BY EUROPE, OUT OF AFRICA:
WHITE WOMEN WRITERS ON FARMS
AND THEIR AFRICAN INVENTION

By

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I am massively indebted to all around me for being able to produce this dissertation: family, teachers, and friends, as well as those writers and scholars I have come to know only through their work.

To start with the last first, this dissertation is its own kind of homage to Olive Schreiner and Karen Blixen whose lives and writing give it its subject. Although, in my analysis of their work, I am frequently critical of them, I have never lost the initial admiration for them as women and as writers that I formed when I first read them well over a decade ago. I am all too well aware that in applying the 20/20 vision of literary hindsight to their work I have applied the kind of scrutiny that, applied to my own work, would set it at nothing.

My indebtedness to literary scholars is abundantly apparent throughout the text: I depend heavily on the insights of Susan Horton, Robert Young, and Terence Ranger, for instance, in my analysis of Schreiner’s and Blixen’s inventions of "I," "farm," and "Africa." Transference to "Africa" of Edward Said’s insight that Orientalism as a discourse had material effects means that much of my work is underpinned by his work and that of Valentin Mudimbe. My
greatest debt, however, is to Raymond Williams, whose arguments in *The Country and the City* are crucial to this study. In addition, Williams’ reluctance to rule out "experience" lends theoretical credibility to my musings in Section 1, while his proto-postcolonial insights on emergent and vestigial, resistant and alternative culture color my observations on the cultural role of history and literature in inventing colonial and postcolonial Africa. Furthermore, Williams’ method, his socially committed scholarship, and his stylistic clarity provide a model I can only dream of emulating.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ................................................... ii

ABSTRACT ............................................................... vii

INTRODUCTION ......................................................... 1

CHAPTER 1
THE INVENTION OF THE "I" ........................................... 13
   Of Masks, and Masques, and Masquerades ....................... 41
   The Whites of Their "I"s: Miming Alterity
      from a Position of Racial Power .............................. 68
   Notes ............................................................... 86

CHAPTER 2
THE CHILDLESS MOTHER AND MOTHERLESS CHILD, OR THE ORPHANHOOD
   OF THE WHITE WOMAN WRITER IN AFRICA ......................... 94
   Notes ............................................................... 124

CHAPTER 3
THE POLITICS OF LANDSCAPE IN
   THE STORY OF AN AFRICAN FARM ................................ 129
   Notes ............................................................... 166

CHAPTER 4
FROM MOO MOO TO MAU MAU: OLD MACDONALD AND KAREN BLIXEN 173
   Notes ............................................................... 194

CHAPTER 5
VIOLENCE AND VOLUNTARISM:
   THE WILL TO POWER AND THE WILL TO DIE ....................... 198
   Notes ............................................................... 232

CHAPTER 6
X-ING OUT AFRICA TO PRODUCE SOMETHING NEW .................... 238
   Notes ............................................................... 273
Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

BY EUROPE OUT OF AFRICA:
WHITE WOMEN WRITERS ON FARMS AND THEIR AFRICAN INVENTION

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By Europe out of Africa: White Women Writers on Farms and their African Invention analyzes the cultural role of white women writers on farms in Africa, paying particular attention to the inventive oscillations in their work. Focussing on Olive Schreiner and Karen Blixen, but extending beyond them to Elspeth Huxley, Doris Lessing, and Nadine Gordimer, the study takes its structure from Blixen’s famous opening to Out of Africa, "I had a farm in Africa," and deconstructs the apparent simplicity and certainty of that statement.

Section one shows how the ability to talk as "I" involves complex negotiations of racial, gender, and class identity. While Blixen’s African experience enables her to forge an aristocratic identity by representing the loss of her farm in terms of pastoral elegy, the mission-raised
Schreiner presents her farm with relentless realism, looking for her Utopia in the future when women can take their place in the world without restriction.

Section two, leaning heavily on the work of Raymond Williams in *The Country and the City*, looks at the politics of landscape in Schreiner and Blixen, attempting to weigh the ideological baggage that comes with literary accounts of rural life in English. A comparison between Elspeth Huxley’s detective fiction, Doris Lessing’s *The Grass is Singing*, and Blixen’s account of the death of a Kenyan farm-laborer called Kitosch shows how the European discourses of ethnography, detective fiction, and colonial law all work together to claim disciplinary control over Africa and Africans.

Section three argues that "Africa" is a European invention, remarkably consistently used by Europeans as a site to write their own history. Ranging from images of Africa in Vergil and Petrarch, through what Martin Bernal calls the "fabrication" of Ancient Greece from 1785 on, to the canonical status of the racist image of Africa in *Heart of Darkness*, this section concludes that Europeans have not just written themselves through "African" experience, but attempted to write themselves into the African landscape through their graves and memorials.
INTRODUCTION

By Europe, Out of Africa: White Women Writers on Farms and Their African Invention analyzes the cultural roles played by white women writing on or about farms in South and East Africa, focusing mainly on Olive Schreiner and Karen Blixen, but with additional reference to Elspeth Huxley, Doris Lessing, Nadine Gordimer, and others. By decoding the apparent simplicity of Karen Blixen's famous opening to Out of Africa--"I had a farm in Africa"--this study reveals the underlying complexity of the politics of colonialism and imperialism. Its three sections explore the manner and effect of the various inventions--of "I", "farm," and "Africa"--in the writers' work: the first section addresses the ambiguous position of the colonial woman, simultaneously subject to Victorian and colonial patriarchy yet participating in the subjugation of a local black population, simultaneously at home and not at home in Africa; the second section traces how a tradition of the English pastoral influences and shapes representations of the African landscape, at times facilitating the occupation of the land by creating an occupation called farming; finally, the third section undertakes a very broad historical investigation of the invention of "Africa" by
European discursive practices, situating Blixen's and Schreiner's work in relation to the European memory-bank of literary and historical tradition that has tended to forget indigenous African experience.

In the past, critics have generally looked at the writers in this study separately, or in terms of their specific physical location, or in terms of their location within specific literary traditions. In the case of Olive Schreiner that has meant a split between the work of those critics who see her as primarily South African, the pioneer of a South African literary tradition, and the work of those critics, mainly outside South Africa, who place her writing and her politics in a British tradition. The split is perhaps an inevitable one, reflecting the actual splitting of her life between physical residence in South Africa and physical residence in Britain as well as the intellectual ambivalence created by being an "English South African."

Following the work of Homi Bhabha in particular, however, that very "ambivalence" in the colonial and postcolonial situation has become of central importance, countering the potential totalization of foundational studies of colonial discourse such as Said's *Orientalism*. In foregrounding such ambivalence, I am also picking up on the earlier insights of Raymond Williams in his accounts of the many layers of any given "culture," with residual and emergent traces, and alternative and oppositional practice
within what looks like a hegemony. With respect to women, who in South Africa in particular have had a long history of resistance, what I am interested in is the way that through both alternative and oppositional practice, the writers in this study offer residual histories as emergent culture; with respect to my own work, I hope that it too might be seen as "alternative," holding on to "residues" of previously oppositional practice (especially in the cases of Schreiner and Lessing) in order to promote an "emergent" culture in postcolonial Africa that can live up to the ANC ideal of being non-racial and non-sexist.

Whether it does so or not I cannot say. It is certainly, however, in keeping with current trends in postcolonial, cultural and gender studies which have already begun to break down the exclusivity of treatment of writers like Schreiner through their general impact on the discipline of English literature and sub-disciplines such as Victorian studies. The recent interest in the ways in which the domestic sphere influenced the imperial adventure has led, for instance, to studies like Anne McClintock's 1995 book Imperial Leather which looks at South African women writers from Schreiner on in terms of a "reformist" discourse of health and hygiene. Developing such trends, my work sets out not just to show how the apparent European/African split in fact holds Schreiner and Blixen together as individuals, but also how that common split
integrity marks Schreiner and Blixen as examples of similar forces of colonialism. While I pay attention to the specificity of local history in Kenya and in South Africa, I am at pains to demonstrate how these writers' literary constructions of "Africa," mainly for a European (or at least metropolitan) audience, contributed in similar ways to those histories. Among my arguments for linking the writers together as specifically women writers in colonial circumstances is the claim that narrow local focus on a specific area's politics tends to obscure the bigger picture of the ways in which patriarchy and capitalism work.

My interest in such issues does not stem solely, however, from academic and theoretical impulses. A large part of my interest depends on autobiography, as I share Schreiner's and Blixen's dislocating experience of having been a European in Africa. To parody Blixen, I might claim "I grew up on a farm in Africa," but the farm was hardly a farm, and the Western Cape was scarcely African. (In fact the Jeune Afrique atlas of Africa shows the Western Cape as inhabited by Europeans.) My father was the manager of a poultry business that provided day-old chicks and point-of-lay pullets to other poultry enterprises that provided the supermarkets with their chickens and eggs. My family lived in a three bedroom bungalow on the slopes of the Paardeberg, some ten dirt-road miles from the local post office, 16 miles from the nearest town--the wine-center Paarl, and some
40 miles from Cape Town where my brother and sister and I attended boarding school.

When I was still at the prep school, my father was invited by the headmaster to come and give a talk about chicken farming to the boarders. He started his talk by asking "What came first, the chicken or the egg?" I don't know whether he'd anticipated a riotous outbreak with half of the audience shouting "chicken", the other half "egg," but we were all too shy in the presence of someone's dad to offer much. So, rather undramatically, but very emphatically, Dad gave the answer that the chicken must have come first, the farmyard fowl being the descendant of some distant ur-chicken aeons ago in Asia. He had a picture of this bird, and very colourful and tropical it was, too. Now we all knew not to talk about "chicken or egg arguments" with the same certainty of indeterminacy.

In the same talk, my father demonstrated the great strength of a hen's egg, too, by summoning to the front of the room one of the biggest boys in the school, one Chris Hayward, a friend and classmate of mine, and son of a Karoo sheep-farmer. He gave Chris a fresh egg and told him to squeeze the egg as hard as he could at both ends to try to break it. Chris was somewhat reluctant to do so, and rightly so, for when he grasped the egg, it smashed in his hand with yolk and albumen oozing stickily through his fingers. It had been supposed to stay intact; obviously
Chris had been putting pressure in the wrong place, not exactly at the tips of the egg. Still, we knew that eggs were strong: most of us had seen photos of grown men standing on ostrich eggs, and many had even been to the tourist ostrich farms around Oudtshoorn and seen for ourselves.

A third memory, vaguer because less personal, is of the chick-sexers. They drove out from Somerset West for the day and had to have lunch provided in their break from picking up chick after cheeping day-old chick, turning them over in their giant palms and lobbing them in the appropriate box, female or male, valuable or reject. Theirs was an unimaginable task. Anything that had the word "sex" in it was unimaginable to me at that age, so I never dared ask how they did it, or what became of the males.

I offer these three images from my memories of farming in Africa—read, of the agri-business in South Africa—as they illustrate by their very banality that same ideological opacity that I have tried to illuminate in this three-part analysis of Blixen's opening clause from *Out of Africa*. My father's determined quest for an originary narrative, the strength and fragility of the eggshell, the determining nature of gender, all find analogies in my analysis: of the European use of evolutionary theory and of history; of the power and vulnerability of the oppressed; of gender-politics.
Autobiography also informs my interest in that last-listed category. Throughout our nine years at Clearsprings, my mother was homesick. Chronically, terminally homesick. She hated her life in South Africa and never even began to adjust. For much of the nine years we lived on the farm she was, I suspect, clinically depressed. As a child I knew that she was frequently required to see the doctor, and that she more frequently claimed to have reached the end of her tether. Sometimes she bemoaned having sacrificed the best years of her life to a place she hated. We, however, (my father, brother, sister, and I) liked our lives in South Africa and had little cause to be homesick for the dreariness of England. My mother was, therefore, even more isolated, as she had no ally among us children with whom to commiserate or plan joint plans of action for "going home."

My mother's experience, as a woman whose racial privilege led to an inner misery that her position as a woman trapped her in, informs my sympathy for the stifling power of colonialist patriarchy expressed by both Olive Schreiner and Doris Lessing. Similarly, her longing for a "home" that was elsewhere informs my reading of Schreiner's and Blixen's complex attitudes towards "home." This is especially the case because in the years since our departure from South Africa my mother appears to have romanticized her stay there, actively forgetting her misery and "inventing" a personal history in a way analogous to the process of
remembering and forgetting I describe in the last section of this work.

Besides all this, I could deconstruct my own parodic claim to have grown up on a farm in Africa by pointing out that, as a boarding school pupil, my growing up was done away from the farm in an environment essentially English, at one of South Africa's "top" private schools, a foundation with an invented tradition that epitomized Victorian educational principles. When we studied English we understood that the Leavisite canon was literature, and that South African literature was secondary (hence really second-rate), a sub-section of the real thing (and hence really sub-standard).

Thus, although we heard about Olive Schreiner, and knew of The Story of an African Farm, we didn't study her any more than we studied local, contemporary black authors. Instead, as you would expect of a white liberal institution, we read Cry, the Beloved Country and short stories of the other white writers who at that time comprised South African literature (as opposed to black South African literature, which was a separate category, even subber than the sub).

Our teachers were probably more enlightened, I suspect, than this account gives them credit for; certainly they never explicitly declared the relative lack of value of South African or black South African writing, or African writing generally, but the syllabuses they were required to
teach were posited on that assumption. So I have some idea of the politics of canons. In fact, growing up in South Africa, even as a highly privileged white child, made the belief that all writing is in the last analysis political axiomatic for me. What one does as a writer and person, given such an axiom, is by no means predetermined, and I am constantly aware of the potential inconsistency of my political quietism (or whatever the opposite of "activism" is). I am also aware of the feebleness of my continued liberalism, a sort of soft-leftishness, in the face of forces of local reaction and global capital.

Feeble or not, though, my background seems inevitably to have led to my strongly privileging a socially-conscious ethic, that assumes the permeability and artificiality of boundaries between literature, politics, economics, history, sociology, and so on. Such an attitude means that I treat Blixen's and Schreiner's generically different autobiographical "inventions" in similar ways, finding it impossible to untangle the literary from the testimonial as Nadine Gordimer has recently attempted. It also means that I treat Schreiner's and Blixen's life-works, with their public appearances and their published work in fictional and non-fictional modes, as if they were more or less of a piece.

In sum, therefore, the great fascination of writing about white women writers on farms in Africa lies for me in
a rich mix of private and personal, political and theoretical concerns. I hope I have done justice to the complexity and confusion of Blixen's and Schreiner's position in the power relations of gender, race, class, nation, locality, occupation, and so on. In trying to keep all these balls in the air at once, I have occasionally felt the panic of the novice juggler; if that panic manifests itself in confusion, my only defence is that the clarity of juggling with only one ball at a time isn't exactly worth much.

Notes

1. For a crystalline summary of Bhabha's expansion of Said's arguments, see Robert J.C. Young's Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race 160-162. Young stresses that "in making ambivalence the constitutive heart of his analyses, Bhabha has in effect performed a political reversal at a conceptual level in which the periphery---the borderline, the marginal, the unclassifiable, the doubtful---has become the equivocal, indefinite, indeterminate ambivalence that characterizes the centre" (161).

2. My attempt is almost identical with that of Gay Wilentz in Binding Cultures: Black Women Writers in Africa and the Diaspora (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1992) who additionally stresses the familial, mothering roles of black women as storytellers in an oral rather than literary mode (see especially pp.xxvii-xxxiii). The possibility that there may be some transracial similarity between the black writers of Wilentz's study and the white writers of mine has animated my desire to read, however cautiously, the term "African" as not racially exclusive (see especially Chapter 4 for a discussion of motherhood and writing).

3. Recently, and coincident with the rise of postcolonial theory, more critics have begun to pay attention to the cultural hybridity of both Schreiner and Blixen. One such critic, whose work I use extensively throughout, is Susan Horton; not only does her recent book Difficult Women, Artful Lives pay that attention to their Europeanness and
their Africanness, it is also the first book-length study I know of to yoke Schreiner and Blixen together. Even more recently Judith Raiskin has produced a book *Snow on the Cane Fields: Women's Writing and Creole Subjectivity* which fascinatingly treats Schreiner as a creole, putting her in company with the contemporary South African "Coloured" writer, Zoë Wicomb, and with Caribbean authors Jean Rhys and Michelle Cliff.

4. "Liberalism," as Rob Nixon notes, becomes an especially problematic term when writing about South Africa from the vantage-point of an American institution, as the very notion "resonates quite dissimilarly in the two societies" (Nixon 79); "in the USA liberalism has tended to connote left of center, while in South Africa it has stood as a right of center term" (81).
SECTION ONE

"I ..."

"Je est un autre"

Arthur Rimbaud

"This I, what is it? We try to look in upon ourself, and ourself beats back upon oneself. Then we get up in great fear and run home as hard as we can."

Olive Schreiner

"Ke motho ka ba bangoe"

[Through others I am somebody]

Tswana Proverb
CHAPTER 1
THE INVENTION OF THE "I"

The two best known works of Olive Schreiner and Karen Blixen produced inventions of themselves in an apparently private, though legally bounded, space—the farm—in an apparently boundless, thus, technically, available landscape—Africa. Both did so at crucial periods in history when the actual space of the actual continent of Africa was being demarcated as European both in terms of political possession and in terms of political and economic systems. Blixen's and Schreiner's racial inventions are therefore crucial to their writings. Furthermore, the historical span of the textual content of *Out of Africa* and *The Story of an African Farm* from about 1860 to 1930 coincides with feminists' struggles for space of their own at the end of the nineteenth- and start of the twentieth-century—hence, gender inventions are equally crucial to their writings.

The role played by class further confuses the issue of who Olive Schreiner and Karen Blixen thought they were; the vicissitudes of Schreiner's early life rendered her oddly déclassée and left her dreaming of a utopian future, while the aristocratic Blixen, anachronistically adrift in twentieth-century Europe,
projects a nostalgic, even elegiac feudal past. Teasing out the complexities of these issues of race, gender and class gives us some insight on the invention of Blixen's and Schreiner's seeing and speaking "I."²

If we look at "invention" in *The Story of an African Farm* and *Out of Africa*, we find a central distinction between the work of Schreiner and of Blixen. Although *The Story of an African Farm* is ostensibly fiction, it is quite plainly autobiographical with the struggles of Lyndall and Waldo readily mappable onto the struggles of the young Olive Schreiner. In addition, the book is written in a self-consciously realist style according to "the life we all lead" (*African Farm* 27). Schreiner's invention is thus ostensibly fiction, but true to life. By contrast, Blixen's true-life story in *Out of Africa* depends on a narrative characterization of herself which is quite self-consciously an invention and notoriously inaccurate factually; at the same time, it too in the parergon of an epigraph³ lays claim to telling the truth. Like the Africans of her invention, Blixen might be thought of as unreliable but ultimately "in a grand way sincere" (*Out of Africa* 27). Her "facts" might be invented but the invention is a true one, nevertheless. With both writers, therefore, but not in the same ways, we find a simultaneous grounding and ungrounding of "truth" in "experience," a paradoxical process that I hope the term
"invention"—with its dual sense of finding and making up—sufficiently captures.

Three related questions immediately arise: "To what extent was the 'experience' Schreiner and Blixen grounded their work on understood as gendered female?"; "How do you cope with or write a 'female' experience in a male-dominated world and set of discourses?"; and "How might one deploy one's 'female' experience and its representation in ways that effectively resist or transform the status quo?" These are questions that continue to trouble contemporary cultural theorists, especially those feminists who wish to retain some sense of agency in the face of the supposed death of the subject. Elspeth Probyn, for instance, goes back to Raymond Williams to "retrieve some of the ways in which experience has been made to function," finding that his "concept of the structure of feeling expresses the richness of what it means to work from within the felt facticity of material being" (Probyn 5). While Probyn's response is to a contemporary crisis of representation, roughly a century earlier Olive Schreiner, too, was concerned with a similar crisis: how to represent her self, how to represent her "female" self (in opposition to current definitions of "woman"), and ultimately how to bring about the representation of women through legal and parliamentary change. Like Probyn, Schreiner's crisis involved asking "the questions of 'who am I?' and 'who is she?' in ways that
neither privilege 'me' nor discount how 'I' and 'she' are positioned in relation to each other" (Probyn 6). For Schreiner, as we shall see, it was a deeply conflictual crisis.

Born female into a colonialist patriarchy, she resisted being made into a particular type of woman by power structures that saw her sex as determining her role. Such resistance put her in conflict not just with the male power structures, but frequently with the passive "women" made by those power structures. In fact, insofar as women, unlike men, had highly limited power to effect direct political change, and insofar as Schreiner saw herself as desiring change and potentially able to effect change, she frequently saw herself as someone not quite a "woman" (although female) speaking on behalf of women. While all her work stands as a model indictment of Victorian and colonialist patriarchy, and indeed inspired a later generation of feminists (for whom Woman and Labor was, in Vera Brittain's words, "the Bible"), Schreiner frequently railed at womanhood in general and the specific restrictions placed on her as a woman. To Havelock Ellis, for instance, who played the Waldo to her Lyndall as "other self," she wrote: "Oh, please see that they bury me in a place where there are no women. I have not been a woman really, though I've seemed like one" (Letters 142).
Susan Horton, whose recent book *Difficult Women, Artful Lives* is the first full-length comparative study of the two women, points out that:

Schreiner found her closest companions during [her] formative years to be not women . . . but the writers she read so voraciously. They were all male. Her fictional heroines are often taken to be instances of self-portraiture, and what both she and these heroines read most were writers who espoused various kinds of willed self-reliance: Emerson, Schopenhauer, Herbert Spencer. (81)

Horton goes on to point out that even in her feminist writings Schreiner can present herself as distinct from the women on whose behalf she writes: "Being a woman I can reach other women, where no man could reach them. A growing tenderness is in my heart for them" (cited in Horton 90; emphasis added). This same distancing limits the possibilities for female solidarity in Schreiner's fiction. As Tess Cosslett in her study of female friendship in Victorian fiction says of *African Farm*:

the need to emphasize Lyndall's isolation and independence, and her difference from a conventional woman like Em leads to the friendship being underplayed, and indeed undermined by Lyndall's behavior. . . . Lyndall's scorn for the conventional woman's lot drives a wedge between herself and her devoted female admirer. (150-151)

The problem of identification/non-identification is intensified in Schreiner's fiction by the way her New Woman heroines are as hampered by other women as by men, before receiving their final come-uppance. Tant Sannie in *African Farm* and Mrs Snappercaps in *Undine*, for instance, oppress Lyndall and Undine quite as effectively as any men, and the
gossipy Mrs Goodman and Miss Mell are the very models of self-righteous hypocrites one would expect from stereotypical misogynist writing. Lyndall's last landlady, too, treats Lyndall as source of "a little innocent piece of gossip," has "no time to be sitting always in a sick room" (269,268), and generally seems keener to get her hands on Lyndall's fifty pounds than to see her get well. Although Schreiner idealized motherhood in *Woman and Labor*, her fiction suggests that actual motherhood is anything but the source of sisterly solidarity: neither Undine nor Lyndall has much chance to love and nurture her baby; when the babies are born, and when they die, their mothers experience more suspicion from the women around them than sympathy.

Schreiner's heroines are thus doubly isolated, then--from male-determined convention and from "women" made by such convention; Lyndall and Undine can have no existence, and duly waste away, while the docile Em and arrogant Mrs Blair survive. As many critics have pointed out, there is a problem with the way New Woman novels in general seemed unable to imagine positive ends for their rebellious heroines. Tess Cosslett, for example, comments that "the New Woman writer's stronger awareness of the injustices done to women often caused her to give a much bleaker picture of women's chances and potential than earlier women writers had done" (162), and Gail Cunningham writes that

the common pattern of the New Woman novel is to show the heroine arriving at her ideals of freedom
and equality from observation of her society, but then being brought through the miserable experience of trying to put them into practice to a position of weary disillusion. (49-50)

This latter formulation exactly describes the disillusionment of Lyndall in The Story of an African Farm who, speaking in the first-person plural, for women, sketches out a pattern of

a little bitterness, a little longing when we are young, a little futile searching for work, a little passionate striving for room for the exercise of our powers,—and then we go with the drove. A woman must march with her regiment. In the end she must be trodden down or go with it; and if she is wise she goes. (189)

Speaking in the first-person singular, however, aware of "that solitary land of the individual experience in which no fellow-footfall is ever heard" (196), Lyndall announces that "Women bore me, and men" (199).

In other words, while Schreiner/Lyndall/the New Woman is essentially the same as all other (white) women, equally bound by the patriarchal conventions of the time, she is simultaneously different from other women in her rebellion, her reluctance to march with the regiment. One way to get around this conundrum was to find what Gerd Bjørhovde calls "rebellious structures" to match the rebellious content. The most extreme form of this would mean ditching plot-realism, as Lady Florence Dixie did in Gloriana, Charlotte Perkins Gilman did in Herland, and as Schreiner herself did later in her short allegorical fictions. The eccentric construction of The Story of an African Farm, and, to a lesser extent,
Undine, represents a move in that direction, but, as we have already seen, Schreiner was unwilling to do away with the appeal to authenticity of experience. Thus, although Rachel Blau du Plessis in Writing Beyond the Ending takes The Story of an African Farm as the germinal text of female modernism, and stresses the rebelliousness of its "critique of narrative" (30)—Schreiner's refusal to paint life according to the "stage-method" described in her preface to the second edition—nonetheless the insistent appeal to the "life we all lead" determines that Lyndall must ultimately fail while the docile Em lives on.۶

What is more, Schreiner appears to have been unable to find a way to present Lyndall's death positively, as a glorious failure or moral victory,۷ as her quiet slipping away occurs virtually removed from the world, in company only of the unsympathetic landlady and of the travesty-woman Gregory Rose. In one of the cruelest moments of a frequently cruel narrative, Waldo, the one character really receptive to Lyndall's views, learns of her death only after he has completed a long letter to her. The sense of futility conveyed in that moment sets the seal on the book's pessimism—particularly, though not exclusively, about women: life is a series of abortions, "a striving, and a striving, and an ending in nothing" (135). Even Em, left with the prospect of marrying Gregory Rose, contemplates the sadness of how "at last, just too late, just when we don't
want them any more, when all the sweetness is taken out of them, then [the things we long for] come" (296). Women, then--even the survivors--are presented as powerless to bring about positive change in their individual lives, and unable to work together on each other's behalf.

Schreiner's own life was blighted by this pair of inabilities. Ruth First and Ann Scott, and more recently Karel Schoeman, have shown how much of an outsider the young, freethinking Olive Schreiner was in the Eastern Cape society in which she grew up. Her father was a failed and bankrupt missionary, already perhaps an oddity, like Otto in African Farm, by virtue of his German birth and "dreamy silent nature" (Hobman, Olive Schreiner 17), while her mother clung so strongly to her Englishness that she once beat Olive for uttering the Afrikaans "Ach." Effectively orphaned by her father's insolvency at the age of 12, Schreiner was passed around among siblings, friends, and families who employed her as a governess; in this last position she was placed at what First and Scott call "an ambiguous point in the social structure: she became a 'higher servant,' socially subservient but culturally superior" (71).

She had no home of her own (references to "home" in her letters frequently mean England, a country she had not even visited) and her free-thinking atheism did not just defy conventional belief but was, further, "triply stigmatized--
she was adolescent, she was a girl, and she had had no formal education" (First and Scott 56). She was so intellectually isolated that it has been possible to identify the one person—a civil servant named Willie Bertram—with whom she felt able to discuss her ideas, and his presence in her life was no less fleeting than Waldo's Stranger's in his. Similarly, she had little chance of mutual emotional involvement, while her first sexual encounter (with one Julius Gau of Grahamstown) ended not just in tears but quite possibly in TB. She remained friends with the Cawoods of Ganna Hoek, but otherwise seems to have been thoroughly estranged from her employers and even from her prudish and puritan brother and sister, Theo and Ettie. Given this sort of background, it is scarcely surprising that her first fictional heroine should bear the name Undine, an orphaned water-nymph lost among mortals who gains her soul—and hence the capacity to suffer—through the love of a man, only to lose the soul but not the suffering when he rejects her.

During this stage of isolation—that is, before Schreiner's 1881 departure for England—writing itself was one possibility for positive individual change, as was her dream of becoming a doctor. The medical dream rapidly dissolved, but with the eventual publication of The Story of an African Farm in 1883, Schreiner found herself—re-invented?—among literary and intellectual equals sharing
broadly sympathetic views. Still, however, she had no home as such, nor was she yet at home among women. In the Men and Women's Club of which she was a forceful member she seems to have formed far stronger bonds with men—especially Havelock Ellis, Bryan Donkin, and Karl Pearson (to whom she wrote of herself as his "man-friend")—than with the women, who, more conventionally brought up in Britain, both more class-conscious and more class-secure, viewed her with some suspicion. First and Scott talk of how her "spontaneous expression, unfettered by Victorian notions of decorum" and her distance both "from the middle-class conventions of London society" and "during her adolescence and after, from family constraints" made her in England not just "a rebel against convention . . . but an outsider" (161).

Schreiner's membership in the club terminated in a tangled row with Elizabeth Cobb and Karl Pearson stemming, as far as can be determined, from Schreiner's attraction to Pearson and her perception of Mrs Cobb's meddling to check their intimacy.¹¹ First and Scott suggest that Schreiner's bout of illness subsequent on this row was partly due to "the conflict between her intuitive, even unconscious mistrust of women and the sense of sisterhood she found obligatory" (171). A rather different but no less vexed conflict informed her much later decision (1913) to resign from the Women's Enfranchisement League when it became clear that the Cape League, of which she was vice-president, would
follow the lead of the Transvaal and Natal societies to push for votes for white women only, rather than go with the more radical Cape society's struggle for votes for all women.

This latter resignation shows the difficulty in talking about Schreiner's "mistrust of women" and "sense of sisterhood," as those phrases beg the very questions of women and sisters that Schreiner was struggling to come to terms with. As I have suggested, Schreiner's own position was closer to the radically questioning position of Elspeth Probyn, trying to work out who "I" is, who "she" is, and "how 'I' and 'she' are positioned in relation to each other" (Probyn 6). While it is clear that an impatience with some women led to her removing herself from organizations such as the Enfranchisement League, her commitment to the advancement of all women remained firm. First and Scott are probably on safer ground to talk about Schreiner's dissatisfaction with individuals and their organizations: "Her constituency was no single movement, but an imperative, a presence, a set of beliefs that gathered momentum from place to place" (264).

In fact, she became her own one-woman pressure group, unattached to any particular association, with relatively few influential women friends but an impressive array of influential male correspondents. This quasi-assimilationist effect does not so much suggest "mistrust of women" as confirm Schreiner's dilemma as an activist woman in a
Victorian colonial society. Female networks of power simply were not available to her—especially in rural South Africa, so in wishing to exert power to change society she necessarily had to operate among males. To be sure, this analysis depends on a limited notion of power and the political—what we might more scrupulously refer to as the geo-political, and overlooks the fact that the example of Schreiner's personal politics was powerful; nonetheless, her own perception seems to have been one of despair at the lack of immediate and tangible effects of her work. For instance, after the publication of Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland, a harrowing account of the results of Cecil Rhodes's policies, and one which cost her enormous mental anguish in the writing and publishing, she wrote to her brother Will, once Rhodes's Attorney-General, but later estranged from Rhodes and a "liberal" Prime Minister of the Cape Colony:

In spite of its immense circulation I do not believe it has saved the life of one nigger, it had not the slightest effect in forcing on the parliamentary examination into the conduct of affairs in Rhodesia and it cost me everything. (Rive 333)

As a woman she could not oppose Rhodes in parliament and her intervention in the geo-politics of the day, was, therefore, though apparently public, necessarily oblique and likely to be frustrating, limited by the existing structures of power to the dismissible sphere of fiction or to behind-the-scenes letter-writing.
Her most direct intervention in local geo-politics took the form of the pamphlet entitled *An English South African's View of the Situation* published in 1899, in which she argued passionately that the looming war between the British and the Boers was being fomented by the agents of big capital quite against the interests of the "English South Africans" and quite against the various principles of justice and democracy invoked by the warmongers. And it is here that we see very clearly the effects of the restriction that Olive Schreiner felt she was under as a woman; throughout the pamphlet the "I" of the text is consistently male-identified. She offers her readers "the voice of the African-born Englishman who loves England, the man, who, born in South Africa, and loving it as all men, who are men, love their birthland" (6). This "manly," almost jingoistic voice strives to make itself heard in the cacophony of male voices prophesying war, while women, far from being potential sources of fuller identity (as in *Woman and Labor*) or of conscience (as in *Trooper Peter Halket*) are reduced to being the potential bearers of a renewed and vengeful breed of South Africans (111).

This belligerent anti-war pamphlet, like *Trooper Peter Halket*, failed in its public purpose: to dissuade the British people from tolerating further military occupation of Africa by Rhodes and other forces of big capital. In private, Schreiner was simultaneously working behind the
scenes trying to act as some sort of go-between between Jan Smuts, State Attorney in Kruger's South African Republic, and Sir Alfred (later Lord) Milner, recently appointed as Governor of the Cape Colony and quite plainly looking for a justification to take over the gold mines of the Transvaal. In letters to her brother Will, then Premier of the Cape Colony, to Smuts and to Smuts's wife Isie, Schreiner agonizes about whether or not she should attempt to see Milner to explain to him why war would be such a bad thing. She wrote directly to Milner, too, sending him a printer's draft copy of An English South African's View of the Situation. Even in the letter she reproduced her male-identified "I," writing rather plaintively, "I do not ask you to forgive my writing to you because there are times when a man has a right to do almost anything" (354). As with her earlier letters to Karl Pearson, this attempt to speak as man to man seems to represent more than just the sexism of current language-use. Even in her apparent abjuring of woman-ness, there is perhaps a poignant sense that it is her woman's envious perceptions of a man's entitlements that prompt the line of approach.

Astute, and even cynical, as she could be about the origins of the war, the apparent naivété and futility of her attempts to avert it once more highlight the difficulties of being an activist, especially an activist woman, in South Africa, not just in Schreiner's time but in our own when
British colonialism has been replaced by apartheid, and apartheid arguably has been replaced by multinational capital. Under each of these systems, and despite the best intentions of the drafters of South Africa's new constitution, what remains constant are capitalism and patriarchy. When, at the nadir of apartheid, Nadine Gordimer, in an influential review of First and Scott's biography, wrote critically of Olive Schreiner that her interest in feminist issues was "bizarre" since the "actual problem" of South Africa was one of race (Clayton 97), she may well have been revealing how effective both capitalism and patriarchy are at hiding their workings: they can still look like natural states long after racism has been exposed. In fact, capitalist patriarchy has been tremendously successful in dividing activist dissidence, so that, for instance, one wouldn't automatically in South Africa think of Winnie Mandela, Helen Suzman, Lilian Ngoyi, and Nadine Gordimer as representing one constituency.

Thus confronted by questions of "representation," it may be useful to refer to Gayatri Spivak's elaborate dissection of the term--using Marx's distinction between "Vertretung" and "Darstellung" (roughly equivalent to the distinction between representation and re-presentation)--in "Can the Subaltern Speak?" In my list above of unrepresentative women('s) representatives Marx's distinction is perhaps rather blurred as a result of the
specific circumstances of political representation in South Africa (i.e. apartheid). Elected representatives did not only stand proxy for others (Marx's "Vertretung"), but also set out representations of themselves and others (Marx's "Darstellung"); in fact, Helen Suzman's justification for participating in a whites-only parliament was always that South Africa's legal system allowed and required her representations of others to be represented in the official records of that parliament. By contrast, Schreiner's resignation from the Cape Women's Enfranchisement League highlights the extent to which she was limited both in representing and in being a representative.

But in the same way that British colonial administrations in India managed to establish a version of history "in which the Brahmins were shown to have the same intentions as (thus providing legitimation for) the codifying British" (Spivak, "Subaltern" 282), so in colonial South Africa the codifying British had managed to establish a version of history in which their representation of the divisions among people was seen to be shared by the peoples thus represented. Hence, the enduring difficulty in South Africa of recognizing that women as a category--however divided they may be made to appear--may share as much as, or more than, categories defined by race, ethnicity, class, or language.
First and Scott suggest that Schreiner was at least partly, perhaps intermittently, aware of the ways in which difference was invented and exploited in colonial South Africa; and they credit her with being unusual in recognizing "Rhodes and the international capital he commanded as the principal instrument" of the profound changes occurring in South Africa following the discovery of the Rand gold. They credit her, for instance, with being alone in recognizing "that the colour question was really the labor question, and that labor, both black and white, could not be free unless it was united" (338). However, though she might have intermittently redrawn these categories, she could scarcely represent them either through claiming a shared, representative experience (as, say, Winnie Mandela represented black women oppressed by apartheid) or by acting as a formal, elected representative (as, say, Helen Suzman represented black political prisoners under apartheid). Thus, as First and Scott emphasize, Schreiner remained isolated, a fact which manifests itself in a "protective, patronizing attitude" to Africans (339).

It is fascinating, nonetheless, to speculate as to how Schreiner's politics might have developed had she in the 1890s not been embroiled in the male geopolitics of British expansion in South Africa, but still remained in England or at least remained in touch with a more thorough, systematic and theoretical approach to politics. For instance, had she
still been in England during the 1890s, that Janus-faced decade of decadence and novelty that identified the New Woman, she would have almost certainly come into contact with the African-American feminist Ida B. Wells and the short-lived anti-lynching campaign she inspired in Britain. Vron Ware's discussion of this campaign and the various tensions it revealed in feminist movements in Britain and the United States highlights the way Wells and her English champion Catherine Impey offered a challenge to the role of English women in imperialism; the significance of the movement, says Ware, was that:

it showed the possibility of an alliance between black and white women in which white women went beyond sisterly support for black women; by confronting the racist ideology that justified lynching, these white women also began to develop a radical analysis of gender relations that intersected with class and race. (220)

Schreiner was never fully able to do that. "African mass organization [in which the women's section of the ANC was prominent] was beginning only as Olive died," write First and Scott, "and her perceptions of the special relationship between class and colour had yet to be theorized by a much later generation of analysts" (340). In fact, it seems to me that had Schreiner met Wells, that special relationship might well have been theorized earlier rather than later.¹⁸

Gordimer's and Schreiner's positions are perhaps a good deal closer than Gordimer acknowledges, and it is interesting how a prioritization of "race" over "gender"
both serves Gordimer's own purposes and suggests something about the way Schreiner has been (mis)read, with the "feminism" of her most famous work occluding her anti-capitalist and anti-racist fulminations. Gordimer's refusal to identify herself as a feminist in apartheid South Africa is in some ways equivalent to Schreiner's male-identified "I" in An English South African's View of the Situation; it makes sure that she is to be taken seriously in the somehow realer world of male geo-politics with its "actual problem" of race. The very same urgency of male politics that kept Schreiner in the 1890s and Gordimer in the 1980s focused on local issues--on effects rather than causes--left them both adrift, like Gordimer's most recent heroine Vera Stark with "none to accompany me," without a constituency to represent. 19

Vera Stark is a white lawyer whose role as a champion of the oppressed alters radically as the oppressing force--apartheid--is dismantled. Her "success" in opposing apartheid in some ways removes a core of certainty in her life. It is as if one has been pushing and pushing against a door, and someone suddenly opens it from inside, sending one tumbling headlong into vacant space. Gordimer's heroine, previously working on behalf of the dispossessed, now herself dispossessed, in a way, of that work, might be seen as a self-conscious image of the committed writer--specifically in Gordimer's case, the committed white writer--
-for whom success will necessarily mean the loneliness of self-effacement. Like the model Roman dictator Cincinnatus who retired to his farm once his task of saving Rome was complete, Vera Stark/Nadine Gordimer must make the final surrender of the privilege of importance, so as not to impede the new order for which she worked. While Schreiner's lonely strugglers are likewise figures of commitment, they are figures of her commitment as a woman writer. Thus, in Schreiner's case, given that (some) British women won the right to vote only in 1919, the loneliness is due to non-achievement (or, at best, deferred success); hers is the spectacular isolation of the pioneer, of a Moses-figure whose vision of the Promised Land is both fleeting and singular. Such a vision is, in a way, dispiriting; Schreiner expresses that sense through Lyndall:

"To see the good and the beautiful," she said, "and to have no strength to live it, is only to be Moses on the mountain of Nebo, with the land at your feet and no power to enter. It would be better not to see it." (196)

If the aptness of the Moses image is conceded, it is fitting that where Schreiner comes closest to transvaluating non-achievement into deferred triumph is in the allegory "Three Dreams in a Desert." Here, in the second of the three dreams, a character identified only as "woman" has to cross a previously uncrossed river in order to reach the land of Freedom. She has to divest herself of "the mantle of Ancient-received-opinions" (Dreams 77) and wear only
Truth, a single "white garment that clung close to her" (78). Just before she is about to start her crossing, Reason, her guide, notices that there is something at her breast, drinking there cherubically. When Reason orders the woman to put this creature down she is initially reluctant to do so, insisting that she can carry him and thus get them both across. When she does put him down, convinced by Reason that he is in fact powerful and perfectly able to fly to the Land of Freedom on his own, "he bit her, so that the blood ran down to the ground" (81). Immediately she becomes old and is filled with a sense of doubt and loneliness.

And she said, "For what do I go to this far land which no one has ever reached? Oh, I am alone! I am utterly alone!"

And Reason, that old man, said to her, "Silence! what do you hear?"

And she listened intently, and she said, "I hear a sound of feet, a thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, and they beat this way. (81/82)

Like locusts crossing a stream, the woman and those thousands of women following her may be swept away, but "at last with their bodies piled up a bridge is built and the rest pass over" (82). The woman asks who will cross over that bridge of bodies and when the answer comes—"The entire human race"—she "turn[s] down that dark path to the river" (83).

I have retold this short allegory at some length because it seems so graphically to capture the way Olive Schreiner appears to have thought of herself vis a vis women
and men. She is the pioneer, totally isolated, occasionally disheartened, whose labor for others is masochistic, involving physical suffering, ingratitude, and the renunciation of what she holds most dear. Her work is for women, certainly, and strives to educate women to care for themselves alone, but is also for men—or perhaps for a new order of male-female relations—and the entire human race who will benefit from the purging of the co-dependency of Passion (the cherubic figure at woman's breast) and its replacement by mutual Love. Gordimer's criticism that Schreiner was "bizarre" in concentrating on "women's issues" actually misses how radically Schreiner conceived of her work in transforming the whole of society through transforming the conditions that women lived under. As Schreiner stresses in Woman and Labor, there is no point producing New Women without New Men to accompany them in a future where "woman shall eat of the tree of knowledge together with man" creating "an Eden nobler than any the Chaldean dreamed of; an Eden created by their own labor and made beautiful by their own fellowship" (W&L 296).

And it is there—paradoxically enough, in her non-fiction—that we can see Olive Schreiner's most radical invention: a Utopian promised land or promised time of closer union where sexual relations are not "dominated by the sex purchasing power of the male" (252). Karen Blixen's Utopia, by contrast, is not located in the future but in the
past, and while Schreiner's work is prophetic in nature and tone, Blixen's writing has an oddly posthumous feel to it. Although the two women's inventions--specifically their inventions of women and their relation to men in an African context--are comparable, this positioning of Eden, in the future or in the past, marks a very significant distinction regarding who they thought they were and what it was they thought they were doing; in short, it marks the difference between the politically active writer, and the aloof, modernist artist.

In both cases, being a woman made the achievement of those roles difficult, and, very different though their personal circumstances may have been, the forces of gender-conventions shaping Karen Blixen and Olive Schreiner can be presented as strikingly similar. For instance, the young Karen Blixen, no less than Olive Schreiner, felt herself to be intellectually apart from her family and, in particular, apart from the "womanly" nature that her mother and mother's relations expected her to conform to. As with Schreiner, Blixen read mainly male writers in her youth, and as with Schreiner she courted the general disapprobation of conventional Christian society by latching on to one particular "freethinker;" in Blixen's case this was Georg Brandes, a Jewish philosopher who had first introduced the work of Nietzsche to Denmark and who had had a notorious row with 1880s Danish feminists like Blixen's Aunt Bess who held
chastity to be of greater importance than equal erotic freedom for men and women (Thurman 63). Instead of Schreiner's "dreamy" father, Blixen had the figure of Wilhelm Dinesen--romantic writer, traveller, hunter--to set against the conventionality of her mother and aunts; instead of being removed from him by insolvency, Karen Blixen was separated from her father by his suicide shortly before her tenth birthday. Severely restricted and isolated by these and other forces, both writers as young women turned to male philosophers to ground their inventions of themselves: for Schreiner the philosopher was Schopenhauer, for Dinesen, Nietzsche; both stressed the value of will and self-reliance.

However, whereas Schreiner's sense of self-reliance feeds that image of herself as isolated pioneer that we have already discussed, leading the mass of humanity to an ideal future, Blixen's use of Nietzsche depends on a more complicated idea of the real and the ideal, allowing her to adopt very self-consciously the "mask" of the artist and to create an ideal self and past that transcend present reality. Blixen's self is at once more divided and more deliberately invented than Schreiner's, and although both rely on imagination to resist the world around them, Blixen tends to use art as a defense against vulgarity, perfecting her own world in a retreat from the quotidian, while Schreiner is more openly rebellious, using art as a lever to
move the world on towards a real state of perfection. Eden for Schreiner is a state of human relations yet to be formed; for Blixen, the Fall is irreversible, and Eden can only be recalled once remote from it in time and space.

In her complex conclusion to the excellent *Difficult Women, Artful Lives*, Susan Horton suggests that both writers, "Like all residents of the avant-garde edge of the modernist project," were involved in collapsing a time past and a time future . . . conflating retrospection and anticipation into a pregnant present moment in which they became themselves in the act of "remembering" and communicating a past that was a construction in and of the moment of writing. (244)

Although I find this analysis of the "selving" of Schreiner and Blixen intriguing, I feel that in her own collapsing of conventional linear notions of time Horton misses a fundamental distinction between the two women that the temporal location of Eden—in the future or in the past—indicates.

*Out of Africa* recalls, from a distance of some 4,000 miles, the period of Karen Blixen's stay in Kenya, 1913-1931, a period stretching back well over twenty years from the time of writing to a time when European settlement of the country was very recent, before colonial infrastructure and administration had sedimented into regularized bureaucracy. Judith Thurman sums up the arrogant sense of freedom white settlers enjoyed at that time by quoting a letter from an early settler declaring: "We have in East
Africa, the rare experience of dealing with a tabula rasa, an almost untouched . . . country where we can do as we will" (cited in Thurman 121). Blixen explicitly deplored such views, but in her elegiac reconstruction of her life, if what is mourned is not quite the kind of license expressed by the letter-writer it is instead a related kind of existential freedom to transcend the social, to create oneself in one's own image, as it were. Her attitude is very similar to that of Evelyn Waugh in Black Mischief where Basil Seal creates the role for himself of beneficent creator only to have his splendidly autonomous creation degenerate into the bungalows and rectangularity of a British colony. Like Waugh, Blixen is scathing about the "modern" and "progress," and Thurman is quite right when she writes: "If the feudal world of Out of Africa works so well, is so harmonious and beautiful, it is precisely because of its fixity" (283).  

In other words, in overstressing the similarity between Schreiner's and Blixen's inventions of self and other vis a vis time, Horton risks losing the distinction between Schreiner's altruism (patronizing though it may be) and Blixen's narcissism (generously intentioned though it may be), between Schreiner's aim to produce an ideal world in a real future and Blixen's desire to transform a real past into an ideal picture. To pick up on the allusions to Eliot in Horton's quotation, we might say that Schreiner's
interest is in the "turning world," Blixen's in its "still point."

More bluntly, Blixen's response to European-determined social conditions that were no less stultifying than those confronting Olive Schreiner, was to use Africa/Eden as a means to create a life for herself: in reality (by escaping from her family in Denmark), in her autobiography (by allowing her to mythologize, thus removing all "psychological or narrative ambivalence" (Thurman 282) from Out of Africa), and in her fiction (by driving/allowing her to be a writer). In all three cases, this mythical Africa prompts Blixen, like Schreiner, to distance herself from women: she claimed that she went to Africa in order to avoid her Aunt Bess; her memoirs present her in the "male" roles of, among others, farmer, doctor, hunter, chief; the pseudonym Isak Dinesen is not only male but a recall of the patronymic, too. As such, Blixen's self-production seems to validate Susan Horton's claim, which she makes with regard to Blixen and Schreiner, that the attempt "to make woman their cross-cultural other" was "made possible partly because as white women in Africa each was able to operate to some extent as an honorary male" (5). The difference is in the "Africa" in which they found themselves and the Africans on whose "unwitting collaboration" (Horton 5) their self-production depends.
Such differences provide material more appropriate to Section 3 of this study, but for now I need to stress that Blixen's Edenic Africa that would, had it existed, have already been an anachronistic reconstruction of feudal Europe when she arrived in Kenya in 1913, was by 1937 rendered doubly nostalgic by her removal from it in time and space. Schreiner's Africa, if anything an anti-Eden, is always in a state of flux--of becoming, not having been. What it means, therefore, for Karen Blixen to write of the "I"--self-created and thoroughly idealized--who had a farm in Africa is significantly different from what it means for Olive Schreiner whose "I" is almost always a creation of immediate circumstance.

Of Masks, and Masques, and Masquerades

It is not just Blixen's memoirs that reveal her imaginary flight from the here and now, although they represent the clearest attempt at recreating and lamenting a Paradise lost. One of the most striking features of her fiction is its fictionality: at the most overt level that includes the fairy-tale transformations of the Lapp witch in "The Sailor-boy's Tale"; but it also includes more human mutations, frequently involving the metaphor of dressing up. Multiplicity of identity, and the creation and more or less voluntary assumption of identity (posthumous or otherwise) feature prominently in Blixen's stories, with numerous
characters, women particularly, restaging themselves in crucial ways. One such character, Mizzi from "The Invincible Slave-Owners," is described by the narrator as a "partisan of an ideal, ever in flight from a blunt reality." The phrase could equally be applied to Blixen herself. By contrasting the elaborate and deliberate fictiveness of Blixen's inventions--both of characters in stories and of herself as a character--with Olive Schreiner's attempted candor in fiction and in life we can draw further distinctions between the invented "I"s of the two writers. Furthermore, analysis of moments from biography and fiction where bodies are dressed and undressed raises further questions concerning the nature of femininity and the body, and femininity and its relation to categories of class and race.

Blixen's very choice of the Gothic mode in her fiction--always refusing the contemporary, and resuscitating a genre that looks like a digression from the development of modern literary consciousness--gives her work a kind of posthumous feel from the outset, as if the pseudonymous invention Isak Dinesen were really from an earlier era. There is, however, a logic to Blixen's choice since, as Marianne Juhl and Bo Hakon Jorgensen point out, the Gothic form is "a protest against bourgeois rationalism which claims that human reason can master nature as well as itself" (Pelensky Critical Views, 90). In particular, its "theme of the duplication of
the self . . . reveals how the interior world rebels against ruling rationality" (90). Blixen exploits those anti-bourgeois, anti-rationalist features to the utmost.

If we look at the story "The Dreamers," for instance, we find not just a duplication of the self, but a tripling of the central character Pellegrina Leoni, whose multiple identities across time, and in other characters' memories and pursuit of her, would appear to validate Horton's claims about Blixen's collapse of retrospection and anticipation. In the story, the famous diva Pellegrina Leoni loses her voice in a fire. Rather than continue in that paradoxical identity of the opera singer without a voice, Pellegrina has it announced that she has died. She vows never to "be one person again . . . I will always be many persons from now" (Seven Gothic Tales 430). In a range of subsequently assumed aliases she continues to enchant and instruct men who, in seeking to discover her true identity, effectively kill her when she is fatally injured in a cliff fall while trying to escape from their insistent: "Tell me who you are" (406).

Even without the outline of the story, the very name Pellegrina Leoni—the wandering/pilgrim lion—suggests an autobiographical connection with her author, which Thorkild Bjørnvig confirms; Blixen once told him, apparently, that: "The loss of her [Pellegrina's] voice corresponds to my loss of the farm and Africa" (cited in Pelensky, Critical Views
Donald Hannah suggests that the connection is slightly more complicated because Blixen's "own situation and Pellegrina's are reversed. Whereas Pellegrina ceases to be an artist and moves into the sphere of life, having lost her voice, Isak Dinesen by moving into the sphere of art, and becoming a writer, found hers" (Pelensky 60). But Hannah also uses the word "posthumous" to describe Pellegrina's life after the loss of her voice, and Blixen clearly regarded her own life on returning from Africa as in some ways "posthumous," commenting in a letter: "it is a difficult proposition, for the second time in one's life, and when one is no longer young, to be faced with the task of creating a life for oneself" (Blixen, Letters x).

Two stories from Winter's Tales further illustrate the paradox of the use of such overtly constructionist themes and language by a writer whose "hyperfemininity" (to use Susan Horton's term) might otherwise suggest that her attitude to gender-difference is an essentialist one. In "The Heroine" a group of foreign refugees is caught in a hotel in Saarburg on the Franco-Prussian border by the Prussian advance in 1870. The central character is a young English theological scholar working on a book on the subject of atonement who has recently had his imaginative and intellectual world enlarged by the pictures in Berlin's Altes Museum. Among his fellow-refugees on the border are an old priest, two old nuns, a widowed hotelier, a wine-
grower and a commercial traveller—all extremely agitated—when a beautiful "French lady, with her maid, arrived at the hotel from Wiesbaden, and immediately became the central figure of its small world" (73). This woman's "undaunted forbearance" makes her appear to the English scholar like "a lioness . . . calmly walk[ing] among a flock of sheep," and he rapidly transforms her in his mind into an "ideal figure," an "embodiment of ancient France" (73-74).

He also sees her in terms of the paintings he has only recently become familiar with, and imagines her having sat within a gold frame in the gallery of Das Altes Museum. . . . At times his thoughts would wander, and he would see her in divinely negligent attitudes—yes, in the attire of Venus herself. But these fancies of his were candid and impersonal; he would not offend her for the world. (74-75)

However, a similar but less scrupulous fancy enters the head of the leading German officer detaining the refugees; Frederick, the Englishman, recognizes that from the moment the officer "caught sight of Madame Heloise . . . the case became a matter between him and her" (77), and all the farcical earlier accusations of espionage are overlooked. The intensity of their conflict makes Frederick wonder whether it was "a hereditary national combat, or would he have to go back, and deeper down, to discover the root of it?" (77) Apart from offering a possibly risky gloss on the origin of the Second World War that was going on around her while she was writing Winter's Tales, Blixen's question
hints that the factor that is "deeper" than nation is gender difference. However, all the references to painting have already suggested that gender itself, "deeper" down, is not a matter of essential difference, but a constructed category.

At the heart of the action of the story is the German officer's abuse of power and his desire for Heloise, or the idealized woman he imagines her to be. While the immediate source of that power is crude enough (military might), its basis in a class hierarchy (officers and enlistees) means that the officer can only express his attempted rape of Heloise through the mediation of "culture." Thus his public promise to the refugees that he will give Heloise their passports to Luxembourg if she comes to him "dressed like the goddess Venus" attempts to hide the violence of his desire not only in the mask of voluntary exchange, but also in aestheticizing it. Heloise, as we shall see later, is very canny in her understanding of bodies, art, and bodies as art. Rather than refuse outright, she puts the proposition to her fellow-refugees, who are all suitably outraged. The officer is thus thwarted in his desires and the refugees are then allowed on their way, presumably thanks to the intervention of the other two German officers.

All through this highly charged experience, Frederick thinks of Heloise as a particular type of heroine, the embodiment of an insulted womanhood defined by its modesty
and purity. He is, of course, completely enchanted. However, his idealized attitude is thoroughly confused when, six years later on a visit to Paris, a friend takes him to a "small, select and exquisite music hall." Frederick's Parisian friend enthuses about the legs of the famous music-hall dancer they are going to see: "La jambe, c'est la femme!"—an explicit equation of womanhood and part of a woman's body that would appear to endorse Blixen's earlier hint that it is the gendered body that is at the root of things. When it turns out that the star of Diana's Revenge is none other than the Heloise who refused to trade her body for the refugees' freedom, Frederick is forced to reconsider his notion of the heroic. That does not mean, however, that he repudiates his former opinion of Heloise as a heroine; on the contrary, the text stresses that Frederick at no stage thinks of her as hypocritical, dissembling, or dishonest.

In fact, the question of honesty—or of being what you seem—gets even more complicated when Heloise, in reviewing the events of six years previously, praises the German officer for his honesty ("He could really want a thing. Many men have not got that in them"), and declares that "A woman would have made me do it, quick, had I been ever so distressed" (87). The nuns she considers not women "in that sense," and the reader is left with considerable confusion as to what finally is womanhood—are we to equate it with, or define it by, heterosexual desire?23 Even with Heloise's
lament that it is "the women" who feel the passage of time, the conclusion of the story suggests that female bodies are nothing in themselves; they only gain meaning in performance.

What we have here is in keeping with the argument Susan Horton makes, that both Blixen and Schreiner should be considered as modernist artists insofar as they were interested in "eras[ing] the hold of nature on woman" (48). Through illness in particular, both women were acutely conscious of their bodies: in addition to heart and respiratory problems, Schreiner gave birth to one live child (to have it die within 24 hours) and had numerous miscarriages; in addition to, or as a result of, her syphilis, Blixen was effectively anorexic for the last forty years of her life. However culturally cross-hatched, nature indeed had a hold on them. Their response was not "primarily a resistance to female biology," though (Horton 78); their "modernism" is in their attempted erasure of the hold of nature, not of nature itself. Thus Schreiner's and Blixen's inventions of themselves--"Dinesen's dramatic eyes darkened with kohl, her turbans, and her carefully cultivated emaciated body, as well as Schreiner's insistence on wearing her familiar faded blue serge and her matter-of-fact stride"--suggest to Horton "that both women were intending to comment on their own 'materials'" (Horton 48).
Horton interestingly draws out comparisons between their specifically literary inventions with their day-to-day self-presentations, and claims that "conscious production of one's own image and awareness of the materials out of which one creates one's self-presentation are modernist as well." Specifically, she analyzes the photograph Blixen chose to represent herself to her American readers once the identity of "Isak Dinesen" became known, a photograph which "hardly reveals who Karen Blixen was, but [which] does suggest how 'Isak Dinesen' wanted to be seen" (49). In addition to the photograph's unrevealing revelation, it also manages, according to Horton, to confuse a number of categories by presenting the forty-nine-year-old Blixen "as almost prepubescent" and by making figure and ground indistinguishable (49-50). Although Horton does not refer to "The Heroine," what she says about the photograph's confusing of categories could equally be applied to Heloise's all-revealing performance revealing nothing, not so much a body as an embodiment.

Such talk of (female) bodies and performance brings to mind the work of Judith Butler and Eve Sedgwick. Indeed, Horton acknowledges a debt to both theorists: Butler's Gender Trouble, she writes, helped her to "talk about the somewhat 'woman'-alienated woman as something other than necessarily self-alienated, woman hating or male identified;" while what she finds most helpful in Sedgwick's
"musing" is her suggestion that "the binary poles of sexuality are neither heterosexual/homosexual nor female/male, but closeted/out, and gender is a product of the constant negotiations made as we shuttle between private and public performances in the public and private spheres" (Horton 29). Fascinating and important though those ideas are, however, I want to take the argument off on another, rather different tack that will force us to read the race of those bodies and performances. We can do so by pushing on from women's masks and masques to the idea of the "masquerade" of womanliness, Joan Riviere's notion that women who involve themselves in conventionally masculine affairs may put on a protective mask of womanliness.

Both Schreiner and Blixen could be seen as performing just such a masquerade of themselves as women: in other words, aware of their encroachment into masculine realms, like Riviere's intellectual, politically active patients, they would then seek the reassurance or other complimentary notice from a man. Out of Africa clearly shows how the hunter/farmer/chief Blixen plays the seductress/hostess to Denys Finch Hatton, while Schreiner's references to herself in letters as "little," and her marriage to Samuel Cronwright--he of the big fore-arms--fit the same pattern.

However, in a recent essay, "Re-Placing Race in (White) Psychoanalytic Discourse: Founding Narratives of Feminism," Jean Walton pushes the idea of masquerade beyond gender and
asks to what extent in psychoanalytic discourse "womanliness as a masquerade is simultaneously a masquerade of whiteness" (792). Thus linking gender and race, Walton's essay has profound implications for Blixen's (in particular) and Schreiner's inventions of themselves as white women.

Re-examining Riviere's 1929 essay "Womanliness as Masquerade," Walton points out that the alleged father-figure in the dream of one of her "masquerading" patients is black. While Riviere had concentrated on the man's gender to confirm her point that intellectual women, or "women who wish for masculinity," felt a need to "propitiate" a potentially retaliatory father-figure, Walton stresses the man's race, and suggests that "By fantasizing a black man, Riviere's patient is calling upon a figure whose relation to the phallus, as signifier of white male privilege in a racialized, patriarchal society, is as tenuous as her own" (784). The article proceeds to discuss the relation of femininity and race not just in psychoanalytic discourse, but also in western art in which "More than any other subject, the female nude connotes 'Art.' The framed image of a female body, hung on the wall of an art gallery, is shorthand for art more generally" (796). This in turn leads to discussion of Sander Gilman's analysis of race and femininity in paintings like Manet's Olympia.

Now, while black characters play no part in "The Heroine," Frederick's first impression of Heloise recalls
precisely the painterly tradition of linking a sexualized white woman with a black servant that Manet's painting of 1863 exploits. Frederick imagines her as an embodied piece of art who would have spent the years till they . . . met . . . amongst the luminous marble columns, in the sweet verdure, in front of the burning blue sea and the silvery and coralline clouds, which he had seen in the paintings. Perhaps she had had a small Negro servant to wait on her. (74-75)

Just as in Walton's article, therefore, the woman who masquerades woman as her most natural self--i.e. naked--conjures up an image of herself as art, and simultaneously coopts the image of a black person. In the case of "The Heroine" the imaginary "small Negro servant" is not gendered at all, and is scarcely a candidate for a potentially retaliatory father-figure; however, her/his very presence does seem to fit an iconographic tradition Sander Gilman traces back to at least the eighteenth century whereby "the overt sexuality of the black . . . indicates the covert sexuality of the white woman" (Gates 231).

With Heloise--the heroine, the goddess--Blixen presents a classic and very classical striptease in which, to quote Barthes, "Woman is desexualized at the very moment when she is stripped naked" (Mythologies 84); what looks like overt sexuality actually remains covert in the blinding dazzle of whiteness. Through the term "candor"--meaning frankness, but having its origin in the Latin for whiteness--it is possible to see the full extent of Blixen's paradox:
the white woman becomes most white and most a woman in a womanly masquerade of candor, a candid display of what isn't.

A similarly radical subversion of reality/unreality involving bodies, dressing up and undressing, gender, race, nature, and art is repeated in another story in Winter's Tales, "The Invincible Slave-Owners." This story, set five years later than "The Heroine" among spa-hopping aristocrats of similarly varied European origins, is again told largely from the viewpoint of a young, single male, one Axel Leth--a Dane this time rather than an Englishman. Just like Frederick, though, Axel is the character who is presented as coming closest to understanding the literal masquerade of the central female character; in fact, he understands it so well that he plays along with it. The woman in question, known as Mizzi, is apparently the impoverished daughter of a gambling father who maintains the pose of a splendidly wealthy and unattainable young woman, attended by her unfailingly loyal female servant, Miss Rabe. In this pair of performances the two women are so compellingly convincing that Axel, along with everyone else in the spa, is taken in; he even feels shamed by his own "pretence and falsity" which he thinks has been shown up by Mizzi's "ruthless respect for the truth" (WT 135).

However, through a chance eavesdropping, Axel learns the "truth" that the two women actually have no money, and
are thus playing a role. Just as Frederick is not outraged by what might be seen as Heloise's hypocrisy, so Axel is not outraged by his discovery, as he feels other men of his acquaintance would have been; indeed, he himself assists the women, because of his "good sense of art" (142), saving face for them by recreating himself as their loyal and aged servant Frantz. His doing so, without Mizzi's foreknowledge or assent, indicates to the two women that the secret is out; Mizzi is furious at the humiliation but powerless to do anything about it, because to blow Frantz's cover would also mean blowing their own. Recognizing that powerlessness, Axel concludes that "the slave-owner's dependency on the slave is strong as death and cruel as the grave" (147), and he completely exonerates the two women for being "so honest as to give life the lie . . . partisans of an ideal, ever in flight from a blunt reality" (150).

Just the bare bones of "The Invincible Slave-Owners" illustrate the way this story, like "The Heroine," confounds notions of the ideal and real, fake and original, truth and fiction. Its connection with Riviere's idea of the masquerade and Walton's racial reading of that becomes apparent in a number of details. The opening description of Mizzi portrays her as "a very young beauty of such freshness, that it was as if she was sweeping with her, into the closely furnished, velvet-hung room, a sea-breeze or a summer shower" (129). All eyes are on her and Axel thinks
of her in terms of a reviewer's description of a German actress. Her audience in the salon, however, become aware of an incongruity:

The astonishment and admiration which her loveliness aroused were, at the next moment, accompanied by a little smile of wonder or mockery, because her slender, forceful, abundant figure was dressed up, two or three years behind her age, in the short skirt of a schoolgirl, and she wore her hair down her back. (129)

This paradoxical image—fairly standard in striptease—of the eroticized innocent, the young woman bursting out of her schoolgirl's uniform, is developed further in even more voyeuristic and tactile ways:

Indeed it looked as if she had, at the moment when her Maker was holding her up for contemplation, slid through His mighty hand, and in this movement had all her young forms gently pushed upwards. The slight calves of her delicate legs— in white stockings and neat little shoes—were set high up, so was the immature fullness of the hips, while the knees and thighs, which, in her quick walk, showed through the flounces of her frock, were narrow and straight. Her young bosom strutted just below the armpits, high above a slim waist. Her milk-white throat was long and round, strangely dignified and monumental in one so young. (129-130)

When the description finally reaches Mizzi's face, the blend of innocence and eroticism continues; with no make-up, her "fair, smooth, rosy face had not a lie in it . . . [b]ut by far the most striking feature in the face was the mouth, a thick, sullen, flaming mouth, like a red rose" (130).

I have quoted this description at such length because as a piece of literary portraiture it is no less spectacular—dependent on being seen—than Manet's portraits
of Olympia and of Nana, or of the eighteenth-century nudes discussed by Sander Gilman. Again, although we appear to be dealing only with white women in Mizzi and her attendant Miss Rabe, there are, in fact, significant points of comparison between Blixen's painting and the tradition Gilman describes that suggest we should look at the whiteness of Mizzi's candor as in part at least keeping her sexuality covert, and displacing it elsewhere onto a black other.

It comes, for instance, as no surprise that Mizzi is dressed "with precise neatness in a white muslin frock, while the attendant Miss Rabe appears in "black silk." Furthermore, like Olympia, whose naked whiteness is offset not just by her black attendant but by a thin ribbon around her neck, Mizzi is adorned by "a black velvet ribbon round her throat, but no ornament whatever" (130); Heloise, too, though more opulently dressed with "a small chasseur hat with a pink ostrich feather, a dove-grey silk dress of unbelievable voluminousness, [and] long suede gloves" also had "a narrow black velvet ribbon" around her "white throat" (74). In addition to the complex play of the black/white, innocent/erotic associations, there are all sorts of hints of bondage in these descriptions, perhaps picked up in "The Invincible Slave-Owners" by the General, who imagines Miss Rabe as a "female Jesuit . . . jailer" and asks Axel, "What do you think, my friend, does she birch her?" These hints
are perhaps peripheral to the main point of the story, but they do suggest a peculiar confusion of female sexuality with the bondage of slave to slave-owner, itself charged with racial associations, and all further undercut by the idea that nothing is what it seems, anyway; all is masquerade.

In love with Mizzi in a very self-conscious way, and aware from his eavesdropping that she could love him but "would rather die" than have him know the truth of her situation, Axel, blessed with his good sense of art, and dressed up as her servant, accompanies her from Baden-Baden to Stuttgart. His masquerade of subservience is a declaration of love, virtually a way of making love, and the tension--of extreme intimacy coupled with absolute distance--between the masquerading aristo and masquerading servant is highly erotic. Permitted to walk the length of the platform with Mizzi, a "walk of perhaps a hundred steps, the relation between Axel and Mizzi ripened and set" (147). At that point Axel experiences the story's central epiphany:

Axel realized and understood, the umbrella in his hand--with reverence, since he was now in livery--that the slave-owner's dependency upon the slave is strong as death and cruel as the grave. The slave holds his master's life in his hand, as he holds his umbrella. Axel Leth with whom she was in love, might betray Mizzi; it would anger her, it might sadden her, but she was still, in her anger and melancholy, the same person. But her existence itself rested upon the loyalty of Frantz, her servant, and on his devotion, assent and support. His treachery would break the integrity of her being. (147)
There are so many paradoxical binarisms to pick up on here—black/white, slave/slave-owner, male/female, art/nature, integrity/duality etc.—that my argument probably feels confused. That confusion is in the stories, though, and stands as an emblem of the confusion of Blixen's own identity just as emphatically as the photograph of her which Susan Horton uses. Axel's conclusions re slaves and slave-owners seem clearly to be explanations and exonerations of Blixen's own behavior both in regard to her African servants (especially Farah) and, also, achronologically, to her secretary Clara Svendsen. Frequently in Out of Africa and Shadows on the Grass, Blixen presents herself as the slave-owner humbly at the mercy of her slaves,²⁷ hence simultaneously affirming and denying the voluntarism of that apparently symbiotic relationship much as Orwell, for instance, presents himself as given no option but to shoot his famous elephant.

To put it as clearly as possible, "The Invincible Slave-Owners" and "The Heroine" suggest that, for Blixen, being a woman depends as much on performance of class and race as it does on performance of gender and sexuality, and that those categories are inextricably interwoven. It is possible to take Joan Riviere's idea of the subconsciously motivated masquerade literally, with Blixen's various performances as woman, as white woman, as aristocratic white woman all resting very self-consciously on illusions which
she deliberately maintains, and which she is able to maintain through the collaboration of her servants. As Jane Walton argues, however, the "masquerade" of femininity is more complex in its relation to blackness than Riviere's original analysis of it as propitiatory to masculinity claimed, because the real black men on whom the illusion depended occupied a position in colonial Kenyan society much more tenuous than her own.

Susan Horton recognizes all this when she writes that "the African fellow workers [Blixen's] writings produced enabled her in turn to produce a particular identity for herself" (212); that identity—the innocent "I" who had a farm—is, I think, the identity of Mizzi, the good-natured slave-owner, the impoverished aristo no less hopelessly trapped by her role than her servants by theirs. However, Horton points out the spuriousness of Blixen's model of symbiosis when she writes that Farah and Kamante were not just "men who took her seriously as a person and worker and who would be there for and with her. They had to. Their livelihood and that of their families required it" (210).

On a farm that was never economically viable—as Blixen admits at the opening of the section "Hard Times," it "was a little too high up for growing coffee" (Out of Africa 275)—it might be argued that Blixen's playing the role of farmer was just as economically desperate as Farah's and Kamante's, but . . . she always had somewhere else to go back to.
Whereas Horton is good at exposing the notion of voluntarism, she does not highlight the possible sexual tension in the relationship between Blixen and her male servants. To be sure, she does suggest that they played the role of reliable "husbands" in a way that neither Bror Blixen nor Denys Finch Hatton could, and that in them she "found the men her own psychic homeostasis required" (210), but in the same way as Riviere overlooked race in her reading of the masquerading woman, Horton here tends to overlook gender in her reading of Blixen's relationship with Africans. Of course, it's almost impossible to keep all these modes of analysis operating at the same time--harder, I would suggest, in criticism than fiction--and it might be fitting to close this chapter of paradoxes open-endedly by circling back to "The Invincible Slave-Owners."

At the end of that story Axel Leth, once more dressed as himself, is seen reflecting amid mountain scenery. He is watching a waterfall and musing on the contrast between the unceasingly moving cataract and the "small projecting cascade, where the tumbling water struck a rock" which "stood out immutable, like a fresh crack in the marble of the cataract" (151). This blend of flux and stasis, expressed in images suggestive both of female and of male, makes him wonder if there is in life a "corresponding, paradoxal mode of existing, a poised, classic, static flight and run" (151). Blixen suggests that the musical form of
the Fuga offers such a mode, but that seems to be a
diversion back into art; in lived experience the paradox is
the one confronting that most famous Dane in English
literature, the paradox of acting a part in the world. And
as out of all of Hamlet's ontological confusion he can come
to the conclusion: "A man's life's no more than to say one,"
so Blixen's answer to the problem of being (a woman, a white
woman, an aristocratic white woman) is to say "I," where "I"
is simply (apparently) someone who "had" something, not
someone who is or was something.

While I believe it is true that Blixen and Schreiner
would fit Riviere's pattern of women who, at least
intermittently, masqueraded as women, their attitudes to
masks, role-playing, seeming and being are radically
different. There was, for Blixen, a moral and practical
imperative to seem what she was; for Schreiner, there was a
moral and practical imperative to be what she seemed. In a
famous exchange between Schreiner and Oscar Wilde, Schreiner
claimed that she was living in the East End of London at the
time (1889) "because that is the only place where people do
not wear masks upon their faces;" Wilde, whose love of
paradox matched Blixen's, retorted, "I live in the West End
because nothing in life interests me except the mask" (cited
in First and Scott 186).

The contrast between Schreiner's earnest drive for
perfect integrity and candor, and Blixen's homage to the
willed integrity dependent on a good sense of art can best be illustrated by comparing the transvestism of Gregory Rose in *The Story of an African Farm* with the role-playing of Heloise in "The Heroine" and of Mizzi, Miss Rabe, and Axel in "The Invincible Slave-Owners." Those who play roles in Blixen's fiction achieve the heroic stoicism of grand tragedy; Schreiner's role-players (in addition to Rose, there is the con-man Bonaparte Blenkins, or the socially aspirant Mrs Snappercaps in *Undine*) are figures of comedy or contempt.

However, it is the very nature of paradox to collapse opposite terms into each other; and in the same way that the truth of Dorian Gray's picture undercuts Wilde's subversive claims for the truth of masks, so Gregory Rose's transformation into a woman actually seems to tell the real inner truth about him, thus undercutting Schreiner's apparently stabilizing claims for integrity. For a start, the "English rose" should be a girl--fair of face, speech and demeanor; the Englishman Rose lives up to the name and is repeatedly feminized in *African Farm* even before he experiences "womanhood" masquerading as a nurse to the dying Lyndall. The apparel all too aptly proclaims the (wo)man; the performed gender is truer than the real.

To set him in context, though, Rose first appears as a fresh-faced young Englishman employed slightly grudgingly on Tant Sannie's farm, rather like the young Englishman Tony
Marston in *The Grass is Singing*. When we first encounter him he is unaccountably depressed. Although there is a "rack for a gun" on the wall of his little dwelling, he is clearly no man of action, and he relieves his depression through writing--on pink paper--a letter to his sister. The house is scrupulously neat and clean, for Gregory kept a little duster folded in the corner of his table-drawer, just as he had seen his mother do, and every morning before he went out he said his prayers, and made his bed, and dusted. (174)

The reference to Rose's mother bears interesting similarities with Schreiner's strategic idealization of mothers elsewhere in her work, notably in *Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland* where Peter's mother is associated with Christ and Peter's conscience (32, 36, 47), and *An English South African's View of the Situation* where Victoria--Queen and Empress--is invoked as a kind of great white Mother whose hand would strike no child (102). For the moment, however, I would like to examine another "feminine" presence in the room, "a little hanging looking-glass." Gregory's depression is linked through the word "reflection" with introspection, "female" vanity, and narcissism. As he begins to put pen to paper "he looked up into the little glass opposite. It was a youthful face reflected there, with curling brown beard and hair; but in the dark blue eyes there was a look of languid longing that touched him" (175). The "but" is significant in that last
sentence as it presents the brown beard, a token of masculinity, as being in contrast to languor and longing; in other words, there is something "feminine" in Gregory that his "masculine" beard cannot mask. Indeed, he is acutely conscious of notions of manliness and unmanliness, rejecting his first attempt at writing to his sister, and cutting a reference to himself looking at himself; he does so, "reflecting" that it might seem "conceited or unmanly to be looking at his own face" (175).

Gregory's narcissism is intriguing for at least two reasons: it seems to anticipate a familiar trope and marker of the Decadents/Decadence; and it also exposes the peculiarly complex affinities created by homosocially defined English notions of "manliness." On the wall of his little house Gregory has pasted prints from the Illustrated London News "in which there was a noticeable preponderance of female faces and figures" (174). Like a boarding school boy in his study Gregory Rose gazes alternately at images of women and of his bearded but "feminine" self. Olive Schreiner names the chapter in which this occurs "Gregory Rose Finds his Affinity" where the "affinity" superficially refers to Rose's "courtship" of Em; however, it seems to me that we should see the affinity as being a recognition that the images of the women on his wall, the image of Em, and the image of his own face are not alternatives but samenesses. They are his own true, but shaming, mask.
Rose's apparent shame at this "unmanly" "affinity" reveals itself in his comments on his fellow-male, Waldo. Waldo's being kissed by Em brings out all of Gregory's snobberies as well as his jealousy of Waldo's easy masculinity: "He's only a servant of the Boer-woman's [Rose writes to his sister], and a low, vulgar, uneducated thing, that's never been to boarding-school in his life" (176). Later, when Gregory has transferred his affections to Lyndall, he is further jealous of Waldo because of the place Waldo holds in her heart; he attempts to denigrate Waldo to Lyndall by calling him a "soft" (230), a phrase that recalls an earlier statement that "If a man lets a woman do what he doesn't like, he's a muff" (207).

However, it is the boarding school educated Gregory whom Lyndall has always considered feminized, describing him as a "true woman--one born for the sphere that some women have to fill without being born for it" (197); to Em, Lyndall suggests Gregory has never come to full manhood, claiming he's one of the category of men "you never see without thinking how very nice they must have looked when they wore socks and pink sashes" (183). Since Lyndall seems to be such a clear mouthpiece for Schreiner's own rebellious feminism, Lyndall's contempt for Rose tends to override the rebellious potential of his breach of gender-boundaries. The female clothing helps him to no new affinity with other women, nor to a gender-fluidity that could continue to work
to destabilize the status quo. He is not the New Man destined to accompany the New Woman into the utopian future Schreiner posits at the end of *Woman and Labor*. Rather, as a woman, finally—specifically as a serving-woman and a serving-woman serving another woman—Gregory achieves only some sort of self-stabilizing answer to his agonized narcissistic question, "`Am I, am I Gregory Nazianzen Rose?'" (270).

The narcissism of Rose's dressing-up can be stressed by comparing its private nature, its surreptitiousness and secrecy with the public nature of Axel Leth's performance. As with Leth, it would be possible to see Rose's transformation as an act driven by love; it is not, however, possible to see it as love-making, and the only person privy to it as a declaration is himself. Whereas the tension of that walk of a hundred paces gains its erotic tension from the fact that Mizzi knows Frantz must really be Axel, through having Lyndall assume Rose is exactly who he says he is (i.e. a woman!), Schreiner removes virtually all eroticism from his ministrations, intimate though they are. In one extraordinary instance, for example, "She made Gregory turn open the bosom of her nightdress that the dog might put his black muzzle between her breasts." When he has done so, Gregory simply "left them lying there together" (274) without, apparently, another thought in the world.
In addition to this, while Axel employs an old tailor and theater dresser to help him in his disguise (even if he hides his true motivation for it), and while the success of the disguise depends on his being under public scrutiny together with Mizzi, Rose performs his transformation alone and is scared of being seen at all: he makes sure that he is "out of sight of the waggons" before heading across the open veld to "a deep gully which the rain torrents had washed out, but which was now dry. Gregory sprang down into its red bed. It was a safe place, and quiet" (270). When he has safely effected his change, he looks around "like a sinner hiding his deed of sin." In line with the contempt displayed by Lyndall for him, he appears to find something at least potentially shameful in his actions.

Ultimately, while Axel's experience allows him to return to reality with an artistic ideal of his "paradoxal mode of existing, a poised, classic, static flight and run," Rose appears to gain nothing at all from his experience; he is simply emasculated: we last see him back at the farm "with his dead pipe lying on the bench beside him, and his blue eyes gazing out far across the flat, like one who sits on the sea-shore watching that which is fading, fading from him" (294). He should be what he seems, a woman, but as he cannot be that, he is nothing.

We can extend these contrasts with their reversed and self-reversing paradoxes to Schreiner and Blixen themselves
and their self-inventions: Schreiner wanting the candor of masklessness to allow herself and others an "impersonal" existence, Blixen preferring the mask of art. Against the artful image of Blixen's photographic self-representation we might pose Havelock Ellis's apparently artless memorial image of Olive Schreiner:

coming suddenly and quite naked out of the bathroom in the house where I was staying into the sitting-room where I was waiting for her, to expound to me at once some idea which had just occurred to her, apparently unconscious of all else. (cited in First & Scott 136)31

That display of candor fits what Horton calls "Schreiner's need to confess--to be exposed" (48), but what truth is exposed--of selfhood, of womanhood, of whiteness--is never quite clear. The camera is never quite candid, the "I" never quite one.

The Whites of Their "I"s: Miming Alterity from a Position of Racial Power

So far I have largely dealt with Schreiner's and Blixen's inventions in terms of personal biography. In fact, closer analysis of those inventions in the context of their contemporary racial situations shows how illusory the idea of any transcendent, non-oppositional subject-position actually was. As Susan Horton rather enigmatically puts it: "Dinesen and Schreiner became 'white' 'women' ... only by struggling not to remember the opposition of woman to man, Europe to Africa, or black to white that 'history' would
have them not forget" (239). Ultimately, I would argue, they owed their ability to speak as "I," both of and for themselves and others, to their whiteness; the almost exclusively European audience of both writers attests that their self-inventions are as white as the whitest "I." 32

What did it mean to be a white woman in colonial Africa, and how limited was the range of any such meaning? In Beyond the Pale Vron Ware attempts "to unravel the different meanings of white womanhood . . . searching for significant moments in the past which would explain how this category was produced" (xii); unlike mine, her search takes her East to India, and West to the United States, rather than South to colonial Kenya and South Africa, but its focus on nineteenth-century racism and imperialism and their effects on the present makes her work apposite to the present study. In her analysis of the career of Annette Ackroyd as a schoolteacher in India and of Catherine Impey as an anti-lynching activist in Britain, for instance, Ware shows the conflicting pressures on white women that made it difficult for them to find a coherent feminist position that might embrace women of color without either imposing a Eurocentric set of values or facilitating racially prejudicial attacks on their culture.

Ware's concentration on the last quarter of the nineteenth-century--when Schreiner was active and Blixen was growing up--highlights a period in English history when the
very notions of "Englishness," of race, nation, and the connections between them were hugely problematical. Robert Young's recent Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture, and Race starts from the premiss that "Fixity of identity is only sought in situations of instability and disruption, of conflict and change" (4), and argues that what we now tend to see as the fixity of late Victorian Englishness was, in fact, anything but fixed. Thus, what Young and Ware are interested in is the way in which a dominant imperialist ideology, anxious about its own entropic effects, could create a stabilizing idea of Englishness, specifically bringing it about that white women were "seen as the 'conduits of the essence of the race'" (Ware 37). Both writers recognize that, in the same way that women were frequently pedestalized as "purer" than men, sexually speaking, so they also came to be seen as "purer" racially. The English woman thus becomes a figure of intense anxiety, a hyper-vulnerable category to be protected at all costs from black crime and desire, whose putative purity—both sexually and racially speaking—creates tremendous difficulties for coherent feminist and anti-racist practice.

Of course, neither Blixen nor Schreiner is coherently and consistently feminist and anti-racist; and their mainly critical positions vis a vis mainstream British imperialist ideology are complicated by the fact that Blixen is Danish
and Schreiner is not quite English, so that any national-cum-racial inventions of themselves should question the very nature of nation and of race. We have already seen some of the effects of this in Schreiner's invention of the all-white "English South African" (rhetorically figured as male), but it is perhaps more interesting to look at Schreiner's and Blixen's black characters and to ask questions as to the possibilities in their work of other "hybrid" types.

Black characters in The Story of an African Farm are presented as peripheral; in Out of Africa they play a larger role but almost exclusively as loyal servants to Europeans, or within their own separate communities. Nothing in either work suggests that the separate racial spheres are under threat sexually. At least, we might say, the absence of the sexually threatening black male and the sexually vulnerable white woman shows that Schreiner and Blixen are less racist than mainstream imperialist ideology. On the other hand, it may simply mean that mainstream ideology of total racial difference was so deeply embedded in the two writers as to make the idea of miscegenation virtually unthinkable.

However, crediting Schreiner and Blixen with some greater degree of enlightenment, part of the apparent difference between their attitudes and those of mainstream imperialism is perhaps allied to Horton's claim that being in Africa allowed Schreiner and Blixen at least in part to
claim "honorary male" status, a status heightened by the two women's resistance to conventional family and married life. Part of it, too, might be the result of the relative novelty of specifically English colonization of South and East Africa at the time of Schreiner's and Blixen's experience there, as well as that intra-racial sense of alterity that they felt as daughter of a German father among Boers, and as a Dane among British. Then again, in Blixen's case in particular, the sense of class superiority seems to have overridden any assumption of special vulnerability arising from the fact of being a "white woman." In fact, it is easier to show Ware's mainstream racist attitude in more canonical works of fiction--from Heart of Darkness where Conrad's Marlow insists on "the women" being "out of it" (84) or A Passage to India where Adela's accusations against Aziz lead to the British all rallying around to "the banner of race" when the Collector, almost choking with emotion, refers to her as "an English girl fresh from England" (165). Later, we shall see the apogee of this attitude in The Grass is Singing where Mary Turner, whom the entire local white community think of, and have virtually ostracized, as a "poor white," is "furious" that a black farm laborer she has just struck with a whip "had the right to complain against the behavior of a white woman" (136). All of these "white women" are presented as being far more dependent on men than
any of Schreiner's heroines, or Blixen's autonomous "I" of *Out of Africa*.

If not in the mainstream, though, there is no denying the racial attitudes of Schreiner and Blixen. While *Woman and Labor* makes some nods in the direction of recognizing the global exploitation of women—as tea-pickers, for example (208)—the "we" of whom Schreiner writes as a representative is highly racialized as women not just of European origin, but specifically of pre-Christian Teutonic origin, "women who were never bought and never sold; that wore no veil, and had no foot bound" and whose "racial ideal was no Helen of Troy . . . but that Brynhild whom Segurd found . . . the warrior maid" (147). As Robert Young shows, this location of a Germanic source of the essence of Englishness was fairly prevalent in England, at least from Thomas Arnold on (Young 67), but what is particularly noteworthy in Schreiner's formulation of womanhood is that she too talks about a racial ideal, suggesting that for her, too, women were the "conduits of the essence of the race," never merely female.

In addition, it should be noted that "Europe" for Karen Blixen generally means Northern Europe; Mediterranean Europe is associated with "the South." She sets this distinction up very early in *Out of Africa* writing that

Those old milords who figure in the history and fiction of the eighteenth century, as constantly travelling in Italy, Greece, and Spain, had not a single southern trait in their nature, but were
drawn and held by the fascination of things wholly different from themselves. (24)\textsuperscript{34}

Furthermore, that fascination is set up as analogous to sexual desire:

The love of woman and womanliness is a masculine characteristic, and the love of man and manliness a feminine characteristic, and there is a susceptibility to the southern countries and races that is a Nordic quality. ... As it is almost impossible for a woman to irritate a real man, and as to the women, a man is never quite contemptible, never altogether rejectable, as long as he remains a man, so were the hasty red-haired northern people infinitely long-suffering with the tropical countries and races. (24)

In both women we thus find a near equation of "race" and "nation;" not only that, we also find that near equation couched in the language of reproduction and heterosexual desire.

The desire of North for South, however, remains only analogous to heterosexual desire, and--explicitly at least--does not trouble the assumption in both writers of the that racial boundaries are no less determined than gender boundaries. Although they may never state that the races should remain as clearly delimited as they assumed they were, there is yet no positive recommendation for the meeting of the twain. As First and Scott point out, for instance, Schreiner's elevation of the role of motherhood did not in itself put her at odds with the eugenic theories of contemporary imperialists, who, confronted with a declining birthrate, were concerned "for the next generation of soldiers and workers" (First and Scott 277), and saw the
health of that generation as dependent on its "true" Englishness.

Likewise, in Schreiner's fiction one can find ample examples that implicitly or explicitly support notions of racial "purity." In *Undine*, for instance, there is one particularly obnoxious description of a "swell nigger," a servant of Albert Blair, who speaks "in very good English and in a very leisurely and self-possessed manner" (350). This servant affects disdain for Undine, at this point in the story working as an ironing woman in New Rush (Kimberley), but the affectation is exposed by his rapid pocketing of the five shilling payment she refuses, and it is while he is out spending that five shillings that Albert Blair, the object of Undine's unrequited love, dies. This episode is highly racist in its apparently paradoxical suggestions that the assumption of English dress and speech are corrupting and yet at the same time unable to hide an essential shiftlessness. Here is the quintessential "cheeky" native all too familiar in racist discourse, damned for being different, damned for attempting to be the same.

For Blixen, difference is usually more positively rendered; indeed, the Masai she idealizes thoroughly, declaring them to be "unswervingly true to their own nature, and to an immanent ideal" (*Shadows* 17), and the Somali, similarly, are rendered as ever-the-same: "a chivalrous nation" (155), "a fighting race," "wiry people, hardened in
deserts and on the sea" (158), and so on. Judith Thurman writes that the Masai attracted Blixen because of their "Nietzschean allure" (120), and there is clearly a huge amount of projection in her description not only of the Masai, but of almost all the Africans in her memoirs. The section entitled "The Somali Women" not only contains such projection but is also the most female-identified portion of Out of Africa, and thus sheds light on Blixen's complex self-invention as a white woman in Africa.

Admitting that in general "In my life at the farm I saw few women" (158), Blixen records that she frequently spent time with the Somali women in quiet conversation; in other words, this was one situation in which she was not openly in a position of mastery. Artfully using style indirect libre to reproduce the tenor of those conversations, Blixen expounds on the huge respect for women implied by the Somali custom of bride-price and compares it unfavorably with European customs of marriage in which nations "gave away their maidens to their husbands for nothing," and where "there was one tribe so depraved as to pay the bridegroom to marry the bride" (157). She goes on to mythologize "the mother" of the Somali women (never blessed with a name and whom she initially compares to a "female elephant" (158)) as symbol of a great ideal . . . the idea of a Millennium when women were to reign supreme in the world. The old mother at such times would take on a new shape, and sit enthroned as a massive dark symbol of that
mighty female deity who had existed in old ages. (159)

Here she comes close to Schreiner's theoretical apotheosis of the mother-figure both in *African Farm* ("we bear the world and we make it," says Lyndall) and in *Woman and Labor*, where, reproducing that idea of womanhood as the conduit of the essence of the race, she declares that "with each generation the entire race passes through the body of its womanhood as through a mold" (131).

Blixen, however, is less interested ultimately in the worship of women as mothers than she is in the worship of women as lovers. In a paragraph which ostensibly deals with Somali warriors' respect for "their" women, Blixen clearly projects her understanding of her own relationship with Denys Finch Hatton whom she repeatedly holds up—as she holds up the Somali—as a model of the chivalric code. The Somali husband, she says, is

abstinent by nature, indifferent to food and drink and to personal comfort, hard and spare as the country he comes from: woman is his luxury. For her he is insatiably covetous, she is to him the supreme good of life: horses, camels, and stock may come in and be desirable too, but they can never outweigh the wives. The Somali women encourage their men in both inclinations of their nature. They scorn any softness in a man with much cruelty; and with great personal sacrifices they hold up their own price. (159)

In a sentence echoing the complex slave-slaveowner rhetoric we examined earlier, Blixen goes on to describe "the young girls who had no men to squeeze, in their little tent-like house . . . making the most of their pretty hair and looking
forward to the time when they should be conquering the conqueror, and extorting from the extortioner" (159-160). Blixen's own pride in her household as a suitably feminized place for the lean and hungry wanderer Finch Hatton to return to after his safaris, and her comparison of herself to Scheherezade telling tales to the Sultan Denys spring to mind here.

Unusually, however, the self-identification with the Somali women is made explicit (or very nearly so) when Blixen goes on to say that at the great religious celebrations the Somali women

so reminded me of the ladies of a former generation of my own country, that in my mind I saw them in bustles and long narrow trains. Not otherwise did the Scandinavian women of the days of my mother and grandmothers—the civilized slaves of good-natured barbarians—do the honours at those tremendous sacred masculine festivals: the pheasant-shoots and great battues of the autumn season. (161)

That phrase "the civilized slaves of good-natured barbarians" is redolent of so much: it confuses boundaries of race, nation, and gender in a way unusual to Out of Africa; it prompts questions of legitimacy of control; and it introduces ideas of invasion and occupation. Technically the "slaves" are women—Somali and Scandinavian—while the "barbarians" are their men, so the comparison is apparently between two distinct and discrete cultures the structure of whose male-female relationships is similar. So far, so clear; but reading the sentence as a projection confuses the
issue. Karen Blixen's being a woman leads one to read the sentence as a projection of her own ideal of male-female relationships based on a no less distinct and discrete set of gender differences. However, given that barbarian slave-owners would normally be invaders, one cannot help but also associate Blixen the white colonist with the barbarians, or invaders. Her idealization of various Africans contrasted against the barbarous bureaucracy of colonial Kenya certainly supports such an identification. In other words, we might conclude that as a white colonist Blixen thinks of herself as both male (or involved in a male practice at least) and barbarian (though good-natured), whereas as a woman she thinks of herself as female, and consequently civilized but enslaved. As usual in Out of Africa, there is a good deal of self-exoneration in this apparent paradox—not least in the addition of the adjective "good-natured"—but, more importantly, it shows how issues of race and gender overlap in the invention of Karen Blixen's "I."

While the overlap is frequently apparent, most of the time, however, Blixen works to keep gender and race as explicitly separate categories. For instance, in a brief section of Out of Africa entitled "Of the two races," she again declares that the relation between male and female is analogous for the relation between white and black, as if all four terms were wholly adequate, distinct and discrete.
The point she attempts to make is that men and women always overestimate their psychological importance in the lives, respectively, of women and men, in exactly the same way that blacks and whites overestimate their psychological importance in the lives, respectively, of whites and blacks. This is a neat comparison and certainly serves, among other things, an anti-racist, debunking purpose of deflating white folks' sense of self-importance, but it doesn't begin to deal with the question of power relations as such, nor does it allow for the actual complexity of Blixen's own position as a white female employer of black male employees, a position, as we shall see in analysis of The Grass is Singing, where the actual workings of heterosexual desire can upset any notions of the parallel distinctnesses of black/white male/female, and instead set them at odds with each other.

It may be, in fact that "playing the white" means "playing the white man" and that this masculine self-identification is effectively a defence against any sexualization of the contact zone between black and white. Susan Horton shows how clearly Blixen lived and spoke different gender-views according to racial and gender circumstance. In a speech written for an audience of African women, for instance, she could propound a conventional view of female passivity, declaring that a woman's value "lies with the opposite sex," and that while
man is the "being who acts . . . [t]he woman, on the other hand, has her center of gravity in what she is" (Horton 100). All her behavior, and her letters home to Denmark, however, reveal her operating according to a very different standard, presenting herself to her brother Thomas as someone deserving "the V.C. for my work here" (cited in Horton 101) no less than he deserved his V.C. during the War. Then again, in her relationship with Denys Finch Hatton--whose sexual availability is marked, among other things, by his non-family, non-African status--she plays a "hyperfeminine persona," using "feminine wiles aimed at keeping Denys attending to her" (Horton 101). She can be Scheherezade, the seductive Oriental woman, only among white men; at other times, the mask of masculinity preserves her status as a working rather than a sexual being.

Schreiner's Woman and Labor, as its very title might suggest, to some extent attempts to re-integrate this splitting of the subject, but in her work, too, there is little suggestion that cross-racial desire could disrupt the separateness of the power structures of black/white female/male relations. Woman and Labor in fact contains a passage which suggests that such a situation was virtually unthinkable for Schreiner. Arguing that races and classes are in "totally distinct stages of evolution," she declares that "the lowest form of sex attraction can hardly cross" the evolutionary gap. She then goes on to imagine what
would happen were one "to place a company of the most highly evolved human females--George Sands, Sophia Kovalevskys, or even the average cultured females of a highly evolved race--on an island where the only males were savages of the Fuegan type," and concludes that "it is an undoubted fact that, so great would be the horror felt by the females towards them, that not only would the race become extinct, but if it depended for its continuance on any approach to sex affection on the part of the women, death would certainly be accepted by all, as the lesser of two evils" (261-262). Likewise "A Darwin, a Schiller, a Keats ... would probably be untouched by any emotion but horror, cast into the company of a circle of Bushmen females" (262). Schreiner's use of the Fuegans and of Charles Darwin as examples is rich (in the slang as well as conventional sense) since, of course, Darwin had actually come into contact with Fuegans in his voyage on the Beagle, and at the very time Schreiner was writing Woman and Labor the Fuegans were indeed dying out, not as the result of any sexual and reproductive failure, but through their being hunted and poisoned by not very good-natured white barbarians. The Bushmen, too, were victims of white genocide, having been hunted as "vermin" since the seventeenth-century.

As figures of horror to "civilized" Europeans, the Fuegans' and Bushmen's alleged sexual repulsiveness clearly figures largely as a justification for their destruction;
they cannot even be left on their own once colonial contact has been made. To be sure, Schreiner emphasizes that there are intra-racial hiatuses just as wide as the pair she uses as extreme examples, but it seems that in indicating cultural difference the leap is more or less automatically to racial difference; for the Victorian sensibility, transcultural sexuality becomes more horrifying when it's recognizably transracial, and when the very possibility of transracial sexuality appears, the actual response of nineteenth-century white colonists was generally to repress it as completely as possible, whether by genocide, apartheid or any combination of the two.

In her analysis of Blixen's and Schreiner's gender-identification Susan Horton uses Frantz Fanon's idea of the mime, of the black person wanting "not to be white but to be 'black' as white imagines black to be," and suggests that Blixen and Schreiner "mimed" being women in this way. Dinesen in her exaggerated femininity and Schreiner in the woman persona constructed for European male correspondents are instances of woman miming 'woman' in the way Michael Taussig describes in Mimesis and Alterity, each producing 'a "nature" that culture uses to create second nature.'" (Horton 104)

Horton's reference to Taussig establishes a general point, but Taussig's specific interest in the mutual observation and mimicry of Fuegan Indians and the crew of the Beagle allows us to look closer at Schreiner's representation of
transracial sexual repulsion, and Blixen's representation of cultural differences.

Taussig presents the encounters between Darwin and the Fuegans as a paradigmatic scene of "First Contact" between the European medical-scientific, objective observer and his supposed non-European antithesis. Taussig's account is a complex component of his complex argument that we should see the mimetic as "curiously baseless, so dependent on alterity that it lies neither with the primitive nor with the civilized, but in the windswept and all too close, all too distant, mysterious-sounding space of First Contact" (72). I wish to draw attention to just two points that suggest that even if we accept the "baseless"ness and apparent mutuality of the contact, of mimesis and alterity, certain material differences mean that power relations are necessarily asymmetrical: first, we should note that the observing gaze is male; second, we should note that while mimicry might appear to be confusingly mutual, physical objects and ownership cannot be so easily swapped.38

The first point highlights the extent to which as a recorder of her life on the farm at Ngong, Blixen is in a tradition of apparently objective travel writing (however subjective her work may be) that generally depends on the gaze of a male subject,39 a male subject who is aloof from his own desire and never represents himself as desired, even though he is both desirable and capable of acting on his
desires. The second point confirms my earlier claim that although Blixen's comparison of the relations between the races and the sexes might from time to time appear to reverse that gaze, in its very claim to reciprocity it misses the material point that power relations between the sexes and between the races she represents are not equal.

In other words, Blixen is able to mime woman successfully, precisely because she is in Africa where European colonization has left "swell niggers" only two choices: to fail at miming whiteness, or "succeed" in miming the blackness of a nature before culture, without civilization. However sympathetic Blixen or Schreiner might be towards Africans, then, their tendency to use Africans as "the raw material necessary for [their] own psychic self-production" (Horton 168) ultimately results in patronizing reifications ("the Masai," or, in Schreiner, "my black people") that confirm that their subject position is still "the familiar one of the privileged possessor of the masculine gaze" (Horton 214). As with Axel Leth, who dons the clothes of a servant in order to learn the apparent truth that slave-owners are dependent on their slaves, only to return to his former self and former privilege, so Blixen and Schreiner, although they may occasionally subvert conventional notions of hierarchy, can only ever mime alterity from a position of power.
Notes

1. The publication of Out of Africa in 1937, and of Shadows on the Grass in 1960, indicates a crucial difference between the forward-looking utopianism of Olive Schreiner and Karen Blixen's nostalgia. Indeed, as I develop later on, there is something almost posthumous about Blixen's memoirs. Concentrating on the period of the textual content of those memoirs—that is, the actual period of time Blixen spent in Kenya (1914-1931)—emphasizes the more turbulent literary and feminist politics Blixen had grown up with (including connection with the Danish literary philosopher Georg Brandes), than the conservative, not to say reactionary, elevation of the feudal and aristocratic ideal affected both in her writing and her life as a writer.

2. In using the term "invention" I am trying to do at least three things: to hold on to a word that seems crucial to European activity in Africa (see Hobsbawm and Ranger, Mudimbe) particularly in the nineteenth-century; to cover the methods of characterization in autobiographical fiction and (fictional) autobiography; and to bridge the gap between essentialism and constructionism. In this third instance, "invention" keeps both the sense of made-up-ness that characterizes constructionist models of gender, while also retaining through its etymology some sense of finding—discovering—something that was already there. This balance seems valuable to me in looking at Schreiner's and Blixen's representations of themselves and others, not least because they at times employ both essentialist and constructionist approaches. Furthermore the ways in which Schreiner and Blixen base seemingly opposite constructions—of themselves as feminist and feminine—on seemingly similar essentialist principles of irreducible biological difference between men and women, suggests that as Diana Fuss argues it's not whether a line of argument is essentialist or constructionist that matters, but how it is deployed (Fuss xi).

3. Judith Thurman identifies the source of the epigraph ("Equitare, arcum tendere, veritatem dicere") as Nietzsche in his "On the Thousand and One Goals" (Thurman 50). Blixen may also have been aware of the quotation in its English form in Byron's Don Juan where the three goals are cited as Persian in origin. The appeal of both Nietzsche and Byron lies in their "aristocratic radicalism," a quality that gave Georg Brandes the title for a series of lectures on Nietzsche in 1888.
4. As indicated in my Acknowledgments and Introduction, Raymond Williams provides the theoretical underpinning of much of this dissertation, although frequently, as in this opening section, his presence is rather more ghostly than actual. Here, for instance, his insistence on materiality (Probyn's "felt facticity of material being") supports my relatively untheorized use of biographical details about Schreiner's and Blixen's material lives--their houses, furnishings, their very bodies. In the second section, The Country and the City is key to my analysis of Blixen's, Schreiner's, Huxley's, Lessing's, and Gordimer's representation of landscape and agriculture, while in the final section my arguments regarding history and memory, and the making of both, draw on his notions of emergent and residual cultures, and oppositional and alternative practice. Williams' generosity and commitment of approach, and his clarity of style have further provided me with a model of critical writing.

5. Terminology is, of course, a minefield here. Almost all the terms that this study deals with, especially those having regard to race and gender, could be placed in quotation marks at all times. I have not done so, on the grounds that it would simply be too irritating to read: at a certain level, as with Eliot's Sweeney, we have to accept that "I gotta use words to talk to you" whatever the inadequacies. However, on those occasions when the words "woman" or "Africa" or "white" (or the like) even more specifically than usual represent the limited concepts of a particular group at a particular time, then I have resorted to the use of quotation marks.

6. Rachel Blau du Plessis's thesis has been an influential one. In support of my contention that The Story of an African Farm is, stylistically at least, more in the tradition of Victorian realism, it should be noted that early twentieth-century reviewers tended to find her realism excessive: Horace Walpole, for instance, criticized her for her "foot by foot realism" (Clayton 91).

For discussion of narrative technique rather than style per se--where Schreiner is certainly more revolutionary--see Chapter 2 on the role of orphans.

7. One might think, by contrast of the way Conrad performs such a transvaluation in his representations of Heyst's "victory" and, even more pointedly, Kurtz's "moral victory" in Heart of Darkness.

8. See First and Scott 49.

9. It is possible that her role as governess made her vulnerable to less than mutual sexual advances from her
employers. In one such case—with the Colesberg agent and auctioneer George Weakly—Schreiner told Ellis that he "tyrannized her and tried to kiss her, but exerted a fascination over her: finally he 'did something that made her leave'" (First and Scott 72).

10. See First and Scott 112-115.

11. In a move that seems to be the male intellectual's equivalent of a gentleman's preferring blondes but marrying brunettes, Karl Pearson five years later married Mrs Cobb's younger sister, Maria Sharpe; according to First and Scott, Maria "had been brought up to dance, play croquet, and appreciate the great cathedrals of Europe. She was gifted at watercolor and well read in the literature of the day. Pearson asked her to be the club's secretary and from then on they worked closely together. In both class and cultural terms the relationship made sense" (170).

12. I have already mentioned Vera Brittain's reference to Woman and Labor as "the Bible" (Testament 41). The earlier influence of African Farm was equally profound. The novel sold more than 100,000 copies by the end of the century and its radicalism was notorious (First and Scott 19). Edith Lees cited African Farm and Ibsen's A Doll's House as the two most significant literary events of the 1880s that "drove thinking women further towards their emancipation" (Clayton 46). Its appeal to women appears to have cut across class, however, extending well beyond the middle-class intelligentsia: Sally Mitchell in The New Girl: Girls' Culture in England, 1880-1915 cites one working-class reader as "feeling that much of what I have been thinking so strongly is here expressed," while a pupil at Cheltenham Ladies' College remembered a smuggled copy of the book setting the sky aflame and turning the girls into "violent feminists" (212, n.12). According to Mitchell, nearly every autobiographical account of pupil-teachers in the last decades of the nineteenth-century mentions reading African Farm "with bated breath and great excitement as a thrilling, liberating, and highly secret experience" (37). The book's descriptions of African landscapes meant that for readers like Doris Lessing African Farm "was the first 'real' book she had read with Africa as a setting" (First and Scott 94). While Black South Africans could not identify with the "nameless, shadowy, 'woolly Kaffir maids,'" Lauretta Ngcobo for one regards her communication with Schreiner as no less than "sacred" as a result of Schreiner's socialism, pacifism, and feminism: "You could not find a more potent keg hurled at South Africa" (Vivan 189, 190). Because he recognizes the African workers' reticence as "laced with agony," Ezekiel Mphahlele can declare that "Olive Schreiner's warmth and compassion never escapes us"
In fine, Schreiner's work was tremendously influential across a huge social range of readers.

13. The casual use of this epithet, and Schreiner's use of the term "Kaffir" which is now considered equally offensive, is probably not intended as derogatory, but it does indicate how completely racialized Schreiner's thinking was. In step with much nineteenth-century thought, she appears to have believed, almost without question, that the white races were the most evolutionarily advanced and that there was a "hiatus" between races and classes in "totally distinct stages of civilization" (W&L 260). Unlike most racists, however, this meant that Schreiner felt whites had a moral responsibility to shoulder their "burden" of superiority. In this respect she resembles Karen Blixen whose attitude toward Africans involved not just racial but class attitudes of noblesse oblige.

14. Published in the United States as The South African Question. Although that is the printed text to which I refer, my retaining the original English title emphasizes Schreiner's appeal to an interested audience.

15. Repeatedly in her letters in 1899 Schreiner stresses sentiments like "while we don't want to fight, if Chamberlain is determined to drive us to war, it will not be the walk over the field that they dream of" (Rive 351; original emphasis), eerily reminiscent of the original jingo rhyme "We don't want to fight but by jingo if we do we've got the men, we've got the guns, we've got the money too!" As with many of her prophetic utterances concerning South Africa, Schreiner was uncannily accurate in predicting the course of the war that followed: "It will take from 100,000 to 150,000 men to do it. We shall fall back on our wide desert plains and hills, and as fast as they beat us in one place we will rise in another" (Rive 363).

16. Milner sent a polite reply, but the futility of Schreiner's intervention became apparent even to her, when Milner's famous dispatch to the Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain referring to the British Uitlanders in the Transvaal as "helots" was published on 6th July, 1899 (Rive 368). An equally ineffective attempt at intervention was her urging her brother Will in case of war to "send home a deputation of women to see the Queen" (368).

17. Or we might consider a further twist by invoking, as Claire Kahane does, Barthes' distinction between the closed-circuit of classic nineteenth-century realism and the notion of "figuration," a notion that implicates text, reader, and writer (Kahane 8). In Kahane's reading of African Farm, the
text's multiple voices and reversals of gender (a feature she refers to non-pejoratively as its "hysterical structure of fragmentation") pushed the novel "beyond the constraints of conventional linear narrative form and opened up new possibilities for representing the subject. In this sense Schreiner's narrative voice is a precursor to present-day representations of a subject-in-process, representations privileging hysteria as a subversive mode of discourse that articulates a dis-ease with the cultural ordering of desire" (84).

18. Schreiner's relative lack of political theorization may be indicated by the fact that her friend Eleanor Marx refused to join the Men and Women's Club on the grounds that she wanted to devote her time to fighting for socialism, "the highest and most important work" she could do (cited in First and Scott 147).

19. For further discussion of None to Accompany Me, and the general isolation and marginality of the white woman writer, see Chapter 2.

20. Curiously enough, Closer Union is the title of her 1909 pamphlet dealing with the constitutional talks that led to the eventual formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910. It is perhaps indicative of the way Schreiner came to integrate the personal and the political. About this time, for instance, in a letter to Mrs. Francis Smith she wrote about the English suffragettes: "It's not what they are trying to get, it's what they are becoming--they are breaking free" (Letters, 281).

21. Evelyn Waugh was enchanted by colonial Kenya. His most recent biographer, Selina Hastings, writes that Waugh "saw in this beautiful country with its young, hedonistic and glamorous society a last, precious vestige of a golden age, an age long vanished from Europe" (Hastings 239). Such an elegiac vision is remarkably close to Blixen's. The two writers actually met in 1947--when Waugh was on a tour of Scandinavia--but I have not been able to find documentary evidence of their opinion of each other's work.

22. Blixen liked to think of herself as a lioness, and records receiving a letter from her Somali gunbearer Ismail addressed to "Lioness Blixen" (Out of Africa 68). I am not sure, however, that "Lioness Blixen" isn't actually a muddled version of "Baroness Blixen" involving a fairly common African transposition of "1" for "r." If this were the case, Blixen's belief of the grandeur of her nickname would be akin to Bror Blixen's happy illusion that his nickname on the farm--"wahoga"--meant "wild duck", when it actually meant "waddler" (Thurman 127n.)!
23. If that is the case, what are we to make of the "femme" who appears in the masque of the chastely naked Diana for paying male voyeurs? Is woman the object or subject of desire? Blixen's representation leaves the question wide open.


25. Intriguingly enough, Blixen herself took "two little Somali pages" with her to Europe on her visit in 1919. As Thurman has it: "The grave, beautifully dressed totos followed their mistress through the blue European dusk, carrying her parcels or her umbrella. At the Carlton Hotel they spent the night in her bathtub when there were no other quarters for them... Years later Karen Blixen admitted to Bjørnvig that the gesture had 'fallen flat'" (Thurman 160). Some gesture!

26. For further discussion of the sado-masochistic master-slave relationship in a specifically colonial context, see Chapter 5's analysis of The Grass is Singing.

27. See, for example, Shadows on the Grass 101-103, where Blixen relates how her "people of the farm" humored her desire to be taken seriously as their doctor. She feels that they have decided to "indulge" (103) her by coming to her even with relatively insignificant ailments. Even as a judge, she claims to be "used" in some way by being turned into a symbol or, as she puts it, "brazen-serpented" (Out of Africa 98).

28. One of the most interesting features of the movie of Out of Africa was, for me, the representation of Farah who opens and closes the movie and who is a constant and intimate presence.

29. See Chapter 5.

30. For fuller discussion of Trooper Peter Halket, see Chapter 7.

31. Havelock Ellis himself was well known for his naturism (even in frigid England), while as a young woman Schreiner was also apparently wont to sunbathe in the nude (Chapman et al. 22).

32. It's at this point that questions about my own purpose and audience, the nature of the American academy, and the nature of taking colonial writers in Africa as an academic topic start getting very problematic. Am I, too, still, producing white writing for white readers? Does it matter
that my skin is white? How would it be different if my skin weren't white? If in choosing white women writers to write about I demonstrate less anxiety about writing about women writers than I do about writing about black writers, why is that? Do I believe there is something more essentially black about black writing than there is essentially female about women's writing? Surely not: after all, racial difference is undetectable genetically, while sexual difference is evident in chromosomal arrangement. So, what is it that makes me, a white male, so anxious and potentially hypocritical about calling Schreiner and Blixen on the inescapability of their whiteness, while I feel freer to talk about them as women and as women masquerading?

33. Entropy itself was a discovery of the Victorian age, and one which seemed counter to the positivism of attitudes to science in general and Darwinian evolution in particular. Young links the idea of entropy to the racial concept of degeneration (Young 100), while Gillian Beer's essay on "The Death of the Sun" also highlights how a physics explaining that all bodies in motion slow down and come to rest was hard to reconcile with notions of progress and perfectionism. Keeping the empire going thus necessitated a struggle against entropy—against the tendency to disorder: or, in the more familiar terms of Matthew Arnold, culture needed to be consolidated as a bastion against anarchy.

34. A similar distinction is frequently made in her fiction, too. For instance, in "The Dreamers" the Englishman Lincoln Forsner, on board a dhow plying between Lamu and Zanzibar, talks of the "blue and voluptuous South" (350), more or less eliding the Mediterranean world with the Orient.

35. I use the phrase advisedly. Keeping the masculine form shows to what extent acting as a white woman (i.e. as an employer) meant acting as a (white) man.

36. One might also add, of course, that as a Dane, Blixen is not as thoroughly implicated in the administration of colonial Kenya as, say, Elspeth Huxley. The continued presence and relative effectiveness of the various Scandinavian aid programs in East Africa in recent years perhaps attests to the way a certain national and political non-alignment can in part counter a racial and economic identity.

37. See Chapter 7 for further discussion of the mask of "work" in colonialist contexts.

38. Taussig implies this in his section entitled "The Spirit of the Gift, the Spirit of the Mime, when he writes,
"you can imitate a sailor pulling faces, but you can't so easily or convincingly imitate his buttons or knife of steel" (93), but his explicit aim is to establish that in a world of perfect equality "there is indeed an intimate bond between the spirit of the gift and the spirit of the mime" (93).

39. For a closer analysis of the gender conventions of colonial travel-writing, see Chapter 3.
CHAPTER 2
THE CHILDLESS MOTHER AND MOTHERLESS CHILD, OR THE ORPHANHOOD OF THE WHITE WOMAN WRITER IN AFRICA

To be unhomed is not to be homeless, nor can the 'unhomely' be easily accommodated in that familiar division of social life into private and the public spheres. . . . The unhomely is the shock of recognition of the world-in-the-home, the home-in-the-world.

Homi Bhabha

In addition to all Schreiner's and Blixen's oscillations of identification and alterity that we have already looked at, we might add a further pair of split senses: of themselves as mothers/not-mothers and orphans/not-orphans. Put another way, they appear to oscillate between inventions of themselves as beings whose roles are defined respectively by a sense of connectedness, and by a sense of detachment. "Mothers qua mothers," writes Nancy Huston in a recent issue of Critical Inquiry, "must be 'other-oriented'; they embody connectedness and attachment. Novelists qua novelists must be selfish; they demand for themselves disconnectedness and detachment" (711). Thus, the woman writer experiences a particular, gender-specific struggle when she decides to be a writer, a role which conflicts with socially-constructed expectations of motherhood, home-making and family life.
In *Woman and Labor*, as we have seen, Olive Schreiner's attempt to elevate the social status of motherhood could be read as feeding an imperialist and eugenicist anxiety about the "purity" of the English "race," about degeneration and/or the sterility that was believed to result from "hybridity." Similarly, conformist movements such as the Church of England Mothers' Union dedicated themselves to a no less elevated ideal of motherhood which could restore a "high tone in the homes and people of this country" (cited in First and Scott 277). Motherhood, therefore, in producing future English soldiers and workers, and the ideal English home for them to grow up in, might be construed more as an imperialist practice than the emancipatory, feminist one Schreiner imagined.

But women are necessarily daughters before they are mothers, and we need to keep in play both directions of the parent-child relationship if we are to find how Schreiner and Blixen came to invent an "I" not just as white woman in Africa, but as a white woman writer. By assessing Blixen's and Schreiner's non-experience/avoidance of those relationships through separation from a family "home" and actual childlessness, and by examining their fictional use of parentlessness I hope to show that, in the same way that actual loss of parents (or widowhood) allowed Victorian women writers, particularly travel writers, the autonomy to write (and travel), so orphanhood has consistently acted as
a useful enabling metaphor for white women writers in Africa from Schreiner, through Blixen, to Nadine Gordimer.

Furthermore, in the same way that the figure of Lyndall as orphan disrupts the conventional Victorian romance-plot in *African Farm*, so it is the metaphorical orphanhood of Vera Stark that disrupts the romancing of the post-apartheid state in Gordimer's *None to Accompany Me*. Indeed, the idea of "romance" in its various different generic manifestations--Victorian romance-plot, travel-writing as equivalent of mediaeval romance-quests, and Shakespeare's late plays--impinges on this topic in a variety of ways that overlap intriguingly with each other and with the popular understanding of romance as love. The "romance" of Gordimer's novel, for instance, is closer kin to Shakespeare's late plays with their cross-generational concerns of loss and gain than to *Jane Eyre*; the brave new world confronts a younger generation, while Vera Stark, Gordimer's newly marginalized orphan/tenant, can only, like Prospero, look on from the sidelines without the benefit any longer of her white magic. That image--of Vera Stark's accommodation to marginality--provides a metaphor for the way in which someone defining her "I" as white and African can take her place in the world, as an orphan in a home in Africa that is yet not quite home.

Let us start, however, with biography. Schreiner may have produced an idealized theoretical image of motherhood,
but her actual reproductive history is bleak indeed. She had at least four miscarriages, and the only baby she carried to full term died the night after it was born. Schreiner was deeply attached to this dead baby, and had it carried with her when she moved, and reinterred with her in her tomb on Buffelskop. As with so much else, her fiction is uncannily prophetic in regard to her own child-bearing, with the deaths of Lyndall's and Undine's babies seeming to foretell her own child's fate.

Blixen appears to have been (or to have thought she was) pregnant only twice, both pregnancies apparently ending in miscarriages (Thurman 174; 208-209). The second occasion, when Blixen was 41, prompted a terse exchange of telegrams in which the ever-chivalrous Denys Finch Hatton urged Blixen to "cancel Daniel's visit" ("Daniel" being their code-word for the pregnancy). Blixen's disappointment, both in the pregnancy and in her lover, resulted in one of her most openly feminist letters to her Aunt Bess (Thurman 210-211), and to this poignant passage in a letter to her brother Thomas:

You know that I have said that I would like to be a Catholic priest, and I still maintain this--and I am not far from being one--but he would have to be more than human if he did not sometimes heave a sigh on seeing the lights lit in the windows and the family circles gathered together. (cited in Thurman 215)

Lacking biological children of their own, both women at times played the role of mother with others who could only
in fantasy be their children: Blixen being talked of, according to her servant Kamau, as the mother of the children on the farm, and Schreiner talking of her own mother as her own child (Horton 78-82).

The childless Schreiner, however, whose *African Farm* she once thought of as being appropriately titled "A Series of Abortions," is, perhaps paradoxically, the mother-novelist, not just attached to her own writing as the fetus is to the mother, but also in insisting on her work's mutual connectedness to the world. Despite the motherless status of Undine and Lyndall, the novels themselves, in their insistence on having been written according to "the method of the life we all lead" (*African Farm* 27), have navels, their "severed umbilical cord[s] . . . evidence of a process that connects this being's present with its past" (Huston 713); they do not live in some other-worldly palace of art.

Without the capacity to be mothers, men are not confronted with quite the same choice between producing novels and reproducing navels. At a very obvious level, therefore, this issue seems to be crucially to do with gender-difference and the oscillatory gendering of Schreiner's and Blixen's "I," the woman who writes. Indeed, according to Frans Lasson, editor of Blixen's letters, the key to Blixen's becoming a writer, and what "must have seemed to her to finally seal her fate as a woman: to be one
who was unable to hold on to another person" (Letters xxiii), was her loss not just of the farm but also of Denys Finch Hatton, and, with him, loss of the possibility of a family. In Lasson's view, Blixen's agonized achievement of a writer's autonomy coincides with and even depends on her failure to be a woman who could "hold on to another person." Lasson's terms seem to exemplify Dinnerstein and Chodorow's gender distinction that women tend to be driven by a sense of connectedness to others, and to confirm Regenia Gagnier's insight that the autonomous subjectivity of the nineteenth-century writer was gendered male, however "feminized" the sphere of writing may have become. Most male writers would have felt neither the same sort of pressure to succeed both "as a man" and as a writer, nor the same sort of conflict between those roles.

Likewise, Judith Lee uses terms highly reminiscent of Dinnerstein and Chodorow when she spells out the dilemma facing the woman artist: in her essay "The Mask of Form in Out of Africa," she presents Blixen as believing that since [woman] has always existed in a world in which there is someone else, she can only be herself in relationship to an other, specifically to a man; at the same time, she can fulfill her nature as an autonomous being only by acting out an identity that is not available to her and which she must imagine. (Pelensky, Critical Views 268)

That identity that must be imagined into existence combines the detached autonomy of the writer/orphan with the connectedness of the woman/mother; it is what puts navels in
novels.

In these terms, then, we might raise the question as to how much Schreiner's and Blixen's work is phallogocentric and how much it obeys, rather, the law of the mother. Balancing the linear, male law of the phallus might be the circular, female principle of the omphalos. In this light, the two women's choice of pseudonyms and other self-naming is fascinating. Retaining the patronymic, as Blixen did in her pseudonym and as Schreiner did in keeping her "own" surname when married, makes it possible to make a case for pen- and penis-envy, arguing that in their literal use of the name-of-the-father they are reinscribing a phallogocentric order. And Schreiner's "Ralph Iron" with its homage to Emerson (supported by the naming of the characters Em and Waldo in African Farm) and its rigidly inflexible metal, emphasizes the male line of descent. However, Gerald Monsman suggests that Schreiner's "Iron" hints at "irony," and Blixen chose "Isak" because it means "one who laughs," thus iron-izing the surname in her case, too; as Gagnier (citing Aristotle, Bergson, Eco, and Cixous) has it:

humor occurs when one sympathizes with a breaker of a rule or convention because one sees the contradiction between her and the frame she cannot comply with . . . humor reminds us of the presence of a law that we no longer have reason to obey. (Subjectivities 197)

In fact, insofar as both writers' work resists the linear and produces instead the circularity (one might describe
Blixen's use of the mise-en-abime as producing concentric circles, Schreiner's use of tangential events as producing eccentric ones) associated with écriture féminine, the new term I have suggested--the omphalogocentric or navel-centered law of the mother--seems appropriate.

It is certainly easy to see Schreiner's work in this light both in her fiction--in the naming of her central characters in *African Farm* (Lyndall) and *From Man to Man* (Rebekah) after her mother--and in her non-fiction; *Woman and Labor* elaborates on parts of Lyndall's feminist monologue in *African Farm* where she declares, "We bear the world and we make it" with the no less memorable lines "with each generation the entire race passes through the body of its womanhood as through a mold" (131), and "No man ever yet entered life farther than the length of one navel-cord from the body of the woman who bore him" (109). The image of the circle is there not just in the omphalos but in the *os cervix*, too:

as the *os cervix* of woman, through which the head of the infant passes at birth, forms a ring, determining for ever the size at birth of the human head, a size which could only increase if in the course of ages the *os cervix* of woman should itself slowly expand; . . . so exactly the intellectual capacity, the physical vigor, the emotional depth of woman, forms also an untranscendable circle, circumscribing with each successive generation the limits of the expansion of the human race. (*Woman and Labor* 131)

While this statement appears essentialist in drawing attention to what Schreiner sees as the key biological
difference between men and women (elsewhere she is generally very clear as to the constructed nature of gender) and while it would appear to be a very risky essentialism, potentially re-confining women to the domestic, Schreiner hammers away at the point that what she wants is a totally new order, one so utopian that an awareness of our shared having-been-mothered-ness makes war, for instance, an anachronism. She wants to replace the restrictions of the Garden of Eden on the navel-less Adam with the openness of a new Garden in which the navelled "woman shall eat of the tree of knowledge together with man" (W&L 298).

However, the future female solidarity hymned in Woman and Labor and its attitude to motherhood is only a theoretical presence. Back in "the life we all lead"—that is, in Schreiner's fiction—it is glaringly absent. We have already seen how Lyndall's experience of motherhood, the loss of her child, and the loss of her own life depend on the absence of female friendship and support. The "successful" mother of African Farm is the grotesque figure of Tant Sannie. In an age when death in child-birth was a high risk, when syphilis was rife, and when double standards of sexual behavior were enshrined in law, marriage was more likely to be fatal to women than to men. However, in Tant Sannie—a woman so fat, it is as if it was not so much consumption that killed her second husband, but her consumption of him—Schreiner creates a monstrous black
widow figure. She is presented in a remorselessly satirical
vein as stupid, capricious, and hypocritical; neither the
status she has as a property-owner, nor her dominance of men
appears as a positive example of female empowerment.
Instead, in her disrespect for men ("As for a husband, it's
very much the same who one has") and her acceptance first of
the consumptive Englishman and then of the puny "Little Piet
Vander Walt," she embodies mere appetite. When she is first
introduced she is dreaming not of either of her two
husbands, but of the sheep's trotters she had eaten earlier
that evening; similarly, when Piet Vander Walt arrives for
his "upsitting" with her she tells of another dream:

of a great beast like a sheep, with red eyes, and
I killed it. Wasn't the white wool his hair, and
the red eyes his weak eyes, and my killing him
meant marriage? (201)

The successful mother, in short, bears an uncanny
resemblance to misogynistic (male) fantasies of (female)
sexual voraciousness.

Under the rule of this wicked stepmother, the two
English girls, Em and Lyndall, are grudgingly brought up in
almost total isolation from life outside the farm. Em, who
has some claims to the farm as a potential inheritrix, seems
happy enough to wait until she is seventeen when she will be
able to marry, but her "little orphan cousin" Lyndall,
perspicacious and thirsty for knowledge, chafes miserably.
Schreiner therefore sets up in this highly "uncoordinated
'family'" (du Plessis 21) twin "scripts" of bildung and
romance, twin scripts that are ultimately not separable. As we have seen from chapter 1, although Schreiner's sympathies are with Lyndall, the heroine of the bildung script, her novel is able to reward her transgression of the romance script only with death. Em, on the other hand, gets her reward of marriage, but realizes its emptiness. Schreiner's "writing beyond the ending" is thus even more radically subversive of possible narrative outcomes for female characters in Victorian novels than Rachel Blau du Plessis suggests; for marriage and death are effectively no different: either you get the erotic attachment which causes your physical death, or you get the psychic death of an empty marriage.

This is, as Du Plessis points out, a violent "rupture of story," quite unlike the ending of that other novel of a female orphan's bildung and romance, Jane Eyre. The connections and dissimilarities between Jane's orphan status in that novel and Lyndall's orphan status in African Farm are revealing. In the former, Jane's orphanhood plays up the essentially conservative romance ending. As du Plessis has it:

Access to a fulfillment that reiterates the status quo is always facilitated by having a character begin so marginalized . . . that if a plot simply provides such a character with access to what must usually be taken for granted, the atmosphere of gratitude will finally impede any criticism from occurring. The critique of social conditions that orphans symbolize (poverty, vulnerability, exclusion) will be muted by the achievement of the blessed state of normalcy, so thrillingly
different from deprivation. Through the mechanism of orphans, novels can present standard family, kinship, and gender relations as if these were a utopian ideal. (9)

The ending of African Farm, by contrast, with Lyndall's deadly "marriage" and Em's deadening one, both overshadowed by Tant Sannie's consumption of men, resists all notions of normalcy. The orphan is not the oddity to be brought into the normal fold, but rather the very figure of a normal state of deprivation and alienation. Through the mechanism of orphans, Schreiner shows that "standard family, kinship, and gender relations" are not so much utopian as mere fictions of the "stage method" of painting human life that her Preface abjures. Schreiner's refusal of the romance ending signals even more than "a dissent from social norms as well as narrative forms" (du Plessis 20); it indicates how fully she was aware that the latter construct the former.

That awareness is perhaps even more explicit in the intertextuality of Undine where Schreiner names her orphan heroine after a figure from German mythology. Undine, in the version by Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué, is no Cinderella with a fairy godmother, Prince Charming, and happily ever after, but a capricious water-spirit who gains a mortal soul by marrying a mortal man. However, she can only finally be released from immortality if that mortal man remains true to her. He does not, of course, and she is left with the burden of a soul that can be tormented for all
eternity. It is an obscure, odd, and disturbing tale, presumably told to Schreiner by her father, just as in African Farm on "Long winter nights . . . the old man [Otto] had told of the little German village, where, fifty years before, a little German boy had played at snowballs" (African Farm 54). The appeal of such a tale, though, to the multiply marginalized Schreiner lies less in its sentimental associations with her father than in its heroine's separation not just from parents but from her own rightful world. Whether as a freethinking teenage girl in a rigidly Protestant colony, as a New Woman avant la lettre, as an English pro-Boer, she continually found herself or placed herself in a category of one, "addict[ed] to marginality" as Rachel Blau du Plessis has it (30).

Karen Blixen's version of the immortal fairy orphan unromantically adrift in the world of mortality is Alkmene. In the story of that name from Winter's Tales, the orphan-girl adopted by an otherwise childless parson and his wife establishes "a deep, silent understanding, of which the others could not know" with the local landowner's son, Vilhelm. In his narration of their relationship Vilhelm records:

We seemed, both of us, to be aware that we were like one another, in a world different from us. Later on I have explained the matter to myself by the assumption that we were, amongst the people of our surroundings, the only two persons of noble blood, and that hers was possibly, even by far, the noblest. In this manner, too, our companionship was mainly of the woods and fields;
Judith Thurman calls the story "one of the most purely tragic and transparently autobiographical stories she ever wrote," and discerns in Vilhelm's and Alkmene's sense of difference from the rest of the world--especially the domestic--the "aristocracy of two" made by Wilhelm Dinesen and the young Karen (Thurman 31, 26). What makes the story tragic is its refusal of romance, and its turning the romance of Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* into tragedy. Alkmene is introduced to the parson's family as someone "singularly and tragically situated in life, so that indeed she might be named Perdita after the heroine of Shakespeare's tragedy" (194). But whereas *The Winter's Tale*, as all of Shakespeare's late romances, both brings the father and lost daughter together again, and perpetuates the cycle of generation by cementing the romance between daughter and male lover, Alkmene's orphanhood means that she can neither be reunited with a father--Blixen's lost Wilhelm--nor matched with an appropriate male suitor--Vilhelm.

Furthermore, Alkmene is not only passively "situated in life" in singular and tragic separation, she actively seeks such separation, twice running away from her adoptive parents. On the second occasion, when Vilhelm, who has gone to find her and bring her back to the parsonage, asks her why she should want to run away from people who love her,
she replies: "What about the children, Vilhelm, who do not want to be loved?" (205) Far from being downhearted, as the parson's wife had desperately feared, when the parson informs her that she is adopted, Alkmene is "changed" in a way Gertrud considers positive. "She has come back to me," she says, "and keeps to me as sweetly as when she was a small girl. I myself feel young with it. I happened to look into the mirror today. You may laugh, but it was the face of a young woman that I saw there" (207); although Gertrud does not recognize it, the burden of obligation to love has been removed. Later, when it is apparent that, despite their kindredness of spirit, Vilhelm and Alkmene are not meant for each other, Alkmene again suggests that the loving attention of uncongenial people is more of a burden than a blessing:

"... I want to ask you a question," I said. "Have you not known that I loved you all the time?" "Love?" she said. "They all loved Alkmene. You did not help her. Did you not know, now, all the time, that they were all against her, all?" (220)

Above all, then, the orphan resists the stifling nature of "normal" family love. What Thurman says of Blixen is, I think true of Schreiner, too, that there is in her work and thinking a frontier--more of a fixed circle like an embroidery hoop--that separates the wild from the domestic. Within it there is firelight and women's voices, the steam of kettles, the clockwork of women's lives. Beyond it there are passions, spaces, grandeurs; there lie the wildnesses and battlefields. (25)
What the two women fought for in their chosen battlefields were rather different, but the desire for exclusivity—the category of one, or the aristocracy of two—frequently allied with a sense of noble suffering, was similar. The orphan, in her radical isolation, makes living itself an act of great risk, and, as Thurman says, the greatest gestures in such a life "have to do with that 'exquisite savoir-mourir' that Isak Dinesen also admired so deeply" (28).

Certainly, in "Alkmene" the moment of greatest hope is when Alkmene thinks that Vilhelm's having been "turned out" of his father's house means that he, too, has no "home" and that they will be able to "go on the high roads together."

In that case, she continues, "'I shall do something so that we shall not have to beg. I shall learn to dance'" (211). However, in the same way that Karen Blixen had somewhere to go back to when Karen Coffee failed, so Vilhelm's loss of his father's house results only in his going to his uncle. The tightness of the family circle closes in, closing out the occasion for art.

The autobiographical nature of "Alkmene" is evident here. It is only the orphan, free from the ties of home, who has the capability of the free expression of the artist. Judith Thurman detects Karen Blixen's uneasy attitude to "home" as early as 1900 when the teenage Tanne, having lived for a time at Folehave with her maternal grandmother, described her grandmother's house in a thank-you letter as
the place "where to all of us are some of the most hyggelige things we have ever known." Thurman comments that the use of the word hyggelig, meaning something between "comfortable" and "homely," was "a clever little hypocrisy," likely to be taken as a compliment by Mrs. Westenholz, but "summ[ing] up what Tanne considered were the most mediocre and contemptible aspects of life at Folehave" (Thurman 47, 48). On her return "home" to Denmark in 1931, Blixen showed her complete disregard for the principles of hygge by leaving doors open in the middle of winter, thereby "fighting a second battle for the ground she had won in Africa: the recognition that she was other, unique, a destinee misplaced among them" (Thurman 258). In an intriguing note, Thurman links the Danish hyggelig/unhyggelig with the German heimlich/unheimlich (48), which through Freud's theorizing suggests a further dimension to her rejection of the safe circle of home for the creative risk of the uncanny, the unknown wilderness.

Blixen could thus most fully become an artist by inventing herself as an orphan, whose "home" on the farm had the appeal of the unheimlich, a place of sojourn or passage rather than of stasis. The place of the multiply self-invented Pellegrina Leoni. As such, it comes as no surprise that one of the sections that Blixen cut from the original manuscript of Out of Africa was about her mother; "the idea that the sovereign narrator is someone's little girl is
somehow incongruous," Thurman comments (282). In fact, Out of Africa even in its very title denies its European parentage, unless one is to infer, as in horsebreeding parlance, a suppressed "By Europe" to indicate the text's sire; in addition, it largely ignores Blixen's actual European family in favor of her extended family of African "watoto."

Making "Africa" her new home, or at least her temporary orphanage, puts Blixen in line with tendencies of earlier European women writers in and of Africa. In her comprehensive study of Victorian women travel writers in Africa, Catherine Barnes Stevenson writes that while male travel writers tend to produce quest-romances in which their rhetorical strategies present themselves as heroic explorers confronted by "a dangerous continent--often perceived as feminine--which must be dominated by the force of his will[, w]omen travellers, in contrast, develop strategies of accommodation" (160, emphasis added). Women travel-writers' heroism, Stevenson says, "rooted in fortitude and patience, achieves its triumphs through adaptation, not conquest" (161). 7

One of the writers whom Stevenson takes as typifying such strategies is Mary Kingsley, whose impulsion to travel in Africa was the result of the death of both her parents within six weeks of each other when she was thirty years old. Finding herself for the first time in her life with
"five or six months which were not heavily forestalled" with service to family-members, Kingsley was able to go to West Africa, and, in writing up her account, to "gain an identity, a sense of personal value, that was otherwise unavailable to her" (Stevenson 99,94). Her relationship to her perennially-wandering father was not unlike Blixen's, and her choice of West Africa—at the time considered to be as fatal a place to white folk as any on earth—as a site to complete his work or compete with him, smacks of Blixen's "savoir-mourir."

It seems, therefore, that being orphaned—whether through invention or actual event—offered Blixen, Kingsley, Schreiner, and others the radical autonomy that allowed them to be writers, by cutting them off from family obligations. As I suggested earlier, the anxiety involved in this process concerning loss of "womanliness" (where that term is defined in Dinnersteinian terms of connection and other-centeredness) makes it look as if the issues involved are primarily issues of gender. However, in this final section I would like to push the argument further to suggest that in seeking to establish a new "accommodation" in Africa, these writers are actually writing as much about the condition of whiteness as about the condition of femaleness or, for that matter, the condition of the writer.

Being orphaned is not necessarily a disaster; in fact, as we have seen, in itself it can be the source of
invigorating new identity. Furthermore, being orphaned does not necessarily mean loss of power over others; the cuckoo is also an orphan. And if white women in Africa are able to come in themselves to a new and invigorating identity, then they are enabled to do so because they are occupying someone else's nest and being fed not by the wicked stepmother of fairytale, but simply by a weaker bird. Schreiner's and Blixen's presence as women in Africa means that, while the exclusively female experience of, or capacity for, physical motherhood might be figured as a potentially utopian marker of radical sameness, transcending political, national, and racial difference, it is probably more realistic to see the image of the orphan, the uprooted child who has a home that is not yet home, as that which marks the white woman as still alien, still extra-familial in Africa.

The "accommodation" that Nadine Gordimer, for instance, has made in South Africa—where white settlement has the longest continuous history in Africa and where white rule lasted longest—is to a situation in which whiteness should no longer afford one the privileges of the cuckoo. A great deal of her work has thus been aimed at showing the marginality of South Africa's racial elite, a racial elite that believed it was at the very center of a world of strangers, unaware of its own strangeness. Abdul R. JanMohamed links Nadine Gordimer's and Karen Blixen's work in his exposure of the manichean aesthetics of colonialist
literature," and notes that their attempts at "genuine and thorough comprehension of Otherness . . . entails in practice the virtually impossible task of negating one's very being" (Gates 84). Of Gordimer he goes on to add:

Unable and unwilling to turn away from the colonial situation, Gordimer makes a virtue of necessity by systematically scrutinizing the social and psychological effects of the manichean bifurcation on her white protagonists, even though she is acutely aware that the price she pays for this deliberately restricted focus is her inability, as a writer, to participate in the formation of a genuinely national literature. (Gates 102)

Of course, Gordimer is also acutely aware of the fact that she is a major participant in international literature, that her use of the English language and her description of essentially European culture makes her work legible to a very wide readership and eligible for all sorts of international honors. As a result she finds herself in a peculiar position at international conferences where she insists on her marginality as a white woman to the black people of whom she is not representative and whom, largely, she does not represent.

For instance, in her 1982 William James Lecture entitled "Living in the Interregnum," she explores the uncertainties of whites who wish to live under majority rule (a segment within a segment already) as to how to offer their selves for and in a future South Africa. The essay covers a broad sweep of legislative and economic measures that might be taken in order to effect a "humanly"
structured society, but its main focus, naturally, is on cultural measures and the role of the writer within society. As a preamble to this section Gordimer says, "I have already delineated my presence here on the scale of a minority within a minority. Now I shall reduce my claim to significance still further. A white; a dissident white; a white writer" (Essential Gesture 272), and she differentiates between the "black writer's consciousness of himself as a writer" and the "white writer's self-image" (274): "The black writer is 'in history,' and its values threaten to force out the transcendent ones of art. The white, as writer and South African, does not know his place 'in history' at this stage, in this time" (276). 12

The issue of the apparent opposition of history and politics to art is one that I have raised earlier and deal with more fully later; for the moment, I am interested in taking at face-value Gordimer's claim that the white South African writer is adrift in time, in much the same way as the orphans Undine, Lyndall, and Alkmene are adrift in their respective worlds. And in the same way that those heroines resist the various modes of romance by actively seeking separation, so Gordimer resists romanticizing the end of apartheid in her work's insistence, in JanMohamed's words, "that syncretism is impossible within the power relations of colonial society" (Gates 85).
One obvious symbol of syncretism that Gordimer largely ignores is inter-racial romance, and the "hybrid" products of such romances. Her work is more concerned with replacing black and white in relation to each other, than with replacing those terms. Although this obviously involves ambiguities that might lead to eventual hybridization or syncretism, her work is still acutely, necessarily, color conscious. In *July's People*, for instance, we might see July's urbanization or the Smales children's easy mixing with the village children as symptoms of a present or future hybrid state, but the book's chief purpose is, as JanMohamed states, "to examine the dependence of whites on their African servants" (Gates 101). The ambivalence of the book's very title also suggests that categories of "people" are never as cut and dried as Victorian racism and the apartheid state would have had them: who are July's "people"? Are they the members of the immediate blood-family to which he belongs, or are they the white madam and master who, in the text's post-revolutionary situation, effectively belong to him? In either case, however, July takes precedence in the re-placing of black vis-a-vis white, and the novel ultimately shows the Smaleses unable to adapt to the reversal of roles; unlike the blacks who had "had to understand and accommodate themselves to white laws and customs," the Smaleses fail to learn "the intricacies of the African world" (JanMohamed 142).
In JanMohamed's reading of Maureen Smales's final dash towards a descending helicopter that will decide her fate one way or the other, according to the race of its occupants, "Gordimer stresses the drastic and appalling nature of the master's self-recognition: Maureen is so horrified by her own perverse involvement with her servant and by her identity as master that she wishes to abandon it at any cost" (JanMohamed 143). This willed annihilation might thus be read as a highly dramatic metaphor for his description of the white writer's virtually impossible task of self-negation involved in her attempt to know the Other.

In keeping with the evolutionary rather than revolutionary changes that occurred in South Africa from 1990 on, the representation of white self-negation of None to Accompany Me (1994) is less dramatic. On the other hand, although it may lack drama, it is nonetheless a grand gesture in its own way, and a successful one, to boot. To keep up the Shakespearean romance connections, it is as if Paulina at the end of The Winter's Tale really did fly off alone to some forgotten bough, there to mourn the love that's lost, or as if Prospero went back to Milan where every third thought would be his grave, without demanding the audience's notice and applause.

None to Accompany Me is a fine and dense novel, traditional in its focus on an individual subjectivity, and even in construction and style, but radical in its
examination of that subjectivity's self-invention in terms of race, gender, and social and economic power. Deeply concerned, like Shakespearean romance, with family relations across the generations and with the connections between self-governance, family, and government of the state, and with the same sense of ripeness we find in Shakespeare's romances that the brave new world is for a new generation, Gordimer's book nonetheless resists the "romance" plot at every turn, with divorce, marital deceit, maternal indifference, abortion, and separation.

The Paulina figure of *None to Accompany Me* is Vera Stark, a lawyer and mother of two children, who lives up to her name by learning to live without her "people", and "find[ing] out about my life. The truth" (313). The end of the novel finds her on a crisp highveld winter's night (filled with the luminescence of Schreiner's opening to *African Farm*) in a state of exalted solitude with her feet planted on the "axis of the earth;" rooted, apparently, but alone; belonging, but no longer owning.

We know nothing of Vera's parents, but her home for forty-plus years--from World War II up until the end of the novel (c.1993)--is the house she acquired as part of the divorce-settlement with her first husband. This house, provided by "people who did not know what they themselves were, part of Europe or part of Africa" (293), she feels a fraudulent acquisition, as it was her infidelity that led to
the divorce. Nevertheless, it is the house in which her two children are brought up, the house in which her father-in-law (father of her second husband) dies, and the house to which her grandson comes. Not the house of an orphan like Alkmene or Undine or Lyndall by any stretch of the imagination; but from Vera's sense that the house does not really belong to her, nor she to it, stems her sense, if not of orphanhood, at least of cuckoo-dom. And in her selling it, we can see both Alkmene's desire to escape the stifling circle of family, and the white cuckoo's desire to escape its history. Thus, in the images of orphan and home, Gordimer unites the personal and the political, private and public in a way that extends Schreiner's or Blixen's use.

Furthermore, Vera's "escape from history" differs from that of Gordimer's earlier creation, Rosa Burger in Burger's Daughter (1979). In that novel, Rosa escapes physically to the South of France, only to find it ultimately unable to accommodate her. Vera's escape is not to a new geographical location at all, but instead to a new arrangement within the old geography. Gordimer's use of the house to link the domestic and the national seems to build on a motif also used in My Son's Story (1990), where, according to Homi Bhabha, "each of the houses . . . is invested with a specific secret or a conspiracy" but also "marks a deeper historical displacement . . . the condition of being Colored in South Africa" (147). This connection between specific
houses and deeper historical (dis)placement and/or racial (re)accommodation "requires a shift of attention from the political as a theory to politics as the activity of everyday life" (149).

Vera Stark's work for the Legal Foundation, an organization fighting for black Africans' claims to their land, is itself political in this latter way. What is more, it ultimately brings the political right back home by changing Vera's own accommodation. While she may have spent a lifetime trying to get rid of the cuckoo's privileges, Vera's own purging of privilege does not come until the novel's end, when, separated from her family (her husband is living with the son of whom he is not the father in London; her daughter is living with her female partner in Cape Town) she moves in to the maid's quarters of a house now owned by her black friend Zeph Rapulana. Rapulana has himself moved very considerably in the accommodations of the new South Africa, from his position as spokesperson for a small rural community to board member of a number of banks and institutions.

Annick, Vera's lesbian daughter, is suspicious of her mother's relationship with Zeph, but Gordimer is at pains to establish that the new orphan/tenant will not enjoy closer union with her newly arrived landlord. Early in their relationship Gordimer gives us Vera's assessment: she "had never before felt--it was more than drawn to--involved in
the being of a man to whom she knew no sexual pull" (123), and in her self-defence to Annick, Vera insists that her new home is "an annexe. Quite separate, own entrance and so on. There's no question of intrusion, either way" (311). If this is a model for racial cohabitation it is one that seems to accept and respect (or assume but respect) racial difference, while ceding priority of rights of ownership to South Africa's blacks. Vera gives up her house, but she can't evade history by giving up her whiteness, a whiteness that has enabled, among other things, the invention of the white writer's "I" as the speaking subject of African history.

Granted the inescapability of that whiteness, my judgment on these particular texts in this particular academic study, my very selection of them, reveals my own writer's "I" as white, too. And it might be argued that in my harping on the "orphanhood" of white women writers, I am whitely ignoring the material existence of black family life in colonial Africa generally and South Africa in particular, a family life that was so comprehensively brutalized by white rule that the trade unionist Emma Mashinini, for instance, recalls in her autobiography that in prison

I could see my youngest daughter's face and I wanted to call her by her name. I struggled to call out the name, the name I always called her, and I just could not recall what the name was. I would fall down and actually weep with the effort of remembering the name of my daughter. (86)
Regenia Gagnier's comments on Victorian working-class autobiography, and the narrative and psychologically distorting pressures applied on it by middle-class norms are relevant here, since it is not just in Victorian England that "domesticity, at home and abroad, was a dominant ideological state apparatus" (Gagnier 52). 17

Even Nelson Mandela, for instance, in Long Walk to Freedom finds space for an apologia in which he defends his prioritizing of national rather than familial needs, expressing "regret that I had been unable to be with her [his mother] when she died, remorse that I had not been able to look after her properly during her life, and a longing for what might have been had I chosen to live my life differently" (506). The prohibition on his daughter Zindzi to touch him when she was finally allowed to visit him in prison has acquired iconic status. In comparison with these experiences, the "orphanhood" of Schreiner, Blixen, and Gordimer still has the trappings of white luxury. However, in the attempt by Gordimer in particular to divest herself of those trappings lies the hope that eventually people will not be able to describe either luxury or suffering in terms of color.

Other texts would suggest that such a process is already underway. Ingrid de Kok's poem "Small Passing," for example, has its origin in the comment of a man to a white woman who had just given birth to a still-born child that
her suffering was insignificant in the face of the daily suffering of black women in South Africa. The poem offers support for the man's point of view insofar as it graphically represents that latter suffering:

Child shot running,  
stones in his pocket,  
boy's swollen stomach  
full of hungry air.  
Girls carrying babies  
not much smaller than themselves. (de Kok 62)

However, the final section of the poem imagines an extraordinary solidarity of mothers:

I think these mothers dream  
headstones of the unborn.  
Their mourning rises like a wall  
no vine will cling to.  
They will not tell you your suffering is white.  
They will not say it is just as well.  
They will not compete for the ashes of infants.  
I think they may say to you:  
Come with us to the place of mothers.  
We will stroke your flat empty belly,  
let you weep with us in the dark,  
and arm you with one of our babies  
to carry home on your back. (de Kok 62-63)

In None to Accompany Me, there is no hybridization, no racial syncretism, but that lack does not represent the anxiety about purity that had led to the birth of the orphan Otto, Vera's former lover, and a "Hitler-baby," "a creature of the unspeakable mythology of genetic engineering, the chimera of modern history" (69). Instead, the apparently barren white couple of Vera's daughter and her lover, like the bereaved mother in "Small Passing," are "armed" with an adopted black baby, thus becoming parents of a daughter of no kin to them, in the same way that Bennett has been father
to the son Ivan who was no kin to him. In the shared home or orphanage of the new South Africa, maybe finally the responsibilities of parents to children—especially Schreiner's and de Kok's connectedness of mothers—can begin to overcome not just racial apartheid but the fracturing of human relations that racialized beliefs engendered. The constitution of the new South Africa—one of the most progressive of such documents in the world—holds out hope that such an aspiration may be both humanly and legally binding, giving the protective force of law to an omphalocentric order in which the individual's relatedness to others matters more than her autonomy.

In the meantime, I'm still white, my chosen authors are still white, the business of publishing and the academy is essentially white, and I must get on in the next section to outline one aspect at least of how white privilege in Africa came to be engineered as natural in a site of apparently natural productivity: the farm.

Notes

1. In her letters Schreiner frequently writes of the great physiological strain of writing: to Havelock Ellis she writes that "artistic work takes the life-blood out of one" (Letters 50); to Betty Molteno she reverses the analogy, writing that child-bearing is "like writing a book—it may be a great labour and half kill you, but if you don't feel it's a great joy and bliss to suffer the agony of writing it, and a reward in itself, you're not fit to write it!!" (Rive 291).

2. There are obvious exceptions to these generalizations, and I in no way wish to imply an essentialist endorsement of
Dinnerstein and Chodorow; however, the evidence does seem to suggest that Blixen felt the pressure on her to be other-oriented as one that was related to her gender.

It might be worth noting that one of the male writers most anxious about his own masculinity, Ernest Hemingway, found the big-game hunting milieu of British East Africa very congenial. The terse, cool, cynical big-game hunter Wilson of "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" is reputed to have been based on Karen Blixen's husband Bror.

And what is one to make of Hemingway's praise of Beryl Markham and Karen Blixen as writers? Did they represent, for him, some version of Schreiner's "virile women"?

3. This term, of course, has none of the high seriousness of professional psychoanalysis, but I'm rather fond of it as an idea simply because it gets us away from that sex/not-one binarism of Lacan/Irigaray. Everybody has a belly-button, after all.

4. I am aware that the gendering of all these terms is rather loose, and has come under fire from recent theoreticians wary of essentialism. However, the anxieties felt by Schreiner and Blixen do lend themselves to the Gilbert and Gubar thesis that the woman writer of the nineteenth-century felt that there was a kind of "infection in the sentence" resulting in a "radical fear that ... the act of writing will isolate or destroy her" (Madwoman 49).

5. Schreiner: "On that day when the woman takes her place beside the man in the governance and arrangement of external affairs of her race will also be that day that heralds the death of war as a means of arranging human differences. . . the knowledge of woman, simply as woman, is superior to that of man; she knows the history of human flesh; she knows its cost; he does not" (Woman and Labor 176).

6. The reference is to Seven Gothic Tales 37.

7. In Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism (London: Routledge, 1991), Sara Mills scrupulously avoids the potential essentialism of gendering style, arguing rather "that women's travel texts are produced and received within a context which shares similarities with the discursive construction and reception of male texts, whilst at the same time, because of the discursive frameworks which exert pressure on female writers, there may be negotiations in women's texts which result in differences which seem to be due to gender" (6). For Mills, therefore, the interest in colonial women travel writers lies in the clash between two discourses--of femininity and of imperialism. The latter calls for "action and intrepid, fearless behaviour from the narrator, and yet
the discourses of femininity demand passivity from the narrator and a concern with relationships" (21-22). These conflicting requirements are "discursively productive" as they "enable a form of writing whose contours both disclose the nature of the dominant discourses and constitute a critique from its margins" (23). Although Stevenson is much less theoretically punctilious than Mills, her biographical approach remains useful to my argument here.

8. I am thinking not just of Schreiner's view that a community where mothers took their rightful place in the foreign affairs of the state would be a community unable to pitch its children into war, but also of Ingrid de Kok's beautiful poem "Small Passing" discussed later in which the white mother of a still-born child is comforted by black mothers who "will not tell you your pain is white."


10. Since the publication of JanMohamed's work Gordimer's participation in the formation of a national literature through extra-literary means has become apparent, especially in her work for and on bodies such as the Congress of South African Writers, founded in 1987.

11. As JanMohamed notes: "When she does enter the world of the Other, as in *July's People*, it is primarily to examine the dependence of whites on their African servants" (Gates 101).

12. It might be noted, as in chapter 1, that Gordimer tends to overlook gender in her analysis.

13. Since the repeal of the Immorality Act and the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act in 1986, cross-racial sexuality has featured more prominently (in *A Sport of Nature* (1987) the female protagonist Hillela is married to a prominent leader in the liberation struggle; in *My Son's Story* (1990) the Colored Sonny has an affair with the white Hannah), but with the psychological focus still on the cross-racial desire between adults rather than on their "hybrid" children. Alice Knox suggests that Gordimer's insistence on the non-sexual nature of Vera's and Zeph's relationship represents her having moved on from "the intense sexuality of Hillela and Whaila in *A Sport of Nature*, and the thwarted communion between Sonny and Hannah in *My Son's Story*, to something that is, at last, true"
(Knox 78). The emphasis in Gordimer's short fiction, such as "Town and Country Lovers," tends to be on the brutally invasive nature of apartheid law in aborting inter-racial relationships.

14. It seems handy to hang on to these terms in a chapter dealing in part with European anxiety about human evolution. It would be perfectly possible, however, to argue either (a) that very little changed when South Africa moved to majority-rule, or (b) that the move to majority-rule was itself the result of a prolonged and painful revolution. February 1990 will nonetheless remain a key symbolic date, marking as it does the release from jail of Nelson Mandela.


16. Even Vera only half-knows that Ivan is the biological son of her first husband.

17. We might extend the scope of this comment still further to the experience and representation of family life among African-Americans. In her essay "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe," Hortense Spillers attacks Daniel Patrick Moynihan's 1960s report on the "Negro Family" for freezing "'ethnicity' itself [as] a total objectification of human and cultural motives. . . . Apparently spontaneous, these 'actants' are wholly generated, with neither past nor future, as tribal currents moving out of time." Spillers insists on an historical understanding of the disruption of African family systems by the "orphaning" of the slave-child who neither belonged to the mother nor was related to the owner. Given that history, any continuing matrifocal "ties of sympathy that bind blood-relations in a network of feeling, of continuity" represent "one of the supreme social achievements of African-Americans under conditions of enslavement" (Spillers 65).
SECTION TWO
"HAD A FARM ..."

"Rus hoc vocari debet, an domus longe?"
Martial

"Gicigo kia mugunda gitinyihaga"
[A piece of land is not a little thing]
Kikuyu Proverb
Effectively orphaned from their immediate families, both Karen Blixen and Olive Schreiner are oddly "homeless," too, in terms of national affiliation: is Blixen a Danish writer or an English one? in what ways, if at all, might she be considered Kenyan or African? is Schreiner part of English literary tradition or prototype of a South African one? Such questions come to a head in both writers' use of the term "farm" to designate the particular tracts of African land represented in their work. But just how, if at all, does the English concept of the "farm," with aesthetic associations deriving from a particular history of landscape representation in European art and the pastoral tradition in European literature, transcend cultural and geographic difference? Do the social relationships between country and city dwellers, farmers and farm-workers in Britain get reproduced identically when capitalist farming arrives in Africa? How is it possible for someone of European origin to write of a farm that is in Africa but geared to European economic systems without at least some form of cultural imperialism? The specific case of Olive Schreiner suggests that even if the colonial writer or artist produces a
landscape resistant to imperial eyes, that very representation may have complex, not necessarily emancipatory, nationalist consequences.

Let us start by examining the English tradition of landscape representation and the place of the farm in that tradition. As Raymond Williams explains in The Country and the City, the life of the country, and its representation in English literature, have had a complex, mutually influential history. On the one hand, the pastoral tradition in literature has tended to privilege "the country" in the English consciousness as a site of "a natural way of life: of peace, innocence, and simple virtue" as opposed to the city's "noise, worldliness, and ambition." On the other hand, the country is also associated with "backwardness, ignorance, limitation," while the city is associated with "the idea of an achieved centre: of learning, communication, light" (Williams 1). Above all, what Williams stresses is that the idea of the country, hence of the countryside, landscape, and the farm, is an ideological construction varying over time both in responding to social and economic change and producing such changes. In particular, he locates certain specific terms as emerging at certain specific times: "Countryside," for instance, "is an eighteenth- to nineteenth-century development, in its modern sense," while the term "farm" was "originally a fixed payment, then from the sixteenth-century, by extension, a
holding of land on lease, and so to the modern meaning" (307). Landscape art in England, likewise, has a fairly definable genealogy, developing into a genre in the seventeenth-century, and reaching its apogee in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century in the work of painters such as Gainsborough, Constable, and Turner. From this bare summary it is apparent that Schreiner and Blixen (although the focus of this chapter will be on the former), even were they dealing with European farms, would be representing sites bearing a very heavy, frequently contradictory, associational and ideological burden.

However, Williams rightly adds another twist to the situation by comparing the relationship of country to city with the relationship of colony to metropole. The fact that Blixen and Schreiner, with their cultural inheritance from a "metropolitan" Europe are dealing with farms in Africa at times of colonialist expansion makes it all the more difficult to unravel the ideological intention and effects of their work.

Recent critical opinion on landscape representation—especially the representation of "new" landscapes—insists that landscape's heavy ideological load results in a depiction of social conditions according to top-down ways of seeing. Moreover, that way of seeing tends to render poverty as picturesque, or else to shift it outside the frame in an aesthetic move analogous to the actual removal
of the rural poor from land previously considered common. Ann Bermingham, for instance, in *The Ideology of Landscape*, stresses that coincidence of "the emergence of rustic landscape as a major genre in England at the end of the eighteenth century" with "the accelerated enclosure of the English countryside" (1). The dominance of this way of seeing was so overwhelming that even such voices as John Clare's protesting the enclosure laws are muted, in Williams' view, by his inheritance of a structure of feeling that both displaces the source of dispossession, and romanticizes what has been lost: rather than attacking "visible and active landowners," Clare's verse targets "'low' and, as it would seem, alien 'tyrants'"; rather than specifying Clare's actual economic loss, Helpstone suggests that "what wealth is most visibly destroying is 'Nature': that complex of the land as it was, in the past and in childhood, which both ageing and alteration destroy" (Williams 137,138).

The tendency to see "Nature" rather than human beings occurs away from the metropole, too, in colonial travel-writing. In *Imperial Eyes*, Mary Louise Pratt stresses how the aesthetic transformations of the "naturalist's quest," whereby any social changes are not expressed as changes at all "but are naturalized as absences and lacks," come to "embody . . . an image of conquest and possession" by effectively emptying the landscape of its human population.
Pratt's account of John Barrow's travel-writing from South Africa claims that "the European improving eye produces subsistence habitats as 'empty' landscapes, meaningful only in terms of a capitalist future and of their potential for producing a marketable surplus" (Imperial Eyes 61).

At the time when Schreiner and Blixen were penning their representations of Karoo and Kenyan landscapes the upheaval in those places in land distribution, occupation, ownership, and use was far more dramatic and socially disturbing than even the enclosure period in Britain. For example, The Story of an African Farm was written in the 1870s, at a time when the last Cape-Xhosa war was coming to an end. The defeat of the Xhosa finally cleared the way for the Glen Grey Act of 1894 under which land was parcelled out among the Xhosa on a "one-man-one-lot principle" in order to "prevent the accumulation of capitalist land" (Switzer 67); in a move that has odd resonance with the English Enclosure Laws, individual plots were allotted, but only on land seen as "commonage" which meant that those allotted the plots did not qualify for the vote. The process of "land alienation" in Kenya, which began very hesitantly with the chartering of the Imperial British East Africa Company in 1888, gathered pace in the first decades of the twentieth-century, culminating after the First World War in the British government's allocation of three million acres of highland farmland to a number of "soldier-settlers." The provision
of cheap labor was a consistent problem for the settlers resulting in what Richard D. Wolff describes as a "proliferation of policies:"

The authorities restricted African reserves, manipulated hut and poll taxes, structured indigenous leadership and tenure systems in the reserves, facilitated squatting, moved toward a South African type of pass system, and even utilized prison terms to give prisoners some minimal training in work discipline. (Wolff 107)

In 1912 an ordinance was passed to obtain forced labor for the "community benefit," a policy that was consolidated in 1920 as a result of intensified settler pressure after World War I. Blixen's own 6,000 acre farm was a part of the four and a half million acres of land that by 1915 had been divvied out among one thousand white farmers "as if it had been vacant" (Thurman 119).

The presentation of Blixen's and Schreiner's literary farms, then, as if they were uncontested and uncontestable entities, as if they really were farms in a sense familiar to European readers, is one that must invite questions of complicity with colonialist power. Can they be separated from the "naturalist" tradition in which writing the landscape embodies conquest and possession? And even if they disavow specifically English conquest and possession, what are the local, national consequences of writing the African farm? If we concentrate on Olive Schreiner's representation of the Karoo landscape in The Story of an African Farm, I would suggest that Schreiner herself was
anxious about such questions (as in so many things, presciently so), and that we might reformulate the first question in her case, as follows: is it possible, given the ideological baggage of the English language, Victorian culture, and pastoral tradition to write an African landscape that resists imperialist ideology?

The short answer is: partly. As with all the various oscillations we have mentioned in Section 1, so in Schreiner's handling of landscape, there seems to be no claim that is not also disclaimed, with the claim and the counter-claim producing further possibilities in an endless dialectic. What most marks her handling of landscape is, in fact, a kind of literary-generic hybridity, a hybridity capable of the production of new forms even while apparently legible to the old order.7 However, I am already rather too far in advance of myself, and need to go back to that overly monolithic notion "Victorian culture" before looking at Schreiner's colonialist/anti-colonialist English/South African hybridity.

Who, after all, were Schreiner's Victorian cultural heroes? Herbert Spencer, catalyst to Schreiner's free-thinking and part of the Darwinist assault on religious certainty; John Stuart Mill, proponent of women's rights and a man whom Schreiner revered as the "noblest of those whom the English-speaking race has produced in the last hundred years" (Letters 402); and John Ruskin, whom Schreiner saw as
"a curious antidote to this commercial, striving, self-seeking, individualistic world" (Letters 276): for all these men's class and gender privilege, they were hardly figures endorsing the status quo. Like Schreiner they considered themselves rebels; within the establishment, to be sure, but opposed to it nonetheless.

Of these three, John Ruskin is clearly the most relevant to my thesis here because of his enormous influence on British art and art criticism.⁸ His particular appeal to Schreiner appears to have lain in his insistence on the morality of aesthetic production and criticism, and the consistency with which he extended that same Victorianly earnest morality to his social criticism. Although Schreiner lost her faith early, and Ruskin lost his late, both writers were shaped by their youthful immersion in the Bible, and each was driven by a similar sense of mission: as Gerald Monsman says of Schreiner, she "absorbed ineradicably the central motif of the missionary's calling: one who is sent to carry on a work, to perform a worthy service" (Monsman 7); Ruskin displayed a similarly evangelical attitude in preaching his gospel of the moral and spiritual effect of art.

The mission of both writers was, in short, to help the world see rightly. Schreiner's insistence on the "truth" of her narrative method conforms to Ruskin's attitude towards landscape painting. As Ann Bermingham explains, such
painting for Ruskin "is treated as much more than a matter of representing scenery. It is, or ought to be, a means by which one discovers the 'truth of nature,' immanent with divine presence" (176). Ruskin draws a distinction between medieval and Gothic art when painters "either painted from nature things as they were, or from imagination things as they must have been" (Works 12: 147). And while Ruskin disparages Renaissance "fancy" which allows for "finish of execution and beauty of form" to replace the moral urgency of visionary intensity, Olive Schreiner disparages the fanciful Piccadilly scribblers who produce neatly structured books full of "those brilliant phases and shapes which the imagination sees in far-off lands" (African Farm 29).

However, Ruskin is not only of interest in this discussion because of his evangelical attitude to right-seeing. He is interesting because of intellectual "hybridity," his own oscillation between opposite poles: the "red" Ruskin who, like Marx, could equate factory work with slavery, and declare the "degradation of the operative into a machine" (Stones 192) the chief blight of the times; and the paternalistic "violent Tory of the old school" (Praeterita 5) whose idea of social justice involved the "upper classes . . . keep[ing] order among their inferiors, and rais[ing] them always to the nearest level with themselves of which those inferiors are capable" (quoted in Bermingham 177).³ Riven, red, Tory Ruskin, in short--surely
the very figure of "the Victorian sage,"--should remind us of the inadequacy of setting up either-or questions and expecting straight answers from them.

However, with the proviso that the either-or questions I set up are likely to break down or branch out into further such dilemmas, I think it is still useful to consider the complexities of Schreiner's landscape representation in terms of at least the following binarisms: colonialist/anti-colonialist (or complicit/resistant); Victorian/avant-garde; European/African. Equally interesting is the divergence between local South African criticism of the novel (by white literary critics, especially; criticism by black critics opens up a whole new line of enquiry) and Anglo-American criticism of it. Together, these sets of binarisms draw attention to the hybridity of The Story of an African Farm and the awkwardness of placing it in English and South African culture, or the history of colonial and anti-colonial writing.

To contemporary and even to current critics of The Story of an African Farm the novel often appears to give the impression of having sprung from nowhere, and it is frequently dealt with as if it were a prototype--whether of the New Woman novel, of female modernism, or of South African fiction--in ways that tend to blur the complexity of the geographical and temporal conditions under which it was produced. At two extremes we might perhaps locate Lloyd
Fernando, whose *New Women in the Late Victorian Novel* places the novel almost entirely in terms of English literary tradition, and Karel Schoeman, whose biography of the young Schreiner insists on its local origins. Where Fernando dismisses the novel's South Africanness in an offhand reference to its having its source in a "simple environment" (130), Schoeman insists on the coincidence of the first 25 years of Schreiner's life with "what may well have been the most dramatic quarter-century in the earlier history" of South Africa (v).

As Schoeman emphasizes, Schreiner's investment in the landscape is deeply personal, not to say solipsistic; despite the bitterness of her childhood, she recalls with delight the "immense" distances of the Karoo, and clings to the memories "of the places I lived at, they were so unutterably lovely" (*Letters* 266). However, it is not possible to utter that private vision of unutterably lovely landscape for the benefit of a reading public--specifically an English reading public--in ways that are purely private or purely aesthetic. According to Abdul R. JanMohamed, colonial literature in general is "an exploration and a representation of a world at the boundaries of 'civilization,' a world that has not (yet) been domesticated by European signification or codified in detail by its ideology. That world is therefore perceived as uncontrollable, chaotic, unattainable, and ultimately evil"
(Gates 64). And Schreiner's "immense" distances and the barrenness of significance of her landscape might easily be read as reproducing just such an "ultimately evil" world in need of domestication. No less than eighteenth- and nineteenth-century English landscape artists or the photographers for the Sierra Club, Schreiner might be read as staking claims.

However, she is only in part a colonist; in part she is also—however problematically—a native, and the claims she makes are couched as counter-claims. We have already seen for instance, in her preface to the second edition of *African Farm*, that Schreiner attacks novelists who use the "stage-method" of writing, and pours scorn on conventional colonialist depictions of Africa, "best written in Piccadilly or in the Strand," which feature cattle driven into inaccessible krantzes by Bushmen" (28). Her own understanding of realism demands that, "should one sit down to paint the scenes among which he has grown . . . sadly he must squeeze the colour from his brush, and dip it into the grey pigments around him." This is life painted according to "the method of the life we all lead" (27).10

Above all, the implication of the Preface is that the writer has a deep moral imperative to this method. As for Ruskin, so for Schreiner, realism of representation was not just a question of style, of technical skill or accuracy of reproduction, but was fiercely tied to an ethics of "right
seeing." That did not necessarily mean allegiance to a kind of photographic accuracy either, as both writers allow for visionary sensibility. Ruskin revered the medieval and Gothic artists for representing "things as they were, or . . . must have been," an attitude that validated Gothic grotesquerie or literary creations such as Dante's centaur, but did not allow for the fanciful "sophistication" Ruskin saw characterizing the Renaissance. Similarly, Schreiner justified her use of dreams and allegories, while vilifying both naturalism and the "stage-method" Piccadilly scribblers. Both therefore insist on correcting not just visual inaccuracy, but misrepresentations of the truth itself.

With no novelistic precedent for Schreiner's landscape, even mundane descriptions are charged with this kind of visionariness. Dan Jacobson in his Penguin Introduction makes this clear when he calls African Farm's opening sentence "almost heroic" in describing the moon as bright enough to "fill the sky with a hard, blue radiance" (18), and Irene Gorak, in her article entitled "Olive Schreiner's Colonial Allegory," extends the paradox when she writes that in African Farm Schreiner "combines an interest in the visionary sensibility with a desire to illustrate the range of yet-unpainted types of an existing Cape community" (57).

Finding a language for these "unutterably lovely" scenes, these "yet-unpainted types" that the South African-
born Olive Schreiner loved is necessarily bound up with the language of moral truth that the English-speaking Olive Schreiner had grown up with. Words like "measure," "proportion," and "perspective," which all too easily slip from the technical to the metaphysical, are key here. Technically, part of Schreiner's problem in depicting landscape is that the Karoo she was depicting, in its immensity—in JanMohamed's terms its resistance to the control of measurement—confounds classical European notions of proportion. At the same time, in a highly influential review of Schreiner's life and work, Virginia Woolf criticizes Schreiner's own lack of "measure": Woolf admires Schreiner "as a martyr" who has had to sacrifice not her life but, "perhaps more disastrously, humour and sweetness and sense of proportion" (Clayton 94). Although I am here quoting Woolf rather out of context, it is almost as though the "evil" of the proportion-defying landscape Schreiner lived in has infected the writer; loving such a landscape puts one beyond the pale, is evidence of having "gone native."

And it seems there is no way to represent the Karoo landscape and still retain a European sense of proportion. J.M. Coetzee's *White Writing*, the most extensive analysis of the aesthetics of landscape representation in South African literature, traces European attitudes to the picturesque, the sublime, and the pastoral as they affect colonial South
Africa from 1652 onward. He shows that from the earliest white travel writers in South Africa, the landscape has resisted European models in each of those categories. William Burchell, for example, produces painterly descriptions of the Cape Peninsula area as if in the tradition of Claude, but as soon as he crosses the Hex River Mountains and reaches the Karoo, he finds it harder to describe the landscape within a familiar set of aesthetics; this leads him to consider the existence of "a species of beauty with which, possibly, [European painters] may not yet be sufficiently acquainted" (38). And it is in precisely this "unutterably beautiful" landscape with its "alien species of beauty" that The Story of an African Farm is set.

One of the chief aspects of the "African" landscape Schreiner sets against the "inaccessible krantzes" of Piccadillyan "Africa" in The Story of an African Farm is its apparent emptiness and negativity. Like Roy Campbell who saw in the veld not "a positive limitlessness but 'a gap in nature, time and space' to be apprehended only in terms of its 'vacuity'" (Coetzee 53), Schreiner frequently describes the landscape in terms of absence---whether of color, of feature, of activity, of variety, of life. The first daytime description sets the tone.

The plain was a weary flat of loose red sand sparsely covered by karroo bushes, that cracked beneath the tread like tinder, and showed the red earth everywhere. Here and there a milk-bush lifted its pale-coloured rods, and in every direction the ants and beetles ran about in the
blazing sand. The red walls of the farm-house, the zinc roofs of the outbuildings, the stone walls of the kraals, all reflected the fierce sunlight, till the eye ached and blenched. No tree or shrub was to be seen far or near. The two sunflowers that stood before the door, out-starred by the sun, drooped their brazen faces to the sand; and the little cicada-like insects cried aloud among the stones of the 'kopje.' (38)

Elsewhere, Otto rides home across the "still monotonaty" of the plain, Waldo rides for half an hour on the farm without recognizing it, and even when the relief of rainfall intervenes, the rain's very persistence makes it acquire a sense of monotonity. Similarly, the little "kopje"--virtually the only salient feature--"was not itself an object conspicuous enough to relieve the dreary monotonity of the landscape" (174).

Given that Coetzee suggests that Schreiner's novel, for all its novelty, is "out of a literary tradition of [her] own, a tradition of the English novel of rural life" (63), it is interesting to contrast the "kopje" with Penistone Crag, the most salient geographical feature in Wuthering Heights. While the kopje remains resolutely antipathetic to humanity, apparently random in its lack of signification, the rocks around the Heights are sympathetic, expressive, and essential: Catherine Earnshaw claims that her "love for Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks beneath--a source of little visible delight, but necessary" (Brontë, 122). The final impression left by Wuthering Heights of the landscape retaining the continued presence of Catherine and Heathcliff
is diametrically opposed to the overriding sense that Schreiner's veld is a "site of wholesale absence" (Coetzee 64).

In fact, the very monotony of the landscape that Coetzee so astutely describes is in itself opposed to the treatment of landscape in English novels of rural life, where one type of landscape tends to gain its significance through contrast with another. As two obvious examples, I might cite Wuthering Heights's contrast of the landscape around the Heights with the gentler environs of Thrushcross Grange, or Hardy's contrast in Tess of the D'Urbervilles of the Frome valley around Talbothays Dairy with the barrenness of Flintcombe Ash.

But if monotony and absence of distinction make it impossible to produce a conventionally picturesque rendering of the scene,¹² might not the vastness of the Karoo make it capable of a Romantic representation, drawing on the tradition of the sublime? Not so, says Coetzee, pointing to the fact that the sublime in Romantic art tends to be vertical, not horizontal, sudden, not extended; mountains claim priority over endless plains in the Romantic imagination. The Karoo's vastness appears as "mere space, contemplated under the dome of heaven," which, according to E.L. Magoon in his 1852 Home Book of the Picturesque, "prostrates rather than sustains the mind" (cited in Coetzee 60).
That prostrating levelness raises another difficulty in representing the Karoo as a readable landscape. Like Mary Louise Pratt, Coetzee suggests that seeing physical landscape in terms of pictures frequently depends on implied "prospects," points from which the viewer can look out across landscape. With the flatness and "featurelessness" of the Karoo, Schreiner has no prospect or vantage-point from which to describe landscape. The "kopje" on the farm breaks the "solemn monotony" of the veld, but it is not a place one would want to climb to in order to get a better "view;" in fact, making allowance for the dazzle of the Karoo sun, one could see virtually as far from the level plain, and there would be nothing more, nothing different, at least, to see from the slight prominence of the "kopje."

Nowhere on Schreiner's farm is there a viewpoint from which a framed, bounded landscape can be surveyed.

Coetzee, citing Barrell, points out that the absence of a viewpoint means that there is none of that "kind of phenomenological distance between viewer and landscape that exists between viewer and painting, creating a predisposition to see landscape as art" (Coetzee 46), or, as Mary Louise Pratt might add, as prospect, or indeed as property; instead, the Karoo landscape, apparently alienating, forbidding and negative in its vastness and lack of feature, ironically forces the characters moving on its surface not to be separate from it (with an implied ability
to exert control over it), but to be a part of it and to be trapped in it. In the final scene of the novel, that is exactly what has happened to Waldo; he has become so completely part of the landscape that "the chickens had climbed about him, and were perching on him" (300).14

But while the landscape's resistance to European models of representation stresses the revisionary nature of Schreiner's African farm, and while the specific absence of prospects may make it possible to read her landscape as counter to the imperialist "Monarch-of-all-I-survey" mode described by Mary Louise Pratt,15 absence generally--as JanMohamed shows--can still work to justify imperialist occupation of the land. After all, emptying the land of all features suggests either the physical removal of human population, or an intellectual incapacity to see, or see as human, the population that is there. As with E.M. Forster's opening description of Chandrapore in which the narrative voice finds "nothing extraordinary," and where the colors have been so squeezed from his brush that "the very wood seems made of mud, the inhabitants of mud moving" (Passage 7), so in Schreiner's novel indigenous Africans are reduced to mere traces of the landscape, passively accepting ill-treated by man and nature, and responding in grunts, laughter, or unintelligible sounds.16 The land no more belongs to them than it does to the ants, beetles, and spiders Schreiner so frequently describes.
And if it doesn't belong to "them" and "they" haven't done anything with it anyway, then, so runs the imperialist logic, "we" must be justified in making it into something, improving it, giving it order, or in JanMohamed's terms, "domesticating" it. In Forster's Chandrapore the "chaotic" Indian town is overseen--both literally and figuratively--from the Civil Station laid out on a slight rise where the bungalow British bureaucrats had created a landscape with which they could feel familiar: individual, demarcated houses and gardens, and streets intersecting at right angles (Passage 8). The Story of an African Farm is almost exclusively rural, but it should be clear that the idea of emptiness and lack of order, along with notions of lack of order and lack of significance, played a large part in British and Boer expansionism in South Africa, and subsequently in the ideology of apartheid. Schreiner's novel, therefore, even in demonstrating the inapplicability of British aesthetico-political principles to her surroundings, may have, at least inadvertently, facilitated their geopolitical implementation.

On balance, however, as Coetzee acknowledges, the chief effect of Schreiner's landscape representation is anticolonial rather than ultimately imperialist. Although Coetzee, like Pratt, insists on the close connection between travellers' records and "the imperial eye," claiming that "landscape art is by and large a traveller's art, intended
for the consumption of vicarious travellers" (174), he nonetheless concludes that Olive Schreiner's landscape consistently thwarts the vicarious traveller; as such, he claims, Schreiner's landscape is anti-colonial in its "assertion of the alienness of European culture in Africa and in her attribution of unnaturalness to the life of her farm" (66).

While such a claim remains difficult to decide conclusively, a contrast with *Out of Africa* supports it. In Blixen's rhapsodically affirmative opening vision of the Ngong Hills, where the difference from European norms makes for "greatness and freedom, and unequalled nobility" (13), the very air offers "a vital assurance and lightness of heart. In the highlands," writes Blixen, "you woke up and thought: Here I am, where I ought to be" (*Out of Africa* 14). Her slipping between first and second person seems to confirm Coetzee's definition of landscape art as "intended for the consumption of vicarious travellers;" it invites the reader to share this buoyant, empty space. No such invitation emerges from Schreiner's opening descriptions. In the daylight description quoted above, the sun causes the human eye to ache, the sunflowers to droop, and the "cicada-like insects" to cry aloud. Waking up here, no-one would think: Here I am where I belong.

Even in the novel's opening nighttime description that immediately precedes the passage quoted, and in which
Schreiner depicts the "loving moonlight" as casting "a kind of dreamy beauty," that beauty is also described as "weird and . . . almost oppressive" (35). Gerald Monsman, in his account of the passage, draws attention to the way Schreiner's diction "suggests a surfeit that threatens to suffocate or drown the child. As [Lyndall] sleeps, the light 'poured down,' 'fell in a flood,' and when she awakes it 'was bathing her'" (Monsman 53). As Schreiner's focus moves from the moonlit girls to the utter darkness of Waldo's room, the sense of suffocation intensifies; from his "box under the window . . . [n]othing was visible" to the wakeful Waldo, and he imagines each inexorable tick of his father's hunting watch to represent someone dying. In the darkness Waldo has a vision of a kind of waterfall of death: "He saw before him a long stream of people, a great dark multitude, that moved in one direction; then they came to the dark edge of the world, and went over" (African Farm 35-37). While it might be argued that such a vision is too general to carry the argument I am making about Schreiner's use of a specific landscape, the tying of its sense of spiritual desolation to the descriptions of physical desolation that surround it textually--and in such a prominent position in the text--does support the contention that Schreiner's landscape asserts the "alienness of European culture in Africa."
Furthermore, unlike the bestselling "non-fictional quest romances" of Victorian travel writing which Patrick Brantlinger rightly asserts "exerted incalculable influence on British culture and the course of modern history" (Gates 176), The Story of an African Farm radically breaks with any idea of the quest romance and suggests that there is really nothing new for Europeans to discover in "Africa." Instead of chronicling a journey, whether to enlightenment or the heart of darkness, to find a goddess or shoot elephant, Schreiner's novel is entirely static; it describes only travel within its defined area. There are no great falls to describe, no semi-mythical sources to discover, no controversial geographical claims to prove or disprove. The book opens and closes on the farm, with no metropolitan penetration of and withdrawal from colonial space, no confirmation of the traveller's preconceived notions of what s/he expected to be able to "discover" and classify.

Instead, characters drift across the landscape of the unnamed, virtually featureless and hence unmappable "African farm," like the farm's own lost sheep and straying ostriches: Waldo's and Lyndall's "strangers" remain entirely strange as to name, origin, and destination; Bonaparte Blenkins's origins are similarly obscure (47), and he finally drives off the page (295) with Tant Sannie too fat to catch up with him; we know next to nothing of Lyndall's parents or of Em's; and the farm's black workers drift in
from, or out into, the semi-desert, either absconding or expelled by Tant Sannie, to be left like Hagar in the wilderness.

The more deliberate journeys that characters do embark on are mundane and disillusioning. Lyndall goes off to boarding school hoping to come back again ... knowing everything that a human being can" (185), but instead comes back with opinions formed in reaction against the school's attempts to "finish" her. Waldo also sets out to enlarge his mind and "taste life," and, like any conventional Victorian traveler, he records his travels in an extensive letter (252-262). However, his efforts as traveler and writer are futile; as in the earlier allegory of the Hunter's quest for Truth told to Waldo by his stranger, so Waldo's own quest is disappointing. His most profound realization is a negative one made in Grahamstown where he learns to feel ashamed of himself "dressed in tancord" (260), and to realize that "he was not meant to live among people" (261); it is therefore his journey home that is "delightful" and which includes the one picturesque description--of a "deep little kloof" that also makes an appearance in Undine--in the entire novel. Bursting to tell of his experience, as any good travel writer should, he writes it all down in a letter to Lyndall, only to have Em finally tell him that his writing is in vain, because Lyndall is dead (263). Actual journeys, it seems, are at
best merely tiring, generally disappointing, and at worst cruelly sundering; they are not the physical counterparts of the Hunter's quest for Truth, nor are they even informative or beneficial in any way to those who would read about them.

Waldo's account does, however, make for illuminating comparisons and contrasts with those of earlier Victorian travel writers. At a key point in his letter to Lyndall, Waldo, like any conventional travel-writer, describes how he worked his way to the top of a promontory from which he had a "prospect" of a "long, low, blue, monotonous mountain" (259). This "mountain" is the sea he had set out in search of, but the prospect is, initially at least, disappointing. Waldo's disappointment, however, is different from the disappointment, both aesthetic and logistical, experienced by Speke on first viewing Victoria N'yanza. Speke, after all, was still able to claim that his "expedition had now performed its functions" (Pratt 206); for Waldo, the expedition performs a function quite different from his expectations: his vision suggested that "the ideal is always more beautiful than the real," that the idea of appropriation or appropriability is flawed ("It was not my sea"), and finally, after the first day of disappointment, that the sea is the one wanting questions answered, and is not an object to be discovered at all (259).

Waldo's refusal of mastery and knowledge links his travel-writing with what Mary Louise Pratt identifies as a
non-mainstream tradition of women travel writers such as Mary Kingsley and Anna Maria Falconbridge in which she claims that "a comic and self-ironic persona indelibly impresses itself on any reader" (213). Such irony in Waldo's account is exaggerated by Schreiner's narrative technique. While Falconbridge and Kingsley are assured of an audience, which, as Pratt emphasizes, to some degree ties them to the imperialist project, Waldo's writing---of which Schreiner records only a fragment---never reaches its intended audience, because, in one of the novel's characteristically jarring moments, he learns as we learn that "Lyndall is dead" (263).

Among other critics who discuss apparently gendered differences in Victorian travel-writing, Susan L. Blake suggests that women travel-writers tend to resist the Linnaean, taxonomic, (male) scientific approach, instead opting for a style that allows the people and landscape observed to speak to them, a process that necessarily involves a degree of assimilation. Waldo's assimilation with the landscape---intellectualized in his comments on the sea---is realized in his death when, having gone out to sit and muse in the sunshine among the stones of the farm, he becomes one of the stones, a perch for the chickens (300). Schreiner's presentation, then, of Africa is novel both as fiction and as travel-writing, resisting the English taxonomic conventions not just of Piccadilly and the Strand,
but of the Royal Geographic Society and the *Illustrated London News*.

Questions of audience and medium, however, lead to further, more local issues: if the landscape resists English expression and expropriation, does it similarly resist African and/or Afrikaner articulation? Whom ultimately does Schreiner's landscape representation inform or benefit?

Given the absence of a literary market within 1880s South Africa, it would have been almost impossible for Schreiner to conceive a target-audience other than an English one. Even the book's title establishes that *The Story of an African Farm* was aimed out of Africa. To have entitled it *Thornkloof* as she once thought of it when it was a work in progress would have implied a familiarity with such names and the landscape they applied to that Schreiner knew she would not find in her readers. (Imagine, by contrast, what it would mean for *Wuthering Heights* to have been called *The Story of a European Farm* (or English or even Yorkshire)). Both Schreiner's Preface to the second edition and her insistence on the book's being published at the relatively low cost of 1/- "because the book was published by me for working men" (Rive 111) confirm whom she expected as readers. 

Despite all that, however, and whatever her connection to prevailing English landscape ideology, nevertheless, in establishing the validity of a specifically African landscape for literary treatment in
English, she does pioneer a way for African writers—black or white—to follow.

Sol Plaatje, for instance, who named his first daughter Olive after her, set *Mhudi*, the first novel written and published in English by a black South African, in a similar landscape to that of *African Farm*. Plaatje's biographer, Brian Willan, draws particular attention to his "finely drawn . . . descriptions of landscape and natural phenomena" (Willan 361); without Olive Schreiner's example Plaatje may have found such descriptions harder to produce. While that comment is necessarily speculative, what is certain is that Plaatje could have had no earlier model. According to Dan Jacobson's Preface to the Penguin edition of *The Story of an African Farm*, even "some sixty years after it was first published" the Karoo landscape was still so infrequently encountered in books that he [Jacobson] had to "struggle with [his] own incredulity that the kopjes, kraals and cactus plants she mentions were of the same kind as those I was familiar with" (*African Farm* 18).²³

As I suggested earlier, though, any set of binarisms tends to break down or branch out into further sets of binarisms. Even if we decide that Schreiner's work is pioneering, that there is indeed, as Dan Jacobson writes, "something heroic" in her (re)visionary descriptions of the Karoo, the very nature of literature, the form of the novel, and the English language itself mean that no follower in her
pioneering footsteps can avoid charges of being at worst complicit with, at best compromised by European culture. Brian Willan writes that Plaatje's novel (and conversely his translations of Shakespeare into Setswana)24 "was the outcome of a quite conscious and deliberate attempt . . . to marry together two different cultural traditions: African oral forms, particularly those of the Barolong, on the one hand; and the written traditions and forms of the English language and literature on the other" (352).

Such attempts at syncretism did not necessarily earn him the praise of whites or of blacks. Stephen Black, editor of the literary magazine Sjambok which was promoting "realistic short stories of contemporary African life" (Willan 363) impatiently dismissed Plaatje's translations of Shakespeare ("What in God's name the Bechuanas want to read Shakespeare for I don't know, unless it is that they want to feel more like worms than ever" (quoted in Willan 332), and criticized him in Mhudi for having "forgotten Bechuanaland sometimes and remembered only the kingdom of Shakespeare" (quoted in Willan 363). Clement Doke, on the other hand, generally sympathetic to Plaatje and fully aware of Plaatje's commitment to the promotion of Setswana, criticized him for writing in English at all, as "Mhudi written in Chwana would have been a still greater contribution, and Chwana sadly needs such additions to its present meagre literature" (Willan 363).
Plaatje's attempt at a "marriage" of African and European traditions, thus, like Schreiner's hybrid text, lays itself open to criticism from all sides, and provides us with an early example of the double-bind faced all over the continent by the African writers of Ngugi's generation whose opposition to European colonialism initially found literary expression in European languages, but whose reversion to the vernacular (a) limited audience, and (b) carried with it potentially divisive nationalisms. Even with the contemporary increase of interest in and ascription of value to oral culture, the debate over literary language still rages. Ngugi has given cogent reasons for ditching English and writing in his native Kikuyu (although he is, of course, now exiled from his own tongue by Kenya's post-colonial government), while Achebe continues to defend his use of English.

In the "new" South Africa, committed to non-racialism, language issues are particularly vexed: any concerted effort to "preserve" a particular language or culture smacks of the kinds of internal divisions of the apartheid era; while privileging any one language threatens the new state's fragile unity by playing into the hands of any group willing to play the nationalist card.²⁵

All of the foregoing suggests that, more than a century after The Story of an African Farm appeared in print, any representation of "African" landscape, especially one that,
like Schreiner's, claims the weight of moral truth, can cause contention. Even Ngugi, for instance, who rejects the English language in its role as "carrier of culture" (Decolonising 13) or Njabulo S. Ndebele who rejects English for its complicity with imperialism and global capitalism, can be criticized for their totalizing tendency: the English language has also, of course, conveyed counter-hegemonic ideas that have had profound influence on culture worldwide.

The awarding of Nobel Prizes to "English" writers as diverse as Wole Soyinka, Derek Walcott, Nadine Gordimer, and Seamus Heaney surely provides adequate evidence for Heaney's claim that "English is by now not so much an imperial humiliation as a native weapon" (quoted in Arkins 208-209). One of the features that makes Schreiner's novel virtually the ur-text of colonial hybridity is precisely its attempt to find a language true to the immediate locality that manages to avoid the violence of that imperialist/nationalist confrontation.

This is certainly not a new idea; in fact, it is something of a commonplace, and a central one, in Schreiner criticism. Joyce Avrech Berkman sees Schreiner's "revulsion from the binary discourse of her times" leading her to "replace a military articulation of reality" with a "medical counterpart," the "healing imagination" (5) that gives Berkman's study its title. Similarly, Gerald Monsman posits as a main thesis of his book, Olive Schreiner's Fiction:
Landscape and Power, that Schreiner's "solution to a transformation of the master-servant, male-female, empire-colony hierarchy was not a role reversal in which the disempowered seize control, but a radical role dissolution" (xiii). And it is in these sorts of terms that Christopher Heywood declares that, despite the book's inevitable European ancestry and its focus on European characters, The Story of an African Farm does not represent "a false start for the African literary tradition" (30).

Extending Jacobson's analysis of Schreiner's "heroic" opening description which counters European expectations of a night sky to the radical way in which Schreiner debunks "imposed stereotypes" and refuses to accept European anthropological views, Heywood shows how Schreiner instead risks writing from her own experience of the six different cultural strands that he identifies as coming together in Cradock (32). In his essay, "The Story of an African Farm: Society, Positivism, and Myth," he argues that the novel resists the English taxonomic conventions of another Victorian paradigm: the Comtean Positivist paradigm. Heywood suggests three possible divisions of South African cultures into Comte's categories of the primitive (superstitious), barbarian (metaphysical), and Positive (scientific). In each of these divisions, English culture represents the Positive phase of human society while the Khoi (Hottentot), San (Bushman), Nguni (Bantu), Boers and
Germans occupy, in various arrangements, the positions of the primitive and barbarian.\textsuperscript{27}

However, even though Lyndall occasionally utters what looks like a Positivist credo, the full effect of \textit{The Story of an African Farm} is to show the inadequacies of Comtean classification. As Heywood points out, the English in the novel are not uniformly civilized: the intellectual, unsettled Lyndall is sharply differentiated from the placid Em; Bonaparte Blenkins is, in Heywood's view, a barbarian (Vivan 33);\textsuperscript{28} and Gregory Rose is scarcely a Positivist model, settling as he does for "the lame ending of a piece of land acquired through marriage" (Vivan 34). Furthermore, it is the Hottentot (Khoi) maid who translates Blenkins's "incomprehensible English" for Tant Sannie. Waldo, meanwhile, who plays the role of German artist alter-ego to the English intellectual Lyndall, might be seen as primitive either through classification among the impoverished German settlers of the region, or through association with the Bushman (San) artist, the strange beauty of whose rock-paintings Waldo alone seems moved by (\textit{African Farm} 49-50).

In short, Schreiner's representation of all her characters shows an awareness of postcolonial hybridity, a radical resistance to what Heywood calls "the straitjacket of ideas offered by the metropolitan cultural world" (Vivan 38).\textsuperscript{29}

But it is chiefly the characterization of Waldo that makes Heywood defend the novel against charges of being a
"false start" in African literature, and he suggests that we might look to Waldo's tentative artistic identification with the Bushman (San) artists (African Farm 49) and his ultimate return to and death on the farm as an affirmation of African-ness (Vivan 35). In language reminiscent of Ruskin's descriptions of medieval art, Schreiner introduces "some old Bushman-paintings . . . grotesque oxen, elephants, rhinoceroses, and a one-horned beast, such as no man ever has seen or ever shall" (44). While Em and Lyndall sit "with their backs to the paintings," indifferent, Waldo reveals an intense imaginative sympathy for the "old wild Bushm[a]n that painted those pictures there" (49). The Bushman shares Waldo's (and the medieval gargoyle-carver's) unconscious, almost elemental urge to paint:

He did not know why he painted but he wanted to make something, so he made these. He worked hard, very hard, to find the juice to make the paint; and then he found this place where the rocks hang over, and he painted them. To us they are only strange things, that make us laugh; but to him they were very beautiful. (50)

In fact, Waldo is not moved to laughter at all by the paintings, but to an odd state encompassing both "deep excitement" and "a dreamy look." He concludes his excited reverie with the revelation that the very stones seem to be talking to and through him. He is snapped out of his "trance" and returned to the mundane reality of his shepherd's duty by Lyndall curtly assuring him, "It never seems so to me" (50). Any identification thus remains
"tentative," but there is at least some acknowledgment of a native tradition of representation not bound by European models, a tradition that might offer a model to build on rather than react against.

It has taken a very long time for white South African culture to advance down the path of identification. In literature, specifically African forms of poetry have only recently emerged in white poets writing in English or Afrikaans. Antje Krog, for instance, whose explicitly erotic verse and candid confrontations of issues of race and gender aroused controversy in the Afrikaans literary community in the 1980s, uses Sotho models in some of her work, using the rhyming of images rather than of sounds, as in Sotho oral praise songs. The praise song has, in addition, been modified to suit the purposes of the trade union movement, with the poets of Black Mamba Rising using that native form to express their dissent within an essentially European social formation. The general level of visibility of indigenous vocabulary in apparently "English" texts appears to have risen considerably in recent years, and will no doubt continue to rise under the linguistic dispensations of the "new" South Africa, especially as reflected by policy on education and broadcasting.30

As to the language of artistic representation, it is perhaps harder to disentangle "African" from "European" vocabulary. The need for graphic representation in the
highly politicized art in the final years of the apartheid regime, for instance, allowed little space for the "native," a category that would have been extremely suspicious, anyway, as possibly playing into the regime's notions of essential differences between "tribes" and races. The Bushmen, of course, played so little part in the political rearrangements that they were left exclusively to anthropologists and Laurens van der Post. The idea of landscape representation remains basically European and it is interesting to compare the pictures of Jan Hendrik Pierneef, "long ... acknowledged as the foremost interpreter of the SA landscape" (Berman 223), with Schreiner's literary depictions.

The son of Dutch parents, Pierneef (1886-1957) trained at the Rotterdam Art Academy. Back in South Africa he came under the influence of other European-trained artists, such as Frans Oerder. Revisiting Holland in 1925-26, he was further influenced by the Dutch painter and formalist theorist van Konijnenburg. The outcome was a style that expressed the landscape by schematizing forms and separating colors (Fransen 295). Like Schreiner's putative painter, Pierneef squeezed the color from his brush, and, according to Hans Fransen, "his palette was so closely attuned to the Transvaal color spectrum that he found it difficult to change over to the more saturated colors of the Cape during his periodic visits to that region" (Fransen 295).
In his linocuts, "simplified to large black and white planes" (296), he squeezed color out completely.

As such, Pierneef looks like the right-seeing artist Schreiner imagined herself to be, whose accurate representation of the South African landscape would counter colonialist conventions. However, Pierneef's "virtually unchallenged position as [South Africa's] most successful artist" (296) shifts attention away from the colonialist/anti-colonial question to the issue of settler nationalism. For Pierneef's early concerns with form were superseded by his "directing himself to the cause of a hypothetical ideal of 'national art'" (Berman 223). During the 1930s, Pierneef established himself as effectively South Africa's national painter, earning a number of highly significant public commissions, including a series of landscapes for South Africa House in London. Most prominent of his public works within South Africa is the series of murals he designed for the Johannesburg railway station; marvellous though these may be, the association with the South African Railways system, notoriously segregated both as to passengers and as to "job reservation," suggests that these accurate, "native" landscapes "embrac[ing] views of several quarters of the country, giving expression to the separate character of each" (Berman 225), remain racially exclusive. No less than the words of Langenhoven’s national anthem, "Die Stem van Suid-Afrika," they reproduce the
Afrikaner mythology of "ver verlate vlakte" (roughly "endless empty plains") waiting for domestication and control, first by wagon, subsequently by railway trains.

I shall return in the final chapter to the effect on public memory and "history" of public memorials, where I will suggest that no mode of memorialization can remain exclusive for long. Schreiner's writing of the South African landscape--like Africa itself "tied by blood and anguish to Europe," as Heywood has it (Vivan 38)--creates new possibilities for seeing South Africa. Ultimately, however, there is no way of limiting who will turn away from her art, as Lyndall turns her back on the Bushman paintings, and who, like Waldo, will attempt to use it; neither is there any way of predicting the political applications of any such use, whether nationalist and racially exclusive or in the interests of a healing, holistic vision.

Notes

1. Lise Kure-Jensen notes that there are intriguing differences between Blixen's original English texts and her Danish self-translations, the latter frequently involving what Kure-Jensen calls verbal "amplification" (Pelensky, Critical Views 317). The effort of such translation appears to indicate an awareness on Blixen's part that she played different roles in Danish and British culture (literary and otherwise).

2. See Bindman, David, ed., Thames and Hudson Encyclopaedia of British Art 140. John Barrell in The Idea of Landscape and the Sense of Place, 1730-1840 specifies that the word "landscape" comes into English from Dutch in the sixteenth-century as a "painter's word." Even, Barrell argues, when the meaning became extended to cover the idea of "land 'considered with regard to its natural configuration'" an
educated person of the eighteenth-century "would have found it very hard, not merely to describe land, but also to see it, and even to think of it as a visual phenomenon, except as mediated through particular notions of form" (2).

3. This is the case not just in Raymond Williams' work on literary pastoral, but also in John Barrell's on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century poetry and painting, and Ann Bermingham's on painting from that period, as well as in Mary Louise Pratt's or Abdul JanMohamed's writing on colonialist travel-writing and fiction.

Said's descriptions of the "relationship between knowledge and geography" in the specific context of Orientalism are also relevant here. Not only does Said insist on the "imaginative" nature of geographical knowledge (Orientalism 53-55), but he also shows how, in the nineteenth-century, "scientific geography soon gave way to 'commercial geography'" (218). Thus Western geographical representations of all kinds, whether in fictional works, travel-writing, or "pure" geographies are all to varying degrees involved in making foreign space knowable and hence usable by Western powers.

4. It is also worth noting that Olive Schreiner positively worshipped the former Governor-General of the Cape, Sir George Grey whose policies in the 1850s had laid the foundation for the 1894 Act. In his attempts to undermine and destroy the last remaining Xhosa institutions in Xhosaland Grey had taken full advantage of the Cattle-Killing disaster (see Chapter 8). In addition to confiscating land and goods, he also bought out chiefs--paying them as judges assisted by white magistrates--thereby subsuming them into white culture. (See also Peires, Switzer, Crais.) To be fair to Schreiner, it should be added that Grey's success depended on his own skillful misrepresentations of his own aims and achievements, so she might be forgiven for not knowing the truth about him. Switzer, who calls Grey "the final architect in the conquest of Xhosaland" (65), points to Grey's manipulation of the colonial authorities in London, both before the Cattle-Killing (when he used a "bogus threat of a possible Mfengu-Xhosa alliance" (65) to get money for his policies) and after it (when he and his officials "manufactured a so-called chiefs' plot to destroy the power of the chiefs, force the Xhosa into migrant labor, and open up their territories to white settlement" (71). As Belich shows, Grey used similar tactics in his two governorships in New Zealand; in his chapter "The Paper Victory" Belich calls Grey a "master of propaganda" (58), refers to the "conscious artifice" (68) of Grey's reports, and shows how Grey's concealment of facts led to a "paper victory" in the New Zealand Wars when in fact the British had suffered a
military defeat (70). Elsewhere, Belich writes that Grey "could certainly have taught Machiavelli a trick or two in methodology" (120); as in South Africa the "campaign of misinformation" involved "a near monopoly of the flow of information to the Colonial Office" (123). It is nonetheless extraordinarily ironic that Schreiner's highly politicized representation of British land-grabbing in Rhodesia in *Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland* (see Chapter 7) should have been dedicated to Sir George Grey, a "great good man." Sally-Ann Murray draws attention to that irony in her article "Olive Schreiner: 'A Soul Struggling with its Material Surroundings,'" where she points out that despite remarkable percipience, Schreiner's "comprehension had limitations pertaining to the entire presence of Britain in Africa, whether imperialistic or humanitarian" (31-32).

5. See Wolff 124-125; Thurman 170-171.

6. For details of land distribution in colonial Kenya and the creation of a Kenyan wage-labor force see Wolff 47-131; and Kennedy 21-27 and 42-47.

7. Writing about the hybridity of Creole languages in *Colonial Desire*, Robert Young links the ideas of Bakhtin with those of Homi Bhabha. Citing Bakhtin's claim for the cultural productivity of hybridized languages ("they are pregnant with potential for new world views, with new 'internal forms' for perceiving the world in words"), he goes on to show how for Bhabha the particular hybridity of colonial discourse "describes a process in which the single voice of colonial authority undermines the operation of colonial power by inscribing and disclosing the trace of the other so that it reveals itself as double-voiced" (Young 23).

8. In their anthology of Victorian writers Bloom and Trilling write, for instance, that "by the pertinacity, passion, and brilliance of his teaching[,] ...Ruskin had shaped the minds of three intellectual generations in their relation to art" (Bloom and Trilling 154).

9. Nigel Everett's book, *The Tory View of Landscape*, draws attention to the intellectual conflicts from the eighteenth-century on within and between Tory notions of a "moral economy" and Liberal notions of a "free" market. Ruskin's position as a Tory who was "constantly seeking means of composing society, reluctant to relinquish it to individual greed and taste or to a natural tendency towards improvement" (Everett 7) is not only central to his argument, but also evocative of Schreiner's attack in *Trooper Peter Halket* and elsewhere on "King Gold," Cecil Rhodes, and capitalist expansion generally in southern
Africa.

10. First person pronouns are frequently problematical with Schreiner; her "we" here seems more like an advertiser's interpellation of audience than a statement of identity; in other words, "we" really means "you" English readers who need to know the real truth about "us" in "Africa."

11. In a letter to Havelock Ellis in 1888 she writes, "I **hate** Zola and that school more and more" (Letters 129).

12. Coetzee points to certain specific features that preclude a picturesque representation: the absence of deep greens; the foliage's lack of lustre; the dazzling brightness and evenness of the light which makes transitions from light to dark harshly abrupt; the absence of reflective surface water and of diffusive atmospheric moisture (Coetzee 42).

13. See the Thames and Hudson Encyclopaedia of British Art, which states that the earliest landscapes in British painting were "topographical views" such as Hollar's "carefully drawn and etched 'prospects.'" Such "prospects" depended on an "elevated viewpoint" from which to present their detailed pictures of country houses (Bindman 140).

14. Karen Blixen, too, explicitly declares Africans to be a **part** of the landscape: "The Natives," she writes, "were Africa in flesh and blood" (28).


16. See, for instance, Itala Vivan's essay "The Treatment of Blacks in The Story of an African Farm" (in Vivan, ed., *The Flawed Diamond* 95-106), where she observes that "the only instance where a black character actually articulates words and chooses a line of behaviour" only "confirms the character's fixed and dependent role, that of a servant and satellite" (100). In that scene, the saintly Otto, about to be turfed off the farm by Tant Sannie as a result of Blenkins's calumnies, turns for support to the "Hottentot woman" whom he has always treated well. Instead of setting the record straight as Otto had expected, she responds with "a loud ringing laugh" and urges Tant' Sannie, "Give it him, old missis! Give it him!" (*African Farm* 90).

17. This was precisely the logic used by the British Foreign Office in overcoming opposition to the idea of selling land in Kenya that did not belong to them. The Foreign Office "pleaded for 'jurisdiction over waste and uncultivated land in places where the native Ruler is
incompetent, whether from ignorance or otherwise, to exercise that jurisdiction" (Wolff 62). They duly won that jurisdiction in the guise of the Crown Lands Ordinance of 1902, after which the alienation of lands to Europeans gathered momentum; 4,991 acres were alienated to Europeans in 1903, 571,368 in 1907, and 639,640 in 1914 (Wolff 57).

18. Cf. also Horton, Difficult Women 154, where she suggests that "Undine's passage down the teeming streets of Kimberley, a journey in which she feels it was 'glorious to be alone,'" stems from impulses similar to those of the white missionaries who described the Karoo as a desert. Citing John and Jean Comaroff, Horton argues that such emptying of the landscape led to "accelerated attempts in their writings to contain, confine, and domesticate it."

19. The consequences of this "unnaturalness" for Schreiner's depiction of and reception by the Boers are no less complex. Catherine Barnes Stevenson points out that Schreiner's pro-Boer stance at the end of the century is pre-figured by Tant' Sannie's dismissal of the British with "Dear Lord! . . . all Englishmen are ugly" (Schreiner 53); she cites Schreiner as the only woman writer of the time to be "aware of her own cultural biases or the valid reasons for the Boers' hostility to the British" (Stevenson 69). The Boers, however, were not flattered, many feeling patronized and insulted both by their depiction in the novel and in Schreiner's later non-fictional descriptions of Boer life; an editorial in Ons Land "expressed indignation that Olive had chosen as type of the Afrikaner the 'despised white frontiersman'--the dour, barely literate farmer--or (as in the case of The Story of an African Farm) the formidable Tant' Sannie" (Rive 274).

20. African Farm 262; Undine 278. The smooth white sand on the bottom of the kloof, the silver bell-like sound of the little stream, and the quivering of leaves in the peaceful evening air appear in both descriptions. Karel Schoeman further suggests that the similar intensity of Waldo's and Undine's emotions links these fictional descriptions to Schreiner's almost mystical recollection of just such an experience in just such a kloof when she herself was a child and living at Healdtown in the Eastern Cape (Schoeman 104-108).

21. See my comments in the previous chapter on Catherine Barnes Stevenson's and Sara Mills's work.

22. Assessments of target-audience for a previously unpublished author are perhaps harder to determine than I suggest here. In a letter to Karl Pearson, for instance,
Schreiner describes *African Farm* as a novel "written altogether for myself, when there seemed no possible chance that I should ever come to England or publish it" (Rive 109). That collocation of coming to England and publishing does suggest, however, that the latter would have been impossible without the former.

23. Both Plaatje and Jacobson, like Schreiner, lived in Kimberley for extended periods.

24. One might draw a parallel with Julius Nyerere's translation of Shakespeare into Kiswahili as a kind of nationalist statement, demonstrating the literary range and value of the Swahili language.

25. We might think of the unlikely alliance, in the period leading up to the 1994 elections, between Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party and the Afrikaner Vryheidsfront.


27. See Vivan 31-32. Even if the specifically Comtean nature of Heywood's hierarchies may be dubious, the hierarchies themselves—and the tendency to impose hierarchies—seem accurate reflections of late Victorian—metropolitan and colonial—habits of thought.

28. Classifying Bonaparte Blenkins as "English" raises further questions regarding the racial, rather than national, marking of Irishness, particularly in the Victorian period (see also Chapter 6). I read Schreiner as intending Blenkins's "difference" from Englishness as negligible. She has him disclaim Englishness in order to overcome Tant Sannie's anglophobia, professing himself to be "Irish every inch of me" (53), but yet claims kin with Napoleon as well as the Duke of Wellington (58-59). Irishness appears to be a kind of flag of convenience; given his mendacity and opportunism, few of his claims are to be trusted, and Heywood is probably justified in concurring with Tant Sannie's identification of him as "You vaggabonds se Engelschman" (*African Farm* 52), even despite the one narrative reference to the young Bonaparte's "playing in an Irish street gutter" (111). Schreiner appears to have been taken by surprise that her representation of Blenkins might have been racially motivated and thus undercut her support for Irish Home Rule (see her letter to her brother W.P. Schreiner in Rive 273).

29. We might also draw attention to Schreiner's bleak short story, "Dream Life and Real Life," in which Jannita, a "poor
indentured child . . . living with Boers" (12) but apparently hailing from Denmark, falls victim to an unholy alliance of a Bushman, an English navvy, and her co-worker, Dirk the Hottentot. Although the Boer family has treated her appallingly, Jannita risks, and loses, her life in warning them of the transracial trio's impending attack on the Boer homestead. Like The Story of an African Farm, "Dream Life and Real Life" thoroughly confounds conventional contemporary racial and ethnic hierarchies.

30. 65% of prime time viewing on the South African Broadcasting Corporation's three national television channels is in English. Multilingual viewing gets 14.5%, Zulu and Xhosa both get 4.1%, and Afrikaans 3.86%. The rights of all of South Africa's 11 official languages are protected by the country's new constitution. The significance of English as a lingua franca, however, more acceptable to more people for whom it is not the first language, is widely apparent, not least in the recent decision to make English the sole language of command and instruction in the armed forces (Beresford 7). A similar attitude to English led to the establishment of English as sole official language in Namibia, despite the slightly greater use of Afrikaans in that country before independence.

31. Fransen is presumably referring to the Cape Peninsular area rather than Schreiner's Karoo.
Since Meryl Streep and Robert Redford translated *Out of Africa* to the saccharine screen, Karen Blixen is probably second only to Old MacDonald in the English-speaking world's name-recognition of people who have had farms. The movie, like the nursery song, doesn't have much to do with farming, but just as the song identifies for children a certain "knowledge" of various farm-animals and what they "say," so the movie provides a certain "knowledge" of Africa and what it "says." The apparent innocence of both texts depends on and promotes the assumption that it's part of the natural order of things for individuals to have farms, while the limited articulacy of farm-animals perhaps matches the limited articulation ascribed to Africans. However, while the song implies the more or less autonomous type of farm that we might call a "smallholding" with its mix of stereotypical farm animals all oinking, quacking, mooing, and producing directly for Old Macdonald, Blixen's 6,000 acre plantation, requiring intensive labor to produce coffee for export, and encompassing the space of some 2,000 "squatters," is a horse of a very different color. The
inevitable noise that emerges from such occupation of the land is Mau Mau, not moo-moo.

To question the ingenuousness of having a farm in colonial Africa, we need to question further the very notion of "culture," particularly in that term's relation to "nature," "cultivation," "civilization," "agriculture," and "colony," especially as they impinge on each other in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century. In Chapter 1 I referred to Robert Young's demonstration that Victorian ideas of "culture" frequently and crucially coincided with "race," a coincidence which in turn led to a link between Arnold's anxiety about "anarchy," and late Victorian fears about degeneration. By the century's end, Arnold's notion of a singular, though flexible, "culture," capable of providing a defence against "anarchy" was becoming less and less tenable in the face of more relativist thinking. James Clifford, for instance, in *The Predicament of Culture* claims that as "evolutionist confidence began to falter" by the turn of the century

\[t\]he word began to be used in the plural, suggesting a world of separate, distinctive, and equally meaningful ways of life. The ideal of an autonomous, cultivated subject could appear as a local project, not a telos for all humankind. (93)

Furthermore, the shared etymological root of "colony" and "culture" (from Latin *colere*, with a range of meanings including to cultivate, and to inhabit) suggests for Young that "colonization rests at the heart of culture, or culture
always involves a form of colonization, even in relation to its conventional meaning as the tilling of the soil" (30). Young also notes how the metaphor of cultivation came to be appropriated by city folk, so that from the middle eighteenth-century "cultivated" and "cultured" "took on a class-fix" (31). Both cultivated and a colonist--the tiller tilled, as it were--Karen Blixen is thus able to present her lifestyle on her "farm in Africa" as the acme of a kind of natural, or at least extra-social, civilization. "I will be a civilized being," she declares in the section titled "Of Pride": "I will love the pride of my adversaries, of my servants, and my lover; and my house shall be, in all humility, in the wilderness a civilized place." At least at one level, then, she seems to believe that the "civilization" of her house depends solely on her, and her will. However, her final sentence in this manifesto-style section seems to make an implied acknowledgment, at least in part, that this civilization is dependent on colonization: "Love the pride of the conquered nations, and leave them to honour their father and their mother" (223-224).

The period of colonial history of Africa which this study primarily deals with is thus a period when the notion of "culture" as a quality you either have or don't have (frequently dependent on "race") was under pressure from a newer notion that "culture" has no opposite, that we inhabit a world replete with different "cultures." Valentin
Mudimbe, commenting on the dramatic "irruption of the Other in the European consciousness" at this time, quotes Paul Ricoeur's "anguished propositions" that at the time when we acknowledge the end of a sort of cultural monopoly, be it illusory or real, we are threatened with destruction by our own discovery. Suddenly it becomes possible that there are just others, that we ourselves are an "other" among others. All meaning and every goal having disappeared, it becomes possible to wander through civilizations as if through vestiges and ruins. (cited in Mudimbe, Invention 20,21)

The nature of this crisis becomes very complicated when we realize that Karen Blixen, writing in the 1930s, tends to look backward for her racialized model of "culture" and "civilization" and valorizes both the "authenticity" of the Masai, for example, and Denys Finch Hatton's noble English lineage. She appears to blend the modern anthropologist's belief in the plurality of civilizations with her faith in the transcendence of aristocratic European culture. Thomas Knipp defines the audience of "Kenya's literary ladies" (Blixen, Elspeth Huxley, and Beryl Markham) as a "range of book-readers at the center of which was a tense, angst-ridden haute bourgeoisie, bracketed by a bored, stifled bourgeoisie on the one hand and a bewildered, redundant aristocracy on the other." These readers' worlds were "increasingly defined by the urban, the industrial, the plutocratic, the tame, and the tacky," thus the "pristine Africa marked by adventure, freedom, and power" invented by Blixen et al. had enormous appeal. And the African farm,
where the wild and the tame, freedom and control, nature and culture, civilizations and civilization meet, is a key site in Karen Blixen's literary invention.

Above all, Blixen's representation of her farm ignores the political. Although she represents it as the place where "Nature" and "culture" meet, the "culture" she describes in and through her self-representation and representation of Denys Finch Hatton, Lord Delamere, and those fellow-aristocrats she treats as her peers, is a static, even anachronistic thing; it is not white-settler "culture" (which she largely scorns), but the culture of an earlier age and distant place: Finch Hatton and Berkeley Cole, writes Blixen, were "outcasts," "examples of atavism" whose England was "an earlier England, a world which no longer existed" (184). Thus the farm acquires a fallacious Old Macdonald-esque autonomy, a place where outcasts can feel at home because it, like them, is not really of the landscape--physical and social--that it is in.

Such displacement of an already-achieved "culture" to the new cultural formation of a colony in which "nature" has yet to be tamed, carries further complications. Matthew Arnold's notion of "culture," or Kenneth Clark's notion of "civilization," is something that manifests itself primarily in a human environment, and hence tends to be associated with cities. Any secondary manifestation in the country is, as Raymond Williams shows, a highly complex one, involving
nostalgia for a "culture" ironically closer to "nature," and requiring the overlooking of economic conditions that bind the country and the city together. The farm house or country manor thus plays a pivotal role in ruling-class attitudes to "culture" and "nature."

It is abundantly apparent that Blixen's Out of Africa, with its playing up of the "natural" grandeur of "the farm" and its playing down of Karen Coffee's position in the local and the international economy, clearly conforms to Williams' model of later European pastoral, in which "intensity of attention to natural beauty . . . is now the nature of observation, of the scientist or the tourist, rather than of the working countryman." Likewise, the portrayal of the farm house and its aristocratic denizens is in line with Tasso's Aminta, in which, according to Williams, "the shepherd is an idealized mask, a courtly disguise" (The Country and the City 20); Out of Africa's representation of an Arcadian existence, largely overlooking the displacement of the actual Arcadians, harps back to that original Elizabethan courtier, Sir Philip Sidney, in whose company Blixen claims Denys Finch Hatton would have been at home (Out of Africa 186). Even Blixen's care for "her" laborers and squatters, elevating her role within the agricultural community against less scrupulous neighbors, puts Out of Africa in the same category as Ben Jonson's To Penshurst in which the so-called "moral economy" prevails; Blixen's
memoirs present "the farm," exactly as To Penshurst does, as the site of a "natural order of responsibility and neighbourliness and charity" (Williams 30). Williams's conclusion on Jonson's poem and Carew's To Saxham applies, with some provisos, to Out of Africa:

What is really happening, in Jonson's and Carew's celebrations of a rural order, is an extraction of just this curse [of labor], by the power of art: a magical recreation of what can be seen as a natural bounty and then a willing charity: both serving to ratify and bless the country landowner, or, by a characteristic reification, his house. Yet this magical extraction of the curse of labor is in fact achieved by a simple extraction of the existence of labourers. (32)

While it is obviously not entirely the case that Blixen's book overlooks the laborers (the movie, interestingly enough, did a more thorough job of that), it is equally obvious that in her portraiture of Kamante and Farah Aden, Blixen favors the representation of domestic over agricultural labor, particularly when that domestic labor tends to reconfirm her own significance, or, as Susan Horton puts it, serves "as a kind of audience in attendance at [her] identity formation" (72). In fact, what is interesting is precisely the inclusion of reified groups of peasantry, laborers, and "natives" at the expense of the boring bourgeoisie: farm managers, accountants, agents, and the like. Out of Africa gives the impression that Karen Blixen had unmediated connection with her work-force, that the day-to-day running of the farm depended on her personality as a kind of primum mobile. She may have been
unable to predict or control the weather, but the workings of her workers' minds, the nature of their desires, and so on are transparent in the godlike omniscience of her narrative. The gods of Europe--of family and money--feature in Blixen's letters, not her memoirs.

Further provisos distinguishing *Out of Africa* and *Shadows on the Grass* from works of pastoral in Britain as outlined by Williams would be the alienation of coffee-growing from any national or local agricultural tradition, and the failure of Karen Coffee as a farming enterprise. However, Blixen's memoirs do fit Williams's extension of the country/city pattern to metropole/colony, and in fact provide a fascinating test-case of his claim that "one of the last models of 'city and country' is the system we now know as imperialism" (279). The role of labor on her farm may not be totally overlooked, but the relation of that labor to the system of colonialism--acknowledgment of which would have diminished Karen Blixen's own personal significance--is ignored.

And of course, although *Out of Africa* does indeed respect "the pride of the conquered nations," nowhere does Blixen address the process by which they became conquered, the process by which her house could be civilized; nor does she address the issue of her own relation to those who did the conquering. Instead, her memoir creates a kind of extra-temporal, as well as extra-social African feudal
order, remaining silent about the actual place of the Karen Coffee Company historically, and in terms of the world economic order. The Ngong Hills weren't a utopia, a "no-place"; they were somebody else's place inhabited by, among others, Masai and Kikuyu people who were displaced until they became squatters on what they had always considered their own land. Blixen's presence there, however benevolent she may have deemed it, was a part of that process. Susan Horton acutely sums up the ambiguity of her position:

The largest part of Shadows on the Grass constructs for her the classic identity of the pioneer going it alone, solving individual health, economic, and educational problems for the natives as if neither she nor they were playing roles specifically designed for them by those policies that were systematically and indeed purposively generating exactly those problems she was setting herself to solve. (218)

The process of displacement and the policies that brought it about included the imposition of all sorts of legal codes and regulations, including taxes. And in the same way that colonization might be fundamental to culture, so taxation is essential to colonization. Here again, etymology supports the claim. In addition to meaning "farmer" the Latin word agricola could also mean "tax-collector;" that the same dual meaning extends into the French fermier Karen Blixen demonstrates:

For some of the years on the farm I had been holding the office of fermier général there—that is, in order to save the Government trouble I collected the taxes from my squatters locally and sent in the sum total to Nairobi. (Shadows 85)
The occupation of farming by whites in Africa—even if those whites saw themselves as independent and idealist aristocrats—was, thus, a large part of the general colonial occupation of the land; while individual farmers, like Karen Blixen, might present their struggles with drought, disease, etc. as elemental, those struggles are also economic. The farm produces revenue (or fails to produce, as the case might be), just as much as it produces (or fails to produce) any natural, agricultural product. What is more, while individual white farmers might see themselves as victims both of natural and political forces, especially of political forces unsympathetic to a farmer's struggles with nature, such farmers—simply by virtue of being white—were necessarily beneficiaries of colonial policies. In short, while Karen Blixen the farmer worried about the rain on her land, Karen Blixen the fermier was consolidating Britain's reign over Kenya. Her "ownership" of the six thousand acres of her farm might be put in quotation marks not just to indicate her questionable right to that land, but also to highlight the fact that, in the end, she was always in hock to the European system of capital, a fact that became all too obvious when she, too, was forced from the land, and the "farm" was "developed" into the suburb that still bears her name.3

Although the South and East African situations are markedly different—notably as a result of the length of
white settlement in the respective areas, and as a result of the Boers' complex relationship to colonialism--certain key similarities nonetheless exist between the displacement and proletarianization of the indigenous population in both cases. In both cases, key colonial legislation, such as pass laws in Kenya and South Africa, the notorious 1913 Natives' Land Act in South Africa or the so-called "kifagio" or clearing-out of the Kikuyu in Kenya, inexorably reduced the viability of African farming. From a position of relative autonomy, as farmers in their own right, Africans were reduced to the status of laborers on white farms; their limited options for other employment, among other factors, made them prey to unscrupulous bosses, and kept the cost of their labor artificially low. In addition, white farming in both regions was frequently, though not reliably, supported by various active and direct government subsidies. Particularly in South Africa, where "poor whites" were both a problem and a possible constituency, government policy deliberately aimed to pre-empt situations in which it became evident that white farming was less efficient, less productive, less profitable than black farming: the racial ideology of British colonialism and of proto-apartheid South Africa could not allow such situations.

In fact, Karen Blixen's openness in *Out of Africa* about the failure of Karen Coffee ought to have given the lie to the myth of white farming's greater efficiency, productivity
and profitability, just as her description of "her" squatters' plight when forced to sell the farm ought to have given the lie to the notion of a "natural" evolution of a capitalist agriculture in the first place. As Susan Horton comments, in the earliest years of British settlement in Kenya, "the Kikuyu were by and large more prosperous and successful farmers than were European settlers," but by the end of her stay in Kenya successive colonial administrations had placed legal restrictions on their "'get-ahead' spirit" which in turn "was beginning to transform the Kikuyu into 'Mau Mau'" (209).

Similarly, Tim Keegan and Charles van Onselen, through the Wits Oral History Project, have shown how the capitalization of South African farming did not come about through some sort of natural selection process whereby the fittest white farming techniques survived, driving peasant and pastoralist to extinction. Rather, the creation of a capitalist South African agriculture depended on massive government intervention through legislation, advantageous economic incentives, and the development of infrastructure in the service of big capital, all underpinned by military and police power. Those farms that were most highly capitalized and seemed to be models of "progressive" farming were not necessarily the most efficient or even profitable (see Keegan: Rural Transformation, esp. chapter 4: "Interventions of the Capitalist State and the Development
of the Arable Highveld") and were either playthings of the very rich ("objects of conspicuous consumption": Keegan 115) or else, like the fictional farm in Nadine Gordimer's *The Conservationist*, a tax write-off.

The stories of African farms that we have in writers like Blixen, Schreiner, Lessing, and Gordimer in fact present fair reflections of the frequent failure of white farming in Africa, both of its inadequacy to adapt to local conditions and of its vulnerability to fluctuations in international commodity markets. Such stories, then, as I suggested earlier, do not quite fit Raymond Williams' category of the pastoral in English. However, they occasionally make a virtue of their failure in a way similar to the "self-consciously rural mode of display" that Williams identifies in the social imagery of the late nineteenth-century country-house novel. As with late George Eliot and Henry James so, to some extent and to different ends, with Karen Blixen and Nadine Gordimer the country-houses are the country-houses of capital rather than of land. More significantly and more ritually than ever before, a rural mode was developed, as a cultural superstructure, on the profits of industrial and imperial development. It was a mode of play: an easy realisation of the old imagery of Penshurst: field sports, fishing, and above all horses; often a marginal interest in conservation and "old country ways." (282)

The latter catalogue of field sports and so on applies perfectly to *Out of Africa* and *Shadows on the Grass* where
Blixen's hunting experiences provide occasion for some of the most detailed and intense descriptions in the books. She uses them to show herself in an almost elemental relationship with "Africa," which in turn makes her and her hunting partner (Finch Hatton) into almost mythic figures outside whose "torchlight there was nothing but darkness" (Out of Africa 202).

It also provides occasion for some of the books' most blatant snobbery with Blixen relating how she gave lion-skins to "the Indian High Priest" (Out of Africa 203) and to King Christian X of Denmark (Shadows 59-67). The letter of thanks from the king is transformed into Blixen's famous "barua a soldani" which, she claims, her squatters viewed as a kind of talisman capable of miracle-working power. Their use of it as a source of healing left the letter, according to Shadows on the Grass, "undecipherable, brown and stiff with blood and matter of long ago," and Blixen claims that "Within [the letter], in paper and blood, a covenant has been signed between the Europeans and the Africans--no similar document of this same relationship is likely to be drawn up again" (74). That powerful nexus of images and presentation--hunting in an elemental Africa, the consciously heraldic use of the lion, the miraculous power of the letter, Blixen's religious diction ("covenant")--creates an impression of a lost Arcadian romance, an impression whose artificiality was exposed by the discovery
in 1969 of "the well-preserved, completely unspotted letter from King Christian X" (Letters xiv).

That discovery, that exposure might stand as an example of what I am trying to do here, in exposing the innocence of Blixen's pastoral, but my main point at this juncture is that the interest in hunting is one that is bound up with class snobbery and self-aggrandizement. Even Blixen's alleged change of attitude toward hunting over her time in Kenya fits Williams's definition of the new country-house dweller who takes "a marginal interest in conservation." In her last ten years in Kenya, despite finding lion-hunting "irresistible," Blixen writes that "It became to me an unreasonable thing, indeed in itself ugly or vulgar, for the sake of a few hours' excitement to put out a life that belonged in the great landscape" (58). But who or what is she interested in conserving, and for whom or what? Her own linking of reason with notions of ugliness and vulgarity--aesthetic and class judgments--suggests that what she most bemoans the passing of is the aesthetic-aristocratic principle of which she and Finch Hatton were exemplars; unlike the common mob, they intuitively knew the proper way to hunt, and Blixen's continued attraction to hunting lions in particular--top of the hierarchy in Blixen's mythological bestiary--attests to the way in which the ability to participate in field sports generally is governed by class considerations. For the country-house "conservationist,"
when everybody hunts, the problem is not so much that animal-populations are depleted, but that the social cachet of hunting itself is diminished. 7

Specific arguments regarding hunting all reveal the "gentlemanly" aura surrounding it. Schreiner's contemporary, F.C. Selous, whose elephant-killing exploits in southern Africa had established him as the "mighty Nimrod" of the Victorian era, became an advocate of conservation by the end of the century, campaigning for "the preservation of African game" by "the prevention of the acquisition of fire-arms by the native tribes, and . . . the total prohibition of all commerce or trade in the skins and horns of wild animals by them or white men" (cited in Taylor 272). Selous proposed, reasonably enough in his own terms, that hunting should only be carried out by the licensed few; but the implication that the "few" should be responsible individuals like himself—that is, non-Africans not involved in trade—neatly reveals a pair of Victorian race and class prejudices.

In 1929 Finch Hatton embroiled himself in a row concerning the ineffectiveness of the Tanganyika authorities to prevent the unsportsmanlike "wholesale slaughter of game from motor cars" (Trzebinski 397-403). Fully endorsing the language of a letter from one Andries Pienaar, Finch Hatton-like Blixen—attacks such slaughter on aesthetic and class grounds, rather than environmental ones, picking in
particular on wealthy Americans out to kill as much as possible in order to "figure in magazines as 'Famous Big Game Hunters'." Finch Hatton is disgusted, nauseated, and revolted by these activities, and shares Pienaar's outrage that their perpetrators "had never been in Africa before, but a single safari sufficed to raise them to the first ranks as the greatest hunters." Finch Hatton's letter to The Times (where else?) goaded Douglas Jardine, then chief Secretary to the Governor of Tanganyika, into a response which, while denying the authorities' ineffectiveness, reproduced exactly Finch Hatton's gentlemanly attitudes. "As a sportsman," he writes, "I bow to no-one—not even to Mr Finch Hatton in my detestation of such butchery," and he categorizes those outragers of "the sportsman's code" as "certain tourists with more money than taste," that is, with new money rather than old. The exchange is a fascinating example of how shared hegemonic class attitudes can shape or mis-shape the terms of a particular debate, and is, additionally revelatory of all sorts of colonialist prejudice, but again the significance is the way in which the elitism of the "country way of life" manifests itself in attitudes to field sports and conservation.

It might be argued that the same sorts of class-analysis do not apply in the South African situation. Indeed, while the white settlers in Kenya had a large proportion of aristocrats among their leaders, British
settlement farther south was mainly lower-middle class. As such, while ruling-class "culture," with its intertwining attitudes to agriculture, cultivation, and civilization, was imported fully-formed into Kenya, South Africa was seen as lacking "culture." In 1890, Schreiner complained to Havelock Ellis: "Harry, you don't know what Philistines the people in Africa are . . . Fancy a whole nation of lower middle-class Philistines, without an aristocracy of blood or intellect or of muscular labourers to save them!" (Letters 168). And although, as Susan Horton points out, Schreiner feels great, though contradictory, admiration for the cultural qualities of African community and Afrikaner individualism (Horton 219-221), still the site of "culture" is England, an England characterized in the male-identified *English South African's View* by "the old oar with which we won our first boating victory on Cam or Thames" (cited in Horton 150). That latter identification of "culture" with the model gentleman/intellectual/sportsman—the ideal Rhodes scholar!—may, given its context, be a strategic one, playing on her audience's prejudices, but the private reference is consistent enough with other stated attitudes to suggest that even Schreiner largely subscribed to hegemonic Victorian beliefs regarding "culture."

The persistence of those beliefs into the contemporary era, and the buying of "culture" through land ownership is nowhere better illustrated than in the work of Nadine
Gordimer. The Conservationist, in particular, in which the "white" farm is actually farmed exclusively by blacks on behalf of the owner, Mehring, exposes the use of landownership by rich white South Africans as a source of cultural capital. Mehring himself has made his money from pig-iron, but is uneasy with his wealth and uses the farm as a natural (African) place to escape to when he has had too much (European) capitalist culture. The farm is also (or was supposed to be) the place for recreation for his rich white friends, hence any interest Mehring appears to have for conservation is tainted by his self-interest in preserving a "wild" space for his "cultivated" friends to enjoy themselves in. Even though "he himself was not a sucker for city romanticism," and attempts to make sure that "reasonable productivity prevailed" (22,23), the actual purpose of the farm as a producer of food is more or less irrelevant to him, as any losses can be offset against tax. 11

The use of land in this way, as a tax-deductible source of recreation for the wealthy, necessarily prompts consideration of some African countries' greatest tourist asset--wildlife. Here, more than anywhere, Williams's model of metropole and colony comes into its own as "Africa" is sold to the West (mainly--although Japanese tourism is increasing, too) as the place to see nature red in tooth and claw. Apart from wildlife documentaries, a string of
feature-films, including *Out of Africa*, have recently trotted out the most depressingly stereotypical notions of Africa, the most egregious being the 1995 Ace Ventura movie entitled, more revealingly than wittily, *When Nature Calls*. Disney's box-office smash *The Lion King* is not only that corporation's only animated feature film to have been set in Africa, it is also the only one to be completely devoid of human presence. Similarly, up-scale advertising campaigns for four-wheel drive vehicles and credit cards depict white tourist-adventurers or hardy settlers as pitted against a rugged and demanding "nature." Thus, while the West (or the North, or the First World, or however we formulate it) promotes the "ultimate safari" with lines of pseudo-colonial fashions and high-powered cameras that can capture the most intimate aspects of African (wild)life, it ignores the daily safaris of ordinary African people displaced by the continuing disruption of ordinary African life by European power.

Nadine Gordimer's short story "The Ultimate Safari" takes as its epigraph a small ad from a London Sunday newspaper (the like of which still runs every week) seeking to persuade readers that the romance and adventure of authentic nature are still available to alienated city-dwellers in the raw "country" of "Africa." The fact that most ordinary Africans are less likely to have come across a lion or elephant than the average New Yorker is to have come
across a grizzly bear on Broadway doesn't bother the advertisers, but provides the core of Gordimer's story, in which a group of refugees from the war in Mozambique crosses the border from that country into South Africa where they find themselves in the Kruger National Park. There, in South Africa's most vaunted game reserve, they "must move like animals among the animals" (113) in order to avoid wardens and police. For them the "safari" (Kiswahili simply for "journey," after all; you don't necessarily have to have a Land Rover) is "ultimate" in the sense of being a matter of life and death; it is emphatically not about buying the biggest thrill. Gordimer's story thus hammers home the obvious point that the West is interested in the conservation of Africa, not just in ignorance of Africans, but at the expense of Africans.

In the great tradition of English pastoral, the West shows a marginal interest in conserving the farm and the farm animals, but extracts the existence of farm laborers. So, the viewing audience of Out of Africa, even less than Blixen's original audience in the '30s, was not invited to complete the opening phrase "Karen Blixen had a farm, e-i e-i o," because it seems to come as a tasteless, uncultivated interruption to voice not the transcendent spirit of "Africa," but the local, historically specific voices of Africans chorusing, sotto voce in 1931 but with terrible clamor by 1952, "Mau Mau here, Mau Mau there . . . ."
Notes

1. It is, furthermore, a charge repeatedly and justifiably leveled at Blixen that she habitually uses animal metaphors to describe Africans. See, for instance, Thomas R. Knipp's, "Kenya's Literary Ladies and the Mythologizing of the White Highlands" (South Atlantic Review 55.1: 1-16) in which he argues that presenting Africans "as fauna" is one key part of "a two-fold tropology of otherness" (6) that Blixen, Elspeth Huxley, and Beryl Markham all develop (the other mode, to present Africans in feudal terms, is also relevant to this chapter's wider argument). On the other hand, in defence of Blixen's use of animal similes for Africans, it might be noted that (a) she tends to use similar comparisons for white folks, too, and (b) she could claim to be using a technique common in African story-telling. See also my references to Blixen's use of animal imagery in Chapter 6.

2. Blixen's use of the word "atavism" calls to mind Joseph Schumpeter's theories of imperialism as social atavism driven by irrational, anticapitalist impulses. However, as Dane Kennedy observes, "No one had shrewder capitalist instincts than that atavistic circle which included Cranworth, Delamere, the Cole brothers, Finch Hatton, and Grogan. . . . The gentlemanly contingent as a whole were refugees not from capitalism, but from industrialism and its corollaries. Property and profit were among the central preoccupations of the society they made in Kenya" (47).

3. In fact, one of the significant features of the official British policy on colonization in Kenya of equating development with agricultural development inadvertently (but perfectly predictably, given the rules of the capitalist game) led to the agricultural underdevelopment of the country: making land available at rock-bottom prices and favorable lease-rates in order to encourage settler-farmers to immigrate actually fueled high levels of land speculation; one of the consequences of that was that it was far more profitable to own land than to farm it. According to Richard D. Wolff, "by 1930, 64.8% of the land available to Europeans was not in any form of agriculturally productive activity" (60). Similarly, in Southern Rhodesia, land and cattle taken from the Ndebele in the 1893 war were cashed in "for immediate profit, not long-term development," with most of the cattle going to slaughter-houses in South Africa, and land ending up in the hands of a coterie of very rich men (Kennedy 16-17). The consequences--agricultural as well as political--for independent Kenya and Zimbabwe were dire.
4. Much the same can be said with regard to the earliest white settlement in Southern Rhodesia. Richard D. Wolff cites an official 1903 British handbook on the colony that explicitly "discouraged prospective immigrants from contemplating farming, suggesting that Africans were more efficient producers" (29). Once white farming was established, though, official policies were implemented to sustain it.

5. While increasing population pressure in the reserves drew the Kikuyu into the available grazing land of the "White Highlands" as squatters, their exploitation once there, fully sanctioned by colonial law, made their situation intolerable. Richard D. Wolff records a proposed 1924 ordinance, for instance, that would have allowed plantation owners not to pay their squatters "in a state of emergency" for their mandatory 180 days of work (Wolff 127).

Tabitha Kanogo's Squatters and the Roots of Mau Mau, 1905-1963 (London: James Currey, 1987) examines in full detail the way in which the Kikuyu people were transformed from a nation of farmers first into "squatters," and thence into rebels by colonial law. More recently, Wunyabari O. Maloba in Mau Mau and Kenya: An Analysis of a Peasant Revolt (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993) has attempted to place Mau Mau in a wider context of peasant revolts. Maloba stresses that the goals of Mau Mau, though far from even, were unlike previous European peasant movements in their mix of looking backward to an ideal society when land had been available and in looking forward to a period free from colonial and racist control. Both the nationalism of Mau Mau, and its apparent class-specific nature, are less to do with a specifically political consciousness than to do with the materiality of land availability. The resultant lack of "a common concrete idea as to the shape of [the] future" was, Maloba argues, "one of Mau Mau's major weaknesses" (4).

The underdevelopment of rural Africa generally has been described by numerous historians (in e.g. Walter Rodney's classic How Europe Underdeveloped Africa; but see also Palmer and Parsons, eds. The Roots of Rural Poverty or Colin Bundy's The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry); despite all colonialism's mechanistic interventions, the remarkable pervasiveness of an evolutionary model in European thinking about all aspects of African "development" is evident not just in agricultural matters but also, as we have seen in Robert Young's analysis, in regard to "culture" and "civilization" generally, and, specifically, in attitudes towards religion (see also, for instance, Valentin Mudimbe's analysis of the aims and roles of Christian missionaries in Africa in The Invention of Africa, esp. pp.44-64).
6. There is an unusual degree of indignation in both her memoirs at the charge that she and Finch Hatton killed the giraffe on which they shot the lion whose skin was presented to King Christian; balanced against the apparent arbitrariness of bureaucracy, represented by the regulations of the impersonal "Game Department," and its need of "proof" is Blixen's notion that "hunting is ever a love-affair" (Shadows 53) and that her shooting the lion was "a declaration of love" (Out of Africa 198). That any bureaucratic organization should claim authority, over her, or, worse, accuse her of impropriety, is presented as absurd, as the principles by which the two operate are incommensurable.

7. Blixen's attitude to horse riding and hunting matches the typically upper-class attitudes Pierre Bourdieu identifies in climbers, whose sport combines the "purely health-oriented function of maintaining the body... with all the symbolic gratifications associated with practising a highly distinctive activity. This gives to the highest degree the sense of mastery of one's own body as well as the free and exclusive appropriation of scenery inaccessible to the vulgar" (During 355).

8. In fact, Jardine's phrasing may be a diplomats' avoidance of pointing the finger at the citizens of another country. Upper-class British snobbery against tourists in general, and American tourists in particular, must have been rife; even in Hemingway's "The Short, Happy Life of Francis Macomber" the professional hunter Wilson (presented as English but reputedly based on Bror Blixen) is outraged by the ignorant behavior of the wealthy Macomber and his society wife: after Macomber's display of cowardice, Wilson imagines himself "seeing them through the safari on a very formal basis" (The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, 7), a coded phrase indicating distance and disapproval.

9. As Dane Kennedy observes, this difference is part of a wider shift in the pattern of emigration from the British Isles. Whereas most eighteenth- and nineteenth-century emigration had been an outlet for the poor, by the end of the century "a different social element began to leave Britain's shores in growing numbers. These were persons of middle- and upper-class backgrounds... motivated to emigrate either because their traditional social standing had deteriorated in a changing Britain or because they possessed certain educational or professional skills in high demand in developing countries such as Australia and Canada" (6).

10. In a letter to J.X. Merriman, for instance, in 1896, Schreiner writes of the Boers that "they have had no Job;
but they have had no language in which a Job could express his thoughts!" (Letters 278). The specific absence of a literary culture also gets in the way of Schreiner's seeing Africans as "cultured."

11. Gordimer reproduces a similar farm in None to Accompany Me where one of Vera Stark's husband's businessman friends owns a farm which is really a "weekend fishing retreat" (163), one of the perks of white privilege that may be lost in the transition from apartheid. On the other hand, the farmer Odendaal—a thoroughly boorish Boer—whose own farming brings in scarcely enough revenue to sustain his white advantage, plans to cash in on the transition of power by "convert[ing] the farm into cash as a landlord; he would divide it into plots for rent to blacks. He was going to turn their invasion to profit" (21-22). Gordimer's recent work, in particular, shows a very astute awareness of the politics and ideology of land-ownership.

12. See the television and print ads for Nissan Pathfinder, and the television ad for American Express featuring Kent of the classiest of Kenya's safari companies, Abercrombie and Kent.
CHAPTER 5
VIOLENCE AND VOLUNTARISM:
THE WILL TO POWER AND THE WILL TO DIE

The most extreme way to "extract" labor would, of course, be to murder the laborer. In practice, through various legal and extra-legal means, this is frequently what happened under colonialism, and I shall be dealing with terror and murder as a means of social control in the "Africa" section; however, colonial fiction rarely presents violence as white on black, and it is that absence that prompts the analysis that follows--of the connection between violence and voluntarism, or the contention in much white discourse about Africa (as in white Southern writing about slavery) that there was an element of symbiosis in African-European relationships that at least mitigated some of the exploitation. As Valentin Mudimbe observes, the postcolonial condition of many African states has led to a romanticization of the colonial era not just among white memoirists and novelists but also among historians suggesting that the accident of colonialism "was not the worst thing that could have happened to the black continent" (Invention 2).

Still using the insights of Raymond Williams from The Country and the City I will still, however, be basing my
argument on specifically "literary" texts, namely Elspeth Huxley's detective fiction (especially *The African Poison Murders*, a.k.a. *Death of an Aryan*, and *Murder at Government House*), where the white murderers murder white murderees, and Doris Lessing's brilliant first novel *The Grass is Singing* in which a white woman seems in part to will her murder by her black "houseboy" who, in turn, willingly surrenders himself to the colonial justice system and an inevitable death sentence. In addition, I will be examining Karen Blixen's account in *Out of Africa* of the death of a worker called Kitosch, victim first of his employer, then of British colonial justice. In this last instance, we have an account of an actual, rather than fictional, example of the way in which what we might call ethnographical knowledge acts in support of forensic detection, a connection vital to understanding the three novels under discussion.

If, as Williams contends, the late Victorian country house novel mutates in the twentieth-century into a watered down subgenre of detective fiction, then we can read Huxley's relocation of that country house detective fiction to colonial Kenya as an unusual amalgam of the national model of country and city with the international model of metropole and colony. Lessing's novel can then be read as a masterful subversion of both, with her exposure of the conventionality of the whodunit exposing the actual workings of rural life in colonial Africa. Huxley reproduces with
great dexterity the structure and conventions of the mystery novel, and in so doing remystifies "Africa;" Lessing, by contrast, in taking the mystery out of the facts of the murder of Mary Turner, takes the mystique out of the colonial order.

The farms in Huxley's The African Poison Murders are not, to be fair, country houses in the Jamesian tradition, nor yet in the middle-class tradition of Agatha Christie. They are still to some extent places of work, whose owners think of themselves as sorts of pioneer. Commander Dennis West, for instance, formerly of the China Squadron, had retired from the Navy and fulfilled his life's ambition to invest his small capital in a farm. . . . The climate was fine. Living was cheap and easy; the country still free from the more rigid fetters of convention, still with a tinge of the frontier about it. (27)

Frequently throughout the text there are references to the boundary between farmland and virgin territory; like the "jungle" in Heart of Darkness the forest seems like some sort of malevolent creature always ready to smother human endeavor. Particularly at night, there is the sense that the light of civilization only extends so far: "Beyond lay the bush, a dense black cloak that hid a predatory world of bloodshed and cruelty" (98). Leading up to the climax of the novel, for instance, Inspector Vachell comes to a fork in a path: "One fork went left towards a dam and some cultivation, the other crossed the broad ride that marked the boundary between farm and forest, and plunged into the
green depths" (185). Cultivation and civilization, inseparably linked as the markers of an exclusive and unitary "culture" though they may be, are not, in Huxley's imaginary Chania, the completed, buyable commodities of English country house fiction, nor even of Blixen's aristocratic pastoral; rather, they are works in progress, and fragile ones at that.

In addition, Huxley might claim that the intrusion of contemporary macro-politics of race through the Nazi Bund affiliations of the farmer Munson makes the story less "detached" and one-dimensional than the model detective story that Williams disparages. However, even the farms' precariousness and the fact that they are working ones cannot hide the way in which Dennis West's, or former Harley Street surgeon Sir Jolyot Anstey's, "retirement" to them fits the nostalgic models Williams describes. Furthermore, the neat structure and eventual closure of the case puts the novel squarely in the non-critical genre of country house fiction defined by Williams in which the country house (however loosely construed) is "the place of isolated assembly of a group of people whose immediate and transient relations [are] decipherable by an abstract mode of detection rather than by the full and connected analysis of any more general understanding" (249). For instance, although characters make scattered comments regarding fluctuations in commodity prices, there is never any
consideration of the reasons for growing pyrethrum or why it is that the Wests' cream should travel "six thousand miles to its market on British breakfast-tables" (1), nor is there any questioning of the assumption that imported cattle and know-how are superior to the native variety. The British presence is generally presented as benign, evoking, for instance, the loyalty of the unnamed askari who saves his superior officer Vachell's life in Murder at Government House. While the open racism of Nazism is consistently decried and even ridiculed,¹ British racism tends to be naturalized as neutral observation.

For a book published in 1939, the oddly racist attitude towards racism (that it is an attribute of "the Boche"), is perhaps understandable, but the ironies are revealing. Huxley tends to present racial characteristics as given, knowable, and finely discriminated. Markers of these characteristics seem to harp back to nineteenth-century racial attitudes in a manner reminiscent of Robert Knox's The Races of Men or John Beddoes' The Races of Britain,² and the wider nineteenth-century European project that attempted to define the types of humanity by using the infant "sciences" of statistics, phrenology, craniology, and photography. Thus, even the facial characteristics of individuals are observable and readable as markers of individual character just as Lambroso or Havelock Ellis believed. Inspector Vachell, Huxley's tall, fair, and
handsome detective, is, for instance, not quite British, still less English; he is a Canadian who, in Commander West's observation, "looked like a Scot as so many Canadians did. He had the sandy hair and long jaw of the true Scot" (8). In Murder at Government House, the narrative observes that it was Vachell's "bony face which betrayed a Scots ancestry" (20). The boniness and length of the jaw are surefire indications not just of ancestry, but of the "Scottish" attributes of grit and determination, too.

As a Scot--whatever his own Scottish racial and facial characteristics might be--Vachell himself--the prime observer--is considered as, and presented as, an outsider whose detachment from those around him makes his observation of them appear to be as objective as possible; his role as detective intensifies his own anxiety that emotional involvement with any of his (white) (female) suspects might impair his judgment. The particular emotional involvement he is conscious of in The African Poison Murders, and which prompts worries about the troubling convergence of the "roads of duty and inclination" (15), is desire for Janice West, the beautiful (naturally) American wife of Commander West. Such anxiety is the very stuff of the detective genre, of course, but in this setting in particular the maze of differences--of duty/inclination; male/female; American/Canadian; English/Scottish--conceals one fundamental similarity: that of whiteness, and the class
privileges attendant on whiteness in colonial Chania. The
investment that Vachell, and all the other white characters
of Huxley's novels, ignore, but which fundamentally
precludes objectivity and any "general understanding" of
their situation is their investment in an expansionist
English culture in which culture is more or less synonymous
with race.

That doesn't matter for the novels, though. The
various false trails that Huxley so dexterously lays expose
all sorts of other oversights and assumptions, but they
don't expose the failure to see or read Africa, Africans, or
Africanness. The total opacity of Africa is, further, not
just assumed, but explicitly commented on. As we have
already seen, beyond the light of the farms lay the bush,
the "green depths," the unsolvable mystery of Africa, that
which, unlike Scots' jaw-bones or European typewriters,
gives the European detective no clues. The "African poison"
used to kill both Karl Munson and Dennis West is
identifiable but virtually untraceable, its symptoms
"nothing more nor less than a cessation of the action of the
heart" (85); faced with such a poison, Vachell feels himself
in a "fog. How could you get anywhere when you couldn't
even depend on doctors to tell you the cause of death?"
(83). European science—whether used for pure medical
inquiry or for forensic reasons—is thwarted by an Africa
that leaves no observable traces behind. Just so does
Conrad's "unspeakable" and "dumb" jungle likewise threaten to overcome Marlow's European notions of reason and identity.\textsuperscript{4}

In many ways the white detective, assiduously observing others, drawing conclusions from the slightest clues, but troubled by fears of his subjectivity, behaves like an ethnographer, torn by an ambivalent colonial desire.\textsuperscript{5} James Clifford, for instance, in an essay on Conrad and Malinowski, talks about the "ethnographic subjectivity" of the early twentieth-century as a new development presupposing "the ironic stance of participant observation" (\textit{Predicament of Culture} 93). Vachell's detection is carried out with just such an ironic stance, not just because of the obvious subjective pulls towards attractive women, but also because he is aware of the expectations of his superiors. There is a discourse within which he has to keep, and just as Malinowski could write one "official" ethnology of the Trobriand Islanders in his \textit{Argonauts of the South Pacific}, and an "unofficial" one in his \textit{A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term} (Clifford 97), so Vachell frequently has to keep his own observations to himself.

Vachell is most obviously aware of this "official" discourse in \textit{Murder at Government House}, when he is a "newboy" in the Chania CID; on the murder of the Governor of Chania, Vachell's superior, Major Armitage moves to round up the usual suspects, overriding Vachell's "hunch that this
crime isn't the work of a native" (30). Predictably, Armitage finds more or less what he wants ("a Swahili who was suspected of at least two murders, who'd once been employed (he'd been dismissed) at Government House, and who was believed to belong to a Chinyani underworld gang who specialized in housebreaking" (49)), and, equally predictably, is way off the mark (the lucky Swahili is now gainfully employed as a night-soil porter--he literally takes shit!); it is the more patient ethnographer/detective Vachell who eventually gets his man. This would almost be a joke--and Armitage is certainly presented in caricature fashion with his clipped sentences--if it weren't so serious, and it isn't until The Grass is Singing that we find a white author showing how white detection/ethnography, hardened into outright racist prejudice, produces black criminals. I shall return later to Lessing's novel; for the time being, the point is that even in a genre which apparently seeks to reinforce rationality (Williams's "abstract mode of detection"), there is some awareness that all detection, all ethnography is inevitably tainted by the subjectivity of participant observation.

It may be, though, that the full force of the detective/ethnographer comparison is stronger when it is framed the other way around--an ethnographer behaves like a detective. Such a formulation more immediately suggests the disciplinary, policing effect of ethnography. Foucault's
theoretical work has shown the extent to which police institutions "discipline" societies, while Terence Ranger's work on European ideas of the conservatism of African "tradition" and its resultant "'immobilization of populations, re-inforcement of ethnicity and greater rigidity of social definition'" (Hobsbawm 249) shows the accuracy of Foucault's theories in practice, and their applicability to African colonial situations. The development of the apartheid state, with its separation of "tribal" groupings into "homelands," provides the obvious and extreme example of how ethnography can become a practice of policing. In imaginative literature, we might point to the famous ending of Things Fall Apart where Chinua Achebe indicates exactly the same process of discursive policing; the complexity and fluidity of pre-colonial Igbo society is reduced to a paragraph or two in the District Commissioner's book to be entitled The Pacification of the Primitive Tribes of the Lower Niger (Achebe 209).

Given this connection, it therefore comes as no surprise in the first Inspector Vachell novel, Murder at Government House, to find Vachell using the American anthropologist Olivia Brandeis as a spy to "find out all [she] can about this secret society." Olivia accepts the task without a qualm and acknowledges, "I should certainly have more chance of finding out what the Wabenda think than one of your police detectives" (65; emphasis added). As it
happens, her discoveries of "what the Wabenda think" are not crucial to the investigation. In fact, Huxley contrasts the witch-doctor Silu's knowledge of Europeans with Olivia's anthropological "knowledge." When she asks to see some of the magic Silu uses to ward off evil spirits, he mocks her expectations by showing her "junk, not magic" (143). And it is Silu, long before anyone else, who realizes who the murderer is—not as a result of any mystical powers but as a result, as Vachell acknowledges, of his application of "psychology" (229). Through the figure of Silu, Huxley gives us a further comparison for the role of the detective, with Olivia telling Vachell that "the functions of a detective in our society resemble those of a witchdoctor among native tribes. The witchdoctor's job, like the detective's is to hunt down the enemies of society and prevent them from doing further harm" (68).

Like the retired surgeon Sir Jolyot Anstey in *The African Poison Murders* who is "tremendously keen on the natives" (8), Olivia Brandeis thus appears to give generous, relativistic credit to the African genius, in a way clearly surpassing stereotypical colonialist dismissals of African knowledge. But just as Karen Blixen feels free to speak the minds of her African characters/workers, so Elspeth Huxley leaves unchallenged the right and the ability of the European witch-doctor, the ethnographer/detective, to pluck out the heart of Africa's mystery, to close the case on its
story. Huxley's detective fiction therefore seems to be of a piece with James Clifford's notion of "ethnographic self-fashioning" in Conrad and Malinowski; although it "portrays other selves as culturally constituted, it also fashions an identity authorized to represent, even to believe--but always with some irony--the truths of discrepant worlds" (Clifford 94).

A fine example of this muddle occurs in Vachell's mental account of the physiognomy of one Machoka, an askari whom Armitage has arrested on suspicion of his being an accomplice to the Governor's murderer. Huxley presents Vachell as registering both a degree of diffidence as to his own deductive powers, and some culturally relativistic musings, at the same time as he displays "knowledge" about racial types:

Vachell knew that he had not been in Africa long enough to tell anything about a native's character from his facial expression. It needed years of association with them to do that. But Africans weren't like Chinese, expressionless and wooden-faced to a European stranger's eyes; their features showed great variation. That he supposed, was due to their lack of homogeneity; like the English and Americans, they were a mixture of any number of races. Machoka, for instance, seemed to be a throwback to the almost pure Hamitic type. He was light in colour, almost as light as a Malay, and although his lips were thick they didn't jut out like rolls of rubber. His front teeth, following the tribal custom, were filed into sharp points, and there were raised tattoo marks on his cheek-bones. Among the Wabenda, Vachell knew, tattoo marks on the cheeks were a sign of high rank. (73)
This paradoxical mix—of awareness of a common
heterogeneity, balanced against a series of "us" and "them"
discriminations of natives, Africans, Chinese, Europeans,
English, Americans, Hamitic types, Malays, and Wabenda; of
admitted ignorance and claimed knowledge; of neutrality of
tone and racist description—is not presented critically:
there is nothing to deny the suggestion that after
sufficient years in Chania, presumably Vachell would be able
to tell things about "a native's character." This is one of
the inconsistencies of Huxley's fiction, as the more liberal
attitudes of positively presented characters such as Olivia
Brandeis or Sir Jolyot Anstey suggest that European
"science" is only one type of knowledge, partial at best,
and not inherently superior to African "magic." Indeed, the
implications of Vachell's newboy ignorance notwithstanding,
the novels tend to present the view, flattering to a liberal
non-colonial audience, that the European settler "knowledge"
bred by length of stay in Africa tends to be mere prejudice.

Particularly in Murder at Government House, tensions
appear between a bureaucratic but humanitarian Colonial
Office and the reactionary settlers. The District Officer
in Taritibu, for instance, who "approved very highly of
anthropologists" (145), tartly dismisses the scaremongering
suggestion that "a native school-boy secret society is
responsible for Sir Malcolm McLeod's murder" as "almost
worthy of a settler" (147), while the settlers' spokesman,
the fiery Donovan Popple, "believed that he knew more about [Chania's] needs and troubles than most of the outsiders who came in at the Colonial Office's orders for a few years, to sit in Marula behind a barricade of officials and tell everyone who had to make a living in the colony where to get off" (11).^8

In the later *The African Poison Murders*, such tensions are not so apparent, but it is still the relative newcomers to Chania who seem to be the more enlightened; the recently settled Wests, for instance, treat their laborers more decently than the longer-established Munsons. Mrs Munson, in particular, appears as an embittered racist, both jealous and paranoid, critical of the colonial government for twisting justice "to suit the convenience of black pagan apes" (163). Huxley makes her the only character to use such openly insulting, racist language, and matches the ugliness of her character and racism with physical ugliness.

When she is first introduced to Vachell,

> Her squat, lumpy figure was dressed in a khaki twill skirt and a bushman's shirt with bulging pockets. Long strands of hair escaped from the bun into which it was screwed at the back. The idea passed through Vachell's mind that she was wrapped in fat as a dancer might be swathed in shawls. It did not seem to be an integral part of her; there was something essentially jovial about fat, but nothing so easy-going as joviality about the woman who stood in front of him, her feet squarely apart, darting her small eyes from one visitor to the other like a chameleon flicking its long tongue at a couple of flies. (17)
Although her obesity is not associated with sexual appetite in quite the same way as Tant Sannie's in The Story of an African Farm, Mrs Munson seems remarkably close kin to Schreiner's portrait of the Boer woman. And, as Tant Sannie's sanctimonious claims to Christian decency and morality are satirized by Schreiner, so it is "Mother" Munson's "strange mixture of blunt colloquialism and Calvinistic mock-biblical" that Vachell finds "disconcerting" (130). The significance of the comparison becomes more compelling when we learn that Mrs Munson has family in South Africa, and wishes to go there, "where there are decent people, respectable people fit for my children to grow up among" (163), following the murder of her husband. As I suggested earlier, the publication of The African Poison Murders in 1939 might in part explain this shifting of the stain of racism onto a convenient European other, but the connection with Schreiner suggests that it is part of a more persistent antagonism (partly class, partly intellectual) between the metropolitan English and white settlers on the land.

As Terence Ranger has shown, in the last decades of the nineteenth-century and first decades of the twentieth, white settlers transferred the invented tradition of the gentleman from Europe to Africa. Although they may have "found themselves engaged in tasks which by definition would have been menial in Britain" their "neo-traditional title to
gentility" played an important role in maintaining a sense of the "glamour of empire-building" (Hobsbawm 215).
Likewise, "with the coming of formal colonial rule it was urgently necessary to turn the whites into a convincing ruling class, entitled to hold sway over their subjects not only through force of arms or finance but also through the prescriptive status bestowed by neo-tradition" (215). Some of the intensity and complexity of this process is evident in The Story of an African Farm, both in Schreiner's representation of Tant Sannie as less than genteel, and in Gregory Rose's boarding-school snobbery towards the uneducated Waldo. More particularly, the Roses are examples of colonists whose local class-inflation was supported by neo-tradition; since their arrival in the colony they have "discovered" that "they were of distinguished lineage," have invented a family crest and motto, and named their colonial farm 'Rose Manor,' all in an attempt to establish their claim to noble blood (175). Literary awareness of the phenomenon Ranger describes thus presumably dates back to the 1870s or even 1860s (the period which African Farm describes), and it clearly persists through the 1930s in the colonial Kenya portrayed by Karen Blixen and Elspeth Huxley, though with varying degrees of critique.

In none of those writers' works, however, does the invention of white class status so prominently and explicitly provide the content of the book (rather than
"background") as in Doris Lessing's *The Grass is Singing*. In this novel, first published in 1950, Lessing meticulously and painfully probes the full intensity and complexity of white settlers' struggle to turn themselves into, and entrench themselves as, a "convincing ruling class." In so doing she completely subverts the ideology of the pastoral that both Blixen and Huxley, in their writing of farms and detective fiction respectively, adhere to.

*The Grass is Singing* is not interested in the "abstract mode of detection" of the "murder mystery" announced by its opening words; instead it probes the extraordinarily complex web of power relationships of colonial Southern Rhodesia, relationships determined not just by race, class, and gender, but also by location in country and city, colony and metropole, agriculture and industry. An indication of the complexity of these relationships is that each of the story's three main characters can be seen as a victim, not just of each other and individual events, but of systems. To state it very baldly: Mary Turner is the victim not just of murder, but of colonialist patriarchy; Moses, her murderer, is the victim of colonialist racism; Dick Turner, her husband, is the victim of colonialist capitalism.

Those "systems" are not, of course, that simply separated, but what Lessing does is to show that having a farm in Africa is not the same as having a farm in Europe, nor can it rightly be conceived of in terms of personal
mythology. Dick Turner, for instance, whose relationship with the land is presented as being as intense as Karen Blixen's, if not more so, is thwarted at every stage from being able to say "I had a farm in Africa:" "on an impulse, [he] had come to Southern Rhodesia to be a farmer, and to 'live his own life'" (158), but "he was indebted to the Land Bank, and heavily mortgaged, for he had had no capital at all when he started" (47) so that "his 'own' soil . . . belonged to the last grain of sand to the Government" (158).

In addition, the text frequently reminds us—as Huxley's and Blixen's do not—that any notion of white ownership of the land is dependent on the violent displacement of "the natives," along with their coercion into a discriminatory labor system: so-called "contract labor" Lessing describes as "the South African equivalent of the old press gang" and little short of slavery:

white men . . . lie in wait for the migrating bands of natives on their way along the roads to look for work; gather them into large lorries, often against their will (sometimes chasing them through the bush for miles if they escape), lure them by fine promises of good employment and finally sell them to the white farmers at five pounds or more per head for a year's contract. (128)

Both Dick's romanticization of "his" land and his "labor troubles" are thus heavily ironized, as he fulminates against the government (to which he is in hock not just monetarily but for his very occupation) for failing to "force the natives to work on the land" or "simply send out
lorries and soldiers and bring them to the farmers by force" (159).

His antagonism to the government takes the form we have already seen in Huxley's fiction of long-term settlers on the land railing at urban bureaucrats unduly influenced by English liberalism. But Lessing's settlers are not retirees from Harley Street or the Navy. In part reflective of actual demographic differences between white settlement in Kenya and Rhodesia, her settlers arrived with an already existing class antagonism as part of their baggage—antagonism between their "real" world, working or lower middle-class professions, and the "intellectual" world of the privileged British establishment. Charlie Slatter, for instance, who, "from the beginning of the tragedy to its end, personified Society for the Turners" (6), was originally "a grocer's assistant in London" (8), come to lord it over his wife, his children, and especially his laborers, farming "as if he were turning the handle of a machine which would produce pound notes at the other end" (7). He has very effectively bought a local class superiority that is dependent on notions of racial superiority, but within that local race/class superiority, he has two special points of vulnerability: gender and "echt" English Englishness, two points that get interestingly confused.
We can see this in the tension between Slatter and Tony Marston, the 20-year-old just out from England who, as Dick Turner's "assistant" for three weeks, witnesses some of the events leading to Mary's murder. Marston himself is only in Southern Rhodesia to make money, and because it offered him a better prospect "than becoming some kind of a clerk in his uncle's factory" (214); in true pastoral mode, however, he initially romanticizes his poverty on the farm as "exciting." By virtue of his being a witness to the events leading to the murder, and a witness with some vestige of faith in "abstract ideas about decency and goodwill" (12), Tony serves Lessing's purpose of being the closest the reader comes to unmasking the ideology of "white civilization" (22).

Elements in his characterization make him familiar to us as the relative outsider, the English newcomer to Africa whose whiteness counts him in, but whose attitudes don't quite mesh. As with Vachell's Canadianness, Marston's Englishness establishes a sort of distance that allows for greater objectivity. However, unlike Vachell, Tony has no authority in the case, and, more like the effete Gregory Rose than the heartily masculine Vachell, is easily over-ridden by Charlie Slatter and the policeman Sergeant Denham, who deals with (one can hardly say "investigates") the case.

Thus, although Marston has much the same aim as Slatter, Slatter sees him as backed by the cultural capital
of an innate class superiority. It is perhaps partly anxiety about his own class inferiority that makes Slatter dismissive of Marston's relative lack of "manliness:" he sees Marston as "the usual type; the self-contained, educated Englishman who spoke in a la-di-da way as if he had a mouthful of pearls" (212). This tension—between what Slatter sees as Marston's class superiority and gender inferiority—makes Slatter nervous:

Anything was possible, thought Charlie, from this particular type of young Englishman. He had a rooted contempt for soft-faced, soft-voiced Englishmen, combined with a fascination for their manner and breeding. His own sons, now grown up, were gentlemen. He had spent plenty of money to make them so; but he despised them for it. At the same time he was proud of them. This conflict showed itself in his attitude towards Marston: half hard and indifferent, half subtly deferential. (8)

Marston's "soft" face and voice, his education, even, perhaps, that "mouthful of pearls" feminize him in Slatter's eyes; being a gentleman makes him something both more than and less than just plain male.

However, Slatter and Sergeant Denham easily bully Marston, in part by appealing to racial solidarity, but mainly by exploiting his outsider status. Although racially not one of "them" (i.e. black), he is yet not quite one of "us" (i.e. white male settler). Tacitly persuading him to keep quiet about "anything out of the ordinary" (16) he might have witnessed, Denham tells Marston,
"When you have been in the country long enough you will understand that we don't like niggers murdering white women."
The phrase "When you have been in the country" stuck in Tony's gullet. He had heard it too often, and it had come to jar on him. At the same time it made him feel angry. Also callow. (17; emphasis added)

Despite his knowledge and his metropolitan "principles," Marston duly says "what was expected of him" at the trial; a repression of his own interpretation of events which represents his collusion with the white settlers' ideological reticence. Thoroughly disillusioned by what he has seen, and by his own behavior, Tony leaves the district shortly after the trial; he is remembered in "the district" as "the young man from England who hadn't the guts to stand more than a few weeks of farming" (27).

What Tony had seen was, of course, precisely what white settler ideology denied the presence of: inter-racial desire, specifically the desire of a white woman for a black man. By the time Tony appears on the Turners' farm, Mary and Dick Turner's marriage has already totally disintegrated; they no longer even share the "double solitude" of marriage and scarcely register each other's existence despite sleeping in the same bed together. Thus Dick notices nothing in the relationship between Mary and the "houseboy" Moses beyond a familiar inability in his wife to understand "the native mind." Tony, however, has seen the extraordinary mixture of attraction and repulsion between the two that inevitably culminates in the murder, a
kind of sado-masochistic consummation at once feared and desired. He sees, but does not say, that "It takes two to make a murder--a murder of this kind" (23), and it is that same recognition and repression that accounts for the "hate and contempt" that "twisted [Charlie Slatter's] features" (10) as he stared at Mary's dead body. Tony does not initially understand that look, but later

there would be a few brief moments when he would see the thing clearly, and understand that it was "white civilization" fighting to defend itself that had been implicit in the attitude of Charlie Slatter and the Sergeant, "white civilization" which will never, never admit that a white person, and most particularly, a white woman, can have a human relationship, whether for good or for evil, with a black person. For once it admits that, it crashes, and nothing can save it. So, above all, it cannot afford failures, such as the Turners' failure. (22)

Thus the dead white woman's body is far more than the catalyst for an "abstract mode of detection;" it is the very core of the novel, the object of desire and hatred which "white civilization" attempts to protect and repress at all costs in order to maintain its own putative integrity or purity and its actual power. In the same way that Marston's "femininity" is potentially troubling to Slatter, and requires breaking in, so white settler society, highly patriarchally organized, seeks to exert especially tight control over its women, who are at once, familiarly enough, both the paragons of white civilization and yet acutely vulnerable to degeneration.
Given this understanding, what does the violent death of one white woman at the hands of one black man mean? The combination of female victim and black assailant places the novel's critique of colonialism within a framework of potentially uncomfortable stereotypes of white women, black men, and their possible relationships. One recent critic, Katherine Fishburn, goes so far as to suggest that the relative lack of attention paid to *The Grass is Singing* may be because "Lessing has written what Abdul R. JanMohamed would call a manichean allegory--an allegory that functions (however unintentionally in this case) to reinscribe the power and dominance of the white colonial ruling class" (Fishburn 2). There is clearly some force to Fishburn's suggestion, especially if, as Ezekiel Mphahlele does, one reads Moses' motivation for murder in purely personal terms as stemming from his belief that "Mary was leaving the farm because she has found new love" (*African Image* 138). I would suggest, however, that Lessing's rendering of the dual, systemic victimization of Mary and Moses (for his murder of her ensures his own death) deliberately and successfully turns the stereotypical notions on their heads.

Mary's destroyer should be construed not just as Moses--whatever his personal motivation--but as colonialist patriarchy; first abused and abandoned by a drunkard father, then pushed into a stifling marriage by social pressure, Mary's gender has victimized her from the start. In her
dreams she confuses Moses with "her father menacing and horrible" (192), and in one particularly graphic instance she imagines Moses first murdering her husband and then approaching her: "slowly, obscene and powerful, and it was not only he, but her father who was threatening her. They advanced together, one person" (192).

At the same time, her murderer is equally victimized by colonialist patriarchy in the form of Mary's extreme racism. As a result of her totally segregated town upbringing, Mary "could not understand any white person feeling anything personal about a native" (69). She shares the prevailing white farmers' objectifying attitude in the novel towards African laborers as "the geese that laid the golden eggs" (7). Consequently, with the progressive deterioration of her marriage, with her husband's deepening economic failure as a farmer, and her almost total isolation from any company--white or black--she has no way of comprehending or coping with her desire, both socially and individually unspeakable, for Moses, nor with his pity for her.

Unable to forget that she had once whipped Moses across the face, she is torn by guilt and fear of revenge, attraction and repulsion. This pair of combinations produces the final climactic scene of the novel in which Mary seems to will (or unable not to will, perhaps) Moses into murdering her as the only possible consummation of their sado-masochistic master-servant relationship. She
"knows" that Moses is waiting for her, and feels "in a trap, cornered and helpless. But she would have to go out and meet him" (241). Complete with the melodramatic bursting of a storm, and forked lightning glinting off Moses's plunging knife, the murder is thus a violent parody of a midnight assignation that both parties must keep, according to a script already written.

After the murder, Moses initially makes as if to flee from the scene of the crime, but "when he had gone perhaps a couple of hundred yards through the soaking bush he stopped, turned aside, and leaned against a tree on an ant heap. And there he would remain, until his pursuers, in their turn, came to find him" (245). His subsequent arrest, trial, and execution are foregone conclusions; everyone, including Moses, knows that Moses is "as good as hanged already" (9) by allowing himself to be apprehended. But it is precisely here, in Moses's indifferent submission to the inevitable processes of the institutionalized racial violence of colonial law, that we see the brilliance of The Grass is Singing; because it is here that Lessing's subversion of the pastoral mode--her exposure of the systems that run farms, countries, and empires--coincides with her subversion of the genre of detective fiction.

Crudely put, The Grass is Singing is a murder story. Unlike Huxley's fiction, however, only one murder is committed and the suspense of the story is provided not by
the withholding of knowledge as to who did the murder, but as to how the murder came about; the action of the story is not provided by the detective's exhaustive tracing of a skillfully hidden murderer and his retrospective recreation of the murder, but by the explicit exposition of the events leading to the murder. Nothing factual is hidden. The climax is therefore not the detection of the murderer, but the act of murder itself. Using a form that perfectly fits her content—the novel opens with a news report of Mary Turner's houseboy's arrest and confession—Lessing shows that, when it comes to apparently black-on-white crime in colonial Africa, no detective is necessary because the criminal has already been produced by official, institutional discourse. The narrative presents "People all over the country" reading the news report with "a little spurt of anger mingled with what was almost satisfaction, as if some belief had been confirmed, as if something had happened which could only have been expected" (1).

The rest of the novel then goes on to show the enormous discrepancy between what "people all over the country" understand of the case, and what actually happened. In other words, although the apparently salient facts of the case—that Moses, a black farm laborer, had murdered Mary Turner, his white employer—are explicit from the start, nevertheless, because so much depends on repression—particularly repression of desire—and because the narrative
is partial in presenting the point-of-view of Mary, rather than her murderer, at the level of motivation much still remains implicit, in fact, very vague indeed.

As such, the novel reverses the procedure of conventional detective fiction. Catherine Belsey defines the "project of the Sherlock Holmes stories," for instance, as being "to dispel magic and mystery, to make everything explicit, accountable, subject to scientific analysis" (Belsey 111). "The stories begin in enigma, mystery, the impossible, and conclude with an explanation which makes it clear that all logical deduction and scientific method render all mysteries accountable to reason" (112); however, Belsey goes on to point out that a deconstructive reading of those stories reveals to what extent they depend on an ideological reticence, particularly with regard to women and women's sexuality.

According to Robert Young, just such a reticence characterized culture and race theory in the nineteenth-century, which were linked by a suppressed "third term"—sexuality (Colonial Desire 97). Although Young's demonstration of the prevalence of a "sado-masochistic structure of inter-racial sexual relations in the colonial period" (108) refers primarily to white male-black female sexual relations, his description of the imbrication of race, class and gender coincides with Lessing's fictional representation. In Blixen, Schreiner, and Huxley the
separateness of African and European races and cultures is preserved by, among other things, silence about inter-racial sexual desire. In articulating that silence, Lessing reproduces in fictional form the set of racial, cultural, and sexual relationships that Young describes.

The same set of relationships therefore link the full legal sanctioning of Moses' death to the extra-legal but "institutionalized practice" of lynching in the 1890s in the United States. According to Hazel Carby, under that institution, just like Charlie Slatter and Sergeant Denham in The Grass is Singing, "white men used their ownership of the body of the white female as a terrain on which to lynch the black male" (Gates 309). Carby's analysis of the logic whereby violence against black men was justified through their demonization as rapists of white women stresses the intimacy of the link between "internal and external colonization, between domestic racial oppression and imperialism" (304) in much the same way as Young does in Colonial Desire. Lessing pushes further to reveal the link within white colonial society between domestic gender oppression and racial oppression.

The Grass is Singing, in sum, attempts to demonstrate how ideological reticence--both in the literary genre of detective fiction and in the actual contact zone of colonial desire--works to produce a misleading set of apparent "facts" that are already explicit, already accounted for and
scientifically (in this case, forensically) analyzed. Going well beyond Huxley's intermittent relativism, in which European science and African magic occasionally appear as parallel sets of knowledge, equally partial, equally (in)valid, Lessing's novel, then, is a much more radical and coherent attempt to expose the ideological basis of European "knowledge," forensic or otherwise. European "science" whether of the racial or forensic varieties is a particular kind of "méconnaissance," and far from producing the objective knowledge it aspires to, actually produces a highly self-interested discourse of knowledge as power.

So far I have confined my comments to fictional representations, limiting my historical comments to one or two observations by Terence Ranger. However, in looking at Karen Blixen's account of the death of the worker, Kitosch, in Out of Africa we can see one example of the way in which actual European forensic practice inflicts violence on black Africans. Countless equally egregious, or more egregious, examples could be found in the annals of all colonial states, but what I am attempting to show is the way that, even though ostensibly "pro-native," the ideology of the pastoral in Blixen's work "extracts" labor, replacing analysis of systems of power with myths.14

Briefly, what Blixen describes is the case of a worker named Kitosch who was so badly beaten for riding his employer's horse back home (rather than leading it) that he
died from his injuries. In court, although the district surgeon declares that death was "due to the injuries and wounds that he had found on the body" (241), the evidence of two defence doctors who claimed that it was Kitosch's own "wish to die" that had caused his death is sufficiently persuasive to the jury for them to find the settler employer guilty not of murder but of "grievous hurt" (242). Blixen relates the entire event in exemplary style, formally reporting the statements of those involved in a series of witheringly detached and sardonic sentences. The contrast between the medical experts' conditional conclusions and the patent facts of the matter are evident, for instance, from Blixen's use of "might" in the following sentences:

If Kitosch had not taken this attitude, he would not have died. If, for instance he had eaten something, he might not have lost courage, for starvation is known to reduce courage. [The doctor] added that the wound on the lip might not be due to a kick, but might be just a bite by the boy himself, in severe pain. (242)

Such medical evidence—all too depressingly familiar from other cases of prison "suicides" and "accidents"—is clearly specious, and Blixen's sarcasm draws attention to its speciousness. However, the conclusion she draws from the case comes as a surprise.

Rather than taking the case as an example of the rottenness of the state of British justice in Kenya, she takes Kitosch's "wish-to-die" literally, and transforms him into a figure of "beauty," who "embodied the
fugitiveness of the wild things who are, in the hour of need, conscious of a refuge somewhere in existence; who go when they like; of whom we can never get hold" (243). Thus, rather than look at the event as evidence of the asymmetry of power relations between two interacting groups, Blixen re-establishes the separateness of African from European: the slave, again, is ascribed a power that puts him beyond the reach of the slave-owner.

As my comments on Blixen's representations of the slave/slaveowner relationship would indicate, this latter move might in fact be seen as in keeping with all of Blixen's thought; its emergence at this point, however, jars. By what sleight of hand has she transformed Kitosch, a man so brutally beaten that he died from his injuries, from murder-victim into a figure of beauty and freedom, "the fugitiveness of the wild things"? I would argue that it is her own ethnographic urge--that urge that drives her to seek to differentiate among and within races, nations, cultures, tribes--that allows her to ignore the grossness of the Kitosch case, and turn it into something ethereal. In so doing she reproduces the same kind of reasoning as that displayed by the defence doctors, and, although her motives might be more honorable than theirs, she reaches equally ludicrous conclusions.

For instance, using language that reminds us of that used against Tony Marston, the first defence doctor cited
claimed to speak "with authority" on the "will to die," "for he had been in the country twenty-five years, and knew the Native mind" (241). Blixen's sarcasm here undercuts the doctor's "authority" and "knowledge;" as with Huxley's and Lessing's settlers, length of stay in the colony seems merely to have hardened prejudice rather than facilitated learning. However, Blixen herself is no less categorical in her declarations about "the Native mind," prefacing the account of the court proceedings with comments on the difference between "Native ideas" of justice (whereby "a compensation for his death should now be made to his people") and European ones in which "the problem of guilt and innocence at once presented itself" (239). This distinction echoes earlier comments in the section entitled "A Shooting Accident on the Farm" where Blixen talks with "authority" similar to the doctor's about "the Native mind" and its attitude to justice:

To the African there is but one way of counter-balancing the catastrophes of existence, it shall be done by replacement; he does not look for the motive of an action. . . . The Native will not give time or thought to the weighing up of guilt or desert: either he fears that this may lead him too far, or he reasons that such things are of no concern of his. But he will devote himself, in endless speculations, to the method by which crime or disaster shall be weighed up in sheep and goats. (93-94)

If there is any sarcasm here it is directed against "the African" and his "endless speculations" of value measured in the currency of sheep and goats. It seems that, in cases
such as the shooting accident on the farm, where she herself is part of the judicial process, Blixen presents "knowledge" of the "Native mind" in a less critical manner than when anyone else is in judgement. It is not so much that there is no reifiable "Native mind" to know, but that Blixen, by virtue of her superior intellect and intuition, can know it more accurately than other white settlers. In other words, it does not matter whether Blixen is disdainful of European or of African justice, her disdain is not directed to systematic criticism of either and analysis of their interactions, but merely forms part of her self-invention as a mythic figure in a mythic landscape. Thus, Kitosch's brutalized and devalued body is etherealized and ascribed a mythic value in a way that allows Blixen herself apparently to transcend the materiality of her circumstances.

As with a lot of Blixen's work, the move is reminiscent of the self-aggrandizing transvaluation of Yeats's use of symbol, but if we compare the "beauty" ascribed to Kitosch with the "terrible beauty" born out of the Easter Rising, we can see quite how willful Blixen's reading of Kitosch's death is. Whereas the leaders of the 1916 rebellion actually did lead a rebellion, and actively resisted British colonial power, Kitosch's only act of resistance was to ride rather than lead a horse; for that "offence" he was killed. Blixen's account almost suggests that there is no need for active resistance, systematic resistance to colonial rule,
since no matter how casually, totally oppressive the rule, Africans will always have the freedom of "wild things" to "go when they like." Thus, again, in reimagining Kitosch as having no less autonomy ultimately than Karen Blixen the apparently autonomous and transcendent farmer, Blixen forgets her complicitous role as fermier, part of a system whose knowledge of Africans was always put to non-reciprocal uses of control.

Notes

1. The only person in the novel whose speech is represented as radically divergent from standard English is Wendlandt, the Nazi Bund member. His speech is marked by heavy-handed reversals of standard word-order; the speech of the Africans in the novel, by contrast, has no such indication of "abnormality," even though their articulacy is severely restricted.

Casual British racism is represented by the anti-Irish sentiment of sarcastic comments such as "Irish logic" regarding the part-Irish Edward Corcoran. Likewise, "Irish charm" characterizes the hot-headed settler Donovan Popple in Murder at Government House.

2. See Robert Young's Colonial Desire, esp. Chapter 3, "The Complicity of Culture. Arnold's Ethnographic Politics." Young reproduces illustrations of "A Celtic Group" from Knox's The Races of Men, and of "English types" from Beddoes' The Races of Britain, and shows that one of Arnold's chief sources for his beliefs was W.F. Edwards, whose Des caractères physiologiques des races humaines (1829) "assimilat[ed] history to physiology and natural history" (Young 76). Young's explanation of how Matthew Arnold's sense of Englishness comes rather paradoxically to be a fore-runner of multiculturalism, "proposing a fusion [of the Celtic and Saxon] at the same time as he makes a claim for the permanence of the two racial types" (71), also has relevance to my argument here of differences within sameness.

3. Even here, though, we might note some transatlantic hybridity in Huxley's use of the detective genre, with Vachell seeming to owe as much to Philip Marlowe as to the
more ascetic Lord Peter Wimsey or Hercule Poirot.

4. See, for example, *Heart of Darkness* where the vegetation stands "higher than the wall of a temple" making Marlow ask himself: "What were we who had strayed in here? Could we handle that dumb thing, or would it handle us? I felt how big, how confoundedly big, was that thing that couldn't talk, and perhaps was deaf as well. What was in there?" (Conrad 56)

Along the same lines, attention might also be drawn to one of Mary Turner's fantasies at the end of *The Grass is Singing*, where she imagines her house being destroyed in a few years' time "by the bush, which had always hated it, had always stood around it silently, waiting for the moment when it could advance and cover it, for ever, so that nothing remained" (Lessing 231). This passage, like the one quoted from Conrad, mixes fantasies of the defeat of cultivation/culture by nature with disintegration of the self; the suggestion that "Africa" is antithetical to civilization and the human further prompts the suggestion that "Africans" cannot themselves be civilized or human. Achebe's critique in "An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*" of the attribution of inscrutability, incomprehensibility, muteness, and malevolence to Africans and African landscape remains the locus classicus of criticism that shows the canonical status of racism in English literature. (See also Chapter 7.)

5. Robert Young's notion of the constitution of "colonial desire," with its mix of simultaneous attraction to and repulsion from the object of desire, draws explicitly on Bhabha's notion of ambivalence. Young agrees with Bhabha that "colonial discourse of whatever kind operated not only as an instrumental construction of knowledge [Said's insight as defined in *Orientalism*] but also according to the ambivalent protocols of fantasy and desire" (*Colonial Desire* 161).

6. Abiola Irele calls *Things Fall Apart* the "master text in the case of Africa" of "literary expression dedicated to the promotion of nationalist consciousness" (Myrsiades and McGuire 22), and one in which "The claim to self-determination thus becomes grounded in a cult of difference all the more plausible in that it seems ratified by the visible imprint of racial and ethnic characteristics" (23). I cite this because of the peculiar similarity between pan-African nationalism and Arnold's "theory of English culture as multicultural" (Young 17).

7. The D.O.'s attitude toward anthropologists and settlers clearly does not prevent him from belittling traditional African ways of life. While the secret society is dismissed
as "school-boy"-ish, the D.O. seems intent on imposing his own schoolboy values on his district, introducing British sports "to replace the old thrills of tribal war, you know, and to give the young men some incentive to keep fit" (147). His naivety towards secret societies is all the more obvious in the light of the Mau Mau movement of the '50s (see previous chapter), while the British advancement of the boxing champion Idi Amin highlights a rather differently nuanced relationship between organized sport and war (see Hobsbawm 217-226).

8. That such tensions existed is not in doubt. Ranger cites an occasion in Nairobi in 1907 when a fancy-dress charity football match "was disrupted by leading settlers dressed as colonial officials with rows of medals made of tin lids and red tape who pegged out quarantine, forest, native and game reserves until the entire pitch was 'out of bounds!'" (Hobsbawm 219). Two points of interest emerge from this anecdote: first, that the sportsfield is such a readable metaphor to the colonizing classes; secondly, that the greater "liberalism" and respect for "law" of the metropolitan British authority made it an often illusory but obvious body to appeal to by Africans victimized by local colonial legislation. Brian Willan writes, for instance, that Sol Plaatje's Native Life in South Africa, his attack on the 1913 Natives Land Act, "was written in a period when most politically active black South Africans placed great confidence in the due processes of law" (Plaatje, Native Life iv); the ANC's slow movement from attempts to function legitimately within South African politics to sabotage and armed struggle illustrates the point. How much the central British authorities used the principle of local autonomy as a deliberate alibi for pursuing their own interests, and how much it was simply an inadvertent weakness of the "liberal" position, is open to debate.

9. And this whole study is concerned in one way or another with the double meaning of the phrase "the occupation of the land." Like "colonization" it implies both inhabitation of a foreign space, and the job of tilling soil.

10. The trial is, of course, a mere formality, and scarcely represented in the novel. The radicalism of Lessing's work is again perhaps revealed by the way she resists another literary convention--the trial scene. Comparison with Alan Paton's Cry, the Beloved Country (1948) and Harper Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird (1960) where good, honest, white liberal lawyers defend black clients in racist situations makes the point, and possibly suggests why The Grass is Singing hasn't yet been filmed. See also Chapter 7 on the role of liberal whites in films about black subjects.
11. It seems that in *The Grass is Singing* Lessing may have encountered precisely the same representational problem encountered by Schreiner in *African Farm*: the aim to represent the truth about colonial oppression, like the aim to represent the truth about women's oppression, makes it well nigh impossible to figure ways out of that oppression. And, of course, just as Schreiner turned to dreams and allegories as new modes for her fiction, so Lessing turned to science fiction for hers.

12. The suggestion that Moses might be seen as the victim of Mary is troubling in its apparent blaming of the actual murder-victim. What Lessing has very acutely caught is the way in which racist patriarchy tends to exonerate itself through self-fulfilling prophecies regarding racial and gender others. Her accuracy in representing the nexus of racism, sexism, and colonialism does indeed make *The Grass is Singing* a troubling book to write about: almost as much as Schreiner's impolite *Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland*, it presents a model of political incorrectness (see Chapter 7).

13. Hazel Carby's article "'On the Threshold of Woman's Era': Lynching, Empire, and Sexuality in Black Feminist Theory" is relevant to my earlier speculations as to the kind of feminist affiliation that might have been achieved through a meeting of Ida B. Wells and Olive Schreiner (see Chapter 1).

14. I have found relatively little comment on Blixen's account of Kitosch's death, an omission which in itself is telling. Ngugi, however, in *Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary* takes the account as typifying a "hideous colonial aesthetic" (35), a phrase that resonates with Achebe's condemnation of *Heart of Darkness* and my discussion of the separation of aesthetic and political considerations in western canon formation (see Chapter 7).

Dane Kennedy reads Blixen's attitude as illustrating the extraordinary extent of the racial boundaries white settlers erected in order to protect their prestige. In a situation which frequently demanded dependence as well as almost constant physical proximity, Kennedy argues that the settlers relied on these racial boundaries for "emotional assuagement" as much as economic advantage (Kennedy 149); "even so universal a matter as death, then, set sharp and steadfast boundaries between the two races" (166).

15. We might also note that in *Out of Africa* Blixen twice acknowledges that the phrase translated as "I want to die" (nataka kufa in Kiswahili) can be synonymous with a simple future tense, not necessarily implying volition. Both occasions involve imminent death and Blixen gives a literal
translation merely as a gloss to her own English versions "was about to die" (108) and "was dying" (286). The literal translations, modified by almost identical phrases-- "wished to die, they have it in Swaheli" (108); and "he wants to die--the Natives have it" (286)-- appear to point to a quirk of expression in Kiswahili rather than a fundamental difference of racial attitudes to death.
SECTION THREE
"IN AFRICA"

"Qui donc saura nous faire oublier telle ou telle partie du
monde

Où est le Christophe Colomb à qui l'on devra l'oubli d'un
continent"
Guillaume Apollinaire

"X stands for the unknown"
Malcolm X
Insofar as it is a European word, "Africa" is a European invention, coming into modern European vocabularies from Latin via Greek. The ancients divided the continent into at least four parts--Aethiopia, Libya, Africa, and Mauretania, believing Aethiopia rather than Africa to be probably the most quintessentially its own space, with a civilization stretching back to the origin of humankind. The word "Africa" has thus not always had its difference-erasing totality. Originally designating the Phoenician or Punic state centered on Carthage, it soon, however, became used for the whole continent south of the Mediterranean.¹

In Latin, the masculine form, "Africus", denoting the south-west wind, shows especially clearly how notions of Africa and things African are inscribed in terms of European experience--the land mass south of the Mediterranean, the source of the south-west wind blowing on Rome.

Likewise, there is a long history of the appellation "African" being attached by Europeans to Europeans; the Latin adjective "Africanus" was famously attributed to Scipio for his victory over Carthage, suggesting centuries before modern colonialism that you can become "African"
through successful exercise of imperial power. This same Scipio is the subject of Petrarch's epic poem bearing the title "Africa" but really concerned with Rome, and the greatness but fragility of its empire. At the very beginning of modern Western history, therefore, "Africa" gets used by Petrarch as a site of otherness--Carthaginian savagery and fraud constantly opposed to Roman mercy and honor--against which to model a specifically European nationalistic and imperialistic ideal.2

Written in Latin rather than vernacular Italian, Petrarch's epic was widely enough published during the early modern period, but, according to his English translators Thomas Bergin and Alice Wilson, "always as a part of his collected works. Not until 1872 did the great epic receive the distinction of special treatment" (Bergin and Wilson xiv). That nineteenth-century date may, in the light of subsequent discussion on the white-washing of the classics and in the light of the contemporary "scribble" for Africa, be significant. Bergin and Wilson don't make that point, but they do suggest that the date (1926) of the poem's final winning of the same "scrupulous editorial attention" of Petrarch's other works coincides with "the resurgent nationalism of the time," citing as evidence the fact that Nicola Festa dedicated his edition to Victor Emmanuel III, and "defined the Africa as 'the poem of the Mediterranean victory of Rome'" (Bergin and Wilson xiv). In this light,
it becomes harder to read Mussolini's invasion of Abyssinia, and Fascism in general, as the result of an aberration from a European Enlightenment ideal; rather it emerges as the very epitome of Europe's writing its own history through and in Africa.

Furthermore, in that history "Africa" tends to provide a very particular set of oppositional, non-European themes or associations; although not reported in Petrarch's poem, Scipio is responsible for another defining characteristic of "Africanness" in European eyes, as it is to him that is attributed the saying "Ex Africa semper aliquid novi;" ever since, it seems, Europe has expected the novel, the exotic, the previously unknown out of Africa. Blixen alludes to the reference in the English title of her first memoir, but although her exoticising is of a relatively benign variety (at least in declared intention), all too frequently Africa's "exoticism" has also led to associations with emptiness, wildness, barbarism and darkness. J.M. Coetzee, for instance, has pointed out how it was possible--at least for a short while--for fifteenth- and sixteenth-century European adventurers to see the people of the "New World" of the Americas as dwellers of an unfallen Eden, whereas the first European settlers at the Cape in mid-seventeenth-century saw the Hottentots as dwellers of an anti-paradise (Coetzee 18). In the nineteenth-century, as Patrick Brantlinger has shown, the notion of Africa as "the dark
continent," the very anti-type of civilization, developed into a virtual given for most Europeans. For all of Joseph Conrad's recognition of the Thames at London once being one of the dark places of the earth, and of contemporary Brussels being a "whited sepulcher," still the effect of his novella was to inscribe in the European consciousness a notional Africa as the heart of an unspeakable darkness.³

The continent is only dark, of course, in respect of European ignorance that misconstrued the white space of gaps on maps, and that can still shrink the continent's vastness to the scope of a suburb in the manner of the famous New Yorker's map of the World. Despite its inaccuracy the label has stuck,⁴ hiding the fact that the naming and mapping of Africa by Europe has never been a neutral, objective Enlightenment. Rather, it has always been hand in glove with enslavement and colonization, part of that European activity that has shaped and distorted the continent physically and imaginatively. Even the "new," post-colonial nations of Africa, for instance, are the results of fairly arbitrary boundary-drawing by European powers at the Congress of Berlin in 1884.⁵ Nation-formation in Africa thus bears little similarity with nation-formation in Europe.⁶ Two years prior to the Berlin Conference, Ernest Renan, one of the chief European theorists of the nation-state, declared that it wasn't language, race, religion or geography that determined the idea of a nation--rather it
was the common will of the people of that nation. There is no place in his thinking, however, for the externally imposed will of imperialist power, and he takes no account of the difficulties of the coming to nationhood of states defined by arbitrary geographical lines that confound and compound diverse cultural, religious, ethnic and linguistic groups.

While the political process of decolonization since the Second World War now appears virtually complete, therefore--only Morocco's "colony" of Western Sahara is still under direct foreign rule--the process is not a simple reversal procedure, allowing states to return to some kind of "authentic", pre-colonial status. Moreover, the most recently decolonized state, South Africa, reveals as plainly as any the glibness of my dating of the process, as areas of South Africa have been in a nearly constant state of anti-colonial agitation ever since the first Dutch settlement was established in 1652. In fact, (still bearing in mind that "Africa" itself might be seen as a European construct) the first people to call themselves African are the descendants of those first Dutch settlers, the present-day Afrikaners. This point is noted by Albie Sachs, who cites Afrikaans literature as the first literature of anti-colonialism in South Africa observing that Afrikaans had been, among other things, "the language of resistance to British imperialism" (de Kok and Press 26). Sachs's claim is, of course, a
deliberately provocative overlooking of the experience and non-literary cultural expression of the Khoi, the San, and the Bantu-speaking peoples of South Africa, but it does reveal how complex the notion of Africanness can be, especially in the South African context. Appropriately enough, in the period between the release of Nelson Mandela and the 1994 elections, the struggle for the "new" South Africa involved the opposition of the English-designated anti-apartheid National Congress and the Afrikaans-designated apartheid apologists, Weerstand Beweging and Volksfront, each, like Petrarch's Scipio, laying claim to the primary adjective "African." Perhaps in that clash of apparent antinomies lies the hope for an integral, unitary African state at the southern end of the continent, radically decolonized in that it is not a state gaining independence from a European imperial power, but from its own awful brand of African/Afrikaner neo-colonialism.

Such is my pious hope. However, South Africa has come (is coming?) to full nationhood a century after Renan's description of European nationalism, at a time when Third World or postcolonial thinkers are wary of concepts of nation. In the post-modern world marked by the rapid flow of capital, information and ideas, and by other symptoms of neo-imperialist control without colonies, it may be another double-A, Anglo-American, that keeps this part of Africa imperially subjugated.
However complex and problematic its nature, though, one aspect of African nation-formation remains indisputable: no African nation would have emerged in its present geographical and political shape if Renan's principles operated outside Europe without European interference. One of Renan's powerful dicta regarding nation-formation claims that "forgetting" plays a key role (Renan 66); what he had in mind was presumably some sort of willed and willing burial of communal hatchets. However, when the "forgetting" has been done for you—as Europe and America have tended to forget Africa, physically and culturally e-ing out whole societies, not just surnames—then nation-building depends on a rather different kind of memorial de-or re-construction.

While part of my project—and the thrust of this chapter so far— is to expose, à la Said, the Europeanness of modern "Africa," in terms of history, geography, economic and political systems, part of my project is also to show, with due regard to Bhabha's notions of ambivalence, the Africanness of Europe. And just as Bhabha and others have criticized Said's totalizing model of "Orientalism," it should be pointed out that a eurocentric notion both of Europe and Africa suppresses Africanness by violently separating a passive Africa from an active Europe, by seeing Africa as Europe's "Other," rather than recognizing the hybridity of both cultures and the intercourse between them.
Two specific issues are thus of key importance here: the West's removal of "Africa" from its story of civilization; and its giving credit to itself for the ending of the slave-trade on which it had depended. The two issues mesh in the history of nineteenth-century racism—a history highly relevant to the life and work of Schreiner and Blixen—as we shall see.

With regard to the former issue, the work of Martin Bernal in his study of the African origins of ancient Greek culture—frequently deemed the foundation of Western culture—is crucial. Bernal's claim, which has sparked renewed controversy over "afrocentrism," posits that there are "two models of Greek history: one viewing Greece as essentially European or Aryan, and the other seeing it as Levantine, on the periphery of the Egyptian and Semitic cultural area;" according to the latter model, which Bernal terms the "Ancient Model" owing to its currency among the Greeks in the Classical and Hellenistic ages, "Greek culture had arisen as the result of colonization, around 1500 BC, by Egyptians and Phoenicians who had civilized the native inhabitants. Furthermore, Greeks had continued to borrow heavily from Near Eastern cultures" (Bernal 1). According to the "Aryan Model", by contrast, "there had been an invasion from the north—unreported in ancient tradition—which had overwhelmed the local "Aegean" or "Pre-Hellenic" culture. Greek civilization is seen as the result of the
mixture of the Indo-European-speaking Hellenes and their indigenous subjects" (2). Bernal goes on to propound a "Revised Ancient Model" which "accepts that there is a real basis to the stories of Egyptian and Phoenician colonization of Greece," a colonization Bernal dates from the first half of the second millennium BC (2).

Bernal's most significant point, however, is not so much a racial or nationalist quarrel over whether ancient Greek civilization should really be thought of as Egyptian, hence African, but that the erasure of lines of influence leading from Africa to Europe occurs at a very specific point in European history; the "fabrication of Ancient Greece" Bernal dates from 1785. The real source of the current controversy lies in his demonstration of the self-serving nature of European "knowledge" about "race," and the coincident rise of academic disciplines and of racism—the same "rise of professional scholarship and the transmutation of knowledge into the different forms of academic disciplines" which Young describes (Young 64).11 Bernal sets out his thesis thus:

If I am right in urging the overthrow of the Arvan Model and its replacement by the Revised Ancient one, it will be necessary not only to rethink the fundamental bases of "Western Civilization" but also to recognize the penetration of racism and "continental chauvinism" into all our historiography, or philosophy of writing history. The Ancient Model had no major "internal" deficiencies, or weaknesses in explanatory power. It was overthrown for external reasons. For 18th- and 19th-century Romantics and racists it was simply intolerable for Greece, which was seen not...
merely as the epitome of Europe but also as its pure childhood, to have been the result of the mixture of native Europeans and colonizing Africans and Semites. Therefore the Ancient Model had to be overthrown and replaced by something more acceptable. (Bernal 2; his italics)

Bernal's work is crucial, therefore, not just because he demonstrates the blackness of Athena, but because he locates the whitewashing of Greek culture in the very set of racialist texts of the nineteenth-century that we have already drawn attention to via Robert Young's analyses in Colonial Desire of texts such as Culture and Anarchy; while Young grants Culture and Anarchy "the dubious distinction . . . that it introduced into British life not only the idea of culture as such but also the tenacious, modern identification of culture with race and nation" (83), Bernal argues that Arnold's cultural/racial/national split between Hellene and Hebrew (erroneous, according to Bernal) legitimates imperialism by, among other things, denying culture and history to Africa and Africans; such negation ultimately feeds into Aryanism's last word, the anti-Semitism of the Nazis.

Bernal's claims are sweeping, but the scope of his knowledge makes them both compelling and unsettling. What I am particularly keen to hang on to in his work is the sense that Europe and Africa have always been interconnected and mutually influential, and that Europe has not always called the tune. Moreover, his claims find strong support in the additional evidence cited by Young in Colonial Desire: not
only does Athena get whitewashed by self-interested European discourse, it also gets whitewashed in European-American discourse.

In the chapter entitled "Egypt in America," Young emphasizes how the emergence in the latter half of the nineteenth-century of so-called "scientific racialism" coincides with the American South's efforts to justify clinging on to the institution of racial slavery. The attempt depended on the so-called theory of polygeny, a theory that held that separate races represented separate species of human being. Not only did this theory justify the treatment of African slaves as not fully human, it further resisted any rapprochement between the races by stressing the alleged degeneracy and sterility of hybrid offspring.

While the early West African empires had never formed a part of modern Western narratives of human civilization, and thus were easy to disregard, ancient Egypt provided a major problem for the polygenist apologists: if the people who built the pyramids were part of the story of human civilization, and they were African, then Africans had to be human. The solution to this problem lay in denying the Africanness of the Egyptians. Thus, according to the polygenist view, the pharaohs had to have been Caucasians. Young reviews the work of American Egyptologists in the nineteenth-century and shows how Nott, Gliddon, Hotze, and
Morton more or less collaborated in a deliberate attempt to establish the Caucasian basis of Egyptian civilization. Young's analysis clearly demonstrates not only the interested/self-serving nature of their apparently "scientific" inquiries, but also the unacknowledged contradictions in their thinking; arguments for the permanent distinctness of races still involve fears of degeneration through miscegenation, despite the supposed sterility of "hybrids." Above all, through scrupulous attention to the conditions in which the research was pursued, Young stresses the situatedness of the American Egyptologists' "knowledge"—how, like Orientalism, it brings into being that which it purports to describe.

I am recapitulating Young's argument because of the rekindling of the debate over afrocentrism by the publication of Mary Lefkowitz's reactionary book Not Out of Africa: How Afrocentrism Led to the Teaching of Myth as History. I cannot comment on the accuracy or otherwise of Bernal's and Lefkowitz's classical "knowledge;" it is, however, apparent that in Lefkowitz's disciplinary exclusivity and her explicit refusal of the poststructuralist insights that would collapse her fundamental binarism of "myth" and "history," she reproduces precisely the kind of operation Bernal is critiquing, privileging one particular, necessarily interested "knowledge" over another. Any claims she makes to
objectivity can only be made by missing Bernal's point that the alleged "objectivity" of "history" is itself a myth.
(This is not to say that there is no such thing as an historical event or a historical "fact," but that any historiographic reconstruction of that event or "fact" itself has its own history, a history that necessarily undercuts the reconstruction's alleged objectivity.) The images of Africa we get in and from the white writers I cover in this study are ones which--each in their different ways--have been influenced by what is in fact a very recent "history" of "Africa," a history that involves as much forgetting as memorial reconstruction.

The history of the slave-trade involves just such a forgetting. In How Europe Underdeveloped Africa, Walter Rodney suggests that the first part of this forgetting lies in the dropping (or non-appearance) of the adjective "European" from references to the slave-trade that operated from Africa's Atlantic coastline. If slavery in East Africa can be labeled "Arab" because Africans "were taken by Arabs and were sold to Arab buyers," then, declares Rodney, "let it be clear that when Europeans shipped Africans to European buyers it was the 'European Slave Trade' from Africa" (Rodney 95). Furthermore, as Rodney insists, even the so-called Arab slave trade

was also a European slave trade. When the slave trade from East Africa was at its height in the eighteenth century and in the early nineteenth century, the destination of most captives was the
European-owned plantation economies of Mauritius, Reunion, and Seychelles—as well as the Americas, via the Cape of Good Hope. Besides, Africans laboring as slaves in certain Arab countries in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were all ultimately serving the European capitalist system which set up a demand for slave-grown products, such as the cloves grown in Zanzibar under the supervision of Arab masters. (97)

Furthermore, the formal abolition of slavery in the British Empire in the 1830s and the continuing struggle to eradicate it throughout the century did not necessarily indicate a new European acceptance of a previously repressed history. Far from it. In fact, in Nancy Stepan's formulation, "just as the battle against slavery was being won by abolitionists, the war against racism was being lost" (cited in Brantlinger 175). Walter Rodney points to the self-interested forgetting that allowed Europeans, particularly the British, to "derive[] the moral justification for imperialism and colonialism from features of the international trade as conducted up to the eve of colonial rule in Africa" (137). Furthermore, in Rodney's view, British emancipationist policies were driven more by economics than by notions of philanthropy:

Many changes inside Britain had transformed the seventeenth-century necessity for slaves into the nineteenth-century necessity to clear the remnants of slaving from Africa so as to organize the local exploitation of land and labor. Therefore, slaving was rejected in so far as it had become a fetter on further capitalist development. (137)

The slave-trade marks the most blatant denial of African culture, history, and humanity, the x-ing out
coinciding with the inking in of European maps of Africa in a paradigmatic model of the exclusionary power of "knowledge." Patrick Brantlinger makes much the same point in Rule of Darkness, that "Africa grew dark as Victorian explorers, missionaries, and scientists flooded it with light, because the light was refracted through an imperialist ideology that urged the abolition of 'savage customs' in the name of civilization" (Brantlinger 173). Taking Eric Williams' thesis in Capitalism and Slavery, that abolition was "not purely altruistic but as economically conditioned as Britain's later empire building in Africa" (Brantlinger 174), Brantlinger attempts to write a "genealogy of the myth of the Dark Continent" (175) to show how Victorian exploration of Africa, together with racist and evolutionary doctrines combined to produce "a view of Africa which demanded imperialization on moral, religious, and scientific grounds" (174).

Brantlinger limits his "genealogy" to British discursive practice; Martin Bernal's corroborating evidence suggests that the British model can be extended across Europe. Contrasting the commercial and popular success of Flaubert's Salammbô [1861] with the outraged reception of Madame Bovary, Bernal demonstrates how this French view of Africa, like the British "demanded imperialization on moral, religious, and scientific grounds." The former novel, like
Vergil's *Aeneid* or Petrarch's *Africa* is, according to Bernal,

a study in decadence. From the viewpoint of the French upper classes in the 1850s, Flaubert had chosen the most decadent aspect (mercenaries) of the most decadent city (Carthage) and of the most decadent people (the Phoenicians). Or, to put it another way, he pictured the accumulation of all the opposites of decent masculine white society. (356)

While *Madame Bovary* had put Flaubert in the dock for "outraging public morals," *Salammbô*, "far more scabrous in every respect, . . . made Flaubert the lion of Parisian high society and enabled him to become a friend of the Imperial family" (Bernal 358). The "realist" displacing of decadent vice to an African Other, according to Bernal,

allowed readers to get their sexual and sadistic thrills, while maintaining their sense of innate and categorical superiority as white Christians. It also increased the urgency of France's *mission civilatrice* to save the peoples of other continents from their own cruelty and wickedness. (358)

Thus, just as with Vergil's *Aeneid* and Petrarch's *Africa*, the image of a decadent Africa is produced as a site of otherness that bolsters European nationalism and justifies European imperialism. Western culture's imaginative use of Africa's ancient "history" at crucial moments in its own political development--the consolidation of imperial Rome after the civil wars of the first century B.C., the rediscovery of the classics that played a crucial role in early modern Europe's "Renaissance," and Bernal's "fabrication of Ancient Greece" coincident with European
imperialism—shows how deeply embedded racial ideology has been in Western ideas of "culture" generally. The forgetting of Africa has been a remarkably consistent cultural corollary of European self-fashioning through imperialism.

To return after this long preamble to Schreiner and Blixen, the question thus arises: to what extent are their African inventions—of self, farm, and Africa in general—consistent with the process I have described? We have already had evidence in part 3 of Chapter 1 that Olive Schreiner might perhaps be an exemplary case of the inability of European anti-imperialists to evade the imperialist ideology that "forgot" Africans and African history: it is there not only in her early fiction's racist representation of Africans, but also in the much later, "scientifically"-argued Woman and Labor. Her overlooking of Africans and African history produces mere traces of indigenous culture in her work, such as African Farm's Bushman paintings discussed in Chapter 3; and, as we shall see in Chapter 7, her attentiveness to European voices results in her jarringly uncritical faith in "civilizers" like Sir George Grey.

While Schreiner's world-view was colored by "progressive" notions of history as exemplified by Mill's faith in the perfectibility of humankind, such belief in the ameliorative effects of her interventions was not racially
neutral; it depended on Herbert Spencer's so-called social Darwinism which placed Aryans at the top of a racial hierarchy, and discouraged hybridity except in cases of "mixtures of nearly-allied varieties of man" (Young 19). We saw the results of this belief in Schreiner's discussion of the sexual repulsion between refined Europeans--such as Charles Darwin and George Sand--and the most uncivilized non-Europeans she could think of--Fuegan men and Bushmen women (Woman and Labor 261-262; see Chapter 3). While Schreiner's evolutionary faith informed her feminism, socialism, and pacifism by positing the future possibility of a society free from class, race, or gender domination, and a society free from war, it also enabled her "forgetting" of Africans and African history.

In her conclusion to Difficult Women, Artful Lives, Susan Horton attempts to come to final terms with Schreiner's (and Blixen's) inventive oscillations by considering them in the light of memory and history, much as I am doing here. Claiming that "far from being opposites, memory and forgetting stand on the same set of polarities" (238), she elaborates on Mudimbe's insight that "memory remains, master, sovereign, working the material of the past, naming subjects and objects of desire. In the writing that can reflect it, it becomes a proposition of a will for truth and a history yet to come" (quoted in Horton 238). As such Horton can concentrate on the productive--one might
almost say performative--nature of Schreiner's and Blixen's remembering-and-forgetting inventions. At the personal level this means for Horton that "Dinesen and Schreiner became 'white' 'women' . . . only by struggling not to remember the opposition of woman to man, Europe to Africa, or black to white that 'history' would have them not forget" (239); at a wider level, "since history is memory multiplied, Schreiner's and Dinesen's memoirs, letters, and fictions were inevitably memories contributing to the writing of an African 'history'" (244). The history and identities thus created might be aberrant ones (like Schreiner's Bushmen women, or the myth of the Dark Continent generally), but such aberrations cannot be erased, and it is not the task of the white western critic to make "compensatory attempts to posit real Africans to counter earlier misconstructions" (245). Rather, "however timorously, white critics need to begin to address head-on exactly how we have used one another in our own self-formations: whites, blacks, women, men" (245).

I have introduced Horton's argument at this point because it brings me back to the key distinction I see between Schreiner's and Blixen's political aims (see Chapter 1). Thus, although I broadly share Horton's conclusions about memory and history in general, I still find her lack of distinction between Schreiner's interventionist, future-regarding sense of history and Blixen's fatalistic,
nostalgic sense slightly troublesome. Blixen's rejection of a progressive view of history involves a kind of remembering and forgetting quite distinct, it seems to me, from Schreiner's, even though, like Schreiner's it too simultaneously resists and reproduces, potentially at least, some of the West's more standard ways of forgetting Africa and African history. The dropping from the canon of Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland, an example of Schreiner's attempted interventions in history (the subject of Chapter 7), and the popular resuscitation of Out of Africa indicates how this difference plays out in terms of reception.

For the moment, though, let me concentrate on Blixen's sense of history. In the brief section "Of Natives and History" Blixen posits what initially looks like a standard progressive notion, racist in its view that "the people who expect the Natives to jump joyfully from the Stone Age to the age of motor cars, forget the toil and labour which our own fathers have had, to bring us all through history up to where we are" (Out of Africa 251). However, Blixen clearly disdains those "people" forgetful of their own history, even though she is one of them, part of that "we" who are more familiar with the age of motor cars than with the stone age.17 Her disdain becomes more apparent as the section proceeds, and Blixen distances herself further from her fellow white settlers' cynical response to the news that "nine young Kikuyu, from the Church of Scotland mission, had
come and asked to be received into the Roman Catholic Church, because they had, upon meditation and discussion, come to hold with the doctrine of Transubstantiation" (251). Laughing at Blixen's news, the settlers "explained" to her "that the young Kikuyus had seen a chance of higher wages, of lighter work, or of getting a bicycle to ride on, at the French Mission, and had therefore invented their conversion in regard to Transubstantiation" (251-252).

Blixen, in her turn, dismisses the settlers' racist cynicism, insisting that Father Bernard, the local Catholic priest, "knew the Kikuyus well," and suggesting that the conversions and the reason for them were perfectly sincere. Her own reasoning, however, depends on a complex application of the evolutionary view of history that sets different peoples at different stages of historical "development":

The minds of the young Kikuyu may now be walking on the shadowy paths of our own ancestors, whom we should not disown in their eyes, who held their ideas about Transubstantiation very dear. Those people of five hundred years ago, were in their day offered higher wages, and promotion, and easier terms of life, even sometimes their very lives, and to everything they preferred their conviction about Transubstantiation. (252)

So far so clear: the young Kikuyu are just like our own ancestors except that they are five hundred years behind in development. In defending the Kikuyu this way, therefore, Blixen paradoxically asserts human sameness through cultural difference, a move whose potential racism is revealed in the very next sentence: "They [our ancestors] were not offered
a bicycle, but Father Bernard himself, who had got a motor bicycle, attached less value to it than to the conversion of the nine Kikuyus" (252). This reference, suggesting that Father Bernard, a twentieth-century white man, shares the values both of "our ancestors" and of the Kikuyu converts, completely undermines the racial, cultural, and historical determining of difference that frames Blixen's response.

Her conclusion to the section involves a similarly paradoxical endorsing and undercutting of a linear notion of history. Imagining an ingenious scheme whereby "we" could allow "them" to "catch up with us, three years to our hundred," Blixen imagines the Kikuyu "in twenty years . . . ready for the Encyclopaedists, and then they would come, in another ten years, to Kipling. We should let them have dreamers, philosophers, and poets out," writes Blixen, "to prepare the ground for Mr Ford" (252). Again, this all sounds patronizingly accepting of the Western idea of progress, but Blixen immediately turns that idea on its head by bending the line of history into a circle.

Where shall they find us then? Shall we in the meantime have caught them by the tail and be hanging on to it, in our pursuit of some shade, some darkness, practising upon a tomtom? Will they be able to have our motor cars at cost price then, as they can now have the doctrine of Transubstantiation? (252)

Like Schreiner, she appears bound by western ideology, intuitively testing the limits of a counter-hegemonic version of history, but unable fully to articulate it
without some recourse to the hegemonic model. However, while Schreiner's testing of the limits depends on pushing the progressive model to one particular logical extreme—that utopian future time of freedom described earlier—Blixen's testing involves bending the line of the progressive model so that it ends up chasing its own tail. For her, what is significant in history is not one's ameliorative impact on a particular society, but one's individual struggle with "destiny." This is a stock feature of her fiction, and equally of her representations of Africans as oscillating between "self-defeating arrogance and a stoic surrender to whatever the powers that be handed them" (Horton 223), and Horton is surely right in ascribing this representation to projection.

Her account of her dealings with Kinanjui, the Kikuyu "chief," provides further evidence of the self-serving nature of Blixen's foregetting-and-remembering of Africans and African history. I put "chief" in quotation marks because Kinanjui's very status depended on British colonial expectations of African "tribal" customs, and had little to do with actual pre-colonial Kikuyu practice. As such, Kinanjui reveals to what extent Blixen necessarily inherited a "history" of "Africa" that already depended on a British discourse in which forgetting and remembering appear in invented traditions. As Terence Ranger puts it:

The most far-reaching inventions of tradition in colonial Africa took place when the Europeans
believed themselves to be respecting age-old African custom. What were called customary law, customary land-rights, customary political structure and so on, were in fact all invented by colonial codification. (Hobsbawm and Ranger 250)

In fact, customary political structure among the Kikuyu did not involve the institution of chiefdom as such, so, as Wunyabari O. Maloba writes, "when the British sought for local agents of colonialism they chose people who had no traditional power." These "chiefs," such as Kinanjui, "owed their offices to British colonial administration and not to the traditional institutions . . . and served without being unduly worried about their popularity with their subjects" (Maloba 27).

Thus, when Blixen introduces "the big Chief Kinanjui" in Out of Africa she can only partly explain the forgetting involved in the history of Kinanjui's elevation. She describes him as

a crafty old man, with a fine manner, and much real greatness to him, although he had not been born to be a chief, but had been made so, many years ago, by the English, when they could no longer get on with the legitimate ruler of the Kikuyus of the district. (Out of Africa 127)

In other words, while she is aware of some of the politics behind his appointment, she doesn't question the fundamental issues of "African" chiefdom and tribal identity. Like most, if not all, Europeans Blixen "failed to comprehend that ethnic populations encompassed substantial diversity and that ethnic affiliations were not infrequently competing or contradictory" (Ambler 32); frequently in her work Blixen
falls back on monolithic versions of Kikuyu, Masai, Somali, Kavirondo, Arabs, and other ethnic groupings even when the details of her subject-matter belie those groupings' monolithic nature.\textsuperscript{20}

She does so, for example, in her discussion of Kinanjui and his role in resolving the dispute over the accidental shooting of two boys on the farm (\textit{Out of Africa} 81-137). The case's complexities abound: while playing with a shotgun, Kabero, the seven-year-old kitchen-toto of Blixen's farm manager, had accidentally wounded four other children (one, Wanyangerri, very seriously) and killed one, a boy named Wamai. After the shooting, Kabero vanishes into the Masai reserve, and Blixen presides over the local "kiama" to settle the question of compensation for the dead and wounded boys.

By the time Blixen introduces Kinanjui into the story, she has already, after some considerable effort, worked out what she considers to be a fair and equitable settlement acceptable to all parties. Apart from the obvious complexity of arbitrating justly in any case of accidental death, one of the factors that makes the settlement in this case so knotty is that it involves a complicated web of intermarriage, adoption, and trade between and among Masai and Kikuyu clans—precisely the sort of intercourse that undercuts the totalizing tendencies of tribal terms. Kaninu, for instance, the father of the boy who accidentally
did the shooting, "was on good terms with the neighbouring Masai tribe, and had married four or five of his daughters off to them," and even Kinanjui himself had apparently "sent ... more than twenty of his daughters to the Masai, and had got a hundred head of cattle back from them" (102). Moreover, Wamai, the boy killed in the shooting, was the adopted son of his father Jogona; on those grounds, Wamai's biological parents--members of "the Nyeri people, who belonged to a low class of Kikuyu, and had all the look of three dirty and shaggy hyenas that had slunk one hundred and fifty miles upon Wamai's blood-track" (107)--disputed Jogona's compensation award of forty sheep. Blixen clearly despises these Nyeri ambulance-chasers, using animal metaphors not just to describe them as scavengers, but also as parasites, sitting "with no more manifestation of life than three ticks upon a sheep" (108). She is more than satisfied when their claim is turned down by the D.O., and her description of them walking "scowling back to their own village, without having got anything off the farm" (113; italics added) suggests to what extent Blixen thought of all the people on the farm in proprietorial, or at least paternalistic terms, as "her" people even more than Kikuyu, or Somali.

My main point is, however, that Blixen's own account of the case fully reveals the arbitrariness and constructed nature of "tribal" identity, at the same time that it uses
the terms Kikuyu, Masai, Somali, and so on in essentialist ways. Thus, while Kabero (Kaninu's son, and the boy who had done the shooting), becomes Masai in the space of a five-year stay in the Masai Reserve (121), and while "the hearts of Kaninu's daughters were turning like the hearts of the Sabine women of old" (103), the climax of the section, where Blixen describes the full and final public settlement of the case, pits Kinanjui as quintessential Kikuyu and Farah as archetypically Somali. And typically for Blixen, she sees them both in terms of animals and of slaves or slave-owners.

Imagining an almost immemorial, virtually unchanging history of an Arab slave trade totally free from European influence, Blixen presents the Kikuyu as long-suffering sheep getting "through their destiny, as they got through it now, on their immense gift for resignation" (134). Unlike the birds of prey, the invading Arabs or "the Native bird of prey of the highlands" the Masai, they neither died under the yoke, nor stormed against fate; instead, "they were friends with God in foreign countries, and in chains" (134). Meanwhile, the Arabs' "young illegitimate half-brothers" (132), the Somali, who "in the old time . . . could marry with the daughters of the Masai only, out of all the tribes of the country" (133) occupied a special position as the Arabs' seconds-in-command, as a result of which "their relation to the Natives was nearly exactly that of the
sheepdog to the sheep" (133). Thus, when Farah—himself peripheral to the matter in hand—and Kinanjui meet at the settlement, Blixen makes their meeting represent something essential, elemental, and extra-temporal:

Farah and Kinanjui met here, the sheepdog and the old ram. Farah stood up erect in his red and blue turban, black emroidered Arab waistcoat and Arab silk robe, as thoughtful, decorous figure as you would find anywhere in the world. Kinanjui was spreading himself on the stone seat, naked but for the mantle of monkey furs on his shoulders, an old Native, a clod of the soil of the African highlands. . . .

It was easy to imagine the two, a hundred years earlier, holding a converse over a consignment of slaves. (135)

Although she herself is present, and although she herself has final, formal authority—as her drawing up of, and signature on, the document of settlement indicates (137-138)—she remains absent from the representation of the "meeting," thus repeating the forgetting of British presence involved in her figuring the Kikuyu as sheep among Arab and Masai birds of prey, and Somali sheepdogs.

One might argue, however, that in thus forgetting the European role, Blixen is not just, deplorably, attempting to find an alibi for European behavior, as Walter Rodney would presumably aver, but that she is also, or instead, laudably attempting to create her own sort of afrocentric history in which Europeans do not play the role of pervasive influence they think they do. This contention would fit the oscillation of aloofness and identification we saw in her setting herself apart from the "we" who are from the motor-
car age, it fits with her outsider status as non-British, and it fits with the complex mix of identification and alterity we find in her representations of Kinanjui himself.

Kinanjui is more than an old ram, vulnerable and long-suffering. He is also grandly impressive and elephantine. Blixen's comparison of Kinanjui with an elephant verges precariously on the edge of the patronizing, even mocking:

he was always an impressive figure tall and broad, with no fat on him anywhere; his face, too, was proud, long and bony, with a slanting forehead like that of a Red Indian. He had a broad nose, so expressive that it looked like the central point of the man, as if the whole stately figure was there only to carry the broad nose about. Like the trunk of an elephant, it was both boldly inquisitive and extremely sensitive and prudent, intensely on the offensive, and on the defensive as well. And an elephant, finally, like Kinanjui, would have a head of the very greatest nobility if he did not look so clever. (130)

However, even though her portrait may exemplify Fanon's settler's bestiary, the elephant does not merit ridicule in Blixen's eyes; her respect for it is up there with her respect for that other grand animal, the lion; and in thus representing Kinanjui as elephant to her lioness, Blixen's use of the bestiary here produces not so much demeaning difference as ennobling sameness.

Two further details of the description just quoted lend credence to my contention—Kinanjui's having "no fat on him anywhere," and his resembling a "Red Indian." In the former case, Blixen's aversion to fat manifested itself in her own anorexia, a condition exacerbated physiologically by her
syphilis, but also a willed "badge of defiance to the
hyggelig, a lightness not only of the flesh: it contradicted
Westenholtz solidity" (Thurman 66). That lightness and
leanness, that spareness is one of the features she projects
onto the African landscape; indeed, in the opening
description discussed in Chapter Five, Blixen declares that
"the geographical position and the height of the land
combined to create a landscape that had not its like in all
the world. There was no fat on it and no luxuriance
anywhere" (13). A little later she declares that "the chief
feature of the landscape, and of your life in it, was the
air" (13). All this leanness then gets picked up by
Blixen's "tribe of deerhounds" which "went well with African
scenery and the African Native. It may be due to the
altitude--the highland melody in all three . . . . It was as
if the great, spare landscape . . . was not complete until
the deerhounds were also in it" (67). What I am arguing is
that Blixen's reference to Kinanjui's leanness is, as
frequently, a projection. Only the lean are here where they
ought to be in the landscape of Blixen's farm, that "refined
essence of a continent" (13). Thus, no matter how
patronizingly, Kinanjui is accorded Blixen's highest
accolade of belonging in the aristocratic-cum-feudal
"Africa" she constructed.

The second feature that suggests that Blixen's tone
should not be read as mocking is the reference to Kinanjui's
resemblance to a "Red Indian." Blixen knew about "Red Indians" through her father's stories and writing. Wilhelm Dinesen had spent more than a year in America in the early 1870s and, according to Judith Thurman, his "assumption about Nature as the great moral force and [his] sense of Western culture as 'the betrayal of the original distinction of mankind' Isak Dinesen would take up in Out of Africa" (Thurman 15). Thurman stresses how Blixen, in emulating her father's romanticism and disparaging her mother's domestic values, was deeply affected by Wilhelm's stories: "when she went to Africa she was extremely proud to enjoy that relationship of mutual respect with the Africans she imagined Wilhelm had had among the Chippewa and Pawnee" (Thurman 27).

Her sense of affinity with the lean and aristocratic Kinanjui reaches its height in a later section of Out of Africa when both he and she at their moments of crisis and loss—Kinanjui's death, the loss of her farm—fall victim to the shrinking effect of bureaucratic colonialism. Indeed the section entitled "Death of Kinanjui" is embedded in the final, most elegiac section of Out of Africa, "Farewell to the Farm." Kinanjui's death, the death of Finch Hatton, and Blixen's departure, which all more or less coincided in the first six months of 1931, represent the passing of the last vestiges of authentic "Africa" before the farm gets swallowed up by the "development" of the suburb of Karen,
when the refined essence of the continent is destroyed by rude concrete, bricks, and tarmac roads. In these last pages, Blixen, like her father in America some sixty years previously, aligns herself not with the European "we" whose technology had allowed her to see Africa from, in, and as air, but with the native other, finally unable to escape the smothering embrace of European economic expansion.

Such an alignment might have appeared merely self-serving. What makes Blixen's account of Kinanjui's death so moving, though, is that it also appears to be a very genuine account of her own tiredness and cowardice. For when she writes that Kinanjui, about to die, "sent for me" (286), she is no longer lord of all she surveys but effectively a squatter too, unable to perform--Prospero-style--any more of her colonial magic. Thus when she learns of the reason for Kinanjui's summoning her she "sat and listened with a heavy heart" (289). She was needed not as a fellow African aristocrat to share a last moment of mutual respect, but as an intermediary to pull one last string to allow the old collaborator at least to die more or less among his own people. Specifically, Kinanjui wanted to avoid being taken by the local mission doctor to die in hospital; instead, he asked Blixen to let him go to her house. She, mindful that that house is no longer her own, tired out by dealings with businessmen and lawyers, and anticipating blame for Kinanjui's death should he die on the journey or on arrival,
refuses his request:

I had not got it in me any longer to stand up against the authorities of the world. I did not have it in me now to brave them all, not all of them. (290)

In addition to her own self-reproach, she feels the reproach of Farah, whose "eyes and whole face darkened with surprise" (290), as well as the silent reproach of Kinanjui himself and his entourage. To be eliciting the very stoicism she normally preferred to observe or practice hurts her; Kinanjui "looked," she writes, "as if something like this had happened to him before, which very likely it had" (291). Then she goes on:

"Kwaheri, Kinanjui," I said—Good-bye.

His burning fingers moved a little against my palm. Already before I had got to the door of the hut, when I turned and looked back, the dimness and smoke of the room had swallowed up the big outstretched figure of my Kikuyu Chief. As I came out again from the hut it was very cold. The moon was now low down at the horizon, it must have been past midnight. Just then in the manyatta one of Kinanjui's cocks crew twice.

Kinanjui died that same night, in the mission hospital. (291)

This is the tone of which Blixen is a real master: while "my Kikuyu Chief" smacks of patronization, it still avows an intimacy; while the sense of guilt evoked by the sound of the cocks crowing presents a chastened, poignantly subdued self, that self is once more implicitly valorized by the suggestion that her silence almost matches Peter's denials of Christ. The remainder of this section continues in much the same vein, simultaneously building up and cutting down
the significance of Karen Blixen, the lone African-European stoically withstanding (or failing to withstand) the forces of a barbarous civilization that ultimately made of Kinanjui's funeral an "altogether . . . European and clerical affair" (292). Blixen writes herself as African more clearly here than anywhere else in the book, affirming her attraction to the Kikuyu practice of leaving their dead "above ground for the hyenas and vultures to deal with," a practice that allowed the body "to be made one with Nature and become a common component of a landscape" (291).

Her anger against the Christian takeover of the funeral service produces a "they" which declares her distance from the European authorities of church (especially) and state, and from all those processes that were transforming lean "Natives" into Christian converts, "fat young Kikuyus with spectacles and folded hands, who looked like ungenial eunuchs" (292).

If they wished to impress the Kikuyu with the feeling that here they had laid their hand on the dead chief, and that he now belonged to them, they succeeded. They were so obviously in power that one felt it to be out of the question for Kinanjui to get away from them. (292)

In fact, even the tall, lean Kinanjui himself appears to have been shrunk and distorted, squashed fat as it were, to fit into "a nearly square box, surely no more than five feet long." Like Blixen, he has finally been brought home to a family of no real kin where fat and rectitude rule.
In this section, therefore, we see Blixen inventing a self very strongly identified with the "African." Like Kinanjui the archetypal African, this African Blixen cannot escape the clutches of European colonialism. However, in her memorialization of "my Kikuyu Chief" Blixen has forgotten her earlier recognition of Kinanjui's lack of authenticity, the fact that he owed his chiefdom to British colonial intervention. To use a proverb she might have appreciated, those who run with the hare cannot hunt with the hounds; and in the same way that it was inevitable that Kinanjui was finally claimed by the European authorities he had served, so it was inevitable that Blixen too should feel the insistence of Europe's claims. By specifically bemoaning the missions' role—something she assumed she could legitimately claim distance from—in taking over Kinanjui's funeral, Blixen diminishes the role of colonial and imperialist economics, a system to which she was inextricably bound and literally indebted.

Commenting on their constant oscillation between identity and alterity in their self-inventions vis-à-vis Africans, Susan Horton observes that Dinesen and Schreiner came to think of themselves as in-betweens who could turn that status into something positive by becoming go-betweens, intercessors, and mediators. Dinesen was forever positioning herself in her discourses of Africa as intercessor or go-between: between the district commissioners of Kenya and the Maasai, between wounded Kikuyu and the hospitals they mistrusted, between the district commissioners and the squatters on her coffee plantation, between.
feuding Somali and Kikuyu. (222)

Ultimately, though, such attempts to act as go-betweens, dependent on temporary suspension of their European identity, depended on a conscious and unconscious forgetting of both Europe and Africa. Indeed, it is possible that Blixen is right to see the death of Kinanjui and her loss of the farm as equivalent, marking the end of a kind of collaborative European Africa, and the beginning of a newly combative Africa, an Africa that is still European in that ultimate system of border control, nationalism, and still in hock to European economic imperialism; an Africa, furthermore, that gives the West a new binarism: the faces of famine and of fat-cat "wabenzi," that comprador class that has used its own forgetful memories of Africanness to keep the people down.

Notes

1. The equation of Africa with the Carthaginian state has some fascinating ramifications, curiously drawing together nineteenth-century English racism against both Africans and the Irish with anti-Semitism. This apparently improbable combination stems from two philological/anthropological narratives. The African/Irish association can be traced back to eighteenth-century arguments "that the Irish language originated with Noah's son Japhet in Scythia, spread to the Phoenician cities on the east coast of the Mediterranean . . . and from there reached Carthage. . . . Carthaginian merchants brought the language to Spain, and then . . . to Ireland" (Cullingford 225). Elizabeth Butler Cullingford has recently shown how contemporary Irish writers such as Heaney, Brian Friel, and Frank McGuinness have appropriated the Carthaginian association as a trope of "imaginative Irish resistance to British colonial rule" (Cullingford 222). This is a positive and subversive use of a much cruder Anglo-American racism that frequently in the
Victorian period caricatured the Irish as dark-skinned and ape-like (see L.P. Curtis, Jr., *Apes and Angels: The Irishman in Victorian Caricature* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1971)).

The second narrative, linking Carthage (hence Africa) with the Jews depends on the Levantine connection between the Phoenicians and the Jews which made both groups Semitic, rather than Aryan in Victorian racial discourse (Bernal 344).

Both of these connections are further complicated by the nineteenth-century association of the English with the Phoenicians, dependent mainly on their common history of maritime trading. Martin Bernal, for instance, draws attention to Matthew Arnold's sympathy for the "grave Tyrian trader" who, at the end of "The Scholar-Gipsy," flees Westward, avoiding contact with the Greek "intruders on his ancient home" (Bernal 351; Arnold 148); such sympathy troubles Arnold's preference of Hellene to Hebrew in *Culture and Anarchy*.

2. Vergil's *Aeneid* (especially Book IV) does much the same thing, contrasting Aeneas's "pietas" with the sensuality of Dido, and adding the sexist twist of male constancy opposing female fickleness that Shakespeare reproduces in *Antony and Cleopatra*. Cullingford observes that Irish reappropriation of the metaphor of Roman imperialism over Carthage to represent British domination of Ireland reversed that sexism; "Irish writers," she writes, "reframed the English opposition between civilians and barbarians as a struggle between colonial power and Celtic culture or between masculine brutality and feminine sensibility" (Cullingford 223).

3. For further discussion of this claim, see Chinua Achebe's essay "An Image of Africa" and Brantlinger's discussion of it in *Rule of Darkness*.

4. It would, I feel confident, be possible to establish the veracity of this claim in a duly scientific way by reference to works of popular culture dealing with Africa. Such a study would be way beyond the scope of this chapter and this work; however, I think it is valid to mention that whenever I have taught *Heart of Darkness*, before introducing the text I have run a word-association "test" on my students, offering them the words "Europe," "Africa," "America," "science," and "progress" to respond to. In broad outline the results have confirmed that my students tend to assume that "Europe" is the site of "culture" and "history," now in decline, that "Africa" is characterized by "jungle," disease," "starvation," and "poverty," while America, God bless it, is still the land of the free and the home of the brave. "Progress" and "science" are, of course, just as
Sellars and Yeatman have it, "a good thing."

5. See, for example, Ngugi's *Decolonising the Mind*: "It seems it is the fate of Africa to have her destiny always decided around conference tables in the metropolises of the western world: her submergence from self-governing communities into colonies was decided in Berlin; her more recent transition into neo-colonies along the same boundaries was negotiated around the same tables in London, Paris, Brussels and Lisbon" (4); or Rodney's *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*: "The development of political unity in the form of large states was proceeding steadily in Africa. But even so, at the time of the Berlin Conference, Africa was still a continent of a large number of socio-political groupings who had not arrived at a common purpose. Therefore, it was easy for the European intruder to play the classic game of divide and conquer" (144).

6. Basil Davidson, commenting on the simultaneous rise of nationalism in Europe in the second half of the nineteenth-century and European imperialism in Africa describes the resultant African nation-formation as "the curse of the nation-state;" the crisis of decolonized Africa he sees primarily as a "crisis of institutions," specifically "the nationalism that became nation-statism. This nation-statism looked like a liberation, and really began as one. But it did not continue as a liberation. In practice, it was not a restoration of Africa to Africa's own history, but the onset of a new period of indirect subjection to the history of Europe. The fifty or so states of the colonial partition, each formed and governed as though their peoples possessed no history of their own, became fifty or so nation-states formed and governed on European models, chiefly the models of Britain and France. Liberation thus produced its own denial. Liberation led to alienation" (10). Davidson's statement may represent a nostalgic yearning for an impossibly authentic "Africa," but his point is clear.

7. In "What is a Nation?"--lecture delivered at the Sorbonne on March 11th, 1882.

8. Founded in 1912 as the South African Native National Congress, the ANC did not become the African National Congress until 1923.

9. South Africa's Truth Commission represents a formalized version of just such a "forgetting." In the light of my subsequent discussion of Horton's claim that memory and forgetting stand on the same side of a set of polarities, it is interesting to note that while those who confess any pre-1993 crimes will be granted amnesty, those who do not confess their crimes to the Truth Commission are liable to
be investigated by an unforgetting, unforgiving state. If you call the memory up, we will forget it; if we call it up, you won't forget it. This odd mix of purging and repression surely captures the essence of South Africa's national neurosis.

10. "Renewed," because Bernal's ideas are not entirely original. Even Young, while essentially supporting Bernal, points out that Bernal tends "to play down the contribution of earlier African-American writers who contested the de-Africanization of Egypt" (Young 126). Walter Rodney in 1981 called the notion that ancient Egypt was not "African" "a curious view which is no longer seriously propounded" (48). More clearly than anything, this suggests that there is still a gulf between what counts for "knowledge" among African and African-American scholars and European and European-American ones. Through my own focusing on white writers and critics my own dissertation plays into this gulf in its own way; not uncritically, though, I hope.

11. See Bernal 215-223 et passim.

12. The fact that I am unable to question Bernal's philological, archaeological, and classical knowledge, but still find his arguments compelling is presumably one of the reasons why Mary Lefkowitz objects to Bernal's work. However, her own defensiveness about disciplinary boundaries seems to be part and parcel of exactly the taxonomic mania that Bernal and Young find both in racism and the creation of academic disciplines. What seems so wrongheaded to me in Lefkowitz's recent attack on "afrocentrism" is that it still appears to posit a "them" and "us" mentality, as if there really were a completely separable group called "Greeks" and a completely separable group called "Africans." In refuting that "the Greeks" "stole" ideas from "the Africans," she is in fact missing Bernal's point that the Greeks were who they were as a result of African heritage (distant, perhaps; distinct, nonetheless) rather than plunder. It is also curious to see her effectively reproducing a version of polygenist theory similar to the highly self-interested nineteenth-century views of Hotze, Gobineau, Nott and Gliddon as discussed by Robert Young in Colonial Desire (see especially Chapter 5, "Egypt in America" (118-141). One cannot escape questioning her own self-interest, and noting the difference between the grant-support she received from the conservative Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation and the John M. Olin Foundation, and the historical lack of funding available to black scholars in this country (see Joseph E. Harris's "Preface" to William Leo Hansberry's Africa and Africans as Seen by Classical Writers (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1981)).
13. Such an idea is, of course, cause for dismay in Lefkowitz's view, part of that dangerous "relativism" that bedevils current academia.

14. More chillingly, the Zairean economic historian Jacques de Pelchin has suggested that as the battle against apartheid in South Africa appeared finally to be won, apartheid was in fact going global (lecture, "Silences in African History," at University of Florida, 1995).

15. Similarly, the ending of apartheid, a system that Derrida called "le dernier mot du racisme," was probably as much the result of economic as of moral pressure: "if one day apartheid is abolished," wrote Derrida in 1985, "its demise will not be credited only to the account of moral standards--because moral standards should not count or keep accounts, to be sure, but also because, . . . the law of the marketplace will have imposed another standard of calculation" (Gates 335). See also Nixon, Homelands, Harlem, and Hollywood, especially Chapter 9 "The Retreat from Communism and Anti-Communism," 213-232.


17. "Stone age," of course, is a racist smear that underestimates African technological know-how, and equates contemporary Africans with those genuinely stone age remains found in East Africa.

18. The idea of a new dark age, reminiscent of Churchill's wartime rhetoric, suggests that, other cyclical notions of history notwithstanding, such an idea may have its own very specific history at the end of the '30s when Blixen was writing Out of Africa.

19. Judith Thurman traces one of Blixen's earliest references to "destiny" to about 1904 (i.e. before she was twenty), fascinatingly linking her attitudes to the "unshakeable justice and regularity in the laws of perspective" in drawing to the equally exacting workings of destiny (Thurman 67). In her more than stoical response to her syphilis, Thurman ascribes to Blixen a Nietzschean amor fati which allowed her to see the sickness as both necessary and useful (Thurman 258).

In the section titled "Of Pride," Blixen herself writes
that a proud man's "success is the idea of God, successfully carried through, and he is in love with his destiny. As the good citizen finds his happiness in the fulfilment of his duty to the community, so does the proud man find his happiness in the fulfilment of his fate" (Out of Africa 224). Here, as clearly as anywhere, we can see how Blixen valorizes the proud, fatalistic individual—in direct relation with God—over the dutiful citizen.

20. Charles H. Ambler points out that European assumptions of the discrete and monolithic nature of various "tribes," and the presumed animosity between them, actually produced that "inter-tribal" animosity. By using Masai warriors as mercenaries on raids into Kikuyuland, the British "generated precisely the kind of generalized ethnic antipathy that [they] assumed was the product of ancient tribal antagonism" (Ambler 112).

21. Blixen resists the drive of her own writing and the conclusions of her own experience by insisting that "Kabero must have had Masai blood in him, the habits and discipline of Masai life could not in themselves have worked the metamorphosis" (121).

22. Equally typically, Blixen attempts to reverse the slave/slave-owner binarism: "Upon the long track of blood and tears, the sheep, deep in their dark dumb hearts, had made for themselves a bobtailed philosophy, and thought not highly of the shepherds or the dogs. 'You have no rest either day or night,' they said, 'you run with your hot tongues out, panting, you are kept awake at night so that your dry eyes smart in the daytime, all on our account. You exist for our sake, not we for your sake.' The Kikuyu of the farm at times had a flippant manner towards Farah, as a lamb may skip in the face of the sheepdog just to make him get up and run" (Out of Africa 134).

23. At least, for instance, Blixen does have some idea of the grandeur that was Africa, the glory that was Arabia. Although in an admittedly highly "Orientalist" manner, she recognizes the length of European-free Arab-African history: "Farah's attitude to the Natives of the country was a picturesque thing. No more than the attire and countenance of the Masai warriors, had it been made yesterday, or the day before; it was the product of many centuries. The forces which had built it up had constructed great buildings in stone as well, but they had crumbled into dust a long time ago" (Out of Africa 131).

24. See also part 2 of Chapter 1 (on Blixen's anorexia) and Chapter 2 (on her rejection of the hyggelig).
25. The cultural associations of "refined" link culture and nature in a way not uncommon in Blixen. See especially Chapter 4.

26. In the sense that she had never proselytized; as a "friend of the Native" she had, rather, attempted to uphold "authentic" African customs and beliefs.

27. See also Chapter 4.
CHAPTER 7
HEART OF AFRICA/OUT OF DARKNESS:
CULTURE AND OTHER WEAPONS OF STRUGGLE

When genocide becomes part of the cultural heritage in the themes of committed literature, it becomes easier to continue to play along with the culture which gave birth to murder.

Theodor Adorno

I write about violence as naturally as Jane Austen wrote about manners. Violence shapes and obsesses our society, and if we do not stop being violent we have no future. People who do not want writers to write about violence want to stop us writing about us and our time. It would be immoral not to write about violence.

Edward Bond

Consider the fate of two texts--both novellas from the late 1890s--dealing with individual white men who go to Africa as part of the imperial adventure, become so depraved as to indulge in "unspeakable" acts, and finally experience some sort of heroic self-awareness. Both texts stem from their authors' horror at current political crises involving European exploitation of Africa and Africans. One of the texts, Conrad's Heart of Darkness is canonically central; the other, Olive Schreiner's Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland has vanished virtually without trace.

Looking at my library copy of Trooper Peter Halket--an American first edition from 1897--and observing that no-one but me had ever borrowed the book, a fellow Ph.D. candidate
casually remarked to me that "No-one reads this stuff any more." When the frontispiece caught his eye, with its photograph of three lynched Africans hanging from a tree, he was clearly surprised by the overtness of Schreiner's anti-imperialism. That surprise--and from a sophisticated student well versed in cultural studies--exemplifies both the erasure of the literature of protest from the literary canon, and the violence that such an erasure does to our notion of the past, replacing a "thick description" with impoverishing linearity.

By its very title, meanwhile, Patrick Brantlinger's *Rule of Darkness* acknowledges the centrality of *Heart of Darkness* in the specifically literary European discourse about Africa, central to Brantlinger's "genealogy of the myth of the Dark Continent." Supporting Chinua Achebe's position on the racism of Conrad's work, Brantlinger shows in his "Epilogue" that one factor in the creation of the Manichaean "memory" of Africa and Europe in terms of dark and light is the literary forgetting of complicating historical lines. Placing Conrad's novella in the historical context of his earlier experience in the Congo and of his subsequent reading about the horrors of King Leopold's regime there, Brantlinger observes that although Conrad's emphasis on cannibalism in *Heart of Darkness* "probably derives from Conrad's reading about the war between Leopold's agents and the Arabs," that war, and the
Belgians' Arab rivals "are conspicuous in the story only by their absence" (263). That omission, dependent on a "simplifying" of Conrad's "memories and sources," has the effect of sharpening the light-and-dark dichotomies, the staple of racism: evil and darkness are parceled out between only two antithetical sides, European and African, white and black. (263)

In the terms of my previous chapter, therefore, Brantlinger thus adeptly shows how the European invention of Africa depends on forgetting. However, the particular racist and manichaean memory that the West tends to hold of Africa does not just depend on the forgetting of third terms within particular texts; for the history of Heart of Darkness's canonical centrality has its own shadow-line, that history of forgetting other texts such as Trooper Peter Halket that prompts broader questions about the definition, value, and function of literature in the West.

Questions of commitment in literature—does commitment to a particular political cause necessarily damage the work of literature qua literature? can any work of literature transcend the political?—have a long history. They become particularly intense at moments of political crisis when the urgency of a particular situation appears to render anything but a politically committed response an irresponsible, even obscene, luxury. Thus Adorno famously declared that "to write lyric poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric" (Adorno 188).
On the other hand, others have insisted on the transcendent priority of the writer's aesthetic responsibility: Auden, for instance, claiming that Time "worships language and forgives/ Everyone by whom it lives, says that "Time with this strange excuse/ Pardoned Kipling and his views,/ And will pardon Paul Claudel,/ Pardons him for writing well" (Auden 197); looking from a more radical perspective, Gabriel Garcia Marquez considered it the task of revolutionary writers to write as well as they could; even Adorno himself praised the so-called "autonomous" works of art of Beckett and Kafka over the "committed" plays of Brecht and Sartre.

Fredric Jameson's central contention in *The Political Unconscious* "that there is nothing that is not social and historical, that everything is 'in the last analysis' political" aims to cancel out the aesthetic pole of the debate, but his use of the phrase "in the last analysis" (however qualified by quotation marks) suggests that there might still be degrees of political-ness. Certainly Aijaz Ahmad's critique of Jameson's extension of the idea of the "political unconscious" to Third World writing, which, he argues, takes the form of "national allegory," reveals that the "political" might, like the "aesthetic," depend on who's doing the analysis. In addition, the tendencies of contemporary feminist and deconstructionist thought, emphasizing respectively that the personal is the political,
and that there is no "outside" world for the writer--committed or otherwise--to represent, further complicate the issue.

The Jameson/Ahmad debate indicates some of the difference that time and location can make to the production, consumption, and interpretation of the "political" text. If, as I said earlier, the urgency of particular political situations lends urgency to the writer's sense of relative political and aesthetic responsibility (however s/he defines those terms for her/himself), then it is hardly surprising that the history of African literature (that is, the published writing of and about Africa; oral cultural production presents different issues entirely), more or less coterminous with the various struggles for national liberation, reveals particularly vexed variants of the politics/aesthetics debate. In South Africa in the years leading to the official end of apartheid, two specific cases illustrate the point and add further useful terms to my investigation.

To deal with these chronologically: in 1984 Njabulo S. Ndebele delivered the keynote address at the conference on New Writing in Africa held at the Commonwealth Institute in London. His paper, "The Rediscovery of the Ordinary: Some New Writings in South Africa" argued that despite the "brazen, exhibitionist openness" of apartheid oppression, the task for the black South African writer was not so much
to reproduce the "spectacular" excesses of that oppression, but to

rediscover the ordinary . . . The ordinary is sobering rationality; it is the forcing of attention on necessary detail. Paying attention to the ordinary and its methods will result in a significant growth of consciousness . . . Where before the South African reality was a symbol of spectacular moral wrong, it is now a direct object of change. (Ndebele 53)

In other words, Ndebele called for a new South African literature that was still "political," but not narrowly so; he wanted a "political" literature that could develop its own "complex system of aesthetics" (47) and go beyond the merely documentary. It seems to me that his position is not far from Adorno's in his essay on "Commitment" mentioned above, with the terms "spectacular" and "ordinary" operating as near matches for "committed" and "autonomous." Nor is it far from the position of Nadine Gordimer that a writer's task is her "essential gesture," something that doesn't transcend politics but that has to do with the politics of human existence as much as of a local situation.

Attitudes such as Gordimer's and Ndebele's were current in South Africa, then, well before the ANC and its cultural commissars had a specific timetable in place for the democratization of South Africa. However, in 1990, following the release of Mandela and the unbanning of the ANC, Albie Sachs, a leading civil rights lawyer for the ANC, risked his position within the ANC by stating publicly in a formal document entitled "Preparing Ourselves for Freedom"
that there should be a moratorium on ANC artists using the phrase "Culture is a weapon of struggle." His argument followed the lines of Ndebele's from six years previously which attacked the "society of posturing and sloganeering . . . that frowns upon subtlety of thought and feeling, and never permits the sobering power of contemplation, of close analysis, and the mature acceptance of failure, weakness, and limitations" (Ndebele 50). Sachs's reiteration of such an argument ran the risk identified by Ndebele of allying itself with a racialized (i.e. white/European) and/or class-specific (i.e. bourgeois) aesthetics in which "interiority in character portrayal" could be lambasted as "bourgeois subjectivity" (Ndebele 50).

His intervention elicited numerous responses and counter-responses, fully illustrating the sophistication of South African cultural politics, and the centrality of culture in the dismantling of apartheid and the formation of the new South Africa. More significantly for the current investigation, the terms of this renewed debate, linking "culture" with "weapon," focus the question of literary commitment on the issue of violence and its representation. What's more, they confound Ndebele's neat binarism of the "spectacular" and the "ordinary" by prompting a pair of questions: first, in a society where spectacular violence is ordinary, what is the artist to represent, and how? Conversely, how, in representing the ordinary life of an
individual as unspectacular might one effectively represent systemic violence, such as the violence of unjust laws?

These are questions with relevance not only to recent South African cultural history; they are fundamental, it seems to me, to all literary production. The starkness of their appearance in the literary production of colonial and postcolonial encounters ought simply to alert us to the violence of apparently "politer" texts, and the collective violence of texts-as-canon. Both Ndebele and Sachs, looking beyond the resistance period in South Africa, recognized the importance of establishing a canon of national culture that could be seen as valuable in its own right, rather than oppositionally. That recognition implicitly supports Pierre Bourdieu's notion of symbolic power, and feminist, postcolonial and deconstructionist canon-reformers' notion of the potential epistemic violence of cultural canons. Seeking to push beyond Ndebele and Sachs, I contend that the discrepancy between the canonical positions of Heart of Darkness and Trooper Peter depends on something like Bourdieu's notion of politeness, the authors' capacity "to assess market conditions accurately and to produce linguistic expressions which are suitably euphemized" (Thompson in Bourdieu 20). In those terms, Conrad appears to have had a shrewder intuition than did Olive Schreiner that the canon tolerates only certain types of violence and its representations.
In more general terms, Walter Benjamin, in a typically memorable, typically suggestive, typically category-collapsing dictum, declared: "There is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism" (Illuminations 256). Benjamin's claim is never more persuasive than when the document in question stems from an encounter between those assumed to be civilized and those assumed to be barbaric (however ironically those terms are deployed). Pushing beyond Brantlinger's analysis of the forgetting involved in the making of the civilized/barbarian binarism in Heart of Darkness, I want to look at the kind of forgetting involved in the making canonical of that text.

While Brantlinger was intrigued by the forgetting of the Arabs within the pages of Heart of Darkness, what intrigues me is the forgetting that relegates Schreiner's Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland to obscurity and elevates Heart of Darkness to the literary divinity of hic et ubique. What forces govern the huge discrepancy in canonical status of these two strikingly similar texts?

To avoid the risk of setting up my own binarism between the reception of two works representing violence, however, I first need to back up and reiterate that even the apparently apolitical, and "civilized" nature of a text like Out of Africa, through its non-representation of violence, tends to occlude the violence of colonial politics. As my comment above on "texts-as-canon" hinted, this is not just a
question of textual content; it is, more significantly, a question of reception, and as such it highlights the potential epistemic violence of cultural canons.

It should be clear that although *Out of Africa* explicitly documents one European woman's notion of civilization, the book itself does not quite have the same canonical status as a public "document of civilization" as Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* does. Neither, in its politeness and decency, and its explicit respect for separate Masai, Kikuyu, Somali, and European attitudes, does it risk the self-questioning circularity of Conrad's novella, which claims Kurtz's looking at his own barbaric heart of civilized darkness as a "moral victory." Nor, in its "ordinariness" does it portray anything as "spectacular" as Marlow's descent into the inferno. However, Blixen's nostalgic representation of an Edenic Africa, with its silence on the violence of imperialism, fascinatingly complements the image of a Hellish Africa depicted by Conrad. That both images have powerful currency in the contemporary Western imagination attests to the persistence of the Manichean tendencies of Western thought so thoroughly exploited in *Heart of Darkness*, and so neatly encapsulated in Benjamin's epigram.

In fact, Blixen herself might have relished this connection. I have already drawn attention to the fact that, through the influence of Georg Brandes, she was
powerfully drawn to Nietzsche, whose attempt to push beyond metaphysics she admired. As Thomas R. Whissen points out, she frequently includes traces of the diabolical in her artist-figures (Pelensky Critical Views 71), and she liked to think of herself as similarly going beyond good and evil; she certainly prefers the Satanic-creative to uncreative good, and in 1926 in a very long "confessional" letter to her brother compares herself to Lucifer, explaining:

I conceive of it as meaning: truth, or the search for truth, striving toward the light, a critical attitude,--indeed, what one means by spirit. The opposite of settling down believing that what one cares for is and must be best, indeed, settling into the studied calm, satisfaction and uncritical atmosphere of the Paradise. And in addition to this: work . . . , a sense of humor which is afraid of nothing, but has the courage of its convictions to make fun of everything, and life, new light, variety. (Letters from Africa 249)

Hence, although it may seem like a wrench to compare Blixen's and Conrad's Africa, through the Nietzschan and/or Manichaean sense of the equivalence and mutual dependency of good and evil, in providing the sites for invention of figures who attempted to embrace their fate regardless of conventional morality--namely, Blixen's writer-persona Isak Dinesen⁶ and Conrad's Kurtz--both Africa as Eden and Africa as Inferno equally represent the European will to power over Africa and Africans.

Such a contention is nothing new, at least, not in its separate parts. Susan Horton stresses throughout Difficult Women, Artful Lives the vital role Blixen's (and
Schreiner's) Africans played in her self-construction: "the European subject becomes real to itself by seeing its reflection in the eyes of another," says Horton, and, "Becoming real to herself by seeing her reflection in their eyes, Dinesen becomes real and important to European and American audiences by reporting those reflections" (Horton 195). It is precisely that use of Africans to validate European identity that Achebe objected to in 1974 in his germinal essay "An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's Heart of Darkness"; having demonstrated how Conrad uses Africa and Africans as mere "setting and backdrop" or as a "metaphysical battlefield devoid of all recognizable humanity," Achebe, full of righteous exasperation, expresses amazement that nobody has seen "the preposterous and perverse arrogance in thus reducing Africa to the role of props for the break-up of one petty European mind" (Hopes and Impediments 12).

Achebe calls Conrad "a thoroughgoing racist." More significantly for my claim as to the violence of texts-as-canon, he adds:

That this simple truth is glossed over in criticisms of his work is due to the fact that white racism against Africa is such a normal way of thinking that its manifestations go completely unremarked. (11-12)

It seems to me less important to label either Karen Blixen or Joseph Conrad as racist writers than to establish that their reception in the West over time has precipitated a
racist image of Africa. By "precipitated" I mean not only brought about, but also produced a precipitate, a solid sediment that won't be dissolved. While specific points in the specific texts could (and do) provide evidence for the specific writers' anti-racist, anti-imperialist attitudes, and while Conrad's in particular displays moments of extreme cultural relativism, reversing the gaze, and imagining how the English might respond to an invading force, still the overall effect of their canonical status precipitates this Eurocentric sediment that Africa is a place for white folks to go to lose their minds, their lives, or their paradise.

As cultural artifacts, as "documents of civilization," *Heart of Darkness* and *Out of Africa* are emptied of their potentially disruptive, dissolving content; appreciation of them by aesthetic criteria tends to anaesthetize the western reader's political awareness.

Thus, when *Heart of Darkness* is taught in English courses in high school and university it is more likely, even now, to be as a "great work of literature," exemplifying Conrad's narrative technique of impressionism, his handling of allegory, imagery, or what have you. The text becomes, therefore, a model of "modernism" in the making, an example of an aesthetic movement apparently beyond politics, rather than an example of the "expose," a literary genre through the use of which a writer attempted to have a particular political impact. The fact of the death
of some 5,000,000 people in the Congo slides from view, and one is left with what . . . sympathy with the devil? *Trooper Peter Halket* meantime doesn't get reprinted or taught at all.

It is tempting to claim that Schreiner's marginalization as female and colonial—as against Conrad's centrality as male and metropolitan—immediately disadvantages her, but such glibness would I think be dangerous.⁹ Besides, as Spivak notes, it's not just a question of who will speak but who will listen, and how *(Post-colonial Critic 59-60)*; a more useful point than biography from which to start a detailed comparison between *Heart of Darkness* and *Trooper Peter Halket* might therefore be the rhetorical strategies Conrad and Schreiner use in order to reach their audience, and persuade them that an operation they are deeply implicated in is rotten to its core.

Conrad's novella is a frame-story. An unnamed narrator recounts the story he heard from Marlow about Kurtz. Thus Kurtz's experience which is presented as encapsulating the story's "true" significance is deflected through at least two layers of narrative and interpretation.¹⁰ Additionally we are told that Marlow's stories are different from the usual seamen's yarns because the meaning of an episode for him was "outside, enveloping the tale which brought it out only as a glow brings out a haze, in the likeness of one of
these misty halos that sometimes are made visible by the special illumination of moonshine" (Conrad 30). Throughout the tale this haziness is compounded by hiatuses, lacunae, ambivalence, instances of misunderstanding and outright lying, and a generally skeptical attitude toward the power of words to represent anything accurately. Kurtz's "unspeakable" acts remain unspoken, and the heart of darkness itself resists verbal illumination. First-time readers\textsuperscript{11} of \textit{Heart of Darkness} could not be said to "know" what Kurtz has done; what the text reveals is auto-referential--its own epistemological crisis.

Fredric Jameson describes Conrad's impressionistic style as schizophrenically defying classification, "floating uncertainly in between Proust and Robert Louis Stevenson." It has elements of late Victorian realism, and of the romance of Victorian adventure stories, at the same time as it displays in emergent form both the alienated and fragmented subjectivity of modernism, and features of popular or mass culture (\textit{Political Unconscious} 206). Schreiner's style in \textit{Trooper Peter Halket} is less ambivalent. Although, like \textit{Heart of Darkness}, her opening sets her focal character apart in the darkness, and although his encounter with the mysterious "Jew of Palestine" stretches the credibility of the text's apparent realism, the result of Peter Halket's solitary musing and ghostly meeting is to lay bare exactly what he had expected to do in
Africa, what he had done, and the utter hypocrisy of the conventional justifications for such expectations and deeds. First-time readers of *Trooper Peter Halket* could not fail to know that Peter has killed, raped, and plundered; what the text reveals is directly representational—of the viciousness and hypocrisy of British-sponsored activity in Mashonaland and Matabeleland.

Thus, even allowing for the uncertainty of Peter's experience on the lonely kopje, Schreiner's text has no equivalent of Conrad's epistemological comfort zone around the facts of Peter's longer-term presence in Africa. Kurtz's "horror" remains an abstraction (heads on stakes notwithstanding) not only grammatically but because Conrad abstracts, separates Kurtz from the horror; he produces a narrator recounting Marlow's recounting of Kurtz's contemplation of it. In addition, the presentation of Africa and Africans allows the reader to maintain that (this is the force of Achebe's criticism) the horror is an external force, acting on Kurtz, not really a part of Kurtz. Kurtz would have been all right, seems to be the suggestion, but for Africa. After all, even Marlow--good, honest Marlow--had felt the infernal attraction.

The comfort zone Schreiner initially creates similarly depends on our readerly assumptions of the potential goodness, or essential decency, of the main character. She draws attention in her first description of Peter to his
youth and malleability by referring to the scattering of "a few soft white hairs, the growth of early manhood" on his face (4). Son of a washerwoman from a fairy-tale "little English village" (7), Peter retains the carelessness and thoughtlessness of the schoolboy who preferred fishing or bird-nesting to school. He is just an ordinary boy, in short, of the "boys will be boys" variety. Schreiner, however, will not let her readers enjoy the false comfort of an unthinking attitude to thoughtlessness; although memory of his mother acts as a kind of vestigial conscience, as a trooper, Peter has behaved as thoughtlessly and carelessly as if shooting Africans and raiding their kraals were no different from killing fish or stealing birds' eggs. "As a rule," writes Schreiner, "he lived in the world immediately about him, and let the things of the moment impinge on him and fall off again as they would, without much reflection." On this particular night, however, he "fell to thinking" (6).

In his thoughts, balanced against the dream of achieving fame and fortune, and establishing his mother in "a large house in the West End of London, the biggest that had ever been seen, and another in the country" (9), lurk more painful recollections of the kinds of "unspeakable" act that *Heart of Darkness* cloaks in general mystery: "niggers they had shot"; "the kraals they had destroyed" (5); "the skull of an old Mashona blown off at the top, the hands
still moving" (15); the almost literal mowing down of black men by his maxim gun (15); the rape of a black woman "he and another man caught alone in the bush" (15). The dawning sense of one's own responsibility is not something we get in Heart of Darkness; we are never privy to the details of Kurtz's thinking, and Marlow himself only observes brutality rather than perpetrating it.

In terms of rhetorical strategy, then, for engaging their audience, we might conclude that the two texts work in a pair of opposite ways: first, while Conrad's provides a genuine comfort zone of epistemological dubiousness, Schreiner's provides the doubled certainty of realistic vision enhanced by spiritual vision; secondly, while Schreiner sets up the assumed innocence of the Englishman only to question that assumption, Conrad uses it in order to maintain a stance of apparently impartial aloofness. Indeed, Marlow is as seasoned as an observer as he is experienced as a seaman; apparently well acquainted with his own and others' vices and virtues, he can be tempted, but will not fall. Presented almost exclusively with his point of view, Conrad's contemporary British readers might likewise have felt aloof and steadfastly virtuous. Sharing Peter's point of view, Schreiner's contemporary readers were confronted with the conscience-troubling possibility that their notion of innocence was deeply flawed.
In dominant Victorian discourse, "work" held high rank among the cardinal virtues. Set against both "thought" and "idleness," "work" represented a virtually unquestioned good. Thus, we can perhaps begin to see the greater subversiveness of Schreiner's text in exposing the "work" of imperialism as less than innocent. Unlike Marlow who uses routine work as a kind of prophylaxis against thought, jungle fever, and the brutal cynicism of the "pilgrims," manager, and so on, Peter's lack of a trade means that his work is imperialism red in coat and blood. Africa doesn't get to him; what gets to him is Rhodes, the Chartered Company, the desire for money, the European working, or working over, of the world.

Indeed, even though it is in a faltering, untheoretical, and entirely self-interested way, Peter recognizes that "work" is a cover. He anticipates making his fortune at a time when "the Mashonas and Matabeles would have all their land taken away from them, and the Chartered Company would pass a law that they had to work for the white men; and he, Peter Halket, would make them work for him. He would make money" (9-10). That final pair of sentences turns "them work[ing] for him" and "money" into more or less interchangeable grammatical objects of the verb "make"; Peter, Schreiner suggests, seems to have grasped that labor can be commodified, and elsewhere he explicitly contrasts those who work with those who make money: "It's not the men
who work up here who make the money; it's the big-wigs who get the concessions!"16

It might be argued that Conrad, too, points to the commodification of labor, notably in his description of the "gloomy circle of some Inferno" near the Company Station where exhausted workers have come to die (Conrad 44). And Conrad is, of course, no less explicitly moralistic than Schreiner about the economic exploitation of Africa; he describes the aim of the Eldorado Exploring Expedition as being "to tear treasure out of the bowels of the land . . . with no more moral purpose at the back of it than there is in burglars breaking into a safe" (61). However, even these explicit statements don't do away with Conrad's comfort zone for British readers: Marlow himself, for instance, is not involved in the commodification of the labor; he is not a part of the fictional, ludicrously named Eldorado Exploring Expedition. These imperialists, after all, are not British, and the Congo is not part of that "vast amount of red" on the map of Africa which Marlow declares "good to see at any time, because one knows that some real work is done there" (36). Schreiner, by contrast, has Peter wanting to commodify African labor, and working for a real-life British company headed by a real-life British businessman.

Schreiner thus runs the risk, by refusing to let her British audience distance themselves from someone else's imperialism, of antagonizing the very readership she aims to
transform. As Gerald Monsman astutely comments, "The fictional problem is somehow to find a device that will allow the English to identify themselves with their victims; that is, equally with the natives to feel powerlessness and to sense that their culture could be subject to arbitrary destruction" (Monsman 114). According to Monsman, Schreiner overcomes this problem by making "the aggressor the victim of his own system" (115) and setting up "a parallel between Peter's conversion and that of her readers" (115). Here, through an apparent similarity, a crucial difference between Trooper Peter Halket and Heart of Darkness becomes apparent.

For at the soft heart of Heart of Darkness, Conrad, too, makes Kurtz "the victim of his own system," so spectacularly so that he appears to be virtually the victim of his own bodily system, his very nervous system. As reward for facing up to the fact of that self-destruction Marlow elevates Kurtz's whisper/cry "The horror! The horror!" into "the expression of some sort of belief" and "an affirmation, a moral victory paid for by innumerable defeats" (113). Whereas Peter experiences a conversion, which leads to transforming action, Kurtz experiences a classical moment of anagnorisis, a self-knowledge that leads nowhere--especially given that Marlow deliberately recontains his "knowledge" in the end by lying to Kurtz's Intended about his last words. Schreiner's purpose was to go beyond providing her audience with the private, readerly
luxury of catharsis. Peter doesn't merely achieve knowledge of himself, but of the system that has spawned him; and his personal transformation aims to transform the system. Dying in that attempt makes him a victim, therefore, of a system he has rejected, and which, Schreiner hoped, her readers would actively reject.

It didn't happen that way. In fact, as we have already seen, it was one of Schreiner's gravest disappointments that "In spite of [Trooper Peter's] immense circulation I do not believe it has saved the life of one nigger, it had not the slightest effect in forcing on the parliamentary examination into the conduct of affairs in Rhodesia and it cost me everything" (Rive 333). Hers had been a deliberate appeal to the British public, in the lifting or turning down of whose thumb Schreiner saw the decision between war and peace (Rive 299). What does the British public's deafness to that appeal betoken?

In his comparison between Trooper Peter and H.G. Wells's The War of the Worlds, Monsman suggests that Schreiner's problem lay in her ignoring the limits of fiction. Wells's novel attacks imperialism in a general way by making the English aggressor victim of his "own" system--imperialism--perpetrated by Martians. Wells, writes Monsman, "has little of Schreiner's desire to censure a specific abuse, little sense that his fiction could participate in history" (120). As such, his "presentation
avoids Schreiner's explicit didacticism," can be "technically" more successful, more "fictionally adept," and work "more effectively" (120,121). The terms of Monsman's arguments transfer with equal weight to my own comparison of Trooper Peter and Heart of Darkness, and again we find ourselves back testing the boundaries of aesthetics and politics, fictional "effectiveness" and actual outcome. What can it mean to say that a fictional text is "effective," when accepting the limits of fiction in the first place has assumed virtual non-participation in history? And what sort of intervention on Schreiner's behalf might have been "effective" in saving African lives or indicting Cecil Rhodes?

Two years after the publication of Trooper Peter Halket, Schreiner again addressed a polemical work to the British public when she produced her English South African's View of the Situation. Her aim, clearly stated throughout the work, was to avert the looming Anglo-Boer War. She hoped to persuade the British public that they were being hoodwinked by Rhodes and his fellow capitalists into waging war on the Transvaal for the ostensible purpose of freeing British inhabitants there (the so-called "Uitlanders") from Boer oppression, when their real aim was control of the recently discovered Witwatersrand gold. Again, despite considerable support for her position, the work was ineffective. War duly followed, among other things
introducing the world to the horrors of modern trench warfare and concentration camps. Although Rhodes died before the peace was signed, the Randlordship he stood for survived and prospered.

Schreiner appears, then, to have been doomed to failure in her efforts at immediate political intervention whether she employed a fictional (read "aesthetic") or non-fictional (read "political") medium. What this suggests is that we should not ascribe the disappearance from the canon of *Trooper Peter Halket* to its failure to observe the limits of fiction, limits which are themselves political fictions. Schreiner is out, and Conrad in, not because she fails to observe the literary decorum of the fictionality of fiction—its other-worldliness—but simply because her content was, and remains, unpalatable, offering a western reader naught for your comfort.

This is a pretty depressing conclusion as it suggests that the western literary canon only admits works that deal with genocide if that genocide has been so euphemized that it now provides the background for some individual drama, preferably a good white man's.¹⁸ The West, in short, regularly and systematically forgets its own viciousness. In the United States this forgetting manifests itself in the hypocrisy that racializes violent crime as "black," that looks at movies like *Menace II Society* as representative of black violence, while the slew of mass slaughter and serial
killing that white directors splatter cinema and TV screens with gets viewed in generic terms—as action movies, thrillers, westerns, and so forth—not as evidence of the essential violence of white people.

The protocols of academic writing, however, require me to cease my stridency and return to more substantiable claims. What evidence is there for my contention that Trooper Peter Halket vanished from sight not because it's overtly political when it should have been concentrating on meeting certain aesthetic criteria, but because its actual political content could not be tolerated? Interestingly enough, First and Scott record that in contemporary reviews of Trooper Peter, "Most of the provincial dailies and the London papers revered its style and ignored its politics." The only review to label it "political" did so pejoratively: the reviewer in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine describing it as a "political pamphlet of great bitterness, linked on to the very smallest thread of a story that ever carried red-hot opinions and personal abuse of the fiercest kind into the world" (First & Scott 230). In other words, the only magazine to acknowledge Schreiner's aim—her politics—did so only to abjure it. Something remarkably similar happened in South Africa in 1979 on the publication of Elsa Joubert's Die Swerfjare van Poppie Nongena. Reviews of this book, in which the white Afrikaans writer Elsa Joubert "ghosted" both the voice of her black Afrikaans maid and friend
"Poppie Nongena," and the voices of her family, frequently denied that the book was "political." Their protestations like Hamlet's mother's were too much; classic Freudian denegations, they revealed the impossibility of reading the book without being moved if not to political action, then at least to political judgment. In fact, *Poppie Nongena* probably demonstrates the untenability of Njabulo Ndebele's binarism, as its attention to ordinary detail necessarily reveals the spectacular horror of the system at large. Trying to not see the politics of *Poppie Nongena* or of *Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland* represents a will to blindness about politics in general, and the violence of political systems in particular.

Such blindness has many and varied manifestations. In *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man*, Michael Taussig describes the way in which newspaper accounts of the atrocities in the Putumayo rubber boom of the early years of this century "involved the barely conscious tension of fascination and disgust, binding the fantastic to the credible" (33). Taussig goes on to quote the evidence of the British vice-consul in Iquitos to a British House of Commons Select Committee, who thought, on reading the newspaper accounts that "they were rather fantastic in the horrors they depicted. Such a horrible state of affairs seemed to me incredible . . . I really thought . . . that they were in a way fabricated" (35). This "real-life"
Pages are misnumbered following this insert.
difficulty of recognizing as credible what seems fantastic is part of the problem of representing colonial violence to the metropolitan center. Taussig introduces it via complex connections between the violent, even genocidal pursuit of the rubber trade in Columbia and in the Belgian Congo, and two outsider-insider representers of the trade's atrocities—the Irish Roger Casement, and the Polish Joseph Conrad. While Casement's reports for the Congo Reform Society displayed a "studied realism," Conrad's "way of dealing with the terror of the rubber boom in the Congo was Heart of Darkness" in which, argues Taussig, his aim was "to penetrate the veil while retaining its hallucinatory quality" (10; original emphasis). Taussig is perhaps more generous to the mistiness of Conrad's style than I am, positing that "the mythic subversion of myth, in this case, of the modern imperialist myth, requires leaving the ambiguities intact--the greatness of the horror that is Kurtz, the mistiness of terror, the aesthetics of violence, and the complex of desire and repression that primitivism constantly arouses" (10). My point is that, regardless of anything else more positive one might say about it, the mistiness of the terror sufficiently euphemizes Conrad's work to allow it to become canonical, and, in so doing, it is the mistiness of the terror that anaesthetizes political response to Heart of Darkness.
Taussig sums up Conrad's own position on the possibility of an active, specifically political response to circumstances by contrasting Casement's activism (and ultimate execution) with Conrad's "resolutely [sticking] to his lonely task of writing, bathed in nostalgia for Poland, lending his name but otherwise unable to assist Casement and Morel in the Congo Reform Society, pleading with hyperbolic humility that he was but a 'wretched novelist inventing wretched stories and not even up to that miserable game'"

(11). Clinging to his role as a producer of fiction, Conrad remains free to produce euphemistic representations of violence that more closely resemble the halo of Marlow's style than the bitter kernel of Schreiner's. In Heart of Darkness, readers are not really required to ask whether or not they find the representation of violence credible, fantastic, or in a way fabricated, since Marlow's impressions constantly distance readers from the acts themselves.24

Presumably in an attempt to avoid the anaesthetic effect I have just described, and to add documentary credibility to her literary representations of violence, Schreiner notoriously included as a frontispiece to the first edition of Trooper Peter Halket a chilling photograph of three Africans hanging from the branches of a tree as eight white men and one black casually look on: two of the men appear to be smoking cigars, and one is smoking a pipe:
they look for the world like a group of deep-sea "sport" fishermen with their prize-marlin. In the body of the text, Schreiner has Peter refer to the "spree they had up Bulawayo way, hanging those three niggers for spies" (34). According to Peter's second-hand account,

they made the niggers jump down from the tree and hang themselves; one fellow wouldn't bally jump, till they gave him a charge of buckshot in the back; and then he caught hold of a branch with his hands, and they had to shoot 'em loose. (35)

Any critical mention of Trooper Peter Halket appears to have to include reference to this combination of photograph and textual account. Arthur Keppel-Jones's history Rhodes and Rhodesia: The White Conquest of Zimbabwe 1884-1902 identifies the three hanged men as "rebels" who had been caught looting and burning. Keppel-Jones cites Frederick Selous, who wrote an autobiographical account of the Matabele and Mashona rising of 1896, as being "satisfied that justice was done" in this case, but adds that Selous "does not say by what law the death penalty was imposed for looting and burning" (462).²⁶

The point is that, in using a photograph, as Monsman has it, to "prepare[] for the symbolic enactment at the end by wedding the literary text to the social context" (Monsman 121), Schreiner is using a medium whose spectacular authenticity can still be disclaimed by those who rewrite lynching as execution. The "social context" is not as stable as it might seem; in its literary context, the text
of the photograph can be read as inauthentic, still to be discredited. Geoffrey Wheatcroft, in his study The Randlords: South Africa's Robber Barons and the Mines that Forged a Nation writes that two generations after it was written "copies of [Trooper Peter] could still be found in homes in Rhodesia; few of them preserved intact the original frontispiece" (208). This latter evidence of white Rhodesians' incredulity and denial, presumably accompanied by the violence of tearing, might stand as an image of the (white? European? male?) incredulity and denial implied by the tearing out of the canon of Schreiner's novella.

What is curious is that Schreiner's readers still appear to be confronted with the possibility that her accounts of more or less casual brutality might appear too excessive to be authentic. Quoting Peter's boastful account of how he had "had two huts to myself, and a couple of nigger girls," Gerald Monsman, for instance, comments that "One cannot help feeling Schreiner may have been overdrawing Peter's insensitivity" (116). She may well have been overdrawing it as far as public taste was concerned, but as far as realistic representation is concerned, she was probably underdrawing it. Prophetic as ever, she appears to have been experiencing, in advance as it were, Ndebele's "problematic relationship between art and objective reality in South Africa." Ndebele cites T.T. Moyana's lament that:

An additional difficulty for the creative artist in South Africa, especially the black writer, is
that life itself is too fantastic to be outstripped by the creative imagination. . . . Indeed, many writers of the absurd school would find their plots too realistic to startle anybody into serious questioning of their deeper meaning. (Ndebele 42)

Certainly the dismissal of Trooper Peter Halket as a "political pamphlet of great bitterness, linked onto the very smallest thread of a story," as the Blackwood's reviewer did, or as "no great work of literature, but a heartfelt cry of rage at the cruelty of imperialism," as Wheatcroft does (208), suggests that the book's spectacular nature devalues it as literature with a "deeper meaning."

If that "deeper meaning" depends on transferability of a work's "message," Schreiner's text could easily have been seen to transcend the immediate and local had the canon not privileged a very particular set of "universals." In fact, the recognition in Trooper Peter Halket of the links between racial and sexual subjugation on the one hand, and economic and military power on the other still has great urgency, as can be shown by reference to two recent cases involving the United States military forces home and abroad. In the first, two white G.I.s out drinking in Fayetteville, North Carolina decided to spice up their evening's entertainment by driving around town looking for black people to harass and ended up shooting two innocent civilians to death. The two murderers were based at Fort Bragg, a base which earlier, in 1992, had made news for its extreme chauvinism towards women. Official policy, of course, parades itself
as anti-sexist and anti-racist, and an investigation into the possibility that the army was harboring extremist groups produced suitably reassuring evidence that suggested the double murder was an aberration. Within the wider context, however, not just of the US army but of mainstream American society, and the institutional chauvinisms of the military-industrial complex, any such investigation is almost absurd—more parody of official policy than parade.

The second incident even more plainly in some ways shows the lasting human and political message of Trooper Peter Halket, as it exposes some of the complex consequences at the personal and institutional level of the exporting of power. In September 1995, two US marines raped a 12-year-old Okinawa school girl. The crime by itself was enough to spark public demonstrations in Okinawa against the US military presence there. Those protests were fueled some weeks after the crime by US Navy admiral Richard Macke's exasperated condemnation of the two men's behavior; finding their stupidity as culpable as their violence Macke said that he could not understand why they had spent the same amount of money on a rental car as they could have spent on a prostitute. Macke subsequently resigned over the gaffe, but his comments impolitely drew attention to the pervasiveness in the contemporary deployment of military-imperial power of precisely the same objectification of women displayed by Schreiner's troopers. Furthermore, the
implications of the two men's crime for Japanese-American economic relations suggests the acuity of Schreiner's spectacularly linking the experience of an ordinary trooper to the machinations of global business, rather than pandering to the politer literary model of probing the consciousness of a grand maverick like Kurtz. No, the problem is not with realism of representation—its being "spectacular" or "overdrawn"—so much as with what the literary market will tolerate, or, more broadly what the market will tolerate as literary.

Which brings us to contemporary violence and representation and Adorno's comment that when genocide becomes one of the themes for committed literature it becomes easier to play along with the culture that gave birth to murder (Adorno 189). *Apocalypse Now*, Francis Ford Coppola's movie based on *Heart of Darkness*, shifts the action to the overtly military context of the Vietnam war. It does not suffer so much from euphemized representation either of spoken or of visual language, as from the spectacularization of violence. In fact, it does so to an extent that makes it difficult to see the movie as committed, or anti-war, at all. Elaine Showalter, in a chapter in *Sexual Anarchy* comparing late Victorian adventure-romances and recent adventure movies, points out the "many elements of the film and production [that] reflect the unconscious imperialism and sexism of male quest
romance" (100). Like *Heart of Darkness* in allowing Vietnam to be used as a background for the study in degeneration of an American Kurtz, now a Marine Colonel who is prepared to take the logic of war to its violent extreme, but necessarily unlike *Heart of Darkness* in its graphic representation of violence, *Apocalypse Now* recycled the image of the Other as cannon-fodder in particularly violent ways. Showalter draws specific attention to the way the Othering is gendered as well as racialized:

> On the journey up the river, women, always nameless and speechless, appear as symbolic figures of sexual danger at every stage, from the Vietnamese schoolteacher massacred in the attack on the beach, to the girl who throws a grenade at the helicopter; to the Playboy bunnies at the USO show dancing to "Suzy Q," and finally, most chillingly, to the Vietnamese girl with the puppy shot by Willard on the boat. Women on the set were similarly objectified. (100-101)

Further, Showalter stresses how the very process of filming the movie in the Philippines in a town north of Manila reproduced the Vietnam experience; she cites Coppola's own admission that "The way we made it was very much like the way the Americans were in Vietnam. We were in the jungle, there were too many of us, we had access to too much money, too much equipment, and little by little, we went insane" (101). Eleanor Coppola commented that her husband, in flying in endless luxuries to keep the crew happy was "Creating the very situation he went there to expose" (cited in Showalter 102). Indeed, the violence of the movie was reflected by the cultural violence of the
movie-making, as the short-lived boom created by the presence of the crew eroded local values and led to the community's dependence on male child prostitution to maintain the inflated standard of living enjoyed locally during the filming (Showalter 103-104).

Showalter calls this last effect an "ironic finale to the masculine quest for King Romance" (104), but "finale" is scarcely the right word for a continuing situation whose "irony" can be relished only from the outside. Her phrasing, for all its alertness to gender politics, smacks of the aestheticism that allows teachers of Heart of Darkness to focus on the "literary" qualities of that text and that allows viewers of Apocalypse Now to relish, as Showalter says, "the pleasure of the film medium and the spectacle of the epic screen" (100). In both cases, the assumption of value in Kurtz (and Marlow and Willard) -- that they, as individuals, are worth the focus -- allows readers and viewers to transfer the heart of darkness from the individual to the generality of all humankind without any systematic mediation. Hence, the geographical site of the heart of darkness becomes a place of great natural fecundity (the "jungle") predating history proper (viz. Conrad's reference to pre-Roman Britain) rather than in modern, specifically Western, human institutions such as the City of London or the Pentagon. And even Showalter in her final
reversion to the language of aesthetic criticism lets
Coppola off the political hook.

The logic of this move is no less a logic of forgetting
than the logic of war or of terror, a hallucinatory logic
that in Michael Taussig's words "claim[s] the rationality of
business" (Shamanism 54). Taussig was writing about the
peculiar rationality of the use of terror in the Congo and
Putumayo rubber-extraction, in which "everything . . .
depends upon the appearance of trade in which the debtor is
neither slave nor wage-laborer but a trader with an ironclad
obligation to pay back in advance" (65). We might think of
the more general European system of underdeveloping Africa
as just such a violent system of debt-peonage, with economic
structures such as Structural Adjustment Programs bearing
all too appropriate acronyms.

Contemporary economic-driven military terror may not be
so obvious in Africa as in Conrad's Congo or Schreiner's
Mashonaland, the logic of trade and aid may appear less
hallucinatory, and the agents of any such terror may have
become more easily forgettable as they have become
"independent" and black, but the same system Schreiner
attacks in Trooper Peter Halket still operates. As Achebe
recognizes, the same attitude of othering keeps the
postcolonial African poor in their poverty by using about
the poor "the very words the white master had said in his
time about the black race as a whole:"
You see, they are not in the least like ourselves. They don't need and can't use the luxuries that you and I must have. They have the animal capacity to endure the pain of, shall we say, domestication. (Achebe, Anthills of the Savannah 37; original emphasis)

What is perhaps most troubling to me right now as I write this page, courtesy of a huge American university, typing on one of thousands of university computers collectively drawing enough electrical power to light Soweto, is the applicability of his plus ca change, plus ca c'est la meme chose type attitude to the very idea of the post-colonial, whether in regard to post-colonial nation formation or post-colonial canon formation. Everywhere across Africa attempts at replacing the colonized state with something autonomous and new--Nyerere's African socialism, for example--have been stifled, squashed by the jostling of giants in the Cold War, and taken in hand by the World Bank and the IMF. Academic postcolonialism, likewise, finds itself drawn in. Every decoding is another encoding, after all, and it is impossible to step outside the cultural memory-bank created by canons (look at those last two metaphors, for instance). Without the canonical status of Heart of Darkness neither Achebe's essay nor my own work would be readable; the cultural capital of Achebe's reputation and of my literary degree depends on that bank, that arsenal.

It may well be that committed art is doomed to double failure; doomed to fail in its political intervention, and
doomed to drop from artistic sight. Its pursuit is nonetheless necessary because its alternative, a notional autonomous art, claiming a transcendence like Blixen's "refined essence" of Africa, is a delusion.

Notes

1. See Jameson's essay "Third World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism" (Social Text 15 (Fall 1986): 65-88), and Ahmad's response "Jameson's Rhetoric of Otherness and the 'National Allegory'" (Social Text 17 (Fall 1987): 3-25).

2. Ndebele points out that a common western error in reading South African protest literature (as with Jameson's reading of "national allegories" perhaps) saw it as "unartistic, crude, and too political." Citing Chinweizu, he explains that a "powerful Eurocentric school of criticism of African literature has imposed on the literature evaluations based on false assumptions" (Ndebele 47). The level of debate inspired by Sachs's intervention showed that South African artists' choices, far from being "crude," had frequently been extremely well-informed and carefully considered.

As for the centrality of culture, Ndebele suggests that the preparedness of young South African writers to "confront the human tragedy together with the immense challenging responsibility to create a new society" might have been what "prompted Soyinka to observe that South African writers might yet be envied for their invidious position by their brothers up north" (Ndebele 58).

3. Rob Nixon contrasts the seriousness of the Sachs debate to the spuriousness of the contemporaneous attempt by the Inkatha Freedom Party to claim its right to carry actual weapons (spears, clubs, pangas, etc.) because they represented "traditional" Zulu culture. "There is all the difference in the world," he writes, "between invoking the metaphor of culture as weaponry in an effort to infuse township theater, performance poetry, or music with a sense of urgent instrumentality, and Inkatha, during a period of supposedly suspended hostilities, rushing through the streets, brandishing literal spears, clubs, and axes in the name of cultural self-expression" (Nixon 201).
4. I use "politer" as an allusion to the etymological connection between politeness, politics and police, a familiar poststructuralist connection drawn attention to by Pierre Bourdieu, and Jacques Derrida (e.g. Limited, Inc pp. 112-113). Derrida's general insistence on the violence of discourse, not least academic and intellectual discourse, with its policing conventions of politeness, suggests that the epigraph taken from Bond's preface to Lear plays on a false distinction between manners and violence.

5. Cf. Thomas Knipp's article, "Kenya's Literary Ladies," mentioned in Chapter 7, in which he talks about the "triple nostalgia" involved in the reception of the film of Out of Africa, nostalgically recalling Karen Blixen, nostalgically recalling a lifestyle in Kenya that was already anachronistic in her native Denmark.

6. Blixen understood "Isak" as meaning "one who laughs."

7. Conrad's famous opening with the Thames at London being declared "one of the dark places of the earth" is an obvious case in point. It is notable that even Ngugi--generally less of a liberal humanist than Achebe--displays more caution in dealing with Conrad, finding his "ambivalence towards imperialism" the limiting factor that "could never let him go beyond the balancing acts of liberal humanism" (Ngugi, Decolonising 76).

8. The epigraph for Section 3 of Out of Africa "Visitors to the Farm" is "post res perditas."

9. Most obviously because of Conrad's marginal status as a Polish-born emigre for whom English--which he spoke with a marked "foreign" accent--was a third language.

10. This feature which I describe as creating a "comfort zone" for Conrad's readership, Achebe describes as a "cordon sanitaire between himself [Conrad] and the moral and psychological malaise of his narrator" (Hopes and Impediments 10).

11. In fact, if this statement is true for first-time readers it must also be true for all readers. In stressing first-time readers I am trying to establish the point that Conrad has established a kind of "comfort zone" that allows readers to feel a considerable distance between themselves and the experience described (or suggested!) by the text.

12. The question of the "puerility of evil" (Brantlinger) in British imperialism is one I return to in Chapter 10. Martin Green's work on the status of boys' adventure stories
in late Victorian England as "primers of Empire" is relevant here (see e.g. "Adventurers Stake their Claim: The Adventure Tale's Bid for Status, 1876-1914" in Lawrence, Karen, ed. Decolonizing Tradition, 70-87).

13. At its most explicit this exoneration of the contemporary British reader occurs when Conrad has Marlow contrast the specifically British imperialism with other European varieties. The "vast amount of red" on the map of Africa is "good to see at any time, because one knows that some real work is done in there" (36).

14. Houghton, in his compendious The Victorian Frame of Mind, opens his section on "Work" thus: "Except for "God," the most popular word in the Victorian vocabulary must have been "work;" and continues "it . . . became an end in itself, a virtue in its own right" (242-243). The attitude reveals itself in all sorts of ways. The proverb, "The devil finds work for idle hands," more explicitly than anything else suggests that those who are already working are on the side of the angels. Furthermore, those who put others, especially those previously idle, to work, must likewise be on the side of the angels. The implications of this attitude for the practice of imperialism are obviously enormous. J.M. Coetzee devotes a chapter to the issue in White Writing. For an example from the texts immediately under discussion we might turn to the brief anecdote, "Fellow-Travellers" told by Karen Blixen in Out of Africa. Unwittingly having asked a Belgian fellow-passenger whether he has worked much in his life (she used the French "travailler" for English "travel") Blixen not only has to listen to the Belgian's tales of his own labor, but of the grand purpose of it all: "Notre mission. Notre grand mission dans le Congo" (262). In discussion of education for Africans, the man is convinced that there is only one thing that Europeans need to teach Africans: "Il faut enseigner aux negres à être honnetes à travailler. Rien de plus" (262). The man's combination of attitudes towards "work," "mission," and "education" reveals as tellingly as Louis Althusser could have dreamed of the operation of church and school as ideological state apparatuses.

15. Cf. Houghton: "a religion of work, with or without a supernatural context, came to be, in fact, the actual faith of many Victorians: it could resolve both intellectual perplexity and psychological depression" (251).

16. Writing this I'm reminded of all the racist language about work that I grew up with. In Afrikaans, a physical task such as cleaning, or digging might be considered demeaning and hence termed "kaffirwerk," in a perfect colloquial discursive analogue to the legal discourse of
actual job reservation. Similarly, to "work like a black" meant to work incredibly hard physically, but, weirdly, such work was completely undervalued because it didn't require mental activity. I say "weirdly" because the whole anti-intellectual, rugger-bugger, macho construction of white South African masculinity appeared to endorse Victorian attitudes towards physical work as an inherently good thing. This irrational, self-contradicting set of attitudes towards work and race has an interesting bearing on this chapter's subsequent discussion of the irrationality of the application of terror in the imposition of an economic order.

17. Schreiner's comment puts one in mind of Sartre's doubts as to whether Picasso's Guernica had won any support for the Spanish cause (cited in Adorno, "Commitment" 185).

18. We can see this trend in movies, too, such as Roland Joffe's The Killing Fields or Spielberg's Schindler's List. The racism of the trend is most clearly evident in a movie like Cry Freedom where Biko's black consciousness message is euphemized by Attenborough's giving the "story" of the film to white liberal Donald Woods (for further discussion, see Nixon, Homelands, Harlem, and Hollywood 81-84). It is interesting to note that since the end of apartheid, Hollywood has once more turned away from the promise of a radically new South Africa, instead churning out a remake of Alan Paton's classic liberal statement, Cry, the Beloved Country.

19. In "The Trooper at the Hanging Tree" Stephen Gray attempts to "reclaim some literary status" for Trooper Peter Halket, pointing to Schreiner's literary artistry in melding realism and allegory, for instance, without losing political urgency. He insists that Schreiner's construction and style are the result of her consciously rejecting the realist novel "because she rejects the morality which the realist novel encodes" (Gray 207; his italics). The implication is that continued dismissal of Trooper Peter Halket on aesthetic grounds depends on the persistence of the very colonial morality Schreiner was attacking.

20. Translated into English and published simply as Poppie in the first instance, and then, rather more dramatically, as Poppie Nongena: One Woman's Struggle against Apartheid. The politics of those renamings is fascinating.

21. As I have noticed since writing about Joubert, the Penguin edition of Nadine Gordimer's None to Accompany Me includes an extract from a review in The Washington Post on the front cover (the only one of many to make it to that eminence). The quotation--"This post-Nobel, post-apartheid
novel--Gordimer's least political and most emotionally intricate--may well be the finest she has ever produced"--indicates the persistence, among reviewers, at least, of the belief that politics mars literature, while its use as a sales ploy indicates the publisher's recognition of market resistance to overtly political work.


23. And, one might add, following Jameson, popular, too.

24. Consider, for example, the attack on the steamer shortly before it reaches Kurtz's Inner Station. Conrad brilliantly catches Marlow's and the "pilgrims'" bewilderment at the attack by describing the arrows as "sticks, little sticks... flying about," and concentrating on Marlow's need to steer the boat. The smoke from the pilgrims' Winchesters therefore causes Marlow a practical problem--how to see to steer--and ignores the materiality of African casualties.

25. See, for instance, First and Scott, who quote a good six pages' worth from the original (*Trooper Peter* 33-39; First and Scott 226-228) with a lengthy footnote devoted to the frontispiece (229); or Brantlinger who, referring to "Schreiner's fictional diatribe against Cecil Rhodes" (Gates 189), includes the photograph and comments on it as "unfortunately a summary of much of the history of Southern Africa" (Gates 189). Neither text offers much else on *Trooper Peter Halket*, as if indeed the photograph did say all that needed saying.

26. In fact, Keppel-Jones's claim that spies (however that term might be defined) "were not executed out of hand" is belied by his own admission, within a paragraph, that "justice may often have miscarried," by his recognition that law is not the same as justice, and by his own accounts of the frequent absence of official control on "unofficial" executions and atrocities in the field. Eye-witness accounts, although full of the horror of African attacks on whites, also tell of the ferocity and cruelty of the white fighters. Selous, in true *Heart of Darkness* fashion, urged
his readers to look sympathetically on his tales of battles in which "No quarter was either given or asked for," commenting that "it is possible for a man to live a long life without ever becoming aware that below the surface conventionality there exists in him an ineradicable leaven of innate ferocity" (cited in Taylor 240).

27. On the question of Rhodesian belief/admission, Schreiner wrote to Betty Molteno in 1897 that her husband had received a letter from "a leading man at Bulawayo in the employ of the Chartered Company on some business. At the end of his letter he sent his kind regards to me and said, 'Tell Mrs Schreiner Peter Halket is quite true, but she would find it very hard to get anyone here to stand to it.' He is a hard man of the world and not at all a friend of the native" (Rive 322).

28. Personal anecdotes may not count for much, but I cannot imagine that Monsman's experience has been that much more sheltered than mine from the casual brutishness and brutality of sexist and racist talk and behavior. And even from my very bourgeois experience I can recall a British squaddie telling me with great glee of the delights of a posting to Mombasa where you could get a "whore" to be your "wife" for the duration of your posting: for a few shillings a week, he claimed, squaddies bought women who gratefully provided them with sex and housework. In Tanzania I came across a number of cases where white male ex-pats were actually married (in at least one case bigamously) to Tanzanian women without ever having any intention of taking their wife "home" with them to Europe. During my schoolboy years in South Africa (and remember Peter Halket is only nineteen) macho conversations about the relative merits and "efficiency" of the South African and Rhodesian armies were commonplace among my peers for whom conscription loomed, but for whom the idea of conscientious objection was scarcely thinkable.

As far as language use is concerned, the phrase "to swear like a trooper" would suggest that Schreiner has considerably euphemized Peter's language.

29. In part that may be the result of the screenplay's having originated in a version written in 1968-69 by John Milius as a "militaristic, right-wing, unabashed celebration of Vietnam heroics" (Showalter 100).
CHAPTER 8
GRAVES WITH A VIEW:
ATAVISM AND THE EUROPEAN HISTORY OF AFRICA

The discovery of primitiveness was an ambiguous invention of a history incapable of facing its own double.
Valentin Mudimbe

The history of colonialism is the history of claims on the land, of settlement by colonists and the consequent ejection of "natives," all enforced by imperial administrative and legal practice. It involves physical line-drawing of numerous varieties--of national, urban, municipal and regional boundaries, limits of mining claims and prospecting rights, fences around homes, farms, factories etc.--equally numerous abstract line-drawings--between right and wrong, legal and criminal etc.--and the line-drawing that classifies human beings by race, class, gender, age, sexuality etc. Throughout this work, I have attempted to demonstrate how these line-drawings contribute to and interact with the line-drawing of history itself; particularly in this last section I have paid attention to the way that memory and myth trace narrative lines between a notional "in the beginning" to the here and now, and the consequent problems facing postcolonial societies in writing their own history. Whereas in the last two chapters,
however, I was interested in the forgetting involved in forging African identities, here I want to show how Europeans like Schreiner and Blixen used memory and memorials to write themselves into the very landscape itself. The graves of Schreiner herself, her political enemy Cecil Rhodes, and Denys Finch Hatton show how white settlers' graves in Africa—and the narrative treatment of those graves—could lay physical and symbolic claim not just to parts of Africa but to the notion of being African; they create "Africa" by creating an "African" history.

It is something of a truism that, while a sense of teleological history first emerges in the Western imagination about the time of the European Renaissance, it was the nineteenth century that first exhibited widespread anxiety about its own historicity. In his Lectures on the Philosophy of History, Hegel draws the distinction between res gestae and historia (60), and declares that only those cultures which have produced "subjective annals" actually have an "objective history" (61). This claim inevitably leads to his privileging of literate cultures and hence to the dismissal of "Africa" as being without history (91-99). While a Hegelian attitude legitimates European authority, Francis Fukuyama's declaration that history has ended suggests that just at the time when African authority might finally be seen to be legitimated—with the passing of the last European-ruled African nation—the post-Hegelian view
sees nothing to legitimate. In the face of this dual refusal of legitimacy, post-colonial writers of African history might perhaps take consolation from this essay's attempted deconstruction of European atavism; for the making of the grave-sites of Cecil Rhodes, Olive Schreiner, and Denys Finch Hatton into historical markers involves a process that counters Enlightenment Europe's alleged attitudes towards history.

In line with the Hegelian rationale, Dan Jacobson in his 1970 Introduction to the Penguin edition of Schreiner's *The Story of an African Farm*, poses as a problem the specific lack of settler history in South Africa: "A colonial culture is," he writes, "one which has no memory", that is, "a vital, effective belief in the past as a present concern, and in the present as a consequence of the past's concerns" (7). He then goes on to describe how at the age of eight or nine he climbed to the summit of Buffelskop with his parents to see Olive Schreiner's grave. He describes both the view from the grave and his own reactions:

The view beneath was of a red and brown expanse stretching flat to the horizon on all sides, interrupted only by stony kopjes like the one on which we were standing, and by the glint of water from a half-empty dam that was shaped like a thumbnail and looked no bigger than a thumbnail, too, from the height we were at. I can remember how impressed I was by the sunscorched aridity and solitude of the scene; and also how obscurely creditable or virtuous I felt our own presence there to be. (9)
Jacobson's description and response, mediated by his own memory and inherited affection for Schreiner, resonate with the notes struck by Schreiner herself in her descriptions of the inhospitable Karoo landscape with its "sunscorched aridity and solitude" and the consequent sense of creditability and virtue. There seems to be a shared way of seeing that endows the Karoo with that historically questionable "emptiness" examined in Chapter 3 which in turn leads to a quasi-Romantic subjective response. Furthermore, in both Jacobson and Schreiner, through the latter's choice of burial place, we see how colonial discourse--however anticolonialist it may be--makes claims on the land by creating memory and hence history. The grave allows a sense of continuity to extend from 1894--when Schreiner picked out the site--to 1921--the year of her reinterment--through the '30s--the period of the young Jacobson's visit--to the '70s and Jacobson's Introduction--and now to this work.

Jacobson's reference to colonial society as a society without memory, like Hegel's notion of Africa's lack of history, or, following Hegel, Fukuyama's definition of the end of history, can be attacked on the grounds of ethnocentrism. His comment is thus a complicated one, because as a Jewish exile from South Africa Jacobson's position is essentially anti-ethnocentric, critical of colonialism and apartheid. However, he still seems to be operating from much the same premisses as Derrida discerns
in Claude Lévi-Strauss's "The Writing Lesson": that a non-literate society is assumed to be lacking history, hence isn't anxious about the lack, whereas European colonizers by virtue of literacy and of coming from a place where they were accustomed to history are anxious about their lack and actively go about remedying it. Arguing against Lévi-Strauss's mixture of Hegelian and Rousseauian logic, I suggest that in using what Hegel might have seen as "atavistic" beliefs in the return of ancestors or of God/gods, black resistance to white discursive power is similar to the way in which white settlers wrote an "atavistic" history through their graves, marking the very landscape itself in a gesture at least as potent as marking the page.²

In fact, finding the right way to write the landscape on the page—that is, a way legible to imperial eyes—was difficult. As we saw in Chapter 3, J.M. Coetzee argues that the physical landscape of South Africa resisted the sorts of pastoral representation European eyes had grown accustomed to. He nonetheless points to the importance of the sublime in the European tradition and the possibilities for sublimity of the South African landscape, and concludes that "the politics of expansion has uses for the rhetoric of the sublime" (62). The engraving of the words "Your hinterland is there" on Rhodes's statue, in the Kirstenbosch botanical
gardens halfway up the slopes of Table Mountain, perhaps illustrates his point.  

One of the features of Olive Schreiner's landscape in *African Farm*, however, that makes that novel in Coetzee's view an "antipastoral" one is that it lacks the necessary prospect from which to view the expansiveness of its potentially sublime vistas. Her representation of the African farm is a relentlessly negative one with the point of view firmly fixed in the level plain, not elevated to a prospect. Coetzee suggests that this thoroughly negative presentation of a landscape that Schreiner herself loved should be read as "a figure in the service of her critique of colonial culture" (66) in virtue of its contrast to Old World farms:

Whereas in the Old World model the farm is naturalized by being integrated with the land, and in turn historicizes the land by making the land a page on which the generations write their story, Schreiner's farm is an unnatural and arbitrary imposition on a doggedly ahistorical landscape.

Coetzee's notion of the "Old World model" may be rather loosely totalizing, but so, it appears, was Schreiner's, whose representation of a rural background for the young Peter Halket seems closer kin to Beatrix Potter than Emily Brontë or Thomas Hardy.

The point is that there is a clear contrast between the anti-colonialist representation of an ahistorical landscape and Schreiner's actual historicization of that landscape through her grave, which shares its grandiose way of seeing,
an "over-looking" that both sees all and neglects to see, with her one-time friend and political enemy Cecil Rhodes rather than with the prospect-less Waldo, whose death is so much an absorption into nature that the chickens are left perching on him at the end of *African Farm* (300). The grave at the summit of Buffelskop offers a perfect physical prospect, lying in wait it seems for Cronwright or Jacobson to come along and finish the painterly/political task before the land can be thoroughly claimed for and as history.

So, even though Schreiner's published work may be distinctly anti-colonialist and opposed to colonialist patriarchy, her grave, nonetheless, lends itself to a reading by imperial eyes. It may appear unfair thus to link Schreiner and Rhodes, the latter the very epitome of the imperialist and a man who left his physical mark on Southern Africa in many more ways than in his grave. It seems to me, however, that the similarity of the two final resting-places overrides Rhodes' and Schreiner's political differences and suggests an ultimately shared attitude towards themselves as Europeans in Africa and African history. That the making of the grave-sites into historical markers involves a kind of atavism which counters Enlightenment European attitudes towards history adds a further ironic twist to their implanting themselves in Africa.

That Rhodes's chosen site "imposing and dominant" (Stead 4), which he called "The View of the World" was known
as "The Home of the Spirit of My Forefathers" and already the burial-site of the Matabele ruler Mzilikazi (though Mzilikazi's presence there has its own history of violence) makes his burial not just a writing over of African history but suggests a profoundly similar notion of history in both the "savage" mind and the "civilized". Indeed, W.T. Stead (whom we need to treat with some caution on this matter) even records Rhodes's "very quaint" and "childlike" belief that he would return to the earth after his death and "be able to recognize and converse with those who had gone before, and that both he and they would have the keenest interest in the affairs of this planet" (Brantlinger 190). This may not quite be an attempt to set himself up for ancestor-worship, but it comes remarkably close.

In Rule of Darkness, Patrick Brantlinger's chapter on "Atavism and the Occult in the British Adventure Novel" analyzes a mode of writing in late Victorian England which he calls "Imperial Gothic" and which combines the seemingly scientific, progressive, often Darwinian ideology of imperialism with an antithetical interest in the occult. Although the connections between imperialism and other aspects of late Victorian and Edwardian culture are innumerable, the link with occultism is especially symptomatic of the anxieties that attended the climax of the British empire. (Brantlinger 227)

Further, Brantlinger suggests that the intrusion of the occult is an indication of a sense of the failure of Christianity and of faith in Britain's future. If we accept his thesis, we might see both Rhodes's and Schreiner's
graves as compensatory moves for other failures of personal and social natures, symptomatic of the anxieties attending their achievements. The two graves, then, might be seen to represent some final success and fixity, and while we might read Schreiner's more generously as symbol of her belonging to the land whereas Rhodes's resists any reading but of ownership of the land, both nonetheless assume vast acreages in prospect.

A comparison of the narrative treatment of the graves reveals further similarities. First and Scott narrate the reinterment of Olive Schreiner both movingly and critically, using Cronwright-Schreiner's biography as chief source. They pick out a number of moments where Cronwright-Schreiner actively mythologizes in his account of the burial: he saw a large eagle that he "could not remember having seen before" and which seemed to him "like the Bird of Truth" from *African Farm* welcoming them to Olive's last resting-place; and in his speech over the sarcophagus he said that "nature now seemed to him almost visibly permeated by Olive's spirit" (332). First and Scott see in Cronwright's reading/writing of the scene his making of Olive into a "child of nature" through which he could "contain his basic disapproval of her 'strange and incredible' personality" and see her "absorption in nature" (cf. Waldo!) as a symbol of her "inability to produce, or be part of the 'real' world" (332). However, they record without comment Cronwright's
thanking the African workmen for having carried her coffin, appropriate, he said, "because she had always been their champion" (332). Although this is a gesture towards recognizing the labor frequently overlooked in the pastoral tradition, the African workmen still remain nameless, while Schreiner is written into history through the literature of England, a verse from In Memoriam.

In Stead's account of the burial of Rhodes, the huge labor of carrying Rhodes's body from the house in Muizenberg where he died, thence to Groote Schuur in Cape Town, and thence well over a thousand miles to the Matopos is erased by Stead's repeated use of the passive voice:

With an energy worthy of the founder of their State, a road was constructed from Bulawayo to the summit of the Matopos. Along this, followed by the whole population, the body of Mr. Rhodes was drawn to his last resting-place. The coffin was lowered into the tomb, the mourners, white and black, filed past the grave, and then a huge block of granite, weighing over three tons [but alone at the scene in possessing individual agency!], sealed the sepulchre from all mortal eyes. (Stead 192, emphasis added)

Two photographs, from Cronwright's edition of Schreiner's letters and Stead's Last Will and Testament further emphasize the point. Beneath a picture of the anonymous African workmen carrying Olive's coffin up Buffelskop (the gradient is steep) appears the caption: "Olive Schreiner's body nearing the very summit of Buffel's Kop (5,000 ft.), 13th August, 1921" (facing page 370). Stead's photograph of "The Scene at the Burial of Mr.
Rhodes" has an equally labor-erasing caption: "The coffin is being lowered into the tomb, and the picture shows the slab, weighing three tons, which covers the coffin" (191).

Cronwright-Schreiner and Stead are clearly responding to a particular contemporary moment (and I don't wish to impugn the sincerity of their mourning), but it's a moment of balanced forces with glances both to past history and history to come, and their writing of the graves writes them into history at the expense of the indigenous population. The private response to the loss of someone loved is not finally separable from the public ceremony. It seems legitimate, therefore, to treat the two men's accounts as equally public documents, even though the two ceremonies do not appear equally public.

In the case of Schreiner's grave, we have already seen in Jacobson's Introduction how it lends itself to readings by people other than the circle of her family and intimate friends, and we shall see later that Etienne van Heerden treats this public record as still potentially disruptive. In the meantime, it remains to be pointed out that although First and Scott critique Cronwright's original "text," they do so on private rather than public grounds, that it was his way of "contain[ing] his basic disapproval of her 'strange and incredible' personality" (332). They don't offer the reading I'm suggesting of settlers' graves representing the final claim on the land and therefore history of that land;
that their being committed into the ground represents a commitment to the land that makes them a part of the land, hence both African and natural, innocently there and very difficult to erase or escape from.

That same process of making African, natural, and innocent occurs with Karen Blixen's representation of the life, death, and burial of Denys Finch Hatton. Unlike Rhodes and Schreiner, Finch Hatton lives on in nothing but memory, memoir, and memorial; he has no mines, no scholarships, no farms, no books to his name. To be sure, Errol Trzebinski has devoted a full-scale biography to him, and Robert Redford--an unlikely, but telling, casting-choice for an English aristo--turned him into a Hollywood symbol (of what, though, exactly?), but without Karen Blixen it is difficult to imagine him taking a place in history as an individual.

In Denys Finch Hatton, then, I would contend that we have the most overt case of myth-making, and it is therefore interesting to consider the cultural effects of this myth-making. For this reason: whereas Rhodes and Schreiner would have left considerable marks on the history of their time and ours even without their grandiose graves with a view and are thus relatively easy to assess in terms of their actual cultural legacy, the effect of Finch Hatton's memorialization is of necessity less material, hence harder to assess, but more insidious.
Part of the problem is posed by his, and Blixen's, aristocracy. Rather than belonging to either of the two rising Victorian groupings represented by Rhodes and Schreiner—the openly capitalist bourgeoisie or the intellectual class—Finch Hatton belongs, at least in Blixen's representation of him, not only to a class—the aristocracy—but to a class-order of the past, the rural, quasi-feudal order. Out of Africa (which has always been a difficult book to categorize), and to a lesser extent Shadows on the Grass, may best be seen as an extended example of pastoral elegy in which Finch Hatton becomes the scholar-pilot whose death is a synechdoche for the death of the ideal farm.

As I suggested in Chapter 4, in hero-izing both farm and Finch Hatton, Blixen creates a kind of utopian African feudal order that largely disregards the actual place of the Karen Coffee Company, geographically, and in terms of the world economic order. Having displaced the "Natives," the farm was willy-nilly a part of colonialist capitalism, not the kind of organic local feudal order Blixen projects. This is not to say that Out of Africa ignores economics—though the movie again tellingly does—but that it presents Blixen living as if she could ignore it.

As we saw in Chapter 4, all of this confirms at least two of Raymond Williams' arguments. To reiterate: first, the pastoral is a tradition which tends to erase the
violence of economic relations and the harshness of labor conditions; it is precisely that violence and harshness which builds the country-house and its lifestyle, represented in *Out of Africa* by Berkeley Cole's insistence on the finest glassware to drink his breakfast champagne from when out shooting animals (184). Secondly, that the pattern of power relations whereby city capital dictates what goes on in the country is repeated in colonial and neo-colonial situations where the metropole calls the tune in the colony.\(^1\)

In the tradition of pastoral, *Out of Africa* hides these power relations, but it does so all the more beguilingly because it appears so guileless—the subjectivity of the whole memoir makes it difficult to see the object relations involved as part of a system at all, and the generosity of the subjectivity makes it difficult to see them as exploitative.

For instance, if we look at Blixen's very moving account of Finch Hatton's death and burial, we find writing full of mystification and mysticism. Part of the mystification is the result of Blixen's omission of the fact that she and Denys had quarrelled,\(^12\) part is more standard colonialist stuff: the assumption that there will be "boys" to carry your coffins for you, or aping Stead's style, that your coffins can be carried for you. The mysticism occurs throughout: Blixen suggests that Finch Hatton knows he's
going to crash his plane, making that event—possibly caused by inexperience or even plain cramp, making it hard for Finch Hatton to cope with vicious air currents—into something fated; after the crash, when Blixen and her friend Gustav Mohr are searching for the grave-site Denys had picked out, not only does the cloud lift, but it lifts when they are at the very site they have been looking for; when the "boys" begin digging the grave, Blixen becomes aware for the first time of an echo, an echo she promptly endues with life—"It answered to the strokes of the spades, like a little dog barking" (304); sometime after the burial, Blixen witnesses a cockerel biting off the tongue of a chameleon and reads that as a "sign" and a "spiritual answer" from "Great powers" that "This was clearly not the hour for coddling" (315); after Blixen has left Africa, she learns that some lions had been seen on Finch Hatton's grave and concludes that, "It was fit and decorous that the lions should come to Denys's grave and make him an African monument" (308). Blixen's phrasing in this last example plays interestingly on what one might call the "natural heraldry" of the lions, as if nature recognized Finch Hatton's noble lineage. In contrasting the heraldic lions on Nelson's column ("made only out of stone"), Blixen not only links Finch Hatton to the grand memorials of British history, but even elevates her lover above the admiral. The grammatical ambiguity of "and make him an African
monument" is also striking: does Blixen mean that the lions turned Finch Hatton ("him" as direct object) into an African monument; or does she mean that they made one for him (indirect object)? Either way, we again see the way in which the European presence is naturalized as African; the former reading effects that naturalization even more thoroughly and explicitly than the latter.

Blixen's writing, as here, is imbued with the melancholy charm of the elegy and is frequently wonderful in more than one sense. While it is perhaps unfair to give it Patrick Brantlinger's label of "Imperial Gothic," Finch Hatton would nonetheless prove a fitting hero for "Imperial Gothic" fiction. Blixen is quite explicit in seeing both Finch Hatton and Berkeley Cole as exiles not just from England but from their rightful heroic time, placing Berkeley Cole as a character out of Dumas' Vingt ans après and Denys as an Elizabethan courtier. Of the pair she writes, "No other nation than the English could have produced them, but they were examples of atavism, and theirs was an earlier England, a world which no longer existed" (184); she goes on to suggest that the "particular, instinctive attachment which all Natives of Africa felt towards Berkeley and Denys . . . made me reflect that perhaps the white men of the past . . . would have been in better understanding with the coloured races than we, of our industrial age, shall ever be" (186). Thus does Blixen use
a nostalgic, innocent reconstruction of a class order to reconstruct her nostalgic, innocent pre-industrial racial one.¹⁶

A harder-nosed interpretation of Finch Hatton would see the other memorial to him that Blixen describes—a bridge at Eton—as placing him in a Tom Brown-ish tradition of the English public schoolboy assured of his own superiority both home and abroad, one of the Blues who ruled Blacks¹⁷, or a type of Forster's English character who hasn't really grown up and whose feelings haven't been allowed to develop fully.¹⁸ Even Errol Trzebinski's generally fawning biography suggests that he had something of a "Peter Pan" complex,¹⁹ and one is reminded of another phrase of Patrick Brantlinger that "Africa was a place where English boys could become men and men could behave like boys with impunity" (190).²⁰

Blixen's romantic idealization of Finch Hatton makes him into a figure like Rupert Brooke's "The Soldier" whose dust not only enriches some corner of a foreign field,²¹ but makes it "for ever England" (Silkin 76). It is extraordinary that that is the case two decades after Wilfred Owen had exposed "The old lie: Dulce et decorum est/ Pro patria mori" (Silkin 178), and even more extraordinary when we consider that Brooke's poem already feels anachronistic when read against Hardy's "Drummer Hodge". Here Hodge—a music-hall comedian's term for the boorish, comic, country bumpkin—is
shovelled in "un coffined" not into any recognizable field of battle, play or farm but into the strange and empty Karoo "veldt" (Silkin 75-76). Hodge's assimilation into the flatness of this land has more in common with Waldo's becoming his own cairn in African Farm than with any of the graves with a view of Rhodes, Finch Hatton, or Schreiner, and points not only to the class implications of the claiming of natural grandeur for the graves, but to the very notion of "England" itself. The England that fought the Anglo-Boer war was one consisting of unmarked generic "Hodges" used by big-name politicians, mine-owners, and power-brokers to make their mark on the land. No doubt such exploitation is always a feature of war, but that the same "England" can still be romanticized in Finch Hatton indicates a sad failure to recognize its violence.

Although Patrick Brantlinger links the occultism of "imperial Gothic," via a citation from Adorno, to fascist politics (245), a link that the underlying violence of Blixen's romanticization of Finch Hatton's supports, the occult is perhaps more commonly associated with resistance than with control. In late Victorian England and America the occult could be marshalled as a resistance strategy to dominant ideology, notably by feminists, socialists, and abolitionists, but, more importantly for the purposes of this study, the occultism of indigenous African practice has fairly consistently been used in opposition to European
colonialism and the fascist-style administrations that depended on.

Such opposition has not always been successful or even recognized, but if we return to South Africa again, we find a momentous event involving ancestral beliefs shaping the history and landscape of the Xhosa people at the very time when Olive Schreiner was a young child and moving from one mission station to the next in the British defined Eastern Cape Colony. Colonialist and subsequently apartheid history of the cattle-kilings of 1856-57 read them either as a kind of "mass-suicide," almost as if the Xhosa were reacting purely to internal impulses not to external pressure, or as a plot against the colonial authorities (Switzer 71). Current attitudes, particularly following the work of Jeff Peires, see the Cattle-Killing as an act, in part at least, of cultural resistance. Les Switzer points out that "For most believers, the cattle-killing movement was their last hope to preserve the old way of life" (71). What is interesting is that what looks like an unadulteratedly "African" response--based on the prophecy that the Xhosa ancestors would return to allow the creation event (uHlanga) to be repeated--is affected by Western traditions; whilst the first prophets of uHlanga saw it incorporating all people, Xhosa and non-Xhosa, "settler antagonism ... soon prompted the believers to declare that whites were not eligible to enter the promised land (they had killed the son
of God)" (Switzer 70). In other words, it is not only Xhosa beliefs which drive the movement; Christian beliefs, too, are used as a kind of prototype of "liberation theology" against the colonial powers. 23

Uses of such resistance feature in fiction, too, from the colonial period through the apartheid era, with two notable appearances in Schreiner's Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland and Percy Mtwa and Mbongeni Ngema's Woza, Albert! In Schreiner's polemical novella, Trooper Peter is visited by a mysterious stranger---"a Jew of Palestine" (21)---who gradually makes Peter aware of the indefensibility of the British slaughter in Mashonaland. Finally, Peter, whose name alone associates him with Christ's disciple, enacts the ultimate Christian sacrifice by freeing a Shona captive due to be lynched the next day and dying in his place. His body remains, unmarked except by a make-shift cairn (133), "lying under the little tree, with the red sand trodden down over him, in which a black man's and a white man's blood were mingled" (131). Schreiner's book is a direct attack on Rhodes's policies and strategies and excoriates a world where brutal capitalism hides behind the rhetoric of Christianity and improving civilization.

It is a measure of the longevity of Southern Africa's pain that nearly a century later Percy Mtwa and Mbongeni Ngema should produce an almost identically motivated strategy in Woza, Albert! Instead of an attack on Rhodes
and the mowing down of Shona and Ndebele "rebels," Woza, Albert! attacks the hypocrisy of white South Africa claiming to be a Christian state when mowing down demonstrators at Sharpeville, Soweto, etc. The play imagines what would happen were Christ ("Morena") to return to contemporary South Africa and shows his daily-increasing anger and outrage at the treatment of black South Africans. Morena is killed while walking across the water from prison on Robben Island, but rises again on the third day in the very graveyard where Zulu Boy (still nameless after all these years!) has now got a job as caretaker. In a final scene blending Christian mythology and traditional African beliefs, Zulu Boy persuades Morena to raise the heroes of South Africa's liberation struggle from the dead. Performances of Woza, Albert! would normally be followed by the singing of "Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika" and by the chant and response "Mayibuye!" ["Let it return"], "iAfrika". In Woza, Albert! Christianity, the belief in ancestors' continued presence beyond the grave, memory and history all come together. The narrative line of colonialist history, a chain of white writing of and on the land, is thus challenged by the resurrection/insurrection of African "ghosts."

The struggle, necessarily, continues after the formal removal of apartheid: in his autobiography Long Walk to Freedom, Nelson Mandela resurrects an idyllic rural African
landscape in recalling his birth-place and early childhood in Qunu in the Transkei. He reclaims this landscape which had already, some seventy years earlier, been marked by the colonialist exploitation of the effects of the Cattle-Killing, and re-presents his "authentic" place of origin as a kind of framing device in his own history; Mandela recounts, for instance, how, on his release from jail, a visit to his mother's grave brought home to him the contrast between the past and the present:

> When I was young, the village was tidy, the water pure, and the grass green and unsullied as far as the eye could see. Kraals were swept, the topsoil was conserved, fields were neatly divided. But now the village was unswept, the water polluted, and the countryside littered with plastic bags and wrappers. (506)

And in his moving peroration Mandela again recalls that time of childhood when he felt that he was "free to run in the fields near my mother's hut, free to swim in the clear stream that ran through my village, free to roast mealies under the stars and ride the broad backs of slow-moving bulls" (543). Clearly, the weapon of memory can be wielded in any number of ways in writing the land. 24

If we return for one last time to Schreiner's grave on Buffelskop, for instance, we can see that Etienne van Heerden's practice in the story "The Resurrection of Olive Schreiner" is more in line with Mtwa and Ngema's act of cultural disruption than it is with Cronwright's attempt at stabilization; it looks less to past history and making
Schreiner an African memorial, than to the future in which she might be a potentially unifying force, breaking the racial impasse of apartheid.

While researching the Schreiner documents in Cradock public library—what more clear emblem of the official repository of history-as-writing/writing-as-history?—van Heerden's narrator reflects back to his childhood and the violence surrounding a visit to town by the prime minister. Son of an English-speaking mother and Afrikaner father, the narrator stages a symbolic resurrection of Olive Schreiner. Together with his friend Willempie, son of the laborer Windpomp killed in the story, he steals Schreiner's bones from the sarcophagus on top of Buffelskop, weaves them together with wire, dresses them in an old dress of his mother's and erects the entire effigy on a "cross . . . made from old fencing-droppers and a sawn-down telephone pole" (180). The whole process is conceived of as an act of rebellion—resurrection as insurrection again—driven by a confusing array of motives: the narrator's identification with his "brave ancestors, the Rebels, who would not bow before the British Empire" (179); the town librarian's declaration that "Olive understood this country. She could unite. She could write life back into the country" (166); and the narrator's and Willempie's sense of grief and outrage at the death of Willempie's father at the hands of the local white civil defence force commando.
The unifying purpose of their rebellion is undercut by reminders of the terrible divisions in South African society, and its efficacy is obviously in question. Van Heerden emphasizes the weakness of their gesture by making Schreiner's skeleton "not complete: one arm was--crazily--only shoulder and hand with fingerbones" (180). Nevertheless, the story ends back in the Cradock Library with a reassertion of "Olive Schreiner" as written, available, and potentially unifying history, still a presence:

What can I say?
Thy voice is on the rolling air,
I hear thee where the waters run,
Thou standest in the rising sun...?
Yes, that too. (183)

Post-colonial Africa (including the "new" South Africa) clearly has a history— that sense of Jacobson's of the past being an integral part of the present; and its graves—whether unknown or grandiose—are markers both of violence and of sacrifice. But here at the "end of history" what future is there for a "new" African history? In the same way that it is possible to re-write the statute books and still not remove de facto apartheid, even a re-writing of history texts, with the inclusion of oral history and so on, may not be adequate to re-order the dominant way of seeing embodied there by the statue of Rhodes on the backside of Table Mountain and enshrined in his "View of the World" at the top of the Matopos.
1. This comment is perhaps interesting in the light of my focus on women writers, as feminists have been suspicious of the theoretical notion of the death of the subject at the very moment when a feminist subject appeared to be claiming her rights of speech and agency. While Fukuyama's politics may not coincide with Foucault's in many other respects, they do both seem to limit the theoretical impact available to previously marginalized Others.

2. For Derrida's discussion of "A Writing Lesson" see especially Of Grammatology 97-140. Derrida's whole argument in Of Grammatology seems relevant here: in its questioning of the "civilized"/"savage" binarism (among others); in its insistence on the violence of writing; and in its extension of the notion of "writing" beyond the act of making legible marks on a page.

3. Or one might think of the early Zionist slogan pertaining to a similarly arid landscape--"A land without people for a people without land." Curiously enough, the British colonial authorities offered the Zionist Congress movement an "empty" part of Kenya as a "homeland" in 1902. Herzl and his colleagues declined the offer. (See Wolff 52-53; Kennedy 24).

4. The contrasts within novels, between Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange or Talbothays Dairy and Flintcomb-Ash, for instance, make the point. See also Chapter 3.

5. See Trooper Peter 7-8; or the "fantasy England of constant tea-parties, snowfalls and woodland" (First 93) of her first novel Undine.

6. First and Scott point to the fact that while Cronwright may have ignored or been high-handed with regard to some of the directives of Olive's will, he was assiduous in carrying out her wishes regarding the burial (330-332). The suggestion that he wrote himself into history with her also arises in the phrase used by some of Olive's close women friends regarding his "autobiography of his wife" (First 20).

7. On the process of establishing a vantage point and then claiming the land below it, see Chapter 3, especially my comments on Mary Louise Pratt and her analysis of Victorian traveller-writers working in the "Monarch-of-all-I-survey" mode. As Pratt observes, many of these writers opted for "a
brand of verbal painting whose highest calling was to produce for the home audience the peak moments at which geographical 'discoveries' were 'won' for England" (Imperial Eyes 201).

8. In retaining these terms I am again recalling Lévi-Strauss, and to some extent my comparison of non-rational belief is in line with his transvaluation of them: beliefs are "preferences . . . denoting a kind of wisdom which savage races practised spontaneously and the rejection of which, by the modern world, is the real madness" (Tristes Tropiques 123); rather than reverse the binarism, however, my aim is to collapse it.

9. W.T. Stead is an interesting intermediary here as he was both a close ally of Schreiner on the issue of prostitution, and such a close friend and admirer of Rhodes that he was at one point chosen by Rhodes as an executor of his will. Stead's fame as pioneering editor (of the Pall Mall Gazette, and The Review of Reviews) and social campaigner is matched by the notoriety of his belief in the spirit world. Closely associated with various occultist movements around the turn of the century, Stead anticipated the tabloid journalism of our own day by publishing interviews with the dead (see Brantlinger 247-249).


11. This is the subject of the last two chapters of The City and the Country (278-306). It is perhaps apposite to note that Olive Schreiner went to England to get African Farm published, and that Blixen chose to write in English rather than her native Danish or the farm's lingua franca Kiswahili. The "Africa" of both writers, however it is represented, is all too easily apprehended by the metropolitan audience as "merely exotic" (Williams 288), not as part and parcel of an economic order.

12. See Thurman 233-234 and 246; Pelensky 117-118 and 127; Trzebinski 434-5.

13. For the cause of the crash, see Trzebinski 446. For the idea of its being fated, see also Trzebinski 440-441--where she quotes Beryl Markham's claim that "both Arap Ruta, her personal servant, and Tom Campbell Black, her flying instructor, had strange premonitions" (440)--and 443. Blixen records that "This was the only time that I asked Denys to take me with him on his aeroplane that he would not do it" (297). If Finch Hatton really did know, as Yeats imagines Major Robert Gregory knowing, that he would "Meet [his] fate/ Somewhere among the clouds above" (Yeats 69), then one has to ask about the "fate" of Kamau, "his own
boy," who also died in the crash. According to Blixen, Kamau "was terrified of flying" (298), anyway; his silence is perhaps the most eloquent example of the violence of the European versions of Africa in this chapter.

14. In light of my subsequent discussion of specifically war-related elegies, it is also interesting to speculate whether or not Blixen had Horace and/or Wilfred Owen in mind when she wrote, "It was fit and decorous."

15. As an aristocratic sportsman he exhibits a certain heroic "manliness," meeting (in part at least) two out of the three requirements Brantlinger identifies as the characteristics of imperial Gothic (Brantlinger 230). Blixen represents him as outside the pale of "ordinary" colonial life, and suggests that his success as a safari-organizer was due to his skill as a tracker and hunter—skill that suggests "individual regression or going native" (Brantlinger 230); furthermore, his flying gives him opportunities for "adventure and heroism" that imperial Gothic sees as diminished in the modern world (230).

16. In fact, Blixen's comment re the "Natives'" affection for Finch Hatton should be modified by the fact that their nickname for him meant "To tread upon" (see Pelensky 102, Thurman 127, Trzebinski 210, and my earlier speculations on Blixen's being called "Lioness").


18. See Forster, E.M.: "Notes on the English Character" in Abinger Harvest: "It is not that the Englishman can't feel—it is that he is afraid to feel. He has been taught at his public school that feeling is bad form" (5). Judith Thurman describes Finch Hatton as having "an almost morbid aversion to emotional demands" (Thurman 246).

19. Passim: see, for example, Trzebinski 234-5 or 428.

20. Schreiner's representation of Trooper Peter Halket may be a case in point. Further devious links between Finch Hatton, Peter Halket and Tom Brown might be made via Frederick Selous. Selous was educated at Rugby in the 1860s and 1870s, but was notorious, like Tom Brown, for his bird-nesting activities, a penchant for which he also shared with Schreiner's fictional Peter. Selous considered writing an updated version of Thomas Hughes's novel, and drafted part of a manuscript provisionally entitled Fred LeRoux's Schooldays. The near approximation to Selous's own name suggests that the novel would have been highly autobiographical.
21. Or like Brooke himself: both born in 1887, they had similar public-school and Oxbridge educations, and earned reputations for style and good looks that made them attractive to men as well as women. More fundamentally, it is their "fields" that connect them: the memorial to Finch Hatton at Eton bears the motto "Famous in these fields and by his many friends much beloved" (Out of Africa 307); the connection between Eton's fields of play and England's fields of battle is a well-established one, but I find the link between those two and the field of the ideal rural England (a field that unlike the Karoo veld has "corners") irresistible. The connection hammers home the point that the pastoral mode is anything but transparent in its representation of a "natural" landscape.

22. In The Darkened Room: Women, Power, and Spiritualism in Late Victorian England, Alex Owen points out the various connections between spiritualism and dissenting religion, socialism and abolitionism; he contends that "women's rights formed an integral, although not dominant part of the progressive spiritualist programme" (27), and that "Victorian mediumship was a form of protest and dissent which predated 'political' awareness" (240). Similarly, Ann Braude in Radical Spirits: Spiritualism and Women's Rights in Nineteenth-Century America draws attention to "spiritualism's association with abolition" (29) and contends that "Spiritualism held two attractions that proved irresistible to thousands of Americans: rebellion against death and rebellion against authority" (30).

23. See also Crais: White Supremacy and Black Resistance, esp. chapter 10, "Empire and the Ancestors". Crais points out that the symbolism of the prophetesses' dreams "stressed, if only implicitly, the pre-colonial order and the return to the beginning of time", but goes on to say that "the prophecies seamlessly incorporated symbols of Christian eschatology"; that incorporation makes the movement "a case in which the essentially conservative teachings of evangelical mission Christianity were subverted into an ideology of resistance" (207). Peires stresses that it is a misconception to see the Cattle Killing as a 'pagan reaction' (as colonialist historians had tended to do); instead, the movement was, according to Peires "one which combined Christian and pre-Christian elements fused under the heroic leadership of the expected redeemer, the son of Sifubasibanzi, the Broad-Chested One" (Peires 123).

24. Don Mattera uses the phrase "Memory is a weapon" (Mattera 151) in his autobiographical account of Sophiatown in the '50s in which he recalls a period of heterogeneity and uninhibited cultural expression. While my essay has
concentrated on rural rather than urban landscape, it seems pertinent to point out that Mattera's romanticization of Sophiatown and of his own gangsterism evinces another kind of nostalgia, another memorial reconstruction of relative innocence in a less viciously complicated age.

25. Although it's a "crazy" sort of leap, van Heerden's qualified fictional optimism in the face of the violence of apartheid matches the qualified optimism of Albie Sachs, maimed by a car-bomb in Maputo in 1988. Like van Heerden's fictional Schreiner skeleton, Sachs was left without an arm but amazingly without bitterness, imagining only "soft vengeance" in an idealistic culture of gentleness and love where the rule of law is not a weapon exploited by rulers and lawyers. I mention Sachs because of his violent disarming and his disarming of violence, and because in The Soft Vengeance of a Freedom Fighter one of the key ancestral ghosts he brings back is Ruth First: she who most impressively resurrected the rebel Olive Schreiner, but who paid for her own rebellion against apartheid with her own life, assassinated in a letter-bomb attack.

26. See Sachs's caution in Soft Vengeance that a Bill of Rights might "simply be a means of entrenching white privilege" (165).
CONCLUSION:
PLAYING TOO LIGHT, TOO LATE

Although much of this study has dealt with successful, even powerful, inventions, much has been about failure. I cannot comment on its success, but I would like to conclude with two admissions of my own failure.

I have thought of this study as a three-part meditation about inventions of self through time and space, specifically about white female selves in colonial Africa, rather than as a linear argument. Textual production, however, appears to impose linearity: the text starts with an "Introduction" (albeit written later than most of what follows it), and now I am closing with a conclusion, written last of all. Between those framing fragments the text is, I hope, expansive rather than developmental, with room for the discontinuities and contradictions that a more traditional argument might not have accommodated. Circling round and round my subject, I have tried to follow my own principle of the omphalos, avowing the connectedness of people, things, the things that people produce, and the people produced by things.

The appearance of linearity, however, foregrounds awkward questions of priority and selection that tend to lie
shadowed in the text. I treated the phrase "I had a farm in Africa" as a heuristic, allowing it to provide structure, and to generate material for me. As a result, I have produced a work that starts with the invention of the white woman writer's "I," that goes on to discuss the invention of the "farm" in Africa, and finally addresses the invention of "Africa" itself. Despite my claim to omphalogocentrism, despite the fact that lines run both ways, the structure of my text, no less than its selectivity, thus appears to have given priority once more to the white subject. What are the consequences of that?

Can I, for instance, claim that my playing in the dark continent is congruent with Toni Morrison's examination of whiteness and the literary imagination in American literature? In many ways our aims do indeed match: like Morrison, I am not interested in replacing one domination with another (Playing in the Dark 8); like Morrison, I am interested in the effect of white people's racism on themselves (11); like Morrison, I insist on the serviceability and availability of blacks for white invention of individual, racial, and national identity (25). Morrison's claim that "when matters of race are located and called attention to in American literature, critical response has tended to be on the order of a humanistic nostrum--or a dismissal mandated by the label 'political'" (12) resonates with my discussion of the canonical
discrepancy between *Heart of Darkness* and *Trooper Peter Halket*; her claim that Willa Cather's non-canonical *Sapphira and the Slave-Girl* represents Cather's "struggle to address an almost completely buried subject: the interdependent working of power, race, and sexuality in a white woman's battle for coherence" (20) matches my efforts to read the presence of Africans in Karen Blixen's short stories as well as her memoirs. And so on.

However, the marking of our texts is necessarily different. When Morrison writes, "I am vulnerable to the inference that my enquiry has vested interests; that . . . I stand to benefit in ways not limited to intellectual fulfillment from this line of questioning," she does so as "an Afro-American and a writer" (12). The nature of her self-interest, whatever it may be, is not the same as the self-interested inventions of the non-Afro-Americans she writes about. Like Morrison, I am vulnerable to the inference that my enquiry has vested interests; more, I am vulnerable to the inference that in perpetuating and prioritizing the white subject I share those vested interests with the white writers I critique. I do not know how to defend myself against that inference other than by quoting Morrison:

> in a wholly racialized society, there is no escape from racially inflected language, and the work writers do to unhobble the imagination from the demands of that language is complicated, interesting, and definitive. (12-13)
My second failure has to do with history. A work of this nature is almost always out of date by the time it is produced. Not just events, but other works, other ways of working, have overtaken it. Many years ago, I first conceived of the project in terms of "frontier feminism" and dreamed of comparing Karen Blixen, Olive Schreiner, Willa Cather, and Miles Franklin as pioneering women among men. Had I attempted such a transcendent, transcontinental project, I suspect that I should have treated the four women in heroic vein as stoic and noble souls whose ideals were ahead of their time. As indeed, in many ways, they were. By three years ago, when I finally started work, it was apparent that I could no longer discuss women among men, without regard to race, class, and geographical and historical specificity: my focus altered accordingly. Then, while I was writing, one of the key inventions of my study, apartheid— an apparently solid object of opposition, and something that had inevitably colored (I use the phrase deliberately) my thought— was written off the statute books and into the history books. The election of 1994 brought the promise of one of the most enlightened constitutions ever, clouded with the fear of renewed sectarianism and the potential of a newly tyrannous majority. The future now is free, and very uncertain.

What is certain is that it will not be possible again to write in the same way what I have written here: a study
of white women writers in Africa. They will remain significant writers, I have no doubt, but no longer in the ways I have sketched, or at least, no longer only in those ways. I celebrate the fact that I am out of date.
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Born in England, but brought up in South Africa, Simon Lewis feels some of the strains of hybridity he attributes to Olive Schreiner and Karen Blixen. He moved from South Africa to England at age 17, completing his A-levels at St. Edward's School, Oxford before going on to read English at Worcester College, Oxford. He has subsequently spent time as a librarian in Oxford, as a graduate student at the University of South Carolina, as a full-time teacher of English in England and Tanzania, and as a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Florida. For six years he edited *Illuminations*, an international magazine of contemporary writing. Married in 1990, he has two children, aged 3 and nearly 1, and large bags under his eyes. He likes wearing hats and, despite being prone to moods of apocalyptic gloom, smiles a lot. He would like to feel optimistic about the future of Africa and his own ability to contribute to it, even from this distance.
I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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