Hilaire Belloc, who developed their system of Distributism on the basis of Catholic doctrine (Corrin 29), Benson is more polemical in his propositions, which consequently lack substantial socio-economic reconstruction. One of his crucial concerns consists in reclaiming more territory from modern England, whose condition is to be rectified in both religious and physical terms. Benson thus advocates a fully autonomous community that aims to take care of people's souls, 'yet make excellent citizens and proper Englishmen' ('Colony' 385). In addition, this recuperative colony is to be placed in Kent or Sussex: 'It is rolling country, wooded in parts, but arable and pasture through most of its extent. In the centre of it, within a mile of a railway station, stands a newly built village grouped about a green' ('Colony' 385). Benson's choice of a southern geography is indicative of an ongoing anxiety about the encroachment of suburbia into the English countryside. In *An Average Man* (1913), Benson's social novel, one finds a symptomatic rendering of the condition of England that calls for improvement: 'England has a wonderful central heart, but its circulation is not of the best, for all that. For, [...] suburbs leave a great deal to be desired as suburbs' (13). Such failures to reconcile suburbia with England are highly resonant with the question that E. M. Forster poses in *Howards End* (1910), when Mrs Munt is about to leave London: 'Into which country will it lead, England or Suburbia?' (13). Keenly sensitive to a largely disfigured England, Benson elects to restore it in a cleansed and secluded environment. However, the very fact of isolation, of an introspective retreat into the condition of England and into the rhetoric of the English character, highly compromises Benson's aspirations for world unity. Benson may have had an ardently cosmopolitan outlook, fully aligned with his Catholic conviction, but his imaginative exercise to convert England to Catholicism is divided in allegiance to nation and faith, which further transpires in *The Dawn of All*.

Chapter One of this thesis examines Benson's version of Catholic England, which is founded on a thorough renegotiation of the contemporary domestic politics, such as concerning parliamentary democracy, enfranchisement, and Irish Home Rule. A newly proclaimed reversal to an England of the medieval monarchy and rigid power structures reveals the conflicted nature of Benson's imaginative enterprise, which is further signalled by the protagonist's failures of memory. The

chapter also explores the ways in which England's conversion to Catholicism refutes English liberty, resulting in repressive socio-political arrangements which are additionally enhanced by the machinery of the modern state and the technology of flying. Of particular interest here is Benson's suggestive placement of England, exclusively defined by its topographies, in the vanguard of a victorious Catholicism that would enable world unity.

Herbert George Wells (1866-1946) lends support to world unity from a perspective diametrically opposed to Benson's. The kind of cosmopolitanism he endorses is directly congruous with his utopian imaginings. In Wellsian studies, it is conventionally held that, from *Anticipations* (1901) through *A Modern Utopia* (1905) and *Men Like Gods* (1923) to *World Brain* (1938), Wells's utopianism prefigures 'the falling-away of loyalties to national identity', and the outgrowing of patriotism and the nation-state (James, *Maps* 134, 165). Undoubtedly, in its accomplished shape, Wells's idea of a World State is teleologically oriented towards the production of nationless humanity. At the same time, the means by which Cosmopolis is to be achieved have a deeper undertow in Wells's considerations of the condition of England, frequently disclosing his engaged response to English culture. This engagement with England arguably resonates with Wells's own identification, which, in the preface to *The Shape of Things to Come*, declares his instincts to be 'as insular as my principles are cosmopolitan' (4).

While Wells tends to erase England out of existence in his scientific romances, thus preparing a clean slate for a new global order,[8] his 'condition-of-England' novel *Tono-Bungay* (1909) is overshadowed by the grim realization that, as the old continuities are dissipating irretrievably, hardly anything may replace them yet. The novel's closing images of the Thames wasting itself purposelessly into the sea ('The river passes – London passes, England passes. . .' (*Tono-Bungay* 352)) symbolically tie into 'an allegory suggesting England's dissolution' (Parrinder, *Nation* 305). In this sense, Wells's social novel *The History of Mr Polly* (1910) reads as a more consoling antithesis of the earlier depiction of a perishing England. It is the

[8] In *The Sleeper Awakes* (1899; 1910) and *In the Days of the Comet* (1906), Wells's 'relish for destruction' (Parrinder, *Wells* 34) is so thoroughly unleashed that the romances' protagonists often wonder in awe or astonishment: 'Is there England still? . . .' (*Sleeper* 432), 'Where is London, that sombre city of smoke and drifting darkness [...]' (*Days* 156).

idyllic Sussex countryside that comes to the foreground as the protagonist's eventually restorative foothold. This form of pastoral recuperation is symptomatic of the period in that it clearly affirms, in the words of John Batchelor, 'a tradition of rural England as a corrective to the misery of lower-middle-class urban life, and as the repository of national virtues' (87). Wells's idealized understanding of England's residual energies gives way to a more compelling invocation of England in his war-time novel *Mr Britling Sees It Through* (1916). Animated by the pervasive national turmoil of the Great War, Wells substitutes his selective idealization of the countryside for a wholesale apology for England. The main character may be simultaneously proud and critical of England (*MBST* 28), but he remains profoundly attached to its lasting presence. When Britling takes a night drive through slumbering Essex and Suffolk, not only does England present itself in his resonantly patriotic soliloquies, but a winding down-hill road, dog-rose hedges, pine-trees, the shapes of the hawthorn, oak and apple, gleaming houses, and a bolting of rabbits also guide the protagonist's arrival at the much sought-after '[c]ertain things – The meaning of England' (*MBST* 116). This vividly conservative construction of England receives a more specific renewal in Wells's *Guide to the New World: A Handbook of Constructive World Revolution* (1941). Afflicted by the Luftwaffe air raids during the Battle of Britain, Wells supplies a most affirmative vision of a desired future: 'Britain, in a federal world, completely socialist and sharing a common freedom with all mankind, may still preserve the outward pattern of "Old England" so far as the countryside is concerned. Church, inn, country house, park, will be there' (*Guide* 94). Perhaps uncharacteristically, Wells also approves of the inward pattern of what he calls 'native traditions', manifest in Britain's parliamentary government, constitutional monarch, and national church. Much as he wonders if all such institutional continuities will hold 'in the midst of this deafening and blinding war' (*Guide* 56), he nevertheless conceives of them as humanity's paths of salvation. Examining Wells's relation to twentieth-century British political thought, Stapleton remarks that Wells's selective privileging of English continuities 'as a model of progress towards a world state suggests an identity with English culture which belies his more culturally detached scientific cosmopolitanism' ('Thought' 260). This remark may serve as a useful point of departure for our further exploration of *Men*

Like Gods and *The Shape of Things to Come*. However, as with Benson, we ought to remember Wells's central belief in world unity that governs his utopian imagination.

Chapter Two is concerned with Wells's version of Cosmopolitan England in which global unity takes the shape of a World State. Unlike Benson, Wells seeks to overwrite the apparatus of national government with a universal system of world controls. This transnationally governed unity, or Cosmopolis, is seen to emerge both as an outcome of Wells's earlier considerations and as a response to his largely betrayed expectations of the League of Nations. This chapter explores in detail the relationships between Wells's explicitly globalizing economic and socio-political arrangements, and his equally pronounced endorsement of continuous progress. While the former aspects of the World State culminate in visions of new humanity, fairly educated and eugenically improved, the latter aspect is notably informed by Wells's readjustment of English continuities, including those inherited from Liberalism. The chapter discusses the symbolic and contextual significance of Southern England, which leads into Utopia. It also examines the ways in which Wells presses into service nationally conscious discourses, such as fairness and hostility to revolution, in order to plot the path to Cosmopolis.

Whereas Benson and Wells express their respective convictions in frequently complex imaginative entanglements, Aldous Huxley (1894-1963) exhibits a more detached relationship with England. Huxley's sense of alienation from the domesticities he inhabits surfaces as early as 'Home-Sickness... From the Town' (1915). Through the central metaphor of 'life nauseous', this poem ironically subverts the idea of home-sickness: instead of brooding nostalgically, the poet intensely craves for a flight from home into '[s]weet unrestraint and lust and savagery' (Huxley, 'Home-Sickness' 27).[9] Huxley's treatment of the English past is equally charged with irony that verges on critical dismissal. In his first novel *Crome Yellow* (1921), Huxley deploys the allegory of a country house to recount 'a placid and uneventful record' of England's continuous degeneration (94). Denunciation of national consciousness as such becomes an explicit concern after he embraces the pacifist cause around 1935. Anthony Beavis, the protagonist of *Eyeless in Gaza*

[9] Here as elsewhere in the thesis, poems are referenced with a page number of the edition in which they appear.

(1936), tells his diary what Huxley will reinstate later in *Pacifism and Philosophy* (1937) and *Ends and Means* (1937):

> One of the great attractions of patriotism – it fulfils our worst wishes. In the person of our nation we are able, vicariously, to bully and cheat. [...] Sweet and decorous to murder, lie, torture for the sake of the fatherland. [...] In the light of these facts, it's obvious what interpersonal, inter-class and international policies should be. [...] peace propaganda must be a set of instructions in the art of modifying character (*EG* 155-6).

These lines were certainly inspired by Huxley's conversion to pacifism, providing another confirmation of his unpatriotic outlook, which had been fostered by his regular absences from England, and additionally reinforced by his voyage to the United States, whence he never returned.[10] As an expatriate, Huxley belongs in the category of contemporaries for whom exile meant a severance from a national tradition. In his comprehensive literary history of the period, Chris Baldick explains:

> The secure link between writers' locations and their *oeuvres* which had been such a prominent feature of nineteenth-century English Literature from William Wordsworth and Jane Austen to George Eliot and Thomas Hardy has by now been broken so often that the author 'rooted' in the same place about which she or he writes is the exception and not the rule (12-13).

In this sense, Huxley visibly stands out not only from his nineteenth-century predecessors, but also from Benson and Wells. Representing a different generation, he is in most respects uprooted from England, which makes him an unlikely candidate for any, aside from ironic, attention to the national problematic. At the same time, the project of a World State that Huxley furnishes in *Brave New World* contains certain discernible traces of engagement with England. Indeed, the location of the World State's metropolis in London rather than New York, which would have been better suited for the role during the 1930s, arguably betrays an underlying anxiety about England's rivalled prominence in a global future. Another narrative tension arises from the fact that England becomes completely absorbed into a globality which Huxley so penetratingly satirizes. Because the unholy proliferation of global influence is enacted against the background of Southern England, this localization may be read as Huxley's ongoing, albeit professedly detached,

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[10] In many significant ways, Huxley's pacifist agenda was his life principle. Having lived in the US for over twenty-six years (1937-1963), he was never sworn in as an American citizen. In his account of Huxley's life in America, David Dunaway reproduces a declassified document of the US Immigration Service dating from November 1953. This document sheds light not only on the nature of Huxley's loyalties, but also on the contemporary American ideology: 'Investigations should fully cover Mr Huxley's writings as well as a neighbourhood; employment and social life of both [Aldous Huxley and his first wife Maria Nys] to determine more fully their qualifications for citizenship outside of their unwillingness to bear arms' (Dunaway n.p.).

disputation of national symbols and significations. Like Benson and Wells, Huxley references English topographies to suggest that world unity would to some degree revolve around England.

Chapter Three extends the exploration of the ways in which *Brave New World* supplies an alien version of England, destitute of a redemptive natural landscape and enslaved by the vapid recycling of a native literary tradition. Within the novel's central dystopic parameters, Huxley's vision of world unity leaves matters such as social hierarchies, reinforced by eugenic controls, and the 'poetic mind' unresolved. The chapter elucidates the contextual ambiguities surrounding the World State's socio-cultural arrangements, and suggests how the latter, in ways intrinsic to Huxley's satirical mode, can be seen to offer mediated responses to the condition of England. Similarly to Huxley, Benson and Wells propose in their fictions that England will have a varying degree of presence in a globalized world, which pivots on the complex exchanges between their personal conviction, on the one hand, and their individual involvement with constructions of England, on the other. Our exploration of such exchanges aims to account for the varied alternative Englands that the writings under analysis provide. Within their individual parameters, the utopian fictions of Benson, Wells and Huxley are examined for their imaginative reconstructions of England as a specific topography, with a political culture, religious sensibility, social hierarchies, and literary traditions.

Bringing together the selected utopian fictions must inevitably raise the question of genre. There is no denying the fact that *The Dawn of All*, *Men Like Gods* and *The Shape of Things to Come* would be conventionally catalogued as descriptions of allegedly better societies than the ones in which they were written (Sargent, *Bibliography* 149, 171, 201), while *Brave New World* in turn offers a highly satirical rendering of authoritarian socio-political organization (Sargent, *Bibliography* 195).[11] Clearly, the categorical labelling of such texts as 'eutopias' and

[11] As our contextual analyses hark back to the earlier period of Wells's utopianism, such retrospective excursions are instrumental in comprehending the degree to which *The Dawn of All* and *Brave New World* deploy what Mark Hillegas calls a 'general scheme [...] foreshadowed by Wells's complementary stories' (4). Indeed, in their own peculiar ways, Benson and Huxley generously avail themselves of Wells's technological and conceptual modernity, yet their engagements with the future of England are as individual as their responses to the Wellsian imagination. A biographer records that Benson's 'favourite modern novelist was H. G. Wells, and though he could not stand certain of his books, others were his constant companions [...]' (Watt 88). In contrast to Benson, Huxley puts his

a 'dystopia' is valid. However, a contextual reading of these and other similar fictions in tandem with their authors' contemporary pronouncements, as well as in relation to the pressures of the moment in which they arose, complicates and potentially disrupts the established terminological order. The editors of the *Dictionary of Literary Utopias* rightly alert us to 'the importance of creating a balance between the historical context and the intentions of the utopian writer, on the one hand, and the different critical interpretations and perspectives of utopian scholars, on the other' (9). As outlined earlier, the historical context of 1910-1939 is particularly notable for constructions of England, which this thesis considers alongside the utopian fictions under discussion. The aforesaid constructions also supply a perceptual lens through which the writers' perspectives on England's position in a global future will be scrutinized. Along these lines, Benson's *The Dawn of All* is understood to manifest dystopic elements in how the depiction of a repressive Catholic regime supersedes Liberal England. Wells's imaginings also emerge as tending towards a dystopic form of authoritarianism, 'un-English' in essence. *Brave New World* in turn, as David Bradshaw has argued, presents 'but one, oblique expression of Huxley's passionate interest in planning and the condition of England' (*Hidden Huxley* xvii). In other words, a marginal concern of the novel is to endorse some considerations about social hierarchies and the planned state which Huxley would have perceived as eutopic at the time of writing. Taking into account the contextual pressures informing the period and these writers' work, this study settles for the term 'utopian fiction' to allow a continuing interchange of eutopian and dystopian impulses within each studied text.

In situating the contextual analysis of the selected writings in a particular genre, this thesis highlights the centrality of world unity as a generic and historically embedded trope. In an extensive account of utopian literature and thought, Krishan Kumar surmises that 'utopia as a form of the social imagination has clearly weakened – whether fatally we cannot say' (*Utopia* 423). This assertion is primarily

preoccupations with Wells to further, often contradictory, lengths. In a letter of 18 May 1931, Huxley admits: 'I am writing a novel about the future – on the horror of the Wellsian Utopia and a revolt against it. Very difficult. I have hardly enough imagination to deal with such a subject. But it is none the less interesting work' (*Letters* 348). However, in its final shape, *Brave New World* comes to communicate more complex, not necessarily satirical, ideas; as Huxley testifies later, the novel 'started out as a parody of H. G. Wells's *Men Like Gods*, but gradually it turned into something quite different from what I'd originally intended' (qtd. in Wickes 165).

based on a perceived preponderance of dystopian impulses, which Kumar traces back to a number of twentieth-century fictions, including *Brave New World*. The present study contends, however, that while Huxley may have initiated the ebbing of the utopian imagination, his major concern consisted in reconfiguring, rather than displacing, the adverse visions of global-scale unity, be they Wellsian, Catholic, or any other. Perhaps symptomatically, Wells, too, had come to refocus his utopianism at the close of the Second World War, as his attention, in the words of Simon James, 'shifted from the World State to a campaign for human rights, which continued, and continues, long after his death' (*Maps* 195). Huxley in turn set out to synthesize a wealth of knowledge contained in world religions and holding out the key to mankind's mystical unity. He related his experience in *The Perennial Philosophy* (1945). One might regard such individual shifts of interest in terms of a nascent post-modern scepticism towards totalizing visions. Certainly, they accompany the more general change that began to affect the utopian imagination from the 1940s onwards, altering both its forms of expression and its relationship with national consciousness.

Focusing on the period of 1910-1939, this thesis examines the extent to which contemporary and modern constructions of England inform visions of a World State conceived in the utopian writings of Benson, Wells and Huxley. Observing these authors' conflicted allegiance to world unity and nationally conscious discourses, the thesis aims to estimate whether and how the studied fictions produce alternative Englands. It is this study's contention that the nationality of a World State manifests itself not in the achievement of world unity, be it desirable or otherwise; but in the process of creating a nationally conscious alterity.

Chapter One.
Robert Hugh Benson's Catholic England

1.1. Continuity and Disruption of England: Memory and Faith

Introduction

Like most of the writings of Robert Hugh Benson, *The Dawn of All* (1911) remains almost completely unexplored or largely misunderstood. In his bibliography of utopian literature, Lyman Tower Sargent catalogues the novel as a '[e]utopia of the Roman Catholic Church completely dominant in sixty years' (*Bibliography* 149). On a similar note, Nicholas Heap asserts in his doctoral thesis that the novel furnishes an unconflicted utopian vision which marshals

> the re-establishment of the Medieval Catholic Church, reborn and triumphant with the Pope recognized by all nations as Arbiter of the World. The second part of *The Dawn of All* concludes with the jubilation surrounding the passage of the bill in the British Parliament making the Catholic Church once more the Established Church of the Realm (214).

Interpreting *The Dawn of All* in the light of Benson's practices as a devout Catholic, Janet Grayson equally sees the establishment of the Church as the novel's ultimate resolution, and concludes that the protagonist 'is made Cardinal Archbishop of England and with the king at his side goes into the skies on an aerial barge to welcome an airship carrying the Pope and world leaders making a world tour' (221). A similarly tendentious understanding is contained in Ian Ker's study of the Catholic Revival, suggesting that *The Dawn of All* 'is unabashedly triumphalistic' (10). Not only do such readings clearly ignore the novel's last few pages, after the alleged triumph of Catholicism, but they also offer somewhat straightforward, if not simplistic, interpretations of a problematic which goes beyond and complicates Benson's theology.

Apart from being an arguably theological book, *The Dawn of All* excites analysis because its accounts of memorial continuity and disruption are measured against contemporary and modern constructions of England. This is closely linked both to Benson's concern about the conversion of England to Catholicism, expressed with fervour in his pamphlet *The Conversion of England* (1906), and to the broader

intellectual context of Edwardian England, witnessing similar speculations. As Julia Stapleton observes, in the 'Catholic triumvirate' of G. K. Chesterton, Hilaire Belloc and Maurice Baring, the first of these searched 'for England beneath what he perceived as multiple layers of concealment, denial, and mistaken identity in the early twentieth century' (*Christianity* 8). For Chesterton, just as for Benson, England's genuine identity was intimately entwined with the Catholic faith. In *The Dawn of All*, Benson's imaginative powers seek to construct a Catholic England whose victorious procession is greeted by the protagonist John Masterman in the capacity of a Cardinal, with the 'Royal Standard of England' flapping nearby (246). However, this triumphant finality seems to be highly compromised by Masterman's inner conflict. He finds the overwhelming victory of Catholicism appealing to his intellect and imagination, but not quite to his heart. Masterman admires the new profile of London as 'a wonderful white city' where Westminster Abbey has been restored to its Catholic appearance and ownership (*DA* 250). Meanwhile, he remains steadfastly unconvinced of the full scope of England's alignment with Catholicism: 'Somewhere, down in the very fibre of him, was an assumption that England and Catholicism were irreconcilable things – that the domination of the one meant the suppression of the other' (177).

Masterman's reservations concerning the Catholic enterprise in England are connected to the larger narrative, in which his memory is placed in doubt. In early utopian traditions of writing, travellers from other spatial or temporal realms would be necessarily briefed about the norms of a newly discovered socio-political setting, as for example, in Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516), Tommaso Campanella's *Civitas Solis* (1602/1623), Francis Bacon's *The New Atlantis* (1627), George Harrington's *The Commonwealth of Oceana* (1656). The protagonist of *The Dawn of All* is also subjected to an introduction into an unfamiliar milieu, but with a significant difference. He is constantly alerted to the fact that he has been there before, and that his lack of understanding stems from his absent-mindedness, 'for which [...] he was almost notorious' (16). Twenty times in the novel Masterman is cited as 'the man who had lost his memory' (11, 15, 33, 37, 97, 100, 108, 128, 131, 136, 145, 154, 159, 176, 186, 204, 218, 229, 251, 254). These reminders of the main character's memorial loss alternate with statements about his mental incapacity ('the invalid',

'the wire-bedecked invalid') and amount to his acceptance of the condition into which he is deliberately forced: 'I am crippled mentally; my memory left me a few months ago; it may leave me again, and this time helpless and useless' (216). The protagonist's memorial failures proceed in stages. He is first able to relate to his new experience, then persistently questions it, and finally surrenders his memory to 'the gift of faith'. This progression, punctuated by the protagonist's (and the dying priest's, from whose dream this vision arises) response to the recognizable or unknown aspects of England, serves as the structuring principle of our argument concerning the continuity and disruption of memory, and the correlation of memory and faith.

The transformation of Masterman's memory is also implicated in the novel's structural elements. *The Dawn of All* comprises three clearly marked elements: a prologue, a main section and an epilogue. The prologue and the epilogue form a unifying frame, very similar to those in Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward: 2000-1887* (1888) and William Morris's *News from Nowhere* (1890), where the time/space travellers lose and subsequently regain their wakeful grasp of reality. In the prologue and epilogue of his novel, Benson narrates the story of a lapsed priest lying on his deathbed in a hospital ward near Westminster Abbey. In a brief renewal of memory, he requests to have a priest summoned in order to make his final confession, sufficient to restore his faith which has been surrendered earlier: '[H]e himself was a priest who had lost the faith [...]' (*DA* 257). Yet the novel's ending is uncertain on several levels: will the dissenting priest disclose the contents of his dream to Fr Jervis (whose name also appears in the dream) and to the nurse? how robust is the priest's power of memory? and how much will he be able to say in his last hours? This reassertion of memory occurring in the epilogue after the rather prolonged and beguiling dream calls the full restoration of faith into question. By keeping the reader continually alert to the lapsed priest's and the protagonist's operations of memory and faith, the novel highlights a factor which unites their respective experiences: it is an England that becomes immediately recognizable either in the tumult of London or (at a deeper level) in its moderate treatment of dissent before a newly established Catholic regime starts repressing heresy and extinguishing individuality. Both the dying priest and Masterman orient themselves with ease in the Englands

commensurable with their memories. Their faith, on the contrary, requires a leap from the continuous identity of England to a vision which disrupts the progression of memory. To an extent, this explains why Masterman cannot reconcile England and Catholicism with his immediately available knowledge or experience. Similarly, the priest finds the memory of his research irreconcilable with his faith. Only his dream state permits an ultimate victory of Catholicism to happen, in which the protagonist's faith in the universal Catholic Church eventually reaches a compromised, yet unresolved, summit at the cost of his memory. It appears that, where memory asserts itself, faith wanes; and where faith intensifies, memory diminishes. Since such an interchanging movement of memory and faith is tangibly present at a structural level, I contend that Benson's novel undermines the vision of a world united by Catholicism to a far greater degree than the mere critique of its unremitting enterprise.

This section aims to explore the continuity and disruption of memory through which *The Dawn of All* engages with contemporary and modern constructions of England. Our central argument is that the novel does not herald the triumph of Catholicism in England; rather, it seeks to defer any radical endeavours which are predicated on a leap of faith and which disrupt continuity in the life of the nation. The first sub-section seeks to historicize the Edwardian contexts perceptible in the novel. The next two sub-sections focus on some of the representations of England which the protagonist initially recognizes and then fails to authenticate. These failures are linked to his burgeoning rebelliousness against the oppressive excesses of a Catholic regime in England. The final sub-section concentrates on the opposition of memory and faith, exploring these tensions with regard to the novel's version of England.

1. The Historical and Intellectual Context of *The Dawn of All*

Published shortly after the close of the Edwardian age, *The Dawn of All* refocuses the politics of Edwardian society with 'a reversion to medieval times' (*DA* 23), turning attention to a globalizing system of governance for which liberty equals love (253). From the projected standpoint of the 1970s, the narrative equates the growth of liberalism in England with the reduction of democracy *ad absurdum* (125) and

cancels out Ireland's aspirations for sovereignty by designating the whole island as a monastic mental hospital run by European governments (159). The evocation of medievalism brings into contrast the flux of Britain's contemporary socio-political life and the picture of a Catholic England, overwhelmingly religious, stringently hierarchical, and increasingly resistant to change. This anti-modern portrayal can be taken as Benson's reaction to the Edwardian frame of mind and the general mood of the pre-war decade. In *Modernist Fiction*, Randall Stevenson notes that in retrospect the pre-war years 'seemed, or could be made to seem, an especially splendid age' marked by coherence, security, and optimism (143). True, H. G. Wells, like many of his contemporaries, summed up the pervasive belief of the period in that 'we should have peace for ever – and everything else would go on as before' (*WB* 30). At the same time, this dominant sense of irenic existence is perhaps inseparable from what Derek Fraser describes as 'a major non-socialist injection of social welfare into the British system' (156). Indeed, the production of a Welfare State in Britain during the period of 1906-1914 created a much larger presence for the state in various spheres of public life; according to J. R. Hay, '[o]ld age pensions, insurance against ill-health and unemployment, school meals, and medical services for children were introduced. Minimum wages were fixed in certain industries, and some attempt was made to alter the distribution of wealth in British society' (Hay 11). However, it was the growth of the state that perplexed Benson. In *The Dawn of All*, Mr Manners, a political economist, condemns the old-age pensions and the national insurance as 'a mark of disgrace – for the simple cause that it is not the receiving of money that is resented, but the motive for which the money is given and the position of the giver' (22). Contesting these allegedly disruptive social forms of state intervention, the novel emphasizes the traumatizing effect of any transformation. In doing so, it invests in a theory of the continuity of national experience consonant with prevailing pre-war views of a coherent and secure English society. Symbolically, the dying priest, who, on relinquishing his ordinary pattern of clerical life, has fallen into a comatose state, eventually returns to his citadel of faith. Because of this reversal, the role of memory deserves further examination.

Equally preoccupied with the continuous and disrupted progression of national life, *The Dawn of All* lends itself to analysis through the lens of

contemporary psychological theories, which constitute a broader intellectual context of the time. The correlation of memory and faith is taken up as a theme by Samuel Butler, better known for his posthumous novel *The Way of All Flesh* (1903). In his evolutionary books *Life and Habit* (1878) and *Unconscious Memory* (1880), Butler maintains that memory lies at the foundation of experience, and forms an indelible part of human existence: 'The life of a creature is the memory of a creature. We are all the same stuff to start with, but we remember different things, and if we did not remember different things, we should be absolutely like each other' (*Life* 300). Holding that each individual life adds 'a small amount of new experience to the general store of memory' (*Memory* 53), Butler concludes that memory is reducible to faith insofar as it draws on habitual actions which later become instinctive and translate into faith, a fundamental storehouse of experience. Instinct, according to Butler, 'is a mode of faith in the evidence of things not actually seen' (*Way* 275). By separating things seen from things unseen, the latter of which materialize as 'an epic in stone and marble' in the architecture of colleges and churches (*Erewhon* 91), Butler may be said to have anticipated the Bergsonian distinction between matter which exists in the present and spirit which declares itself as 'a prolonging of the past into the present' (Bergson 295). In *Life and Habit*, Butler admits that 'reason points remorselessly to an awakening, but faith and hope still beckon to the dream' (307). Here, faith is cognate with memory as its derivative and is therefore capable of distancing the individual from reality.

In line with Butler's concept of habitual actions, Henri Bergson elaborates another essential dimension of memory and wakeful consciousness.[12] In *Matter and Memory* (1896), he differentiates between motor mechanisms, which are based on habitual actions, and independent recollections, which are free images (87). Motor mechanisms, in Bergson's view, are not premised on special awareness because they resemble the reproduction of a lesson wherein each consecutive moment automatically follows its antecedent: 'The memory of the lesson, which is remembered in the sense of learnt by heart, has all the marks of a habit' (89).

[12] In her study of Bergson's presence in the theory and practice of British modernism, Mary Ann Gillies confirms the link between the theories of Butler and Bergson further: 'Although there are similarities between Bergson and Butler, Bergson's stress that the creative impulse was not, ultimately, controlled by humans distinguishes the two approaches to evolution' (191).

Independent recollections, on the contrary, presuppose attention and reflexivity: 'By this memory is made possible the intelligent, or rather intellectual, recognition of a perception already experienced; in it we take refuge every time that, in the search for a particular image, we remount the slope of our past' (92) The two forms of memory singled out by Bergson differ in the amount of conscious effort they require and the (re)productive output they make; while motor mechanisms accumulate repeated actions, independent recollections record facts and images which store up and generate new experience. Unlike Butler, Bergson does not reduce memory solely to habits and instincts; this permits him to discriminate between habitual and conscious workings of memory.

Whereas Bergson's theory is useful in identifying independent recollections which enable continuity in Benson's Catholic England, Sigmund Freud's account of 'The Origin and Development of Psychoanalysis' (1910) is central to interpreting how certain experiences are repressed or substituted, and yet remain continuously present. Betraying some familiarity with this cultural debate about the nature of memory, *The Dawn of All* suggestively mentions the development of psychology as an enquiry into 'the subliminal consciousness' which is 'acknowledged, and [...] perceived to move along definite lines of law' (19). In *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death* (1903), Frederick Myers, one of the founders of the Society for Psychical Research, argues 'the existence of some subliminal continuity of memory, lying deeper down than the evocable memory of common life – the stock of conscious reminiscences on which we can draw at will' (69). The peculiar ability of memory to allow access to deep-laid recollections permits Myers to connect it to the spiritual world with which the personality comes into contact during sleep (*Personality* 91). Since most of the events of Benson's novel take place in the priest's dream, Myers's theory is instrumental in fathoming Monsignor Masterman's wakeful life whose depths, as Mr Manners comments in *The Dawn of All*, manifest themselves 'in a personal, though always a malevolent manner' (19). Benson takes his cue from Myers, when, in 'A Modern Theory of Human Personality' (1907), he designates memory as a 'trapdoor' which 'often opens up the way of communication between [the states of wakefulness and subliminal activity], so as to allow of an uprush of strange but natural powers' (87). Along these lines, the dying priest's

malevolent vision of a Catholic regime derives its impulses from his memorial impressions, which are naturally in conflict with his faith. In creating a specific sense of continuous psychological experience, the aforementioned theories offer an intellectual context for the consideration of how memory and faith relate to each other in the novel's narrative, and how individual memory may be read as a response to the continuity and disruption of England under Catholicism.

2. Memorial Continuity

In the main section of *The Dawn of All*, the protagonist's memory is gradually activated in an environment which at first strikes him as profoundly disorienting:

> And then in a flash he recognized where he was. He was sitting, under this canopy, just to the right as one enters through Hyde Park Corner; these trees were the trees of the Park; that open space in front was the beginning of Rotten Row; and Something Lane – Park Lane – (that was it!) – was behind him (3).
>
> What was this vineyard? and why did he appeal to English people in such words as these? Every one knew that the Catholic Church was but a handful still in this country. Certainly, progress had been made, but. . . . (4).

After verifying his location in Hyde Park, the protagonist feels convinced that his memory cannot 'be wholly gone'. He later identifies the Houses of Parliament (7), Westminster Cathedral (10), 'the masses of Buckingham Palace as he seemed always to have known it' (41). Additionally, he makes sense of everyday chatter about the 'extraordinary fairness' of English weather (15). Having such vital coordinates restored to his memory, Masterman progresses through experiences which remain partially novel, yet strangely familiar: 'If he remembered so much, there seemed no intrinsic reason why he should not remember more' (13). Fulfilling this memorial desideratum, the protagonist first meets the Cardinal of England, whose face 'was a little hard to make out' (33). Then he reaches Lourdes, where the miraculous healing of the sick permits him to connect 'the broken threads' of his memory:

> The man who had lost his memory had piled impression on impression during the last forty-eight hours (108).
>
> It was not that his memory had returned. Still, behind his sudden awakening in Hyde Park, all was a misty blank, from which faces and places and even phrases started out, for the most part unverifiable. Yet it seemed both to him and to those about him that he had an amazing facility in gathering up the broken threads (112).

These newly regained links in Masterman's memory become central to not merely recalling the past, but delineating a future that hinges on the sense of England's continuity. The repeated formula 'the man who had lost his memory', which

specifies the nature of the protagonist's receptivity to a world being transformed by Catholicism, does not simply invalidate his prior experience. In fact, it occurs in episodes where Masterman begins to cautiously recognize the images and conversational patterns from his past.

However, a further rupture of Masterman's memorial understanding is guided by the knowledge that Westminster Abbey has been transferred to the Benedictine Order. This change prompts a reconfiguration of the Abbey itself: 'The old monuments were gone, of course – removed to St. Paul's – and for the first time for nearly three hundred years it was possible to see the monastic character of the church as the builders had designed it' (128). Although the main character spends time rejoicing in the return of the Abbey to its original, sanctified purpose, there is a touch of sentimentality for 'statesmen in perukes who silently declaimed secular rhetoric in the house of God, swooning women, impossible pagan personifications of grief, medallions, heathen wreaths, and broken columns' (129). All these mementoes cluster in Masterman's mind, contrasting with the starkness of the church, which has undergone a radical process of transformation and cleansing. The rift between the ways in which the protagonist remembers the Abbey's decor and its currently subdued appearance links closely with Freud's insights into memorial processes. In his lectures on 'The Origin and Development of Psychoanalysis', Freud claims that the symptoms of reminiscences are 'the remnants and the memory symbols of certain (traumatic) experiences' (187). Viewed through this lens, Masterman's positive attitude to the restored design of Westminster Abbey, coupled with a pang of regret for what is gone, suggests a neurotic fixation on the symbols from the nation's past, which disallows him to appreciate the Abbey's present condition to a full extent. This operation of memory has a particular impact on the understanding of social space, where the removal of memorials can be regarded as an attempt at detraumatization. Yet, in view of Freud's parenthesis, which indicates that certain experiences are not necessarily traumatic in nature, the act of displacement gives additional prominence to memories that are not neurotic in character, unless experienced as such. In this context, one may be reminded of Masterman's meditations on how irrelevant pasts might be remembered, and how to negotiate

lapses in memory: ‘It seemed to him as if in some other life he had once stood here – surely there in that transept – a stranger and an outcast [...]’ (*DA* 129).

As the above examples demonstrate, England’s re-imagined landmarks take centre stage in the novel’s setting, although there are also several other locales: Versailles, Lourdes, Rome, Ireland, Boston and Berlin, whose relation to England is further examined in the next two sections of the present study. Aside from being aware of Hyde Park, Westminster Abbey, and Buckingham Palace, Masterman flies over Brighton (44) and learns about High Mass ‘sung in the University churches of Oxford, Cambridge, and Durham’ (127). Interestingly, Britain, or more specifically, Wales and Scotland, never occur in the novel, nor is there any evidence that they are collapsed into the geography and politics of Benson’s England. By contrast, Ireland, which was also a constituent part of the United Kingdom at the time, is presented as a separate, even secluded, dominion. It can be argued that the narrative simply discards the internal national distinctions in contemporary Britain. But further analysis suggests the contrary. Shunning any topographic references to lands beyond England’s borders (with the exception of Dublin, Belfast and Thurles in Ireland), *The Dawn of All* evokes a Scottish presence through the character of James Hardy, a smiling and composed leader of the Socialists, demanding ‘the formal disestablishment of the Church throughout Europe and the complete liberty of the Press, with guarantees that these should continue’ (226). Barely coincidental is the homology of this character’s name with that of James Keir Hardie, a working-class Scotsman, chair of the Independent Labour Party (1894-1900, 1913-1914) and leader of the Labour Party (1906-1908). With regard to this homology, the novel’s map of Britain (characterized by fragmentation and erasure) looks symptomatic of the fears surrounding Keir Hardie, who came to typify a socialist Scot, an ostensible threat to England’s distinctiveness and continuity. If Benson’s novel critiques the possible excesses of socialism as a disastrous attempt to tyrannize ‘first over the minority and then over the individual’ (22), it is nevertheless more interested in promoting hierarchical power structures (in essence undemocratic and historically despotic) than in anxiety-ridden examinations of socialism. As Fr Jervis admits, ‘[w]e treat our kings like kings [...]. And, at the same time, we encourage our butchers to be really butchers and glory in it. Law *and* liberty, you see. [...] No republican stew-pot, you

see, in which everything tastes alike' (55). In the hierarchical orderliness of Benson's fictional England, the erasures of a wider British topography are tantamount to the repression of socialist loyalties which purportedly sought disruption of English cultural and political life.

The idea of continuity underlies the periodization of England's alternative history which the protagonist is expected to grasp. Since the novel is set in 1973, it flashes back to the socio-political context of the early twentieth century as, retrospectively, a completed cycle of national experience. The initial two decades of the century are recalled by Mr Manners as a turbulent time when 'Socialism came most near to dominating the civilized world' (16). In direct comparison with Edwardian Britain, these years became noted for the advancement of social policy – indeed, an unjustifiable growth in the state apparatus. Eventually, the reader learns that the socialist project was overthrown because it had supported the population 'for economic reasons, however conscientious and individually charitable statesmen may be; while the Church gives for the Love of God, and the Love of God never yet destroyed any man's self-respect' (22-3). Subsequently, the expansion of Catholicism in Benson's version of England came as an economically auspicious enterprise for the pauper classes of society, and took over the whole country by the re-instatement of the medieval precepts of authority and hierarchy. Within some forty years after the failure of state socialism to supplant 'Divine methods by human' (23), the Church approaches its establishment in the state as 'the centre and not merely a department of the national life' (120). Benson's imaginary accounts of the swift transitions from one government to another in the early twentieth century accentuate the fact that a Catholic regime may be established within several decades.[13] By assigning an ephemeral timespan to a socialist state, *The Dawn of All* represses its reformist endeavours as disruptive of England's continuity. Instead, continuity is realized in the designation of Edward IX as King of England. When

[13] By contrast, in *Brave New World* (1932), Aldous Huxley, originally afforded some 632 years 'after Ford' to enable a new civilization of the utmost order to gain momentum. However, after Huxley 'revisited' his Brave New World some twenty-seven years later, his optimism about the extensive lifespan of a complete transformation of society abated. In his own words, '[t]he prophecies made in 1931 are coming true much sooner than I thought they would. [...] The nightmare of total organization, which I had situated in the seventh century after Ford, has emerged from the safe, remote future and is now awaiting us, just round the next corner' (*BNWR* 237-8). For Huxley, the change of heart followed in the wake of the historical experience that included the 'flowering' of Stalinism and Nazism.

Masterman queries whether England remains a monarchy, Fr Jervis replies in the affirmative, assuring that 'Edward IX – a young man – is on the throne' (*DA* 27). This extension of the Edwardian period underscores the role of monarchs in shaping history, and can be interpreted as another effort to extinguish anxieties concerning highly undesirable socio-political transitions and the instability that occurs in the aftermath. Accordingly, the novel reproduces an analogy with the eighteenth century, when the successive ascensions of Hanoverian kings, all named George (1714-1830), to the throne might have been perceived to communicate political and religious continuity in the life of the nation. If only in name, the replication of an 'Edwardian' dynasty renews the protagonist's self-conscious alertness to the integrity of his memory and indicates Benson's support of an undisrupted progression of national history.

From this perspective, it is not only socialism that poses a challenge to the continuity of English national life, but Catholicism is also capable of producing equally disruptive effects. In Benson's novel, the former aims at restructuring the existing authority and distribution of wealth, while the latter aspires to align itself with the state. On closer examination, however, this overriding concern with the question of continuity becomes for Masterman a matter of choosing the lesser evil. Even though it remorselessly limits individual freedoms and takes an inquisitorial line on dissent, the Catholic regime in England, unlike its failed socialist counterpart, invests deeply in the perceived coherence and stability of monarchical government, 'that faulty mirror of the Divine government of the world' (*DA* 248). Robert Colls has observed that compromise must be an organizing principle in any construction of England: 'The Englishness of the perpendicular line was matched, apparently, only by the Englishness of the horizontal: as in politics as in climate as in architecture – a characteristically English compromise between one thing and another' (*Identity* 235). The compromise worked out in Benson's novel is retrospectively of a piece with this theorization, harmonizing social cohesiveness with enduring state hierarchies. Additionally, this compromise is seen to embody divine power.

Through the protagonist's memorial operations, *The Dawn of All* attempts to bolster England's continuity in a number of ways. The repeating narrative stress on a continuing version of England in political, social and dynastic terms extends beyond

the Edwardian period well into the future. Repeatedly styled as 'the man who had lost his memory', Masterman articulates a growing resistance to any potential ruptures in national life. Indeed, the protagonist's loyalties to England surface in his capacity to recognize continuities in some of the native patterns of existence, and to identify closely with them.

3. Disruption of Memory

One of the historical disruptions which the novel contests, aside from social reform and state intervention, is the legacy of Protestantism. Admiring the history of England at large, the Cardinal admits in the novel that 'there is one black blot upon the page, and that, the act of hers by which she renounced Christ's Vicar, by whom kings reign' (*DA* 183). This denigration of Protestantism stands in opposition to constructions of England which promote the English Reformation as a moment pivotal to the rise of national consciousness. One such construction has been sustained by Georgii Gachev, who places Protestantism at the centre of England's major cultural and scientific advances (155). In *The Dawn of All*, however, it is brought to the protagonist's attention that the Reformation and its outcome in England ushered in 'the experiment of a religion resting on the strength of a national isolation instead of a universal supernationalism [...]' (250). With a view to combating national isolation and reconnecting the country to the Continent, Benson devises a form of a World State ruled by Rome, and embeds it firmly in the modern age with an air fleet of volors (from the Latin *volāre* 'to fly') which reach Rome in a matter of a few hours. Throughout the novel, this emphasis on an international community in which England participates is set in stark relief to the time-honoured image of England as a self-consciously insular nation. While modern historians, such as Keith Robbins, tend to perceive insularity as a characteristic that has produced both the nation's self-conscious confinement and its global outreach,[14] Benson's novel regards this insularity as a failure in the growth of the nation: '[I]t had been tried, and found wanting' (*DA* 250).

[14] Robbins further observes: 'Identity was rendered secure by insularity. [...] Britain was a part of Europe, but had so many other links and connections in distant lands that its destiny could not be confined to the neighbouring mainland' (*History* 32-3).

The narrative equates the 'black blot' of Protestantism, alongside its reputedly isolating effects, with welfare reform and socialism. In an interview of 1914, Benson is recorded to spell out his disapproval of the history of the English Reformation:

> Then he pointed out to me, emphasizing his remarks with jabs now with a cigarette, now with a forefinger, that until the Reformation there were no poor laws in England. The first one came in under Elizabeth. The monasteries took care of the few poor there were in the medieval era. The destruction of the monasteries meant the real beginning of the unhappiness of the poor. Protestantism and poverty were linked rather closely together (Wetmore 444).

By extension, socialism presents for Benson a further means of impoverishment. Protestantism and socialism turn out to be identical in fracturing England's continuity. Even though *The Dawn of All* enables a reconnection of England with the Catholic fold, it opposes an equally universalizing potential of socialism, which means that Benson's fear of reform eclipses other alternatives. It is little wonder that, after the transformation of England into a Catholic realm begins, Protestantism and especially socialism are actively consigned to the past. Like the monuments from Westminster Abbey, rival ideologies become either traumatizing or irrelevant.

The protagonist further becomes aware of an evening out of the crucial differences between Liberalism and socialism, reducing their distinct programmes to the extension of the franchise and freedom of speech. Voicing a symptomatic fear of mass disorder, Fr Jervis argues that

> Socialist and infidel speeches can be delivered freely in what are called private houses, which are really clubs. Well, that sort of thing cannot possibly go on. The infidels have complained of tyranny, of course – that's part of the game. As a matter of fact they've been perfectly free unless they gave actually public offence (*DA* 122).

In contrast, Masterman's attitude to these dissenters is theological in essence. His visit to the socialist outpost outside Catholic England does not catch him off-guard; rather, 'the man who had lost his memory knew that he was coming into a civilization which, although utterly unknown to him by experience, yet had in his anticipation a curious sense of familiarity' (203-4). At the same time, no matter how much Masterman enjoys 'real liberty as he had conceived it' (208), he is unable to square his faith with the godlessness of 'the socialistic Canaan', which tends towards 'a pitch of perfection' through human evolution: 'Yet he could no longer conceal from himself [...] that it was better to be heartless through too vivid a grasp of eternal realities, than through an equally vivid grasp of earthly facts' (209). Unsurprisingly,

given the limitations of his outlook, the protagonist cannot countenance a tentative rapprochement between socialism and Christianity which gained a particular prominence in Edwardian Britain.

In an account of debates about socialism and Christianity which became particularly lively in the late Edwardian period, Vincent Geoghegan singles out several analytical groupings. Taking into account the degree of religious consciousness (or its absence) that informs a socialist platform, he proceeds to acknowledge Church Socialism, Working-Class Biblical Socialism, Anglican Christian Socialism, Catholicism and Socialism, among others ('Socialism' 55-61). Within these groupings, one finds Keir Hardie's argument for the essentially Christian character of the Labour movement (*Speeches* 142), and on a strikingly similar note, Conrad Noel's, who was the 'Red Vicar' of the Church of England, equation of the principles of Christianity with those of socialism (Noel 7). Geoghegan additionally places the rise of a Catholic Socialism in the context of Pope Leo XIII's seminal encyclical 'Rerum Novarum: On Labour and Capital' (1891). As the encyclical was concerned with the condition of the poor, it had created an unintentional occasion for socialist leanings among Catholic believers (Geoghegan, 'Socialism' 62). When *The Dawn of All* refers back to the early twentieth century, it importantly records 'all the *ideals* of Socialism (apart from its methods and its dogmas)' as 'the ideals of Christianity' (22). However, most of the concrete alignments of socialism with Christianity remain noticeably absent from the novel's further exposition. Catholic England's ideologues are bewildered not by the diversity of socialist platforms, but by the mere fact of their proliferation and activity: 'These Socialists are stronger than any one dreamed. Their organization is simply perfect' (*DA* 193). The theological nature of Benson's profound distrust of socialism becomes vivid in his apocalyptic novel *Lord of the World* (1907), stipulating that the divinity and power of God always surpass and defeat humankind's foredoomed attempts at reorganizing the world. Catholicism stands against socialism (disguised as 'Humanitarianism'), almost like good against evil (*LW* 8). In this sense, Benson's conservative theology plays a central role in berating socialism at large, not only in dismissing its particular alignments with Christianity.

The protagonist's memory undergoes a further series of failures that coincide with the escalation of global Catholic rule, as it crosses the boundary of an essentially English compromise and proves more unremitting. As Masterman progresses in his exploration of Catholic England, he gradually loses his ability to relate the new experiences to their antecedents. Some emerging tendencies appear 'strange' to him, as he finds a discrepancy between what the system practises and preaches (*DA* 131). His revulsion towards the regime becomes more pronounced when he realizes that any type of reasonable doubt about the righteousness of the Church is treated as treason at the state level. Additionally, insinuations directed against socialist dissidence disturb Masterman, who thinks that the Church was supposed 'to guide the world' without necessarily crusading against its opponents (177). Masterman's growing inability to negotiate the oppressive practices of England's Catholic order explains why some early readers of *The Dawn of All* found the novel's message disconcerting. As Benson's first biographer C. C. Martindale admits, 'if only because it seemed almost cynical that a man should so light-heartedly preach a sermon first on one text and then on its exact opposite' (Vol. 2 87). Undoubtedly, if read from this angle, the novel presents the global outreach of Catholicism in the least favourable light, which was immediately spotted by both lay readers and Roman Catholic officials. In Grayson's words, while 'visiting Rome shortly after publication, Hugh was told of the harm such books were doing, and ceased using the theme' (88).

However, the narrative emphasis on the protagonist's rebellion does not contradict the expression of Benson's religious allegiances, which lie at the heart of the novel. Masterman's predecessor in the post of Cardinal of England expresses his loyalty in this way: 'I am an Englishman as well as a Catholic, and I love England only less than I love the Church. I say frankly that I do love her less. No man who has any principles that can be called religious can say otherwise' (182). This statement may represent Benson's own point of view; but in the novel, the protagonist's failing memory does not comprehend the profound disruption that has been occasioned by the Catholic regime's key position in the wider life of the nation: '[T]his vision of earthly peace, this perfection to which order and civilization had come; and then, as he regarded it, it enraged him. . . .' (133). The novel's disrupted

vision of England is linked directly to the question of dissent, traceable to the 'black blot' of the Reformation: a universalizing form of Catholicism was brought into being in England in order to write off the Protestant experience of national isolation. Yet Masterman's powers of memory cannot resolve the discordances between the present Catholic enterprise and the remembered continuities of English liberal society. Keenly sensitive to the conflict present in this Catholic England, Masterman deems its system to be 'hateful and impossible' (144) and feels 'unhappy altogether' (166). Unable to endure such a serious memorial disruption, the protagonist wishes that his memory were completely gone.

4. Memory and Faith

The uncertainty of memory underpins the fabric of the whole novel in that the protagonist's recollections of England are contested in his conversations with Fr Jervis and, more systematically, in Mr Manners's discourse on the first two decades of the twentieth century. Uncertainty also characterizes Masterman's presence in Catholic England. As a result, the protagonist finds himself in the position of an amnesiac; after he is brought to his lodgings, he picks up a letter in which he recognizes only his handwriting (*DA* 12). His bedroom also strikes him as barely his own: '[H]e thought he recognized the use of everything which he saw, there was no single thing that wore a familiar aspect' (13). These revelations of his psychic impairment lead to a vital moment of self-identification:

> A tall mirror, he remembered, hung between the windows. He ran straight up to this and stood staring at his own reflection. It was himself that he saw there – there was no doubt of that – every line and feature of that keen, pale, professional-looking face was familiar, though it seemed to him that his hair was a little greyer than it ought to be (14).

Fully recognizing his appearance in the reflection, Masterman also detects a minor, but extremely significant, change. In view of the novel's further developments, his 'greyer hair' charts the onset of a becoming, of recognizing change as the determining factor of his existence.

After taking the protagonist through a sustained experience of disorientation and change in Catholic England, the novel proposes two versions of psychic becoming predicated on the very opposition of memory and faith. The first is explored in the main section of the text, chronicling Masterman's rise to the rank of Cardinal of England. This is an account riddled with problems of compromise.

Continually haunted by the dilemma 'to sink his individuality [and] to throw up his hands and drown, or to assert that individuality openly and defiantly, and to take the consequences' (165), the protagonist eventually succumbs to the temptation of power. The fact that he becomes the highest-ranking official in the once abhorred establishment is determined by his choice of acquiescence rather than revolt. This contentious achievement, if put in a biblical context, represents a positive outcome of remembering 'the perfect law that gives freedom' (James 1: 25), whereas disobedience means looking at oneself in the mirror and forgetting what one looks like (James 1: 23-24). The main character's becoming, reflected by his 'greyer hair', forestalls the inception of a different enterprise where 'the Law of Liberty' equals 'the Law of Love' (*DA* 253). But this projected resolution proves delusive:

> It had seemed to him that Christ had accepted the taunts at last, had come down from the Cross and won the homage only of those who did not understand Him. He had been quieted indeed for a time, under the power of men who, whatever the rest of the world might do, still thought that suffering was the better part. Yet he had been quieted; not convinced (248).

The protagonist is not able to free himself from such angst-ridden reflections until he completely renounces his allegiance to memory and turns wholly to the demands of faith: 'So there the vision lay before him – this man who had lost his memory and had found a greater gift instead' (250). The faith in the arrival of Christ's Kingdom, both in heaven and on earth, which is evoked at the end of the novel's main section, serves to disable Masterman's memory and arrest his process of becoming. The protagonist's faith is thus allowed to triumph, whereas his memory is discontinued.

The second form of becoming associated with memorial operations is communicated most fully in the last scene of *The Dawn of All*, where the dissenting priest, lying on his deathbed, regains his memory. While the novel's main section promotes a final victory of faith over memory, the epilogue creates a sense of indeterminacy relating to the fate of the lapsed priest, once he has uttered his last words. Nonetheless, the dying man's confession and his attention to the bells audible on an Easter morning are highly suggestive of a reawakening of his faith as he approaches death's door. These closing moments indicate a coalescence of the priest's reasserted memory with his restored faith. The background to this scene is a dim presence of London outside the hospital ward, with 'the footsteps and the voices and the bells' (260). London's continuous, if slightly subdued, energy filling the

room with delicate noises matches the nearly eternal Westminster Abbey, in whose vicinity the priest is about to meet his end. Paying heed to timeless, yet nationally specific, embodiments of continuity, the novel's epilogue eradicates the need for change, religious or socio-political. In this setting, where the dying man returns to his wakeful grasp of reality and chooses to confess, memory guides faith.

Conclusion

This section has examined the ways in which the workings of the protagonist's and the lapsed priest's memory relate to contemporary and modern constructions of England. In *The Dawn of All*, England is symbolized by a pervasive emphasis on continuity, hierarchy, and dynastic succession. Benson summons up a deeply conflicted version of Catholic England, one which entails the ultimate defeat of memory, where any attempt at Protestant or socialist reform gives way to a textual investment in faith.[15] Much as this reading sustains *The Dawn of All* as a theological book, it has also shown the novel's tight engagement with a very distinct socio-political atmosphere experienced in Edwardian Britain. The novel's allegedly malevolent vision of a Catholic world unity remains crucially rooted in Benson's ongoing anxieties about the reformist endeavours at work in his society. In the final scenes of the novel, in the dying priest's wakeful perceptions, England becomes significantly coterminous with a perennial order of existence, and any threat to the continuity of its progression is bound to fail – unless the powers of memory are usurped by those of faith.

[15] In this respect, *The Dawn of All* anticipates some of the later dystopian fiction marked by what Fredric Jameson describes as 'the elegiac sense of the loss of the past, and the uncertainty of memory' (*Archaeologies* 200).

1.2. The Fate of Liberal England

Introduction

The period in which Benson wrote *The Dawn of All* was much preoccupied with what historians describe as a confluence of rebellious political platforms, associated with enfranchisement, Irish Home Rule, and a proliferation of socialist ideas (Dangerfield 19; Robbins, *Britain* 193). Characterizing the period as one of a 'real crisis' and 'tremendous agitation' against authority, monarchy, capital and aristocracy (*DA* 16), the novel conflates 'the state of England' with a religious transformation of society (28). However, since such contemporary pressures are made contingent on the imaginary establishment of the Catholic Church in future England, their resolution hinges on Benson's theological positions. This coalescence of theology and politics manifests itself in the protagonist's appellations. Not only is he 'the man who had lost his memory', as has been explored in the previous section, but he is also Monsignor Masterman, whose name and clerical rank provide a clue to the dual nature of his conflict.

The novel's prologue prefigures the theological aspect of the Monsignor's tension, when the dying priest recalls his intensive research on 'the thirteenth-century Popes' and 'the Piccolomini affair' (ii-iii). Given the priest's ultimate collapse into a coma of disbelief, one may suppose that his upsetting findings have mapped out a period of Church history noted for the growth and subsequent suppression of heresy. Through much of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the Rome-Avignon schism caused Europe-wide divisions, leaving a legacy of mutual antagonism between countries and a wealth of newly forged doctrines (Tuchman 338, 590). But most notoriously, this schism caused an escalation of the crusading spirit of the Church. In the mid-fifteenth century, Pope Pius II (Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini) put his 'energies and money [...] to recruiting troops and ships for a new crusade and to trying to persuade the leading powers of Europe to take part' (Collins 327). Even though this venture never succeeded, the priest, in Benson's novel, may have acquired a knowledge of it which forced him to revolt against religion and disavow his Catholic faith: 'All religions were the same. There wasn't any truth in any of them. Physical science had settled one half of the matter, and psychology the other

half' (*DA* iii). The fact that modern systems of thought, such as science and psychology, are brought to bear on the dying priest's lapse of faith aligns him with modernism, a fin-de-siècle liberal movement in the Catholic Church. Initially defined by Pope Pius X in his encyclical 'Pascendi Dominici Gregis: On the Doctrine of the Modernists' (1907), modernism came to denote a synthesis of all heresies, brought about by a rationalist approach to the Bible, secularism, and agnosticism. The latter reaction against modern disputations of Catholic dogma further produced 'The Oath Against Modernism' (1910), condemning 'historico-theological research' uninspired by 'sacred authority'. A key role in engendering this papal onslaught on modernist heresy was played by George Tyrrell, an English Catholic priest who opposed the infallibility of the Popes and stability of dogma, and insisted on the abandonment of power, pursued by the Church in the political arena (Sagovsky 3, 9). Tyrrell's bitter confrontation with the Catholic establishment led to his excommunication (Lewis, 'Modernism' 187), and most probably stirred Benson's imagination to produce characters with modernist leanings.[16] In *The Dawn of All*, the priest fails to reconcile Christ's resurrection with the sectarianism and militancy that riddled the medieval history of the Catholic Church (259). In much the same way, Monsignor Masterman struggles to envisage a future in which the Church would espouse 'the religion of its Founder' (*DA* 201); the novel further spells out his dilemma: 'Then, almost without perceiving the connection, he turned in his mind to Christianity as he conceived it to be – to his ideal figure of Christ; and in an instant he saw the contrast, and why it was that the moral instinct within him loathed and resented this modern Christian State' (134). In dismissing the political licence of the Church, the Monsignor is shown to embrace Tyrrell's 'Christ-centred Catholicism' (Sagovsky 23). Because Masterman's conflict is theological in nature, does his apostasy correlate with the views he holds on liberal politics?

The novel brings Masterman's avowed modernism into contact with an England whose politics, as indicated in the previous section, are a future extension of an early twentieth-century Liberal agenda. If one accepts the contention that between 1880 and 1920 Liberalism 'remained the dominant force in the political culture' (Colls, 'Englishness' 29), and therefore represented English political loyalties at

[16] In his account of literary conversions to Catholicism, Joseph Pearce records that Benson's interest in Tyrrell's theological modernism abated after the latter's expulsion from the Jesuits in 1906 (19).

large (Smith, 'Englishness' 255), *The Dawn of All* can be read as a searching commentary on Liberal England, which is being transformed by Catholicism. The novel's political underpinning is further signalled by the protagonist's name, eponymous with that of Charles F. G. Masterman. The latter served as a junior minister in the Asquith government (1908-1916) and authored, among other studies, *The Condition of England* (1909). In this survey, C. F. G. Masterman gives voice to his profound anxiety about the ongoing decomposition of English social and cultural continuities. Not only does he impute the underlying threat of disruption to the rise of the uncontrollable masses, which he terms the 'Deluge', but he also advocates the constitutional relationship between church and state in England (205), and sympathizes with the Irish move towards sovereignty (14). C. F. G. Masterman's anti-imperial rhetoric discloses, as Anna Vaninskaya observes, a major divide among the Liberals as regards Irish Home Rule and the Empire (537). Because Benson targets the same concerns, as those raised in *The Condition of England*, and proceeds to reconfigure them into a politics fully accountable to the Church, this section seeks to comprehend the ways in which the alignment with a Catholic project of world unity inflects and displaces England's parliamentary democracy, enfranchisement, and relations with Ireland. If the protagonist's theological modernism is coalescent with his liberal politics as occasions for apostasy, what is the extent to which Benson's idea of a universal Catholic future hangs on Liberal England?

1. Church and State

The question of an alliance between church and state runs through much of Benson's writing. In his historical romances, he accentuates the unifying benefits of Catholicism for England. Set amidst post-Reformation ancestral tensions, *The Queen's Tragedy* (1906) contrasts Elizabeth with Mary Tudor, who, unlike her Protestant sister, is deemed to have 'a plan of rule that would make England one with the nations instead of setting her aloof in a fierce and capable insularity' (321). Such devout aspirations match the religious piety with which Robin Audrey, the protagonist of Benson's *Come Rack! Come Rope!* (1912), accepts death, after years of persecution by the Elizabethan regime, for 'the Catholic faith, [...] that which was once the faith of all England – and which [...] may be one day its faith again' (402).

Oriented towards a future realization of the aforesaid pledge, *The Dawn of All* throws into relief the increasing power of the Catholic Church, levering England to an international visibility. A governmental official assures Monsignor Masterman:

> The establishment of the Church in England was being regarded on the Continent as a kind of test case; and even more by the Anglo-Saxon countries throughout the world. In itself it was not so vast a step forward as might be thought. It would make no very radical changes in actual affairs, since the Church already enjoyed enormous influence and complete liberty (195).

In drawing on the absolute liberty of the Church and England's place in the world, the novel lends itself to a contemporary contextualization. Some commentators have expressed contesting views with regard to the condition of religious sensibility in the early twentieth century. G. R. Searle notes: '[W]hat was happening was less an erosion of traditional Christian beliefs than a watering-down of religious practice, as the churches sought popularity by making their peace with an increasingly secular society' (538). Pericles Lewis counters the above contention by suggesting that 'the early twentieth century witnessed a great deal of anxiety about the dangers of secularization and a search for alternatives to the privatized, liberal religion that had dominated the late nineteenth century' (Lewis, 'Modernism' 186). These seemingly opposed ideas about the Edwardian frame of mind indicate an underlying process, whereby secularization triggers anxiety about a liberal religion in particular and a liberal society at large.

Benson may have been anxious about an ostensible spread of liberal beliefs which G. K. Chesterton ironically captures in *Heretics* (1905): 'Thus every man who utters a doubt defines a religion' (169). At the same time, Benson's fascination with unorthodox phenomena, such as spiritualism (Baumstein 14), betrays a liberal undertow in his interests. In an analysis of the fin-de-siècle conflation of occultism and socialism, Matthew Beaumont remarks that 'the notion of a creative brotherhood, which could assume both democratic and technocratic forms, was an important aspect of both movements at this time, as was the apocalyptic expectation of some fundamental social transformation on which it was premised' (*Spectres* 177). Indeed, Benson is reputed to have an express liking for modern literature on spiritualist subjects, including H. G. Wells's *Love and Mr Lewisham* (1900) as 'the best novel ever written' (Watt 49). In his novel, Wells ridicules spiritualist séances as occasions for flagrant cheating (*Love* 84), and eventually dismisses schemes whose

artifice purports to falsify individual lives. Because Benson is attracted to Wells's allegedly gnostic refocusing of the guiding principles of life, he understands the former's writings as holding out 'a perfectly definite end in view', which, 'however contrary to the orthodox one, was far better than agnosticism or aimlessness' (Martindale, vol. 2 223). The latter observation explains Benson's dual acknowledgement of spiritualism as a revealing, yet dangerous, companion to the Christian faith. Furthermore, this biographic note aptly summarizes Benson's benign attitude towards liberal creeds, unless they are agnostic in orientation.

Benson's positions on the establishment of the Catholic Church by the state offer a renegotiation of England's allegedly liberal religion. As a major reason for the growing secularization in England, Benson cites 'the rent and divided National Church, held together as it is at present by little more than its establishment in the State [...]' (*Denominations* X). Because the Church of England lacks universal spiritual authority, its denominational sectarianism is deemed to produce doctrinal anarchy, which Benson counterpoises to the very strict principles of Catholic rule (*Paradoxes* 98). In departing from what he calls 'Protestant doctrine', which is based on liberty, Benson equates liberty with submission to authority (*Paradoxes* 102). This understanding of liberty secured by laws takes its cue from Chesterton's *Orthodoxy* (1909):

> A man cannot expect any adventures in the land of anarchy. But a man can expect any number of adventures if he goes travelling in the land of authority. One can find no meanings in a jungle of scepticism; but the man will find more and more meanings who walks through a forest of doctrine and design (291).

Chesterton's apology for authority and doctrine is inseparable from his appeal for a progression towards fundamental aspects of faith. Unlike Chesterton, however, Benson dresses England's complete transition to Catholicism in seemingly evolutionist apparel. In his apologetic pamphlet *A City Set on a Hill* (1904), he describes the Catholic Church as exhibiting 'the two principles of organic growth, namely: identity and change' (52). Along similar lines in *The Dawn of All*, Mr Manners maintains that Catholicism possesses the power of remaining the same in appearance, yet affecting its surroundings. This tendency is reported to stem from the writings of W. H. Mallock and Leslie Stephen, among others (*DA* 18). Indeed, the central precept of Mallock's *Doctrine and Doctrinal Disruption* (1900) is the metaphor of the Catholic Church as a living organism, endowed with authority and

continuity. Like Benson, Mallock partly acquires his organic gauges from John Henry Newman's *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (1845). Newman contends that 'the highest and most wonderful truths', just because they require a 'longer time and deeper thought for their full elucidation', must manifest the principles of unity, continuity, and logical sequence (Newman, *Essay* 206). Mallock goes on to connect the gradual unveiling of Catholic truths to the ability of the Church of Rome to remain united and grow in its organic unity (175). Such allegedly evolutionist foundations of Benson's idea of a Catholic world unity enable a special type of liberty which, being guided by authority, is capable of organic growth.

The idea of organicism further evokes Herbert Spencer's *First Principles* (1862-1896), in which the character of morality, religion and social institutions is subjected to the organic nature of society: 'Forms of religion, like forms of government, must be fit for those who live under them; and in one case, as in the other, that form which is fittest is that for which there is an instinctive preference' (119). If judged on the grounds of this postulate, the establishment of the Catholic Church in England may only be achieved by reforming the whole of English society; meanwhile, some of its nationally conscious aspects will have to be preserved. Helped by his correspondence with Spencer Jones, the author of *England and the Holy See: An Essay Towards Reunion* (1902), Benson promotes two interrelated strategies of accommodating England into the Catholic fold. One such strategy involves satisfying the national need of self-fulfilment. Just as Spencer Jones upholds the possibility of a National Church revolving around its own centre, so long as it revolves around the Holy See (159), Benson attempts to procure a new role for England in a wider international community. This ongoing anxiety about England's Catholic future can be additionally linked to the status of the British Empire in the early twentieth century. Linda Colley places Protestantism at the heart of an imperialism which defined Britain's 'God-given mission' in the world (47). The gradual erosion of British military and industrial superiority, which had become particularly evident in the course of the Boer Wars (1899-1902), provoked the dissolution of certain Protestant assurances. As Colley conclusively summarizes the mood of the period, 'God has ceased to be British, and Providence no longer smiles' (395). The fact that *The Dawn of All* positions England as a 'test case' of the

established church is intended not only to boost and reignite the Christian faith across the nation. This enterprise also replaces a historically failing mission, and the increasingly problematic ideology of British imperialism, with a compensatory vision of England, being at the forefront of universal Catholic affairs.

The other strategy of ensuring England's organic transition to Catholicism presupposes reversing English people's loyalties. Some of Benson's social novels seek to project a contemporary English attitude which manifests itself in resolute opposition to union with Rome. In *None Other Gods* (1910), the central character's choice of the Catholic faith is markedly at odds with the conservative beliefs, deeply ingrained in his family. His father is referred to as 'a Tory, not exactly by choice, but simply – for the same reason as he was Church of England – because he was unable, in the fibre of him, to imagine anything else' (Benson, *Gods* 46). The English are stereotyped not only as lacking the imaginative powers that would allow them to transcend their entrenched mind-sets, but also as being unable to rationalize their anti-Catholic sentiment. One of the characters in Benson's *Initiation* (1914) is believed to have several reasons why 'she couldn't be a Catholic [...]; but had omitted to state what these were. . . .' (21). In *The Dawn of All*, English people are reported to have gradually embraced the Catholic faith. Yet regardless of this vivid progress, they anticipate that their earlier drift from the Holy See ought to be redeemed; as Cardinal Bellairs pleads:

> As individuals, Englishmen have already returned to Him [Christ]. But a corporate crime must be expiated by corporate reparation, and it is that reparation which has already waited too long. I am an old man, gentlemen. That, no doubt, is why I have been so verbose, but my one prayer for the last thirty years has been that that corporate reparation may be made within my own lifetime. . . . (183).

Undoubtedly, such nation-wide expiation of a long-gone past, as envisaged by the Cardinal, can barely tie into the doctrine of liberty and organic growth defined by Benson. The proliferation of Catholicism in England dethrones, rather than endorses, the central principle of organicism: instead of permitting society to evolve its own form of religion, the Catholic Church comes to direct the redemptive reversal of the English nation to an imagined, pre-existing condition. This conflicted reversal of organic development is additionally signalled not only by Masterman's failure to align the Catholic Church with the English state, but also by the processes he countenances, as England strives to adapt itself to a unifying religious cause:

> Yet by some abominable trick, it seemed, these individuals were not merely in external matters forced to conform to the Society which they helped to compose, but interiorly too; they actually had been tyrannized over in their consciences and judgments, and loved their chains. If he had known that the fires of revolt lay there sleeping beneath this smooth exterior he would have hated it far less; but he had seen with his own eyes that it was not so (133).

Indeed, the protagonist's rebellious thoughts may be explained away by his modernist apostasy. However, the 'final victory' of Catholicism 'in the history of mankind', which is related at the end of the novel's main section (248), ultimately negates the very idea of organic growth, to say nothing of liberty.

Benson's own emphases on authority-bound liberty and gradualism are crucially denounced by the finality that a Catholic world unity heralds in *The Dawn of All*. If the triumph of Catholicism is hailed as finite, any further progress of doctrine is disabled and becomes redundant. In this context, one is reminded of Leslie Stephen's *The Science of Ethics* (1882), whose notion of doctrinal development is acknowledged in Benson's novel: 'Complete equilibrium, or an elimination of this discordant element, would therefore mean, not perhaps stagnation, but a cessation of progress, an attainment of the highest arc of the curve, after which we would only expect descent' (Stephen 444). The novel leaves the reader with a conflicted version of a Catholic globality, whose final triumph removes all discordances necessary for progress. Yet in doing so, the established Church, envisioned in Benson's England, stalls doctrinal development and freezes the English nation's newly acquired Catholic spirituality, once and for all.

2. Liberal Politics

In endorsing the established church as a 'final victory', *The Dawn of All* totalizes the imagined political and social resonances of Catholicism in England. Not only is practically everybody pronounced 'a Catholic – from the King downwards' (*DA* 28), but 'the first professedly Catholic Parliament for more than four hundred years' is also expected to open (178). As Monsignor Masterman witnesses the concluding preparations for such a transformed England, his new experiences are inevitably guided by the politics of Edwardian Britain, where the Liberal Party came to face the challenges of enfranchisement, Ireland, and socialism. This sub-section seeks to establish the ways in which England's imaginary involvement in a universal Catholic enterprise maintains a connection with contemporary England, through engaged

responses to the domestic rifts and arguments that beset Liberalism/liberalism as a political and social force dominant in the early twentieth century.

One such response relates to Parliament. In the novel, Fr Jervis notifies Masterman that the Houses of Parliament have been visibly reconfigured. This concerns both Parliament Square, which has acquired 'the image of the Immaculate Conception' (7), and the newly renamed Lords and Commons, now referred to as the Upper and the Lower House respectively (185). Despite these symbolic re-articulations, the Lower House remains invested with robust legislative authority. While the Upper House heeds the monarch's opinion by lending unwavering support to the established church, its 'lower' counterpart serves as a barometer of public opinion. These functional differences between Lords and Commons, as recorded by Benson, evoke disputations in the British Parliament surrounding the Finance Bill (1909) that was met with severe opposition in the House of Lords. This negotiation resulted in the request lodged by H. H. Asquith, the then Prime Minister, for a dissolution of Parliament and a general election in January 1910. Another request for an election was made later in the same year, after Liberal and Conservative MPs 'had failed to agree on proposals to limit the power of the House of Lords' (Craig 177). In *The Dawn of All*, one finds a telling re-enactment of the above conflict: the Upper House is equally at loggerheads with the more influential Lower House as regards Catholic rule: 'The Upper House, it was notorious, was practically unanimous in favour of the Bill; and there had been one or two unpleasant demonstrations outside the entrance to the Second Chamber' (185). Masterman's observations further suggest that the Lower Chamber's receptiveness to mass protests, which may potentially affect the voting, subsequently backfires. The government officials take advantage of such suggestibility and proclaim the Pope as 'Arbitrator of the East', in order to ensure that the Lower House votes in favour of an establishment bill. Cardinal Bellairs reassuringly sums up: 'Don't you understand, Monsignor? The House would have refused to vote otherwise' (*DA* 198).

The fact that the Lower House of Parliament falls victim to a manipulation of power further diminishes the English principles of parliamentary democracy as such. Benson's presentation of the elected chamber as a residual bastion against consensual acquiescence is in direct correspondence with the ideas about enfranchisement

expressed in the novel: ‘There’s a severe educational test now, of course. Not more than about one in seventy adults get the vote at all. But the result is that we’re governed by educated persons’ (27). In addition, Masterman discovers that the Catholic authorities in England are explicitly opposed to popular democracy, or rule ‘by sheer weight of numbers’ (17), by ‘the inexpert’ (17), by ‘the mediocrity of the average’ (53). If set against the franchise framework of Edwardian Britain, Benson’s version of Catholic England operates a much more rigid system of educational controls. Before 1914, the British electorate comprised predominantly householders, enfranchising around sixty percent of the male population (Robbins, *Britain* 175). As Benson makes education pivotal in obtaining the right to vote in parliamentary elections, *The Dawn of All* betrays suggestive consonances with John Henry Newman’s pronounced denigration of liberalism in *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (1864). Equally opposed to what he feels to be potentially menacing inroads of the multitude on religion, Cardinal Newman vigorously supports the idea of education ‘as a means of maintaining religious truth in this anarchical world’ (*Apologia* 325). This proposition is fully vested in Catholic dogma, which forms the standard of Newman’s battle against liberalism. Matthew Arnold, who acknowledges Newman’s exclusive investment in religious belief as a means of national renewal, ascribes the Cardinal’s professed renunciation of liberalism to its alleged ‘hardness and vulgarity’. In *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), Arnold traces the complete supersession of ‘the great middle-class liberalism’ by ‘a wholly different force’, new and more democratic (73-4). This emerging phenomenon compels Arnold to question its current congruence with culture, which he places at the basis of national regeneration. Along similar lines, Benson argues that national regeneration has nothing to do with ‘drains and female suffrage’. In one of his more radical articles, ‘Points of View’ (1911), he further declares that ‘with regard to the suffrage, I am of Ruskin’s opinion that not only would I not extend it to women, but I would take it away from men’ (72). Benson shares, with Newman, Arnold and Ruskin, a downright hostility to the much feared, and therefore disorienting, manifestations of liberalism. In downplaying universal suffrage, Benson gives vent to chronic anxiety about the uneducated multitude, who may, armed with the franchise, wreak ‘simple chaos’ (*DA* 53). In *The Dawn of All*, the marginally dissenting nature of the Lower

House of Parliament thus brings into view those remaining forces that confront the establishment of a regime which is self-consciously undemocratic.

In Benson's novel, women are enfranchised under the same strict educational requirements as men. Moreover, women are said to enjoy more liberty in clothing, so long as they conform to a pattern relevant to their social standing: '[E]ach woman has a predominating colour, the colour of the head of her family, and all, of course, wear badges' (53). Such ostensibly liberating prescriptions are more relevant to slavery, than to emancipation, remaining conditional on women's subordination to paterfamilias. To that end, Masterman's socialist opponent remarks: 'The enfranchisement of women settled all that. They are always clerical, you know' (179). As the protagonist feels pricked by the foregoing remark, 'clerical' may be taken to imply women's secretarial, supplementary position in society, rather than their ecclesiastical status. Despite the fact that women are almost entirely absent from Benson's depiction of this Catholic world, their occasional characterizations stand in stark contrast to the image of the New Woman that acquired visibility in, among others, Wells's social novel *Ann Veronica: A Modern Love Story* (1909). Wells initially equips his heroine with a symptomatic fervour for freedom and citizenship, which would culminate in the vote, 'the symbol of everything' (*AV* 229). But Ann Veronica's revolutionary aspirations took a downturn after a failed 'raid upon the House of Commons' (*AV* 230) in which she had become involved and was arrested thereafter. The heroine's subsequent withdrawal from political activity refocuses her searching impulses onto her own emancipation. Her previously claimed demands for women's legal and economic freedom are ultimately achieved, as some critics observe, through the realization of her right to free love (Chialant 11; Patterson 29). Contrasts between Ann Veronica and Benson's auxiliary portrayal of women are further enhanced by the character of a nurse who looks after the dying priest in *The Dawn of All*. In the novel's prologue and epilogue, not only is she heard to speak in a grave and quiet monotone (*DA* ii), but she is also a 'convinced Catholic' saying her beads (257). The nurse's peaceful drowsiness floats her to a compensatory vision 'of a king [...] in a far-off city' (258). Unlike Ann Veronica, the nurse romances with Christ, not for free love; she is comfortably ensconced in her own positive faith that transcends worldly aspirations. At the same time, just as Wells

condemns women's political violence as 'wild burlesque' (*AV* 229), Benson highlights 'clericalism' as an ideal of women's self-control and composure. The two writers may hold fiercely competing views on women's liberal rights and self-fulfilment, but they both converge on repudiating politically radical methods of female emancipation. The England that Benson aligns with Catholicism eradicates all that.

Benson's persistent alerts to protest and violence place the relations of his imagined England on a somewhat ambiguous footing with Ireland. In *The Dawn of All*, Fr Jervis spells out:

> Ireland developed enormously as soon as she had gained independence, but emigration continued, and the Irish strength really lies abroad. [...] Of course, she is a part of the British Empire; but her real social life lies in her colonies. Australia succeeded in getting Home Rule from Ireland about twenty-five years ago (31).

The above summary of Ireland's fictional history supplies a compromising solution to the dilemma of Irish sovereignty: the island acquires not only Home Rule under the British Crown, but also becomes a colonial power in its own right. Ireland's newly proclaimed position at the frontline of international cooperation is vividly reminiscent of what the Fabians, such as G. B. Shaw and Sidney Webb, espoused as 'a progressive imperial framework' (Claeys, *Sceptics* 182). Benson's imagination avails itself of two global frameworks at a time: the British Empire and the Holy See, whose respective economic and religious advantages are projected on Ireland. This supposedly progressive duality may perhaps liberate Ireland by lifting it to an international prominence. But the novel systematically propels into view the island's rather adverse qualities, manifest in this Catholic universe. The fact that Ireland turns into a European sanatorium reaffirms its pastoral, yet secluded, stereotype, which is discussed in the next section. However, during his visit, Monsignor Masterman is unable to comprehend the pervasive deadness of the island: 'It was not until afterwards that he realized that there had hardly been one window to be seen; and not one living being' (*DA* 158). Because Irish economic engagements remain largely declaratory in the novel, Ireland's utter confinement and desolation encapsulate the unviable compromise between Catholic rule and the Irish involvement in the Empire.

While suffrage and Irish sovereignty are set within the range of future England's domestic concerns, socialist ideas are posed as an alien, unwelcome threat. Benson's aversion towards socialism in general may be measured against the 1910

electoral manifestoes of the Labour Party, which declared the need of a different socio-political order, where 'the feudal age is past and [...] the people are no longer willing to live on the sufferance of the Lords' (*Labour* 12). In response to the spectacular gains of the Labour Party in the 1906 and later elections, *The Dawn of All* conjures up colonial outposts for socialist activity and locates them in North America. Massachusetts is chosen to negotiate relevant arrangements for socialists 'to enjoy complete civil and religious liberty [...]' (199). Barely coincidental is the setting of the socialist colonies in Boston, evoking the topography of Edward Bellamy's utopian novel *Looking Backward: 2000-1887* (1888). Ideals of one such Bostonian outpost, such as '[g]ood government, stability, good bodily health, the propagation and education of children, equality in possessions and opportunities' (*DA* 206) clearly echo the provisions that Bellamy makes for the late twentieth-century United States. Bellamy's protagonist, Julian West, is briefed by his guide Doctor Leete: 'The nation is rich, and does not wish the people to deprive themselves of any good thing. [...] No man any more has any care for the morrow, [...] for the nation guarantees the nurture, education, and comfortable maintenance of every citizen from the cradle to the grave' (58).

In order to ensure the integrity of England within the Catholic fold, Benson stages an exile of socialists. This trope of the utopian imagination, which necessitates expulsion of malcontents, is deeply rooted in what Fredric Jameson terms 'the fear of contamination' (*Archaeologies* 204), and it receives further attention in sections 2.2 and 3.3 of this thesis. Before Masterman arrives in Boston, he tends to consider the ideological tensions between socialism and Catholicism in absolute dichotomies. He draws the dividing lines between the socialist who is also an infidel, a materialist, a democrat, at the one end of the spectrum, and the Catholic who is a monarchist and an imperialist, at the other (*DA* 203). Masterman's stay in America confirms these divisions only as regards the absence, among the socialists, of the religious sense of 'an incomprehensible Power greater than themselves' (209). True, the protagonist's wary disapproval of the socialism he observes is fundamentally theological. However, Masterman additionally develops an important understanding that systems of government, be they socialist or Catholic, are indiscriminately repressive and therefore imperfect. When wondering whether there is 'no longer any room for a

man with feelings and emotions and an individuality of his own' under either regime (209), Masterman associates the limitations of liberty with the efficient machinery of the state. Despite their exiled status, the socialist colonies thus fail to offer a sustainable alternative to a Catholic world unity with which England conspires. Such underlying narrative anxieties may run counter to Benson's religious conviction. However, through the socio-political imperfections of Catholicism and socialism, both globalizing in outreach, the novel viscerally points retrospectively to a more benevolent, albeit equally imperfect, Liberal England.

Conclusion

While Monsignor Masterman's theological apostasy is integral to his liberal politics, additionally complicit with doctrinal growth and occasions for dissent, Benson's own reputed reactions to Liberal England present a more complicated conundrum. In his recent article on prophetic fiction, Axel Stähler interprets some of Benson's novels as being antagonistic to modern constructions of nationality (167). Similarly to its dystopian predecessor *Lord of the World*, *The Dawn of All* can be seen to rehearse 'the ultimate communion', which is enabled by the apocalypse of universal Catholic rule. This arguably redemptive event may perhaps allow a complete transcendence of the novel's ongoing engagement with the historic moments of Edwardian Britain. However, Benson's imagined trajectory towards this universal Eucharist entails a substantial overhaul of England, including its nation-state and people's character. If one accepts the view that Benson conflates the nation's apparatus and idiom with the rise of Antichrist, how does one negotiate the novel's internal conflict? This latter view, like many other readings cited in the previous section, notably retreats from the important fact that Benson's notion of a globalizing Catholicism emerges from the final denunciation of Liberal England, whereby the newly established Catholic Church becomes fully identical with the nation-state. As the novel fuses the universal with the national, this uneasy and conflicted amalgam accounts for the protagonist's disturbing nightmare, and bespeaks Benson's deeply ingrained dilemma about Catholic ends and national means.

1.3. Religion and Science

Introduction

The discussion of society and politics can be further extended to an interaction between religion and science. The latter two serve to reinforce Benson's vision of a Catholic world unity. In seeking to overcome its own insularity, England is made to rely not only on dogma, but also on modern technology. The use of airships provides effective physical access to the Catholic fold of nations with which England seeks to align itself. However, as explored in section 1.1, the fact that the protagonist awakes with a rather disturbed mind testifies to a stark discrepancy between his expectations and a changing nation that he conjures up in his dream. As England proceeds to embrace the absolute rule of the Catholic Church, Masterman gradually submits first to miracles, then to the mystery of religious suggestion, and finally, to the authority of the established Church. This narrative progression structurally reprises a biblical pattern, whereby Jesus does not yield to working a wonder, putting God to the test and gaining power over the kingdoms of the world. The crucial difference between Christ's passions and Masterman's qualms lies in his acceptance of what Jesus had the strength to resist. Having repressed his memorial reservations about the flawed nature of a state religion, Masterman chooses to become its newly-sworn guardian.

The protagonist's rise to authority bears a vivid resemblance to what Fyodor Dostoyevsky repudiates as the secular power of Popery in *The Brothers Karamazov* (1880). In one of the novel's most allegorical episodes, the Grand Inquisitor insists that Christ's resistance to temptation should be corrected and 'based on *miracle, mystery and authority*' (288). As Dostoyevsky admonishes, such a fundamental revision of the Scripture will allow the millions of weak and unhappy to know 'whom to worship, to whom to entrust [their] conscience and how at last to unite in a common, harmonious, and incontestable anthill, for the need of universal unity is the third and last torment of men' (*Brothers* 288). The above admonition embodies Dostoyevky's reaction against the much feared authoritarian expansion of the Catholic Church and other Western influences. Even though Benson's allegiance to Catholicism is diametrically opposed to that of Dostoyevsky, these two writers' central concern about the power of the Church, which sets out to transform people's

consciousness, seem to converge. For this reason, the legend of the Grand Inquisitor offers a valuable analytical tool for exploring the ways in which miracle, mystery and authority are deployed in Benson's project of Catholicism that takes over England.

The relationship of religion and science is deducible from a number of contexts in *The Dawn of All*. The novel tentatively, if not superficially, charts the possibility of reconciling this time-tested dichotomy in a manner similar to Samuel Butler's late-Victorian postulate acknowledging that religion (Christianity) and science (rationalism) 'have become essential to the very existence of [each] other' (*Haven* 270). Even though religion and science are instrumental in connecting Benson's version of England to a supranational Catholic community, science not only remains subservient to religion, but also manifests itself predominantly in technology. Religion is styled as 'a matter of authority', while science is perceived as a distraction from 'an axiom of thought [...] that a Revelation of God must be embodied in a living authority safeguarded by God' (*DA* 17). In the canon of utopian fiction, the closest analogy to the above conception can be found in Francis Bacon's *The New Atlantis* (1627), where light, which is both 'God's first creature' (168) and the epitome of the divine revelation, is sought and acquired worldwide for the sake of broadening the knowledge of God, and therefore has a religious purpose. Yet, in Nell Eurich's observation, Bacon for the first time enthroned 'the scientist [...] at the top of the social hierarchy, well ahead of contemporary thought' (262). Benson's novel offers a conflicted renegotiation of the scientist's position in a society which is gradually reversing to Catholicism. In laying out the protagonist's exposure to the displays of miracle, mystery and authority, *The Dawn of All* makes a clear distinction between the physical (airships, bodily health) and emotional (confession, psychotherapy) transcendence of reality. This distinction betrays a link with G. K. Chesterton's idea of materialistic and spiritual agencies of the miraculous. In *Orthodoxy* (1909), he insists that the benefits of science limit man's freedom and create spiritual tedium, whereas religion is much more liberating, especially when it comes to God's miracles. As Chesterton concedes,

> If a man cannot believe in miracles there is an end of the matter; he is not particularly liberal, but he is perfectly honourable and logical, which are much better things. But if he can believe in miracles, he is certainly the more liberal for doing so; because they mean

> first the freedom of the soul, and secondly, its control over the tyranny of circumstance (*Orthodoxy* 235).

The Dawn of All problematizes the interaction between the materialistic and spiritual aspects of both religion and science. The extent to which either of these aspects prevails in creating a Catholic England is examined in this section.

Constructions of England, with which the novel preoccupies itself, can be placed in the context of the mythologies of national science, associated with the 'English practical mind', and of national religion, guided by English compromise. The aforesaid mythologies were aptly summarized in *The Character of England* (1947), whose editor Ernest Barker had proposed the volume as 'a monument to the England of these days [...]' (v). Recording some protean manifestations of 'the spirit of England' in areas as varied as land, religion, law, government, industry, education, literature, science, and arts, the book justified its use of the present in conjunction with 'the living Past' (*Character* v). Thus, in his deliberations about national science, William Dapier suggested that '[m]eanwhile most of the practical English, unlike the logical French and the metaphysical Germans, found no difficulty in accepting simultaneously Newton's science and the religion to which they were accustomed' (*Character* 260). The idea of compromise also underpinned A. T. P. Williams's treatment of national religion: 'The Englishman's unwillingness to draw or to respect rigid lines, his often unreasoned but not unreasonable conviction that the nature of the evidence makes many questions unanswerable, will account for more. The English Church has given him large latitude' (*Character* 66). Biographers report that Benson had serious intentions to reform English people by infusing into them 'a new public spirit – a spirit of obedience, devotion, loyalty and subservience to the Church, which is essential to any Catholic' (Watt 116). In his pamphlet *The Conversion of England* (1906), Benson remarked that 'English religious sentiment and English national religion have crumbled' (20). Whether Benson attempted to replace this system of allegedly deceased loyalties with one based on the faith in authority, and what implications this transition had for the identity of a newly transformed England is the subject-matter of this section. Following the pattern of Christ's temptation in the desert in Dostoyevsky's seminal interpretation, this section discusses the ways in which miracle, mystery and authority are co-opted to the service of the Catholic regime that comes to bear on Benson's version of England.

1. Miracle

In Benson's vision of Catholic rule, miracles stem from the proclaimed rapprochement of science and religion. After the scientist declared: 'I believe in God', and the theologian reiterated: 'I recognize Nature' (*DA* 109), they allegedly initiated an exchange of insight into natural and supernatural phenomena. It is nonetheless noteworthy that this insight remains the prerogative of the 'educated few' who prevent the 'uneducated many' from turning 'creation upside down' (109). In line with physical and divine forces that dominate the Catholic agenda of future England, distinction may be made between two types of miraculous (that is, out-of-the-ordinary) developments: air travel, and suggestive and instantaneous treatment of the sick. Although air travel, recorded in the novel, foreshadows present-day aircraft, some of its technical aspects are calculated more for an impressive effect than for practical purposes. Made of a special metal which is 'as thin as paper' and 'far stronger than any steel', volors are propelled by gas and built to resemble birds in 'Almighty God's design' (43). These airships are equipped with open decks from which the passengers can watch the vehicle's progression above the ground; volors can also remain airborne, like a helicopter, in one position, thereby allowing travellers to disembark and to alight: 'It seemed impossible to realize that this station in the air was not the normal level, and the earth not a strange foreign body that attended on it' (46-7). The concept of a volor is Benson's barely novel invention. Earlier, the protagonist of his *Lord of the World* acknowledges the extension of 'the European line of volors' to London (11). These sliding objects with 'outstretched wings' are devised to herald the ultimate triumph of a largely irreligious world. In the light of Benson's interest in some of Wells's futuristic imaginings, the air fleet of volors may have been inspired by flying machines from 'A Story of the Days to Come' (1899) and *The Sleeper Awakes* (1899; 1910), which describe a London whose streets are pervasively furnished with landing stages and moving platforms. Predating Blériot's flight across the English Channel in July 1909, Wells's visions of the twenty-second century reveal more than the miraculous potentialities of flying. In his 1921 preface to *The War in the Air* (1908), Wells focuses on the vast expanse of social destruction that airships, or 'navigables', can create, unless used for a collective peace cause (839-40). Whereas Wells is largely concerned with the

beneficial applications of airships, Benson initially dismisses them as harbingers of godlessness. But, later in *The Dawn of All*, volors are effectively used by England's Catholic elites that seek unity with the Holy See and the rest of the world. Flying comparatively low and at relatively moderate speed, the air fleet performs several symbolic functions.

First, volors serve to overcome the gravity of national isolation by connecting England with France, Rome, Ireland, Germany, and North America. Given the historic complexity of England's relationships with each of the above destinations, the aspiration to establish a sustainable link, which will be both meaningful and beneficial, merits attention. During his first voyage out, Masterman 'had learned in Versailles that the Church could reorganize society, in Rome that she could reconcile nations; he had seen finally in Lourdes that she could resolve philosophies' (*DA* 109). France is shown to have irrevocably renounced its revolutionary past and have re-instated the monarchy, thus fulfilling the requirements of a Catholic world unity. The pomposity of Versailles provides a perfect setting for vacuous discussions which casuistically contest the infallibility of the Church, only to boost its authority and perfection: 'The only point of dispute between reasoning beings seemed to be not as to whether or no[t] the Church must be treated practically as infallible, but whether dogmatically and actually she were so!' (62). If Versailles is kept away from contact with commoners, Rome opens itself up as a spectacle, deploying its heavy artillery of 'pomps and glories' to impress on the viewer (87). In C. C. Martindale's estimation, 'Benson's love for pageantry reveals itself again in [*sic*] the *Dawn of All*, where the Pope, Temporal Ruler of all Italy, and practically acknowledged by the whole world as its spiritual lord, rides triumphant across Rome' (Vol. 1 287). Like the Pope, who reminds the main character of a business man (*DA* 81), Rome reconciles nations by responding to their needs with worldly charms and luxury. Masterman's fascination with the acts of the Church reaches its peak at Lourdes where, in front of a learned convention of scientists and theologians, two miracles are performed and meticulously recorded. The protagonist's second voyage by volor takes him to Ireland, which is presented as a physically insulated community boasting 'four millions of persons wholly devoted to the Contemplative Life' (168-9). The last few journeys bring Masterman to the outposts of socialism in Boston and Berlin. This

newly experienced and rather sensational portrait of a globalizing world throws into relief the condition in which England's emerging allies and adversaries find themselves.

Further to the above, volors offer truly revealing images of London, which comes across 'as if it were seen through glass or water – a beautifully finished, clean picture, moving within itself like some precise and elaborate mechanism' (41). This heightened portrayal of the metropolis contrasts with the earthly pictures furnished, for example, by William Morris in his utopian romance *News from Nowhere* (1890). In an attempt to dispense with the steam and sweat of the ever-expanding city, Morris enacted a different set of social relations according to which, as Ruth Levitas notes, 'the image of London as a network of villages with their own centres is wholly consonant with the most imaginative, radical thinking about urban areas' (*Morris* 48). Where Morris took a radical stance on the haphazard growth of London, Ford Madox Ford in his survey *The Soul of London* (1905) recorded the overwhelming complexity and fragmentation with which the capital strikes a first-time visitor; London was 'essentially a background, a matter so much more of masses than of individuals, [...] a very immense symphony-orchestra than a quartet party [...]' (11).[17] In *The Dawn of All*, volors provide a vital distance from the oppressive advances of the city that cancel out a unified vision; indeed, a bird's-eye view transcends the contemporary disparity of London. On the one hand, volors effectively negotiate a physical distance which disunites nations from the Catholic fold. This aspect of flying evokes Wells's use of navigables in order to unite the world. On the other, in registering the most overwhelming and unifying images of London, volors endorse Benson's modern technological impulses, which prove to be more revealing than his advocacy of a universal system of Catholic rule.

The second type of the miraculous which is elaborated in the novel includes the healing of the sick. Promoted as an 'authorized miracle', instantaneous recuperation that takes place at Lourdes stirs the protagonist's innermost emotions: 'The sense of a great circumambient Power grew upon him at each instant, sacramentalized, it seemed, by the solemn evening light [...]' (*DA* 104). The observation of miracles instils in the main character a transcendent sensation, very

[17] In Matthew Beaumont's estimation, Ford's aesthetic is 'of someone who loves the city but must preserve a safe distance from the life of its streets in order to protect his sense of identity' ('Ford' 46).

similar to the feeling of a physical transcendence of reality in a volor. Epitomizing the idea of a miracle, volors and instantaneous cures constitute the objects of human veneration. On this note, the Grand Inquisitor from Dostoyevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* exhorts that

> what man seeks is not so much God as miracles. And since man is unable to carry on without a miracle, he will create new miracles for himself, miracles of his own, and will worship the miracle of the witch-doctor and the sorcery of the wise woman, rebel, heretic and infidel [...] (286).

Raised in a sober Protestant atmosphere, Benson, in his own perceptions, lacked faith as a gift (Martindale, vol. 1 205). His anxiety about faith, which, as Cardinal Newman contended, was superior to senses (*Essay* 327), took him to Lourdes, where he 'arrived somewhat of a sceptic, but returned absolutely convinced [...]' (Grayson 153). In one of his pamphlets, Benson later declared that Lourdes 'is not Science, it is Faith' (*Christ* 100). Particularly intriguing, in this respect, seems the attitude to miracles in *The Dawn of All*, when Fr Jervis, speaking on behalf of the Catholic establishment, sees no conflict between science and faith whatsoever (*DA* 82). Therefore the 'army of State-paid doctors' find themselves at ease with the authorization of miracles, 'all those [cures] which could not be so paralleled were recorded, with the most minute detail, under the sworn testimonies of doctors [...]' (101). As a literary antecedent of this medical account of Lourdes, though written with a wildly different purpose in mind, the novel brings to the reader's attention Émile Zola's eponymous first part of the trilogy *Les Trois Villes* (1894-8). The rhetoric of Zola's *Lourdes* (1894) in relation to miracles sounds markedly redolent of the Grand Inquisitor's scathing statement about the human spirit, which 'thirsts after illusions' (Zola x) in its search of the incontestable, with the need to be 'deceived and consoled' by miracles (Zola 373). Stigmatizing his literary predecessor's *Lourdes* as a 'dishonest book about miracles' (*Lourdes* 2), Benson questions the verifiable aspect of a cure as the foundation of faith. As B. W. Cornish points out, Benson fears that people would want to 'become Catholics for the sake of regaining their health' (18). Instead, he stipulates that a different lesson be learnt at Lourdes: '[F]or if I should not be healed by Mary, I could at least learn how to suffer as a Christian ought' (Benson, *Lourdes* 82). Unsurprisingly, Masterman's initial bewilderment by the acts of healing gradually tends towards his acceptance of the divine provenance of miraculous treatment: '[N]atures that were inert and

immovable under the influence of sympathetic science leapt up here to meet the call of some Voice whose very existence a hundred years ago had been in doubt' (*DA* 103). This development suggests an importance that the Catholic regime places on the spiritual direction of faith, rather than on its materialistic, scientifically endorsed value.

In contrast, a discourse of national qualities retrospectively laid claim to a moderate religious sentiment in England: 'It is not strange that the Englishman is an individualist, impatient of and now unaccustomed to the authoritarian direction of faith or morals [...]' (*Character* 83). In more general terms, the Englishman was expected to recoil from the immediate recovery of the sick. Furthermore, this discourse also implied that English common sense had very little to do with the human spirit, which, according to Dostoyevsky and Zola, is normally inclined towards the miraculous. Nevertheless, the miraculous transcendence of reality permitted by volors and instantaneous cures could not but excite the Englishman Masterman, who is shown to succumb to the overcoming of regular patterns of earthly existence.

2. Mystery

Where miraculous elements lie at the heart of Benson's imagined society, mystery is meant to seal the boundary between what is put on display and what is hidden from view. Mystery envelops the role of confession in a Catholic environment, psychotherapeutic treatment, and the origins of volors. Where the former instance is purely spiritual in nature; the latter two impart a varying degree of materialism to mystery, especially to the airships. The first mysterious experience to which the protagonist is subjected takes place at the Apostolic Palace in Rome. Having observed the ease with which princes of the world groom the Church, Masterman unknowingly gets into a chapel where he sees the Pope at confession. The picture of 'the Lord of All kneeling to confess his sins' produces a surprising effect on the protagonist, who, on reflection, perceives this moment in tandem with the auspicious interaction of the Church and those in power as 'the two magnetic points between which blazed Religion' (*DA* 87). Perhaps the very worldliness of Catholicism, which seeks support from state leaders, triggers Masterman's response to the Pope's

kneeling posture. This crucial act of confession can be situated in the context of an earlier understanding of faith. In his influential study of the *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902), William James contends that all religions converge on the point of a deliverance which has its roots in seeing the wrongness of our natural position in the world, and which is resolved by 'making proper connection with the higher powers' (392). James terms these higher powers 'a more', which has the same quality as 'the germinal higher part' of the human self. What renders the Pope's confession extraordinary is not so much the implied recognition of 'a more', but its fully realized potential. According to James, '[f]or him who confesses, shams are over and realities have begun; he has exteriorized his rottenness. If he has not actually got rid of it, he at least no longer smears it over with a hypocritical show of virtue – he lives at least upon a basis of veracity' (*Varieties* 357). Undoubtedly, an insincere or dishonest act of confession is not impossible. But because Benson's protagonist is primarily alert to the Pope's supreme position in the Catholic fold, his response to the scene is immediate and overwhelming: Masterman 'stood there, trembling a little, trying to steady his bewildered brain – even now, in spite of his years, not unlike the brain of a child' (*DA* 87). The main character's innocent bewilderment may also be the outcome of his relocation from a predominantly Protestant environment known, as James describes it, for 'the general self-reliance and unsociability of our nature', to a new world where it is not enough to 'take God alone into our confidence' (*Varieties* 358). For Masterman, the Pope's act of confession transcends the boundary of a culturally conscious religious experience, while its content remains a mystery: 'It was over; the two doors had closed almost simultaneously [...]. He stood here now, strangely moved and affected' (*DA* 86).

Another instance of mystery involves the concept of psychotherapeutic treatment, set outside Benson's Catholic England. In the novel, Ireland provides medical services that target the body and the mind. By contrast, treatment at Lourdes caters solely to physical ailments. Because cures are presented as a miracle, the practice of convalescence in Ireland dismisses scientific verification and leaves no room for disputation, unlike at Lourdes. Irrespective of a consensus among the local doctors as regards conditions incurable by suggestion, such as a broken limb, tuberculosis or heart diseases (*DA* 90), Benson's portrayal of Ireland sets the mystery

of suggestive recuperation between the 'high walls' of 'the whole island', which serves as 'one monastic enclosure' (156).[18] When visiting Ireland, the protagonist of *The Dawn of All* comes into a land that cultivates a deeply restorative atmosphere which is believed to affect senses and rectify any 'physical, mental, or spiritual' condition hereafter (*DA* 158).

At a historic juncture (as discussed in the previous sections) when the future of Ireland remained uncertain until the establishment of the Irish Free State (1922), the imaginary repression of unwanted psychic disorders from a technologically advanced England to an isolated and rural Ireland looks quite telling. In endowing Ireland with redemptive potential, Benson reaffirms this island's reputed pastoralism and ostensible backwardness. By contrast, the total orderliness of a newly emerging Catholic England produces an uncompromising reality, which Masterman perceives in bewilderment and awe. After he is first faced with the clocks of London 'all striking the single stroke of midnight' (*DA* 40), later the protagonist bitterly concludes: 'Certainly it was a Catholic city, [...] drilled and disciplined by its religion; there was no noise, no glare, no apparent evil. And the marvel was that the people seemed to love to have it so!' (132). Masterman further indicates that English people fully accept 'scattered sentinels', curfew laws and checkpoints, justifying these limitations of freedom by the fact that Catholic rule 'would be inconceivable without them. How else could the few rule the many?' (132). The consensual acquiescence witnessed by Masterman among the English rehearses the Grand Inquisitor's concept of mystery as 'neither the free verdict of their hearts nor love that matters, but the mystery which they must obey blindly, even against their

[18] The Irish approach to physical and mental recovery by means of religious suggestion supplies an antidote to the method of Christian Science, which started to gain momentum in the second half of the nineteenth century and advocated, among many other aspects, affecting the mind, erasing sin, removing fear, and fostering a trusting relationship between the doctor and the patient (Eddy 80, 82, 98, 238). *The Dawn of All* explicitly denigrates Mary Baker Eddy's *Science and Health* (1866) as 'an old heresy' (38), and Benson's earlier article takes a rather critical line on how Christian Science denies 'any reality to matter, and practically any intelligible meaning to language [...]' ('Science' 71). Benson contends that Eddy's failure to permit her patients to progress from matter to symbol, from bread to the Sacred Sacrament, places her method as far apart from Lourdes as 'the apocryphal from the genuine gospels' ('Science' 68). Indeed, Eddy's frivolous recourse to the Bible in its historical contexts, and her extremely pseudoscientific views on mental processes engendered the general trend to criticize Christian Science as an unorthodox phenomenon lacking in both religious and scientific foundations. Thus, E. Abbey Tindall, one of Eddy's stalwart critics, refuses 'to admit that the thought of mental healing was in the mind of either Saint Peter or our Lord at that time' (11); he also finds it inconceivable that 'the action of the senses is set in motion by the mind' (29).

conscience' (*Brothers* 287). As the protagonist additionally asks: 'What becomes of science and discovery under a system like this? What becomes of freedom – of the right to think for oneself?' (*DA* 145), he persists in his searching analysis of a mechanized and indoctrinated society. In this sense, *The Dawn of All* prefigures some of the most seminal constructions of a dystopic England furnished in the twentieth century. Just as Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) provides 'four thousand electric clocks', which simultaneously strike the same minute and hour (40, 134), Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) disturbingly opens with the sound of clocks 'striking thirteen' (3). While Huxley is primarily concerned with Taylorized forms of production and time management (whose ramifications are considered later in the thesis), Orwell supplements these concerns with a ubiquitous presence of the state controlling people's lives and minds, through media and 'thought police' (*Nineteen* 5). In both of these scenarios, the problem of personal freedom reigns supreme: the Savage claims 'the right to be unhappy' (*BNW* 211), Winston Smith summons his energy to refute the equation of '2+2=5' (Orwell, *Nineteen* 303). They both eventually fail on the score of dissent, so does Masterman in *The Dawn of All*. Just as Smith wins 'the victory over himself' and can only love Big Brother (Orwell, *Nineteen* 311), Masterman ultimately betrays his inward rebellion, and submits to the temptation of Christ's kingdom on earth empowered by modern technology and limitations of freedom. All the above examples bewail an England which has come to conspire with universal repressive regimes.

Aside from the stifling machinery of a newly established Catholic order, the necessity of repression from England to Ireland is determined by a devised difference in the mode of their existence. Indeed, restrictions operating in Benson's future England appear to be largely incongruous with the availability of an air fleet of volors, so long as its gestation requires both considerable scientific and technical investment. Since the novel withholds the mystery of the production of volors, it may be assumed that they came down to the Catholic authorities from the twenty years of socialism, noted for inspiring modernization. The survival of airships can be explained by the necessity to instil awe in the masses. Conversely, Ireland is reported as a modernization-free and, by extension, spiritually pure terrain. The contrast between England and Ireland lends itself to what Benson dubs 'the dawn of all', and

what is reminiscent of 'the Celtic Twilight'. Metaphorically suggestive of dim light which accompanies the daily movement of the sun – one in the morning, the other before dusk, the two metaphors are derived from the opposition of modernity ('dawn') and tradition ('twilight'). According to Mr Manners's discourse, 'the dawn of all' lies at the onset of Catholic rule in England and allows a fundamental likeness between the precepts of socialism and those of Catholicism. For this reason, Benson may be seen to readily exploit the innovative 'dawn of all', which is guided by modernity and acts as a foil to the 'twilight' of pastoralism and spiritual evocation. Given the technological direction of the Catholic enterprise in England, airships play a crucial role in enhancing the authority of an otherwise restrictive regime. England's emerging spirituality is made to coalesce with its creative imagination, which enables the physical transgression of national boundaries by modern means, this being an even more restrictive venture than the mystery of pastoral isolation.

3. Authority

The exercise of Catholic authority over England has several major manifestations which are derived from miracles and mystery, and can be classed into two categories according to their narrative chronology in the novel – before and after the establishment of the Catholic Church. Prior to the establishment of the church by the state, the regime's authority is buttressed by the miracle of flying. The air fleet of volors functions as a technology commanding spectacular aerial views and presenting a formidable sight, when seen from the ground. Notably, airships press the authority of Catholicism into service. Mircea Eliade's comparative study of world religions sheds light on how ascension involves 'the transcendence of the human condition' (102), insofar as it gives access to 'ultimate realities' (108) and allows man to eventually regain a divine state before the Fall.[19] The fact that 'incalculable multitudes beneath' (*DA* 247) are only permitted to observe volors from their earthly

[19] Behind the miracle of the air fleet, one finds the idea of organized veneration, whose trenchant critique may be unearthed in Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* novels (1872, 1901). In the hope of avoiding persecution for untoward behaviour, the protagonist Higgs makes an escape in a balloon. His rising passage into the sky subsequently engenders a religion of Sunchildism with a new system of time-calculation after his successful ascension, to say nothing of place names. Because of the absurdity of such a gross 'miracle', Butler comments on the human thirst for an external authority which would serve as a criterion of righteousness, 'a peg on which to hang all your own best ethical and spiritual conceptions' (*Erewhon Revisited* 356).

perspective substantially contributes to their utter astonishment: '[A] pavement of crystal, a river of glass, so clear as itself to be unseen, on whose surface floated this navy of a dream such as the world itself had never imagined' (246). In *The Dawn of All*, the use of the miraculous reinforces the authority of those few who may access 'ultimate realities' and therefore enjoy the right to authorize miracles.

Another aspect of authority becomes manifest in the axes of church-state and church-society. That Catholic rule allows Catholics on the throne of England testifies to the special premium that it puts on the continuity of divine power, reposed in the monarch. Such an anachronistic reversal of history resonates with the central argument of Benson's romance *By What Authority?* (1904), in which Queen Elizabeth is portrayed as a ruthlessly pious Protestant who persecutes Catholics and, in doing so, assumes authority beyond her regal jurisdiction (548). Like the Church of England as a historical fact, Catholicism as a fictional project is raised to the level of establishment in the state and acts as an indisputable moral and spiritual benchmark of what society ought to think and do. An unholy attitude to dissent comes to the protagonist's attention when he meets Dom Adrian, a 'daring' and 'extraordinarily clever' clerk (*DA* 95), who, in his own words, refuses 'to submit, maintaining that I am differing, not from the Catholic Church as she really is, (which would be heretical), but from the Catholic Church as interpreted by [...] theologians' (143). The culprit's brave disputation of 'the miraculous element in religion' has been perceived as a strike against society, for which he is to be trialled and sentenced to death. This truly Erastian trial, whereby the clerk faces punishment by civil authorities (what Benson calls 'the secular arm' of the Church (27)), showcases the public dismissal of his dissent: 'It might be intolerably unchristian that a tonsured clerk should be put to death for heresy, yet he was put to death and not a soul, it seemed (not even the victim himself) resented it' (154). The absence of protest against the inflicted death penalty reveals another aspect of this Catholic regime: the Church, strengthened by the penal system of the state, assumes the role of a public conscience. Society is shown to find peace in convicting dissenters, no matter how immoral this attitude may be.

Authority gains its final and unremitting momentum in a brief (albeit technologically enhanced) conflict between England, which is complicit with

Catholicism, and socialist Germany. *The Dawn of All* uses both retrospection and anticipation to demonstrate the effectiveness of war in promoting Catholic loyalties. From a late twentieth-century perspective, Fr Jervis suggests that the European war of 1914 made France 'a small country, but intensely Catholic' (29). Even though Benson's accurate prediction of the war's outbreak had thrilled one of his early biographers who exclaimed: 'What a remarkable thing it was that, three years before it began, he prophesied in that book the European War of 1914' (Parr 62), the abundance of what I. F. Clarke terms 'future-war fiction' (33) during this period was barely incidental. Gregory Claeys reminds us that the 'future-war novel gained in popularity from the late nineteenth century as Britain's imperial position came to be challenged by Germany. Beginning with George Tomkyns Chesney's *The Battle of Dorking* (1871), the publication of works such as William Le Queux's *The Invasion of 1910* (1906) aroused immense anxiety' (*Searching* 173). Germany's fit economy, robust monarchy, and 'sense of being a nation among other nations' had begun to pose an economic and military threat during the decades preceding the First World War (Grainger 168). However for Benson, this anxiety was also, if not primarily, commensurable with the proliferation of reformist ideas in Germany. In *Lord of the World*, he presents Berlin as the hotbed of irreligious dissidence, embodied by 'the influence of Karl Marx' (5), as well as the strongest socialist movement in Europe. In *The Dawn of All*, Masterman's interlocutor links the imminence of military conflict in Europe to Germany's resistance to universal Catholic rule, this resistance being additionally dismissed as nationalism (which, aside from being non-universal, may be also seen as a synonym for socialism, as in Bellamy's *Looking Backward*): 'There are great forces in Germany. It's there that the danger lies. And you must remember too that there is no Universal Arbitrator yet. Nationalism is still pretty strong. There might easily be another big European war' (*DA* 31). Having received threats of air attacks on London, England supplements the Pope's diplomacy with an air fleet of volors. As a result, Catholicism finds itself on the winning side of the battle against socialism.

This projected victory of Catholicism over socialism can be placed in a broader economic and socio-cultural context. The Pope's histrionic descent from a volor in Germany initiates a series of confrontations with socialist ideas. One such

collision invokes *An Examination of Socialism* (1908) by Hilaire Belloc, who himself was a Catholic, as well as Benson's literary ally, and served as a Liberal MP (1906-1910). He distinguished between Catholic societies, 'whose ultimate appetite is for a state of highly divided property' (16), and their socialist counterparts, 'which have ultimately grown out of the religious schism of the sixteenth century' (15). Where Belloc equated socialist endeavours with the creation of a 'Servile State' (*Socialism* 5), his socialist opponents, James Keir Hardie for one, recognized Germany's notable successes in delivering social welfare: 'In Germany more social reforms for the benefit of the working-class have been enacted by the State than in any country in Europe, and it is in Germany where socialism has made, and continues to make, greatest progress' (*Serfdom* 26). In Benson's version of England, the question of ownership is resolved in favour of Catholic communities which, in encouraging 'private enterprise as much as possible' (*DA* 62), trump the ostensible failure of socialism to cater to the inherent competitiveness of human nature. To that end, the lines of volors, which bear archangelic names (e.g. the *Michael* and the *Gabriel*, alternating on a weekly basis), are operated privately. The ideological wrangle over such vital practicalities as property ownership and the unwelcome expansion of the apparatus of the state fails to favourably promote either socialist or Catholic models. Their climactic clash never points up a spiritual aspect which, by Benson's own standards, may supply Catholicism with authority, similar to Christ's resurrection. Ironically, the Pope's discourse with the socialists is calibrated not so much by the contrapuntal movement of his argument but by 'the smooth delicacy of French', with which he spoke, and 'the heavy German accent' of his socialist rivals in Berlin (242). The above characteristics are clearly oxymoronic in the light of the strictures and oppressions that England witnesses under Catholic rule.

The objective of authority, which entails achieving mankind's religious unity, transpires in the unwavering support secured by the Pope from both the European Powers and the East. Admittedly, it is neither the moral authority of Catholicism nor the Pope's personal authority that stuns the socialist congregation; rather, it is the technological muscle of the air fleet that causes the opponents' unquestionable capitulation. The irrational fear of the miraculous unknown irrevocably aborts the socialists' free will to oppose oppression, and bitterly confirms the Pope's

inquisitorial remark: 'I too say that man must have liberty – he was made for it; but what liberty would that be which he has not learned to use?' (245). Hardly surprising is the subsequent glorification of airships as the embodiment of authority which has 'floated' Catholicism to its final victory. Apart from the miracle of flying, the protagonist has also a role to play in serving authority. Having taken up the post of Cardinal of England, he elects to withhold the mystery that the fundamental premise of this newly forged establishment is at fault with Christian doctrine. The scripturally unfulfillable task of founding heaven on earth, where everyone would be Christian, leaves Masterman to wonder about human nature under such rule: 'It was man who could suffer, who could reign; since he only who knows his weakness, dares to be strong' (250). The source of his authority lies in the display of the miraculous and in guarding the mystery of the human condition from a newly transformed nation. The disturbing aspect of this nation, though, is its rather denigrating depiction as a plain mass which either listens absently to the churchmen's pronouncements in Hyde Park (4) or watches astoundedly a show of volors (246). Even though their society reserves outlets for dissent, the English become silently engaged in an authorized spectacle, permitting religion and science to silence their minds. Just as humanity acquiesces in authority, so is this future England made to renew its acceptance of a state religion. This means that the difference between how the individuality-driven Englishman and the mass man respond to authority becomes hard to ascertain. The materialistic aspect of both miracle and mystery takes a universally authoritative toll.

Conclusion

This section has explored constructions of England which traverse *The Dawn of All* and interact with the project of a Catholic enterprise. If seen through the lens of Christ's temptation in Dostoyevsky's interpretation, the novel convincingly discloses the ways in which the authority of a new Catholic regime draws on the spiritual and materialistic aspects of religion and science in fostering a nearly unanimous acquiescence in any form of government, no matter how oppressive or inquisitorial it appears to be. Informed by a complex pattern of their interaction, the novel highlights a science that culminates in technology and a religion that reaches the foundations of faith. Both volors and confession, in their own peculiar ways,

transgress England's national boundaries of collective and individual experience; in overcoming the gravitational field of insularity and isolation, they permit a requisite degree of distance from, and proximity to, new realities. Yet the ultimate renunciation of an oppressive vision of a Catholic world unity brings out the novel's underlying concern about the nation – religion may transcend England, but it ought never to take command of it. English common sense is shown to defeat the human bend towards miracle, mystery and authority by waking up, as the lapsed priest does, to the reality of a status-quo England. Even though this awakening runs up against Benson's conflicted portrayal of Catholic rule, it leaves behind lasting aerial impressions of London and Europe. Perhaps heretically for Benson, Catholicism becomes superficially complicit with science, only to produce an England which finds flights more compelling than religious recuperation. Such a perceived shift of imaginative perspective makes an apt turning point for our further discussion of Wells, whose engagements with England and a World State have an expressly innovative orientation.

Chapter Two.
A Cosmopolitan England in H. G. Wells's Utopias

2.1. National Foundations of a World State

Introduction

Unlike Benson, H. G. Wells conceives of world unity as being terminal to nations and nation-states. Therefore his version of England can largely, if not exclusively, be assembled in conceptual terms, as a reconstruction of his varied reflections on political culture, topographies, and other nationally conscious moments. While Benson makes a Catholic world unity congruent with a redefined England, Wells devises a World State which challenges the endurance of England, yet never discards connections with it. Rooted in studies of the future, such as *Anticipations of the Reaction of Mechanical and Scientific Progress upon Human Life and Thought* (1901), *Mankind in the Making* (1903), *A Modern Utopia* (1905), *New Worlds for Old* (1908), and *The Great State* (1912), Wells's World State (also figuring as a Great State, a New Republic, a functional state, Cosmopolis) charts the gradual transition of humanity towards a global community that would be immune to patriotic or nationalist afflictions.

The juxtaposition of nationality and a World State in Wells's writings received a special urgency in the interwar period. In John Partington's estimation, the interwar years at large saw 'the development of Wells's world-state proposals, from suggesting post-war geographical federations and regional cooperation to his insistence on the establishment of functional world controls' (*Cosmopolis* 101). On the way to a World State, the idea of a league of free nations preoccupied Wells for some time as 'a project to establish and organize common interests' (*Nationalism* 8). Lending initial support to the league, Wells set out to elucidate the nature of this emerging organization through its adherence to, and departure from, the ideas of nationality and patriotism. In his pamphlet *British Nationalism and the League of Nations* (1919), Wells reasserted his national belonging and patriotic sentiment: '[T]he present writer [...] happens to be an almost offensively patriotic Englishman,

[taking] care to express that patriotism emphatically and to quote old and recent utterances of his own to enforce the fact' (4). Despite its allegedly defensive slant, Wells's patriotism was meant to surpass wide-spread instincts and loyalties derived from the love of England that would frequently proscribe positive attitudes towards other nations. Instead, respect for other countries and peoples constituted, according to Wells, 'a good patriot' who 'is still incomplete until he has squared his patriotism with the human commonweal' (*Nationalism* 7).

Wells's critique of the excesses of British nationalism as a 'large-scale aggression and exploitation' (*Nationalism* 10) triggered conflicting responses from his countrymen. For example, Gilbert Murray, who chaired the League of Nations Union, agreed with Wells's push for world citizenship. According to Edward Earle, *The Idea of a League of Nations* (1919), to which both Wells and Murray, as well as Ernest Barker and Leonard Woolf, contributed, 'made it plain that the proposed league would be merely preliminary to a much more ambitious, truly world state' (199). As Peter Wilson shows in his evaluation of Murray's contribution to the study of politics, the latter held the belief that 'international cooperation is always difficult and always entails the sacrifice of some immediate national interest' (259). Summoned to address economic and power rivalry in the world arena, the Research Committee of the League of Nations, chaired by Wells, did not object, in their own words, 'to interference with the realities of national life, but to interference with national aggression and competition, which is quite a different thing' (*Idea* 43). Standing at the other end of this debate, Hilaire Belloc and G. K. Chesterton feared disproportionately that the League of Nations could take on the role of a world police and completely abolish nations. Julia Stapleton observes that Chesterton cherished national interest as 'the English religion of patriotism' (*Christianity* 189). In his review of Wells's *The Salvaging of Civilization* (1921), he underscored the primacy of the nation and nationalism as key to international cooperation and understanding. Unlike Wells, Chesterton was cautious about courting a world state that would 'despise the deepest sentiments of the most democratic States in the world' (Chesterton, 'Review' 738). Perhaps sensitive to such ensuing disputations about the enterprise, Wells avoided its rigid dogmatization and originally stated '*a* case, not *the* case, for the League of Nations' (*Fourth Year* x). However, at a later date, neither

Chesterton's inflated anxiety about the abolition of nations nor Wells's aspirations for a human commonweal came to their full fruition in the activities of the League of Nations. In his study of nations and nationalism, E. J. Hobsbawm claims that the Treaty of Versailles, the brainchild of the League of Nations, inflamed nationalist instincts and led to the 'apogee of nationalism' in Europe, whose boundaries were to be redrawn on the Wilsonian principle of language and nationality (132).

Regardless of his waning support for the League of Nations after 1919, Wells did not give up his long-term projects for world unity. In the 1920s and 30s, he was predominantly concerned with what he dubbed an 'open conspiracy' and a 'world brain'. His concept of 'an open conspiracy of intellectuals and wilful people' began to take shape no later than the 1914 preface to *Anticipations* (1901), where Wells proposes that it 'will come. It is my faith. It is my form of political thought' (x). Similarly, the notion of a collective mind, later known as a world brain, is also foreshadowed in the same preface. Wells explains that the 'immediate social and political effect [of a collective mind] is an insistent demand for perfect freedom of thought and discussion. Social and political order it values only as a means of freedom' (*Anticipations* xii). Later in *The Outline of History* (1920), Wells mentions these principles among 'the broad fundamentals of the coming world state' (1093). Much as Wells is prone to withdraw nationality from the open conspiracy, he stresses the necessity of free discussion and criticism, possible only in certain national cultures. In *The Open Conspiracy: Blue Prints for a World Revolution* (1928), he points out that the English-speaking states still grant 'liberty to establish educational companies, running schools of a special type' (140). Wells also considers some parts of the globe to be better equipped for an open conspiracy, due to a 'sufficient range and amplitude of thought and discussion' (*OC* 86). Absence of free discussion and criticism precludes the progression of the world brain, to say nothing of an open conspiracy in which Wells vested the powers of a world religion (*OC* 128).[20]

[20] In *Socialism and Religion*, Vincent Geoghegan establishes that, in his treatment of religion, Wells departed from the non-Christian use of the concepts and language of the Christian tradition in *First and Last Things: A Confession of Faith and Rule of a Life* (1908) and *God the Invisible King* (1917). Thereafter Wells 'began significantly to retreat from this project, adopting a much more secular, positivist and "scientific" approach, and displaying a distinct impatience with those who continued to place religion at the heart of their enterprises' (96). Religion constituted for Wells a new creed stripped from the 'desire for service, for subordination, for permanent effect, for an escape from the

Wells's ambivalence concerning nationality as a requisite and at once disposable element in a World State appears to be double-edged. Despite his inspiring declaration that '[o]ur true nationality is mankind' (*OH* 1087), Wells notably exercises selection and gives priority to a particular set of ideas, whose origins and purview are tethered to certain strands of English culture, and therefore require further examination. In their recent reassessment of the interaction of the nation-state with world society, Ohn Meyer [et al.] cite a hypothetical example of a modern island community the secluded evolution of which cannot help being affected by 'the current world-cultural preference for market systems and political democracy' after 'a half-century of dominance by the United States' (Meyer 167). It is also suggested that this situation would have been most likely different in a world with a dominant China. Along these lines, the continuing, if fragile, status of the British Empire during the interwar years arguably provided Wells with a foundation to build his World State on. In *Imperialism and the Open Conspiracy* (1929), Wells privileges the free-trading system of the British Empire, 'an open hand spread throughout the world', to the 'tight fist' of the German *Zollverein* (10). Because of its alleged openness, he considers British imperialism to be an essential forerunner of a cosmopolitan order that embraces various nationalities under one economic and legal umbrella (Wells, *Nationalism* 4). Yet regardless of his rare congratulations of the Empire, Wells struggles to square 'the greatness of English fairness and freedom with the tawdriest of imperialisms' (*OH* 1021), which highlights his conflicted version of England, alien and at once relatable to British imperialism.

This section seeks to comprehend the extent to which nationality is integral to Wells's vision of a World State in his interwar utopias *Men Like Gods* (1923) and *The Shape of Things to Come* (1933), as well as other writings from the same period. With regard to the rhetoric whereby Wells asserts his nationality, coupled with the premium he places on certain nationally conscious aspects of a World State, this section investigates Wells's idea of nationality and its constituent elements, explores the forms of future government, and evaluates the concept of the world brain in line with historical and contemporary constructions of England.

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distressful pettiness of the individual life [...]' (*OC* 24). Instead, Wells understood religion as the rational choice 'to give oneself' to a world commonweal (*OC* 32).

1. Nationality and Its Constituents in a World State

In defining nationality, Wells maintains that Giuseppe Mazzini's understanding can make 'a centre for the discussion of nationalism in Europe rather than Gladstone' (*Teaching* 11). True, being one of the forefathers of united Italy, Mazzini anchored the 'construction of humanity' in national consciousness, suggesting that '[h]umanity constitutes the *end* and the nation the *means*' (63). However, W. E. Gladstone equally invested in the autonomous governance of European nations, giving support to the liberal-nationalist cause in Italy, Ireland, Greece, and Poland. As Keith Sandiford explains, Gladstone's views revolved around the idea of Europe as 'the cultural centre of the earth' (29). In opting for Mazzini's version of cosmopolitanism, Wells consciously distances himself from a Gladstonian cultural imperialism. Yet, as our further discussion will show, Wells's World State, fairly selective in allegiance to England, compromises its own cosmopolitan calibre.

Wells refers to the idea of nationality as a historically indispensable force. In *What Is Coming? A Forecast of Things after the War* (1916), he contends that '[l]ocal difference, nationality, is a very obstinate thing. [...] Once a people has emerged above the barbaric stage to a national consciousness, that consciousness will endure' (256). Considering the persistence of national consciousness in history, Wells adopts a dual approach to nationality in his later projections of a World State. On the one hand, a robust disrespect for national susceptibilities marks off Wells's conception: '[T]here is no reason why it should tolerate noxious or obstructive governments because they hold their own [nationality] in this or that patch of human territory' (*OC* 147). On the other hand, as Partington suggests, Wells does not 'necessarily desire the destruction of the political unit which is understood as a "nation"', endowing it with 'certain cultural powers [...] – tourism, language teaching and the maintenance of important cultural practices' ('Wells' 242). Where the former tendency throws into relief the understanding of nationality as a politically administered loyalty, the latter gravitates towards a socio-cultural dimension. A similarly dual arrangement of nationality is created in William Morris's *News from Nowhere* (1890). The crucial difference between the two systems lies in that Morris negates the role of the state in both politics and culture, whereas Wells devises a World *State*, no matter how decentralized it may be. In *News from Nowhere*, the

establishment of a network of sustainable communities renders central government redundant, which is potently reflected in the relegation of the Houses of Parliament to a dung market (Morris 65), as well as in the complete displacement of politics from national and international affairs (73). At the same time, Morris's communitarian world encourages national variety; as the protagonist's guide Hammond insists, '[y]ou will find plenty of variety: the landscape, the building, the diet, the amusements, all various. The men and women varying in looks as well as in habits of thought; the costume far more various than in the commercial period' (74). These reputedly diverse characteristics are additionally enhanced by a requisite knowledge of foreign languages, both modern (French and German, Irish and Welsh) and classical (Greek and Latin): '[C]hildren pick them up very quickly, because their elders all know them; and besides our guests from over sea often bring their children with them [...]' (Morris 26). *News from Nowhere* may be regarded to reconstruct nationality from the diversity of cultures and languages, and to preclude the state apparatus from manipulating it. In this context, a further enquiry into the political and cultural constituents of nationality in Wells's utopias is in order.

In *The Shape of Things to Come*, Wells situates nationality in relation to the promises and failures of the League of Nations. Recognizing the centrality of 'nations' in its name, the League was nevertheless meant to have conceived and forged world unity. Wells particularly singles out the United States President Woodrow Wilson among the foremost architects of the organization who 'stood alone for mankind' (*STC* 87). But because Wilson's proposals were deeply steeped in 'a typical nineteenth-century government enlarged to planetary dimensions' (88), and intended to achieve a peace settlement on purely national lines, the League only boosted national sovereignties and ignited unhealthy superstitions. As one such example, Wells cites the new government of the restored Poland, which 'developed into an aggressive, vindictive and pitiless dictatorship', belligerent against other nationalities (90). Linking the likelihood of international conflict to the Polish Corridor near Danzig, Wells not only disturbingly predicts the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, but also dismisses the 'premature and ineffectual' League of Nations as 'a hindrance rather than a help to the achievement of world peace' (98). Along similar lines, in *Men Like Gods*, Wells critically treats the League

as a club with national loyalties which seeks to unleash war rather than contain it. Indignant about the other Earthlings' war schemes against Utopia, the protagonist Mr Alfred Barnstaple vainly admonishes:

> Are you incapable of thinking of human affairs except in terms of flags and fighting and conquest and robbery? Cannot you realize the proportion of things and the quality of this world into which we have fallen? [...] We are like suppressed cannibals in the heart of a great city dreaming of a revival of our ancient and forgotten filthiness (327-8).

Nationality, which hinges on flags and fighting, strikes Barnstaple as an atavism and stands in opposition to world unity. In the context of the failed endeavours of the League, Wells's rejection of the growing political importance of national sovereignties affords insight into where the governmental leverage of national feeling may go wrong. However, Wells's interest in the political aspect of nationality does not end here, as the further discussion demonstrates.

The cultural constituent of nationality in Wells's conception of a World State manifests itself in two aspects. The first aspect is associated with the politics of nationality venerated in history. In *Mankind in the Making*, Wells presents a typical young Englishman as hostage to 'an unbroken tradition from the days of the Restoration', whose age-old hierarchies result in social exclusiveness, which 'is to be remedied only by ultra-scholastic forces' (196). Hierarchical distinctions may be viewed as the outcome of cultural history, but they are also unavoidably political. While burning into national consciousness, they create a faulty sense of order as the life of the nation progresses. The second aspect concerns the pervasive circulation of 'national ideas', which the narrator of *A Modern Utopia* also finds deficient as 'a uniformity of physical and mental type, a common idiom, a common religion, a distinctive style of costume, decoration, and thought, and a compact organization acting with complete external unity' (324). He goes on to dispute the deeply ingrained stereotypes of nationality by questioning 'the exceptionally noble quality of the English imagination':

> I am constantly gratified by flattering untruths about English superiority which I should reject indignantly were the application bluntly personal, and I am ready to believe the scenery of England, the poetry of England, even the decoration and music of England, in some mystic and impregnable way, the best. This habit of intensifying all class definitions, and particularly those in which one has a personal interest, is in the very constitution of man's mind (*MU* 325).

Wells accepts the necessity to reckon with this kind of categories because they help to sustain a certain profile of national culture. Yet he also discerns the potentially

harmful implications of national ideas that depersonalize individuals, who comprise a national community, by supplying them with average traits: ‘It is not averages that exist, but individuals. The average Chinaman will never meet the average Englishman anywhere [...]’ (*MU* 332).

This tension between collective and individual ‘English’ qualities comes to the fore in *Men Like Gods*. In one of the opening scenes, Mr Cecil Burleigh takes the initiative to describe his gastronomic day:

> He proceeded to [...] the particulars of an English breakfast, eggs to be boiled four and a half minutes, neither more nor less, lunch with any light wine, tea rather a social rally than a serious meal, dinner in some detail, the occasional resort to supper. It was one of those clear statements which would have rejoiced the House of Commons [...] (228).

When asking Barnstaple if he eats in a similar way, Burleigh is alert to the distinctions that result primarily from their respective social standing. Barnstaple’s hesitant reply: ‘Yes, I eat in much the same fashion’ (228), implies the entanglement of his understanding of the national cuisine with its idealized upper-class description. The initial account of his irregular meals and stagnant financial circumstances gives an ironic spin not only to the conventionalities of an English breakfast, but also to the allegedly ‘national’ eating habits. Furthermore, cooking an English breakfast becomes a challenging venture for the Utopian chef, as ‘[e]ating bacon has gone out of fashion in Utopia’ (296). The national diet appears to be a temporary contingency which passes out of vogue under a new socio-economic order. Wells problematizes the cultural component of nationality by binding it up with class differences and idealizations which tend to be magnified into national characteristics.

In Wells’s project, nationality presents an active point of reference. When abused at a political level, nationality deepens divisions within humanity and disables world unity. At a cultural level, ideas of nationality are often class-ridden. This tendency limits the social diversity of a nation and reduces the variety of its features to a socially skewed stereotype. In contesting uniform generalizations, Wells, unlike Morris, seems reluctant to uphold national variety, which is manifest in a diet, habits of thought, and costume. Yet these two writers’ positions importantly converge on the withering-away of the nation-state. This leads us to the question of how Wells’s World State is governed and what residual elements of England it contains.

2. Nationality and World Governance

Wells stipulates that a World State should supersede permanent national governments by corporations and companies. As early as *A Modern Utopia*, he predicts that farming, factory production, science and research will be organized in accordance with cooperative enterprise. In *The World of William Clissold: A Novel at a New Angle* (1926), Wells anticipates universal governance as 'one interlocking system' and 'a world business organization' (635). Emphasizing the entrepreneurial foundations of a new order, Wells expounds, in *Imperialism and the Open Conspiracy*, that large companies 'make for a single economic world organization, for Cosmopolis that is and not for Empire' (6). This profile of a World State is further elaborated as a functional system of faculties, sections, and departments in *The Shape of Things to Come*: 'There was to begin with a faculty of scientific research, a faculty of interpretation and education, a health faculty, a faculty of social order, a supply and trading faculty, a number of productive faculties, agricultural, mineral and so on' (350). Positing such a multiple complex of functional units, Wells ensures that they possess 'electoral central councils' which are structurally fluid and thereby facilitate 'the melting of one faculty into another' (*STC* 350). The system of world controls fulfils Wells's ambition 'to override governments', which he expresses in his collection *After Democracy* (1932) as a self-styled World Dictator (195). Besides, the network of faculties and departments that make up a World State dissolves the politically administered component of nationality. The state in the sense of central government withers away both in Wells's utopias and in Morris's *News from Nowhere*. But considering that the world becomes 'divided among functional Great Powers', instead of 'among territorial Great Powers', as Wells prescribes in *The Shape of Things to Come* (351), the idea of world governance puts the endurance of nationality at risk.

Humanity's progression to a World State is nevertheless inseparable from what Wells calls 'national ideas', which either constitute the background of his utopian imaginings or are articulated centrally. Thus, the missionary role of England in the world arena is invoked by Oswald Sydenham, Wells's mouthpiece in *Joan and Peter: The Story of an Education* (1918), when he claims that '[w]e English have made the greatest empire that the world has ever seen; across the Atlantic we have

also made the greatest republic. And these are but phases in our task. The better part of our work still lies before us' (715). The promise of the better part becomes meaningful in the context of 'empire pooling', which will give rise to 'a great confederation of English-speaking republican communities' (Wells, *Mankind* 391). Aside from these future coalescences, Wells identifies the tradition of free discussion and criticism with Britain and the USA. This tradition acquires universal status in the 'Principles of Liberty', put forth in *Men Like Gods*. Among the precepts of privacy, free movement, unlimited knowledge, and 'lying as the blackest crime' (377-8), special attention is paid to free discussion and criticism (379). This latter principle is meant to keep world governance under control, so long as discussion is honest and does not take the form of insurrectionary or libellous propaganda.

Despite the promotion of free criticism as 'a bulwark against the totalitarian usurpation of his world-state bureaucracy' (Partington, *Cosmopolis* 128), Wells asserts the necessity of compulsion through planned action. In *The Shape of Things to Come*, when deliberating about social nuclei – from individual to collective, Gustave De Windt, a fictional mastermind of the Modern State, insists that '[i]t is no good asking people what they want. [...] That is the error of democracy. You have first to think out what they ought to want if society is to be saved. Then you have to tell them what they want and see that they get it' (254). The tension between an uninformed desire and a superimposed decision, which underlies the above imperative, is born of interwar debates about planning in Britain. In a study of competing notions of Englishness manifest in the landscape, David Matless connects the prospect of a planned England to road aesthetics, and draws out the distinction between the 'English arterial road' and the German autobahn: 'The autobahn was an awkward inspiration for the shape of things in England; confusingly clear' (61). Wider contemporary resonances of this nationally conscious mythology may be discovered in Wells's *Men Like Gods*. The Utopian road is described to be made of glass, 'clear in places as still water and in places milky and opalescent, shot with streaks of soft colour or glittering richly with clouds of embedded golden flakes' (*MLG* 216). The narrative further contrasts the unusually clear qualities of the Utopian road with 'a normal English high road'. Not only does the road in Utopia reflect the effort of planned construction, but it also serves as a synecdoche for a

thoroughly planned social order, as apparent to Burleigh: Utopians 'plan and arrange these delightful habitations, say who shall use them and how they shall be used' (245). Earlier in *The War in the Air* (1908), Wells brings into focus the notably different nature of the British road: 'Unlike any other roads in Europe, the British high roads have never been subjected to any organized attempts to grade or straighten them out, and to that no doubt their peculiar picturesqueness is to be ascribed' (629-30). Comparing the winding high road in the south of England with the British Empire and the English Constitution, Wells acknowledges the appealing aspects of unplanned growth. His admiration for the winding national past seems to war with his utopian project of a planned and transparent future. Because the World State is premised on significant socio-political transformations, liberty necessarily gives way to compulsion, which may also imply that natural picturesqueness is likely to be flattened out by planning. Meanwhile, Wells's conception of functional world controls is in conflict about the quaintness of the past and the lucidity of the future, just as it is divided in allegiance to organic growth and planned action. The image of the road heightens Wells's ambivalent attitude towards an England to which he was emotionally attached, and a World State which he intellectually cherished.

Another channel through which constructions of England filter into Wells's vision of a World State is the opposition of revolution and reform. Before enlarging on this opposition, it is essential to separate out at least three different meanings in which Wells uses the word revolution. The first one bears a metaphysical connotation and denotes a thorough socio-political, economic, cultural transformation of the world at large. In *Men Like Gods*, Barnstaple ponders on the seminal forces that generate the Utopian order: 'Revolutions arise and die; the Great Revolution comes – incessantly and inevitably' (402). On a similar note, Wells concludes *The Shape of Things to Come*, maintaining that 'this is neither a dream book nor a Sibylline history, then it is a theory of world revolution' (424). The second meaning of revolution implies an urgent change in a certain area or practice. This type of revolution, in Wells's understanding, is necessitated by what he construes as the 'triple malaise' of the 1930s; in *After Democracy*, he admits: 'The first and most urgent is the financial breakdown. The second and most fundamental is the revolution in economic method. The third and most perplexing is the political

fragmentation of the world' (234). In combating these three factors, Wells proposes to control inflation (*AD* 238), encourage collective buying and public employment, which will complement mass production (240), and create 'enduring structural arrangements' that 'will jump boundaries and operate in a world-wide manner' (243). In essence, the above meanings of revolution chart a notable step-change as their outcome. Yet by no means do they propagate revolution as their vehicle, especially in a period which was marked by the underlying fear of social revolution. Here, the third meaning of revolution becomes inseparable from an active overthrow of existing power structures. In this sense, developments in Britain's interwar politics put official reactions to social unrest in perspective. According to Derek Fraser, the government's endeavours to aid the unemployed through a series of reforms 'produced a demoralized, not a revolutionary, nation' (172). Even though 'the Englishman of 1939 was very much better protected than his father forty years before', Fraser admits that, throughout that time, social policy 'evolved pragmatically, was uncoordinated and still far from universal' (191). In a study of British political culture in the period of 1929-1945, Philip Coupland examines propositions for 'a New Britain' which circulated during the Second World War, and conveyed national continuities which had become typified by revulsion towards political radicalism, by the countryside, and by respect for tradition (293). Coupland revisits the famous football match between police and protesters during the General Strike of 1926, to suggest that this unusual occurrence was possible only in a culture hostile to political violence.

Given the progressive thrust of Wells's utopias and the predominantly reformist developments in Britain's interwar politics, it is curious to collate these seemingly opposed trends with contemporary constructions of England. During his third visit to Russia in 1934, Wells met Joseph Stalin in person, and the events of the General Strike emerged in their recorded conversation. Categorizing the General Strike in rigidly Marxist terms of class struggle, Stalin comments:

> The first thing any other bourgeoisie would have done in the face of such an event, when the General Council of Trade Unions called for a strike, would have been to arrest the Trade Union leaders. The British bourgeoisie did not do that, and it acted cleverly from the point of view of its own interests. I cannot conceive of such a flexible strategy being employed by the bourgeoisie of the United States, Germany or France. In order to maintain their rule, the ruling classes of Great Britain have never forsworn small concessions, reforms. But it would be a mistake to think that these reforms were revolutionary (*Stalin* 17).

From Wells's perspective, Stalin's theory of revolution as a class war between rich and poor oversimplifies the balance of social forces wherein, aside from proletariat and bourgeoisie, the technical intelligentsia has a role to play. In addition, Stalin's denigration of the bourgeoisie as an inherently evil agent attracts violence in breach of the law. As Wells argues, 'I think the forms of the struggle should fit as closely as possible to the opportunities presented by the existing laws, which must be defended against reactionary attacks' (*Stalin* 15). Yet Stalin methodically insists on the transference of political power from one class to another, which can be achieved solely by force (17); he further aligns the technical intelligentsia with the proletariat.[21] Not only do Wells and Stalin stand on divergent ideological grounds, united only by their common leftist leanings, but the two speakers' difference of opinion also ties into their ideas about the political culture – English and Soviet respectively.

If Stalin's uneasy relationship with the Soviet identity and Russian culture would perhaps deserve a separate paper, Wells's negation of political violence can be linked to constructions of England. In *The Politics of Englishness* (2007), Arthur Aughey detects institutional stability in 'a culture favourable to the exercise of the rule of law' (44). He goes on to contend that the absence of a serious fascist or communist threat to 'constitutional politics in England in the 1920s and 1930s was not a matter of "mere" luck but also a matter of political culture' (Aughey 45). Unsurprisingly, Wells's attitudes towards law and order which he voices in his talk with Stalin overlap with the contemporary emphases on continuity and therefore take on a reformist perspective as regards the achievement of a World State.

Even though the centralized nation-state withers away equally in the conception of a World State and in Morris's communitarian world, Wells's utopianism is distinct in its treatment of the gradual progress of society. In *Men Like Gods*, Barnstaple recollects, yet takes exception to, the notion of communism at large and the kind of communism, specifically developed in *News from Nowhere*. Focusing on the implications of unremunerated labour, a Utopian youth Crystal replies that communism 'brought about great economic confusion and want and

[21] In his comment on the transcript of this conversation, J. M. Keynes poignantly reflects: 'It is Wells's trouble that he has never yet found a satisfactory instruction to give. He has nothing to offer Stalin. That is what Stalin might have pointed out, if gramophones could hear' (*Stalin* 33).

misery. To step straight to communism failed – very tragically' (*MLG* 380). It is not only Wells's sensitivity to communism as 'the sabotage of civilization by the disappointed' that surfaces here (*Clissold* 194), but also his active concern about continuous progress without abrupt and violent upheavals. Despite the fact that a World State effectively supersedes permanent governments and professes compulsory planning, its conception arises out of an England that gravitates to legality and reform, rather than violence and revolution.

3. English Thought and the World Brain

In order to establish homologies with English thought, this sub-section first looks at the particulars of Wells's concept of the world brain and then places this concept in relation to constructions of England. The initial stirrings of the world brain can be discovered in *A Modern Utopia*, which describes a centralized storehouse of the citizens' personal data. Because of the mistaken identity between the protagonist traveller and his Utopian double, whose thumb marks match, the former regards this indexing database with reservations:

> Now an eye does not see without a brain, an eye does not turn round and look without a will and purpose. A Utopia that deals only with appliances and arrangements is a dream of superficialities; the essential problem here, the body within these garments, is a moral and an intellectual problem (*MU* 172-3).

The centrality of cerebral activity to Wells's imaginative concerns is further signalled by the subtitle of his *Experiment in Autobiography* (1934). 'Discoveries and conclusions of a very ordinary brain' are prefaced by Wells's self-conscious observations about his own cerebrum: 'My brain I believe is consistent. Such as it is, it holds together. It is like a centralized country with all its government in one capital, even though that government is sometimes negligent, feeble or inert' (*EA* 36). Wells completes the journey of his 'very ordinary brain' in the 'multitudinous brain-life' of the human species (643). In this sea of cerebral activity, he registers a lack of unity, which prevents mankind from arriving safely at 'universal freedom and abundance' (702). In order to secure humanity's concerted effort, Wells posits a theory of a common brain. This theory gains further momentum in *The Science of Life* (1929-30), in which Wells and his co-authors Julian Huxley and G. P. Wells connect the direction of evolution to 'the possibility of one collective human mind and will': 'At the end of our vista of the progressive mental development of mankind

stands the promise of Man, consciously controlling his own destinies and the destinies of all life upon this planet' (878). A similarly desirable transition from disparate (and unavoidably imperfect) attempts at generating and storing up knowledge to a more organized compendium of universally available competence is charted in *The Shape of Things to Come*, where 'the Brain of Mankind' features as a permanently enlarging phenomenon: 'As the individual brain quickens and becomes more skilful, there also appears a collective Brain, the Encyclopaedia, the Fundamental Knowledge System, which accumulates, sorts, keeps in order and renders available everything that is known' (413). Wells equates the steady increase of knowledge with 'the Memory of Mankind' which is served by millions of active workers. Despite such relentless activity, the world brain is referred to as an 'adolescent' development: 'It is because the mind of man is growing up that for the first time it realizes that it is young' (*STC* 414). Aside from these several remarks about the properties of the world brain, through which a World State is capable of fulfilling its functional potential, Wells leaves its concept largely provisional.

A slightly more detailed concept of the world brain is presented in *The Work, Wealth and Happiness of Mankind* (1932), in the chapter on education. Designating a world encyclopaedia as the world brain's likely forerunner, Wells links its purpose to directing 'the ideological side of human education' (769). He offers a provisional anatomization of world knowledge into encyclopaedic sections that deal with philosophies, languages and cultures, mathematics, chemistry, biography, health, biology, political systems, education, religion, economic life, and aesthetics (*WWHM* 773-5). This extensive aggregate of competence is devised as 'the central ganglion, as it were, of the collective human brain' (*WWHM* 776). Wells revisits the above arrangement in his collection *World Brain* (1938), stipulating the liberal character of a world encyclopaedia, for it 'will necessarily press strongly against national delusions of grandeur, and against all sectarian assumptions' (55).

Wells's insistence on playing down national sectarianism in producing a universal store of knowledge conflicts with his rationale for the exclusive use of English in a world encyclopaedia. Wells sets forth the advantages of English both as a vehicle of conveying ideas and as the product of a particular culture. English is deemed to have 'a wider range than German, a greater abundance and greater

subtlety of expression than French and more precision than Russian [...]' (*WB* 22). In his BBC broadcast 'As I See It' (1937), Wells discerns the features of Cosmopolis in the English tongue. Irrespective of the diversity of the Anglophone nations, English is said to amalgamate differences without losing its integrity. It also ensures the movement of humanity towards a universal convergence, where 'the curse of Babel has been lifted from over three hundred million people. This coming together is a new thing in human experience' ('As I See It'). Probably unimpressed by the then available artificial languages, Wells privileges a living tongue, which he places above other European languages as a 'precious inheritance of ours' ('As I See It').

Such reasoning, however, does not ultimately involve the preservation of English in its present-day form. The status of English as the world's lingua franca necessitates its further structural and lexical transformation. In *The Shape of Things to Come*, Wells registers two contrasting experiments with English united by the ambition to forge a new language. Basic English owes its appearance in the 1930s to C. K. Ogden, who restricted its vocabulary to the commonest 850 words, with a minimal set of grammatical rules. In his general introduction to the project, he suggested that the effective reduction of the complexities of language would facilitate universal communication (7). At the opposite end of the spectrum, Wells situates James Joyce, who, unlike Ogden, 'worked aesthetically for elaboration and rich suggestion [...]' (*STC* 410). Alert to what Ogden recorded as 'the growing tendency of English to simplification' (Ogden 25), Wells does not simply reject the Joycean 'gibbering of a lunatic' as being unacceptable for the world brain (*STC* 410). Since the Modern State is founded as a technocracy of aviators, it develops a fuller vocabulary that amounts to two million words, and a greater lucidity of expression, based on phonetic spelling (*STC* 411). Wells accentuates the structural and cultural assets of English as a launching pad for a new universal language. Subject to significant modifications, as time wears on, English is utilized as 'a provisional language' gradually evolving into a qualitatively different medium of communication (*STC* 413). In *Men Like Gods*, for example, language ultimately becomes supplanted by telepathy; as Urthred spells this out to Barnstaple, '[w]e use sounds in this world now only for poetry and pleasure and in moments of emotion or to shout at a distance, or with animals, not for the transmission of ideas from human mind to

kindred human mind any more' (242). Verbal, or sound, communication activates an atavistic regression to the past that harbours gaps in understanding and confusion of the brain. Barnstaple sums up his response to the Utopian telepathy: '[W]hen you soar into ideas of which we haven't even a shadow in our minds, we just hear nothing at all' (*MLG* 242). The fact that language becomes, for the most part, telepathic eventually renders the world brain (in the physical shape of an encyclopaedia) superfluous in Utopia. Connected to the world brain through their individual cerebra, Utopians are shown to partake of a truly universal exchange of ideas.

Whereas English is well suited to becoming at least a temporary communicative and cognitive tool of the world brain, the universities of Oxford and Cambridge figure as impediments to the growth of universal competence. In *The Camford Visitation* (1937), Wells enacts a fictional interaction between a 'Voice' and the thoughts of several dons and fellows. Speaking probably on behalf of the world brain, the Voice holds his academic interlocutors to account for failing to contribute to humanity's common cause:

> Is a progressive solidarity too much for you? Here is this new mankind, world-wide, able to talk to itself all over the planet, able to fly to the ends of the earth, possessed of what would have seemed a hundred years ago incredible power, and it produces no sort of brain (41).

In portraying Camford as 'feeble in innovation but invincible in resistance' to the ever changing needs of the world (*Camford* 66), Wells sets its educational purpose in contrast to 'an ordering of knowledge, so valiant a beating out of opinions, such a refreshment of teaching and such an organization of brains as will constitute a real and living world university [...]' (67). In an earlier war-time proposal for a new education, Wells indicates that 'there never may be again an opportunity for a cleaning-up and sweeping-out of those two places, and for a profitable new start in British education' (*Coming* 150-1). Later Wells will reinstate his concern about the future of Oxbridge in *The World of William Clissold*, where he notes:

> A time must come when Oxford and Cambridge will signify no more in the current intellectual life of the world than the monastery of Mount Athos or the lamaseries of Tibet do now, when their colleges will stand empty and clean for the amateur of architecture and the sight-seeing tourist (735-6).

Wells thus reduces the role of Oxford and Cambridge to the quaintness of their architecture, and thereby follows Samuel Butler's disparaging remarks about

England's leading universities. In *Erewhon* (1872), Butler disguises Oxbridge as 'the colleges of unreason', accommodated in the city with the suggestive name of Bridgeford. The protagonist of *Erewhon* finds the 'beauty and interest' of the colleges 'extreme' (130); at the same time, he learns about the unholy suppression of original thought, and preference for a hypothetical language and evasive rhetoric. From the Erewhonians' point of view, 'it was as immoral to be too far in front of one's age as to lag too far behind it' (135). Butler's late-Victorian castigation of a hypothetical, and therefore unreasonable, education at Bridgeford has a genetic relation to Wells's critical assessment of Oxford and Cambridge. Because Camford is shown as a bastion of entrenched knowledge, it falls short of contributing to a universal world brain, embodied in comprehensive bibliographies.

Wells invests the concepts of a world encyclopaedia and universal language with continuous development, thus making them provisional. Such proposals are seconded by his awareness of the changing nature of experience and by his ensuing unwillingness to dogmatize the organization of the world brain. Wells surmises:

> Such premature crystallization of a thing needed by the world can produce, we now realize, a rigid obstructive *reality*, just *like enough* to our actual requirements to cripple every effort to replace it later by a more efficient organization. Explicit constitutions for social and political institutions are always dangerous things if these institutions are to live for any length of time (*WB* 52).

Indeed, besides Wells's proposals for a world encyclopaedia with a dictionary index (*WWHM* 774), published in a book format (*WB* 13) or on 'ultra-microscopic' film (*Camford* 47), the world brain looks, in W. B. Rayward's estimation, 'remarkably under-imagined' (571). Here arises the question of disparity between Wells's self-conscious tendency 'to think in systems' (James, 'Prophet' 111) and his self-proclaimed reluctance to finalize the notion of the world brain. Systematic thinking underlies Wells's futuristic imaginings of a consistent world transformation. Examples of such change can be found in his earlier work, as Wells resorts to planetary catastrophe that wipes out the old order and, in a completely new ecology, systematically produces a thoroughly regenerated world. *In the Days of the Comet* (1906) records the rise of 'a different humanity from any I had known [...]. It was no mere change in conditions and institutions the comet had wrought. It had made a change of heart and mind' (200). *The World Set Free* (1914) furnishes an apocalyptic picture of atomic obliteration that would enable 'this Modern State of ours, which

would have been a Utopian marvel a hundred years ago [...]' (264). In this context of systematic propositions, Wells's circumspect stance on the finality of the world brain begs attention.

The world brain's provisional nature is akin, on many scores, to the tradition of socialist empiricism, exemplified by Robert Blatchford's collection of fictional correspondence *Merrie England* (1893). Apart from outlining his socialist platform to Mr Smith, 'a hard-headed workman', Blatchford makes an effort to dispel the commonly held misconceptions about the potential implementation of socialist ideas in England. But once the writer faces the need to systematize his outlook, he admits: 'I confess I approach this question with great reluctance. I have no "system" ready cut and dried. I don't think any sensible Socialist would offer such a system. Socialists are practical people in these days, and know that coats must be cut according to cloth' (Blatchford 46). The exclusion of a 'cut and dried' system from his deliberations about the practice of socialism allows Blatchford to sound less dogmatic, and to reflect both on immediate needs and on a broad range of new experience. Marked by the underlying sense of empiricism, this approach is in step with the ways in which the peculiarities of English thought have been understood.

During the interwar period (just as in more recent discussions[22]), empirical discourse was construed as an essential quality of English thought. Indeed, in a contribution to *The English Genius* (1939), a collection of essays on various aspects of national culture, W. R. Inge, a Cambridge professor of divinity and Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, had cited Edmund Burke's revolt against abstractions and concluded that 'the most irreparable mistakes are made by consistent doctrinaires, and we prefer to improvise a solution for each problem as it arises' (5). Given this culturally ingrained aversion to speculative and abstract thought, Wells's idea of the world brain may be further interpreted through what George Orwell stereotyped, and at the same time critiqued, as the national preference for 'instinct to logic, and character to intelligence' (*People* 46). Wells can be seen to rehearse the mythologies

[22] In his projection of English culture, embodied in literature, science, and journalism, Anthony Easthope unearths the roots of English empirical discourse in case law, and traces the latter to what he calls '[t]he English preoccupation with reality' (89). In line with the above assessment, Krishan Kumar attributes the cult of empiricism in English thought and culture to Francis Bacon and the English Romantic movement. These influences are claimed to have informed 'empirical, concrete, individualist, utilitarian' English thinking, which 'eschews the wild abstractions and futile speculations of continental – and Celtic – thought' (Kumar, *Making* 216).

of English empirical discourse when he designates the Voice as 'the enemy of all final doctrines and convictions' in *The Camford Visitation*. He further emphasizes that 'Marxist jargon, Freudian jargon, precious literary criticism, the dear old Humanities, were plainly all the same [to the Voice]; all so much mental thumb-twiddling. [...] He [the Voice] was the spirit of the provisional. His message was an intellectual drive without a glimmer of surcease' (60).

Even though Wells declares the world brain to be provisional, it would be an unfair exaggeration to equate this concept exclusively with English empirical discourse. One also thinks of other reasons which may have borne on the world brain's provisional character. Perhaps it is due to the historical context of the 1930s that Wells shies away from dogmatism – political or scientific. *The Shape of Things to Come* contains a critical survey of the contemporary doctrines of Fascism and Communism. Wells lays a particular stress on the dogmatic character of these competing ideologies, which eventually fall victim to a rhetoric that taints their original purpose: 'There was a heavy load of democratic and equalitarian cant upon the back of the Russian system, just as there was a burthen of patriotic and religious cant upon the Italian fascist' (*STC* 128). By contrast, in making the world brain provisional, Wells leaves more space for ad-hoc complications and improvisation. Apart from the historical experience of the period, Wells's professed investment in the organic growth of the world brain is clearly reminiscent of his evolutionary outlook, explicitly dissonant with final doctrines: 'If a thing is really to live it should grow rather than be made. It should never be something cut and dried' (*WB* 52). Wells's rejection of dogmatism and finality borrows in his methodology from the English tradition of empirical thinking.

Conclusion

In response to the expectations of world unity, upset by the failures of the League of Nations, Wells's vision of a World State is founded on a gradual transition from nation to cosmopolitanism on several levels. Nationality as a politically administered allegiance dissipates along with the idea of national government. While the nation-state withers away, this process does not necessarily eclipse national culture, so long as the cultural aspect of nationality remains dissociated from class-ridden prejudice.

With regard to universal governance, Wells proposes a network of world controls that effectively replace nation-states with functional region-based faculties. This rearrangement of governance is enabled by the ultimate revolution, which presupposes slow-pace reform that shuns insurrection and class antagonism. Premised on respect for legality, Wells's idea of revolution objects to reactionary assaults on the existing order and reproduces the discourse of progress with continuity. Other nationally conscious discourses are further revealed in the empirical character of the world brain. Acting as the universal storehouse of encyclopaedic knowledge, the world brain heavily relies on the linguistic structure and cultural heritage of the English language. A tendency of English to lucidity of expression is deemed to ensure free criticism and discussion. At the same time, neither the English language nor the world brain is ever deliberately dogmatized into a final doctrine. On the contrary, they figure as provisional, evolving instruments ready to take on new experience. Constructions of England filter into a World State through channels which facilitate progressive, rather than abrupt, transformations, non-violent and lawful reform, and empirical attitudes to concepts and their practical realization. Besides the above channels of continuous interaction, the conception of a World State also evidences disruption of nationality. But even vivid dismissals, such as critique of the inflexible national education and of the use of compulsion in planning, steer Wells's cosmopolitan praxis within the idiom of English continuity.

2.2. England's Utopian Extension

Introduction

The idea of a nationally determined World State can be further understood in the light of H. G. Wells's preoccupations with continuous development. In Laura Marcus's estimation, the fact that Wells espouses progress and gradual evolution is substantially derived from 'the admixture in his work and thought of experiments with time and histories of mankind' (58). Many such experiments are enabled by locomotion; indeed, as Simon James remarks, Wells's *Anticipations* 'begins by considering neither birth, politics, nor art, but transport' (*Maps* 134). As in *The Time Machine* (1895), locomotion provides Wells with an opportunity to set ongoing historical processes in a longer-term perspective and thereby alert the reader to the potentialities that certain social tendencies may unveil. Another method of experimentation recurrent in Wells's writing involves 'mediating frames' which permit an opening of the present moment into alternative times. Keith Williams notes that Wells's '[c]haracters and narrators are constantly seeing or being seen through [...] lenses, screens, windows, doors and apertures of all kinds' (7). These uniquely mediated glances link back to Wells's teenage fascination with the telescope (Sherborne 11), and suggest an orientation of his outlook towards multiple possibilities of progress. Wells's short story 'The Crystal Egg' (1897) charts a changed vision of the world, depending on the angle from which the crystal is peered into. In *After Democracy* (1932), Wells applies his 'magic crystal' afresh, but the socio-political and economic turmoil of the early 1930s engenders a plethora of undesirable probabilities: 'The crystal is more clouded and darkened and disturbed' (225). Wells's professed concern with movement in time and prognostication has earned him competing profiles. For some critics, as Richard Costa records, Wells gazes at reality through crystals which are essentially rose-coloured (116). For others, Wells surveys the world from his vantage point of a somewhat complacent 'prophet-messiah of mankind' (Kemp 213). One way or the other, be it locomotion or crystal lenses, Wells's writings, especially utopias, envisage various directions of development, in order to ascertain more continuous possibilities.

Renegotiations of time and history in Wells's work necessitate the production of spaces parallel to ours. In 'The Door in the Wall' (1906), Wells supplies the protagonist Lionel Wallace with a time portal which leads to a more fulfilling reality than the one he inhabits. After a period of exhaustive governmental business, Lionel is reported to have lost his ability to traverse realities, and he therefore longs expressly 'for a door, for a garden!' (Wells, 'Door' 634). This instance of nostalgic craving allows Peter Conrad to locate Wells's short story in the context of national consciousness. Conrad contends that, from Chaucer onwards, English writers beweep either a land from which the gods have abdicated or a state from which the closed door of Eden has shut man off, as in John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667). The dual sense of a deconsecrated existence is thus deemed to galvanize the English imagination, which strives to furnish a compensatory pastoral condition, 'the walled garden or the moated house, corresponding to the islanded self, private or privated, sundered from the unifying continent [...]' (Conrad 172). If read from this perspective, Wells's utopias disclose a similar imaginative impulse, to regain a defunct garden, which may also be a redeemed version of England.

In *Men Like Gods*, Mr Barnstaple gains access to a time portal by means of locomotion. A 'door in the wall' opens inadvertently, as he drives into Utopia along a crystal road. Barnstaple immediately distinguishes Utopia's paradisiacal qualities in 'groups and clusters of flowerlike buildings', and 'paths and steps and pools of water as if the whole place were a garden' (*MLG* 230). Not only is the protagonist initially taken aback by a tame leopard, which he compares to 'a great cat' (220), but he also comes to admire roses whose stems are dwarfed by their huge double petals (295). Such remarkable transformations of the natural order, to which the protagonist is not accustomed, have been effected by human agency. Barnstaple's ultimate realization that Utopia exists in a different temporal dimension, 'one of countless universes that move together in time' (407), may be seen to propose England as the future extension of this newly consecrated, 'perfected landscape' (401). In his subsequent novel *The Dream* (1924), Wells makes use of a narrative technique that moves the narrator Sarnac back in time, from an accomplished utopian future to an early twentieth-century Kent. Despite his account of stark distinctions between the

Utopian 'land of heart's desire' and England's 'narrow countryside' (Wells, *Dream* 317-18), Sarnac acknowledges his profound memorial continuity with the past:

> If the memory of Harry Mortimer Smith is in my brain, then I am Smith. I feel as sure that I was Smith two thousand years ago as that I was Sarnac this morning. Sometimes before this in my dreams I have had a feeling that I lived again forgotten lives (314).

This latter acknowledgement allows a justifiable supposition: because Sarnac's dream transports him to a very specific English topography and connects him to an Englishman's memory, the future from which he originates is spatially parallel with England. As Sarnac dreams of an England in which an Englishman dreams of Utopia, they both share a vision wherein England takes centre stage and calls for redemption. While *The Dream* is oriented towards recovering constructive probabilities strewn in the past, *The Shape of Things to Come* lays out a precise chronological history of the future. England noticeably recedes from this outline, and the only invocation of a British landscape is rendered through a reference to the 'natural coast scenery' of Western Scotland (*STC* 381). This rare reaffirmation of nature occurs in contrast to nineteenth-century romantic sensibilities, which Wells characterizes as the professed adoration for a tame natural countryside, and sees as the outright denial of the fact that much of the natural world is essentially 'gaunt, unsatisfactory and utterly unsympathetic' (382). In accentuating the unyielding features of nature, Wells unequivocally capitalizes on the efficiency that man may extract from the natural world abounding in 'areas of marsh and scrub, bare wilderness of rock, rainless regions, screes and avalanche slopes' (382). However, Wells's choice of Scotland over England, to exemplify the residual romantic energies summoned from nature, suggests the defunct condition of the English countryside, most probably crowded and domesticated. If one follows W. Warren Wagar in reading *The Shape of Things to Come* as a stage in the bigger structure of Wells's utopian vision, one will arrive at *Men Like Gods*, which contains the most advanced variant of Cosmopolis (Wagar 210). Along these lines, *The Shape of Things to Come* only diagnoses the ways in which efficiency may be brought to bear on a natural landscape, which *Men Like Gods* potently reconfigures into a garden and situates in a parallel temporal dimension.[23]

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[23] In one of his less sanguine pronouncements made in *First and Last Things* (1908), Wells comes near to denouncing the utility of parallel universes as forms of predestined existence which war with freedom: 'There may be a fourth dimension of space, but one gets along quite well by assuming there

In addition to the significance of a temporally restored England which forms the foundation of a World State, Wells's underlying anxiety about how possible universes will be inscribed on the English landscape visibly manifests itself. In his dystopian novel *The Autocracy of Mr Parham: His Remarkable Adventures in This Changing World* (1930), Wells construes the environmental devastation of the countryside as the outcome of a political change, allegedly incongruous with England's continuity. The protagonist's sympathies for Mussolini are developed into an alarming vision of a regime which heavily invests in militarization and thereby affects sea levels around England's coastal areas. Set in Cornwall, one of the novel's concluding chapters communicates Mr Parham's express nostalgia for a national past embodied in landscape. The sense of an irremediable loss fuses his memories of the Arthurian cycle with a bright recollection of a sunset above the sea. Yet these redemptive memorial operations are dashed by a disconcerting corrective from the protagonist's interlocutor: 'Only it isn't Land's End any more. This runs right out' (Wells, *Autocracy* 337). By contrast, Barnstaple's sojourn in Utopia brings out more pleasing aspects of a transformed countryside:

> The landscape had absorbed the patient design of five-and-twenty centuries. In one place Mr Barnstaple found great works in progress; a bridge was being replaced, not because it was outworn, but because someone had produced a bolder, more delightful design.
>
> For a time he did not observe the absence of telephonic or telegraphic communications; the posts and wires that mark a modern countryside had disappeared. [...] but his ideas of the mechanical organization of this new world were too vague and tentative as yet for him to attempt to fix any significance of this sort of place or that. He walked agape like a savage in a garden (*MLG* 371).

Relieved of his innermost fears about the scars with which England has been endowing its own landscape, the protagonist is particularly sensitive to the centrality of progress and design, which enhance a natural countryside. Unlike Parham, Barnstaple readily, albeit awkwardly, connects with a future landscape, which testifies to its redemptive qualities. In their own unique ways, both of these characters seek some affirmative likeness with the England they remember.

Primarily drawing on *Men Like Gods*, this section examines the ways in which the Utopian landscape, delineated by the principle of progress with continuity,

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are just three. [...] I am free and freely and responsibly making the future – so far as I am concerned. You others are equally free. On that theory I find my life will work, and on a theory of mechanical predestination nothing works' (57-8). Wells's abjuration of predetermined potentialities is markedly in conflict with a narrative technique he uses in *The Shape of Things to Come* to mould the future into a universal historical record of what 'occurred' (17).

constitutes England's temporal extension. As Utopia comes to be explored by Earthlings, most of whom are Englishmen with certain socio-political views, this section further accounts for their reactions to Utopia, in order to comprehend what Wells perceives as temporary impediments to a redemptive utopian landscape.

1. Utopian Landscape: Progress with Continuity

The supreme qualities of the Utopian landscape are heralded in a series of contrasts with the condition of England. As Barnstaple drives in a desperate search of a recuperative respite, the disparities of the English countryside become striking:

> On the left were a low, well-trimmed hedge, scattered trees, level fields, some small cottages lying back, remote poplars, and a distant view of Windsor Castle. On the right were level fields, a small inn, and a background of low, wooded hills. A conspicuous feature in this tranquil landscape was the board advertisement of a riverside hotel at Maidenhead (*MLG* 214).

The scarring intrusion of commercialism into an idyllic Berkshire, where time-honoured nature is made to mingle with temporary distractions, fails to grant the protagonist any sustainable rejuvenation. Passing by Slough and Sydenham, Barnstaple further realizes the extent to which these locations forbid pastoral experience. Slough suggests ascertainable homologies with some of the allegorical landmarks that feature in John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678). Like Christian, who dreams of finding a way from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City, Barnstaple heads from London to Utopia. The latter's road to redemption passes through Slough, while the Celestial City can be reached by overcoming the Slough of Despond (Bunyan 17). Barnstaple's 'roadmap' may be related to his response to the somewhat grim reality of England, overshadowed by 'commercial ruin', 'unforgettable and unforgivable outrages' in Ireland (*MLG* 208), which create a despondent atmosphere. In addition, the protagonist's neurasthenia builds up in Slough, which presented in the 1920s 'the archetype of anti-settlement', deforming the time-tested dichotomy of town and country (Matless 35). To Christian, the Slough of Despond looks like a 'particularly filthy ground', arousing 'in his soul many fears and doubts, and discouraging apprehensions' (Bunyan 18). As the direction of Christian's and Barnstaple's respective sojourns is teleological, their progress takes them out of despondency and brings them, with a varying degree of effort and revelation, to what they perceive as a more hopeful and restorative stage.

The rejuvenating role of Sydenham is equally problematic in the course of Barnstaple's progression towards Utopia. In referring to 'the domesticities of Sydenham' (*MLG* 347), the protagonist deflates the importance of this area, which boasted in the period of 1851-1936 a glass and cast-iron Crystal Palace. This notable erasure of a renowned edifice stands in contrast to competing evaluations which Sydenham Hill garnered from contemporary commentators. In a tribute to the Crystal Palace, which had been destroyed by fire, Le Corbusier hailed this structure as 'one of the great monuments of nineteenth-century architecture' ('Palace' 106). Impressed by its modern faith and daring, he congratulated the Palace on affording a 'spectacle of triumphant harmony'. While Le Corbusier's admiration was guided by his own futuristic projects, Fyodor Dostoyevsky regarded the modernity of the Crystal Palace in eschatological terms. In *Winter Notes on Summer Impressions* (1863), written after his visit to the Crystal Palace, Dostoyevsky recorded that 'something final has been accomplished here – accomplished and completed. It is a biblical sight, [...] some prophecy out of the Apocalypse being fulfilled before your own eyes' (50). Dostoyevsky took up the subject anew in *Notes from Underground* (1864), where the protagonist was unable to square the Crystal Palace with the innermost needs and inclinations of humanity: '[S]uffering is doubt, it is negation, and what good is a crystal palace in which one can have doubts? [...] man will never renounce suffering, that is, destruction and chaos' (34). For Dostoyevsky, the Crystal Palace represented finality, whose dissonance with man's nature could only be rectified by an external moral authority. Whereas Dostoyevsky's denigration is largely couched in theological vocabulary, which rails against finality, Wells may be seen to dismiss the Crystal Palace as being at odds with his idealized vision of England, as well as with Utopia. In *Experiment in Autobiography*, Wells recalls 'the gardens of the Crystal Palace at Sydenham', through which he would take strolls as a teenager (97). *The New Machiavelli* (1911) contains a dubious rendering of the Crystal Palace, both as an 'immense facade' blocking the protagonist's way to the school, and as a playground spectacle of 'gratuitous fireworks' (44-5). In neither of these depictions does the Crystal Palace epitomize England or finality. The absence of this construction in *Men Like Gods* further signals Wells's tensions concerning its relevance to both the English countryside and Utopia's crystal landscape. Perhaps

circumspect about a concretization of progress in one such structure, Wells, like Barnstaple, feels contented ‘so long as his back was generally towards Sydenham’ and its unfulfilling domesticities (*MLG* 213).

On accessing Utopia through an inadvertent time portal located in the Maidenhead road, Barnstaple becomes aware of a few remarkable changes: ‘This was an entirely different road from the one he had been upon half a minute before. The hedges had changed, the trees had altered, Windsor Castle had vanished, and – a small compensation – the big Limousine was in sight again’ (215). Despite having the central symbol of the nation’s political life removed, this seemingly continuous progression enacts vivid transformations of the English landscape. Utopia’s crystal qualities manifest themselves in physical clearness. Not only is the road to Utopia made of glass (216), and the air is clear and full of sweetness (217), but the sky and water are also crystalline (309). For a moment, one of the Earthlings, Mr Burleigh, is even led to rely on his common sense in undervaluing the obvious contrasts between the English and the Utopian landscape: ‘But are we to judge by appearances or are we to judge by the direct continuity of our experience? The Maidenhead Road led to this, was in continuity with this, and therefore I hold that this is the Maidenhead Road’ (218). Yet the Earthlings’ later response to the clearness of the Utopian landscape resolutely changes, as the aforesaid acknowledgement of continuity gives way to denial. Mr Rupert Catskill, one of the English visitors, admits:

> Life on earth was [...] insecure, full of pains and anxieties, full indeed of miseries and distresses and anguish, but also, and indeed by reason of these very things, it had moments of intensity, hopes, joyful surprises, escapes, attainments, such as the ordered life of Utopia could not possibly afford (265-6).

The fullness of human experience, allegedly truncated in Utopia, evokes an episode from William Morris’s *News from Nowhere* (1890). The ‘epoch of rest’ is shown to commemorate the ‘Clearing of Misery’, a ceremony that has young ladies sing of the want and suffering which used to afflict the previous periods. On hearing one such song, Guest’s interlocutor exclaims: ‘[A] tragedy [has] grown inconceivable to her and her listeners. [...] [H]ow glorious life is grown!’ (57). Unable to comprehend Utopia’s ultimate clearness of misery and noxious sights, the Earthlings additionally resemble the protagonist traveller of Edward Bellamy’s *Looking Backward: 2000-1887* (1888), who can be seen to represent original sin, ‘the tainting force that banishes mankind from paradise, conduit of knowledge that must inevitably lead to

the Fall' (Lowenstein 152). Along these lines, Utopia's crystal features, as evidenced in *Men Like Gods*, are not only embodied in its landscape, but they also potently encapsulate the improved human condition. At the same time, Utopian clearness invites further discussion, given Wells's casual dismissal of the Crystal Palace as an irrelevant synecdoche for progress. Does Utopia invest its crystal landscape with finality, such as understood by Dostoyevsky?

Wells's conceptualization of static and kinetic utopia provides helpful insight into his opposition to finality. In *A Modern Utopia*, Wells emphasizes the paramount role of Darwinian evolutionism in mankind's development, which allows him to interpret static utopias as 'a balance of happiness won for ever against the forces of unrest and disorder that inhere in things' (5). Kinetic utopias, on the contrary, 'must shape not as a permanent state but as a hopeful stage, leading to a long ascent of stages' (*MU* 5). Wells moves on to prescribe turmoil and even disease to Utopia, whose progress ought to outstrip stagnation and degeneration. Earlier in *The Time Machine*, he has demonstrated that a transformation into a deficient Eloi species proceeds from a pernicious intellectual and physical equilibrium, after certain vital stimuli have been withdrawn and basic needs gratified: 'The too-perfect security of the Upperworlders had led them to a slow movement of degeneration, to a general dwindling in size, strength, and intelligence' (44). With these caveats in mind, one nevertheless countenances a deeply ingrained conflict in Wells's views regarding Utopian clearness. If progress may only be achieved by keeping the forces that destabilize Utopia constantly at work, why does Wells posit an arrangement whereby social disjecta are purged into insular communities? This practice is equally common in Benson's Catholic world and Huxley's *Brave New World*. While the World Controller in Huxley's novel is little concerned with anything other than stability, both Benson and Wells declare organic growth and progress as precepts of their respective societies. However, just as Benson segregates infidels from the Catholic enterprise, which in essence lands on finality, Wells displaces 'incurable cheats' because they threaten to unsettle the stability of the Utopian order: 'Perhaps islands will be chosen, islands lying apart from the highways of the sea, and to these the State will send its exiles, most of them thanking Heaven, no doubt, to be quit of a world of prigs' (*MU* 144). Pursuit of clearness may effectively rid Utopia of socially

maladjusted individuals. Yet because finality persistently guides this relocation, progress becomes fully identical with cleansing.

Perhaps alert to such gruesome implications of Utopian clearness, as indicated above, Wells allows an occasion for dissidence in *Men Like Gods*. While in Utopia, Barnstaple comes into contact with an 'educational failure' whose speaking name Lychnis indicates equivalences with some residual sensibilities. Having lost her husband and sons in an accident at sea, Lychnis is portrayed as a throwback from unemotional and steely rationality, typical of Utopians; she has a predilection for human passions of the heart:

> She had rediscovered the lost passion of pity, first pity for herself and then a desire to pity others. She took no interest any more in vigorous and complete people, but her mind concentrated upon the consolation to be found in consoling pain and distress in others. She sought her healing in healing them (386).

Barnstaple's account of the misery of 'the Age of Confusion' kindles Lychnis's imagination, just as the displacement of sympathy in Utopia fails to excite her. To use Yevgeny Zamyatin's metaphor from his dystopian novel *We* (1924), Lychnis shows the symptoms of a 'disease' which suggest the discovery of the soul (*We* 220). Acknowledging Wells's penetrating impact on his fiction, Zamyatin nevertheless differs in his positions on the creative impulses, derived from the natural landscape. In setting up an 'infinite revolution' against the stagnant and degenerate One State, described in *We*, Zamyatin strongly relies on the human forces from 'the other side of the Wall' (217). Wells in turn closes off channels for social upheaval by ostracizing Lychnis, who comes to embody the atavistic loyalty to a romantic form of dissidence. Indeed, Lychnis's increasing interest in soul-doctoring tallies with her recuperative energies, associated with secluded life and attachments to nature. However, because she is only a minor character in Wells's novel, the social role of her dissent should not be overestimated. Vested with the power of regeneration, Lychnis has the ability to ensure the kinetic gauges of progress that would have fractured finality. But Wells cancels out the realization of such dissenting potentialities, being in conflict about progress and its potential disruption. In his pamphlet *Herbert Wells* (1922), Zamyatin regards Wells's ideas about continuous development as English in character: instead of curing the old cancerous order by surgery, Wells resorts to radiotherapy (19). Yet outside the context of Wells's allegedly English susceptibilities, his imaginative conflation of dissent with social

maladjustment ties into the wider contemporary fear of entropy. In his comprehensive study of the ways in which literary consciousness in the late nineteenth – early twentieth century preoccupied itself with the second law of thermodynamics, Michael Whitworth admits: 'The fear of slower, weaker bodies that might reduce the average level of energy is common to eugenics and thermodynamics. It is a fear that the essential characteristics of the nation might dissipate' (78-9). If viewed from this perspective, Wells's ultimate privileging of Utopia's crystal qualities not only bespeaks his continuing anxieties about the much feared dissipation of England, but also confirms the anti-entropic character of his utopianism.

The fact that the Utopian landscape allows marginal instances of dissidence is linked to other contexts of Wells's writing, in which his ambivalent attitudes towards Russia assert themselves. Wells is renowned for his initial support of the Soviet project in general, which distinguishes him from many English intellectuals whose intense fascination with Russia and its culture abated after the Revolution of 1917.[24] Building on his continuous interest in things Russian, Wells highlights several factors that account for Russia's irrelevance to a utopian endeavour. As early as *Russia in the Shadows* (1920), he disparages Marxist doctrine, on whose principles Soviet Russia styles itself, for being destitute of 'creative and constructive ideas' (48). On a similar note, Barnstaple observes in *Men Like Gods* that 'the narrowness of Marxist formulae' sacrifices the nation's 'constructive power for militant intensity. In Russia he had marked its ability to overthrow and its inability to plan or build' (402). Deploring the degree to which the ostensibly destructive impulses of Marxism guide Russia's drift to falsity, Wells is especially sensitive to the treatment of creative effort under Stalin's rule. In *The Shape of Things to Come*, Russia emerges as lying to the world, not leading it: 'Russia went clumsily, heavily and pretentiously – a politician's dictatorship, propaganding rather than performing, disappointing her well-wishers abroad and thwarting the best intelligences she produced. When her plans went wrong through her lack of precise material foresight, she accused, and imprisoned or shot, engineers and suchlike technical workers'

[24] In a study of Anglo-Russian cultural connections, Galya Diment records 'the intense interest that Great Britain manifested toward Russia prior to the Russian revolution of 1917', which 'says more about England at the time [...]' (4).

(129). Wells's growing awareness of Russia's notorious crack-down on intellectual freedom is recorded in his autobiography. While visiting Soviet Russia in 1934, Wells met Ivan Pavlov, a world-class physiologist, whose international prominence had secured him a relatively free, if marginally dissident, position in the Soviet society. Wells reports Pavlov's vigorous anxiety about 'the need for absolute intellectual freedom if scientific progress, if any sort of human progress, was to continue' (*EA* 816). Yet, in Wells's estimation, Pavlov towers as a solitary figure above the wilderness of Soviet despotism and error of self-sufficiency. Disillusioned by Russia's failure as an intellectually liberal environment, Wells gives the following rendering to its evolutionary development: Russia 'is like a reptile trying to fly before wings were evolved' (*AD* 187).

Wells's failure to identify in another cultural milieu an essential openness to free discussion, which is instrumental to progress, reaffirms his imaginative projection of a utopian landscape in England. Endowed with traditions of dissent and intellectual freedom, England appears to be appropriately suited to a continuous transition into Utopia. True, the temporal divide between Utopian clearness and England's counter-pastoral condition depicted in *Men Like Gods* remains insurmountable. Therefore the double-petal rose, which embodies Utopia's landscape, is ultimately unviable in the English countryside. The shrivelling of the rose in England may mean, as J. R. Hammond proposes, the end of Barnstaple's romance (141). However, the symbolism of the rose can also be read as an underlying, albeit insecure, connection between England's national symbol and its Utopian counterpart. Just as a Berkshire road elevates into a utopian landscape, the evolved rose communicates an allowable possibility of progress with continuity, on condition that this continuous development serves as a unifying national force.

2. English Attitudes in a Utopian Context

Even though Wells permits a certain degree of dissidence in order to sustain unhampered progress, Utopian clearness is devised to clash with concepts and predispositions which have been outgrown by its own emergence. In general terms, the yawning gap between the utopian and the earthly mode of existence forms the crux of the utopian genre. As Richard Gerber explains, when viewed 'from the

superhuman utopian level, humanity's shortcomings are comic; when longingly looking up to the ideal from the world of human misery, the failure of humanity to rise to the utopian level strikes [one] as tragic' (131). Indeed, this conflicting disparity can be exemplified by Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) and Wells's own *The First Men in the Moon* (1901). Gulliver's and Dr Cavor's accounts of their countries, Europe and the world at large, trigger bewilderment and indignation on the part of the King of Brobdingnag and the Grand Lunar respectively. As a result, the King identifies Gulliver's fellow countrymen as 'the most pernicious Race of little odious vermin that Nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the Earth' (Swift 123). The Grand Lunar in turn, perhaps worried about an alien invasion, orders that Cavor's channels of communication with Earth be cut off (Wells, *FMM* 541). From the standpoint of a more advanced socio-political order, humanity's present-day condition frequently looks despicable. This temporally distanced perspective enables a better understanding of the forces that bring about the contemporary chaos and destruction, and isolate people from 'the social, and particularly the intellectual advances of utopia' (Haynes 27).

Historical embodiments of such forces in Wells's work have led some commentators to interpret *Men Like Gods* as a *roman à clef* (Haldane, 'Biology' 257; Hammond 135). As indicated earlier, during his sojourn in Utopia Barnstaple is accompanied by two Earthling parties, which include Fr Amerton, Mr Burleigh, Mr Catskill, Mr Mush, Lady Stella; Lord Barralonga, M. Émile Dupont, Mr Hunker, Greeta Grey, and the chauffeurs Penk and Ridley. This assembly of alien visitors are engaged in various occupations from politics and religion to journalism and cinema. Yet the most noteworthy distinctions concern their nationality, tying in with the configuration towards which the League of Nations became skewed after the Treaty of Versailles. In John Partington's observation, Wells's hopes for a post-war settlement were betrayed by the fact that Germany had been 'treated to a vindictive peace [...] by the "war-guilt" clause. [...] The League of Nations [...] was for all practical purposes a league of victors [...]. It excluded Germany, Russia and Turkey and was deserted by the USA' (*Cosmopolis* 82). Unsurprisingly, the distribution of Earthling nationalities among the characters of *Men Like Gods* is overwhelmed by a majority of English people, excepting a Frenchman (Dupont) and an American

(Hunker). This sheer preponderance gives the English visitors a disputable right to act on behalf of humanity at large. When Catskill calls for a military campaign against Utopia, he co-opts his cause to the interests of the 'Human Empire'. However, should Catskill remain unchallenged by the French and the American Earthlings, he would readily accommodate humanity first with Anglo-Saxon unity and then with Britain's war allies only. Catskill eventually condescends: 'I meant a common brotherhood of understanding. [...] I meant our tried and imperishable Entente' (*MLG* 327). This latter acceptance of wider boundaries of the Human Empire inspires the Earthlings to unite under Catskill's leadership and produce 'a blue flag with a white star, a design sufficiently unlike any existing national flag to avoid wounding the patriotic susceptibilities of any of the party. It was to represent the Earthling League of Nations' (337). Regardless of the League's allegedly neutral insignia, the Earthlings' human aspirations are highly compromised by their national loyalties. Given the English dominance over the visitors' parties, the novel primarily focuses on how some of the contemporary strands of English politics and attitude fall out with the Utopian order.

In a utopian environment, Fr Amerton emerges as a headstrong guardian to the universal status of Christian morality. He most severely berates anything that contradicts the preordained course of nature, be this population control or vaccination (256, 319). Amerton's emphasis on the transcendent origin of moral principles takes its cue from G. K. Chesterton's professed opposition to all brands of socialism and state control. As Jay Corrin summarizes, Chesterton denounces the idea of world government and bases his Distributist system on guilds, a medieval form of production, which he derives from Christian doctrine (xii-xiii). Wells pillories Chesterton's socio-economic outlook as being outdated, and collapses its anti-evolutionist orientation into a prudish attitude towards progress in general. Amerton, who fails to envisage human development beyond the fixity of his orthodoxy, thinks of Utopia exclusively in terms of 'a moral nightmare' (*MLG* 394).

A less outspoken, yet equally antiquated, reaction against Utopia is supplied by Burleigh, a conservative leader. In keeping with his gentlemanly upbringing and civility, he cannot help commending, tongue in cheek, Utopian clearness: 'It is certainly a very lovely world. The loveliness is even greater than the wonder. And

there are human beings here – with minds' (223). But with time Burleigh's philosophy of scepticism drowns whatever open-mindedness he originally displays, and he eventually renounces, on the Earthlings' part, any 'favourable preconceptions of Utopia' (328). In addition, Burleigh's superficial understanding of politics finds vent, as he conflates Utopian governance with republicanism, socialism and anarchism (244-5). The fact that Burleigh comes across largely as a dilettante of a thinker and politician matches some of the contemporary accounts of Lord Balfour, who served as Prime Minister (1902-1905) and a Conservative MP (1906-1922). Incapacitated by his egotism and lack of competence in national and international affairs, Balfour is described as having a pronounced aversion to novelty and 'the enthusiasms of the human race' (Begbie 76). This critical appraisal of Balfour's personality may be further linked to the ways in which the Utopians project his caricature: Burleigh's 'powers of belief are very small. He believes in very little but the life of a cultivated wealthy gentleman who holds a position of modest distinction in the councils of a largely fictitious empire' (*MLG* 393). Indeed, the Empire continues to define Balfour's world-view, even after his political career comes to an end. In the introduction to a new edition of Walter Bagehot's *The English Constitution* (1927), Balfour rules that the past and future successes of the British Empire duly owe themselves to 'the transformation of the British Monarchy' (xxvi). If placed in the context of Utopian progress, this reaffirmation of monarchical rule and imperialism signals a considerable degree of anachronism.

Another character whose outlook wars with that of Utopia is Catskill. Conservative hallmarks of English culture, such as Kipling, Empire, Anglo-Saxonism, boy-scouting and public schools, surface in Barnstaple's mind the moment he confronts Catskill on the question of warfare with Utopia (*MLG* 344). Catskill's plea for the establishment of an Earthling council of war corresponds with his position as Secretary of State for War. As Catskill is driven by the ambition to set 'a foothold of mankind' (323), and to dominate and 'spread our prestige and our influence and our spirit into the inert body of this decadent Utopian world' (325-6), these intentions reprise Wells's understanding of war-mongering, directed by nationalist and imperial reflexes. Catskill's threat to put Barnstaple to death, unless he also conspires against the Utopians, verbally echoes an analogous pledge voiced

in Rudyard Kipling's short story 'The Army of a Dream' (1904). Reflecting on the British failures in the Boer Wars, Kipling engages, in a rather futuristic way, with what could constitute true military values and how atrociously these values would fail in the course of military action. Exposed to daily drilling from an early age, young men are raised for the Imperial Guard, which is stationed all over the world, in order to defend Empire; as one of the characters admits: 'We're a free people. We get up and slay the man who says we aren't' (Kipling 257). Despite such perverse determination, this 'army of a dream' suffers nearly total defeat and extinction at the hands of those whose fighting spirit and training prove to be less stringent and superior. The aforesaid outcome quite accurately describes the Utopian order, innocent of militarism, yet victorious in combat.

If seen as a satirical lampoon of Winston Churchill, Catskill embodies a pre-war frame of mind which was agonized by Britain's 'fading global clout' (Bradshaw, 'Kipling' 82). As a cultural symptom of the British economic and imperial decline, war and totalizing destruction feature quite strongly not only in Kipling's prescient outputs (e.g. *The Five Nations* and *Traffics and Discoveries*), but they also span Wells's early fictions (*The War of the Worlds, In the Days of the Comet, The War in the Air, The World Set Free*). Moreover, at the outbreak of the war in 1914, Wells was leading an offensive against pacifists, his pamphlet *The War That Will End War* (1914) being one such example. As Peter Buitenhuis notes, 'Wells the propagandist had in those early months of war entirely taken over from Wells the scientist and critic' (120). However, both Kipling and Wells were compelled to refocus radically their attitudes to combat, after the Great War had begun to claim numerous casualties. While the loss of his son in military action animated Kipling's inconsolable grief (Bradshaw, 'Kipling' 92), the harrowing news from the Battle of the Somme arrested Wells's militaristic fervour (Buitenhuis 120). In the wake of what he dubs 'the spectacular catastrophe of the Great War', Wells grew persistently concerned about restraining the destructive forces of 'our outwardly prosperous society' (*Salvaging* 1). Along the lines of Wells's disavowal of 'the war that will end war', Churchill's caricature, as presented in the character of Catskill, provides a penetrating commentary on how Wells himself was prone to endorse warfare for the national and imperial cause. This reflective hindsight may be further confirmed by

the fact that, despite their political differences and clashes, Wells and Churchill maintained cordial relations and a mutual affection throughout their lives (Toye 150).

While Amerton, Burleigh and Catskill are depicted as struggling with Utopia on predominantly conceptual grounds, Mr Freddy Mush takes exception to the natural aspect of Utopian clearness. Perhaps impaired by his monocled vision of the world around, he is strongly susceptible to the 'Balance of Nature', which the Utopians have tamed and adapted to their needs. Not only is Utopian clearness secured by the absence of annoying insects and midges, but it has also transformed the ruthlessly competitive order of nature into the service of the best, not the strongest, qualities: 'The brown bear had always been disposed to sweets and vegetarianism and had greatly improved in intelligence. The dog had given up barking and was comparatively rare' (*MLG* 261-2). Such corrective treatment of the natural world, bearing Wells's touch of optimism and irony, further justifies the likeable leopards and double-petal roses. The ways in which organic selection affects human characteristics in Utopia are considered at length in the next section of this thesis. Here, Mush's reaction to Utopian clearness deserves attention. In his perceptions, the removal of a struggle existing among and within biological species divests the countryside of its compensatory impulses. Indeed, the kind of poetry that Mush relishes and offers for the Utopians' attention is preoccupied, in his own words, with 'the effect of the war upon literature' (303). It is little wonder that his proposal falls on deaf ears. Because of their immunity to militant rivalry, the Utopians fail to imagine why nature should be retrieved from chaos and destruction; instead, they put their effort to the improvement of nature. In illuminating the discrepancy between the English and the Utopian ideas of landscape, Wells particularly has in mind Edward Marsh, editor of *Georgian Poetry* (1912-1922) and personal secretary to Winston Churchill. As Marsh is reputed to emphasize 'England as a mythical place or romance landscape' (Caserio 98), his caricature portrayal in *Men Like Gods* can be read in stark contrast to Utopian clearness, enabled by continuous work, rather than poetic recovery.

As Barnstaple is the only character who is utterly charmed by Utopia's conceptual and natural parameters, he is allowed to summarize impediments to

progress with continuity and to propose their tentative resolution. In the midst of the Earthlings' burgeoning war with the Utopian order, he reflects:

> They [the Utopians] had tried to bring back Utopia to the state of earth, and indeed but for the folly, malice and weakness of men earth was now Utopia. Old Earth was Utopia now, a garden and a glory, the Earthly Paradise, except that it was trampled to dust and ruin by its Catskills, Hunkers, Barralongas, Ridleys, Duponts and their kind. Against their hasty trampling folly nothing was pitted, it seemed, in the whole wide world at present but the whinings of the Peeves, the acquiescent disapproval of the Burleighs and such immeasurable ineffectiveness as his own protest (*MLG* 350).

This guilt-ridden consideration suggests that Barnstaple gravitates towards a new earth, with its restored profile. Yet this craving is hampered by the very specific predispositions that are inseparable from the Earthlings' national status. Even though Barnstaple eloquently substitutes Catskill's notion of the 'Human Empire' for a more neutral 'Old Earth', his concern equally revolves around the English preponderance (Catskills, Barralongas, Ridleys, Peeves, Burleighs) that disables progress on a global scale. Barnstaple may not be as narrowly imperialistic as Catskill, but his outlook on the world is by no means less Anglocentric. Moreover, by implicating his own ineffectiveness in Utopia's delayed progress on earth, Barnstaple indicates a wider nationally conscious discourse.

A more scrupulous judgement on the nature of Barnstaple's inaptitude can be found in Wells's *Mr Britling Sees It Through* (1916). The protagonist of this earlier novel conceptualizes some of the features intrinsic to the English character:

> The English because of their insularity had been political amateurs for endless generations. It was their supreme vice, it was their supreme virtue, to be easy-going. [...] Until the Great War the Channel was as broad as the Atlantic for holding off every vital challenge. Even Ireland was away – a four-hour crossing. And so the English had developed to the fullest extent their virtues and vices of safety and comfort; they had a hatred of science and dramatic behaviour; they could see no reason for exactness or intensity; they disliked proceeding 'to extremes'. [...] All their habits inclined them to fight good-temperedly and comfortably, to quarrel with a government and not with a people (*MBST* 170).

Like many other statements about England which abound in the novel, this conceptualization balances between critique and approval: England may be incapacitated by its isolationism, yet Britling's sentiment visibly tends towards moderate conduct, which proscribes revolutionary or destructive action. In propelling amateurism as the nation's defining quality, Britling rehearses a current construction of the English character. According to Peter Mandler, amateurism featured among the Liberal values, and implied resistance to foreign politics and thought ('Consciousness' 134).

The ambivalence of Britling's views, which shun insularity as much as outlandish influence, is commensurable with what Wells devises as a continuous passage to Utopia permitted by the protagonist's double-edged relationship with Liberalism. In *Men Like Gods*, Barnstaple is driven out of England by his frustrations with the Liberal government. At the same time, being a journalist with Liberal leanings, he immediately develops a most profound liking for Utopia. In addition, because Barnstaple's inactivity ties into the Liberal concept of amateurism, this contemporary coupling of Liberalism with England, marginalizes all the other 'English' susceptibilities, exemplified by anti-evolutionism (Amerton), superficiality (Burleigh), militancy (Catskill), and poetic recovery of landscape (Mush). While the latter positions are presented as being subversive and alien, both to England and to Utopia, the Liberal vantage point, regardless of its acknowledged stalwarts, affords the most serious appreciation of the Utopian order. Aside from being an indication of the responses to utopianism in the British political culture at the time, the above detail suggests Wells's renewed anxiety about a unifying national force, after Liberalism declines in importance and becomes unrepresentative of England. However, such fears appear to be somewhat premature, as Barnstaple, an average middle-class Englishman, is yet to find a way of disentangling his identity from England.

Conclusion

This section has ascertained the ways in which England and various identifications with it play a pivotal role in Wells's utopian imaginings. With caveats to dissipation, dissent, and attachments to nature, Wells's version of England acts as a temporal foil to a World State, it also opens a 'door in the wall'. In negotiating continuous development alongside loyalties to Liberal politics, Wells reasserts nationally conscious concerns as driving forces of human progress. England thus becomes a benchmark against which prognostications about humanity's future are measured. As an urgent national anxiety about a redeemed landscape is ultimately resolved in Utopia, it is Southern England that extends into a fulfilling future. England's topographies and political culture provide not only a liminal pad, but also an environment from which a World State can be achieved.

2.3. Raising a Utopian Double

Introduction

If H. G. Wells's vision of a World State builds on English topographies and political loyalties as points of progressive departure, the World-Staters' character and susceptibilities may equally have a connection with a wider nationally conscious problematic. Particularly pivotal during the interwar years was the problem of revitalizing the nation and bringing up good citizens. Theresa Jamieson traces the origins of this problem to 'the degenerative scourge sweeping the nation' in the years prior to and after the Boer Wars (74). During the Great War and throughout the interwar period, national anxieties about physical health were only renewed. In the words of David Matless, '[d]ebates over an "A1" or "C3" nation went back to the eugenic "National Efficiency" drive which followed the revelation of poor physical capacity in Boer War recruits' (91). This persistent trope was also related to, and frequently informed by, a more general socio-cultural climate that involved a complex coexistence and cross-fertilization of evolutionary ideas and Nietzschean philosophy. Not only did Darwinism affect laissez-faire economics and notions of individualism, as Richard Weikart has noted (17); but, as David Stack observes, it also provided the socialists, who opposed laissez-faire, 'with an organic and an evolutionary language that profoundly influenced the form and content of [their] socialism' (vii). Stack further explains that G. B. Shaw, Beatrice and Sidney Webb, Ramsay MacDonald, among others, used the ideas of evolution as a caveat to the degenerative drift of capitalism and as a bulwark of an organically developing society (Stack 88, 115). Just as Darwinism preoccupied national consciousness across the political spectrum, Nietzsche's impact on the Edwardian and interwar views on degeneration was felt, according to Dan Stone, across nationally conscious discourses (65). Given its contemporary urgency, the problem of national revitalization also galvanized Wells's utopian imaginings, which were in conversation with the ideas of evolution and with the projections of the overman.

As early as 'Human Evolution, An Artificial Process' (1896), Wells argued that the differences between the natural and the evolved man were minimal in terms of evolutionary changes. The more significant distinctions would consist in the

accumulation of 'moral suggestions and knowledge', which characterized the evolved man (Wells, 'Evolution' 594). Wells's evolutionary perspective on the two types of humanity can be placed in the wider context of the literary practice of doubling, which was particularly prominent in the fin de siècle. As Linda Dryden demonstrates, 'horrors occurring in the heart of the modern metropolis' activated the images of degenerate souls (in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and R. L. Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*) and subterranean sweatshops (in Wells's *When the Sleeper Wakes*) (15). These representations of the darker sides of life threw into relief the duality of human nature and exposed 'metropolitan anxieties springing from the lived experiences of the late-Victorian public' (Dryden 188). In utopian fiction, the practice of doubling heralds a substantial betterment of mankind, insofar as the horrors of living are ironed out not only by social, but also by physical reconstruction.

Indeed, in *A Modern Utopia* (1905), Wells supplies the contemporary Englishman with an evolved, and therefore superhuman, double. While visiting Utopia, the main character comes to a realization that his thumb marks, collected for the purposes of identification, happen to match the personal record of a Utopian. He first deems this coincidence to be a mere failure in the Utopian database storing up individual information. Then he allows the possibility of 'a grotesque encounter, as of something happening in a looking glass' (*MU* 229). The protagonist's anticipated projection of his identity into the future permits Harvey Quamen to discern in *A Modern Utopia* 'a hall of mirrors: Wells resembles, but is not identical to, the Owner of the Voice who in turn resembles, but is not identical to, the main character who resembles, but is not identical to, his Utopian double [...]' (74). This chain of resemblances arguably testifies to an underlying continuity whereby the main character ascertains 'a strange link of essential identity, a sympathy, an understanding' between himself and his Utopian double (*MU* 229). At the same time, the Utopian double is reported to belong to a caste of highly accomplished citizens, and is therefore superior to the protagonist: 'He is a little taller than I, younger looking and sounder looking [...]. His training has been subtly finer than mine; he has made himself a better face than mine' (*MU* 247).

The fact that the Utopian double improves on the Englishman's physical and social qualities has further resonances in Wells's interwar utopian fictions. This conception permeates both *Men Like Gods* and *The Shape of Things to Come*. In *Men Like Gods*, the Utopians display visible signs of superiority in their longer lifespan, as well as in taller build and fairer complexion; in Mr Barnstaple's perceptions, 'theirs was a cleansed and perfected humanity, and it seemed to him that they were gods' (372). Distinctive features are also intrinsic to the Utopians' character, which is noted for 'cleanliness, truth, candour and helpfulness, confidence in the world, fearlessness and a sense of belonging to the great purpose of the race' (375). *The Shape of Things to Come* charts the progression of the world up until the year 2106, from 'the Age of Frustration' to 'the Modern State in control of life'. The rise of the Modern State entails the expansion of a regulated education and the subsequent proliferation of polymaths, who are eventually replaced by what Wells envisions as a new species of man that will live longer and more cooperatively (*STC* 421). From the above brief outline, it follows that the assets of the Utopian double are premised on the transformations that involve humanity's appearance, character, and social milieu.

This section examines the ways in which Wells's conception of the Utopian double mediates a response to the nationally conscious perceptions of a degenerative drift. In order to comprehend how the contemporary emphases on national revitalization filter into the vision of a World State, this section reads Wells's utopian fictions in the context of his other writings, which problematize education and eugenics. A further question which this section addresses is one of individuality. If the Utopian double is to bear the hallmarks of a superman, how can his character be accommodated with respective national susceptibilities? This section seeks to further our contention about the national foundations of Wells's utopian imagination.

1. Education and Eugenics

Among factors contributing to the conception of the Utopian double, education and eugenics acquire a special and frequently conflicted prominence. Urthred, one of the characters in *Men Like Gods*, points to the dividing chasm between the mind-sets of the Earthlings and their Utopian counterparts, which he attributes to education:

> Yours are Age of Confusion minds, trained to conflict, trained to insecurity and secret self-seeking. In that fashion Nature and your state have taught you to live and so you must

> needs live until you die. Such lessons are to be unlearnt only in ten thousand generations, by the slow education of three thousand years (272).

The growth of a World State is inseparable for Wells from the spread of education, which lays the foundation of what he terms in his economic study *The Work, Wealth and Happiness of Mankind* 'the universal human persona' (718). However, the attainment of such a persona is seriously hampered, in Wells's judgement, by the lamentable state of education, when viewed from the vantage point of a fulfilled utopian future. *The Shape of Things to Come* provides the following account: not only did education in the Age of Frustration indulge in 'patriotic twaddle' and keep knowledge explicitly outside formal schooling, but there was also 'practically no philosophical education at all in the world, no intelligent criticism of generalizations and general ideas. There was no science of social processes at all' (82). Such a retrospective diagnosis is fully consonant with Wells's other criticisms of the contemporary system of education. In *Experiment in Autobiography* (1934), Wells comments that the 1870 Education Act was meant 'to educate the lower classes for employment on lower-class lines, with specially trained, inferior teachers who had no university quality' (93). Where Wells as a student of a National School had to undergo training mainly in his teacher's volatile moods and deficient professionalism, the protagonist of his 'condition-of-England' novel *The New Machiavelli* (1911) is exposed to a schooling in which there are always model replies to the same questions. Similarly, the main character of *The History of Mr Polly* (1910) bears the brunt of educational mismanagement. The imaginary picture of Empire instructing her 'English children' about 'their essential nobility and knighthood' falls short of Polly's long-term expectations. Instead, he is eventually left with the compression of his 'mind and soul in the educational institutions of his time' (23), indigestion and mispronounced words. Notably, John Carey construes Polly's lost educational opportunities as 'Wells's rage at the national expenditure on armaments, which [...] has stunted the lives of millions of children' (141). But what Carey importantly overlooks is Polly's constant search for a difference that his ordinary life could not provide. Undoubtedly, his failed suicidal attempt at his house, as well as his fluke heroism at the Potwell Inn, contain an ironic commentary on the lengths to which Polly goes in seeking maturity and self-fulfilment. Yet from the moment he embarks on a life-time education, Polly figures in the novel, as Kevin

Swafford asserts, as 'a responsive and candid mind' (72). Polly learns more from life than his formal education ever afforded. Much as this statement brings the effectiveness of institutional schooling almost to a minimum, it throws into relief the protagonist's inherent receptivity to learning and his disposition to change. The penultimate chapter of *The History of Mr Polly* tellingly opens with a line central to Wells's utopianism: 'If the world does not please you, *you can change it*' (283). The state of national education in England, as Wells depicts it, may be deficient and mismanaged, but the first stirrings of the Utopian double are with those who are responsive and resolute, like Mr Polly.

Whereas Polly evolves into a responsive and resolute character in a largely idyllic rural England, the eponymous protagonists of *Joan and Peter: The Story of an Education* (1918) gain insight into the more valuable qualities of the English character in the company of their uncle Oswald Sydenham. The novel is interspersed with the latter's pronouncements about the duality of Britain, which is at once badly and properly placed to manifest its genuine character: 'We have an empire as big as the world and an imagination as small as a parish' (*JP* 276). The nation's alleged parochialism is solely assigned to the system of education: as in *The History of Mr Polly*, it comes across as inappropriate. It effectively disseminates habits and attitudes of isolation which are incongruous with the necessity to maintain a more knowledgeable international outreach. As Oswald notes, '[t]he habit of detachment was too deeply ingrained. Great Britain was an island of onlookers' (*JP* 578). The fundamental sense of isolation to which the novel refers does not seem to do sufficient justice to the national system of education, especially before the Great War. In a study of English patriotism, Stephen Heathorn observes that the ideas about the nation propagated in the classroom 'were ultimately successful enough to induce millions of working-class men and women to willingly sacrifice their lives and loved ones to the demands of the nation-state in the cataclysmic clash of rival nationalisms that erupted in 1914' (218). This statement sheds some light on the vividly patriotic, if not nationalistic, aspect of English education. However, both Heathorn and Wells's mouthpiece in *Joan and Peter* are reluctant to acknowledge the immediate effect that the Great War produced on all those 'onlookers' who found themselves fighting for England in Belgium and France. Their professed sense of

isolation would not have taken them far. Growing sensitive to this realization towards the end of the novel, Oswald tones down his critique and reveals his understanding of the truly English ideals:

> I tell you there is no race and no tradition in the whole world that I would change for my English race and tradition. I do not mean the brief tradition of this little Buckingham Palace and Westminster system here that began yesterday and will end tomorrow, I mean the great tradition of the English that is spread all over the earth, the tradition of Shakespeare and Milton, of Newton and Bacon, of Runnymede and Agincourt, the tradition of the men who speak fairly and act fairly, without harshness and without fear, who face whatever odds there are against them and take no account of Kings (*JP* 725).[25]

Oswald's confession indicates his fundamental attachments to national culture, rather than the political continuity, vested in the monarchy and parliamentary government. It also brings out the idiom of the English character, which is associated with fairness. In his account of Britain's intellectual life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Stefan Collini elucidates the discourse of the national character through the notion of fair play, typical of organized games such as cricket. Extending the principle of fairness to the discourse of character, he contends that, during this period, it 'was an expression of a deeply ingrained perception of the qualities needed to cope with life, an ethic with strong roots in areas of experience ostensibly remote from politics' (Collini 116). Along these lines, Oswald's privileging of fair actions and words points up a quality which is closely linked to a wider understanding of the English character.

Wells puts the ideal of fairness to a number of imaginative and highly suggestive lengths in his conception of the Utopian double. On proclaiming as their motto 'Our education is our government' (*MLG* 254), the Utopians have acted consistently in dismissing both politicians and lawyers as anachronistic phenomena. Utopia's revenue from natural resources gets fairly distributed in such a way that a child is granted a credit 'sufficient to educate and maintain him up to four- or five-and-twenty, and then he was expected to choose some occupation to replenish his

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[25] The mention of Bacon in the company of Shakespeare, Milton and Newton immediately brings back the figure of Francis Bacon, the English statesman, empirical thinker and essayist. In *A Modern Utopia*, Wells aligns his vision of Utopian science with what Bacon pictured in *The New Atlantis* (1627) as Saloman's House, a body of scientists obtaining knowledge from all corners of the globe. Advocating the continuous growth of science, Wells relates more to Bacon's 'foreshadowings' than to Morris's return to nature (*MU* 100). Besides, in articulating Oswald's views on fairness, Wells might also have in mind Roger Bacon, a medieval English philosopher. In his autobiography, Wells paralleled his own vocation in life with that of Roger Bacon: 'I play at being such a man as he was, a man altogether lonely and immediately futile, a man lit by a vision of a world still some centuries ahead, convinced of its reality and urgency, and yet powerless to bring it nearer' (*EA* 729).

account' (382). If one fails to start a job, his or her idleness figures as a psychological disorder, not a financial crime; the Earthlings receive a further explanation of Utopian norms: 'It is a pleasant world indeed for holidays, but not for those who would continuously do nothing' (254). As a result, this beautiful and just society is largely secured by its citizens' access to, and acquisition of, professional knowledge, and subsequent work. If read in this light, Wells's vision of a World State/Utopia fully outgrows the educational deficiencies of contemporary England, making education a central socio-political force.

Alongside education, the nationally conscious ideal of fairness lies at the foundation of the Utopians' attitudes. While briefing the Earthlings about the socio-political arrangements in Utopia, Urthred promises: 'We will try our utmost to deal fairly and friendly with you if you will respect our laws and ways' (*MLG* 272). This pledge of fair treatment evokes the opening scene of Francis Bacon's *The New Atlantis* (1627). A crew of English sailors are equally promised admittance to the island of Bensalem, provided that they swear by their Christian faith and own up to not having shed blood, either lawfully or otherwise, in the last several weeks. Once through this searching interrogation, the company later find themselves in a fair city with three fair streets, a fair and spacious house, a fair parlour, among 'men more fair and admirable' (Bacon 152, 155, 173). The ninefold repetition of the epithet 'fair', which is used to describe the comely appearance of buildings and people, is bounded up with Bensalem's consistent and moderate practices which can also be regarded as being fair. The island's scientific advances render the laws redundant, as everyone abides by 'the reverence of a man's self, [...] the chiefest bridle of all vices' (Bacon 174). The pun on the word 'fair', implicit in *The New Atlantis*, thus becomes deliberate in *Men Like Gods*.

However, what complicates the realization of fairness in its two major meanings (just and beautiful), is the entanglement of Utopian education with eugenic practices, resulting in a pool of fair-looking people. On the eve of his forced departure from Utopia, Barnstaple looks back on the fairness of the Utopian order and wishes to see it take effect in his space-time: 'Earth too would grow rich with loveliness and fair as this great land was fair. The sons of Earth also, purified from disease, sweet-minded and strong and beautiful, would go proudly about their

conquered planet and lift their daring to the stars' (403). Barnstaple's anticipations are clearly informed by his attention to the Utopians' physical fairness. Besides education, Patrick Parrinder detects in Wells's utopias 'an unrecognizable physical evolution, brought about by eugenics rather than natural selection' (*Wells* 10). Indeed, two times in *Men Like Gods*, Wells indicates that eugenics has begun in Utopia (263, 313). Wider applications of positive eugenics are signalled in *The Shape of Things to Come*, again in tandem with the educational effort, which is expected to guide man's becoming 'generation by generation a new species, differing more widely from that weedy, tragic, pathetic, cruel, fantastic, absurd and sometimes sheerly horrible being who christened himself in a mood of oafish arrogance *Homo sapiens*' (420).

Apart from exposure to the educational impact that governs Utopia, the conception of the Utopian double is derived from the theory and practice of eugenics. In *Men Like Gods*, Barnstaple, overwhelmed by 'the firm clear beauty of face and limb that every Utopian displayed', learns about the limits of eugenics: 'The Utopians told of eugenic beginnings, of a new and surer decision in the choice of parents, of an increasing certainty in the science of heredity [...]' (263). Wells takes eugenic policies much further in his later vision of a World State conjured up in *The Shape of Things to Come*: '[T]his painless destruction of monsters and the more dreadful and pitiful sorts of defective was legalized, and also the sterilization of various types that would otherwise have transmitted tendencies that were painfully undesirable' (388). The disturbing aspect of these policies is prompted by the historical context in which they were proposed. Before and during the Great War, when Britain was again faced with anxieties about the nation's mental and physical decline, eugenic ideas continued to emerge in the mainstream of the political agenda. In his critical examination *Eugenics and Other Evils* (1917), G. K. Chesterton labelled the initiatives to legalize sterilization as the advent of the Eugenic State: 'The first of the Eugenic Laws has already been adopted by the Government of this country; and passed with the applause of both parties through the dominant House of Parliament' (19). Here Chesterton refers back to the 1913 Mental Deficiency Act, which defined three categories of mental defective ('idiot', 'imbecile' and 'feeble-minded') and prescribed institutional detention, not sterilization, of people with

relevant handicaps. Chesterton apprehended that England was likely to tread down the path of eugenics and arrive at what Belloc called 'the Servile State' (Belloc, *Socialism* 5); in Chesterton's words, England 'has almost certainly missed the Socialist State. But we are already under the Eugenist State; and nothing remains to us but rebellion' (*Eugenics* 21). Interestingly, after this outspoken response to the reputed flowering of eugenics in England, there was only one major parliamentary campaign to legalize voluntary sterilization in 1931, which had not garnered sufficient support. According to Desmond King and Randall Hansen, '[t]he request, which was portrayed by its opponents as fundamentally anti-working class, was defeated by 167 votes to 89' (85). In this context, Wells's intermittent advocacy of both positive and negative eugenic methods appears to be more marginal than it would have been during the earlier decades of the twentieth century.

The publication of *The Shape of Things to Come* coincided with the adoption of the Eugenic Law in Germany in 1933. Initially imposing sterilization in the case of mental illness, genetic malformations, and alcoholism, the Law culminated in the 1935 'Act for the Protection of German Blood and German Honour' (Weingart 184). In the estimation of Peter Weingart, who has investigated the attempts to rationalize human evolution in Germany, the aforesaid Act 'reflected the unholy combination of eugenic thinking and Germanic race doctrines which under the Nazis had crystallized into a government-sponsored anti-Semitism' (184). However, what matters is not only a temporal coincidence with Wells's eugenic concerns, but that these concerns had a long history of their own. In *Anticipations* (1901), for example, Wells gives voice to his understanding of the Jewish question: 'If the Jew has a certain incurable tendency to social parasitism, and we make social parasitism impossible, we shall abolish the Jew, and if he has not, there is no need to abolish the Jew' (316). The ambiguity of such considerations is connected with the verb 'to abolish', which suggests extermination. But given Wells's insistence on the coalescence of identities into a cosmopolitanism, 'to abolish' may mean to re-educate the Jew. *The Shape of Things to Come* confirms the latter interpretation in a number of ways. Pinning down the Jewish sense of exceptionalism to their religion, Wells describes the Jew as 'a breach in the collective solidarity everywhere. [...] One could never tell whether a Jew was being a citizen or whether he was being just a Jew' (376-7). To that end, the

World State is devised to rectify the Jew's peculiarities 'in the food of either of his body or his mind' (*STC* 377). This arrangement is expected to engender a complete solidarity of the world, rendered by Wells as being 'full as ever it was of men and women of Semitic origin, but they belong no more to "Israel"' (378). Although some of the conceptual premises of the eugenic legislation in Nazi Germany and Wells's support for respective practices sound worryingly homologous, there is clearly – crude as it may sound – a difference between the educational coercion of the Jews in the World State and their physical extermination in the Holocaust. There is also an undeniable difference of degree between the Mental Deficiency Act in England and the Eugenic Law in Germany, to say nothing of their subsequent applications. These differences, to use Stone's classification, fall into two categories: a 'theoretical and ideational background', and 'action'. So long as eugenic ideas did not fully cross the boundary between theory and practice in England, they have been interpreted as 'the extremes of Englishness' (Stone 4). To use this conciliatory and largely normative logic, Wells's conception of the Utopian double may be made to seem nearly un-English. Because Wells negotiates the Utopian double on the basis of eugenic practices, his conception, at least retrospectively, occurs in the margins of the contemporary constructions of England.

Wells's other writings on the theme of a World State further demonstrate his consistent adherence to eugenic principles, but with one noteworthy peculiarity. As Chesterton insightfully concedes, 'if I were restricted, on grounds of public economy, to giving Mr Wells only one medal *ob cives servatos*, I would give him a medal as the Eugenist who destroyed Eugenics' (*Eugenics* 70). Chesterton explains his commendation by the challenge that Wells presented to the eugenicists as early as *Mankind in the Making* (1903), where he questioned the inheritance of health. Since health is not a quality but a balance, its breeding in the course of parental selection proves impracticable. Perhaps Wells's attention to this legitimate challenge eventually allowed him to project 'a different animal' in the citizen of the Modern State, who had emerged 'from the honest application of the Obvious to health, education, and economic organization, within little more than a hundred years' (*STC* 322). Aside from these measures, Wells enforces an ethical limit beyond which the creation of the Utopian double may be accomplished solely by educational means.

As a caveat, Wells proceeds to conclude in *The Work, Wealth and Happiness of Mankind*: 'The deliberate improvement of man's inherent quality is at present unattainable. It is to a better education and to a better education alone, therefore, that we must look for any hope of ameliorating substantially the confusions and distresses of our present life' (679-80). This conclusion echoes Wells's views on the role of a fair education discussed above, and ties into the ethical foundations of his idea of the 'artificial factor'. As the next chapter deals with Aldous Huxley's reactions to some of Wells's anxieties about the dysgenic future of England, it will further specify the development of English eugenic discourse, whose problematic shifted from nature to nurture.

In his study of Wells's Cosmopolis, John Partington traces the idea of the 'artificial factor in man' to T. H. Huxley's conception of ethical evolution. Even though T. H. Huxley distinguished the 'cosmic process', which permits the fittest to survive, from 'social progress' that favours 'those who are ethically the best' (81), he did not consider these two factors in opposition. As Partington clarifies, 'not only is "ethical man" the result of natural evolution, but humanity's use of ethics to tame the "cosmic process" is also a part of nature' (*Cosmopolis* 28). Along these lines, Wells's aspirations for the improvement of humanity, either biological or social, target the 'artificial factor in man' and are not ethically at variance with natural evolution.[26] In *The Shape of Things to Come*, the narrator Dr Philip Raven supplies a most valid confirmation of this theory: a citizen of the World State is presented to be 'less gregarious in his instincts and less suggestible [...], but he is far more social and unselfish in his ideology and mental habits. He is, in fact, for all the identity of his

[26] In the wider context of Wells's scientific romances, this point can be corroborated by the example of *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896), in which the protagonist Prendick comes to observe a gruesome experiment in the course of which animals are 'carven and wrought into new shapes' (146). The transformation of animal species into human beings stems from Dr Moreau's theory that, after affecting the bodily structure of a living creature, its mental structure may immediately be subjected to a moral education which is 'an artificial modification and perversion of instinct; pugnacity is trained into courageous self-sacrifice, and suppressed sexuality into religious emotion' (Wells, *Island* 147). To that end, Moreau has his Beast Folk obey the 'Law' under a threat of severe punishment. But from the outset, it becomes clear that the 'Law' is a highly artificial appendage to the animals' normal ways. Being superimposed by vivisection and conditioning, the 'Law' can be neither fully grasped nor interiorized because, as Nick Redfern deduces, 'for Wells, nature and ethics are both required in constructing the limits of humanity [...]' (23). By contrast, the 'artificial factor' forms an integral element in human beings, insofar as it issues from natural evolution and may therefore be further fostered by education. The paramount role of ethics in Wells's scientific imaginings resonates with what Dariusz Piechota envisages as a requisite trait of the characters in Wellsian fiction: '[A] strong moral code and a kindly disposition of man [...] ensure the stability of human existence' (74).

heredity, a different animal. He is bigger and stronger, more clear-headed, with more self-control and more definitely related to his fellow creatures' (408-9). Because this profile of the Utopian double is focused on attitudinal and mental characteristics, it makes little use of heredity. Whereas the betterment of man's physical qualities originates from parental selection and breeding the defective out, ideology and mentality at large can only be the outcomes of education.

Because Wells's reservations concerning the use of eugenic methods are not rare, his vision of a World State is in conflict about education and heredity. Even though education and eugenics reinforce each other in his conception of the Utopian double, Wells repeatedly stresses the need of an education that would guarantee fair provisions. In an essay on eugenic thinking, Partington fully rehabilitates Wells the eugenicist, who, afflicted by a knowledge of the death camps operating in Central Europe during the Second World War, was forced 'to reject [eugenics] out of hand' ('Thinking' 79). However, if the Utopian double is to epitomize fairness, being both just and beautiful, his identity is inextricable not only from the idiom of the English character, but also from the contemporary national conundrum, where eugenics and education continued an exchange of energies.

2. Utopian Individuality and the Crowd

Both *Men Like Gods* and *The Shape of Things to Come* promote individuality. Because Wells's vision of a World State forbids anyone without an individualizing distinction, it becomes an onus for a Utopian to study and work hard, in order to develop in several directions, like a polymath. Thus, Crystal, a thirteen-year-old youth, apart from majoring in natural sciences and mathematics, 'is reading history in a holiday stage of his education' (*MLG* 372). *The Shape of Things to Come* complements this understanding of individuality: 'We do not suppress individuality; we do not destroy freedom; we destroy obsessions and remove temptations. The world is still full of misleading doctrines, dangerous imitations and treacherous suggestions, and it is the duty of government to erase these' (347). However, some Wellsian scholars are prone to question the theoretical foundations and practical implications of individuality in Wells's writings. Parrinder and Partington are unanimous in arguing that Wells rejected liberal individualism (Parrinder, *Wells* 13;

Partington, *Cosmopolis* 2), while Carey suggests that, with time 'Wells began to doubt not only whether individuality could be allowed but whether it existed at all' (147).

The individuality of the Utopian double may be read as a reaction against the theory and practice of laissez-faire, which had its roots in free trade and later came to refer to governmental non-involvement in the domestic economy and other social spheres (Weikart 19). The Utopian double, conceived in Wells's utopias, notably contests laissez-faire, which is implicated in the Spencerian formula of 'the survival of the fittest'. In *The Shape of Things to Come*, the project of a regulated capitalism, set forth by J. M. Keynes, one of the leading economists of the time, is viewed as being insufficient, despite the fact that it wins 'an increased adherence' (249). Indeed, in his polemical pamphlet *The End of Laissez-Faire* (1926), Keynes gives vent to his deep concern about the precepts of laissez-faire individualism: 'It is *not* a correct deduction from the Principle of Economics that enlightened self-interest always operates in the public interest. Nor is it true that self-interest generally *is* enlightened [...]' (39). Alongside individual enterprise, which, as Keynes believes, cannot be abolished unless it fails to deliver, the state should be permitted to take over 'those things which at present are not done at all' (47). The Keynesian compromise instigates state control over unemployment and labour, savings and investment, as well as population. Regardless of Keynes's opposition to the expansion of laissez-faire, Wells censures these proposals as an attempt at safeguarding 'some existing political system by all sorts of artificial barriers and restraints from the world at large, in order to develop [a] peculiar system within its confines' (*STC* 249).

Conversely, in *Men Like Gods*, the Utopian system of controls displaces 'a limited and legalized struggle of men and women to get the better of one another', and sanctions the 'idea of creative service' (*MLG* 249-50). In the eyes of Rupert Catskill, this transition can only end in degeneration, once competitive forces are withdrawn from social interaction. Yet Catskill's opinion is found to be exclusively reliant on factors external to the actual process of competition. As Urthred contends, 'it is not true that competition has gone from our world. [...] everyone here works to his or her utmost – for service and distinction. [...] There is no way but knowledge

out of the cages of life' (*MLG* 269). True, the transition from laissez-faire to the Utopian type of individualism is paradoxically based on the totality of state intervention, which Wells promotes in *The Shape of Things to Come*: 'Never before was man so directed and disciplined' (392). But on the way to the further realization of a World State, the role of the state diminishes, and creative service allows immediate occasions for the expression of individuality; in *Men Like Gods*, Barnstaple observes:

> And down there under the blue haze of the great plain almost all those who were not engaged in the affairs of food and architecture, health, education and the correlation of activities, were busied upon creative work; they were continually exploring the world without or the world within, through scientific research and artistic creation. They were continually adding to their collective power over life or to the realized worth of life (311).

The Utopians' professional occupations afford additional insight into the practice of individualism. Some of the Utopians, with whom the Earthlings interact, represent certain departments of knowledge to which their society attaches importance. Barnstaple remarks: 'Everyone was doing work that fitted natural aptitudes and appealed to the imagination of the worker. Everyone worked happily and eagerly – as those people we call geniuses do on our Earth' (*MLG* 374). As a specialist in physio-chemistry, Serpentine explains the theories of 'space-and-time universes, parallel to one another and resembling each other' (236). Cedar works as a cytologist, running an improvised sanatorium where the Earthlings are quarantined in order to prevent the epidemic from spreading (318). Urthred's expert areas include ethnology and history. These competences allow Urthred to trace the development of humanity into a Utopian race whose progress hinges on the applications of the will.

The Utopians understand will as key to harnessing nature, whose actions they see as illogical, ruthless and incompetent. In Urthred's words, nature 'made us by accident; all her children are bastards – undesired; she will cherish or expose them, pet or starve or torment without rhyme or reason' (270). In order to combat nature's adverse and whimsical conduct, the Utopians rely on their will 'to learn it and cease to fear it, to know it and comprehend it and master it' (270). The mastering of nature by the force of will governs the most ambitious cosmological interventions, to which Sungold, probably the oldest Utopian with whom Barnstaple holds conference, refers as 'no more than a beginning' of a 'Life of which you and I are but anticipatory atoms and eddies, life will awaken indeed, one and whole and marvellous, like a

child awaking to conscious life' (396). The continuously expanding horizons of the Utopian endeavour are signalled by the vocabulary that describes an existence on the threshold of a higher order of reality. Where the Utopians aspire to reach the stars and other planets through their constant applications of the will, for Barnstaple the will secures a plausible passage of humanity to Utopia: '"Given the will," said Mr Barnstaple. "Given the will.". . .' (403). Being an active force in Utopia, the will is also associated with power. In her dissenting evaluation, Lychnis equates her fellow Utopians' projects with the following aspirations:

> They have changed a wild planet of disease and disorder into a sphere of beauty and safety. They have made the wilderness of human motives bear union and knowledge and power.
>
> And research never rests, and curiosity and the desire for more power and still more power consumes all our world (*MLG* 368).

Engrossed in the study of compassion, a quality almost completely absent from the Utopian society, Lychnis laments the staggering lack of emotion. In a conversation, Barnstaple learns about her nephew: 'Crystal, Utopian youth, was as hard as his name. When he had slipped one day on some rocks and twisted and torn his ankle, he had limped but he had laughed' (387). By the same token, death, should it be confronted fearlessly, is the cause of gladness, not sympathy. Falling out with such sentiments, Lychnis discerns overhuman qualities in the Utopians' impregnable psychology. Such a forsworn capacity for self-pity and empathy, coupled with relentless yearnings for the stars, suggests equivalences with Friedrich Nietzsche's projection of the overman in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1883-1885). The immediate impact of Nietzsche on Wells's utopianism is a largely contestable and unexplored area. In a recent monograph on the early fiction of Wells, Steven MacLean has ascribed the scorn for 'universal morality', which characterizes Griffin in *The Invisible Man* (1897), to 'a possible Nietzschean influence' (84). This declaratory remark, interesting in itself, requires further critical analysis on the level of textual evidence and Wells's direct responses to Nietzsche. Always intent on 'overcoming itself' (Nietzsche 89), the overman, like the Utopians in *Men Like Gods*, is goal-oriented and presents the pinnacle of mankind's ascent from the depths. These textual homologies are in direct correspondence with G. B. Shaw's earlier vindication of the overman. In his preface to *Major Barbara* (1907), Shaw tellingly disowns 'the despotism of a single Napoleonic Superman' (13). Instead, he sees

sense in Nietzsche's promotion of the overman as 'the modern objection to Christianity', the latter being 'a pernicious slave morality' (Shaw, *Barbara* 13). In *The World of William Clissold* (1926), Wells further registers the contemporary perceptions of Nietzsche's ideas:

> Neither Nietzsche's Overman nor Shaw's Superman was really to be thought of as an individual person. Both were plainly the race development, the whole race in progress. But writers with the journalistic instinct to capture got hold of these ideas and cheapened them irremediably, and the popular interpretation of these phrases, the Overman and the Superman, had come to be not a communion of saints but an entirely ridiculous individual figure, a swagger, a provocative mingling of Napoleon Bonaparte, Antinous, and the Admirable Crichton (93-4).

Just as William Clissold reacts against a denigration of the allegedly useful concept of the overman, Wells apparently holds Nietzsche in reasonably high esteem. In a letter of 21 February 1922, urging the editors of several literary journals to publish a complete edition of Leo Tolstoy's works in English, Wells commends Nietzsche, alongside Richard Wagner and Henrik Ibsen, as 'three giants': without them 'the XIX century bookshelf of our national libraries' would have been incomplete (*Correspondence* 97).

However, Wells's paramount acknowledgement of Nietzsche and his philosophy as a break-through in conceptualizing mankind's progress takes exception to the principles of morality exercised by the Utopians. In *Men Like Gods*, the conception of the Utopian double is interlaced not only with overhuman qualities, but also with responsibility. Thus, Crystal points Barnstaple's attention to the existence of latent frustrations and agonies that the Utopians have learnt to muster: 'There is plenty of spite and vanity in every Utopian soul. But people speak very plainly and criticism is very searching and free. So that we learn to search our motives before we praise or question' (383). The practice of enquiry into one's own motives sets a universal moral benchmark which steers the will towards perfecting individuality. Furthermore, in *The Shape of Things to Come*, Wells defines individuality as 'a responsible part of a species. It has become an experiment in feeling, knowing, making and response' (423). This definition shapes the Utopian double, enabling a complete change of sensibilities and mediating an antidote to those irresponsible individuals who, in retrospect, hampered the rise of the World State. Undergirded by the discourse of responsibility, the Utopian double's individuality outgrows the predominantly overhuman implications. At the same time,

this version of individualism seems to be somewhat uniform and bland; the Utopians' characterless light-heartedness is endorsed with a 'broad' and 'pleasant' smile typical of Urthred, Cedar and Sungold (*MLG* 242, 319, 389). Moreover, the demise of Serpentine and Cedar in the battle with the Earthlings, which in essence means the loss of two highly qualified scientists, is not duly recalled or remembered. This attitude not only confirms the Utopians' understanding of death, which is never to be bemoaned, but it also implies the ordinariness of each allegedly unique Utopian who can so remorselessly be dispensed with.[27] If 'men like gods' are conceived of as individuals whose character manifests itself in their collective work, how are they different from the crowd?

In Wells's interwar utopias, the crowd stands in conceptual opposition to the Utopian double. While conversing with Crystal in *Men Like Gods*, Barnstaple recollects images from 'the world of the Crowd, the world of that detestable crawling mass of un-featured, infected human beings' (385). Crystal in turn assures Barnstaple that '[t]here are no more Crowds in Utopia. Crowds and the crowd-mind have gone for ever' (385). Having witnessed the irrational and barely controllable behaviour of crowds, Barnstaple associates them with mass gatherings and celebrations, like sport, war demonstrations, coronations, and public funerals. The protagonist's critical assessment of the crowd phenomenon is redolent of the social trends in England's national life in the early twentieth century. According to H. Cunningham, changes in the social dynamic became acutely visible with the growing circulation of newspapers and a notable increase in the popularity of football matches, seaside resorts and admissions to the cinema (311-14). On all such occasions, the number of consumers had risen in geometric progression by 1939. Earlier on, Gustave Le Bon, one of the first critics of the crowd, connected the pervasiveness of crowds in his time to the enfranchisement of the working classes and exhorted that '[t]he age we are about to enter will in truth be the era of crowds' (14). Since Utopia has distanced

[27] In the 'Memorandum' that prefaces *Things to Come: A Film Story Based on the Material Contained in His History of the Future The Shape of Things to Come* (1935), Wells stipulates that '[m]en will not be reduced to servitude and uniformity, they will be released to freedom and variety. [...] The workers to be shown are individualized workers doing responsible cooperative team work. And *work will be unobtrusive* in the coming civilization' (13-14). In a commentary on Wells's 'Memorandum', Laura Marcus observes that 'while Wells may have insisted [...] on the individuality of the workers, in the representations of the machine age and the technological utopia, in the final parts of the film the human beings almost disappear from view' (67).

itself, both temporally and mentally, from the era to which Le Bon referred, the crowd phenomenon re-emerges solely on cinematographic film, designated in *Men Like Gods* for educational purposes.

In *The Shape of Things to Come*, the crowd and the crowd-mind figure in tandem with the growth of the World State. Wells follows gradual transformations in the make-up of crowds, which initially acquire a military element, then become ‘a medley of uniforms’ (50), and finally develop ‘candid interested faces’ (188). Despite this somewhat favourable improvement to the characteristics of crowds, Wells disparages the group sentiment that unites them; that is, crowds may act, when terror- or panic-stricken, ‘like madmen, all formations and distinctions lost’ (65). Apart from this, Wells registers a pseudo-democratic malaise of the period, which presupposes the treatment of the electorate as a mere crowd of ‘prejudiced voters’ holding manipulated opinions (116). Most importantly, in the context of 1930s Europe, Wells suggestively comments on the propensity of crowds to form an alliance with dictators who offer an ‘imaginative refuge [...] from hard and competent aristocracy’ (333). As a historical precedent of a dictatorship hailed by the masses, Wells cites Stalin, who had come to imagine that ‘men could not do without him’ (333). But in reality, as Wells records in his autobiography, Stalin was ‘a despot without vices, a jealous monopolizer of power’ (*EA* 800). After falling into the dictators’ iron grip, crowds may viciously rule against individuality. On this note, Wells’s critique of the crowd phenomenon resonates with José Ortega y Gasset’s condemnation of the masses as a threat to the order of civilization. In *The Revolt of the Masses* (1930), Ortega, to whom Wells dedicated *The Shape of Things to Come*, voiced serious concern about the qualities of the average man that result from the levelling of incomes, culture, social classes and sexes. Ortega further asserted that the masses were capable of ruling through the state, whose power might become embodied in a dictatorship erasing ‘everything eminent’ (173). In an attempt to prevent crowds from gaining power, Wells eventually restricts their presence to pictorial depictions in the Modern State, which is a practice similar to preserving their images on cinematographic film in Utopia. In *The Shape of Things to Come*, the narrator observes: ‘The notebooks [...] contain sketches of various members of the Council and some brilliant impressions of crowd effects in the main pavilion’ (*STC*

371). The aforesaid notebooks happen to belong to the local artist and poet Theotocopulos, who stands out as a non-conformist and is therefore extremely individualistic.

This latter connection of dissidence and individualism creates a palpable tension between Wells's disavowal of the crowd as a mainstay of irrational behaviour and its arguable validity for questioning authority. Theotocopulos's dissenting nature is given a socio-political prominence in the script of *Things to Come* (1935), as he continues to challenge the progress that incessantly limits human freedom and precludes the joys of living in the here and now: 'Is man *never* to rest, never to be free? A time will come when they will want more cannon fodder for their Space Guns [...]. Make an end to Progress now. [...] Between the dark past of history and the incalculable future let us snatch today – and *live*' (*TC* 122). But this conflicting campaign, charged with Luddite overtones, is later presented as a platform for the haphazard activity of the crowd: 'The crowd hesitates. [...] re-entering the city, in a straggling aimless manner, and pausing ever and again to stare at the sky' (140). In these scenes, the crowd emerges as a de-individualized riposte to the social order. Followed by a featureless mob, Theotocopulos contests the major scientific enterprise of space exploration with his reactionary attitudes. For this reason, it is not so much his dictatorial powers of mass manipulation that constitute Theotocopulos's revolting individuality, but his natural desires 'to wander freely above the mountains and clouds, to go whither he liked at his own sweet will, unhampered by any thought of immediate "service" [...]' (*STC* 363). Notably, in *The Shape of Things to Come*, Wells mentions the protagonist's 'anarchistic soul' in one breath with the latter's objections to state intervention into 'private flying, the difficulties in finding scope for his genius, and the general want of beauty and graciousness in life' (363). Indeed, Theotocopulos is shown to be atavistically disposed to a bucolic past. His disposition is made to contrast unfavourably with the Utopian type of cooperative individualism, corrected by responsibility.

However, the presence of crowds as occasions for mass mobilization suggests that Wells's investment in the triumph of scientific progress is not absolute, which reaffirms an underlying connection between Utopian individualism and the crowd. This link can be expounded by contemporary discussions of the national character,

which manifests itself in the crowd phenomenon. In the interwar years, the social situations, which tended to assemble crowds, permitted people to find ‘their identities both individually and collectively’ in activities outside religion (Cunningham 339). Besides, Gary Cross and John Walton emphasize, in their book on the geographies of pleasure, that the mind-set of crowds ‘reflects less the refinement and manipulation of the masses, than the triumph of particular strands of middle-class and “respectable” popular culture’ (256). In this light, considering that a dominant ‘respectable’ culture in Wells’s utopias is represented by technical and scientific elites, the crowd mind is a necessary extension of the Utopian double. Therefore the revolt of the crowd against technological progress indicates a deep uncertainty which can equally, if covertly, beset the elites. Much as Cabal unequivocally opts for ‘conquest after conquest, to the stars’, when the crowd is unable to abort the launch of a space gun in *Things to Come* (141), he never orders Theotocopulos to be suppressed, no matter how outspoken the latter’s castigation of progress sounds. So long as the dissenters, such as Lychnis and Theotocopulos, are allowed to critique their respective societies, the crowd provides additional, albeit regressive, opportunities for free discussion. The fact that the crowd is brought back to life on film in *Men Like Gods* and in Theotocopulos’s notebooks in *The Shape of Things to Come*, to say nothing of its active role in *Things to Come*, closely follows a contemporary England of ever changing susceptibilities which Wells proposes to acknowledge and re-educate.

Conclusion

The conception of the Utopian double traverses Wells’s long-term project of bettering humanity by social and biological means, and by balancing out challenges to individuality. Immersed in a properly managed and fully accessible system of education, the Utopian double’s character is fostered in the tradition of fairness which springs from the nationally conscious emphasis on fair play as an active strategy in the Englishman’s life. Alongside eugenics, the overhuman qualities of the Utopian double’s physique and character equally signal Wells’s steady interest in revitalizing the nation (and humanity at large). Having rejected laissez-faire, Wells invests individualism in the functional aspect of a progress-oriented World State. In

depicting potential opposition to progress, he nevertheless designates the crowd as both a dissenting agency and a critical corrective to Utopian individualism. This ambivalence suggests Wells's underlying uncertainty about the forms in which residual attachments to England may be allowed to survive in a rational World State.

Even though the Utopian double is devised to jettison nationality as narrow and lacking in foresight, Wells's textual investment in fairness and openness to dissenting predispositions coalesces with some of the dominant nationally conscious discourses. Like the Utopian double, this ongoing coalescence is moored in the structure of *A Modern Utopia*, whose English narrator remarks prior to encountering his future self: 'That I have come to Utopia is the lesser thing now; the greater is that I have come to meet myself' (229). Wells's sustained attempts to furnish the Utopian double with a recognizable profile reveal a continuing, yet expressly uneasy, centrality of England to the emergence of a World State. This uneasiness acquires distinct valences in Huxley's version of England, on which the next chapter focuses.

Chapter Three.
Aldous Huxley's Alien England

3.1. Town and Country

Introduction

In dealing with Aldous Huxley's vision of a World State, one countenances the difficulty of persistent ambivalences. This peculiarity, especially evident in *Brave New World* (1932), is determined by the fact that Huxley hardly allows any direct reaffirmation of contemporary England and its condition. Where Benson's and Wells's projects of world unity are linked with England by means of their protagonists' memory and movement in time, Huxley produces an alien England which is markedly distorted by the writer's satirical detachment. Not only does Huxley's dystopia disallow transitions between various temporal dimensions, but it also disables most of the memorial re-invocations of England, on the characters' part. This largely dystopic World State emerges as a grotesque product of globalization, enshrining, as Jerome Meckier has potently argued, a wide range of international influences in its citizens' proper names (*Novelist* 185).[28] In whatever remains of England within the functional region of Western Europe, a list of around 10,000 appellations (*BNW* 42), ranging from Lenin to Mussolini, reinforces the extent to which England has become dissolved in a World State.

Alongside this irreversibly globalizing invasion of England, *Brave New World* delivers a strong sense of English topographies. That English town and country lie at the heart of Huxley's imaginative concerns can be supported by highly recognizable and suggestive place names. The novel opens and is set, for the most part, in London. Outside the radius of Central London, mention is made of Shepherd's Bush, Notting Hill, Stoke Poges, Slough, Chelsea. Further afield one finds Exmoor, Torquay, Eton, Canterbury, Surrey, Portsmouth. Significantly, with the exception of golf courses at St. Andrews (*BNW* 87), the novel does not record other British locations outside England's borders. The final episodes of *Brave New*

[28] A full account of Huxley's use of onomastic satire is offered in Meckier's *Aldous Huxley: Modern Satirical Novelist of Ideas: A Collection of Essays* (2006).

World focus on Surrey, Huxley's own home county, whose topography retains poetic vernacular qualities: Godalming, Guildford, Milford, Witley, Worplesden, Puttenham, Elstead, the Hog's Back, Hindhead (213).

The fact that Huxley supplies the World State with a distinctively English prominence resonates with an earlier construction of England's 'South Country' offered in the poetry of Edward Thomas. Susceptible to the scarring effects of industry, suburbanization, and war on landscape, Thomas constructs England as a perennial, yet elusive, presence which asserts itself through naming. Thomas's 'Lob' (1915) summons a spirit whose knack for giving names inaugurates him as the author and poet of England's quaint realities:

> He has been in England as long as dove and daw,
> Calling the wild cherry tree the merry tree,
> The rose campion Bridget-in-her-bravery;
> And in a tender mood he, as I guess,
> Christened one flower Love-in-idleness,
> And while he walked from Exeter to Leeds
> One April called all cuckoo-flowers Milkmaids (Thomas 54).

The profound emotional attachment to England that traverses 'Lob' comes in for Huxley's praise. In the collection of essays *On the Margin* (1923), Huxley points to Thomas's remarkable ability to capture 'his English countryside and the character of its people' with the utmost precision (154). As late as *Texts and Pretexts: An Anthology with Commentaries* (1932), Huxley, who remains fascinated with this robust rendering of England, turns to 'Lob' afresh, in order to highlight the country's growing evasiveness (161). In his study of England's literary landscapes, Roger Ebbatson observes that 'Thomas's poems characteristically set up the beloved South Country not only as a utopia, but also as [...] an imaginary place [...]' (165). Along these lines, the prominence of English topographies in *Brave New World* can be seen to match Thomas's compensatory projections of England, threatened by modern developments. In Huxley's dystopia, modernity takes the shape of a World State which inscribes itself, most unscrupulously, on the surviving English topographies, both urban and rural.

This section explores the distorted embodiment of English town and country, which Huxley presents as integral constituencies of the World State. The present argument is that, through the satirical, and therefore alienating, depiction of England, *Brave New World* intensifies, rather than disowns, an ascertainable resistance to the

globalizing import of the World State. Aside from the urban reconfigurations of architecture and institutions, the novel also propels a romantic aspect of the English countryside, which has been disfigured by the World State's invasion of England. Drawing on the novel's contemporary contexts, this section seeks to disentangle Huxley's satirical detachment from his genuine, albeit oblique, engagement with England.

1. Future London: Architecture and Institutional Framework

Urban England is levered into immediate visibility in the initial paragraph of *Brave New World*: 'A squat grey building of only thirty-four stories. Over the main entrance the words, Central London Hatchery and Conditioning Centre, and, in a shield, the World State's motto, Community, Identity, Stability' (15). The novel's opening lines put forward two discernible aspects of Central London: the World State's high-rise tendencies in architecture and its newly devised institutional framework. The highly mechanized operations of test-tube decanting and psychological conditioning, with which the thirty-four stories are furnished, create a picture of a stringently regulated society. Being the symbol of social organization, the conditioning centre's multi-storied tower invokes a historical homology with modern architectural designs which were felt to be 'un-English' in the 1920s and 1930s. One such example of an alien influence includes Le Corbusier's seminal books *Towards an Architecture* (*Vers une architecture*, 1923) and *The Cities of Tomorrow* (*Urbanisme*, 1925), which offered the strongest designing impulses and garnered varying responses from British intellectuals. Thus, Frederick Etchells, the first translator of Le Corbusier into English, pitted the innovative forms of town and country planning against what he deemed to be the rather preposterous advocacy of traditional England:

> It is little use bleating about the defacement of the English countryside or the spoiling of London, unless you have something better to offer than gentlemanly *pastiches;* nor will you solve the problem of the new arterial roads and of our villages by erecting sham Elizabethan petrol-filling stations. The problem is far too serious for absurdities of this kind, and surely a rational spirit of adventure should excite us to the search for an adequate solution (48).

The Cities of Tomorrow received quite a favourable evaluation from Evelyn Waugh. But, unlike Herbert Read, who had especially welcomed the efficiency and freedom of Le Corbusier's architecture (85), Waugh checked his enthusiasm with reservations

about its aesthetic effects, 'when the patina of the concrete has weathered and the sharp angles have softened [...]' (74). Indeed, the aesthetics of the 'squat grey building', with which *Brave New World* begins, may be indicative of Huxley's similar concern, as the novel gives a peculiar spin to the abundant use of concrete. Observed from the air, London acquires unexpected parameters: 'The huge table-topped buildings were no more, in a few seconds, than a bed of geometrical mushrooms sprouting from the green of park and garden. In the midst of them, thin-stalked, a taller, slenderer fungus, the Charing-T Tower lifted towards the sky a disk of shining concrete' (*BNW* 65). Equipped with take-off platforms, London's cityscape comes across as Huxley's satirical comment on Le Corbusier's admiration for machinery, wherein a house is a 'machine for living in' (Huxley, *MN* 217).

In 'The New Romanticism' (1931), Huxley places Le Corbusier, somewhat unexpectedly, in the company of Henry Ford and Vladimir Lenin. Representing the antagonistic systems of capitalism and communism, these two men are equalled to Le Corbusier on the grounds of their common materialistic outlook, which is deemed to be as one-sided as the romantics' insistence on 'the primary facts of men's spiritual experiences' (*MN* 215). Exposing the materialists' exaggerated sense of machinery and organization over 'the soul and the individual' (*MN* 220), Huxley does not nonetheless disavow matter and society: 'I would not choose either of the romanticisms, I would vote for the adoption of a middle course between them' (*MN* 220). Huxley's allegiance to a golden mean between the two contrasting world-views fits into the narrower frame of his tastes in English architecture. In the essay 'Christopher Wren' (1923), he acknowledges this architect's ability to merge productively classical principles with a native tradition. Wren's 'sober restraint', as viewed by Huxley, stands out against the extremes of baroque theatricality and mechanistic imitations of art. Huxley believes Wren to be a most essentially English artist, not only because of his gentlemanly style, but thanks to 'the golden mean of reasonableness and decency', which he preached in stone (*OM* 183). At the same time, a further projection of Wren's desired impact on twentieth-century architects does not readily imply Huxley's nostalgia for the past. An attempt to rebuild London according to Wren's grandiose design has been travestied in Huxley's second novel *Antic Hay* (1923), which satirizes projects governed by either wishful thinking or the

negation of art. Therefore it is the one-sidedness, the mechanistically skewed character of Le Corbusier's architecture that renders itself dystopic in *Brave New World*. It comes as a barely surprising fact that future London, which has hitherto preserved the nominal residues of some of its historical landmarks, contains no St. Paul's Cathedral, earlier hailed by Huxley as 'a monument of temperance and chastity' (*OM* 180).

The principles of community, identity and stability, proclaimed on the high-rise hatchery and conditioning centre, challenge and transform contemporary English institutions and attractions. In erasing Buckingham Palace from London's topography, Huxley dismisses any royal presence in the World State's power structures. Another notable erasure concerns the Houses of Parliament. When Henry Foster and Lenina Crowne return from the golf courses at Stoke Poges, their helicopter lands 'on the roof of Henry's apartment house in Westminster' (*BNW* 76). The novel gives away a sole hint about a dining-hall that lies across the street from 'the newly opened Westminster Abbey Cabaret' (76). This tentative location is obviously insufficient to reduce the Palace of Westminster to a dining hall. That Parliament has sunk into oblivion in the World State is justified, with a higher degree of certainty, by Mond's remark: 'Parliament, if you know what that was [...]' (51). Furthermore, the textual eradication of this institution from London's topography follows Huxley's scepticism about parliamentary democracy, which he articulates in *Proper Studies* (1927):

> Only the most mystically fervent democrats, who regard voting as a kind of religious act, and who hear the voice of God in that of the People, can have any reason to desire to perpetuate a system whereby confidence tricksters, rich men, and quacks may be given power by the votes of an electorate composed in a great part of mental Peter Pans, whose childishness renders them peculiarly susceptible to the blandishments of demagogues and the tirelessly repeated suggestions of the rich men's newspapers (163).

In diagnosing the current condition of parliamentary democracy, Huxley voices serious doubts about the electorate, politicians and the media. Similar doubts inform Huxley's other writings. In *Antic Hay*, Mr Bojanus denies the value of political liberty, reputedly coveted by common people: 'Political liberty's a swindle because a man doesn't spend his time being political. He spends it sleeping, eating, amusing himself a little and working – mostly working' (34). Liberation from work, as Bojanus goes on to argue, lures an ordinary man into other forms of enslavement, such as permitted by entertainment and printed media. One has to be 'a man of sense,

a man of independent judgement' to be able to resist these temptations (*AH* 35). In some sense, this argument anticipates Huxley's remark questioning the practical applications of liberty. In 'Sight-Seeing in Alien Englands' (1931), he poses a rhetorical question: 'We can therefore be absolutely certain that the minds of machine-tenders are not occupied with cosmical or cultural matters. How then do they employ their freedom?' (76). Here, as in *Antic Hay*, Huxley imputes people's ability to make use of liberty to their social distinctions, which are strongly accentuated in *Brave New World* and further explored in section 3.3.[29]

While liberal democracy is central to Huxley's elitist reservations about the electorate, 'the Mother of Parliaments' comes under his scrutiny as a largely boring anachronism. In 'Greater and Lesser London' (1931), Huxley records his impressions of a debate on the national economy which he observed from the Strangers' Gallery at Westminster. Instead of a historic discussion, he evidences a 'prep-school scolding-match' carried out 'in the great parliamentary tradition' (Huxley, 'London' 90). Feeling in the end uninspired by the inept performance of the 'Grand Old Men', Huxley proposes to 'lose the flower of both Houses of Parliament. Britannia would drop a tear; but I fancy she would have a pretty deep sigh of relief' ('London' 93). The stagnation of Britain's political balance, which became prominent after the 1931 Parliamentary election, may have given Huxley an additional impulse for reconsidering the effectiveness of liberal democracy. Contrary to conventional British politics, the election did not yield what Keith Robbins describes as 'a government of one colour being confronted by an opposition of another' (*Britain* 204). Instead, the national vote legitimized a 'National' coalition government. Historians share a general consensus in linking such a political settlement to the economic crisis, on which the previous Labour government had been unable to deliver (Glynn and Oxborrow 184; Robbins, *Britain* 203; Coupland

[29] In addition to what critics describe as Huxley's initial 'contempt for the masses' (Bradshaw and Sexton xi), one also finds mordant accounts of the intimidating expansion of America's falsified values. In his travel book *Jesting Pilate* (1926) and collection *Do What You Will* (1929), Huxley points out the ways in which excessive emphases on industrial efficiency come to pervert the notion of liberty by creating a social system in which 'not only work, but also leisure has been mechanized' (*DWYW* 225). These disturbing tendencies are ironically summarized in Huxley's third novel *Those Barren Leaves* (1925), where Chelifer naïvely envisages a consolidation of the world as 'one vast American-speaking tribe, composed of innumerable individuals, all thinking and acting in exactly the same way, like the characters in a novel by Sinclair Lewis' (314). Even though Chelifer takes this speculation to be 'most pleasing', it brings to mind Lewis's scathing caricatures of conformity and social malaise, depicted in his satirical fictions *Main Street* (1920) and *Babbitt* (1922).

318). In the wider context of 1930s Europe, where France, to say nothing of Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia, were in the vanguard of unprecedented institutional and constitutional revisions, Huxley's concern about economic stability begs a further comment. In a discussion of the origins of dystopia, Gregory Claeys traces Huxley's reactions not primarily to materialism and consumerism, or even the eugenic state, but to 'the threads which connect America with the Germany of Hitler and the Russia of Stalin, the human willingness to renounce a more diverse life in favour of certainty and stability [...]' ('Origins' 116). In this light, Britain's political situation, with a 'National' government in power, could be felt to offer an occasion on which the electorate readily sacrificed liberal democracy to a more economically satisfying outlook. In *Brave New World*, Mustapha Mond, the mastermind of a stable World State, is heard to repudiate 'something called liberalism' (*BNW* 51), because it has become inefficient. It has failed to provide social and economic stability, allegedly cherished by the masses.

Unlike the Houses of Parliament, Whitehall is preserved in the World State as 'the World Controller's Office' (130). In contrast to the obsolete parliamentarianism, the secure endurance of Whitehall tenuously ties in with what Huxley promotes as 'a ruling aristocracy of mind' (*PS* 163). This concept bears the signs of several influences. First, the segregation of castes is linked to H. L. Mencken's idea of intellectual hierarchy. As America's adamant critic, Mencken quickened, according to David Bradshaw, Huxley's anxiety about 'the advancing hordes of democracy' (*Hidden Huxley* 15). Second, in the words of Joanne Woiak, Huxley espoused Wells's system of scientifically trained elites, known as an 'open conspiracy' and furnishing 'a serious alternative to democracy [...]' (171). Third, Huxley also benefited from his involvement with Political and Economic Planning (PEP), a private pressure group. Judging by Julian Huxley's 'If I Were Dictator' (1934), one of PEP's publications, this movement was acutely alert to questions of national renewal. Julian Huxley, for one, opted for scientific humanism that would create a 'balanced community' of different classes of people: 'I do not want a nation of shopkeepers, nor one of rentiers, nor yet one of primary producers [...]' (19). Maintaining that all these contemporary influences inflected Aldous Huxley's active, albeit short-lived, participation in national planning, Bradshaw remarks that *Brave*

New World 'may be seen as a tentative, paradoxical expression of his [Huxley's] fervent interest in the planned state in the early 1930s' ('Slump' 157).

The form of socio-economic planning, which is endorsed in *Brave New World*, impregnates Whitehall with quasi-authoritarian qualities. Taking up Britain's governmental headquarters, Mond towers above the masses of completely disenfranchised pleasure-seekers. 'Poor little children!' he suggestively exclaims at the close of his first appearance in the novel (*BNW* 61). Indeed, the Brave-New-Worlders are so deeply engrossed in their happy stability that they barely know what they are doing. The World Controller enjoys, on the contrary, a compensatory degree of freedom: '[A]s I make the laws here, I can also break them' (193). As Mond promotes an eradication of 'a long time-interval between the consciousness of a desire and its fulfilment' (50), he ensures that his subjects' development is locked in the immediacy of the present moment. In rebranding London's major clock from Big Ben into Big Henry, the novel underscores the mechanized forms of time measurement used for the purposes of enhancing labour efficiency and reinforcing the routineness of daily activity.[30] Robert Baker further explains that this type of stability 'is attributable to a paralysis of historical process that extends to the temporal experience of the individual citizen [...]. Neither past nor future has meaning' (*History* 97). This absolute stress on stability provides additional insight into the high-rise architecture of Mond's London, where the tallest buildings, with the exception of a 'Singery' on Ludgate Hill, reach a maximum of sixty stories (*BNW* 68, 177). Sixty is also the age at which most people are destined to die in the World State (180); thereafter their deceased bodies are cremated, 'going up in a squirt of hot gas' (76). This planned upward movement may never deviate from its finality, just as the gap between a desire and its fulfilment never extends in time, never becomes continuous with past and future. Mond justifies his theory of the 'stablest equilibrium in history' (200) by referring back to the 'unspectacular' periods of disease, poverty

[30] The pervasiveness of mechanized time measurement in Huxley's World State is redolent of a wider contemporary dislike of clockwork in the novels of D. H. Lawrence, Virginia Woolf, and Joseph Conrad. In Randall Stevenson's estimation, 'hostility to the clock, within modernist texts, is matched by their authors' reluctance to rely on chronological sequence as the basis of their construction' (90). With the exception of the two instances of contrapuntal dialogue (Chapters 3 and 11) and the memorial exposition of the Savage's life (Chapter 8), *Brave New World* relies almost exclusively on sequential narrative chronology. The novel's largely traditional form enhances the fixed condition of society, where characters are supposed to 'remain constant throughout a whole life' (*BNW* 60).

and uncertainty. He is also quite clear about the historically ascertainable origins of his power, rooted in the periods of unplanned living: 'People were ready to have even their appetites controlled then. Anything for a quiet life. We've gone on controlling ever since. [...] Happiness has got to be paid for' (201). Based at Whitehall, Mustapha Mond derives his unchallenged authority not simply from his governmental seat, but from his subjects' aspirations for stability. In construing stability as the outcome of planning, the World State imbues Whitehall, not Westminster, with the ability to act unscrupulously, in order to achieve the highest levels of socio-economic efficiency.

In addition to Whitehall, London's Fleet Street figures in *Brave New World* as a site from which the World State is governed. As Mond stipulates that 'government's an affair of sitting, not hitting' (*BNW* 54), he upholds 'slower but infinitely surer methods', primarily associated with printed media:

> The various Bureaux of Propaganda and the College of Emotional Engineering were housed in a single sixty-story building in Fleet Street. In the basement and on the lower floors were the presses and offices of the three great London newspapers – *The Hourly Radio,* an upper caste sheet, the pale-green *Gamma Gazette,* and, on khaki paper and in words exclusively of one syllable, *The Delta Mirror* (68-9).

Whereas the names of the above newspapers parallel some of their contemporary counterparts and reinforce the idea of class-specific reading practices, the basement and lower-ground locations of the printing presses suggest the media's subordination to conditioning and propaganda. In this sense, the novel capitalizes on the reputation of Fleet Street as home to the British national press, which acquired a notorious profile of a propaganda machine in the early twentieth century. As Peter Buitenhuis explains, the contentious alliance between British printed media and government-sponsored propaganda was forged by the need not only to engender national uplift, but also to secure the USA's involvement in the First World War (xvii). In addition to mobilizing the most eminent British writers of the time to produce propagandist outputs, this need allowed the promotion of media barons, such as Northcliffe and Beaverbrook, to various governmental offices. This modern precedent, which united a governmental agenda with the literary imagination and the power of the press, is resonantly enacted in Huxley's future London. Just as Helmholz Watson, the World State's outstanding rhymer, churns out hypnopaedic proverbs that serve as precepts

of emotional engineering, the printing presses in Fleet Street are presented as being fundamental to the production of propaganda. They both act on Whitehall's orders.

Huxley's imaginative use of war-time propaganda provides a mediated response to what constitutes an efficient system of governance. When flying above London suburbs, Henry Foster sights 'the majestic buildings of the Slough Crematorium', which elicits his exclamation: 'Now they recover over ninety-eight per cent of it. More than a kilo and a half per adult corpse. Which makes the best part of four hundred tons of phosphorus every year from England alone' (*BNW* 75). Making dead bodies 'socially useful' certainly corresponds to the World State's ideology, in which human life has solely economic value. Meanwhile, both the fact and purpose of cremation bear a disturbing resemblance to the atrocity stories about 'Corpse Exploitation Establishments' in Germany. Thus, on 17 April 1917, *The Times* reported on 'Science and the Barbarian Spirit'. A separate column detailed the process of extracting fat from dead bodies and then turning it into lubricating oils; bones were said to be ground into a powder and used in pigs' food and as manure ('Germans' 5). This report, which the *Daily Mail* also circulated, was later discredited as an anti-German hoax fabricated in Britain (Taylor 65). In appropriating the homespun propaganda, *Brave New World* magnifies the roles of newspapers, regardless of their readership's class distinctions, not only in galvanizing public opinion, but also in marshalling imaginatively constructed spoofs into reality. Indeed, the World State's economic exploitation of cadavers has its roots in the English imagination. The striking similarities that traverse the descriptions of corpse treatment in war-time Germany and in the World State set up the standard of a ruthlessly pragmatic, yet efficiently governed, society.

While the interpretations of Whitehall and Fleet Street re-adapt England's institutional framework to the needs of the World State, Westminster Abbey stands out as a more problematic attraction. Despite having been converted into a cabaret, the Abbey continues to enact a ritual whose choreography follows, in a largely absurd form, conventional church liturgy. Just as incense, light and music would be normally used to sharpen religious experience, 'London's finest scent and colour organ' and 'the latest synthetic music' arouse sensations about the renewal of life in test tubes: 'Bottle of mine, it's you I've always wanted!' (*BNW* 77). Yet religion

does not constitute the major theme of this episode. Religious practices are more centrally based on Ludgate Hill, where 'an immense T shone crimson against the night, and from the mouths of twenty-four vast golden trumpets rumbled a solemn synthetic music' (79). The location of the Fordson Community Singery, with its imposing T-cross, supersedes St. Paul's Cathedral as London's main religious site. So long as Ford takes over as godhead, T, which originally stood for his T-model motor car, replaces crosses in London's cityscape. Most importantly, the country's landmark clock, Big Henry, now finds itself next to the places of Fordian worship. This imaginary remapping of London throws into relief the unique position of Westminster Abbey within the topographies of the World State. The Abbey stands in isolation from orgiastic services, and Big Henry does not chime within its walking distance. Westminster Abbey endures as a curious residue of the past which has been saved from 'the closing of museums, the blowing up of historical monuments' (56). Yet in a society where history is 'bunk', the Abbey's significance as a national symbol of continuity can only be displaced. In his essay 'On the Charms of History and the Future of the Past' (1931), Huxley notes: 'What [each generation] shall think about past and future is determined by its own immediate problems' (*MN* 139). In this respect, it is hardly striking that the couples of drugged dancers perceive themselves in the Abbey Cabaret as 'twin embryos gently rocking together on the waves of a bottled ocean of blood-surrogate' (*BNW* 78). As Huxley opposes the immediacy of the present to the organic continuity of history, Westminster Abbey emerges as essentially deformed by the celebration of artificial procreation. Just as the protagonist of Benson's *The Dawn of All* perceives the Abbey's transfiguration as an occasion for memorial rupture, the displacement of the age-long symbolism in Huxley's novel points to this landmark's significance not as a site of ritual worship, but as a storehouse of vacuous continuity.

This sub-section has pointed out the ways in which Huxley's excursions into 'alien Englands' of enfranchised machine-tenders and into the anachronism of the 'Mother of Parliaments' have engendered a World State where separate buildings in Whitehall and Fleet Street suffice in controlling the whole society. The continuing presence of government and the press in future London is legitimized by mass aspirations for happiness and certainty, modified into stern fixations on the present.

Much as London's cityscape reinforces a newly avowed allegiance to stability, it notably fails to acknowledge its own temporal continuity. This major disruption is attested by the novel's grotesque caricature of Westminster Abbey, which, unlike Whitehall and Fleet Street, objects to being accommodated into the ritual stability of the World State.

2. Rural England and Beyond

The rural aspects of the World State are given only a few cursory glances in *Brave New World*; these include satellite suburbs surrounding London, a reference to the Lake District as Bernard Marx's potential holiday destination, an open seascape, and the Wey valley near Godalming, where the novel's last chapter unveils. These locations can be read as Huxley's engaged response to contemporary preservationist imperatives. One such project was initiated by Patrick Abercrombie, an English architect and town planner, in *The Preservation of Rural England* (1926). Abercrombie worried about a sudden and thorough change in the undulating, and therefore appealing, English countryside; he therefore opposed uncontrolled suburbanization and advocated a planned protection of pictorial landscapes (19). On a similar note, in 'Sight-Seeing in Alien Englands', Huxley castigates the lack of planning in English suburbia and admonishes that '[i]t will take long years and much expensive surgery to restore this densely populated country to health and beauty' (66). Following this line of critique, Huxley welcomes the creation of satellite towns as independent entities of 40,000 people, with theatres, libraries, and schools ('Sight-Seeing' 66). Such a scheme is explicitly derivative from Ebenezer Howard's specification of a Garden City, which encloses 'a garden in the centre, surrounded by a green belt [...]' (Miles 63-4). In Chapter 4, *Brave New World* supplies a bird's-eye view of how the Garden City has been realized, when Henry and Lenina are 'flying over the six kilometre zone of parkland that separated Central London from its first ring of satellite suburbs' (66). Seen from the air, London's suburbs leave an impression of uniform housing, caste segregation and industrial specialization. 'Forests of Centrifugal Bumble-puppy towers' alternate with sporting facilities which are intended for upper-class recreation and lower-class brainwashing: while hundreds of Betas play tennis, thousands of Deltas are engaged in a 'community sing'.

Substantial territory outside the city is allocated to film and television industries, both essential to manufacturing propaganda: 'The buildings of the Hounslow Feely Studio covered seven and a half hectares. [...] At Brentford the Television Corporation's factory was like a small town' (66). A high concentration of economically auspicious and caste-specific enterprise in the satellite suburbs travesties the original concept of the Garden City as a self-managing democratic unit. Moreover, this mislaid arrangement bespeaks the project's ultimate failure to contain urban growth within the town-and-country duality, which underpinned the residual discourses of the English pastoral tradition, particularly evident in the collections of Georgian poetry (*Writing* 194). Not only did these redemptive discourses continue to valorise rural England throughout the interwar years, but they also provisionally transpire in Huxley's protective attitudes towards the countryside.

The novel's aerial perspective on London's satellite areas additionally reveals that the 'green was maggoty with fore-shortened life' (*BNW* 66). Given the prevalence of entertainment industries around future London, this remark can barely imply a poor state of ecology. Rather, the decaying quality of the green is indicative of abandonment, whose cause can be traced back to the World State's communications and conditioning practices. The novel's third chapter opens with an almost idyllic depiction of nature: 'The roses were in bloom, two nightingales soliloquized in the boscage, a cuckoo was just going out of tune among the lime trees. The air was drowsy with the murmur of bees and helicopters' (37). Despite being intruded by the sound of modern machineries, nature continues to exist, admittedly negligent of the human impact. During his first appearance in the novel, Mond stresses the exclusively economic value of utilizing the countryside: 'Primroses and landscapes [...] have one grave defect: they are gratuitous. A love of nature keeps no factories busy' (31). For this reason, every Brave-New-Worlder is programmed to seek recourse to nature not for gratuitous pleasures, but in order to consume transport and sports gear. The decay of London's parkland results from a psychologically engineered revulsion towards nature among the citizens of the future. This radical repression of a potentially destructive love of the country echoes Huxley's own anxiety about mass access to England's landscapes. In 'Notes on Liberty' (1931), he exhorts: 'Nations that love the country destroy what they adore.

Witness the two thousand square miles of London's suburbs. Beauty spots accessible to whole populations cease to be beauty-spots and become Blackpools' (*MN* 129). With a view to combating this unholy popular trend, Huxley proposes not only to breed and reduce the amount of population, but also to restrict certain experiences, like the countryside, to be used by a tiny minority. More specifically, Huxley's proposal can be felt to oppose the public right of way, which was established by the 1835 Highway Act, and gained unprecedented dimensions in the 1920s. In David Matless's terms, the national landscape became at the time, 'the occasion for an intellectual, spiritual and physical citizenship' (73). In a situation when the countryside bears the brunt of both suburban expansion and popular exploration, *Brave New World* radically forbids the use of nature, whereby even the upper-caste individuals are permitted a rather limited rapport with the country.

Whereas Matless's account reconstructs landscape as a contemporary medium through which the sense of belonging to a national community could be affirmed, the novel mentions the Lake District as Bernard's plausible retreat from the constraints of communal life. Feeling continually aloof both during solidarity services and from collective sports, Bernard considers flying to Cumbria. Because his upper-caste conditioning does not bar him from accessing the countryside, he probably looks to nature for a liberating personal release. In an interpretative study of *Brave New World*, Robert Baker argues that 'Bernard's choice of the Lake District, of privacy and conversation, is a political choice to the extent that it endorses what Huxley viewed as the liberal values of romantics like Shelley and Godwin' (*History* 103). Much as the above citation elucidates popular associations with the Lake District, it erroneously collapses this region into a largely distinct tradition of English Romanticism. Additionally, this citation never spells out that not all connections with nature necessarily imply radical politics, just as it fails to acknowledge the nature of Huxley's mediated response to the previous tradition. Indeed, the Lakes came to emblematize a particular strand of national culture associated with liberty and romantic sensibility, as well as man's intimate relationship with nature. However, stemming from Wordsworth's celebration of landscapes of exceptional beauty was not only the idea of creating 'a sort of national property' (qtd. in Appleton 113), but also an ensuing commercial opportunity 'to persuade town-dwellers to part with their

money on a day out in the country' (Gill 3). Huxley thus renegotiates Wordsworth's own concern about the conversion of pristine nature into a tame and visitor-friendly facility. This renegotiation can therefore be read in the broader context of early twentieth-century reactions to the ways in which romantics, such as Wordsworth, opposed mechanization. In this sense, to use Michael Whitworth's theorization of British modernism (233), Huxley's rendering of a mechanized modernity offers a reaction to a reaction. In *Brave New World*, this dual response takes on an expressly parodic valence. Even though Bernard originally proposes to Lenina to spend a few hours walking in the heather and talking in solitude, he primarily thinks of landing 'on the top of Skiddaw [...]' (*BNW* 87). Bernard's immediate expectation of an established helipad signals a certain degree of mechanization, which, having been superimposed on nature, disallows going completely off-piste. From Bernard's proposal, one justly assumes that the Lake District, recalled within the frontiers of the World State, presents a fully contained terrain wherein any interaction with the countryside must yield an economic return, and where nature subsequently obtains a somewhat defiled, counter-pastoral profile. Therefore Bernard's unfulfilled plan of a lonely afternoon in the Lakes is barely a political choice. His failed retreat may be read as a parody of how human agency disrupts gratuitous and potentially liberating contact with what romantics could only idealize as untamed nature.

Bernard's continued search for freedom from the World State becomes central in the novel's next episode. Flying across the English Channel in Lenina's company, Bernard brings his helicopter to a halt 'within a few hundred feet of the waves' (*BNW* 88). While Bernard willingly exposes his sensibilities to the flux of the sea, Lenina is 'appalled by the rushing emptiness of the night, by the black foam-flecked water heaving beneath them, by the pale face of the moon, so haggard and distracted' (88). Against the backdrop of a strengthening wind and clouded sky, Bernard declares his determination to be more 'on my own, not so completely a part of something else. Not just a cell in the social body' (89). This latter notion of freedom obviously dissents from the World State's ideology, which Lenina verbalizes: 'I am free. Free to have the most wonderful time. Everybody's happy nowadays' (89). The novel lays bare the striking contrast between the regulated stability of the community to which these characters belong and the unsettling

motion of the sea, which may never be contained or possessed. The fact that an odd minute above an open sea so thoroughly compensates Bernard for an afternoon in the Lake District testifies to the potentially fake experience, being offered within this mechanized region. Even though in the 1930s, constructions of England continued to promote the sea as a complementary asset to isolation and world-wide outreach (Noyes 164), Huxley professedly discards such speculations. In *Brave New World*, air travel has transfigured the ideas of insularity and international communication, leaving the sea outside the World State's jurisdiction. Linking the possibility of genuine experience to a restless sea, the novel challenges the meaning of an authentic England. Since the sea, unlike the compacted territory of the Lake District, cannot be easily controlled or commodified, it allows Bernard at least a brief respite from the restrictive constraints of the World State. Yet this liberating instance of seascape remains significantly singular in the novel, as Bernard never returns to witness it anew. Similarly, in Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* (1927), the sea can no longer supply the beholder with a restorative vision, after the destructive gauges of modernity have come to dominate our perceptions: '[C]ontemplation was unendurable; the mirror was broken' (146).

Set in the South Country, the novel's final chapter further problematizes the relation of rural England to the World State. The Savage's wish to be alone is precariously fulfilled in the Wey valley of Surrey, which, as a result of a few flying accidents, has been designated as a no-flight zone: 'Between Grayshott and Tongham four abandoned air-lighthouses marked the course of the old Portsmouth-to-London road. The skies above them were silent and deserted. It was over Selborne, Borden and Farnham that the helicopters now ceaselessly hummed and roared' (*BNW* 214). Despite being alert to 'a blue romantic distance' granted by the South Country, the Savage nonetheless chooses one of the ferro-concrete lighthouses as his hermitage. Additionally, the sight of distant skyscrapers engenders his transient reconciliation, as they appear to be pointing 'solemnly towards the plumbless mysteries of heaven' (215). John's momentary emotional uplift is enabled by the barely idyllic environment he comes to inhabit. Conventional markers of rural England, such as the rustic hermitage and the stately home, are expressly absent from the scene, having been superseded by abandoned lighthouses. This re-articulation of the English

landscape resonates with a 1930s idiom of finding some consolation in a damaged, fractured countryside and the litter of failing machineries. One such example includes W. H. Auden's compensatory attraction to the 'state of dereliction' (Deane 26). In the 'Letter to Lord Byron' (1936), he famously avers:

> Tramlines and slagheaps, pieces of machinery,
> That was, and still is, my ideal scenery (175).

Leavened by a sense of irony, these lines, like the rest of the poem, perpetuate a rather serious reflection on the condition of England, with whose ruined landscape Huxley's Savage has to gradually get to terms.

Antithetical to the World State's counter-pastoral mentality, John embodies a whole series of traditional attachments to nature at large and the English countryside in particular. One cannot but notice his faithful, albeit unreflective, adherence to natural economy, whose principles were originally voiced by Gilbert White, a pioneer of natural observation. In *The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne* (1789), White characteristically declared: 'Thus Nature, who is a great economist, converts the recreation of one animal to the support of another!' (17). In rehearsing the aforesaid precept of Enlightenment thought, the Savage not only finds himself surrounded by the same topographies of Hampshire and Surrey, as described by Gilbert White (Selborne, Bordon and Farnham), but he also enlists nature as the vital foundation for his independence of the outside world. Yet importantly, unlike Robinson Crusoe, another predecessor from the period of Enlightenment, John never laments his solitary state, which places his romantic aspirations in line with an ever shrinking garden space occupied by Connie and Mellors in D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928). Acutely aware of the rapid decline of traditional England, exemplified by chapels, pubs, shops, and country houses, Connie seeks redemption in her secluded life with Mellors: 'Still she would be content with this little house if only it were in a world of its own' (Lawrence, *Lover* 212). Sharing the Lawrentian 'overt quest to rediscover a bucolic idyll' (James and Tew 20), the Savage also makes a conscious attempt to expiate 'the filth of civilized life' from his seemingly idyllic habitat:

> The woods, the open stretches of heather and yellow gorse, the clumps of Scotch firs, the shining ponds with their overhanging birch trees, their water lilies, their beds of rushes – these were beautiful and, to an eye accustomed to the aridities of the American desert, astonishing. And then the solitude! Whole days passed during which he never saw a human being (*BNW* 215).

Even though, in John's perceptions, the lifeless desert renders a stark contrast to the vivacity of the Surrey landscape, their opposition communicates an underlying tension. Despite its pronouncedly defiled condition within the World State, nature is shown to retain some of the highly recognizable flora and fauna, typical of England's temperate climes. These characteristic aspects of the English countryside animate the Savage's hopes of redemption. But all such hopes will be ultimately dashed, when this personage fails to sustain his solitary existence.

In the hope of working his garden, John hastily assumes that 'flowers and a landscape were the only attractions here' (216). This assumption obviously deviates from Mond's earlier denial of the gratuitousness of nature. The Savage is unable to comprehend that the unused land he is digging lies within the World State's possessions. In this respect, the novel can be seen to evoke a seventeenth-century community of Diggers in Surrey. Inspired and led by Gerrard Winstanley, they sought 'to dig up George Hill and the waste ground thereabout and sow corn, and eat our bread together by the sweat of our brows' (Winstanley 84). It is interesting to trace the ways in which Winstanley's idea of 'waste lands' (unused barren lands, usually former crown possessions) transforms into what the Savage will realize later. Repeatedly raided by outsiders, the Diggers' community was eventually displaced, having allegedly breached the laws of land ownership. The fact that the Savage is equally displaced from his hermitage may be seen as a parodic reinstatement of the counter-pastoral capitalistic tendencies that have been current in Surrey for centuries. The novel highlights Surrey as a historic site for agricultural activities which are doomed in how they pursue to redeem a waste land.

A realization that his newly acquired land is irredeemable dawns on the Savage when his continual digging yields no result: 'After a time the vermin evidently became bored and flew away; for hours at a stretch the sky above his head was empty and, but for the larks, silent' (*BNW* 220). One is reminded, though, that John's solitude is eventually cancelled out by 'a great swarm of helicopters' heralding a whole new entertainment industry. As a result, this abandoned portion of the South Country acquires 'the Savage of Surrey' as a medial attraction which starts to give economic profit. The impossibility of solitude in the waste land inhabited by the Savage echoes T. S. Eliot's earlier admonition that

> There is not even solitude in the mountains
> But red sullen faces sneer and snarl [...] (*Waste* 74).

Recalling Christ's agony in his garden, this passage from *The Waste Land* (1922), the most strikingly counter-pastoral poem, focuses on the human and natural aridity that may only be resolved by creating 'the illusion, almost the substance, of that which is desired' (Scofield 122). In much the same way, the sterility of the Savage's garden is matched by the World State's orgiastic intrusion into his solitude, so much that even a thunder cannot release him from agony: 'Like locusts they came, hung poised, descended all around him on the heather' (*BNW* 223). Notably, both in Bernard's reference to the Lake District and in the Savage's interaction with the Wey valley, heather is used as a recurrent image suggestive of barrenness, but also of nature's regenerative energy to reclaim territory from man. In Huxley's novel, England's rural aspects may be severely truncated, yet they are never missing.

The few glimpses into the defunct countryside, offered in *Brave New World*, bear out the ways in which the advances of the World State debase the condition of rural England. In divesting the English countryside of any sustainable restorative energy, Huxley reproduces a cultural symptom that pervaded some of the contemporary writing. Quite markedly, this symptom features in *To the Lighthouse*, when Virginia Woolf, as Randall Stevenson observes, 'has to go as far as the Hebrides to find' a viable substitute for the English landscape, sullied by human activity (84). Huxley in turn shows that both Bernard and the Savage are inclined, in their own peculiar ways, towards a sensibility which is essentially inseparable from the very specific, residually English attachments to landscape. However, as neither of these characters ever turns from their respective engagements with the countryside to an internal compensatory vision, Huxley's exploitation of whatever remains of rural England strikes us as being almost exclusively parodic. Therefore the novel's more affirmative, albeit equally problematic, imperatives can be further gleaned from Helmholz Watson, a third dissenting character who is also in conflict with the World State. His vision of 'something, which is not' (*BNW* 162), revealed in what he styles as 'Rhymes on Solitude', is in direct correspondence with the 'English poetic mind', and deserves to be examined at length in the next section. A wider context of Huxley's work, though, contains a less ambivalent reaffirmation of the need of a landscape detached from the incremental globalization. This vividly romantic

desideratum acquires conceptual definition in 'Landscape Painting as a Vision-Inducing Art' (1956), where Huxley descries in pristine landscapes a 'more-than-symbolic meaning which is identical with being' (171). Huxley's visionary perceptions of nature are also centrally articulated in his last novel *Island* (1962), whose emphases on an inviolate landscape hold out the key to a consummate, if fragile, utopia. The island of Pala, marked by flowers, unfailingly provides what Bernard and the Savage seek, but can never fully validate either in a fractured country or above the sea – a visionary landscape which is 'blue, unpossessed, and open' (*Island* 94). Just as Pala privileges isolation that would protect its innocence for some time, the remaining scraps of England, highlighted in *Brave New World*, cry for an island which is decisively immune to the encroachment of the World State.

Conclusion

In redrawing England into a World State, *Brave New World* signals Huxley's oblique, but not indifferent, engagement with the questions concerning national institutions, social and cultural life, and attitudes to the national landscape. Undergirded by the vividly ascertainable English topographies, the World State builds on England's complicit entanglement with global influence. The novel's central dilemma about the planned state and national continuity is heightened, but remains largely unresolved, only viscerally pointing to a visionary possibility that lies beyond this alien version of England. Huxley may have been ambivalent, or even confused, in his views on liberal democracy, efficient government and planning. But the novel's rendering of the condition of England into the dystopia of a World State is barely ambiguous.

3.2. The Future of National Literature:
Environment, Will and Imagination

Introduction

The idea of national literature invites attention from varying perspectives. In his contribution to *Literature and the Political Imagination* (1996), Paul Gilbert distinguishes between literature as a cultural environment 'independent of and prior to any political choice', and literature informed by a national will (199). This distinction polarizes the formative factors of national literature and presents them as mutually exclusive: '[I]f a national will really *is* constitutive of nationhood then it does not need to be based on any belief in a national culture; while if national culture is constitutive then it does not require the accompaniment of a national will' (Gilbert 200). In an attempt to transcend this rigid polarity, Paul Gilbert goes on to suggest elements such as language, tradition and collective consensus as constructive forces of national literature. Ensuring communication in space and time, language acts as a social medium, while tradition guides the occurrence of recognizable motifs. Collective consensus in turn entails valorising certain literary achievements on the basis of not only a literary judgement 'as to what might exemplify national identity, but a political one as to what national identity consists in' (Gilbert 212).

With the above criteria in mind, there are valid reasons to question Huxley's *Brave New World* as a literary text immediately concerned with the condition of national culture. Indeed, set in the year A.F. 632, the novel conjures up a globalized world from which nations and nation-states have withered away. The fact that Englishness has become irrelevant in the World State is additionally signalled by the use of the adjective 'English' in two situations. Recollecting his indecision with Lenina, Bernard rationalizes her escapade with Henry Foster as appropriate, 'because she had behaved as any healthy and virtuous English girl ought to behave and not in some other, abnormal, extraordinary way' (67). Here, health and virtue imply promiscuity, a practice common in Huxley's dystopic future. The other instance, in which the word 'English' occurs, involves the Savage, after he has settled in the Surrey heath: 'Dim in the hazy English air, Hindhead and Selborne invited the eye into a blue romantic distance. But it was not alone the distance that had attracted the

Savage to his lighthouse; the near was as seductive as the far' (215). Astonished by the hazy mysteries of the English air and incapacitated by his past, John, as the previous section of this thesis has shown, fails to comprehend the residually English countryside as a barren, yet appropriated, waste land. The 'English' aspects of the unclear air and Lenina's easy virtue present a convergence which suggestively points to a used and tried England that has lost its productivity. There being no direct reaffirmation of nationality, which has been usurped by the World State, it is hard to deny that the novel problematizes England's relevance to a global future.

The recession of England as a meaningful socio-cultural, geographic and political space becomes inseparable from the character and availability of reading matter in the Fordian society. From the titles of the local newspapers one deduces that literacy is pervasive because even the lower castes constitute reading communities of the *Gamma Gazette* and the *Delta Mirror*. But, as is the case with Alphas and Betas, the lower classes pursue golf and pastimes lighter than reading, which are administered by 'the Bureaux of Propaganda by Television, by Feeling Picture, and by Synthetic Voice and Music respectively' (69). In contrast to these various channels of conditioning, the Savage, coming from the repressed backwaters of civilization, possesses a grammar and vocabulary which not only clash with the rhetoric of the World State, but also surpass it. Over fifty allusions and direct references to some sixteen works of Shakespeare that occur in *Brave New World*[31] create suggestive counterpoints to the thirteen hypnopaedic proverbs, constantly recycled in local parlance. For example, a recollection of how Prospero warns Ferdinand against breaking Miranda's 'virgin knot' illuminates John's conception of pre-marital chastity. For Lenina, who is resolute that 'every one belongs to every one else' (48), John's references to the 'sanctimonious ceremonies' of marriage, with 'full and holy rite', are beyond her ken: 'Zip, zip! Her answer was wordless. She stepped out of her bell-bottomed trousers' (172). While John has derived his saws

[31] These include *The Tempest* (128-9, 143, 144, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 185, 186, 193), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (143), *Measure for Measure* (223), *The Life and Death of King John* (204), *The Life of Timon of Athens* (172), *The Merchant of Venice* (148), 'The Phoenix and the Turtle' (164), *The Tragedy of Antony and Cleopatra* (140, 220), *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* (122, 123, 204, 210, 222, 223), *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar* (187), *The Tragedy of King Lear* (41, 174, 207, 222), *The Tragedy of Macbeth* (109, 110, 127, 195, 222), *The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice* (154, 175, 193, 194, 204, 209, 211, 220, 221, 225), *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet* (133, 158, 159, 164, 165, 194), *The Tragedy of Troilus and Cressida* (133, 171, 175, 208, 226), *Twelfth Night, or, What You Will* (176).

from self-immersion in reading, his London counterparts take their cues from sleep teaching and further education, which facilitates factual awareness rather than operable knowledge or wisdom. When visiting Eton, the Savage enquires if Shakespeare is read by the students. 'Certainly not', uttered by the confused Head Mistress, is followed by an explanation from Dr Gaffney that '[o]ur library [...] contains only books for reference. If our young people need distraction, they can get it at the feelies. We don't encourage them to indulge in any solitary amusements' (147). This blunt reply reveals the perceptions of reading as both a trivial and anti-social activity.

In addition to hypnopaedia and propaganda, this collectively knit environment is primarily sustained by the literary and political judgement of the Resident Controller for Western Europe. Mustapha Mond, unlike his laboratory of social experimentation, is well-versed in both Shakespeare and other authors. The Savage is prematurely taken aback when his comment on the music that he keeps hearing from the Synthetic Voice is returned by Mond: 'Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments will hum about my ears, and sometimes voices' (193). Excited by Mond's evocation of *The Tempest*, John ignores the treacherous implications of the scene wherein these lines occur: plotting murder, Caliban is trying to convince his audience that it is only natural to hear music and voices on his island. Nevertheless Shakespeare is consigned to oblivion for being outdated, while other select writings are relegated to Mond's 'avowed library' because they infringe on the current belief that God 'manifests himself as an absence' (*BNW* 206). The Controller refers to his literary stock as a 'whole collection of pornographic old books. God in the safe and Ford on the shelves' (203). Designating Ford as a dominant feature in the future reading experience, Mond exercises his will in creating a literature-free environment; any dissent from this arrangement is punishable by ostracism. This explains why Helmholz Watson's expulsion to the Falkland Islands directly stems from his unorthodox poem which, instead of celebrating the orgiastic unity of social being, as solidarity hymns do, points up absences and uncertainties, themes not only resonant with the old books, but also potentially harmful to conditioning. Helmholz's recital causes a predictable commotion among his students; as Bernard comments, '[i]t's flatly against all their sleep-teaching. Remember, they've had at least a quarter

of a million warnings against solitude' (163). Given the culturally sterile conditions in which Helmholz's poem appears, it may be seen as a literary accident.

However, other forces also allow a transcendence of this global society, shaped by hypnopaedia and consumerism, and by the rejection of art, pure science and religion. Undoubtedly, Helmholz's express uprush to imagine absences in a poem is uniquely his own due to the outstanding 'alpha-double-plus' power enabling him to translate his searching energy into poetry. At the same time, some other characters who are neither budding poets nor highest-caste individuals may nonetheless be capable of imagining situations absent from their lived experience or at odds with their conditioning. To be sure, Mond invites a congregation of children 'to imagine what "living with one's family" meant' (42). Where the children are not successful in this far-fetched exercise, Lenina recoils in disgust when Bernard teases her with a suggestion: 'Imagine yourself sitting there with a little baby of your own . . .' (105). The novel does not record a momentary picture which may have passed through Lenina's mind, but her indignation, even though it comes after she has seen two women with children in Malpais, is triggered by her imagination. Disparate as they are, these appeals to the imagination produce varying effects on different characters' ability to digress from received truths and knowledge. This digression in turn can open up a window into new realities, poetic or otherwise.

This section contends that, in the absence of an adequate cultural environment informed by a common will and underpinned by tradition, Huxley invests the future of national literature in the power of imagination. However, because Helmholz may never become a 'national poet' in a nationless world, one needs to assess the very foundations of his literary imagination, coalescent with the 'English poetic mind'. As its structuring principle this section deploys Paul Gilbert's theorization of national literature as a combination of environment and will, which is complemented by the notion of the national imagination, central to our argument. Placed in broader literary and cultural contexts of the late 1920s – 1930s and Huxley's own writings of the period, the following sub-sections analyse forces that arguably enjoin the survival of national literature in a World State.

1. Confining Environment: Hypnopaedia and the Savage's Shakespeare

If England and Malpais are projected as regions within a World State, they may be said to constitute a common environment in which reputedly opposed socio-cultural practices converge in the outcomes they produce on an individual and collective level. More importantly, this common environment is enabled by English, a major surviving European language, spoken both in England and by the Savage, who has acquired it from his mother Linda and his reading of Shakespeare. Owing to the crucial civilizational distinction between these two societies, hypnopaedia and Shakespeare may be incompatible as types of literariness. Indeed, hypnopaedic proverbs encapsulate the Brave New World's ideology of collective hedonism and consumerism, which indoctrinates its citizens that 'Every one belongs to every one else' (45, 48, 51); 'Every one works for every one else' (75); 'Ending is better than mending' (54, 57); 'The more stitches, the less riches' (54, 57, 112); 'Never put off till tomorrow the fun you can have today' (91). The final aim of the hypnopaedia is to guide happiness through progress: 'Everybody's happy now' (76); '[P]rogress *is* lovely, isn't it?' (96). Because in the World State reading has been limited to *My Life and Works* (1922), homologies between Henry Ford's sanguine remarks made in his book and the hypnopaedic proverbs are hardly surprising. Ford's rhetoric about 'the wonderful progress' (1), coupled with his vocal support for the existing capitalist system where '[m]ost men know they cannot get something for nothing' (8), becomes proverbial. Aside from highlighting the ultimately communal aspect of civilization ('When the individual feels, the community reels' (*BNW* 91)), the hypnopaedia also proclaims sterilization and cleanliness (104). The latter two principles are particularly redolent of what Sigmund Freud posits as the requirements of civilization. In *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930), he notes: 'Squalor of any kind seems to us incompatible with civilization, and we extend the demand for cleanliness to the human body too' (38). Freud, like Ford, is enlisted as one of the World State's ideological inspirations: 'Our Ford – or Our Freud, as, for some inscrutable reason, he chose to call himself whenever he spoke of psychological matters [...]' (*BNW* 44). While the consonant pairing of Ford and Freud sustains the internal unity of the hypnopaedia, Shakespeare's lines may appear to yield a native antidote to these foreign rationalizing influences. However, the ways in which the

Savage resorts to his 'metafunctional language' (Baker-Smith 105), derived from Shakespeare, are barely sufficient to render any meaningful opposition to civilization.

In a study of Huxley's 'novels of ideas', Olga Redina carries out a detailed analysis of a Shakespearean presence in the narrative structure of *Brave New World*, which allows her to counterpoise the hypnopaedia of future London to the Savage's cultural memory; she observes that John, who 'has tapped into (albeit unconsciously) the mystery of Shakespeare's phrases, has a more mature and independent personality than the upper-caste visitors of the Reservation. He may be less civilized, but he is more cultured' (79). Even though John's invocations of Shakespeare may be placed in opposition to the Brave-New-Worlders' cultural amnesia, his superior culture raises doubts, as there appears to be no major difference between the mechanisms of memory which he and the characters from Fordian England possess. When Bernard asks John to explain the life of the pueblo 'as far back as you can remember' (*BNW* 115), the latter embarks on quite a sequential vista of recollections. It starts with his discovery of others and their attitudes to him, progresses to his oedipal fixation on Linda and further discovery of the human condition through the reading of Shakespeare, and ends with initiation into solitude: '[B]ut it was not for pain that he sobbed; it was because he was all alone, because he had been driven out, alone, into this skeleton world of rocks and moonlight' (126). This third-person account betrays a striking resemblance to a nineteenth-century *Bildungsroman*, coherent and self-explanatory. In contrast, the reminiscences of some of the future Londoners are disjointed and fragmentary. Indeed, the Savage's father, Director of the London Hatcheries and Conditioning Centre, recalls the shock of not only losing Linda in the Reservation ('she was pneumatic, particularly pneumatic; I remember that' (93)), but also his sense of loneliness in an unknown habitat; he confesses to Bernard: 'I actually dream about it sometimes [...]. Dream of being woken up by that peal of thunder and finding her gone; dream of searching and searching for her under the trees' (94). This first-person testimony with abrupt remarks and lapses into silence accomplishes a less comprehensive but more personalized mode of narration. Widely distinct as they are in their narrative techniques, John's and the Director's accounts nonetheless deal with the same unbearable experiences of becoming

(forcefully or accidentally) outcasts amongst natural elements. Linda's memory is also set in motion by her dislocation to a new milieu – first to the pueblo, then back to London. Her 'torrent of words' (112) reveals a deep-set longing for a civilized life into which she was programmed by hypnopaedia: 'Mending's anti-social. But it's all different here. It's like living with lunatics. Everything they do is mad' (113). After she is taken to the hospital for the dying, Linda becomes enveloped in the sensations she was deprived of when living in the pueblo. Yet of all the maddening experiences of the Reservation Linda holds on to the memory of being with her lover. Television, the scent organ, and soma are shown to facilitate her compensatory voyage into 'that paradisal Malpais where she had been spending her *soma*-holiday with Popé' (182). This escapist holiday, albeit unthinkable without technological artefacts and pharmacological stimulation, exploits Linda's memory in order to implement her dream. The way Bernard remembers is equally bound up with technology. Where the Savage, in his agony of solitude, comes to terms with the movement of time through Macbeth's 'Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow' (127), Bernard realizes that time moves electronically and fetches a price. Having left the perfume tap running in his bathroom, he, '[w]ith his mind's eye, [...] saw the needle on the scent meter creeping round and round, ant-like, indefatigably' (97).

These examples of the memorial operations experienced by the members of the two societies bring into focus not so much the question of cultural memory or amnesia, but a temporality that activates these operations. John's reliance on Shakespeare in decoding the world distinguishes him from his 'English' counterparts, whose technologically assisted existence informs their experience of time. Yet none of the above memorial accounts leaves a sense of being embedded in history: just as the Savage remembers being ostracized when seen as a threat to the stability of the pueblo, so does Fordian England declare stability as its touchstone. The two societies appear to be poised in what Walter Benjamin defines as *Jetztzeit*, 'the present of the now' (261). Or, as Peter Firchow further spells out, '*Brave New World* portrays a future as well as a past which differ from the present in that they have no history' ('Wells' 277). It is not just history that is absent, with a chronology 'after Ford'; rather, it is a preponderance of socio-economic forces directly or indirectly affecting the individual that reduce history to a repeated cycle of daily

chores. Thus, Mustapha Mond makes a cursory foray into the pre-history of the World State. His references to gas attacks, anthrax bombs, an economic collapse and 'a choice between World Control and Destruction' (53) echo the First World War and its aftermath. Because such war is meant to end war and inaugurate 'a campaign against the Past' (56), Mond cannot help dismissing history as 'bunk' (40). This dismissal is devised to arrest the motion of history, once and for all. At the same time, the World State ensures its social cohesion by methods less emotionally compelling than the ostracism to which the Savage has been subjected in Malpais. Accidents incongruent with social stability, such as John's inexplicable discovery of *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare* or the rumoured content of alcohol in Bernard's blood-surrogate, momentarily fracture the totality and equilibrium of their respective societies, but these accidents are insufficient to undermine the *Jetztzeit*. The fact that Bernard eventually turns out to be a coward, while the Savage commits suicide, may be linked to the historically empty time which usurps them both, rendering accidental fractures into dead ends.

A head-on collision of the hypnopaedia and Shakespeare's poetry is staged in the episode that immediately follows the description of an Indian ceremony celebrating both Christian and pagan gods. This is when the Savage first encounters Lenina and Bernard: 'You're civilized, aren't you? You come from the Other Place, outside the Reservation?' (109). The alterity of civilization becomes even more pronounced when John, indicating the blood stains left in the square by the ritual flagellation of a teenage boy, asks his counterparts: 'Do you see that damned spot?' (109). Where the Savage is thinking of Lady Macbeth's delirium, provoked by her inability to redeem a morally right and socially acceptable position, Lenina prefers the line of the least emotional resistance: 'A gramme is better than a damn, [...] I wish I had my *soma*!' (109). Despite the absolutely different cultural connotations of these responses, Lenina's reaction to an emotionally demanding situation matches that of the Savage: they both feel trapped in the need to adhere to the social norm. Owing to her conditioning, Lenina is unable to conceive of a form of alleviation distinct from what her society permits her. John in turn continues to deceive himself about becoming a part of the society which stubbornly rejects him. In playing down the differences between the civilized and the savage individuals, the above-

mentioned ceremony scene is in conversation with what Lawrence promoted as Rananim, an organic alternative to England.

In order to make sense of this long-term conversation, the trajectory of Lawrence's influence on Huxley needs to be clarified further. Backed up by biographical and textual analyses, literary scholars express a general consensus as regards several phases of Huxley's engagement with Lawrence and his ideas. In a study of literary Englands, David Gervais links Lawrence's imaginary colony to his ambivalent attitudes towards England which combined a passionate attachment to it with a strong impulse to flee into exile (84). As early as 1915, before their friendship commenced in earnest some eleven years later, Lawrence had asked Huxley to accompany him to Florida, with the aim of founding an organic colony there. Even though this trip never happened, Huxley did not take it seriously anyway; he 'sympathized with the spirit rather than the letter of the enterprise' (Pogue 7). Lawrence's imprint on Huxley grew in substance particularly in the late 1920s. Despite remaining in Huxley's perceptions 'partly extremely modern, partly atavistic' (Huxley, 'What' 94), Lawrence helped to shape his friend's outlook on nature. As John Atkins notes, 'Lawrence's most valuable gift was not his worship of instinct and "dark forces", which could easily degenerate into diabolism, but his sensitiveness towards nature and his insistence that man must never attempt to cut the links between him and [nature]' (142). Unsurprisingly, Mark Rampion, a 'life-worshipping' character in Huxley's *Point Counter Point* (1928) sees mankind's salvation in harmonizing the life of the body with the life of the soul, a desideratum pointed against a Wellsian vision of the ascent of man 'towards Utopian infinity' (*PCP* 274). During this period, Lawrence seemed to offer Huxley, if not a 'positive programme' (Rabinovich 109), but at least a tentative balance between intellectual and natural agencies in human personality, with which Huxley's collection *Do What You Will* (1929) was most centrally concerned. Huxley began to gradually emerge from under his friend's spell after Lawrence died in 1930. This departure, according to Carey Snyder, is visible in how Huxley used Lawrence's ethnographic experience of observing Pueblo Indians, related in 'The Hopi Snake Dance' (1924), in his own *Brave New World*. Where Lawrence sympathized profusely with the Indians' sense of awareness 'from the darkest origins out to the brightest edifices of creation'

(‘Hopi’ 146), Huxley elected to expose primitivism as Lawrence’s regressive fantasy (Snyder 193). Having undertaken an exploratory tour of the places and cultures with which Lawrence had associated Rananim, Huxley explained away the failure of his friend’s utopia in his travel book *Beyond the Mexique Bay* (1934): ‘Lawrence thought that we should abandon the new privileges in return for the old treasure. But he was reckoning without himself and [...] without Destiny’ (314). Indeed, the fact that Lawrence had eventually left for England, seeking occasional contacts ‘with the lilies of the mind and spirit’, permitted Huxley to distrust a return to primitivism as such (*BMB* 250). When, in a 1936 essay dedicated to Lawrence, Huxley admitted that ‘[t]o be with Lawrence was a kind of adventure, a voyage into newness and otherness’ (*OT* 232), this was a conclusive statement about how different they were as social thinkers.

This difference can be felt in how Huxley applies the Lawrentian Rananim, based on ‘blood consciousness’, to the Savage. In Lawrence’s *The Plumed Serpent* (1926), Don Ramón Carrasco, an ‘eminent historian and archaeologist’, perceives blood as a channel of communication between man and the world. Insisting on the primacy of blood before spirit, Ramón advocates their ultimate unity, beneficial for humanity at large: ‘And this is the god-power in man. By this power you shall know the god in a man. By none other’ (Lawrence, *Serpent* 394). Even though Kate, a convert-to-be in Lawrence’s novel, remains in Mexico, her scruples about ‘blood consciousness’ are never fully resolved. Huxley also has reservations concerning the unity of mankind on the blood principle; these may be seen to surface when the Savage laments: ‘They could have had twice as much blood from me. The multitudinous seas incarnadine. [...] But they wouldn’t let me. They disliked me for my complexion. It’s always been like that. Always’ (*BNW* 110). Undoubtedly, the Indian ritual does not call for seas of blood to which John refers, recalling Macbeth’s guilt-ridden conscience. In throwing the Savage’s frustration into relief, this hyperbole indicates that the stringency of social othering can be so powerful that even excessive amounts of blood offered to create unity will be refused. The cathartic power of Shakespeare proves impotent in Malpais, Huxley’s parody of Lawrence’s organic England. The experience of ostracism transforms John’s outlook

into a state wherein recourse to Shakespeare further disconnects him from the life of the community.

Whether this state is the Savage's true personality remains to be asked. Receiving a call from the hospital where Linda has been taken to die, John confirms that he is the Savage over the phone: 'If I do not usurp myself, I am' (176). Making use of Shakespeare's most intricate exploration of false identities in *Twelfth Night, or, What You Will*, the novel offers a comment on the professed stability of the Brave New World. If '[c]haracters remain constant throughout a whole lifetime' (*BNW* 60), this implies that they are usurped by stimuli, such as hypnopaedia, which disallow change. In addition to the hypnopaedia, there is a sense that the Savage is equally, though more consciously, alert to having been usurped by a Shakespeare whose texts are utilized in order to rectify his choked socialization in both Fordian England and Malpais. However, his practice of quoting from *The Complete Works* never frees John from the confinement of his social alienation, because Shakespeare, even though his texts raise universal issues, belonged to a specific national culture which has become usurped, like John's identity, by the alien encroachments of a World State.

Concerns about being usurped by external forces are quite centrally conveyed in *Eyeless in Gaza* (1936), a novel in which Huxley does justice to his own identity shifts from cynical detachment to a pacifist conviction, combined with a sympathy for the masses (Meckier, *Novelist* 244; Bradshaw and Sexton xxvi). The novel's protagonist Anthony Beavis pleads allegiance to what he terms 'the new conception of personality', whose origins he primarily connects to William Blake's notion of man as 'a succession of states': 'Good and evil can be predicated only of states, not of individuals, who in fact don't exist, except as the places where the states occur. It is the end of personality in the old sense of the word' (*EG* 98). This 'new' conception, unlike its predecessor, disavows totalities, especially exemplified by the ideology of Fascism. Beavis's endorsement of personality as 'experience in the lump and by the hour' (*EG* 99) resonates with a commendation of Blake expressed in Huxley's earlier novel *Point Counter Point*. Mark Rampion, whose ideas about the depersonalizing effects of science and progress bear a disputable likeness to those of Lawrence (Poller 80), propounds: 'Blake was civilized, [...] *civilized*. Civilization is

harmony and completeness. Reason, feeling, instinct, the life of the body – Blake managed to include and harmonize everything' (*PCP* 135). That Rampion's reflections about holistic personality emanate from the *Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1793) leads Nicholas Williams to believe that the 'Proverbs of Heaven and Hell', which form a separate section of Blake's poem, might have supplied models and an inspiration for the hypnopaedic proverbs in *Brave New World* (Williams, 'Sciences' 50). Indeed, Lenina's 'A gramme is better than a damn', uttered in a state of emotional distress and deprivation (*BNW* 109), is verbally evocative of 'Damn braces: Bless relaxes' (Blake 9). Yet, aside from promulgating a positive attitude, Blake also posits the importance of fulfilling a desire by all means: 'Sooner murder an Infant in its cradle than nurse unacted desires' (10). This is particularly important for the World State, where the temporal gap between the gestation of a desire and its fulfilment has been abolished and the hypnopaedia delivers immediate gratification, often with a reliance on modern methods: 'One cubic centimetre cures ten gloomy sentiments' (*BNW* 60), 'Never put off till tomorrow the fun you can have today' (91). Regardless of these detectable similarities, Blake's proverbial sayings are notably double-barrelled. They create a sense of a constant alternation between competing forces, where heaven and hell change places, persistence in folly leads to wisdom, and excess teaches moderation. Perhaps it is this very flux of the living process that the hypnopaedia of the future tends to simplify and eliminate. 'Successions of states', essential to Huxley's definition of personality, are reduced to singularities, a danger which Rampion and Beavis discern through Blakean lenses in their respective versions of England.

The flattening-out of proverbial sayings into prescriptive guidelines can be historicized in some congruent developments in Huxley's contemporary England. Mesmerism, which entered common currency in the nineteenth century, later evolved into the practices of hypnotism and autosuggestion, having been pioneered in 1920s England by the followers of the French psychologist Émile Coué. Declaring autosuggestion as 'a scientific method based on the discoveries of psychology' (Brooks 4), Coué focuses its implementation on the energy of the unconscious, which is believed to affect 'the moral and physical being of mankind' (9). In an introduction to his method, Coué exploits the power of imagination to channel and

guide human behaviour and thoughts through the repetition of simple, yet reputedly effective, formulas: 'It is easy and I can' (20), or 'Every day, *in every respect*, I am getting better and better' (22).[32] Insofar as suggestive messages are brought from the outside of personality, and are supposedly effective when interiorized, this mechanism is equally applicable to propaganda. In this respect, the Shakespearean presence in the World State, much as it is limited to the Savage's and Mond's distinct discourses, is redolent of the appropriation of Shakespeare for purposes of emotional education. One such example is offered by Edward Thomas's war-time anthology *This England* (1915), which invokes the famous 'scepter'd isle' soliloquy from *Richard II*. In the preface to his selections from major British writers and thinkers, Thomas sets out 'to make a book as full of English character and country as an egg is of meat' (iii). Where Thomas seeks to call up an England in a compactly rich volume that addresses the national turmoil of the Great War, Septimus Smith, a character from Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* (1925), is quick to answer this call. After a brief period of acquiring a taste for Shakespeare under the guidance of his lover Miss Isabel Pole, Septimus 'was one of the first to volunteer. He went to France to save an England which consisted almost entirely of Shakespeare's plays and Miss Isabel Pole in a green dress walking in a square [...]' (Woolf, *Dalloway* 94). Just as Septimus's feelings for Isabel do not take him anywhere after the war, his patriotism, hinging on Shakespeare, falls victim to his shell shock and withdrawal from society. When Septimus revisits *Antony and Cleopatra* years later, Shakespeare strikes him as a professed loather of humanity; he admits to himself: 'Love between man and woman is repulsive to Shakespeare. The business of copulation was filth to him before the end' (Woolf, *Dalloway* 97).

Where Septimus's attitude to Shakespeare as a synecdoche for England mutates into bitterness and detachment after the war, the Savage's heightened expectations of England remain consistently self-deluding. John's powerful impulse to encounter a 'brave new world' is rekindled, before his failed attempt to avert a soma distribution among the lower castes, in order to fulfil Miranda's naïve vision:

[32] In *Brave New World Revisited* (1958), Huxley observes that self-administered suggestion yields tangible results, judging by unsolicited testimonials from satisfied customers: '[M]any obese ladies do lose weight and many couples on the verge of divorce achieve sexual harmony and live happily ever after' (353).

'Miranda was proclaiming the possibility of loveliness, the possibility of transforming even the nightmare into something fine and noble. "O brave new world!" It was a challenge, a command' (*BNW* 186). The Savage's persistence in his expectations may be read as Huxley's supposedly apprehensive attitude towards a fragmentation of Shakespeare, which in his life-time, as Nicholas Murray records, 'was inspired and has become the stuff of journalistic cliché' (256). Just as Blake's proverbial saws can be flattened into platitudes, Shakespeare's lines get stripped from their wider contexts. As the Savage reads his redemptive aspirations into a 'brave new world', he fails to anticipate a less pleasing version of 'beauteous mankind'. Identifying himself with Miranda, he ignores Prospero's sober, if cynical, return of his daughter's precocious excitement: ''Tis new to thee' (*The Tempest* 5.1).

An emotionally skewed appropriation of Shakespeare features quite strongly when Helmholz hears John read from 'his mouse-eaten book'. Shakespeare's 'The Phoenix and the Turtle' arouses Helmholz's 'growing excitement': 'At "sole Arabian tree" he started; at "thou shrieking harbinger" he smiled with sudden pleasure; at "every fowl of tyrant wing" the blood rushed up into his cheeks; but at "defunctive music" he turned pale and trembled with an unprecedented emotion' (*BNW* 164). Judging by the above, Helmholz betrays a keen susceptibility to the poet's language, which manages to convey a sense of solitary existence, might, and silence. This succession of states, which have defined his own being, sustains Helmholz's genuine interest, regardless of Bernard's interruptive dismissal of Shakespeare's verses as variants of solidarity hymns. As the Savage moves on through *Romeo and Juliet*, Helmholz grows quite impatient and responds with 'an explosion of uncontrollable guffawing' (165). In interpreting this unexpectedly blasphemous reaction to the most intense episode of the play, one may, to a large degree, be persuaded by Meckier's explanation: 'His [Helmholz's] conditioning in the totally promiscuous brave new world stops him from sympathizing with the lovers' plight and, by extension, with John's lust for Lenina. Ludicrous though Watson's rephrasing of the play's problems sounds to admirers of the Bard, it renders Shakespeare's love-tragedy outmoded and irrelevant' (*Huxley* 243). However, one cannot avoid noticing a tipping point which marks the translation of Helmholz's 'puzzled interest' in this love-tragedy into his intemperate hilarity. Huxley indicates, albeit parenthetically, that from start to finish

John is ‘seeing himself as Romeo and Lenina as Juliet’ (*BNW* 164). John’s passionate identification with the characters and their irresolvable situation makes Helmholz think of the play as ‘a superb piece of emotional engineering’ (164). His bewilderment erupts the moment the Savage, carried away by his role-play, becomes usurped by Shakespeare, or – to be more precise – by the sentiment of one particular piece. Even though Helmholz explains away his coarse reaction by the ‘grotesque obscenity’ of the play’s subject-matter, he nevertheless phrases his query in a way that accommodates John’s self-usurpation: ‘Why was that old fellow such a marvellous propaganda technician?’ (165). What Helmholz, who teaches the ‘Use of Rhymes in Moral Propaganda and Advertisement’ (161), is able to distinguish with certainty is how potently the Savage is locked in identifying himself with a particular strand of ‘madness and violence’. Shakespeare is made to collapse into the realm of conditioning not only because of his allegedly antiquarian tragedy, but because the ways in which his poetry is invoked confine personality to a narrow mode of perception, similar to hypnopaedic proverbs. This observation by no means suggests that the Savage ‘does not understand Shakespeare’s art, only parrots his text, as a child recites poems by rote’ (Pintér 165). Not only does John reproduce the Shakespearean lines, but he also dramatizes them. As if following Huxley’s own interpretation of what silence might have meant to Shakespeare, that is, ‘all the things that, to the human spirit, are most profoundly significant, can only be experienced, not expressed’ (Huxley, *Essays* 12), John falls silent at Mond’s request to spell out the essence of God: ‘He would have liked to speak; but there were no words. Not even in Shakespeare’ (*BNW* 203).

In an environment where collective aspirations are ritualized into social stability and the movement of time becomes historically void, there is a deeply ingrained anxiety about the watering-down of literary influences. The Savage’s vocabulary may be culturally richer than the hypnopaedia permits, but he is shown only to mediate fragments of Shakespeare’s texts, carved out for his own deluding needs. This form of expression connects him to the World State’s hypnopaedic mind-set, insofar as neither his Shakespeare nor their proverbs create what Huxley will later come to appreciate as ‘a pluralistic mystery’ (‘Shakespeare’ 172). As in the scene with Helmholz, Shakespeare engenders diverse interpretation, while

hypnopaedia does not. Quotes from Shakespeare may ideologically clash with hypnopaedia (Meckier, *Novelist* 317), but John never conceives of Shakespeare as a semantic universe in which numerous potentialities for interpretation are enshrined. One critic suggests that through hypnopaedia Huxley 'targets the fatuity of the popular beliefs of his own time' (Ferns 141). This remark can be also extended to imply Huxley's ongoing reaction against the deadness of the tradition being recycled and simplified.

2. Will and Imagination: Mond's Safe and Helmholz's Poetry

While hypnopaedia, with an accidental intervention of Shakespeare's texts, dominates the World State's socio-cultural ecology, books locked in Mond's safe and Helmholz's single poem pose problems to the social stability. In acting as guardian to this literature-free environment, Mond equates stability with pervasive popular happiness, based on the clear distinction between old and new, high and low. Shakespeare, together with items in Mond's safe such as *The Holy Bible*, *The Imitation of Christ*, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, Cardinal Newman's sermons, and Maine de Biran's journal (*BNW* 203-5), is considered old and therefore incomprehensible. As Mond declares, '[y]ou've got to choose between happiness and what people used to call high art. We've sacrificed the high art' (194-5). This wilful choice between the high old culture, on the one hand, and the mass new culture, which is driven by popular aspirations for happiness, on the other, bears more than a fleeting resemblance to the condition of interwar England. In the atmosphere of a persistent social disparity and a deepening cultural fragmentation, Patrick Scott deems it only natural that such vividly different texts as *The Newbolt Report* (*On the Teaching of English in England*, 1921) and T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922) articulate very similar anxieties about the future of national culture. Allegedly resonant with Matthew Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), 'the unified voice of its class and culture' (Scott 226), they are both perceived to communicate a deep-laid awareness that 'traditional culture, like traditional hierarchy, was doomed [...]' (230).

Huxley's writings also encapsulate a response to the traditional aspect of English culture. As early as *Crome Yellow* (1921), he highlights his problematic allegiance to Romantic poetry. The novel's protagonist Denis Stone, an aspiring poet

with a clichéd style and highly predictable narratives, is summoned to a funeral which he has contrived as a pretext for his own departure: 'He looked quickly from face to face. Nobody had noticed. He climbed into the hearse' (*CY* 244). Meckier reads this 'lugubrious yet farcical departure' as Huxley's aesthetic pronouncement against the unholy exploitation of the Romantic tradition of Wordsworth, Keats and Shelley in the volumes of *Georgian Poetry* (Meckier, *Huxley* 165), which were edited by Edward Marsh and made five appearances in 1912-1922. Having parted with the frequently unsuccessful recycling of Wordsworthian romanticism, Huxley additionally takes exception to the professed absence of theory in Marsh's selections, a dominant streak whose reputedly English character might have been particularly unsatisfying to Huxley. On this note, James Reeves's description of Marsh's editorial practices as 'characteristically English' may be useful: 'Theorizing about art was foreign; announcing aesthetic and critical doctrines was foreign. His approach to artistic problems was pragmatic and amateur' (*Georgian Poetry* xiv). In contrast, Huxley's own engagements with literary subjects during this period are marked by attempts to come up with a set of theoretical positions. In *On the Margin* (1923), Huxley proposes the prevalence of theory in times when 'old traditions are breaking up, when all is chaos and in flux' (188). He proceeds to contend:

> The only occasions, in fact, when the artist can afford entirely to dispense with theory occur in periods when a well-established tradition reigns supreme and unquestioned. And then the absence of theory is more apparent than real; for the tradition in which he is working is a theory, originally formulated by someone else, which he accepts unconsciously and as though it were the law of Nature itself (*OM* 189).

Much as this theorization strikes a consonant chord with 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' (1919), Huxley clearly takes issue with what T. S. Eliot demands as the procurement of 'the consciousness of the past' (39). Whereas Eliot emphasizes the depersonalizing effect of acquiring tradition, Huxley invests in a natural, unconscious, acceptance of it. For Eliot, the poet can only be appreciated 'in his relation to the dead poets and artists' ('Tradition' 37); for Huxley, tradition becomes by the very nature of the poet's art. This sub-section argues that Huxley's poet tends towards Wordsworth's idea of poetry, understood in the 'Preface' to the *Lyrical Ballads* (1800) as being 'the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity [...]' (266).

Indeed, Huxley's ambiguous apology for theorization does not immediately align him with the modernists, about whose practices he remained sceptical from the beginning of his career (Firchow, *Modernists* 159). Despite his frequent experiments with the form of fiction, on which the preceding section has commented, and heavy reliance on modern science for his visions of the future, which is discussed in the next section, Huxley maintains his own notions of literature inflected by modernity. In 'The Subject-Matter of Poetry' (1923), he begins to question the newness of contemporary poetry whenever it deals with automobiles, planes and other means of locomotion: just as Homer's horses are not new, '[t]here is nothing intrinsically novel or surprising in the introduction into poetry of machinery and industrialism, of labour unrest and modern psychology: these things belong to us, they affect us daily [...]' (*OM* 32). Preoccupied with such manifestations of the modern age as the above, literature, in Huxley's view, contains '[a] certain amount of the life of the twentieth century [...], but precious little of its mind' (*OM* 36). In his later essay 'What, Exactly, is Modern?' (1925), Huxley takes up the discussion of the qualities that modern literature ought to display in order to reflect the state of the twentieth-century mind. Like modern music and art, literature must appeal primarily to the intellect, without distorting reality: 'The most modern work of literature is the most intelligent, the most sensitive and spiritual, the freest and most tolerant, the most completely and widely comprehending' (Huxley, 'What, Exactly' 94).

Huxley revisits many of the above debates in *Vulgarity in Literature* (1930), where he voices concern about the inherent subtlety of reality which should not be simplified into theories. Instead, the modern writer's aspirations must be directed, more modestly, towards sincerity, truthfulness, and artistic integrity, which permit reality to be most fully comprehended (*MN* 310, 326). These literary principles are elaborated further in Huxley's essay 'Tragedy and the Whole Truth' (1931).[33]

[33] Firchow believes this essay to be 'one of the most important and also most neglected statements about modernism in the critical canon' (*Modernists* 164). Along these lines, 'contrapuntal musicalization' in *Point Counter Point* is cited as Huxley's pursuit of 'the Whole Truth'. Similarly, the atomization of personality as a series of states, propagated, as has been indicated above, by the protagonist of *Eyeless in Gaza*, can be felt to identify with 'Wholly-Truthful Art'. However, because in his early career Huxley is readily wont to take on the role of a satirist, Bradshaw's observation about the method used by satirical authors is quite helpful: they 'intrude into their novels without a qualm, either directly or in the guise of patently autobiographical characters, show little (if any) interest in the representation of consciousness, being almost exclusively focused on the exposure of

Huxley suggests that 'Wholly-Truthful Art' relates to tragedy, just as an entire river relates to its eddy. Tragedy, being more intense and 'chemically pure', fails to comprehend 'the totality of human experience' (*MN* 13), while 'Wholly-Truthful Art' does not call for a photographic naturalism, yet it is expected to record 'bits of the truth'. As a result, it produces a less immediate, but a more lasting, effect than tragedy. Even though Huxley refrains from promoting 'Wholly-Truthful Art' as an exclusively modern phenomenon, its manifestations in the twentieth century attract his special attention. Remarkably distinct contemporary authors, such as Marcel Proust, D. H. Lawrence, André Gide, Franz Kafka and Ernest Hemingway, are seen to be united, not by their artistic techniques and ideologies, or, more importantly, national identity, but in 'that none of them has written a pure tragedy, that all are concerned with the Whole Truth' (*MN* 17). Given the above theoretical positions, which span the period when the literary tradition was felt to be dissolving in England, one may wonder if Huxley's system of values seeks to reverse this current condition of national culture, or at least to highlight a glimmer of hope. If the price for mass happiness is absolute in *Brave New World*, in what way can any vestiges of non-mass, non-global culture be recovered by the poetic imagination?

In *Brave New World*, Huxley's system of literary values may be seen to bifurcate into religio-philosophical and aesthetic components. While Mond's voluntarism seeks to insure the World State against philosophers who 'didn't dream about [...] us, the modern world' (205), Helmholz's imaginative impulses tend to transcend the prescribed limits of social order and personality. So far as the novel's religio-philosophical component is concerned, a contemporary reader of Huxley maintained that *Brave New World* advocated, through the persona of the Savage, physical pain and self-denial. The author of this 1932 review felt that, should Huxley persist in his contempt for 'ordinary human nature', and 'unless he becomes reconciled to our sad condition, he will be received, with loud applause from the faithful, into the bosom of the Church of Rome' (*Heritage* 214). The prophecy of Huxley's Roman communion did not come to pass at once, possibly because the novel's religious aspect, much as it dismisses ordinary human powers, had been misunderstood as being prudish. More recent readings of *Brave New World*, such as

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folly' ('Modern Life' 226). In this sense, modernism and satire may be incompatible, yet satire does not seem to contradict 'the Whole Truth'.

Meckier's lengthy essay 'Poetry in the Future, the Future of Poetry: Huxley and Orwell on Zamyatin' (1984),[34] refocus the novel's redemptive concerns from the Savage, who is largely regarded as an atavism, to Helmholz, whose 'creative drive is the only true utopian impulse, the only reliable urge towards a perfection that lies beyond *soma*, beyond the World State, beyond Shakespeare; it is otherwise known as man's Final End' (*Huxley* 260). Just as this teleological interpretation of Helmholz's role as a poet is useful in understanding the growth of Huxley's ideas about poetry and utopianism, there are numerous ways in which Meckier's is an unsatisfactory definition of the creative influences that enable the poet's arrival at this 'Final End'. Perhaps Gerald Heard, as Meckier proposes, creates a valid contemporary impact on the ways in which Huxley construes 'the ascent of humanity'. But the sources that are directly acknowledged in *Brave New World* afford sharper insight into Huxley's positions on the poetic imagination.

In contrast to the international influences, immortalized in the World State, the books that are kept in Mond's private library can affect this socio-cultural environment only by their absence. However, despite their relegated condition, some thoughts and opinions held by the 'old' philosophers begin to surface in Helmholz, who, in the knowledge of being an individual, grows increasingly 'aware of his mental excess' (*BNW* 70). The fact that such visceral awareness gradually translates into Helmholz's application of 'that extra, latent power' to poetry (163) indicates 'a succession of states'. Helmholz's progress sets him apart from his contemporaries, whose characters, as has been mentioned before, remain stable due to the social order in which they are ensconced. Helmholz's unique ability to break through the cocoon of a total personality links his change implicitly to Mond's safe, whose forbidden literature collectively promotes the conception of personality as 'a succession of states'. The reason why *The Holy Bible* appears in the collection is not self-evident until one is prompted by Anthony Beavis, from *Eyeless in Gaza*, that the Jesus of the Gospel offers the only ideal personality of a total man, 'unbowdlerized, unselected, uncanalized' (98). Any attempt to achieve a consummate personality which is coherently sincere, humble and destitute in spirit and ambition is destined to produce gross simplifications. Perhaps with this caveat in mind, Mond goes on to show the

[34] A modified version of this essay appeared as 'Poetry in the Future, the Future of Poetry: *Brave New World*' in Meckier's collection *Aldous Huxley, from Poet to Mystic* (2011), 229-90.

Savage *The Imitation of Christ* (1418-1427), a second 'small book' which 'had lost its cover' (*BNW* 203). Writing for a specific audience of men who had surrendered earthly delights for the cloister, Thomas à Kempis allowed for a daily toil of self-improvement: 'Man's true progress is self-renunciation; the man who achieves it has great freedom and security' (97). This statement is entirely subverted by Mond's hedonistic civilization: 'Self-indulgence up to the very limits imposed by hygiene and economics. [...] You can't have a lasting civilization without plenty of pleasant vices' (*BNW* 208). Helmholz in turn clearly begins to deviate from such pleasures as sex, sport and communal activities in order to grasp, as he phrases it, 'something else' (70). Helmholz's indeterminacy is only partly resolved in his 'Rhymes on Solitude', which summon up an apocalyptic cessation of the mechanized universe whose silences and absences merge into 'something, which is not' (162). If God, in Mond's words, 'manifests himself as an absence; as though he weren't there at all' (206), what Helmholz's latent powers permit him to envisage is perhaps God's presence. This realization carries further implications for Helmholz as a visionary poet who is about to enter into a new experiential state.

One such implication concerns his emerging connection with what William James calls 'the higher powers'. In *Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature* (1902) (a third volume which Mond extracts from his safe), James explains man's possession of a higher part, 'a more'. This extra element of the self is essentially linked to a transcendent godhead, through 'the subconscious continuation of our conscious life' (James, *Varieties* 395). James's additional remark that the discovery of 'a more' can help man to save himself '*when all his lower being has gone to pieces in the wreck*' (*Varieties* 392),[35] not only ties into Helmholz's 'latent power', but also suggests a state of crisis he is living through: all his previous preoccupations have turned out to be 'second bests' (*BNW* 70). Another implication for the growth of Helmholz's personality, of which he may be imaginatively conscious in his poem, is expressed in the two excerpts from the literature contained in Mond's safe. The first one comes from John Henry Newman's sermon 'Remembrance of Past Mercies' (1878) and problematizes the notion of independence in various periods of man's life:

[35] Emphasis in the original.

> We are God's property by creation, by redemption, by regeneration. [...] [A]s time goes on, they [the young and prosperous], as all men, will find that independence was not made for man – that is an unnatural state – may do for a while, but will not carry us on safely to the end (*Selection* 59).

In an environment such as the World State's, where human lives are a sole property of social forces (from decanting to hospitals for the dying), Helmholz's disavowal of his previous life-style can be viewed as a major existential detour towards a new proprietor, which is God.

Mond's second reading from the second volume of Pierre Maine de Biran's *Intimate Journal* (*Journal intime*, 1817-1824) complicates man's (and by implication, Helmholz's) independence by embedding it in old age, when the religious sentiment becomes only natural: '[W]e feel the need to lean on something that abides, something that will never play us false – a reality, an absolute and everlasting truth. Yes, we inevitably turn to God [...]' (*BNW* 205).[36] A sense that such an abiding reality begins to loom is conveyed by Helmholz in his poem. Physical copulation is made to contrast with a still incomprehensible, and therefore 'absurd essence', whose solidity the poet would rather feel on an empty night (162). This imaginative exercise restructures reality so that whatever the poet's lived experience has to offer becomes less preferable and more evanescent than the missing essence. Where Mond declares that there can be no need of 'something immovable, when there is the social order' (206), Helmholz shies away from this pronouncement. He must have outgrown his bodily desires and reached another 'succession of states', landing on the path of religious self-exploration and conquest.

This religio-philosophical aspect of Huxley's utopian imaginings delineates a system of fundamental international values, which notably conflict with the principles of the World State; yet this system is far from being exhaustive with

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[36] In the journal entry for 6-7 June 1818, Maine de Biran lays a particular stress on 'Dieu, le Souverain Bien' and '*quelque chose qui reste te qui ne trompe pas*' (Maine de Biran 102), omitted in Huxley's text. The last sentence of the entry, should it be present in the novel, may suggest that Helmholz's religious sentiment does not engender a fear of dying; on the contrary: 'La crainte de la mort ou de l'enfer n'a rien de commun avec ce sentiment et se trouve au contraire en opposition directe avec lui' (Maine de Biran 102).
The second volume of Maine de Biran's journal came Huxley's way when he was working on *Brave New World*, 'a seriously comic' Swiftian novel, as he called it in his letter of 15 September 1931. Huxley further admitted that he had found Maine de Biran's journal 'most interesting. The only psychologist-philosopher who has really gone to the trouble of carefully observing the relation of soul to body' (*Letters* 353-4). Huxley's interest in this relation had lingered on until his extensive essay on Maine de Biran made appearance in *Themes and Variations* (1950).

regard to the poetic imagination. The old literature, which remains locked in Mond's library, is said to be 'particularly beautiful' (193), and Mond also links Helmholz's dissent to the pursuit of beauty: 'Happiness has got to be paid for. You're paying for it, Mr Watson – paying because you happen to be too much interested in beauty' (201). This coalescence of religion and philosophy with an interest in beauty suggests that the aesthetic component of Huxley's utopian system is deeply grounded in the religious experience that renews Helmholz's personality. When Helmholz refers to his inordinate latent power, 'like all the water that goes down the falls instead of through the turbines' (71), this description evokes what Frederick W. H. Myers categorizes as a 'realm of genius' (44), in *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death* (1903). According to Myers, genius is constituted by 'subliminal uprushes' of ideas from 'profounder regions of [one's] being' (*Personality* 42), which in essence contain 'a direct knowledge of facts of the universe outside the range of any specialized organ or of any planetary view' (60). Indeed, Helmholz's emergence as a poet correlates with his growing attention to a newly and internally available knowledge and understanding. On composing his 'Rhymes on Solitude', he has become able to 'say something about nothing', a development with which he could not come to grips earlier: 'I try and I try . . .' (*BNW* 72). As Helmholz continues to sense his own subliminal uprushes, it is little wonder that he detects one, of a different nature, in Bernard, when the latter starts complaining about his stress-ridden life: '"If only you knew what I'd had to put up with recently," he said almost tearfully – and the uprush of his self-pity was like a fountain suddenly released' (73). Despite his compassion for his friend, Helmholz wishes 'Bernard would show a little more pride' (73). To realize why Helmholz finds Bernard's emotional outflow embarrassing, Myers can be helpful, when he further defines a subliminal uprush as an unused potential which 'takes command of the man and guides his action at the moment when his being is deeply stirred' (*Personality* 47). Indeed, Bernard is shown to be animated by his 'consciousness of being separate' (*BNW* 70), and as an upper-caste individual he may also be eligible for subliminal uprushes, like Helmholz. But Bernard's uprushes are channelled into the divide between his individuality and the social norm. This compensatory use of energy is perhaps conducive to socialization, but, from Helmholz's perspective of an excessively able man, it is abjectly misused.

Whereas Bernard's mental excess results from his defects, Helmholz is said to acquire 'the voluntary blindness and deafness of deliberate solitude, the artificial impotence of asceticism' (71). Not only is solitude a requisite state of self-renunciation, to which Helmholz commits himself, but also an important condition of a poetic mind, such as his. In *Proper Studies* (1927), Huxley stipulates that 'the more powerful and original a mind, the more it will incline towards the religion of solitude, the less it will be drawn towards social religion or be moved by its practices' (178). However, what Huxley promotes as 'the religion of solitude' has unequivocal resonances with the construction of 'the English poetic mind' undertaken by Charles Williams, a writer, literary critic and member of the Inklings. Even though Williams insists in *The English Poetic Mind* (1932)[37] on his reference to 'poetic' rather than 'English' (v), one is still struck by the ways in which this book positions itself as the first study of the recurrent poetic experience derived almost exclusively from England's major poets – Shakespeare, Milton and Wordsworth. Setting out to read English poetry in relation to Wordsworth's *Prelude* (*Mind* 9), Williams is deeply concerned with the continuity of national traditions of writing. His book revealingly opens and closes with a qualification of poetry as a progression from 'unknown modes of being' to 'the hiding-places of man's power', which create 'the glory and the good of art' (*Mind* 199-200). From these invocations of Wordsworth's idiom, Williams additionally deduces the method of the English poetic mind: '[A] thing common to all the ways has been solitude, and by its increasing capacity to express solitude, change, and action, the increasing strength of the poetry is known' (*Mind* 201). Undoubtedly, all of the above propositions may hold true of much poetic creativity, English or not. But what remains particularly significant is how both Huxley and Williams resuscitate, in their own peculiar ways, a nationally ingrained phraseology to express what proves to be a shared anxiety of the period. That Helmholz continually thinks about his latent power and seeks solitude is clearly more than a wink, on Huxley's part, at Wordsworth. In choosing the Falklands as his post of expulsion, Helmholz opts for a climate, 'with a lot of wind and storms', in

[37] The likelihood that Huxley resorted to this study is rather slim for at least two reasons. Firstly, it came out after *Brave New World* had been published. Secondly, the only mention of Charles Williams in Huxley's correspondence dates from 1953, when Huxley reports to have recently read Williams's science-fiction novel *War in Heaven* (1930) (*Letters* 683).

which he might supposedly write better (*BNW* 202). Wordsworth also sought solitude in what he wished to see as the wild recesses of Cumbria. When Helmholz confronts Mond with a dismal realization that it is 'idiotic' to write 'when there's nothing to say [...]' (195), he can be put in agreement with an assembly of poets enabled by Wordsworth 'to perceive Something unseen before; [...] Proceeding from the depth of untaught things [...]' (*Prelude* 226). Just as *The Prelude*'s Poet grows to feel, early in his life, '[t]he self-sufficing power of solitude' (22), Helmholz finds a partisan way to sublimate solitude into a vision.

Aside from the implicit acknowledgement of Wordsworth as a model poet, Huxley endorses the need of the constant progress of the poetic mind. Much as Wordsworth is preoccupied with 'the growth of a poet's mind', and his work on *The Prelude* is indicative of a creative evolution (Newlyn 59), the progression of his poetic sensibilities and personal politics raise Huxley's doubts. In *On the Margin*, Huxley congratulates Wordsworth on his ability to couch emotions in intellectual terms. But Huxley's analysis poses some serious reservations concerning 'a conduct value' of such emotions, whose 'truth value' may be harmful (157). By these he means the reputed spirituality of nature, celebrated by Wordsworth. In 'Wordsworth in the Tropics' (1929), Huxley argues how inappropriate the Wordsworthian nature-worship would have looked in climes less temperate than Europe's.[38] As Wordsworth's divination and humanization of relatively tame nature cannot be universally applied, Huxley presents the Romantic poet in the role of a stubborn preacher, who becomes later, 'personally as well as politically, the [*sic*] anglican tory' (*DWYW* 126-7). Where F. W. H. Myers, who had equally paid tribute to Wordsworth's visionary insight, connected the latter's growing conservatism to a much-loved England which had been threatened by social reform (*Wordsworth* 161), Huxley plays down such loyalties as harbingers of the poet's death (*DWYW* 125). By contrast, Helmholz proceeds from his once secure position of an emotional engineer, who used to enslave the Brave-New-Worlders' imagination by newspaper articles,

[38] Huxley takes up the critique of a limited romantic outlook in his comedy *The World of Light* (1931). One of the play's characters eloquently compares a tropical forest to 'the devil's own cathedral. Nobody has a sufficient respect for the devil in our civilized temperate countries. You have to go to the tropics to see him functioning on the grand scale. [...] No philosophy has ever been written in the jungle' (Huxley, *Light* 16). This latter remark can be read as Huxley's direct acknowledgement of the profound linkages between nature and the creative imagination, between temperate climes and religio-philosophical messages gleaned from them.

feely scenarios, and hypnopaedic rhymes, to a position in 'conflict with Authority' (*BNW* 161). Helmholz's development entails not only dissent from the official ideology, but also a radical move from social indoctrination to poetry. Even though in this newly acquired role of a visionary poet Helmholz is determined to pursue 'penetrating, X-rayish phrases' (165-6), there is a strong sense that, on all other counts, he is unsure of what words need to convey. Both his poem and his conversation with the Savage about the literature of the future are left open-ended. The poem only attempts to negotiate the romantic chasm between the tangibly 'squalid' reality and something incomprehensibly 'solid', and therefore concludes with a question mark. The question of the subject-matter of literature is never resolved either: Helmholz 'was silent; then, shaking his head, "I don't know," he said at last, "I don't know."' (166). In contrast to these uncertainties, Huxley finds fault with Wordsworth's more assertive awareness about the purpose of writing, which degenerates into a resolute didacticism. Instead of drawing inspiration from experience, Wordsworth, in Huxley's appraisal, ends up shutting 'his ears and himself dictates the lesson he desires to hear' (*DWYW* 118). The reversal of Helmholz's position from teacher to poet may indicate the avowed perceptiveness of his poetic mind to a knowledge that lies outside the range of the lived experience, its openness to inflows of new sensations, and readiness to take fresh directions. From this perspective, Helmholz appears to espouse a distinctively romantic sensibility which is untarnished by loyalties other than to the imagination, and thereby charts a further development of the English poetic mind.

Because of the detectable traces of the English poetic mind, Helmholz's ascent to poetry is administered without the immediately available ladder of tradition. In practically all respects, the Eliotic theory of tradition appears to be dethroned in *Brave New World*: not only does the World State's socio-cultural ecology forbid ancestral voices which may 'assert their immortality most vigorously', but Helmholz is also never shown to 'obtain it by great labour' (Eliot, 'Tradition' 37). While the Savage's mediation of Shakespeare bespeaks a deadness of the obtained tradition, Helmholz's poetic mind does not mediate tradition in any allusive way. On the contrary, whatever recognizable strands of tradition the foregoing analysis has discerned emerge from his latent power of imagination. In this

sense, tradition is made to collapse into a subliminal, unconsciously recoverable knowledge and experience. However, this process is not irreversible. Haunted by the sense of 'a presence', Helmholz's poem marks a major advance towards recovering tradition from the subliminally active energy, coterminous with God. Just as Eliot problematizes tradition when it is deplorably absent ('Tradition' 36), Helmholz writes about absences in order to summon up their essence (*BNW* 162). Furthermore, one cannot ignore the fact that Huxley's own theory contains a distilled version of the romantic mind which is essentially incongruous with its misappropriations in a World State. True, for its ideology this theory quite heavily leans on predominantly international religio-philosophical influences, silenced into a safe mode because they point up the vision of a divine ground. But these foundations are reinforced by the recurrent idiom of a native school of psychology concerned with the Wordsworthian exploration of the poet's evolution.

Conclusion

Within its dystopic parameters, *Brave New World* not only discloses mounting anxieties about the future of philosophy and art, but it also taps into the problems surrounding the continuity of the national imagination. In reshaping the national cultural scene into a confining environment dominated by the misappropriated and vacuous uses of proverbial sayings and Shakespeare, Huxley reaffirms that any wilfully devised projects that aim to preserve and reproduce tradition will trigger further usurpations. In an attempt to redress such a deficient environment, the novel supplies a theory of the romantic mind, which Huxley associates with a progressive strand of the Wordsworthian imagination. This theory is devised to render opposition both to the popular and institutionalized abuse of cultural values, and to a deadness of the constantly recycled tradition. Through some of the ascertainable homologies between Helmholz's personality and its relegated religio-philosophical origins, the novel inscribes a visionary tradition on the English poetic mind. This newly forged, albeit ambivalent, linkage is inseparable from Huxley's wider reactions against the defacement of the English countryside, unable to grant the poet any (re)creative impulses. The fact that Helmholz, who comes to embody the ascent of a visionary poet, is made to depart from a defiled England signals the ultimate dissent of his

romantic mind from the largely counter-pastoral condition of the World State. His imminent expulsion emphasizes the centrality of a religio-philosophical tradition to the poetic imagination. Even though the poet faces plausible extermination on the World State's warrant, he is equipped with a viable, yet socially unheeded, power to recollect tradition in solitude.

At the same time, one may not forget that Helmholz's re-invocations of tradition importantly stem from his elite eugenic background. This contingency leads us to the question of social hierarchies, with which Huxley furnishes the World State in response to England's dysgenic drift.

3.3. Science and Social Hierarchies

Introduction

A national orientation of science highlights an applied aspect of scientific research and technological advance, which tangibly contributes to the nation's well-being, general development, and international profile. In their appreciation of science as a formative force of national identity, Carol Harrison and Ann Johnson place a further premium on the bond that scientific and technological progress has been forging between the state and its citizens since the Enlightenment, serving as an arguable indicator of national distinctiveness. They contend that '[s]cience and engineering become "proof" that the nation can improve the living conditions of citizens, "proof" that the nation and its citizens are modern, and "proof" that they are economically and militarily competitive in a global world' (8). In endorsing science as a testimony to national superiority, the above citation points to a related series of questions regarding the application of Britain's scientific capacity during the interwar years. In a British context, one such project included the development of the Science Museum. According to Tom Scheinfeldt, the governmental and public support for the Museum was meant to channel the nation's scientific achievements into 'the cause of peace and renewal, and to ensure that the fallen had not died in vain' (46). However, the Museum's peace-keeping pledge had been gradually eroded by its newly avowed position as 'an instrument of industrial power, national security and military strength' (Scheinfeldt 52), until the geopolitical situation in 1930s Europe ultimately forced the Museum to take up 'the imperial banner' (55). Britain's renewed attention to science as a form of national prowess demonstrated, in the words of Michael Adas, 'the great strength and staying power of scientific and technological gauges of achievement and capacity' (401), a tendency that had additionally increased the scientist's socio-political roles.

The scientist's growing leadership in such particularly pressing issues as social hierarchies and nation can be seen to inflect eugenic discourse in interwar Britain. The initial signs of refocusing a eugenic agenda from nature to nurture began to surface after 1926 (Soloway 173). Indeed, A. M. Carr-Saunders, an English biologist, concluded his *Eugenics* (1926) with a proposition of 'a wise social

philosophy' which bound up differential fertility among classes with the social circumstance of prosperity, and called to raise the living standards of 'the less prosperous classes', as well as to direct expenditure towards education (252). In his study of British racial science, Gavin Schaffer contends that the 1930s saw a major shift in eugenic thinking as a result of left-wing opposition and the rise of Nazism in Germany (26). Not only did Julian Huxley and his co-authors of *We Europeans* (1935) disavow class and nationality as scientifically unfounded social constructs (93, 107), but they also cautioned against the ongoing manipulation of human biological difference for political purposes, this being 'an attempt [...] to find a firm basis in objective scientific ideas and policies which are generated internally by a particular economic and political system, and have real relevance only in reference to that system' (287). Much as this disavowal posed a challenge to a conventional outlook on society, it was driven by its authors' political will and therefore failed to bring down the scientific curtain on class and nationality.

Social hierarchies remained a recurrent political and scientific trope in interwar Britain. In his account of class, David Cannadine maintains that the danger of social unrest that threatened British society had led such different politicians as Ramsay MacDonald and Stanley Baldwin to share the 'idea of British society as free from collective identities and class conflict' (138). This professed equilibrium was arguably reinforced by what William Rubinstein interprets as a 'policy of accommodation and concession' with which the Establishment treated outright radicals (9). Whereas the character and scope of this policy can be disputed, the fact that Britain's social hierarchies were shaken, yet survived the collapse of their counterparts in Russia, Germany, Austro-Hungary and Turkey, speaks for itself.

Brave New World, along with Huxley's other interwar writings, bears witness to an orientation of science compounded by the questions of power, of the scientist's social role, eugenics and hierarchies. Voicing concern about science as 'a menace to stability' (*BNW* 198), Mond does not 'allow it to deal with any but the most immediate problems of the moment' (200). In 'Science and Civilization' (1932), Huxley strikes a chord resonant with that of the World Controller, calling for 'a lot of science, well applied' (106). Following this call is an appeal to dictatorship and scientific propaganda as 'the only means for saving humanity from the miseries of

anarchy' (Huxley, 'Science' 111). Mond's and Huxley's respective discourses on science come across as exclusively utilitarian, aiming to extinguish instability. Interestingly, in one of the early essays on cognitive distinctions between nations, Michael Demiashkevich links Huxley's fondness for applied science to particular strands of conservatism: 'This tendency of Mr Huxley's is perhaps a result of the Briton's desire to justify his scholarship by service to his readers and of the wish thus to square his avid intellectual curiosity with the condemnation of theoretical knowledge when divorced from life and service' (136). If read from this angle, the emphases that both Mond and Huxley lay on applied science suggest their complicity.[39] For a moment, Mond emerges as Huxley's spokesman and, by extension, a reactionary conservative who treats pure science as a 'subversive enemy' (*BNW* 198). Just as Mond defends the status quo of his World State by means of eugenics and conditioning, Huxley feels it necessary that similar means should be deployed in his society. Mond's experiments conform to 'a cookery book, with an orthodox theory of cooking that nobody's allowed to question, and a list of recipes that mustn't be added to except by special permission from the head cook' (199). Where Mond takes centre stage as 'head cook' in the World State, Huxley assumes an almost identical, albeit far less imposing, role in preparing 'a kind of practical cookery book of reform' in *Ends and Means: An Enquiry into the Nature of Ideals and into the Methods Employed for Their Realization* (1937). Undoubtedly, there is very little comparison between Huxley as a latter-day public moralist with political, economic, educational recipes and warnings (*EM* 9), on the one hand, and Mond as a self-proclaimed servant of other people's happiness, on the other (*BNW* 201). Yet the culinary metaphor they both use to describe the different constituencies of planned action may be indicative of the special importance that applied science acquires during the 1920s – 1930s.

In fictional terms, Mond's 'orthodox cooking' radicalizes eugenic thinking and social hierarchies. Such a trend reinforces, in Joanne Woiak's view, social class prejudice, which 'was always the predominant factor in British eugenics [...]' (176). Indeed, in 'On the Charms of History and the Future of the Past' (1931), Huxley contests 'the fruits of universal education' propagated by thinkers like Godwin and

[39] June Deery also records 'Huxley's fondness for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*' (171), which can be seen as an indication of his esteem for applied knowledge.

Shelley. Huxley's faith in eugenic hygiene overtakes their democratic ideal: 'Nature [...] does rather more, nurture rather less, to make us what we are than the earlier humanitarians had supposed' (*MN* 151). At a later date, 'What is Happening to Our Population?' (1934) conveys Huxley's particularly outspoken attitude to a proliferation of defectives amongst the 'social problem group' of English society, as opposed to the 'bourgeoisie'.[40] Unless sterilization as 'a mild measure' is fully legalized, he offers a rather grim prospect for England: '[I]n a century or two, [...] a quarter of the population of these islands will consist of half-wits. What a curiously squalid and humiliating conclusion to English history!' (150). Huxley's highfalutin angst not only indicates his loyalty to heredity, but is also deeply enmeshed in class-ridden rhetoric. In 'A Horrible Dilemma' (1936), Huxley further problematizes the application of scientific principles to England's national life. This essay features a conflicted understanding of a good-natured England which uniquely affords to have 'unarmed policemen, freedom of speech and *habeas corpus*' ('Dilemma' 213). Yet Huxley is anxious that this very democratic England may soon break down, unless what is deemed to be undemocratic planning is utilized on a large scale.

Additionally, one cannot neglect some wider transitions taking place in Huxley's own scientific and political outlook at the time. A renunciation of the 'philosophy of meaninglessness' in *Ends and Means* permits Bernfried Nugel to argue that Huxley holds 'a position of autonomous morality based on mystical insight', which stands 'in sharp contrast to his agnosticism up to the beginning of the 1930s [...]' (50). Where Nugel attributes this shift to the moral philosophy that Huxley came to acquire in the late 1930s, Robert Baker contends that Huxley's original dismissal of total theories as fictions is superseded by his adherence to a 'totalizing end' embedded in 'the scientific-mystical conception of the world' ('Science' 58). In this way, Huxley may have arrived at what he posits as 'the fragmentary outline of a synthesis' (*EM* 330), but the fictional realization of this synthesis remains unfulfilled. Indeed, the emergence of such social physicians as Dr

[40] In contrast, H. G. Wells and his co-authors of *The Science of Life* (1929-1930) refer to the 1929 Report of the Mental Deficiency Committee, which indeed records an increase in the number of defectives in the population of England. However, unlike Huxley, Wells [et al.] explain away this growth in terms distant from class discourse: 'The birthrate of defectives it seems has not risen, but the defective children have been better taken care of and have survived. So that they in turn are capable of parentage' (*Science* 875).

Miller in *Eyeless in Gaza* (1936) and Mr William Propter in *After Many a Summer* (1939) is barely carried out beyond a schematic outline. Dr Miller is only a minor character; his vision of compassionate mankind originally amuses Anthony Beavis, who will only later grasp the doctor's anthropological views about the unity of mankind (*EG* 421). Mr Propter in turn stands up against the meaninglessness of pure science, nationalism, and capitalism, all destructive to human life; yet his professed 'liberation from personality, liberation from time and craving, liberation into union with God' prove mainly his own private persuasions (*AMS* 110). This lack of Huxley's thorough reaffirmation of his newly espoused outlook signals continued uncertainties about the ways in which moral philosophy and mysticism may be reconciled with the social applications of science.

If viewed in the context of the aforesaid trends in British science, Huxley, who intermittently lived abroad and eventually left England in 1937, cannot be easily fitted into the mainstream of nationally conscious dispositions. On the contrary, his steady interest in pacifism, which took permanent hold in the mid-30s, wars with the contemporary militarization of the national scientific capacity, as exemplified by the history of the Science Museum. Similarly, a gradual recognition of nurture and environment in the national eugenic discourse clearly contrasts with Huxley's repeated emphasis on hereditary forces and class distinctions. Given these apparent frictions in the understanding of how science may and ought to be applied in a national context, this section argues that Huxley's vision of a World State, articulated in an absurdly satirical mode, is nevertheless governed by his reaction against a dysgenic and egalitarian dissolution of England, and by his reaffirmation of social hierarchies. In what follows I seek to contend the ways in which *Brave New World* derives its relevant meanings from the perceptions of science as power, science and society, all central to interwar constructions of England.

1. Power of Science

The profile of science as power can be better understood through the opposition of civilization and savagery dramatized in *Brave New World*. To be sure, this antinomy comes to the fore in Huxley's essays denouncing 'the State of Nature and the Noble Savage' (*MN* 142), which was promoted by, among others, D. H. Lawrence. On

witnessing 'the deep-rooted weed of primitive human life' in a Native American village, Huxley passes a seemingly conclusive judgement: 'If Miahuatlan were the only possible alternative to Middlesborough, then really one might as well commit suicide at once. But luckily it is not the only alternative' (*BMB* 250). However, what originally appears as a clear-cut distinction between the two alternatives becomes blurred in an analysis of Huxley's construction of England, which has been absorbed into the World State. Making their way to the Reservation in an aeroplane, Bernard and Lenina grow aware of an electrified frontier separating civilization from savagery (*BNW* 100). They also find out that '[t]here is no escape from a Savage Reservation' (98). This knowledge is enhanced by the sight of scattered bones and carcases of the animals, which attempted to trespass. Where humans, on both sides of the border, have accepted the territorial divisions imposed by civilization on savagery as 'the geometrical symbol of triumphant human purpose' (100), nature continues to render them provisional, if life-threatening. Aside from putting up 'the destroying wires', the World State has tamed outlying savagery by means of mass destruction: '[S]avages won't do you any harm. They've got enough experience to know that they mustn't play any tricks' (101). Each time the pilot, who has brought Lenina and Bernard to the pueblo, comments on the safety measures that aim to entrench savagery, he laughs continually. His unchecked hilarity at seeing the animals' skeletons and recalling the gas attacks is inseparable from Mond's graphic recollection of the 'Nine Years' War' of A.F. 141, during which anthrax bombs were initially tested. Barely 'louder than the popping of a paper bag', the bombs are reported to have played formidable havoc: 'An enormous hole in the ground, a pile of masonry, some bits of flesh and mucus, a foot, with the boot still on it, flying through the air and landing, flop, in the middle of the geraniums – the scarlet ones; such a splendid show that summer!' (53). Heightening the gruesome incongruities of a mechanized war in contrast to a splendour ascribed to geraniums, Mond's account is riddled with a fear of destruction. As these images are clearly evocative of atrocities of the Great War, one is reminded of a genuinely perverse welcome given to destruction in the final scene of *The Heartbreak House* (1919). In this pungent critique of the purpose and perceptions of war, G. B. Shaw's demonstrates how an air raid may elicit a response commensurable with that of the World State's pilot; Mrs

Hushabye jubilantly announces: 'Did you hear the explosions? And the sound in the sky: it's splendid: it's like an orchestra: it's like Beethoven' (*House* 158). Where Shaw's play targets the Great War as a faulty release from the boredom of civilized life, *Brave New World* problematizes the degree to which the 'splendour' of destruction is a valid token of civilization or, in Huxley's contemporary context, national prowess. In this respect, Huxley is not a solitary thinker; in the first volume of *Equality* (1931), R. H. Tawney shares his first-hand experience of the Battle of the Somme: 'It is possible [...] for a society to be heir to the knowledge of all the ages, and to use it with the recklessness of a madman and the ferocity of a savage' (212).

Brave New World proposes further equivalences between scientific civilization and savagery, almost immediately after Bernard and Lenina reach Malpais. The landing pad on the mesa reminds them of the Charing T-Tower; the drumbeat of the savage festivities sounds like 'the synthetic noises made at Solidarity Services and Ford's Day celebrations' (*BNW* 106); the onset of the ceremony is momentarily evocative 'of a lower-caste Community Sing' (107). True, most of these equivalences are soon dashed by the unsavoury presence of poverty, old age, and general squalor, against which Lenina has been conditioned. Yet the immediately spotted parallels may serve as indicators of a more profound structural similarity of the communal experience at work in their respective societies. Such coalescences are further nuanced by the use of drugs to alleviate and expand reality. In Mond's description, 'there's always *soma* to give you a holiday from the facts [...] to calm your anger, to reconcile you to your enemies, to make you patient and long-suffering' (209). By comparison, when Linda's longing for civilized life builds up in the Reservation, peyotl and mescal compensate for her requisite intake of soma; she relates her frustrations: 'But it makes you feel so bad afterwards, the *mescal* does, and you're sick with the *peyotl*; besides, it always made that awful feeling of being ashamed much worse the next day' (112). Possessing a more versatile and less defective drug, the civilized World State lifts tribal addictions to new levels. Along these lines, Huxley's essay 'Wanted, A New Pleasure' (1931) discusses a possible synthetic upgrade for the primitive sensations enjoyed in olden days. Wishing to be a millionaire who could invest in the production of 'a more efficient and less harmful substitute for alcohol and cocaine', Huxley comes, with a tinge of irony, as close to

Mond's exposition of soma as one can get: '[A]ll our problems (and not merely the problem of discovering a novel pleasure) would be wholly solved and earth would become paradise' (*MN* 254-5).

If Huxley is to present the continuity of pleasure in this format, other parallels between savagery and the World State merit attention. In *Brave New World*, Lenina eventually fails to find traces of a Solidarity Service, as an abrupt release of unfamiliar activity seems disorienting and therefore chaotic: '[F]irst one woman had shrieked, and then another and another, as though they had been killed; and then the leader of the dancers broke out of the line, ran to a big wooden chest [...], raised the lid and pulled out a pair of black snakes' (107). In contrast, the account of a Solidarity Service in which Bernard participates appears to be more stringently structured and logically builds up towards a communal orgy. Being more advanced in the exploitation of synthetic music and the effects of soma, the Solidarity Service overwhelms the human by these newly available stimuli. While Lenina senses 'the pulsing of fever in the ears' produced by the Malpais drums (107), Bernard's self-conscious detachment from the orgiastic celebration of Ford highlights an equivalent, yet technologically enhanced, power of a drumbeat: '[I]t was not the ear that heard the pulsing rhythm, it was the midriff; the wail and clang of those recurring harmonies haunted, not the mind, but the yearning bowels of compassion' (80-1). Insofar as Sigmund Freud is hailed as co-founder of this future world, his understanding of the necessity of religion for civilization, spelled out in *The Future of an Illusion* (1927), is realized nearly verbatim: '[E]ither these dangerous masses must be held down most severely and kept most carefully away from any chance of intellectual awakening, or else the relationship between civilization and religion must undergo a fundamental revision' (39). In ensuring that no such revision is ever effected, the World State invests its scientific energies in creating formal distractions which disallow a sensibility that heralds intellectual awakening. In this sense, the science of the future is seen to widen the gap between civilization and a truly religious experience, further reversing man to a savage condition.

The protagonist of *Eyeless in Gaza* accentuates this gap by suggesting an analogy between sacraments and machinery as formal epitomes of progress:

> The recent Catholic revival [*sic*] essentially a revival of sacraments. From a Catholic point of view, this is a 'sacramental age'. Magic power of sacraments regarded as

> sufficient for salvation. Mental prayer conspicuously absent. Exact analogy to the Webbs-Soviet idea of progress from without, through machinery and efficient organization. For English Catholics, sacraments are the physiological equivalents of tractors in Russia (386).

Even though the above shorthand appears in Anthony Beavis's diary in 1935, it looks back on the events that are most centrally concerned with earlier accounts of English history and its mediated representation in *Brave New World*. In a study of national religion, John Maiden has commented that the years 1927-1928 saw an 'anomalous' escalation of what came to be known as the 'Prayer Book controversy' (2). Seeking liturgical discipline, the bishops of the Church of England petitioned the reinstatement of reserved sacrament into religious service, a development seen by many as a move towards Roman Catholicism. Not only did this proposal deepen the age-old divide between the liberal Anglicans and the more traditional Evangelicals, but it also entailed heated newspaper coverage, wide discussion in England, Wales and Scotland, and two major debates in Parliament which yielded a marginal rejection. If one follows Maiden's argumentation, the Prayer Book controversy 'pointed to the existence of a considerable residual anti-Romanism within the Church and wider English culture' (105). If seen as a partial renegotiation of this debate, *Brave New World* divests England's global future of the anti-Catholic sentiment, thus necessitating both the preservation of the sacrament and the idea of transubstantiation. Whereas the aforesaid religious conflict in interwar England revolved around the insertion into the Prayer Book of 'unto us the Body and Blood of thy Son' (*Prayer Book* 334), allegedly indicative of Christ's physical presence during the Holy Communion; the Solidarity Service attended by Bernard makes use of '*soma* tablets' and 'strawberry ice-cream *soma*' (*BNW* 81), which are intended to anticipate Ford's coming with 'the feet of the Greater Being' (82). This bizarrely derogatory travesty of Catholic liturgy is complicated by the figure of the Arch-Community-Songster of Canterbury. On all counts, the Songster is a high-ranking ideologue who openly goes on amorous escapades with Lenina. Just as the liturgical use of soma deflects from, rather than incites, religious experience, the Songster's resolute indulgence in earthly delights has very little in common with religious ministry. These varying developments conflate the parodied Roman communion with some of the distorted manifestations of the English church establishment. In fusing the global and the native symptoms of official religion, the novel magnifies the ways

in which 'progress from without' guides, through soma and displaced moral values, an unholy sublimation of conventional religious containments into secular transcendences.

The other aspect of 'progress from without', to which Huxley alerts us in *Eyeless in Gaza* is linked to machinery (386). Beavis's remark about tractors in Russia evokes Huxley's own letter (of November 1930), in which he comments on the Soviet propaganda film *Earth* (1930), directed by Alexander Dovzhenko. Huxley admits that

> there are scenes showing the arrival of a motor tractor in a hitherto backward agricultural district. The machine is treated as tho[ugh] it were a god [...]. The thing was particularly striking [...] with large-letter captions stating: There is no God. Alas, there is always a tractor or something else to take his place (qtd. in Begnoche 52).

Huxley, in fact, overstates the film's ideological stress on the tractor, a machine which, much as it revolutionizes the speed of agricultural labour, is shown to grind to a halt even before it approaches the village. In addition, as one critic proposes, the film's final scenes create a utopian possibility by merging a renewal of life with the villagers' upward glances towards unseen aeroplanes (Papazian 424). Nevertheless, Huxley's susceptibility to the displacement of God by machinery, which is manifest in both the above letter and Beavis's remark, appears to be in line with Mond's ideology: 'God isn't compatible with machinery and scientific medicine and universal happiness' (*BNW* 206). The idea that social applications of science would most likely displace traditional creeds was acknowledged by, among others, J. B. S. Haldane (*Daedalus* 90), and one sees its subsequent comeback in Mond's exhortation. The World State, where the 'machine turns, turns and must keep on turning – for ever' (*BNW* 47), would not have been intimidated by a new tractor or an aeroplane. Yet Mond is wary of innovation: 'We don't want to change' (198). When rejecting 'A New Theory of Biology' as 'dangerous and potentially subversive', he fears a possible deconditioning of 'the more unsettled minds', should they comprehend that the purpose of human existence lies beyond their service to a steadily running machinery (159). By this Mond certainly means 'progress from within', potentially disruptive to the upper castes. Just as machinery endangers an agrarian community, a reinstatement of purpose in life may potentially upset the social stability of a technologically advanced society. Where machinery becomes an end in itself for the masses, purpose is an unwarranted path for the few. Here, as in

the novel's further treatment of social boundaries, Huxley's is a class-ridden dilemma, particularly concerned with intellectual elites' access to a divine ground. This ongoing anxiety is inseparable from the scientific and technological advances that threaten to discontinue religious experience.

2. Society and Science

With a strong demand 'to organize effectively across Britain as a whole' and the Labour Party's inability to act convincingly on the economic slump of the early 1930s (Robbins, *Britain* 291), the role of science in national affairs continued to grow. Set by *The Science of Life* (1929-1930), this trend is traceable through *We Europeans* (1935) to Lancelot Hogben's *Science for the Citizen: A Self-Educator Based on the Social Background of Scientific Discovery* (1938), all striving to reach a larger lay audience (Schaffer 49). Huxley may not have engaged directly and immediately with some of the ongoing debates in the national domain, as he was more permanently based abroad (Bedford 244, 274), but his essays nevertheless advocate applied science as a (cautious or desirable) solution to England's economic and socio-political plight. In 'Spinoza's Worm' (1929), Huxley's concern about the 'statesmanship of the immediate future' stems from his unsympathetic presentation of the working classes as being mutilated by machinery, which can be held responsible for their single-minded consistency. Huxley admonishes that a thoroughly consistent 'good citizen', who 'is less human, an imbecile or a lunatic' (*DWYW* 91), reduces democratic institutions to 'matters of secondary importance' and leaves plenty of room for psychological engineering (89). Huxley's later endorsement of psychology as 'the key to science', in 'Science and Civilization', is anything but ironic. Acknowledging the power of psychological compulsion over physical force, Huxley supposes: '[O]nce our rulers have been educated up to the point of realizing the extent of the power which psychological science has placed in their hands, strong government will cease to be necessary' ('Science' 110). However, the European experience of how brutal mechanized force could be deployed by dictators in sync with unscrupulous propaganda tones down Huxley's polemical fervour. In 'Writers and Readers' (1936), a note of warning re-emerges, as Huxley deems that an even educated population may surrender itself to a nationalist frenzy,

assisted by refined forms of mass manipulation: 'A system of propaganda, combining pharmacology with literature, should be completely and infallibly effective. The thought is extremely disquieting' (*OT* 29). Enhanced by the power of words and drugs, the potential of science is seen to affect not only individual people, but also national consciousness at large. In this context, Huxley's searching exposition of the scientist's socio-political capacities deserves to be explored further.

In *Brave New World*, the scientist's impact on whole communities is taken to the level of experiments which, through their geographic locations, betray immediate associations with colonial and racial constructions of England. True, Mond's accounts of the contrasting applications of science in Cyprus and Ireland primarily confirm the caste divisions within the World State: 'An Alpha-decanted, Alpha-conditioned man would go mad if he had to do Epsilon Semi-Moron work [...]. Only an Epsilon can be expected to make Epsilon sacrifices, for [...] they're the line of least resistance' (*BNW* 196). But, aside from testing the limits of the caste system, these experiments are barely incidental in their specific historical and cultural links to England. In relation to Cyprus, Huxley's novel avoids a direct reference to its population: 'The Controllers had the island of Cyprus cleared of all its existing inhabitants and re-colonized with a specially prepared batch of twenty-two thousand Alphas' (196-7). In this respect, the Cyprus experiment brings out Huxley's own caveat to a requisite division of society into classes. In 'A Note on Eugenics' (1927), he stipulates: 'A state with a population consisting of nothing but these superior people could not hope to last for a year. [...] If the eugenists are in too much of an enthusiastic hurry to improve the race, they will only succeed in destroying it' (*PS* 282). However, in addition to the imagined degeneration of Cyprus as a misconceived eugenic utopia, the political outcome of this experiment reprises, in a number of ways, the island's unsettled position under British rule in the early 1930s. Indeed, Cyprus started to make headlines in the British press and featured in Arnold J. Toynbee's *Survey of International Affairs* (1930-1931) after a nationalist push for union with Greece had gained momentum (Hill, vol. 4 544). One historian explains that the Cypriots' competing allegiances to Britain, Greece and Turkey disallowed any prospect of self-organization and sparked off mass protests which lasted throughout 1931, until the British military intervened (Crashaw 26-7). In *Brave New*

World, we hear echoes of these events in the social disorder and mutual defamation that lead to 'a first-class war' (197). As if picking up on the Cypriots' real failure of self-regulation, the surviving Alphas 'unanimously petitioned the World Controllers to resume the government of the island. Which they did' (197). This latter occurrence may have renewed the topicality of Cyprus for Huxley's contemporary readers. Even in the 1930s, when the British Empire was gradually losing territory, Cyprus, immune to inflation and high taxes, offered a comfortable place for retirement from other imperial positions (Buettner 234).

Whereas Cyprus entertains at least a failed attempt at self-regulation, Ireland is construed by Mond as an incapacitated outpost. The Irish experiment seeks to ascertain the extent to which extra leisure granted to the island's socially inferior population impacts on their state of happiness. Mond reports the reduction of 'all lower-caste working hours to three or four a day' as having caused '[u]nrest and a large increase in the consumption of *soma* [...]' (197-8). Put generally, this socially unsettling outcome confirms Mond's larger narrative that stresses, in Robert Baker's words, 'the crippling inability of humanity to discipline itself [...]' ('Science' 43). However, the indication that the 'whole of Ireland was put on to the four-hour day', which involved workmen and peasants (*BNW* 197-8), not only rehearses certain unflattering national stereotypes, but also evokes the concept of 'Home Rule', as understood by Tom Broadbent, the protagonist of G. B. Shaw's *John Bull's Other Island* (1904). Tom reassures that '[w]e English must place our capacity for government without stint at the service of nations who are less fortunately endowed in that respect; so as to allow them to develop to the English level of self-government [...]' (911). This far-reaching pledge for Ireland's bright prospects 'under English guidance' enabled Shaw to explore, ironically, yet approvingly, the clichés of the impractical Irish, led by the efficient English administrator (Kiberd 58). It is from this perspective that Mond can be seen to administer experimental measures in Ireland, as elsewhere within his regional competence. Whereas, up to the 1930s, the social policy of the Irish Free State focused somewhat excessively on the nation's moral profile, with the banning of divorce, restricted liquor consumption, and state protectionism against contraceptive advertisements (O'Halpin 117-18; Johnson 36), Mond's rationale for a lower-caste daily pattern of work and leisure is fixed at

‘[s]even and a half hours of mild, unexhausting labour, and then the *soma* ration and games and unrestricted copulation and the feelies’ (*BNW* 197). Along these lines, self-governing Ireland chances on its socially degraded and morally compromised version, fully contingent on the World State’s experimental remit. The novel’s accounts of social experimentation propel to the level of class discourse what was previously perceived as cultural difference in self-organization and government. Through the Irish and Cyprus experiments, *Brave New World* manipulates the contemporary constructions of nationality which are rendered into the insurmountable social prejudices of a global future. The scientist’s socio-political roles, as represented by Mond, are shown to capitalize on, and reinforce, this transition.

3. Social Hierarchies and Eugenics

Class arrangements and values came under the scrutiny of varying discourses produced during the interwar period. In *Daedalus, or, Science and the Future* (1924), Haldane not only warned against expansive urbanization, synthetic food (39), in vitro fertilization (43), and incessant conquests of space, time, matter and body (82), he also emphasized ‘the tendency of applied science [...] to magnify injustices’, which could only be extinguished by the ‘average man’ (85). It was perhaps this democratization of science that compelled Wyndham Lewis, a self-styled ‘Enemy’ of what he thought to be ‘leftist orthodoxy’, to object in *The Art of Being Ruled* (1926) that pure science, once ‘made available for a mass of people’, would translate into ‘some sort of weapon or tool at once, to get at food with, or sanctimoniously rip up their neighbour [...]’ (118). Lewis dismissed Haldane’s futurity as a ‘romance of destruction’ on the grounds that the knowledge of the ‘splendid few’ would unavoidably come into the average man’s possession (258). In his dismissal, Lewis proceeded from the fear of the masses as ‘obedient, hard-working machines, [...] as near dead (feelingless and thoughtless) as they can get, without actually dying’ (168). On this count, Bertrand Russell’s *The Scientific Outlook* (1931) may be read as a corrective response to the contestations of science as mass currency. In line with Wells’s ‘open conspiracy’, Russell projected a ‘scientific society’ in which the ‘governing class’ would withhold science from the ‘ordinary men’ (253). However,

Russell's project permitted the individual to exercise 'knowing' and 'feeling', to have an awareness of times and places, as well as of values. In addition, Russell conceded that if a scientific society is to be accomplished, this 'must be done tentatively and with a realization that the purpose of government is not merely to afford pleasure to those who govern, but to make life tolerable for those who are governed' (278). The 'average man', a 'mass of people', 'ordinary men', as opposed to the 'splendid few', or the 'governing class', reaffirm hierarchy. Class thinking appears to galvanize both critics and proponents of science, regardless of their political conviction. This tendency clearly suggests wider anxieties about sharper social boundaries envisaged as inevitable, or even convenient, for the realization of a global future.

In interpreting the pervasive mechanism of laboratory cloning, with which *Brave New World* opens, and the caste-specific hypnopaedia, which is meant to uphold the social stability, critics lay a justifiable stress on a Wellsian influence informing Huxley's conviction and imagination (*Hidden Huxley* 31-43; Woiak 170-2; Golovacheva 241-9). On presenting the reader with the process of caste production at the level of test-tube decanting and incubation, the novel moves on to reveal the method of 'Elementary Class Consciousness', taught at initial stages of socialization. Beta children are shown to receive, subconsciously, the fundamentals of class difference, broadcast through a loudspeaker:

> Alpha children wear grey. They work much harder than we do, because they're so frightfully clever. I'm really awfully glad I'm a Beta, because I don't work so hard. And then we are much better than the Gammas and Deltas. Gammas are stupid. They all wear green, and Delta children wear khaki. Oh no, I *don't* want to play with Delta children. And Epsilons are still worse (*BNW* 35).

The Brave-New-Worlders' class consciousness is first biologically determined, and then implanted into their social experience and individual perceptions. This process takes its tack from Wells's *The First Men in the Moon* (1901). Dr Cavor, the novel's space traveller, records: 'In the moon [...] every citizen knows his place. He is born to that place, and the elaborate discipline of training and education and surgery he undergoes fits him at last so completely to it that he has neither ideas nor organs for any purpose beyond it' (522-3). One learns later that the Selenites' body shapes range from 'wobbling jellies of knowledge' to those of machine-tenders, with a specially nourished 'extended hand' (*FMM* 524-5). These physical markers

epitomize the lunaries' hierarchies. In *Brave New World*, in a marginally more humanizing fashion, caste distinctions are primarily associated, aside from intelligence, with height and body mass, which is levered into view through Bernard's 'physical inadequacy': 'He stood eight centimetres short of the standard Alpha height and was slender in proportion' (68). Despite the smoothly running process of fertilization and breeding, this Fordian world is not insured against accidents whose provenance, as is the case with Bernard's alcoholized blood-surrogate, can only be speculated about.

The few images of a lower-caste presence, registered in Huxley's novel, take on a vividly derogatory tonality, which is pointed against the dehumanizing effects of capitalist production. Gammas, Deltas and Epsilons appear as a nondescript mass: 'Like aphides and ants, the leaf-green Gamma girls, the black Semi-Morons swarmed round the entrances, or stood in queues to take their places in monorail tram-cars. Mulberry-coloured Beta-Minuses came and went among the crowd' (*BNW* 66). When occasionally individualized, like the liftman at the Hatcheries and Conditioning Centre, the lower castes are almost certainly simian creatures, only capable of obeying repeated orders and existing in the 'twilight of [their] own habitual stupor' (63). Besides, Huxley is known to have espoused the samurai idea of governance within a scientifically planned state (*Hidden Huxley* 41; Woiak 171). In concrete terms, this means, as originally proposed in *A Modern Utopia* (1905), an institution of a non-hereditary class of voluntary administrators, morally upright and specially trained; as Wells propounds: 'Any intelligent adult in a reasonably healthy and efficient state may, at any age after five-and-twenty, become one of the *samurai*, and take a hand in the universal control' (*MU* 278). This prospect of samurai meritocracy is realized, as has been discussed in section 3.1, as an antidote to Britain's contemporary power structures.

Despite there being a lucid Wellsian streak in what Huxley conceptualizes as a scientifically rationalized society, *Brave New World* enforces, not only satirizes, certain ramifications of English class systems. Huxley's one-time exposure to the industrial north of England raised his awareness of the nearly impregnable social boundaries, additionally magnified by education. In 'Abroad in England' (1931), he remarks: 'Class barriers are everywhere high; but in no country of the West are they

so high as in England' (51). The hordes of the unemployed and destitute that Huxley observes put him off further, and he only cherishes the hope that they 'don't find [these 'alien Englands'] quite so awful as I find them' ('Sight-Seeing' 72). Huxley's reaction to social difference seems symptomatic of a larger response to class-ridden narratives within an English context. David Cannadine conflates the interwar retreat of the upper-class elites from the national scene with a changing pattern of the political life, which comes to be dominated by the middle classes (Cannadine 129). This economically secure 'bourgeois' preponderance, regardless of its political orientation, is believed to have created, in pursuit of sustaining the social order, 'the traditional view of the decade as one of suffering for the workers' (Pugh 88). Such sympathy for the lower classes can be perceived to ensure the idea of national unity, especially in times of an underlying social upheaval. One such example of a unifying discourse is provided by Stanley Baldwin in his collection of speeches and addresses *Our Inheritance* (1927). Revisiting the growth of maritime trade in English history, he puts forward a holistic vision of the nation, divested of such 'old invidious expressions' as 'the gentry, or the middle classes, or [...] the lowest classes' (Baldwin, *Inheritance* 17). In lieu of these categories, Baldwin vouches for merit unimpeded by 'Government interference' (*Inheritance* 17). Messages like these attribute the nation's social cohesion not to class, but to individual import. Where Baldwin seeks to individualize social groupings in their contribution to national life, *Brave New World* decisively ties individuality to class. When flying back with Foster to London, Lenina is reminded of her hypnopaedic 'wisdom' by the sight of a lower-caste monorail station: 'Every one works for every one else. We can't do without any one. Even Epsilons are useful. We couldn't do without Epsilons' (*BNW* 75). Endowing Epsilons with a socially indispensable function, Lenina and Foster, both Betas, agree that the lower castes are only different in how they are cloned and conditioned. Huxley may be genuinely critical of these ostensibly sympathizing middle-class attitudes towards those who are down below on the social scale, yet his self-conscious distance from the alien industrial north is alarmingly consonant with '"I'm glad I'm not an Epsilon,' said Lenina, with conviction' (76). Huxley's ambivalent views on the lower classes, their merit and individuality, signal his deep-laid conflict about a future endurance of class systems.

Whereas the World State's eugenics and hypnopaedia ensure the impenetrability of the social boundaries, the class systems of interwar England could allow membership in elites through education. To this effect, Rubinstein contends that growing access to prestigious public schools and Oxbridge enabled the more affluent middle classes to move up the social ladder (7). This inter-class mobility supposedly acted as a safety-valve for the otherwise challenged hierarchical order. Huxley's imaginative arrangement of elite education supplies a critical comment on these contemporary social tendencies. Remaining 'reserved exclusively for upper-caste boys and girls' (*BNW* 145), Eton is shown to accommodate children with a class range from Alpha-Double-Plus to Beta-Minus. While we are left to wonder what elementary physics is delivered in the Alpha classroom, Betas are busy with personal hygiene and geography, both essential to instilling a uniform set of competences and values. In forcing its Beta students to go through 'constant drilling', because some of them happen to be sexually different from sterile 'freemartins', and making them laugh at difference, as presented in the film about savage culture (146), Eton teaches not to aspire, but to acquiesce. As the school library is stocked with reference books only, even the Alphas, regardless of their training in physics, may not be encouraged to deviate from the norm. Huxley uses Eton, of which he had first-hand knowledge as both student and teacher, to mark up caste belonging, but his satire calls into question the validity of elite education as a designated path for class mobility.

Unlike school education, sport is imposed on the whole society portrayed in *Brave New World*. Applied science enables such ludicrous futuristic extensions as Riemann-surface and centrifugal bumble-puppy tennis, escalator squash, and gymnastics. Most universally Brave-New-Worlders play obstacle and electro-magnetic golf. Before the Solidarity Service, Bernard is accosted with a question about the variety of golf he played last. As he has to admit that 'he had been playing neither', this triggers sheer astonishment and 'an awkward silence' (80). Later in the novel, Lenina suggests playing 'a round of Electro-magnetic Golf at St. Andrews', which Bernard declines as 'a waste of time' (87). Bernard's dismissal of golf betrays his social non-adherence; it also characterizes this sport's pervasive popularity in the World State. In a sense, Huxley targets the contemporary encroachment of American

life-styles which hailed golf as 'a new religion' (Meckier, 'Golf' 242). However, this comparison tends to overlook the Scottish origins of golf and its specifically English phenomenon. As a game appealing to all social classes, golf enjoyed its peak moment in the 1930s, and St. Andrews continued to grant access to its golf links to everyone without payment (Cousins 95). In England, though, golf was frequently 'an occupation of affluent men' (Pugh 288), because golf courses there, as elsewhere in Britain, were associated with clubs which maintained strict requirements for the players' social standing. Municipal golf courses provided an alternative to elite membership (Hamilton 226). Similarly to these divisions, in *Brave New World*, upper-caste individuals like Lenina and Foster belong to the 'Stoke Poges Club House', whereas lower-caste golfers are reported to return 'from their separate course to the metropolis' (74). Involving the consumption of 'elaborate apparatus' and transport, golf dominates the global patterns of leisure. But it fails to unite the social disparities, as hierarchies persist both on separate golf courses and in the use of transport. Highlighting the antinomy of the upper-caste helicopter and the lower-caste monorail, the novel emphasizes how disparate social groups are ultimately locked in their manufactured habitats, which crucially undermines the idea of nationality vested in sport.

In a BBC broadcast 'Causes of War' (1934), Huxley capitalizes on sport and other competitive activities as partial cures for boredom, which, in his opinion, constitutes 'one of the main psychological reasons for nationalism and so, indirectly, for war'. Aligning himself with this statement, Dr Miller, in Huxley's *Eyeless in Gaza*, advocates games as 'the greatest English contribution to civilization [...]. Much more important than parliamentary government, or steam engines, or Newton's Principia. More important even than English poetry. Poetry can never be a substitute for war and murder. Whereas games can be. A complete and genuine substitute' (389-90). Here, the Scotsman Miller primarily implies football, a game that calls for a team spirit. The fact that the Brave-New-Worlders privilege golf signals that this sport is either less competitive than football or not genuinely English. Lenina's mention of St. Andrews of all geographic locations outside of England is quite revealing in this matter. Huxley's own emphasis on football implies

that this English sport can grant its players a better release of social hostilities and a wider communication between different classes than golf.

Primarily founded on the rationalized applications of eugenics, the World State's caste hierarchies prove elaborate, yet not entirely effective, especially among the Alphas. The system's flaws are discernible in Bernard's reputedly inferior physique; they also take precedent in Helmholz's poetic deconditioning. Before exiling Helmholz and Bernard to the islands, for being in conflict with authority, Mond suggestively remarks: 'It's lucky [...] that there are such a lot of islands in the world. I don't know what we should do without them. Put you in the lethal chamber, I suppose' (*BNW* 201). This comment may explain that the lethal chamber is exploited for dealing with felonies other than dissent. But since Huxley leaves no further clue to instances punishable by death in *Brave New World*, other contexts of his writing can be helpful. A polemical resort to the lethal chamber by early twentieth-century British writers and social thinkers is well documented by Dan Stone (*Breeding Superman*) and David Bradshaw ('Eugenics') and includes, to name only a few, Wells's 'merciful obliteration of the weak',[41] Shaw's and the Webbs' penitentiary prescriptions, D. H. Lawrence's 'crystal palace' for the extermination of defectives. In contrast to these radical attitudes towards physical deformity, Huxley's *Crome Yellow* (1921) gives voice to Mr Scogan's version of a rational state in which a poet like Denis Stone would be a social misfit. In Scogan's project,

> It's difficult to see where you [Stone] would fit in [...]. You couldn't do manual work; you're too independent and unsuggestible to belong to the larger Herd; you have none of the characteristics required in a Man of Faith. As for the Directing Intelligences, they will have to be marvellously clear and merciless and penetrating. [...] No, I can see no place for you; only the lethal chamber (*CY* 187).

Stone's exclusion from a planned future may stem, as has been argued in the previous section of this thesis, from his continued adherence to a largely decayed literary tradition. But Scogan's anti-poetic cue also owes itself to a Platonic idea that poets generally endanger order with their vain imaginings, and therefore deserve to be banished from the Republic. Scogan opts for the lethal chamber, unavailable to Plato. Caricature resemblances between Scogan and Bertrand Russell, noted by

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[41] In *The Science of Life*, Wells and his co-authors further speculate about the need of the lethal chamber for humanity's benefit: 'A rather grim Utopia might be devised in which for some generations [...] inbreeding would be made compulsory, with a prompt resort to the lethal chamber for any undesirable results. A grim Utopia, no doubt, but in that manner our race might be purged of its evil recessives for ever' (307).

critics (Redina 69; Sion 21), lead to the latter's account of a scientific society that resorts to the lethal chamber, not for eugenic purposes, but in order to combat revolt that arises out of 'ill-disciplined intelligence' (Russell 257). Individual failure to conform to the rulers' solidarity is perceived as a menace to societies which have already purified themselves of physical deficiencies.

However, just as Russell nurtures reservations concerning the sadistic direction of what he calls 'power-knowledge' (273), Huxley is concerned with the lengths to which eugenic cleansing ought to be put. A precious clue to Huxley's ambivalences is held in his introduction (1934) to Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* novels. Setting out to challenge the zeal from which both humanity's finest and basest achievements spring, Huxley places Butler in line with Chaucer, whose alleged reluctance to paint and judge his characters in black and white tones, distinguish him as a mainstay of moderation and common sense. In Huxley's estimation, '[a]s a critic of life, if not as a poet, Butler was of the true Chaucerian lineage – a solitary voice crying – or rather gently and ironically murmuring – in the wilderness of Victorian zeal' ('Introduction' xvii). Butler is deemed to shy away from zeal by opposing prudish morality, medicalizing crime, and warning against unregulated mechanical progress. Apart from these moments, Huxley's introduction, like Butler's novels, is a reflective statement about eugenics. When Huxley notes the 'physical beauty of youth and the moral beauty of the simple virtues and natural pieties' ('Introduction' xxi), which *Erewhon* communicates to the reader, he comes to terms with the projected results of a eugenic policy. In *Erewhon* (1872) and *Erewhon Revisited* (1901), Butler constructs an isolated society entrenched, both physically and ideologically, in the repercussions of its own claustrophobia. A protectionist frame of mind, easily swayed by prophets and philosophers, did not only cause the complete annihilation of all the traces of technological progress, but also absolutized physical health and beauty. In this sense, Patrick Parrinder reminds us that the monstrous statues, placed at the entrance to Erewhon and sounding like organ-pipes, represent both the origins of Erewhonian eugenics and this society's fear of mechanical consciousness ('Utopia' 163; 'Entering' 18). These formerly radical attitudes have led Erewhon to the need of a readjustment. Still fearing 'universal dephysicalization', the Erewhonian society bans people with hereditary and transferable diseases from

procreation and sentences them to life imprisonment (Butler, *Erewhon* 73-4). This verdict criminalizes disease without inflicting death. Further to the above equation, Huxley proceeds to acknowledge Butler's interpretation of crime as disease: 'The Erewhonian philosophy robs mankind of one of its most ancient excuses for cruelty. If criminals are merely sick, then our sadism towards them remains unmitigated sadism and cannot disguise itself as a zeal for righteousness' ('Introduction' xix). Congratulating Butler on such hitherto unorthodox analogies, Huxley attributes his Victorian counterpart's alleged moderation to 'the rudiments of a poet' ('Introduction' xxii). Just as Butler protests against the 'too much zeal' of a post-Darwinian obsession with eugenic purity and unhampered progress, Helmholz's and Bernard's dissent run up against similar fixations in the World State. Either as criminals or as deconditioned malcontents these two characters face expulsion to the Falklands and Iceland respectively, rather than the lethal chamber. Mond diagnoses their varying conditions as a failure to conform: 'All the people who, for one reason or another, have got too self-consciously individual to fit into community-life. All the people who aren't satisfied with orthodoxy, who've got independent ideas of their own' (*BNW* 200). Thus, Mond fulfils Butler's prescriptions for dealing with crime and disease by segregation, and the danger of eradicating otherwise useful stocks is tentatively averted. But because there is nothing in Huxley's novel that indicates the islands' saving power, one cannot deny that they are an equally gruesome means of disposal of social disjecta.

Despite his caveat to some of the bleaker consequences of applied eugenics, Huxley sustains his unambiguous stance on social divisions, wherein 'Epsilon Semi-Morons' are disturbingly homologous with 'half-wits' from socially unprivileged classes ('Population' 148). At the same time, there is a sense that Huxley wishes eugenic controls to be more discriminate in treating what appear to be socially deviant cases that conceal talent or even genius. *Brave New World* makes, albeit precariously, provisions for the latter only amongst intellectually endowed upper-caste elites. This socially skewed prospect contrasts with the general drift of British eugenics, especially in the late 1930s, towards what Richard Soloway calls a 'eugenic and racial conscience' which was energized by a universal educational and scientifically verified promotion of healthy and useful stocks (310). True, Huxley did

not maintain formal links with the Eugenics Society throughout much of the interwar period (Bradshaw, 'Slump' 164). To a certain extent, this explains why he remained somewhat warily trapped in class thinking as late as *The Olive Tree* (1936), in which he notes: '[W]ritten propaganda is less efficacious than the habits and prejudices, the class loyalties and professional interests of the readers' (8). This remark is most probably a self-searching commentary on Huxley's own identity, shaped by his class belonging, education, and career. The fact that Huxley communicates a wider awareness of the old opinions that die hard additionally explains the robust endurance of class identities in his vision of a World State.

Conclusion

If, as Huxley posits in 'A Horrible Dilemma', the uncomfortable question about the survival of England, in any recognizable form, is one of scientific planning, *Brave New World* fulfils this programme in some of the most unprecedentedly thorough, yet disconcerting, ways. As the science of the World State conspires with some of the contemporary anxieties, England's religious outlook, colonial past, newly emerging mobility between classes, and eugenic conscience provide Huxley with relevant imaginative impulses. The World State thus recruits social experiment and eugenic controls, in order to rationalize the boundaries of social difference and invigorate hierarchical structures. Whereas the external enhancement of religious experience may have elicited Huxley's more pronounced scepticism, instances in which the global applications of science harden class discourse are surely less unequivocal. This contention by no means suggests that Huxley's largely satirical mode fails to comprehend some of the fundamental concerns about world unity, guided by science. On the contrary, in undermining the designated frontier between savagery and civilization, Huxley points up the dichotomy of internal and external progress. Yet, similar to a less zealous eugenic practice, the possibility of internal progress is exclusively reserved for those on the higher levels of an intellectual and, subsequently, social scale, which disallows class transitions in principle. Where *Brave New World* leaves the aforesaid arrangements open to dispute, Huxley's other statements made during the interwar years testify to his class-ridden mind-set, informed by a regressive understanding of ostensibly degenerative tendencies among

the 'social problem group'. On these grounds, Huxley's vision of a World State, satirical or not, cancels out not only equality, but any prospect of a class-free England.

Huxley's later avowal of ethics as an overarching principle of any political and economic agenda (*EM* 329) is foreshadowed by some of his earlier statements about the heroism of loving one's neighbour and about moderation, found in *Now More Than Ever* (ca. 1932) and the introduction to the *Erewhon* novels (1934) respectively. In *Eyeless in Gaza*, Beavis's concluding thoughts are guided by affection and compassion (421). Similarly, in *After Many a Summer*, Propter stresses compassion as 'an aspect of peace and a result of the same knowledge' (273). This emerging motif can be indicative of Huxley's gradual transition to a synthesis whereby science comes to embrace a religion of mysticism, as it ultimately does in a utopian community of constantly aware individuals, founded by a Scottish doctor and an Indian raja, and described in *Island* (1962). However, on the way to this fragile synthesis, Huxley, helped by his Californian experience, will project a largely insalubrious and decaying England. Playing down the applications of science and the romantic mind, both inspired by the Enlightenment, *After Many a Summer* presents England as a degenerating archive of morbid sensibilities. Applied science is shown to yield a subterranean 'foetal ape' (*AMS* 312), while poetry confines life 'between the covers of a book' (*AMS* 23). Perhaps clearer about the wrongs of the above scientific and poetic positions, Huxley summons up a version of England which is more alien and less conflicted than the one offered in *Brave New World*.

Conclusion

Being innovative and transgressive in scope, the utopian imagination refuses to be co-opted solely to the local and temporary contexts in which it operates. In their own unique ways, Benson, Wells and Huxley envisage a newness that decisively transcends their reconstructions of England, and thereby prefigures a horizon of ultimate possibilities. The lasting topicality of Benson's utopia is ensured by a positioning of nation-states within wider transnational entities; Wells's emphases on continuous progress are historically more reassuring than revolutionary upheavals; Huxley's investment in a tradition which would enable humanity's mystical unity provides an equally novel and stimulating orientation. At the same time, the utopian writings of Benson, Wells and Huxley reveal an ascertainable engagement with contemporary and modern constructions of England which were concerned with the nation's condition and continuity. The complex dialogue between the utopian imagination and nationally conscious discourses is engaged in the attempts to surpass contemporary England and thus enact a World State. This dialogue equally seeks to retrieve at least some vestigial moments of England, threatened by the arrival of a global future.

Benson's and Wells's alternative Englands emerge from their respective loyalties to Catholicism and Cosmopolis, whereas Huxley's vision of alterity is hostile both to world unity and to England's complicity with it. Such individual positions have a further bearing on these authors' constructions of England. Benson envisages world unity exclusively on the premise of England's continuing status as a nation. For Wells, England becomes superseded alongside other nations, yet it permits both topographic and conceptual occasions for the progression into a World State. Huxley makes England conspire with global influence, which only dissolves the nation's distinctive profile. Even though these imaginative transfigurations are differently pointed, they collectively testify to a conflicted exchange of energies between these writers' cosmopolitan conviction and their creative impulses, which continuously re-invent England.

The fictional and discursive aspects of this conflict involve topographies, literary tradition, religious sensibilities, political culture, and social hierarchies.

These aspects allow the relationship between England and a World State to be analytically established. On the level of topographies, England's absorption into a World State brings out competing prospects. On the one hand, London is shown to accommodate successfully the power and efficiency of the new socio-political arrangements, which render the symbolic significance of some of the English landmarks and institutions defunct (Benson and Huxley). London's involvement in a World State reveals an underlying anxiety about the endurance of national symbols, such as Westminster Abbey, being transformed by the proliferation of universal creeds. On the other, the regulatory mechanism of a World State is recruited to curb the contemporary disfigurement of the English landscape (Wells and Huxley). As the meaning of England is ultimately withdrawn from landscape (either in a future model of nature or in its parodic travesty), this process is intended to abort all attachments to the countryside, which had been turned into a cultural artefact and a commercial commodity. Displaced by the arrival of a World State, the cultural content of England guides Benson to settle for the recuperative role of a religious tradition, while Wells enables the survival of tradition in the form of a world brain. Huxley in turn exercises selection, when he inscribes a religio-philosophical tradition on the 'English poetic mind'. The latter serves as a vehicle for a hopeful, yet extremely fragile, transcendence of the culturally vacuous environment of a World State.

The utopian imagination and national consciousness are also engaged in a complex interaction with the contexts that renegotiate England's political culture into one dominated by supranational, region-based world controls. Because, prior to the pervasive shifts of the early twentieth century, Liberalism had resolutely epitomized and united England, its gradual demise found acute resonances in the studied utopias. Whereas Benson and Wells endow their protagonists with expressly Liberal leanings, thus creating a perceptual lens through which the effects of world unity on England would be evaluated, Huxley allows several narrative references to a Liberal, and therefore distinctly insalubrious, England. Even though such retrospective glances focus on an imperfect England, they clearly view the politics of Liberalism as a riposte to the largely repressive, authoritarian, and dictatorial regimes that a World State comes to enforce. The recurrent contrasts between the decaying Liberalism and the newly available world unity do not readily signal an overt conflict of authorial

allegiance. Rather, one becomes aware of a cautious dissociation from the England of ineffective continuity.

The displacement of Liberalism from the political contexts of a World State creates further opportunities for the reinstatement of social hierarchies. Just as the class politics of Liberalism were by no means egalitarian, the hierarchical structures of a World State vary from medieval power arrangements to scientifically reinforced castes. Undeniably, the deliberate regeneration of social distinctions is a phenomenon with implications far outside English consciousness. However, because the period of 1910-1939 renewed the persistent fear of the 'Deluge' in national life, the contemporary anxieties that approved of socially dividing lines as markers of time-tested continuity were resonantly English. The rigid hierarchical order that Benson, Wells and Huxley project on the whole of humanity firmly pivots on their espousal of social continuity.

Such preoccupations with continuity demonstrate not only an ongoing concern about the pressures of the moment, but they also display the terms and strategies whereby utopian fiction reconstructs England, often in vividly alternative forms. The utopian alterity remains nationally conscious, until a World State comes into full effect. But even then nationality may persist in feeble, yet detectable, forms. This uneasy reciprocity between the utopian imagination and national consciousness opens up a better understanding of the extent to which the nationally susceptible contexts of 1910-1939 continued to direct visions of world unity.

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