

**Undeath and bare life: biopolitics and the Gothic in contemporary  
British fiction**

Kathryn Elizabeth Bird

Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Leeds

School of English

March 2016

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is her own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

This copy has been supplied on the understanding that it is copyright material and that no quotation from the thesis may be published without proper acknowledgement.

© 2016 The University of Leeds and Kathryn Elizabeth Bird

The right of Kathryn Elizabeth Bird to be identified as Author of this work has been asserted by her in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

## Acknowledgement

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr Nicholas Ray, for his excellent advice, support, patience and good humour throughout this process. His dedication to fostering this project from its earliest inception has been invaluable, and I could not have wished for a better supervisor.

I am also immensely grateful for the scholarship I received from the Arts and Humanities Research Council: the opportunity to focus on my research while being supported by this scholarship has been a privilege.

Thanks are due to a number of people who have supported and encouraged my academic and professional progress. In particular, I would like to thank Doctor Kaye Mitchell and Professor Hal Gladfelder at the University of Manchester for encouraging and helping me to pursue doctoral studies. I am also grateful to Professor Simon Swift for the insightful feedback he provided on some of the early work of this thesis during the upgrade process, and for his support as my teaching mentor. I would like to thank Dr Marie-Luise Kohlke at *Neo-Victorian Studies* for her helpful editorial feedback on some of the material which forms part of the third chapter of this thesis.

I am very grateful to Meera Shekar for her early and continued expressions of faith in my pursuit of postgraduate studies. There are also numerous people among the postgraduate community at the School of English whose support has been vital: in particular, I would like to thank Dr Samantha Reive-Holland, Dr Simon Sandison, Dr Edward Powell, and Dr Arthur Rose for intellectually stimulating conversations and encouragement. Special thanks must go to Ragini Mohite for her warmth, support, kindness and sound advice, especially during the final years of this project. I also owe so much to the friendship, solidarity, and unstinting generosity and kindness of Jessica Ballantine.

This project would not have been possible without the love and support of my sister, Hannah, whose faith in me has been invaluable. Finally, immeasurable thanks are due to my mother, Anne-Marie, for her practical and emotional support throughout this process; for her faith in my ambitions; for being my first and best teacher – really, for just about everything.

## **Abstract**

This thesis examines representations of undeath in relation to political power over life in a selection of contemporary British novels published between 1990 and 2010. The novels I focus on draw significantly on themes and imagery from the Gothic genre in order to reflect on the ways in which political, legal and social institutions both produce and depend on certain constructions of human life; on the one hand, the construction of life that is considered worthy of being supported and preserved; and, on the other hand, the construction of life that is judged to be a threat to the health of a population, and is thus abandoned to the experience of legal or social ‘undeath’. Although this thesis begins by situating this form of undeath in relation to Michel Foucault’s work on biopolitics, it draws primarily on subsequent philosophical reflections on the intersection of politics and life in the work of Giorgio Agamben, Roberto Esposito, and Jacques Derrida. All of these thinkers pose crucial questions concerning the relationship between life and politics, law, and sovereignty, as well as interrogating divisions between life and technology and between human and animal life which prove critical in decisions on which lives will be fostered and which lives abandoned. I argue that the Gothic genre constitutes a key resource for contemporary British writers whose work displays an insistent concern with the relationship between political power and biological life; moreover, I also argue that the novels in question often point to moments where theories of ‘bare life’ and of biopolitics in their current forms sometimes struggle to fully account for diverse experiences of being undead before political power over life in the contemporary period.

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgement.....	iii
Abstract.....	iv
Introduction.....	1
Taking life and making live .....	1
The ‘new living dead man’: biopolitics and the Gothic.....	6
Spectral politics.....	19
Chapter Summaries .....	25
Chapter 1 – A financial sentence of death: <i>homo œconomicus</i> and <i>homo sacer</i> in Christopher Priest’s <i>The Prestige</i> (1995).....	32
Introduction: ringing cash tills and fruitless speculation .....	32
Entrepreneurship and accounting.....	38
The Prestiges .....	54
A financial sentence of death .....	65
Chapter 2 – Poor things, poor creatures: biopolitics, biotechnology and immunity in Alasdair Gray’s <i>Poor Things</i> (1992) and Kazuo Ishiguro’s <i>Never Let Me Go</i> (2005) .....	76
Introduction: The Modern Epimetheus .....	76
Immunity.....	84
Automata.....	91
Anatomy.....	103
Poor Things, Poor Creatures .....	119
Chapter 3 – ‘Civilised society doesn’t just happen’: the animal, the law and ‘Victorian values’ in Kim Newman’s <i>Anno Dracula</i> (1992).....	128
Introduction: a reversion towards barbarism .....	128
An ape with a straight razor: the production of the juridical subject.....	134
Hunting in packs on Pall Mall: the wolf and the state of exception .....	150
Alternative histories .....	164
Chapter 4 – ‘I am a settlement, a place of safety, a bombproof shelter’: security, hospitality and living ghosts in Hilary Mantel’s <i>Beyond Black</i> (2005) and Nicola Barker’s <i>Darkmans</i> (2007).....	173
Introduction: biopolitics and space .....	173
Letting the right one in: scenes of (in)hospitality in suburbia .....	176
Suburbs, biopolitics, and gender .....	176
Homes are very unsafe places to linger.....	183

Hostility and hospitality .....	191
‘Weren’t all true nomads at their happiest in limbo?’: tourists, vagabonds and non-places .....	203
The bewildered dead .....	203
Indifference is a kind of murder, a death of care .....	217
Chapter 5 – From the cradle to the grave: haunting at the founding of the welfare state in Sarah Waters’s <i>The Little Stranger</i> (2009).....	228
Introduction: the nature of the haunting.....	228
Persons and things.....	233
The deciding machine of the person .....	238
From the cradle to the grave .....	250
A failed modernity narrative .....	262
Conclusion .....	274
Bibliography .....	281

## Introduction

### Taking life and making live

In the final lecture of the course entitled *Society Must Be Defended*, Michel Foucault makes a striking statement about what he describes as ‘power’s hold over life.’ For Foucault, ‘the acquisition of power over man insofar as man is a living being’ is one of the ‘basic phenomena’ of the nineteenth century, but in order to understand its development, it is necessary to return to the notion of the sovereign right of life and death, which Foucault describes as ‘a strange right’, even ‘at the theoretical level’:

In one sense, to say that the sovereign has a right of life and death means that he can, basically, either have people put to death or let them live, or in any case that life and death are not natural or immediate phenomena which are primal or radical, and which fall outside the field of power. If we take the argument a little further, or to the point where it becomes paradoxical, it means that in terms of his relationship with the sovereign, the subject is, by rights, neither dead nor alive. From the point of view of life and death, the subject is neutral, and it is thanks to the sovereign that the subject has the right to be alive or, possibly, the right to be dead.

Before the sovereign, then, the subject is ‘neutral’, ‘neither dead nor alive’; or, we might say, the subject is ‘undead’, really more dead than alive, because this sovereign right of life and death ‘is always exercised in an unbalanced way’, with the balance ‘tipped in favor of death.’ The ‘essence’ of this sovereign right ‘is actually the right to kill’, because it is only ‘at the moment when the sovereign can kill that he exercises his right over life.’<sup>1</sup>

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, this sovereign right to take life or let live gradually ‘came to be complemented by a new right’, one which ‘does not erase the old right, but which does penetrate it, permeate it.’ This new right –

---

<sup>1</sup> Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76*, ed. by Alessandro Fontana and Mauro Bertani, trans. by David Macey (London: Penguin, 2003), pp.239-40.

‘precisely the opposite right’ – is ‘the power to “make” live and “let” die’. Although this new right does draw on existing techniques of ‘disciplinary’ power over ‘man-as-body’, it nevertheless operates on a different ‘scale’, targeting ‘the living man’ at the level of ‘man-as-species’: it is ‘a “biopolitics” of the human race’, which focuses on ‘overall processes characteristic of birth, death, production, illness, and so on’ as they affect this species body.<sup>2</sup> But what becomes of the ‘dramatic and somber absolute power to take life’ when this new ‘technology of biopower’ emerges from ‘beneath’ it, a power which ‘consists in making live and letting die’? According to Foucault, the development of biopower goes hand in hand with ‘the famous gradual disqualification of death’, which saw death, once characterised by ‘great public ritualization’, becoming ‘the most private and shameful thing of all’; indeed, under biopower death begins to constitute the end or limit of power, ‘the moment when the individual escapes all power’. Biopower can only find a purchase on death ‘in general, overall, or statistical terms’ in the form of mortality rates.<sup>3</sup>

What interests me here is the example Foucault uses to address the ‘clash’ between the powers of ‘sovereignty over death’ and ‘the regularization of life’, an example which again involves a strange state of undeath. Foucault’s example is the death of General Franco, a man ‘who had exercised the absolute power of life and death over hundreds of thousands of people’, but who at his own death, which involved being placed on life-support – a technology whose development Foucault attributes not merely to ‘scientific prowess’ but to ‘the actual exercise of political biopower’ – came ‘under the influence of a power that managed life so well’, a power that had ‘become so good at keeping people alive’, that it can now keep people alive after the point ‘when, in biological terms, they should have been dead

---

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp.242-3.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp.247-8.



long ago'.<sup>4</sup> Yet this example poses another problem for understanding how this new power to make live actually operates, a problem which is evident in the question Foucault poses only a few pages later: how can a technology of power 'which takes life as both its object and its objective' and essentially aims 'to improve life' go on to 'demand deaths' amongst not only its 'enemies' but also 'its own citizens' – how can it take life, or 'let die'?<sup>5</sup>

For Foucault, the answer to this problem lies in racism, which functions primarily as 'a way of introducing a break into the domain of life that is under power's control: the break between what must live and what must die.' The production of distinct and hierarchized 'races' becomes 'a way of establishing a biological-type caesura within a population that appears to be a biological domain'. Having fragmented the population into specific groups, the 'second function' of racism is to establish a 'positive relationship' between the death of another and one's own continued survival. This relation is ultimately 'not a military or warlike relationship of confrontation, but a biological-type relationship', which is underpinned by the assumption that the vigour and strength of the 'good race' will increase in parallel with the extent to which the 'inferior species' dies out, such that life in general will be 'healthier and purer.' Under the system of biopower, then, 'killing or the imperative to kill is acceptable only if it results [...] in the elimination of the biological threat to and the improvement of the species or race.' However, this killing should not be understood as 'simply murder as such, but also every form of

---

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp.248-9.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p.254.

indirect murder: the fact of exposing someone to death, increasing the risk of death for some people, or, quite simply, political death, expulsion, rejection, and so on.’<sup>6</sup>

This strange state of being undead before political power over life is the focus of this thesis. I am interested both in undeath as it appears in more ‘literal’ forms (so to speak) – for example, in the figure of the comatose person kept alive by a scientific and political power to make life live beyond the advent of biological death – and also in the peculiar situation articulated by Foucault of the subject being neither dead nor alive before the sovereign power to take life, and the continued manifestation of this form of undeath in the era of modern biopolitics, in which the subject can remain biologically alive but can endure ‘political death’ by being expelled and utterly exposed to death. As Thomas Carl Wall puts it in a much more recent reflection on biopolitics, ‘[t]he very certainty of belonging to the human race, the certainty of being alive, is the most fragile and politically slick of conditions.’<sup>7</sup>

This thesis will examine a selection of contemporary British novels published during a twenty-year period from 1990-2010 which draw on themes and imagery from the Gothic genre in order to depict experiences of undeath. Using the work of Giorgio Agamben, Jacques Derrida, and Roberto Esposito, I will argue that contemporary British fiction displays an insistent concern with the relationship between political power and biological life. My analysis of novels by Christopher Priest, Alasdair Gray, Kazuo Ishiguro, Kim Newman, Nicola Barker, Hilary Mantel, and Sarah Waters will demonstrate that the Gothic genre constitutes a key resource for contemporary British writers when figuring the experience of the ‘fragile’ and

---

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp.254-6.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas Carl Wall, ‘Au Hasard’, in *Politics, Metaphysics, and Death: Essays on Giorgio Agamben’s Homo Sacer*, ed. by Andrew Norris (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005), pp.31-48 (p.35).

‘politically slick’ condition of belonging to the human race, or simply of being alive. I will also argue that the novels in question often point to moments where theories of ‘bare life’ and of biopolitics in their current forms sometimes struggle to fully account for the experience of being undead before political power over life in the contemporary period.

The rest of this introduction is divided into a further three sections. The second section outlines the theoretical and critical frameworks in relation to biopolitics and the Gothic which I use in my analysis of my primary texts. I begin by addressing the significance of Agamben’s work in this thesis, and by outlining the concept of ‘bare life’ and the key figure of the *homo sacer* in relation to ideas of undeath, as well as pointing to Agamben’s main examples of this figure in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Following this, I consider the centrality of the Gothic genre in this thesis, and summarise the contemporary developments in scholarship on the Gothic which point to those aspects of the genre’s history and development which make its typical themes and imagery ripe for appropriation in contemporary novelists’ explorations of major biopolitical issues. I end this section by considering Esposito’s response to the Gothic and to biopolitics, and by situating his approach in relation to that of Agamben.

The third section of this introduction focuses on Derrida, the other key theorist whose work I draw on in this thesis. I begin by drawing attention to the relationship between Derrida’s work and the Gothic, focusing especially on critical responses to the ‘spectral turn’ and uses of the concept of ‘hauntology’ in Gothic scholarship. I then examine some scholarly works which use ‘hauntology’ to examine forms of political death in the contemporary period, or which draw on ideas of the spectral more broadly, and outline where Agamben’s emphasis on the concept

of the sovereign ban can also be used to think about depictions of hauntings in contemporary fiction. I end this section by outlining the interactions between Derrida's thought and recent work on biopolitics, emphasising the prominence given to considerations of the relationship between politics and life across his *oeuvre*, and suggesting some key moments where his thought intersects with that of both Agamben and Esposito.

In the closing section of this introduction, I outline my decision to turn to the specific twenty-year period, the British political context, and the particular novels I have chosen to focus on in this thesis, situating this discussion in relation to the key biopolitical issues and aspects of Gothic scholarship dealt with in the first and second sections of this introduction. I end this introduction by outlining the structure the thesis takes, and by providing summaries of the chapters.

### **The 'new living dead man': biopolitics and the Gothic**

The fragility of these 'politically slick' conditions of being alive and belonging to the human race has become a major preoccupation across disciplines in recent years; in fact, in their introduction to the recently published *Against Life*, Alastair Hunt and Stephanie Youngblood identify 'a veritable "turn to life"' in theory, in which life is examined not only in ontological or epistemological terms, but also in 'ethical and political' terms which emphasise the intersection of life with various 'technologies of power'. Hunt and Youngblood list a rather astonishing array of terms which feature in this 'turn to life', ranging from Eric Santner's 'creaturely life' to Judith Butler's 'precarious' and 'grievable' life, and from Zygmunt Bauman's 'wasted life'

to Jacques Derrida's 'living on'.<sup>8</sup> But it is Giorgio Agamben's conception of 'bare life' that I have chosen to couple with 'undeath' in the title of this thesis. In part, this is because Agamben's work on biopolitics has arguably had the greatest impact of any post-Foucauldian theorisation of biopolitics, and has been taken up across a broad range of disciplines. However, I also prioritise the term 'bare life' in connection with 'undeath' in my title because undeath is a key image for Agamben, not least in his central preoccupation with the 'bare life' of the *homo sacer*, the 'living dead man'.<sup>9</sup>

As Thomas Lemke observes, although Agamben does engage with Foucault's work, he takes a different view of the history and development of biopolitics. While Foucault locates the emergence of biopower in the eighteenth century and distinguishes this power from the sovereign right of life and death, Agamben insists that the modern era does not constitute such a decisive 'historical caesura'; rather, the modern era sees 'a generalization and radicalization' of an ancient sovereign relation between power and life which continues to underpin biopolitics. For Agamben, the present can thus be understood as 'the catastrophic terminus of a political tradition that had its origins in Ancient Greece and that led to the Nazi concentration camps'.<sup>10</sup> For this reason, Agamben's theorisation of biopolitics has a much stronger thanatopolitical character than Foucault's.

Agamben begins his account of biopolitics in *Homo Sacer* by drawing attention to the Ancient Greek division of life into *zoē* or 'simple natural life', which

---

<sup>8</sup> Alastair Hunt and Stephanie Youngblood, 'Introduction: Against Life', in *Against Life*, ed. by Alastair Hunt and Stephanie Youngblood (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2016), Amazon Kindle e-book (loc. 198 - loc.212).

<sup>9</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. by Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, [1995] 1998), p.131.

<sup>10</sup> Thomas Lemke, *Biopolitics: An Advanced Introduction*, trans. by Eric Frederick Trump (New York and London: New York University Press, 2011), p.53.

is ‘excluded from the *polis* in the strictest sense, and remains confined – as merely reproductive life – to the sphere of the *oikos*’, and *bios*, ‘the form or way of living proper to an individual or a group’, ‘a qualified life, a particular way of life.’<sup>11</sup> For Agamben, the development of biopolitics is only made possible by ‘the entry of *zoē* into the *polis* – the politicization of bare life as such’, which ‘signals a radical transformation of the political-philosophical categories of classical thought.’<sup>12</sup> In *Homo Sacer*, Agamben sets out to ‘thematically interrogate the link between bare life and politics, a link that secretly governs the modern ideologies seemingly so distant from one another’. Hence, the ‘protagonist’ of the book is the ‘bare life’ of the figure of the *homo sacer* or ‘sacred man’, a figure drawn from ‘archaic Roman law’ who ‘*may be killed and yet not sacrificed*’, and who embodies the way in which (continuing into the modern era) ‘human life is included in the juridical order [...] solely in the form of its exclusion (that is, its capacity to be killed)’.<sup>13</sup>

The ‘bare life’ of the *homo sacer* can be seen to correspond in many ways to the paradoxical situation of the undead subject before sovereign power articulated by Foucault. The *homo sacer* ‘exists on the threshold that belongs neither to the world of the living nor to the world of the dead: he is a living dead man’,<sup>14</sup> whose reappearances over time can be tracked from archaic Roman law to the concentration camp, whose inmates Agamben describes as beings who lacked ‘almost all the rights and expectations that we customarily attribute to human existence, and yet were still biologically alive’. They therefore ‘came to be situated in a limit zone between life and death, inside and outside, in which they were no longer anything but bare life’,

---

<sup>11</sup> Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, pp.1-2.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p.4.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p.4, p.8.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p.99.

and were thus ‘abandoned, in a state of exception, to the most extreme misfortunes.’<sup>15</sup>

In the third part of *Homo Sacer*, Agamben identifies a number of figures who might be understood as examples of the *homo sacer*, including the refugee, who is the ‘new living dead man’, perhaps the most ubiquitous example of bare life in the contemporary period; the bandit, expelled from the *polis* but ‘caught in the sovereign ban’; ‘the *Muselmann*’, the ‘most extreme figure of the camp inhabitant’; and ‘overcomatose’ bodies waiting to have their organs harvested for transplantation.<sup>16</sup> Although some of these figures – the ‘overcomatose’ person and the bandit, for example – do feature in some of the novels I will be analysing in this thesis, my contention is that contemporary British writers display a marked tendency to draw on the Gothic genre in order to depict the experience of being situated (like the *homo sacer*) in ‘a limit zone between life and death’. One could attribute this use of the Gothic genre to the general fascination with the Gothic evident in contemporary culture: as Alexandra Warwick puts it, ‘[w]e live, apparently, in Gothic times’, during which the Gothic appears ‘everywhere’, from academic publications to contemporary popular culture.<sup>17</sup> However, I suggest that there are aspects of the Gothic, especially in terms of the genre’s origins and development, which make themes and imagery drawn from Gothic texts particularly apt for depicting the contemporary experience of political death.

---

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p.159.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p.131, pp.183-6.

<sup>17</sup> Alexandra Warwick, ‘Feeling Gothicky?’, *Gothic Studies*, 9 (2007), 5-15 (p.5).

The term ‘Gothic’ is notoriously difficult to define: in fact, David Punter describes it as a ‘contested site’.<sup>18</sup> As Catherine Spooner and Emma McEvoy observe, it was once ‘taken for granted’ that the term ‘Gothic’ describes a particular set of texts ranging from *The Castle of Otranto* in 1764 to *Melmoth the Wanderer* in 1820, which ‘could be easily identified by their incorporation of dominant tropes such as imperilled heroines, dastardly villains, ineffectual heroes, supernatural events, dilapidated buildings and atmospheric weather’. Later texts which echoed these tropes could simply be categorised as ‘throwbacks’ to the earlier examples of the Gothic genre. However, towards the end of the twentieth century this model came to be considered increasingly ‘inadequate’, and critical work on the Gothic began to define the genre according to a wider range of emphases, including a focus on ‘the returning past’, ‘a dual interest in transgression and decay’, a ‘commitment to exploring the aesthetics of fear’, and a ‘cross-contamination of reality and fantasy’.<sup>19</sup> In turn, this enabled critical work on the Gothic to address a much broader range of texts; for example, in his study of geography in the Victorian Gothic, Robert Mighall explains his decision (which ‘might puzzle readers’) to characterise certain works as Gothic to be a result of his treating the Gothic as a ‘mode’ rather than a genre, ‘the principal defining structure of which is its attitude to the past and its unwelcome legacies.’<sup>20</sup>

In this thesis, I am not seeking to situate the novels I analyse within a rigid set of generic conventions that can be described as ‘Gothic’; indeed, I am not making the case that contemporary British writers are necessarily producing ‘Gothic’ novels.

---

<sup>18</sup> David Punter, ‘Introduction: The Ghost of a History’, in *A New Companion to the Gothic*, ed. by David Punter (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), pp.1-9 (p.1).

<sup>19</sup> Catherine Spooner and Emma McEvoy, ‘Introduction: Approaching Gothic’, in *The Routledge Companion to the Gothic*, ed. by Catherine Spooner and Emma McEvoy (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), pp.1-3 (p.1).

<sup>20</sup> Robert Mighall, *A Geography of Victorian Gothic Fiction: Mapping History’s Nightmares* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.xix.



As I will outline in more detail at the end of this introduction, although some of my primary texts are more recognisably Gothic in terms of their structure and content, others make more or less explicit references to the Gothic tradition, as well as borrowing select themes and imagery from key Gothic texts, without necessarily drawing on a broad range of the genre's aesthetic conventions. I am therefore more concerned with those particular features of Gothic texts and of the genre's history that make Gothic themes and imagery especially ripe for appropriation by contemporary novelists for the exploration of biopolitical issues. Recurrent themes such as the return of the barbarous past, the emphasis on the unstable boundaries of life and death, and especially the interrogation of the figure of the human are of particular interest here, as are the specific political, economic, social and scientific developments which took place in the period when Gothic novels emerged, and in the subsequent periods (especially the *fin de siècle*) when the genre came to prominence again. A number of recently scholarly works on the Gothic have approached the genre in ways which point to its potential for exploring different modes of political power over life and death, whose key trends I will outline below.

In one of the earlier lectures in *Society Must Be Defended*, Foucault situates the rise of the Gothic novel in the context of the political and social 'struggles' taking place in Europe in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and argues that such novels are both 'tales of terror, fear, and mystery' and 'political novels [...] about the abuse of power and exactions; they are fables about unjust sovereigns'.<sup>21</sup> More recent studies of the origins of the Gothic genre, such as those by Angela Wright and Joseph Crawford, have further emphasised the significance of its early historical and political contexts; in fact, Crawford includes an epilogue

---

<sup>21</sup> Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, pp.211-12.

which briefly sketches out the relationship between the political and aesthetic notions of terror which informed the evolution of the Gothic genre and those which inform the so-called ‘war on terror’ of the present day.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, if recent work on the Gothic has foregrounded the genre’s entanglement with questions about the legitimacy and abuses of political power, scholarship on this genre has also begun to show a marked interest in the representation of law in Gothic texts. Susan Chaplin, for example, argues that from the eighteenth century to the present day, the law emerges in Gothic texts as a ‘contaminated’, ‘unstable’, and ‘at times monstrous’ space; while Bridget Marshall reads ‘the portrayals of courtrooms and laws’ in Gothic novels and the ‘formal testimonial and confessional structures’ of these texts as expressive of a broader concern with ‘the terrifying injustices of the real, day-lit world’.<sup>23</sup>

Recent scholarship on the Gothic thus tends to emphasise the genre’s interest in sovereign power and the rule of law, interests which can also be understood in terms of the Gothic genre’s central emphasis on the return of ‘the past and its unwelcome legacies’,<sup>24</sup> which may include the return of tyrannical rule and associated forms of sovereign violence. However, it is also important to note the significance of the *contrast* between the ‘barbarism’ of the (medieval and Roman Catholic) past and the more enlightened and civilised ‘modern values and interests’

---

<sup>22</sup> See Angela Wright, *Britain, France and the Gothic, 1764-1820: The Import of Terror* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), and Joseph Crawford, *Gothic Fiction and the Invention of Terrorism: The Politics and Aesthetics of Fear in the Age of the Reign of Terror* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp.189-98.

<sup>23</sup> Susan Chaplin, ‘Contemporary Gothic and the law’, in *The Cambridge Companion to the Modern Gothic*, ed. by Jerrold E. Hogle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp.37-52 (p.37). See also Chaplin’s *The Gothic and the Rule of Law, 1764-1820* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). Bridget M. Marshall, *The Transatlantic Gothic Novel and the Law, 1790-1860* (London and New York: Routledge, [2011] 2016), p.1.

<sup>24</sup> Mighall, p.xix.

which Mighall identifies as a defining feature of Gothic texts.<sup>25</sup> This contrast points to the Gothic's investment in models of political power over life other than that of sovereign power; in fact, the genre rose to prominence against the backdrop of the development of the liberal modes of governance which Foucault associates with the development of biopolitics.<sup>26</sup>

Hence, studies of some Gothic texts (*Frankenstein* in particular) tend to focus on ideas of population and birth rates, or on legislation concerned with the management of poverty, which are more readily associated with biopolitical approaches to managing the life of a population.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, *Frankenstein* is also a highly significant text inasmuch as it points to other late eighteenth-century developments which enabled the evolution of biopolitics, particularly the emergence of what Foucault terms the 'human sciences' of philology, political economy, and especially biology in this same period.<sup>28</sup> Biology is especially important: as Davide Tarizzo observes, for Foucault the onset of modernity heralds 'the simultaneous appearance of a knowledge about life and of a power over life, of biology and biopolitics'. However, in order for these two domains of knowledge and power to be established, life itself must emerge as a 'modern ontological abstraction', not only through biology as a 'science of life' but also through vitalism as 'a metaphysics of

---

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., pp.2-3.

<sup>26</sup> It is worth noting here that Agamben also acknowledges that in the late eighteenth century 'life is more and more clearly placed at the centre of State politics', although he insists that this political and cultural shift still owes its being to the ancient relationship between sovereign power and bare life rather than to the development of new models of governmentality. See *Homo Sacer*, p.111.

<sup>27</sup> See for example Tim Marshall's *Murdering to Dissect: Grave-robbing, Frankenstein, and the anatomy literature* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1995), and Clara Tuite, 'Frankenstein's Monster and Malthus' "Jaundiced Eye": Population, Body Politics, and the Monstrous Sublime', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 22 (1998), 141-55.

<sup>28</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An archaeology of the human sciences* (London and New York: Routledge, [1966] 2002), p.376.

life’, both of which ‘lead us to the same notion of life, to the same, deep, semantics of an “untamed force.”’<sup>29</sup>

Vitalism’s interest in this ‘untamed force’ is often associated with Gothic literature: for example, numerous critics have remarked on the role played by the so-called ‘vitalist controversy’ of 1814-19 in the genesis of Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, Gothic novels first emerge in a period which Robert Mitchell has recently described as the first age of ‘experimental vitalism’, a form of scholarly endeavour which seeks to ‘encourage perplexity about the being of life’ through ‘a search for liminal entities or “altered states” that seem to confuse the line between life and death.’<sup>31</sup> Interestingly, the Gothic genre – whose texts are likewise fascinated by liminal states between life and death – also enjoys a significant re-emergence in both of the subsequent periods Mitchell associates with ‘experimental vitalism’: the *fin de siècle* and ‘our own, current fascination with vitality’, which has extended beyond ‘the hard sciences’ to the social sciences and humanities, where scholars ‘have coined and adopted terms such as “non-organic life”, “bare life”, and “precarious life” to denote ontological dimensions of vitality’.<sup>32</sup>

Mitchell’s emphasis on experimental vitalism’s interest in liminal states between life and death also resonates with the ways in which the Gothic genre can be seen to register developments in the understanding of death as well as of life. For example, Megan Stern observes that although eighteenth-century medicine sought to

---

<sup>29</sup> Davide Tarizzo, ‘The Untamed Ontology’, trans. by Alvise Sforza Tarabochia, *Angelaki*, 16 (2011), 53-61 (p.54, p.56).

<sup>30</sup> See for example Marilyn Butler, ‘Introduction’, in *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus*, ed. by Marilyn Butler (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp.ix-li (p.xv-xxi), and more recently Catherine Packham, *Eighteenth-Century Vitalism: Bodies, Culture, Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp.177-8.

<sup>31</sup> Robert Mitchell, *Experimental Life: Vitalism in Romantic Science and Literature* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2013), pp.2-3.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.1-2.

subject death and dying to scientific scrutiny, and especially to demonstrate ‘the need for medical expertise in diagnosing death’, this did not have the effect of ‘discredit[ing] the idea of undeath’, but rather had the unintended consequence of giving rise to fears concerning the ‘gothic nightmare’ that ‘individuals who were only in a state of “suspended animation” might be prematurely buried’, a nightmare Stern finds reflected later in the work of Edgar Allan Poe.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, this ‘gothic nightmare’ of undeath persists in the prevalence of what Roger Luckhurst describes as ‘New Death anxieties’ in contemporary Gothic and science fiction films. The term ‘New Death’ denotes ‘an ongoing technoscientific, biomedical revolution which has profoundly disturbed the boundaries of life and death’, and which in the field of ‘cultural imagination [...] has unleashed a whole new order of liminal ontologies, the new undead’. Significantly, Luckhurst links this concept of ‘New Death’ to the ‘emergent field’ of ‘*thanatology*’, something he also associates with Agamben’s work on biopolitics, in which, Luckhurst argues, the ‘most extended example of the control of bare life’ is the figure of the coma patient.<sup>34</sup>

However, the prevalence of what Luckhurst describes as ‘liminal ontologies’ in Gothic texts is not only entangled with the boundaries of life and death but also with those between the human and the non-human. Indeed, I want to return here to the statement from Thomas Carl Wall which I quoted in the first section of this introduction: that in biopolitical terms, ‘[t]he very certainty of belonging to the human race, the certainty of being alive, is the most fragile and politically slick of

---

<sup>33</sup> Megan Stern, “‘Yes: — no: — I have been sleeping — and now — now — I am dead’”: undeath, the body and medicine’, *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences*, 39 (2008), 347-354 (pp.347-8).

<sup>34</sup> Roger Luckhurst, ‘Biomedical Horror: The New Death and the New Undead’, in *Technologies of the Gothic in Literature and Culture: Technogothics*, ed. by Justin D. Edwards (New York and London: Routledge, 2015), pp.84-98 (p.84, p.86).

conditions.’<sup>35</sup> As I will contend throughout this thesis, when depicting the biopolitical experience of being exposed to death, contemporary British novelists draw not only on imagery related to undeath from Gothic texts, but also (and often at the same time) on the Gothic genre’s preoccupation with the division between the human and the non-human. This fascination with ‘abhuman’ figures has been thoroughly explored by Kelly Hurley, who argues that *fin-de-siècle* British Gothic fiction ‘insistently’ and ‘almost obsessively’ depicts ‘the ruination of the human subject.’ Hurley locates this obsession in the context of ‘a general anxiety about the nature of human identity permeating late-Victorian and Edwardian culture’, particularly through discourses such as ‘[e]volutionism, criminal anthropology, [and] degeneration theory’, which ‘dismantle[d] conventional notions of the “human”’. The effects of this can be seen in the ‘slug-men, snake-women, ape-men, beast-people’, and other ‘phenomena at the borders of human identity and culture – insanity, criminality, barbarity, sexual perversion’, which populate Gothic texts in this period.<sup>36</sup>

The *fin-de-siècle* Gothic’s interest in ‘phenomena at the borders of human identity’, and especially in the division of the human from the non-human animal, has significant biopolitical resonances, particularly where discourses such as degeneration theory are concerned. Indeed, William Greenslade argues that it is possible to map ‘a line of descent from the academic debates around degeneration in Britain, Europe and America from the 1880s, through to the holocaust of the 1940s.’<sup>37</sup> Similar connections between degeneration theory and the rise of Nazism

---

<sup>35</sup> Wall, p.35.

<sup>36</sup> Kelly Hurley, *The Gothic Body: Sexuality, Materialism, and Degeneration at the Fin de Siècle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp.3-6.

<sup>37</sup> William Greenslade, *Degeneration, Culture and the Novel 1880-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p.255.

are also made in the work of Roberto Esposito, another key contemporary theorist of biopolitics whose work forms a central part of this thesis. In the chapter of *Bíos* entitled ‘Thanatopolitics’, Esposito turns to ‘artistic practices’, which, ‘[m]ore than theories’, are able to ‘register’ the ways in which degeneration theory ‘closes around its own sacrificial object, drastically separating it from the healthy type, pushing it towards a destiny of expulsion and annihilation’. In particular, he turns to *fin-de-siècle* British Gothic texts, including Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*, and compares the vampire’s status as belonging to ‘the world of the “non” – no longer alive, [...] still and above all else “undead,” repulsed by life and death into an abyss that cannot be bridged’ with the status of those ‘other vampires some fifty years later’ who will also be ‘designated’ as belonging to this world of the ‘non’, this time ‘with the yellow star on their arms.’<sup>38</sup>

Despite this emphasis on the Nazi genocide, Esposito does not share Agamben’s tendency to characterise the concentration camp as the ‘fundamental biopolitical paradigm of the West’.<sup>39</sup> Rather, as Timothy Campbell observes, Esposito’s analysis of biopolitics stands in contrast with the ‘radically affirmative biopolitics’ of Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt on the one hand, and with the ‘negative tonality’ of Agamben’s work on the other.<sup>40</sup> As Esposito points out, all of this work on biopolitics (including his own) begins as a response to Foucault’s ‘underlying question’ concerning whether biopolitics ‘is a process that is substantially positive, innovative, and productive’, or rather is ‘something negative, [...] a lethal retreat from life’. Whereas Agamben ‘accentuates the negative, even

---

<sup>38</sup> Roberto Esposito, *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy*, trans. by Timothy Campbell (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, [2004] 2008), pp.124-6.

<sup>39</sup> Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, p.181.

<sup>40</sup> Timothy Campbell, ‘Bíos, Immunity, Life: The Thought of Roberto Esposito’, in *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy*, trans. by Timothy Campbell (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, [2004] 2008), pp.vii-xlii (p.xx).

tragic tonality of the biopolitical phenomenon in a strongly dehistoricizing modality’, Negri ‘insists on the productive, expansive, or more precisely vital element of the biopolitical dynamic.’<sup>41</sup>

By way of contrast, Esposito attempts to avoid ‘radicaliz[ing] one of the two semantic polarities of biopolitics to the detriment of the other’, which he does by drawing on ‘a different interpretive key’ or ‘paradigm’: that of ‘immunity’, which allows him to be attentive to both the deadly and the potentially affirmative aspects of the relationship between political power and life.<sup>42</sup> I will outline Esposito’s conception of immunity and its complex relationship with the idea of community in greater detail in the second chapter of this thesis. For now, it is worth noting that aside from the analysis of Gothic texts in Esposito’s own work, his conception of immunity has also featured in contemporary critical work on the Gothic: for example, Aspasia Stephanou identifies an ‘immunitary logic’ in vampire narratives, particularly where the vampire is understood as ‘the degenerate, the nonhuman, the already dead, whose blood is the breeding ground of contamination.’<sup>43</sup> Moreover, I am also interested in Esposito’s more recent work on the category of the ‘person’, which intersects in striking ways with Agamben’s emphasis on the key biopolitical division between ‘nutritive’ and ‘animal’ life (which will prove to be significant in several chapters of this thesis).<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, Esposito’s deconstruction of the category of the person opens up a space for thinking about the kinds of binary oppositions – human/animal, living/dead, animate/inanimate – which are also central

---

<sup>41</sup> Roberto Esposito and Timothy Campbell, ‘Interview’, trans. by Anna Paparcone, *diacritics*, 36 (2006), 49-56 (p.50).

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Aspasia Stephanou, *Reading Vampire Gothic Through Blood: Bloodlines* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p.50.

<sup>44</sup> See Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, trans. by Kevin Attell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), pp.13-15.



features of the Gothic genre and of the contemporary British novels I have chosen to analyse.

### **Spectral politics**

Esposito's work on biopolitics is of interest to me because of its relationship with the thought of Jacques Derrida. For example, Esposito's focus on immunity has some significant connections with Derrida's later work on autoimmunity; moreover, both Derrida and Esposito are concerned with the originary relationship between life and technicity, an important aspect of the biopolitical management of populations which is largely absent from Agamben's theorisation of biopolitics, but which strongly inflects Esposito's reflections on life and immunity (something I will examine further in the second chapter of this thesis).

Derrida, then, is the other key thinker of the relationship between life and politics whose work I will draw on in this thesis – even though his work has an undeniably complex relationship not only with biopolitics, but also with Gothic studies. I want to turn first to the relationship between Derrida's work and scholarly work on the depiction of haunting in the Gothic, in which, according to Luckhurst, *Specters of Marx* has had a particularly problematic influence. According to Luckhurst, ghosts return in Gothic texts for a specific reason – they 'appear precisely as *symptoms*, points of rupture that insist their singular tale be retold and their wrongs acknowledged'. Critical work on the Gothic should therefore 'risk the violence of *reading* the ghost, of cracking open its absent presence to answer the demand of its specific symptomatology and its specific locale.'<sup>45</sup> However, this 'inevitably historicized mourning-work' is being hindered, according to Luckhurst,

---

<sup>45</sup> Roger Luckhurst, 'The Contemporary London Gothic and the Limits of the 'Spectral Turn'', *Textual Practice*, 16 (2002), 527–546 (p.542).

by what he terms the ‘spectral turn’ in criticism, which he attributes to the popularity of Derrida’s work on the ‘specter’ and his concept of ‘hauntology’. Rather than producing sound critical readings of Gothic texts, criticism inspired by hauntology functions as a ‘Gothicized’ critical discourse which ‘elides object and instrument’. These ‘spectropoetics or hauntological frameworks’ produce readings of hauntings in Gothic texts which overlook the specific historical and cultural contexts in which particular and singular ghosts arise, instead ‘investing in the compulsive repetitions of a structure of melancholic entrapment’.<sup>46</sup>

In some respects Luckhurst is right to point to problems with such readings of Gothic novels, and to emphasise the need for historicised readings of the depiction of haunting in Gothic texts. The success of the kind of approach to haunting which Luckhurst would be likely to favour is evident in Avery Gordon’s productive insistence on understanding the ghost as a ‘crucible for political mediation and historical memory’, which enables her to advance a seminal reading of haunting in relation to slavery in Toni Morrison’s Gothic novel *Beloved* (1987). Yet the fact that Gordon briefly draws at certain points on *Specters of Marx* suggests that Derrida’s work is by no means inimical to attempts to historicise hauntings in Gothic texts.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, more recent work both within and outside of literary scholarship has utilized hauntology very productively in order to think about the *politics* of haunting. For example, Jessica Auchter uses *Specters of Marx* in order to explore ‘the project of statecraft’ via memorialisation and memorial sites. Auchter favours hauntology because it ‘offers a way of supplanting ontology’, thereby enabling her to examine the ways in which ‘life and death are politically constructed’ and to focus on the

---

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p.542.

<sup>47</sup> Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), p.18. On *Beloved*, see pp.164-190. On *Specters of Marx*, see p.58, pp.183-4.

ways in which states distinguish between ‘the politically viable life or death’ and the ‘already ontologically dead.’<sup>48</sup> More recently, in *The Spectral Metaphor*, Esther Peeren uses hauntology extensively when formulating her notion of ‘living ghosts’. These are figures which appear in contemporary British and American cultural productions, where their presence testifies to the experience of ‘dispossession’ of ‘certain marginalized groups’, whose members are depicted as ‘in some way ghostly, spectral, phantasmatic, or spooky.’<sup>49</sup>

Moreover, this approach to figuring such forms of abandonment can be understood as part of a broader trend in contemporary fiction. Just as Peeren draws attention to the prevalence of ‘living ghosts’ in recent novels and films, so Siân Adiseshiah and Rupert Hildyard observe that ‘the return of ghosts’ is ‘an obvious preoccupation of twenty-first century fiction’<sup>50</sup> (although I suggest that this ‘preoccupation’ can also be seen in British fiction in the nineteen-nineties). In particular, Adiseshiah and Hildyard associate this ‘Gothic renaissance’ in contemporary fiction with the depiction of ‘the ghost as a figure for the dehumanised or wasted human’, a trend which also forms the centre of Emily Horton’s analysis of what she terms the ‘post-millennial Gothic’ and its depiction of homelessness in another essay in Adiseshiah and Hildyard’s edited collection.<sup>51</sup>

The novels I have chosen to analyse are populated by these living dead beings, and sometimes also by the actual dead, who return after their lives have

---

<sup>48</sup> Jessica Auchter, *The Politics of Haunting and Memory in International Relations* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), pp.4-5.

<sup>49</sup> Esther Peeren, *The Spectral Metaphor: Living Ghosts and the Agency of Invisibility* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p.4.

<sup>50</sup> Siân Adiseshiah and Rupert Hildyard, ‘Introduction: What Happens Now’, in *Twenty-First Century Fiction: What Happens Now*, ed. by Siân Adiseshiah and Rupert Hildyard (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp.1-14 (p.10).

<sup>51</sup> Adiseshiah and Hildyard, pp.10-11. See also Emily Horton, ‘A Voice Without a Name: Gothic Homelessness in Ali Smith’s *Hotel World* and Trezza Azzopardi’s *Remember Me*’, pp.132-146.

finally been disallowed to the point of death in order to haunt the (more or less) living. These spectral returns can be understood in terms of the logic of the ‘sovereign ban’ which Agamben outlines in *Homo Sacer*. When discussing the fate of those banned from the *polis*, Agamben posits that ‘[w]hat has been banned is delivered over to its own separateness and, at the same time, consigned to the mercy of the one who abandons it — at once excluded and included, removed and at the same time captured.’<sup>52</sup> This same logic can be seen to operate in the hauntings associated with those who experience or have experienced a form of living death: as Derrida puts it in his discussion of hospitality, ghosts ‘haunt places that exist without them; they return to where they have been excluded from.’<sup>53</sup>

Indeed, this trend for depicting the dispossessed as ghostly is also something Peeren links to ‘spectralized figures’ such as Agamben’s *homo sacer*, the ‘living dead’ in the work of Achille Mbembe,<sup>54</sup> and ‘the *ungrievable*’ in Judith Butler’s work, all of which, she argues, provide ‘useful ethico-political frameworks for understanding how and why contemporary societies generate living ghosts’.<sup>55</sup> Derrida’s work on hauntology can also be understood in this context as a useful resource for thinking about the relationship between political power and life in the

---

<sup>52</sup> Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, p.110.

<sup>53</sup> Jacques Derrida and Anne Dufourmantelle, *Of Hospitality*, trans. by Rachel Bowlby (Stanford: Stanford University Press, [1997] 2000), p.152.

<sup>54</sup> Although Mbembe’s emphasis on the ‘living dead’ and his concept of ‘necropolitics’ are promising resources for the consideration of the role of undeath in theorisations of biopolitics, I have chosen not to include his work in this thesis; in part because his emphasis on thanatopolitics provides no significant counterpoint to Agamben’s work (unlike Esposito’s work on biopolitics); and also because, as Peeren has illustrated elsewhere, his concept of haunting originates in the African ‘postcolony’ and thus draws on a very different tradition of ghost narratives to the ones used in the contemporary British novels I am examining in this thesis. See Achille Mbembe, ‘Necropolitics’, trans. by Libby Meintjes, *Public Culture*, 15 (2003), 11-40. For more on Mbembe’s emphasis on thanatopolitics, see Warren Montag, ‘Necro-economics: Adam Smith and death in the life of the universal’, *Radical Philosophy*, 134 (2005), 7-17 (pp.10-11). For more on Mbembe’s work on haunting, see Esther Peeren, ‘Everyday Ghosts and the Ghostly Everyday in Amos Tutuola, Ben Okri, and Achille Mbembe’, in *Popular Ghosts: The Haunted Spaces of Everyday Culture*, ed. by María del Pilar Blanco and Esther Peeren (New York and London: Continuum, 2010) pp.106-117 (p.113).

<sup>55</sup> Peeren, *The Spectral Metaphor*, p.15.

production of so-called ‘living ghosts’. That is not to say, however, that he can be understood as a thinker of biopolitics in quite the same way as Agamben and Esposito can: indeed, as both Arne de Boever and Sergei Prozorov have observed, in his final seminars Derrida is highly critical of Agamben’s theorisation of biopolitics, and particularly of his insistence on the division of *zoē* and *bios*, which Derrida rejects.<sup>56</sup> And yet, Derrida does insist here on his ‘interest’ in the ‘specificity in the relations between living beings and politics’, and he acknowledges that the concerns with this relationship evident in the work of both Foucault and Agamben ‘go to the heart of what matters to us in this seminar: sovereign power, life, death, animality’.<sup>57</sup>

In fact, these same concerns are evident in Derrida’s own work long before the seminars which comprise *The Beast and the Sovereign*. For example, during the 1991 interview ‘Eating Well, or the Calculation of the Subject’, Derrida ponders whether ‘we have a responsibility to the living in general’, and then goes on to consider the ‘sacrificial structure’ underpinning discourses on the subject, drawing attention to ‘a place left open, in the very structure of these discourses (which are also “cultures”) for a noncriminal putting to death.’<sup>58</sup> Later in the interview, Derrida returns to these ideas, and suggests that although he remains uncertain of his precise understanding of the ‘sacrifice’ he refers to at various points in this interview, the ‘clue’ lies somewhere in the idea of ‘the justification of putting to death, putting to death as the denegation of murder’, especially in the case of the animal. He then

---

<sup>56</sup> Arne de Boever, *Narrative Care: Biopolitics and the Novel* (New York and London: Bloomsbury, 2013), p.7. Sergei Prozorov, *Agamben and Politics: A Critical Introduction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), pp.96-8.

<sup>57</sup> Jacques Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign, Volume I*, ed. by Michel Lisse et al, trans. by Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2009), p.326, p.331.

<sup>58</sup> Jacques Derrida, ‘Eating Well, or the Calculation of the Subject’ (1991), trans. by Peter Connor and Avital Ronell, in *Points: Interviews, 1974-1994*, ed. by Elisabeth Weber, trans. by Peggy Kamuf and others (Stanford: Stanford University Press, [1992] 1995), pp.255-87 (pp.277-8).

links this denegation of murder to ‘the violent institution of the “who” as a subject’, stating that

There is no need to emphasize that this question of the subject and of the living “who” is at the heart of the most pressing concerns of modern societies, whether they are deciding birth or death, including what is presupposed in the treatment of the sperm or the ovum, surrogate mothers, genetic engineering, so-called bioethics or biopolitics (what should be the role of the state in determining or protecting a living subject?), the accredited criteriology for determining, indeed for “euthanistically” provoking death (how can the dominant reference to consciousness, to the will and the cortex still be justified?), organ removal and transplant.<sup>59</sup>

Many of the issues which will populate Derrida’s later work — including the noncriminal putting to death of the animal and the relationship between life, death, and technology — are evident in these reflections on ‘so-called bioethics or biopolitics’, which he defines in terms of the role of the state ‘in determining or protecting a living subject’.

Moreover, the definition of death, organ transplants, and genetic engineering which Derrida touches on in this interview are all biopolitical issues which feature in Agamben’s and Esposito’s work: indeed, the focus in Derrida’s later work on sovereignty, terrorism, animals, and autoimmunity means that his thought intersects frequently with that of Agamben (especially in terms of a noncriminal putting to death, sovereign violence and the figure of the wolf, as I will emphasise in the third chapter of this thesis), and with Esposito’s theorisation of immunity, as I noted earlier.

However, it is also important to note Derrida’s statement in *The Animal That Therefore I Am* that ‘the question of the living and of the living animal [...] will always have been the most important and decisive question’, which has been

---

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p.283.

‘addressed [...] a thousand times, either directly or obliquely, by means of readings of *all* the philosophers I have taken an interest in, beginning with Husserl’.<sup>60</sup> The relevance of this earlier engagement with ‘the question of the living and of the living animal’ can certainly be seen in Leonard Lawlor’s recent analysis of ‘animality’ in Derrida’s thought, in which Lawlor draws on the analysis of auto-affection in *Speech and Phenomena* (1967) in order to explore Derrida’s later writings on the animal.<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, an engagement with ‘the question of the living and of the living animal’ is a central feature of Derrida’s theorisation of hauntology in *Specters of Marx*. As Warren Montag points out, whereas ontology ‘speaks only of what is present or what it absent’, and ‘cannot conceive of what is neither’, hauntology is ‘adequate to the task of interrogating [...] that which is neither living nor dead [...] what persists beyond the end, beyond death, of what was never alive enough to die, never present enough to become absent.’<sup>62</sup> Hence, perhaps hauntology, along with Derrida’s career-long engagement with ‘the question of the living and of the living animal’, might be understood to provide another way of approaching the same ‘politically slick’ conditions of the ‘certainty of belonging to the human race, the certainty of being alive’<sup>63</sup> which are at the heart of Agamben’s and Esposito’s conceptions of biopolitics.

## Chapter Summaries

My sense of the pertinence of Derrida’s thought on life and politics to this thesis also lies in his insistence in *The Beast and the Sovereign* that

---

<sup>60</sup> Jacques Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, ed. by Marie-Louise Mallet, trans. by David Wills (New York: Fordham University Press, [2006] 2008), p.34.

<sup>61</sup> Leonard Lawlor, “‘Animals Have No Hand’: An Essay on Animality in Derrida”, *The New Centennial Review*, 7 (2007), 43-69.

<sup>62</sup> Warren Montag, ‘Spirits Armed and Unarmed: Derrida’s *Specters of Marx*’, in *Ghostly Demarcations: A Symposium on Jacques Derrida’s Specters of Marx*, ed. by Michael Sprinker (London: Verso, [1999] 2008), pp.68-82 (p.71).

<sup>63</sup> Wall, p.35.

all the things we're dealing with here, sovereignty, the animal, the living dead, the buried alive, etc., the spectral and the posthumous – well, the dream, the oneiric, fiction, so-called literary fiction, so-called fantastic literature will always be less inappropriate, more relevant, if you like, than the authority of wakefulness, and the vigilance of the ego, and the consciousness of so-called philosophical discourse.<sup>64</sup>

There are resonances here with Esposito's insistence that 'artistic practices', perhaps '[m]ore than theories', are able to 'register' the effects of biopolitical discourses on the management of populations.<sup>65</sup> The novels I analyse in this thesis were all published between 1990 and 2010, and thus in the same period as the 'turn to life' which Hunt and Youngblood identify in contemporary theory, and in which major works dealing with biopolitical issues emerged from Agamben, Derrida and Esposito. Moreover, as I noted in the second section of this introduction, this twentieth-century *fin de siècle* period is identified by Mitchell as the 'third age' of 'experimental vitalism'. In this contemporary period, Mitchell locates 'a sense of life as *provocation*' whose impact he suggests can be felt in contemporary work on biopolitics,<sup>66</sup> but which could also be understood as emerging in 'artistic practices' (as Esposito puts it), including contemporary fiction.

Additionally, my chosen primary texts were published at a time when, according to Derrida, the 'question of the subject and of the living "who" is at the heart of the most pressing concerns of modern societies'.<sup>67</sup> Indeed, these contemporary British novels are responding to the same historical, political and economic developments as recent theoretical work on biopolitics; as my analysis of these novels will demonstrate, they are responding to key events and shifts in the relationship between life and politics, ranging from advances in biomedical and

---

<sup>64</sup> Jacques Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign, Volume II*, ed. by Michel Lisse et al., trans. by Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2011), p.185.

<sup>65</sup> Esposito, *Bíos*, p.124.

<sup>66</sup> Mitchell, pp.1-2.

<sup>67</sup> Derrida, 'Eating Well', p.283.



genetic technologies to exceptional encounters between law and life engendered by contemporary responses to terrorism. As is the case with the theoretical frameworks I draw on in this thesis, my primary texts are responding to developments in the relationship between politics and life which are still in process; hence, there are many moments when these theories illuminate the depictions of undeath in these novels; equally, there are inevitably instances when the novels depict the contemporary relationship between politics and life in a way which exposes the limits of theorisations of biopolitics in their current forms.

This thesis is divided into five chapters, each of which takes up one or more of these ‘pressing concerns’ about the relationship between political power and life as expressed in contemporary British novels, particularly in relation to the key biopolitical questions engendered by recent scholarship on the Gothic which I outlined in the second section of this introduction. While some chapters will focus on the relationship between biotechnology and undeath which features so prominently in contemporary work both on the Gothic and on biopolitics, others will turn to ideas of dispossession and spectrality; all of the chapters, however, will be concerned with the representations of the relationship between undeath and bare life in terms of the history and present experience of biopolitics in a specifically British context. Although a handful of monographs concerned with literature and biopolitics have emerged in recent years, they have tended to range across historical and national contexts.<sup>68</sup> By contrast, in this thesis I have limited my primary texts to those published not only in a very particular period of time, but also to those published in a specific national context, with the aim of achieving a sustained and in-

---

<sup>68</sup> See for example Arne de Boever’s *Narrative Care: Biopolitics and the Novel*, and de Boever’s *States of Exception in the Contemporary Novel* (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2014). See also Christopher Breu, *Insistence of the Material: Literature in the Age of Biopolitics* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2014).

depth view of how a particular and interrelated set of novels respond to the same (bio)political and economic context. In particular, all of the novels I analyse can be understood as responses to the end of consensus politics in the nineteen-eighties and to the development of neoliberal approaches to the management of the life of the population, especially in terms of the provision of welfare, under both the Thatcher and Blair governments. The publication of the final novel I will analyse roughly coincides with the end of the New Labour era and appears just a year after the global financial crash in 2008.

The novels I have chosen to analyse are broadly well-known; indeed, many of the authors (and some of the novels, such as *Beyond Black* and *Never Let Me Go*) have appeared on the same shortlists for major literary prizes such as the Man Booker. As I will outline in the chapter summaries below, some of these texts have a closer or more explicit relationship with the Gothic genre than others, but a number of images and themes associated with the Gothic recur across these novels. My analysis of the primary texts progresses in a roughly chronological order in terms of moving from texts published in the nineteen-nineties to those published after the millennium. However, where the issues and themes dealt with in certain texts or chapters speak particularly clearly to those in another chapter or to novels published in a different decade, I have deviated from chronology in order to group texts into certain chapters and to place the chapters into such an order as will enable these connections to emerge.

Each chapter has its own introduction detailing the particular biopolitical issue being explored, and each chapter also includes an exposition of the theoretical material drawn from Agamben's, Esposito's, and Derrida's work which will be used to facilitate this exploration. I have selected for each chapter those aspects of these

theorists' works which provide the most appropriate frameworks for illuminating the novels' depictions of living death. Moreover, each chapter also considers where the novels in question expose the limits of concepts such as 'bare life', or where they point to those areas in which current theories of the relationship between politics and life sometimes struggle to account for the experience of being exposed to death of specific populations.

This thesis begins with a chapter which addresses one such limit in current theorisations of biopolitics: in this case, the relationship between biopolitics and political economy where questions of the value accorded to life are concerned. In this first chapter, I focus on the depiction of the relationship between money, life and death in Christopher Priest's 1995 novel *The Prestige*. I examine the ways in which Priest draws on themes and imagery from the Gothic genre and from earlier forms of 'experimental vitalism' in order to figure the 'economization' of life, especially in the context of neoliberal theories of political economy at work in Britain in the nineteen-eighties and nineties. In particular, I turn to neoliberal ideas on the development of an entrepreneurial approach to managing life, and the total penetration of life by economic concerns which such approaches entail, in order to consider the biopolitical and thanatopolitical implications of investing (and disinvesting) in one's own and others' lives.

Following this, Chapter Two considers the relationship between undeath and bare life in the context of the kinds of biotechnological developments which scholars such as Luckhurst foreground in their readings of the Gothic in the contemporary period. I explore the intersection of biotechnology and biopolitics in Alasdair Gray's *Poor Things* (1992) and Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* (2005), novels which directly reference or have been associated with Mary Shelley's depiction of the

creation of artificial life in *Frankenstein*. In focusing on the relationship between life and ideas of originary technicity, I suggest certain limits to Agamben's conception of bare life, and turn instead to Esposito's and Derrida's work on immunity and autoimmunity to think about the intersections of life, technology and politics in the contemporary period. I also explore how these novels' responses to the relationship between biopolitics and biotechnology open out onto an examination of the history of British legislation on anatomy and poverty and how this continues to inform contemporary approaches to welfare provision.

No thesis examining undeath would be complete without a vampire: hence, Chapter Three turns to Kim Newman's 1992 novel *Anno Dracula*, and to its depiction of the fragile condition of belonging to the human race, especially in terms of the role of the human/animal division in the relationship between law and life. Focusing on the kind of 'abhuman' figures examined in Gothic scholarship, I explore what the novel suggests about the continued relevance of nineteenth-century discourses of degeneration and criminal anthropology in contemporary approaches to law and order, and I also turn to the key figure of the werewolf in theories of biopolitics in order to think about the novel's representation of founding violence. I situate this exploration in the context of the novel's response to Thatcherism and the invocation of 'Victorian values' in the nineteen eighties, particularly in terms of its implications for welfare policies in late twentieth century Britain.

While Chapter Three focuses on spaces such as the city and the camp which have featured prominently in analyses of biopolitics, Chapter Four turns to ostensibly mundane spaces to examine the depiction of political death in Hilary Mantel's *Beyond Black* (2005) and Nicola Barker's *Darkmans* (2007). In this chapter, I turn to the idea of 'living ghosts', and focus on the ways in which the

novels differentiate between the vulnerability of specific populations, especially where women's uncertain relationship to both political life and Agamben's conception of bare life is concerned. I examine how the novels' representations of women's bodily vulnerability in domestic spaces opens out onto an exploration of contemporary security anxieties and related questions of hospitality, which I also consider in relation to the key contemporary figures of the tourist and the vagabond.

Finally, Chapter Five turns to Sarah Waters's 2009 novel *The Little Stranger* and its depiction of haunting at the founding of the welfare state, which I examine in relation to Esposito's analysis of the concept of the 'person', and through both Agamben's and Esposito's emphasis on the biopolitical implications of Xavier Bichat's distinction between vegetative and relational life. I use this theoretical framework to explore the ways in which the novel figures haunting both in relation to life which is stripped of attributes and to that which precedes political life; in turn, this latter consideration opens out onto questions about the key but under-examined area of reproductive life and of the biopolitical valuation of women's bodies according to their reproductive capacities. I end the chapter by examining the role of this reproductive life in Waters's representation of a more troubling history of the welfare state and its decisions on the value of certain lives.

## **Chapter 1 – A financial sentence of death: *homo œconomicus* and *homo sacer* in Christopher Priest’s *The Prestige* (1995)**

### **Introduction: ringing cash tills and fruitless speculation**

‘My financial sentence of death has been pronounced, made official!’<sup>1</sup> So begins one of Rupert Angier’s diary entries in Christopher Priest’s *The Prestige*, which tells the story of two nineteenth-century stage magicians, Rupert Angier and Alfred Borden, who compete for the ‘prestige’ of producing the most acclaimed version of a teleportation illusion. In their respective illusions, each magician appears to be electrically transmitted from one area of the theatre to another in an instant – or, as the title of Angier’s illusion puts it, ‘In a Flash’ (p.273). According to Borden, success will be rewarded with ‘a commotion of acclaim, ringing cash tills and fruitless speculation’ as to the ‘secret’ of the illusion (p.71). Borden’s reference to ‘ringing cash tills’ and Angier’s statement concerning his ‘financial sentence of death’ (which actually refers to the termination of his allowance from his aristocratic family) are two among many statements which are illustrative of the extent to which money is a central preoccupation of *The Prestige*. But the novel is not simply concerned with the mundane financial worries of the protagonists; rather, as I will argue in this chapter, money is profoundly linked to the exercise of power over life and death.

Angier’s comment on his ‘financial sentence of death’ hints at this intersection of money, life and death in the novel, but this relationship is made most explicit in Priest’s depiction of the machine which enables Angier’s performance of

---

<sup>1</sup> Christopher Priest, *The Prestige* (London: Gollancz, [1995] 2004), p.165. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

‘In a Flash’. Unlike Borden’s teleportation illusion, which relies on ‘standard stage trickery’ (p.271) and utilises electricity purely for dramatic effect, Angier’s illusion is in fact powered by an electrical apparatus built by the real-life electrical pioneer Nikola Tesla. This apparatus does not actually allow Angier to teleport; instead, the machine duplicates Angier’s body, apparently killing the ‘original’ version left behind in the machine, and producing a new copy in the desired location. But this copy of Angier is not the only thing produced by the Tesla device: every time he uses the machine, Angier also carries gold coins in his pockets which are duplicated along with his body. After each performance, the new version of Angier disposes of the original body, which he labels ‘the prestige materials’, in the family crypt (p.275), presumably collecting the original stash of coins from the pockets of his own corpse in the process. These coins are then added to the ‘hoard’ he is saving for future generations of his family (p.343), who will also inherit the ‘prestige bodies’ stored in the family crypt, each one labelled with the amount of money Angier earned for the performance in which it was produced.

As this description of Angier’s illusion suggests, the term ‘prestige’ conveys a number of meanings in this novel. First, and most obviously, the term carries its usual contemporary connotations of acclaim and recognition. For example, Angier states that he is unconcerned about appearing lower down on a ‘bill’ as long as the performances ‘amply repay in money what they do not offer in prestige’ (p.284). But the term ‘prestige’ is also an old word for a conjuring trick, and Priest’s use of this as the title for his novel hints that there may be something performative about the text itself. This latter understanding of the term ‘prestige’ frequently informs critical readings of the novel, which tend to focus on the ‘secret’ behind the success of Borden’s teleportation illusion: that ‘Alfred Borden’ is the stage name of a pair of

identical twins, Albert and Frederick Borden, who have merged not only their names but also their entire lives in order to perform this illusion. The concealment of this secret also plays a central role in Borden's autobiography, such that Priest's construction of Borden's narrative can be seen to practise the same trick upon the novel's reader as Borden practises on his audiences. In this vein, Kym Brindle describes *The Prestige* as a novel which 'tells a tale of illusion, magic, and trickery by "stage-managing" two diaries, with authorial sleight of hand concealing doubles and unreliable narrators'.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, Ann Heilmann and Mark Llewellyn include Christopher Nolan's film adaptation of *The Prestige* and (briefly) Priest's novel in a discussion of the ways in which neo-Victorian texts 'self-consciously mimic the strategies of Victorian stage magic' and engage the reader 'in a game with their artefactuality'.<sup>3</sup>

However, in my reading of *The Prestige*, I am less interested in focusing on the forms of narrative trickery involved in the concealment and revelation of secrets – secrets which, as Borden's autobiography notes, are in fact 'easily guessed' (p.67) – and more interested in the other meanings Priest ascribes to the term 'prestige'. The 'prestige' is defined by Borden not as the conjuring trick itself but as one of the three stages of an illusion, which typically comprises 'the setup, in which the nature of what might be attempted is hinted at', the 'performance' or 'magical display', and 'the effect, or the prestige', 'the product of magic', which, like a rabbit pulled from a hat, 'apparently did not exist before the trick was performed' (pp.64-5). In each version of the teleportation illusion, the 'prestige' which appears at the end is the magician himself, but there is also another kind of 'prestige' produced by these

---

<sup>2</sup> Kym Brindle, *Epistolary Encounters in Neo-Victorian Fiction: Diaries and Letters* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p.5.

<sup>3</sup> Ann Heilmann and Mark Llewellyn, *Neo-Victorianism: The Victorians in the Twenty-First Century, 1999-2009* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p.175, p.210.



illusions. I will suggest that the term 'prestige' comes to be closely associated with credit, both in terms of the 'commotion of acclaim' and of the 'ringing cash tills' (not to mention the counterfeit money) which are the other 'prestiges' of a successful performance.

Finally, perhaps the most striking meaning attached to the term 'prestige' in the novel is its use to indicate the state of being undead. As part of their bitter feud with one another, Angier and Borden frequently attempt to sabotage each other's illusions, to the point of nearly killing each other on more than one occasion. Eventually, Borden succeeds in switching off Angier's machine at a crucial moment, such that instead of being duplicated, Angier is divided into two selves, one a more bodily version and the other a 'partial prestige' (p.302), who persists in a 'wraithlike condition' (p.330) and is able to witness the continuation of his and Borden's feud through subsequent generations of their respective families. The effects of this rivalry are detailed in a Gothic framing narrative set in the present day, which is narrated from the perspective of Andrew Westley, an adoptee who is aware that his birth name is 'Nicholas Julius Borden' (p.6) but takes little interest in his past beyond an intense conviction (despite a total lack of documentary evidence) that he once had an identical twin brother. He is lured to the Angier family mansion by Kate Angier, who wishes to discuss the visit Andrew's birth father, Clive Borden, made to Caldlow House with his young son Nicky when Kate was a child, ostensibly to discuss the family feud, but she suspects in reality to ask for money (p.127).

Kate's account of this event, which forms the central section of *The Prestige*, focuses on the climax of Clive Borden's visit, and of the inherited feud, when Kate witnesses her own father apparently murder the child Nicky by throwing him into the Tesla device. Kate's conviction that Nicky Borden survived, and that Andrew

Westley is Nicky, is explained in the final section of the novel, in which Westley finds Nicky's body in the Angier family crypt and discovers that he is the copy of Nicky produced when the child was thrown into the Tesla device. Westley also discovers multiple 'prestiges' of Angier in the crypt, but his description of these bodies is curious: although he describes the bodies as 'corpses', he states that there is 'no sign of decay' in any of them, and remarks that it seems 'as if each one had been frozen in life, made inert without being made dead' (p.354). In fact, earlier in the novel, Angier has already revealed that although the Tesla device appears to kill the 'source body', this body is only 'left behind in the transportation, *as if dead*' (my emphasis). Angier's prestiges are not corpses, but are instead bodies which are 'frozen in the half-dead, half-live condition' that Angier terms 'prestigious' (p.330). Finally, then, in addition to describing a conjuring trick, the product of magic, and forms of credit, the term 'prestige' also denotes the liminal state between life and death in which Angier's prestige bodies (also labelled with a monetary value) remain.

In this chapter, I examine *The Prestige's* obsession with money, and especially the persistent linking of money with vitality (or its absence), in relation to transformations in political economy in the late twentieth century. In the first section of the chapter, I read Priest's depiction of Borden's and Angier's anxieties concerning money in relation not only to the economic upheavals which characterised the decade preceding the publication of *The Prestige*, but also to the fundamental transformations in political economy wrought by neoliberalism. One of the key changes concerns the transformation of the *homo æconomicus* from the 'man of exchange' of classical liberal political economy to a figure instead characterised by the neoliberal focus on competition, a transformation which I suggest is reflected

in Borden and Angier's intense rivalry. I read this rivalry in relation to the neoliberal emphasis on the figure of the entrepreneur, and particularly to the notion of the economic man as an entrepreneur of himself developed in neoliberal human capital theory. This theory is in turn characterised by a total penetration of life – even down to its very biological substance – by economic concerns in the contemporary period.

For Foucault, liberalism emerges as a newly significant object of analysis in the latter part of the twentieth century. In the opening lecture of *The Birth of Biopolitics*, he explains that his interest in attending to both the history and present of liberal thought lies in the fact that 'the problem of liberalism arises for us in our immediate and concrete actuality': it is 'the problem of our times'. In this opening lecture, Foucault also states his intention to explore the biopolitical implications of liberal and neoliberal forms of political economy, insisting that 'only when we know what this governmental regime called liberalism was, will we be able to grasp what biopolitics is.' However, despite his stated intentions, Foucault is never 'lucky' enough to have the time to reach the point of discussing 'the problem of biopolitics and the problem of life' as major preoccupations in the history of liberalism.<sup>4</sup> 'Regrettably', as Thomas Lemke puts it, 'what we are left with is the "intention"' and some 'promising suggestions'.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, Ulrich Bröckling argues that any analysis of 'the conjuncture between the politicization and economization of human life' must 'start off from a double blank space' created not only by Foucault but also by Agamben. For Bröckling, Agamben's 'narrowing of biopolitics to sovereignty theory' results in his 'blindness to political economy', and thus also to a necessary

---

<sup>4</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979*, ed. by Michel Senellart, trans. by Graham Burchell (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp.21-2, p.78.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Lemke, *Biopolitics: An Advanced Introduction*, trans. by Eric Frederick Trump (New York and London: New York University Press, 2011), p.50.

understanding of biopolitics as a mode of governing populations which seeks to ‘construct a biological continuum and subjugate human life to the economical imperative of added value’. Biopolitics, he concludes, ‘is essentially a political economy of population.’<sup>6</sup>

In the second and third sections of this chapter, I consider how Priest’s depiction of the consequences of Borden and Angier’s rivalry might be read in the light of the potential costs of the economization of life in the contemporary period. In the second section, I focus on the relationship between money and vitality in the novel, paying particular attention to Priest’s Gothic depiction of the relationship between money and undeath through the image of suspended animation. The third section then examines the curious echoes of the sovereign power to take life evident in Angier’s and Borden’s illusions, and considers what *The Prestige* might suggest about the relationship between the *homo oeconomicus* and the *homo sacer* – the key figures of political economy and of Agamben’s conception of biopolitics respectively – where calculations about the value of human life are concerned.

### **Entrepreneurship and accounting**

*The Prestige* was first published in 1995, following a period of significant economic transformation (and crisis) in Britain and beyond. During the early years of the nineteen-nineties, John Major’s government had presided over further unpopular pit closures and a period of recession which devastated large manufacturing companies and small businesses alike, sending ‘the efforts of Thatcher to restore an enterprise

---

<sup>6</sup> Ulrich Bröckling, ‘Human Economy, Human Capital: A Critique of Biopolitical Economy’, in *Governmentality: Current Issues and Future Challenges*, ed. by Ulrich Bröckling, Susanne Krasmann, and Thomas Lemke (New York and London: Routledge, 2011), pp. 247-68 (pp.248-49).

culture to Britain [...] down the drain’;<sup>7</sup> meanwhile, the political and economic turbulence surrounding ‘Black Wednesday’ and Britain’s hasty exit from the ERM had focused attention on the unstable nature of financial markets, particularly in terms of their vulnerability to currency speculators.<sup>8</sup> But this was also a period in which Britain was still coming to terms with the economic transformations of the preceding decade; indeed, the same year which saw the publication of *The Prestige* also saw the publication of Will Hutton’s influential analysis of the economic transformations of the nineteen-eighties, entitled *The State We’re In*, in which Hutton paints a portrait of Britain suffering ‘a general sense of fear and beleaguerment’ in the wake of a period characterised by intense financial deregulation and by credit booms and busts.<sup>9</sup> The surprising ‘runaway success’ of this book is indicative of the extent to which the general public was concerned about the economy in this period.<sup>10</sup>

This sense of economic gloom is evident in the contemporary sections of *The Prestige*. The novel opens with a section from one of the present-day narrators, Andrew Westley, who immediately declares himself to be ‘on company time’ (p.3), thereby drawing attention to work and money from the outset. In fact, not long afterwards we learn that Westley has ‘not done well’ in the ‘training programme’ at the newspaper he works for, and has ‘serious long-term worries’ about explaining this failure to his father, a retired successful journalist who has been ‘pulling strings’ for Westley behind the scenes (p.10). If Westley is personally suffering from economic worries, his observations of the Angier family’s ancestral mansion and the

---

<sup>7</sup> See Earl A. Reitan, *The Thatcher Revolution: Margaret Thatcher, John Major, Tony Blair, and the Transformation of Modern Britain* (Lanham and Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003), pp.126-27.

<sup>8</sup> For more on this, see the chapter titled ‘Events’ in Alwyn W. Turner, *A Classless Society: Britain in the 1990s* (London: Aurum, 2013), pp.80-109.

<sup>9</sup> Will Hutton, *The State We’re In* (London: Vintage, [1995] 1996), p.10.

<sup>10</sup> Turner, p.263.

surrounding village hint at broader economic shifts. Firstly, the decline of the Angier family and of the house itself following the Second World War, evident in their long-term reliance on renting parts of it out (p.19), hints at the loss of economic position and prestige experienced by the upper classes following the election of a Labour government in 1945.<sup>11</sup> Secondly, Priest's depiction of the village surrounding the house speaks to the decline of heavy industry which was accelerated during the latter part of the twentieth century, and the resultant shift to an increasing economic dependence on service culture: hence the village, 'once a centre of slate mining', is 'now heavily dependent on day trippers', for whom 'a National Trust shop [...], a pony trekking club, several gift shops and an hotel' have been created (p.11).

Interestingly, in the subsequent section of *The Prestige*, narrated by Westley's ancestor Alfred Borden, the magician makes some similar comments on his return to his hometown of Hastings. Borden finds that his father's once-prosperous carpentry yard has been sold and 'sold again' over the course of a short space of time, and he considers Hastings to have 'started a decline' which he 'fear[s] will prove irreversible' (p.67). The subtle parallels Priest establishes in *The Prestige* between economic developments and uncertainties witnessed by Borden in the late Victorian period and those encountered by his descendant in the late twentieth century are not without foundation. In particular, there was a tendency to return to the idea of London's 'Victorian glory as the centre of global capitalism' during the nineteen-eighties, especially where the City's possible restoration to this position through the 1986 deregulation of the stock market known as the 'Big Bang' was

---

<sup>11</sup> I will discuss this issue in more detail in my reading of Sarah Waters's *The Little Stranger* in Chapter Five of this thesis.

concerned.<sup>12</sup> The end of the Victorian period, when the majority of the action of *The Prestige* is set, also saw significant changes to financial regulations, particularly through the so-called ‘bankerization’ of the economy, a term which refers to ‘the centralization of banking’ and ‘the turn to monetary exchanges that are facilitated through credit’.<sup>13</sup> In turn, credit became an increasingly significant aspect of the British economy during the nineteen eighties and nineties, something Christopher Payne emphasises in his recent study of the rise in this period of ‘an imagined figure of the consumer, with raised levels of indebtedness’ who came ‘to be identified as central to the government of the modern economy’.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, Sarah C. Alexander identifies parallels between the concerns expressed over this ‘immateriality of finance capital’ in the late-Victorian era, and in Fredric Jameson’s 1997 essay ‘Culture and Finance Capital’, expanding on the connections Jameson briefly refers to between the rise of ““feverish” speculation’ and the shift from production to ‘free-floating’ and increasingly mobile capital in the Victorian and contemporary eras.<sup>15</sup>

For Jameson, the late twentieth century constitutes ‘a new period of finance capital’, in which capital is separated from ‘the concrete context of its productive geography’ and instead circulates freely ‘on the floor of the stock market’, where it exists ‘in the form of speculation itself: specters of value, as Derrida might put it, vying against each other in a vast, worldwide, disembodied phantasmagoria.’<sup>16</sup>

Jameson’s reference to *Specters of Marx* here is useful when thinking about Priest’s

---

<sup>12</sup> See Graham Stewart, *Bang!: A History of Britain in the 1980s* (London: Atlantic Books, 2013), p.387. Notably, Stewart gives the section of his book which discusses these changes the Dickensian title ‘A Tale of Two Cities’.

<sup>13</sup> Gail Turley Houston, *From Dickens to Dracula: Gothic, Economics, and Victorian Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p.7.

<sup>14</sup> Christopher Payne, *The Consumer, Credit and Neoliberalism: Governing the Modern Economy* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2012), p.2.

<sup>15</sup> Sarah C. Alexander, *Victorian Literature and the Physics of the Imponderable* (London and New York: Routledge, 2015), p.40. See also Fredric Jameson, ‘Culture and Finance Capital’, *Critical Inquiry*, 24 (1997), 246-65 (p.252).

<sup>16</sup> Jameson, p.248, p.251.

depiction of money in *The Prestige*, inasmuch as Jacques Derrida places significant emphasis in *Specters of Marx* not only on the spectral but also on the ‘theatrical metaphors’ which characterise Marx’s descriptions of commodity fetishism and exchange value in *Capital*.<sup>17</sup> The obverse of this approach can be seen in *The Prestige*, in which Priest figures the performance of stage magic through vocabulary and ideas related to speculative financial markets. For Borden, the success of stage magic depends on what he terms ‘the Pact of Acquiescent Sorcery’ made between the magician and the audience. The audience’s role in this Pact (of which they are ‘barely aware’) is to ‘suppress the knowledge’ that ‘what they are seeing is not true sorcery’ and to ‘acquiesce to the selfsame wish as the performer’s’ (p.33). Borden’s description of the ‘Pact’ governing stage magic resonates with Jane Moody’s argument that theatrical performances create a ‘contract’ between performers and spectators, but the credit involved in this pact is as much ‘financial’ as it is ‘aesthetic’. Indeed, for Moody, the workings of the theatrical world bear some strong resemblances to those of the financial world, which is likewise underpinned by ‘credit’ in the form of money and in the form of ‘belief, confidence, faith, trust’.<sup>18</sup>

Hence, despite Borden’s insistence that ‘[m]ysteries are the common currency of magicians’ (p.104), his reference to the ‘fruitless *speculation*’ and the ‘ringing cash tills’ which are the products of a successful performance (p.71, my emphasis) suggests that financial credit is as significant as the aesthetic credit which forms the focus of most readings of Priest’s novel. In fact, both forms of credit can be seen to play an important role in the origins of Borden and Angier’s feud, which

---

<sup>17</sup> See Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*, trans. by Peggy Kamuf (New York and London: Routledge, [1994] 2006), pp.188-200.

<sup>18</sup> Jane Moody, ‘The Drama of Capital: Risk, Belief, and Liability on the Victorian Stage’, in *Victorian Literature and Finance*, ed. by Francis O’Gorman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp.91-109 (p.91, p.94). Interestingly, Derrida also draws attention to ‘a whole theory of the juridical form of the pact, the pledge, the contract’ in Marx’s depiction of commodity fetishism: see *Specters of Marx*, pp.198-99.



is underpinned in part by the magicians' opposing attitudes to the performance of magic and particularly to the protection of 'mysteries' as 'the common currency of magicians'. While Borden ostensibly prioritises the 'acclaim' which results from the performance of stage magic, and appears squeamish about his occupation's 'golden allure' (pp.49-50), Angier has no such qualms about the financial side of their profession. Unlike Borden, who is introduced to the performance of stage magic with the help of other prominent magicians, and who has a natural talent for creating illusions, Angier has 'a poor magical imagination', and despairs of the secrecy surrounding his chosen profession, lamenting that the secrets behind illusions are 'devilish hard to discover [...] when they cannot be purchased for cash!' (p.163), and ridiculing a 'hapless magician' who wishes 'to set up some kind of bank in which magical secrets would be stored and protected' (p.174).

Angier therefore has a much more protracted struggle to begin his career, and as his 'financial sentence of death' looms (p.165), he turns to mediumship as a means of making a living, a profession which Borden considers to involve fraud in both aesthetic and financial senses. Not only do mediums make 'warped use' of the standard techniques of 'legitimate magicians' by pretending that their magical displays stem from genuine supernatural powers, but they also use these techniques to deceive 'vulnerable families' who are 'robbed of their money' as a result of their desperate belief (pp.51-2). Motivated by what he claims are 'the highest principles' (p.51), Borden therefore attempts to unmask Angier as a charlatan during one of his séances. In the ensuing scuffle, Angier's wife is injured by Borden, and suffers a miscarriage the following day, for which Angier holds Borden responsible.

Over the course of the life-long feud which grows from this encounter, Angier becomes engaged in the kind of 'fruitless speculation' about the secret behind

the teleportation illusion which ensnares Borden's non-magical audiences. Eventually, Angier's obsession with Borden's secret (and his refusal to accept the obvious explanation of identical twins) leads him to travel to America, 'squandering' all of his fortune and nearly going 'bankrupt' in search of an electrical invention from Nikola Tesla (pp.265-67). Eventually, after temporarily adding to Angier's financial woes by becoming 'a bankrupt' and going into 'hiding from his creditors' (p.288), Tesla delivers the electrical device which will not only enable Angier to gain immense financial and aesthetic credit from his own teleportation illusion, but will also permanently solve Angier's money worries by allowing him to produce counterfeit money: indeed, Angier ultimately concludes that counterfeiting, rather than the performance of stage magic, is 'what the duplicating apparatus can best be used for' (p.343).

Moreover, electricity itself also has keen associations with the nature and movement of money in the twentieth century. The emphasis placed in both Borden's and Angier's teleportation illusions on the magician's instantaneous and secure electrical transmission speaks to the notion of the instantaneous electrical movement of money in the contemporary period: for example, Jameson refers to the 'lightninglike movements' of capital in the late nineteen-nineties.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, in the nineteenth century period Priest focuses on in *The Prestige*, the mechanics of electricity and of other forms of so-called 'imponderable matter' in physics (such as the 'luminiferous ether' which was thought to explain the interaction between distant objects) were also 'employed to discuss the material conditions of Victorian

---

<sup>19</sup> Jameson, p.251. For more on the use of electrical metaphors to describe the movement of money, see Anne Mayhew, 'Money as Electricity', *Journal of Cultural Economy*, 4 (2011), 245-53.

capitalism and its abstractions’, whose workings were likewise governed by ‘invisible and only partially material forces’.<sup>20</sup>

Electricity is certainly associated with mysterious and occult forces in *The Prestige*, especially in Priest’s depiction of Angier’s intention to use the Tesla device to reunite his split self at the end of the novel by transmitting himself ‘across the ether’ in order to inhabit and reanimate his own dead body with a ‘vital spark’ (pp.344-45). Additionally, both electricity and money can be seen to interact with the occult in *The Prestige* through Angier’s electrical production of money as the ‘prestige’ of a magic trick. However, I also want to note that Priest’s emphasis on electricity resonates with more mundane (but no less significant) economic changes during the period in which *The Prestige* was published, particularly through Priest’s association of electricity with the figure of the entrepreneur.

Electricity was a significant emerging market in the nineteenth century, and the writings of electrical inventors in this period were understandably as much concerned with the financial as the political or social benefits of the ‘electrical futures’ they imagined.<sup>21</sup> Priest embodies this simultaneously futuristic and financially motivated approach to electricity in the figure of a ‘vice-president of sales in a company that manufactures [...] electrical appliances’, whom Angier meets on his journey to Tesla’s laboratory. This man tells Angier ‘that as we move towards the 20<sup>th</sup> century there is no limit, no bound, to what we might expect electricity to do for our lives’, and details items such as ‘electrical beds’ and ‘electric razor blades’ whose routine use he anticipates. Although Angier describes the man as ‘a fantasist

---

<sup>20</sup> Alexander, pp.4-5.

<sup>21</sup> See Graeme Gooday, ‘Profit and prophecy: electricity in the late-Victorian periodical’, in *Science in the Nineteenth-Century Periodical: Reading the Magazine of Nature*, ed. by Geoffrey Cantor et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp.238-54 (p.240).

and a salesman', he is nevertheless ensnared by this futuristic thinking, which 'fires [him] with a tremendous hope' (pp.236-37).

Later, when Angier meets Tesla in order to arrange for the inventor to begin work on the device for his illusion, he finds Tesla 'curiously reminiscent of [his] erstwhile fellow train-passenger', perhaps not only because of the 'litany of possibilities' for the electrical future which Tesla expounds (p.251), but also because Angier discovers that 'money [...] is one of the few subjects where [their] interests genuinely meet' (p.244). Indeed, money was also at the root of one of the most famous professional rivalries of this period: the so-called 'war of the currents' – referred to in *The Prestige* as Tesla's 'conflicts with Edison' (p.244) – which centred on the dispute as to whether Thomas Edison's direct current or the alternating current pioneered by Tesla would dominate the future of the electrical market. The rivalry between Borden and Angier over their respective electrically-powered teleportation illusions in some ways mirrors this 'war of the currents', with their rival electrical illusions functioning as rival 'products' in the same market.

Hence, while some readings of *The Prestige* emphasise the difference between Borden's and Angier's social backgrounds (Borden is the son of a carpenter, Angier the son of an earl) as a significant factor in their rivalry and in their opposing approaches to stage magic,<sup>22</sup> I propose that the two magicians can be read as rival entrepreneurs in the same highly competitive and speculative market of stage magic. In the period leading up to the publication of *The Prestige*, the notion of 'enterprise culture' and the figure of the entrepreneur were particularly significant, and played central roles in Margaret Thatcher's notion of what a 'healthy society'

---

<sup>22</sup> See for example Graham Sleight, 'Introduction', in *The Prestige* (London: Gollancz, [1995] 2011) pp. vii-ix (p.viii). See also Heilmann and Llewellyn, p.182.

should look like;<sup>23</sup> indeed, the post-war creation ‘of a socialistically inspired anti-enterprise culture leading to indulgence, degeneration, and national demise’ was contrasted in this period with the ability of enterprise culture to bring about ‘widespread industriousness, regeneration and hence national recovery.’<sup>24</sup>

But this entrepreneur-led revival would require a new kind of economic subject. As Jason Read observes, both classical and neoliberal formations of political economy are dependent on ‘plac[ing] a particular “anthropology” of man as an economic subject at the basis of politics’: the *homo oeconomicus*. However, each ‘art of governing’ has a markedly different conception of this figure. Whereas liberalism relies on ‘an anthropology of exchange’, neoliberalism depends on an anthropology of ‘competition’.<sup>25</sup> Read is drawing here on Foucault’s analysis of neoliberal political economy in *The Birth of Biopolitics*, in which he emphasises the transformation of the ‘classical conception’ of the *homo oeconomicus* of the eighteenth century as ‘the man of exchange, the partner, one of the two partners in the process of exchange’, to the neoliberal conception of the *homo oeconomicus* as ‘the man of enterprise and production’. Significantly, this enterprise is also turned inwards: man is now an ‘entrepreneur of himself, being for himself his own capital, being for himself his own producer, being for himself the source of [his] earnings.’<sup>26</sup>

This idea of man as an ‘entrepreneur of himself’ is drawn from ‘human capital theory’, which developed following the Second World War, although, as Lemke observes, it has its origins in Rudolf Goldscheid’s earlier concept of

---

<sup>23</sup> Payne, p.90.

<sup>24</sup> Roger Burrows, ‘Introduction: entrepreneurship, petty capitalism and the restructuring of Britain’, in *Deciphering the Enterprise Culture: Entrepreneurship, Petty Capitalism and the Restructuring of Britain*, ed. by Roger Burrows (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, [1991] 2015), pp.1-16 (p.1).

<sup>25</sup> Jason Read, ‘A Genealogy of Homo Oeconomicus: Neoliberalism and the Production of Subjectivity’, *Foucault Studies*, 6 (2009), 25-36 (p.26, p.28).

<sup>26</sup> Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, pp.147-48, p.226.

*Menschenökonomie* or ‘human economy’, which ‘sought to provide a comprehensive account of and guide to the management of the conditions of the (re)production of human life.’ Goldscheid explored the possibility of performing a ‘human-economic calculation’, which contrasted the money spent by the state on ‘upbringing, education, and subsistence’ with ‘the profits that human labor generates’, in order ‘to reach the highest possible “surplus value”, that is, to maximize advantages by minimizing expenditures.’ This calculation would in turn allow ‘for an efficient and rational administration and control of “organic capital” – that is, of human labor and life.’ Like Goldscheid’s concept of ‘human economy’, human capital theory also involves human life being ‘subordinated to the economic imperative of valorization’, but whereas Goldscheid preferred ‘the social alternative of a comprehensively planned economy which would promote the foundation for a rational cultivation of life’ – a life that Goldscheid believed would be better protected from ‘the excesses of capitalist exploitation’ once it was conceived of as ‘economic capital’ – key figures in the development of human capital theory such as Theodore W. Schultz and Gary S. Becker rejected ‘the directed control of a planned economy’ in preference for ‘the “invisible hand” of spontaneous market regulation.’<sup>27</sup>

Human capital theory thus turns on the anthropology of ‘competition’ which Read views as central to neoliberal forms of political economy. It conceives of the human being as ‘a rational actor who is constantly allocating scarce resources in the pursuit of competing goals’. The ‘scarce resource’ this rational actor has in hand is his own human capital, ‘whose restoration, preservation, and accumulation require[s] investment.’ There are two components to human capital: ‘an inborn corporeal and genetic endowment, and the entirety of the abilities that are the result of

---

<sup>27</sup> Lemke, pp.107-109.

“investments” in appropriate stimuli’, ranging from nutrition to education.<sup>28</sup> What this means, as Read points out, is that neoliberalism ‘extends the process of making economic activity a general matrix of social and political relations’. Every aspect of human behaviour can now ‘be understood “economically”, according to a particular calculation of cost for benefit.’<sup>29</sup>

This ‘cost for benefit’ calculation plays a central role in *The Prestige*, whose plot is structured around Angier and Borden’s entrepreneurial rivalry in which success for both magicians depends on their respective abilities to make the most of what Foucault terms the ‘innate’ and ‘acquired’ elements of their ‘human capital’.<sup>30</sup> For example, Borden’s autobiographical account places keen emphasis on the ‘acquired’ elements of his human capital in the form of the amount of practice and hard work he invests in his career – his habit of ‘applying’ and ‘re-applying’ himself to learning each illusion until he is ‘perfect at it’. But Priest juxtaposes this image of ceaseless practice with Borden’s subsequent insistence that ‘[t]he strength and dexterity of [his] hands was the key to this’, whose ‘true value’, although augmented by ‘exercise’, is nevertheless implied to be at least to some degree innate (pp.42-3). Moreover, the same innate talents seem to underpin Borden’s understanding of how magic tricks work. When he first encounters magic tricks in his father’s carpentry yard, he finds that he is less easily deceived than his fellow workers, whose eyes are ‘slower’ than his own (pp.39-40), and even before his career begins he is somehow ‘recognised’ as ‘a fellow magician’ by an established stage magician who then helps him to establish his own career (p.47).

---

<sup>28</sup> Lemke, p.110.

<sup>29</sup> Read, pp.27-8, p.31.

<sup>30</sup> Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, p.227.

Perhaps most significantly, Borden's version of the teleportation illusion also depends on innate human capital: being a pair of identical twins, the Borden brothers can perform the illusion with greater speed than any single magician while retaining the completely identical looks of a 'natural' double. By contrast, Angier lacks not only this 'natural' double, but also any innate understanding of magic. Though he practices constantly, he states that he has 'a poor magical imagination', and 'never understand[s] the working of an illusion unless it is explained' (pp.162-63). Angier's need for technical props and for a kind of prosthetic self eventually leads to his acquisition of the Tesla machine, which allows him to achieve 'by scientific method' (p.282) what the Borden twins achieve by means of their innate human capital.

In turn, this emphasis on the entrepreneurial management of the self in the Victorian parts of the novel provides a notable contrast to Andrew Westley's lacklustre approach to his own career in the contemporary sections: as I noted earlier, he is struggling with his 'training programme' (p.10) and seems to lack any direction about his future. Moreover, Westley's father, Clive Borden, also appears to lack his grandfather's enterprising spirit. Kate Angier's researches into his life lead her to conclude that his manner of living was characterised by 'irrationality'; having 'dropped out' of college soon after entering, he was 'frequently homeless' and 'was arrested several times for drunk and disorderly behaviour', before embarking on 'a precarious living in the film industry [...] with periods on the dole' in between brief periods of employment (p.125).

Interestingly, whereas Kate finds Clive Borden's more chaotic existence 'difficult to research' (p.125), she has no such difficulties with Borden's and Angier's lives; Borden has left an autobiography (heavily edited and annotated by Angier following Borden's death) charting his rise to prominence and his magical



career; while Angier has left for his descendants what Kate describes as ‘The Great Danton’s Obsessive Filing System’, which includes ‘a ledger’ recording every performance he ever gave and how much he earned for each one (p.27), as well as a diary kept from his childhood until his (apparent) death. Both Borden’s and Angier’s acts of life-writing reveal the ways in which their entire lives have been penetrated by economic concerns and are self-reflexively managed in response to an economic calculation of ‘cost for benefit’. As Borden states in his autobiography, Angier ‘would never credit the extent to which my life has been shaped towards holding the secret intact’ (p.67). In other words, Angier would never credit the extent to which the Borden twins ‘have built their lives’ from childhood on ‘sustaining’ the secret which enables the success of their teleportation illusion (p.291), a secret which is thus the ‘common currency’ (p.104) of their lives in both aesthetic and financial terms.

As I noted in the introduction to this chapter, Priest constructs Borden’s account of his life such that it mirrors this teleportation illusion, with one twin repeatedly taking the place of the other and taking over the visible role as ‘Alfred Borden’ in the act of writing. But the effects of the trick extend further into the Borden twins’ lives than even their writing act would suggest. The autobiography states in the very first paragraph that ‘the story of my life is the story of the secrets by which I have lived my life’ (p.31), and this total penetration and transformation of the twins’ lives by their secret is illustrated by the example of a Chinese magician, Ching Ling Foo, who, in order to protect the secret of where he concealed the glass bowl of ornamental fish he triumphantly produced as the prestige at the end of his act, maintained a shuffling, ‘hobbling’ gait for the entirety of his life. The narrator of the autobiography similarly describes how the ‘deception rules [his] life’ and

‘regulates [...] every movement’, and states that ‘everything in this account represents the shuffling walk of a fit man’ (pp.95-6). What the Borden twins effectively do in order to sustain their illusion (and thus to maximise the return on their human capital) is to ‘economise’ their lives, condensing their separate existences into a single and more economical identity which allows them to compete more effectively in their profession. In fact, not only are their narrative accounts merged and governed by the singular pronouns ‘I’ and ‘me’, but the twins have also tampered with their own legal existences by altering their birth records to disguise the fact that they are twins, and they have also presumably fabricated a legal existence for ‘Alfred Borden’ in order for one of the twins to marry under this name.

Thus, the story of the Borden twins’ lives (or rather, life), in being the story of the secrets by which they have lived their lives, is also an account of the ways in which their whole lives are structured around both aesthetic and financial forms of credit: it is the ‘false account’ from which each twin ‘gains’ (p.34). The term ‘account’ is also of interest here: as Peggy Kamuf observes, although terms such as ‘account’ and ‘accountability’ form ‘a place of overdetermined crossing between calculation and narration’, the two senses are conventionally kept apart, and are even understood to stand ‘in rough opposition’ to each other.<sup>31</sup> Yet while Sleight’s description of Borden’s and Angier’s autobiographies as ‘in part an accounting, a setting-out of the costs exacted’ by their rivalry implies that these costs might be understood metaphorically as personal and moral costs,<sup>32</sup> forms of financial and narrative accounting are in fact revealed to be closely connected in *The Prestige*. Indeed, they turn out to be equally valid methods of accounting for a life, especially in light of the novel’s appearance during a period when individual existences are

---

<sup>31</sup> Peggy Kamuf, ‘Accountability’, *Textual Practice*, 21 (2007), 251-66 (pp.251-52).

<sup>32</sup> Sleight, p.viii.

increasingly mediated through an economic calculation of cost for benefit. In Priest's novel, both magicians make an account in order to weigh up the negative and positive effects of bending their entire lives around the performance of their illusions, and thus around their competition for the greatest 'prestige', a form of credit which can be understood both in terms of 'acclaim' and in terms of 'ringing cash tills' (p.71).

The extent to which this desire for 'prestige' or credit can possess an entire life is especially apparent in Angier's account, which demonstrates a much more naked focus on money. Although Angier reflects on his dependence on the conventional form of prestige he receives through performing on stage – 'the fame, the admiring glances in the street, the respectful regard of my contemporaries, the recognition in the highest areas of society' – he immediately follows this reflection with the exclamation 'And the money! How I crave the money!' (p.268), and later states that he cares little about appearing lower down on a 'bill' as long as the performances 'amply repay in money what they do not offer in prestige' (p.284). Moreover, as with Borden's account, the structure of Angier's account is indicative of the extent to which he has also built his entire life around the accumulation of credit. The narrative account he begins as a child at his father's behest, to which he gives the title 'The Story of My Life' (p.155), quickly morphs when he becomes an adult – and is under the threat of his 'financial sentence of death' – into an obsessive financial accounting. Most of Angier's diary entries (especially the earlier ones) include an account of how much he has earned in a particular performance, week, or year; in fact, some entries provide only financial accounts of his 'Total Income from Magic' (p.186). Furthermore, just as the Borden twins' illusion and their autobiography share a structure of substitution, so too does Angier's illusion come to

mirror his diary entries, inasmuch as both his narrative account and his teleportation illusion are centrally concerned with the production of money. Just as each diary entry can function primarily as a financial accounting of how much money Angier has accumulated, so each performance of 'In a Flash' can also be seen to centre on the production and accumulation of financial credit above all else. Not only does Angier produce counterfeit money as one of the 'prestiges' of his trick, he also produces 'prestige bodies', all of which are labelled with the time and place of their production and the amount of money Angier earned in that particular performance, such that his hoard of bodies functions as a parallel financial account to the one he keeps obsessively in his ledger.

### **The Prestiges**

However, by the end of Angier's account of his life, his diary has also come to mirror both Borden's autobiography and his version of the teleportation illusion. Following his accident with the Tesla device, Angier is split into two selves. The diminished but more bodily version of Angier, which is the 'source body' left behind in the device (p.330), returns to his ancestral family home and continues his diary, while slowly dying of his injuries. The other version of Angier, the less substantial 'partial prestige' (p.302) transmitted across the theatre before the duplication process was complete, wanders around London for ten months in 'a half-world' (p.328) before returning to the Angier family home, where he witnesses the death of the more bodily version of himself. While some of the entries in Angier's diary at first appear to be narrated by the bodily version of Angier, they are in fact made by the wraithlike version of Angier, who has 'borrowed a technique from Borden, so that I am I as well as myself', which is how he manages to narrate his own death (pp.324-

25). Meanwhile, Borden ends his autobiography mired in uncertainty, stating ‘I do not know what to do or who I really am’ (p.117).

Both Angier’s diary and Borden’s autobiography thus reveal the costs of structuring their entire lives around their illusions and their competition with each other. As Nicholas Ruddick puts it, although this rivalry ‘drives each to ever more brilliant achievement in the manufacture of illusions, it is entirely destructive to their identities.’<sup>33</sup> Priest depicts this destruction in Gothic terms through the figures of the double and the ghost, something which is especially clear in Angier’s critique of the Borden twins’ decision to shape their lives around their illusion. When Angier finally acquires the twins’ diary and learns their secret, he remarks that although they have successfully ‘fooled’ the majority of people, in the end the twins have destroyed their own lives. ‘Two lives made into one,’ Angier concludes, ‘means a halving of those lives’, such that only one twin ‘lives in the world at a time’, while the other twin ‘hides in a nether world, literally non-existent, a lurking spirit, a *doppelgänger*, a prestige’ (pp.318-19). But this critique applies equally well to Angier. The total penetration of his own life by his desire for credit also transforms Angier into ‘a pathetic denizen of a half-world that was as much of [his] own making as it had been of Borden’s’ (p.336).

*The Prestige* shares this fascination with the figure of the uncanny double – the ‘lurking spirit’, ‘*doppelgänger*’ or ‘prestige’ – with late-Victorian Gothic texts such as *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), but it also shares an unexpected preoccupation with money to be found in this and other Victorian Gothic texts. As Gail Turley Houston observes, although the last place one would generally expected

---

<sup>33</sup> Nicholas Ruddick, ‘Reticence and Ostentation in Christopher Priest’s Later Novels: *The Quiet Woman* and *The Prestige*’, in *Christopher Priest: The Interaction*, ed. by Andrew M. Butler (London: The Science Fiction Foundation, 2005), pp.79-96 (p.91).

to see a ‘horrifying Gothic protagonist’ is ‘at the bank [...] fumbling for petty cash,’ the ‘supernatural atmosphere’ of late-Victorian Gothic texts is nevertheless frequently ‘invaded [...] by startlingly mundane indications of the capitalist sensibilities of the title characters’: for example, one of the earliest encounters with Hyde in Stevenson’s novella concerns a visit to Jekyll’s bank to have a cheque honoured.<sup>34</sup> For Houston, the frequency with which Gothic tropes appear in considerations of finance in both Gothic and realist fiction, and in works of political economy during the Victorian era, is indicative of the significant role the Gothic genre played in attempts to ‘register, manage, and assess the intense panic produced and elided by the unstable Victorian economy’.<sup>35</sup> However, I suggest that notwithstanding his more obvious borrowings from the Victorian Gothic, Priest also draws on the themes of earlier Gothic texts in *The Prestige*, whose ‘trappings’, according to Andrea K. Henderson, lend themselves particularly well to an exploration of the effects of political economy on conceptions of subjectivity, not least because the Gothic genre evolved in the same period during which political economy emerged as a distinct discipline, and in which economic models began to shape perceptions of subjectivity in new ways.<sup>36</sup>

Henderson argues that Gothic texts produced during the genre’s initial flourishing manifest the ‘obverse’ of ‘the canonical Romantic model of subjectivity.’ Both Romantic and Gothic models of subjectivity are constituted by ‘the perceived division between a “true inner self” and a “superficial social self”’, a division which Henderson suggests can also be read in relation to political and economic developments in this period, which saw the usurpation of ‘the traditional genealogy-

---

<sup>34</sup> Houston, p.12, p.2, p.100.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., pp.1-2.

<sup>36</sup> Andrea K. Henderson, *Romantic Identities: Varieties of Subjectivity 1774-1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p.58.

based model of identity' (especially after the French Revolution) by the emergence of 'a market-based model of identity', which in turn served to 'polarize identity into an essential identity akin to use value [...] and a relational identity akin to exchange value'. Whereas 'Romantic interiority' focused more on essential identity, presenting a subject with 'an intrinsic and relatively stable character', Gothic novels typically focused on relational identity, 'making character a matter of surface, display, and "consumption" by others', such that characters become more and more akin to inanimate objects such as automata, puppets, corpses, and coins. For Henderson, much of the horror and 'distastefulness' of the Gothic genre arises from its insistence on this close association between 'persons and commodities', which 'tends to give rise to a kind of gothic abjection.'<sup>37</sup>

Priest's depiction of what Angier terms 'the prestige materials' invokes this Gothic relationship between persons and inanimate objects, especially where coins are concerned. The 'prestige materials' are the 'source' bodies (p.330) for Angier's performances of 'In a Flash'. The version of Angier who enters the device is copied and seemingly killed in the process, while a new version of Angier appears in the designated place in the theatre. Angier stores the source bodies in the family crypt, where many years later, in the final section of the novel (entitled 'The Prestiges'), one of Borden's descendants, Andrew Westley, finds them. When Westley enters the crypt, he finds first of all the kind of scene one might expect to see in a Gothic novel, involving 'ancient coffins [...] stacked horizontally in heaps' and 'in various degrees of decay'. But he also finds 'modern metal racks' illuminated by electrical lights, each of which holds a copy of Angier's body, each copy 'identical to all the others', bearing 'no sign of decay', and marked with a label indicating the place and time of

---

<sup>37</sup> Henderson, pp.38-9.

its production, and the amount of money Angier earned in each performance (pp.352-55). Priest's description of these bodies makes them sound very much like coins: identical, unchanging, and marked with an indication of their origin and their value. It is as though Angier's desire for credit has transformed his very body into money.

Moreover, Westley's reasons for entering the crypt also resonate with Henderson's analysis of the relationship between political economy and subjectivity in the Gothic genre. Henderson argues that problems arising 'in the determination of value, with people as with goods' in this period are 'related to a problem in the determination of origin', and this concern manifests itself in the Gothic through the genre's obsession with characters whose 'material origins' are unknown, such that 'not only their origin but their very existence takes on a supernatural quality.' The 'resolution' in Gothic novels of 'the gap between relational and intrinsic identity' thus takes the form of 'a revelation of material origins: who was born to whom and where', and of 'reconnect[ing] persons with the site of their original "production"'.<sup>38</sup> Westley, whose entire life has been troubled by a supernatural and seemingly telepathic connection to an identical twin (of whose existence he can discover no official record), is drawn to the Angier family crypt, where he finds the body of a small boy whom he wishes to believe is his brother. However, the body is labelled with the name 'Nicky Borden', Westley's own name before his adoption, and Westley discovers that he is the copy of Nicky produced when the child was thrown into Angier's machine. Yet, although the act of entering the crypt reconnects Westley with the site of his original production, it does not connect him in any straightforward way with his genealogical origins: more horrifyingly than in many

---

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p.53.



Gothic novels, he finds the original subject of which he is merely the copy – or, more disturbingly still, he finds the inanimate object, the corpse or coin, of which he is merely the animated replica.

For Henderson, the emphasis placed in Gothic texts on the association between persons and commodities indicates that the genre ‘lends itself to a more thorough analysis of certain social pressures’ than the lyric poetry more typically associated with the Romantic period, which, despite its ‘concern with social problems and reform’, nevertheless often ‘obscures’ the processes of ‘commodification’ through ‘its emphasis on personality.’ Moreover, Henderson also speculates that the Gothic genre might retain this function of interrogating the role of political economy in the production of subjectivity during the contemporary period. ‘We post-Romantics’, she asserts, ‘have ourselves adopted the depth model as a sort of protection against the effects of capitalism’, which she suggests ‘gives rise to our blindness to the special insights of the gothic.’ In fact, Henderson concludes, the Gothic novel might constitute ‘an embarrassing subject’ for certain critics (such as Robert Kiely) precisely because ‘it presents an embarrassing “subject”’, one who is little more than ‘a commodity, a coin.’<sup>39</sup>

This ‘embarrassing “subject”’ in *The Prestige* is arguably the ‘prestige body’ itself. As I noted in the introduction to this chapter, the term ‘prestige’ conveys multiple meanings in Priest’s novel, ranging from a name for a conjuring trick to the ‘product of magic’ which ‘apparently did not exist before the trick was performed’ (pp.64-65). Borden states that when performing his teleportation illusion, ‘the prestige is the main preoccupation’ – the prestige being none other than Borden himself, or rather the Borden twin who lurks in ‘a nether world’, apparently ‘non-

---

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p.58.

existent', while the other twin performs, until the moment comes for him to switch places with the 'original' twin. By contrast, Angier uses the term prestige differently, describing the 'source body' left behind in the Tesla device as the 'prestige body', and considering the duplicated version produced and projected by the machine to be the real version of himself. This is something of a reversal of the way in which the term 'prestige' is defined in Borden's narrative: according to his definition, it is the version of Angier produced at the end of the performance which should be labelled the prestige (or the product of magic, which seems to appear out of nothing), rather than the inert body left behind. Angier's contrasting use of the term arguably reveals a certain anxiety or even embarrassment (as Henderson might put it) on his part about the complexity of the relationship between original and copy, authentic and fake: after all, the other 'prestige' of Angier's illusion is counterfeit money.

Conversely, perhaps the use of the term 'prestige' to label the bodies left behind in the machine is meant to indicate their status as a kind of by-product or waste product of the illusion. Yet Priest complicates his use of the term 'prestige' even further by using it to describe 'the half-dead, half-life condition' that these 'source' bodies involved in Angier's teleportation act are 'frozen in', a state which is termed 'prestigious' (p.330). Priest's description of Angier's prestige bodies is highly evocative of the idea of 'suspended animation', which was a key concept in eighteenth-century practices of what Robert Mitchell terms 'experimental vitalism' – a mode of experimental research into life itself which aimed to 'encourage perplexity about the being of life' through 'a search for liminal entities or "altered states" that seem to confuse the line between life and death.'<sup>40</sup> Suspended animation was one such state, and was originally associated with the belief that 'it was possible for

---

<sup>40</sup> Robert Mitchell, *Experimental Life: Vitalism in Romantic Science and Literature* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2013), pp.1-3.

individuals to *appear* dead without actually being dead’, and thus also that it might be possible to restore ‘animation’ to the bodies of people who had drowned, particularly through the use of electrical shocks.<sup>41</sup> Suspended animation was also associated with changes in temperature, something which is especially evident in John Hunter’s vitalist experiments, in which he used ‘extreme cold in order to suspend all organic actions without producing death’. The results of Hunter’s ‘cryonic’ experiments ‘implied that practical life was grounded in a more fundamental mode of vitality’ which he termed ‘simple life’.<sup>42</sup> In *The Prestige*, the Tesla device appears to be able to achieve something similar, rendering a living body ‘inert’ and ‘frozen’ in order to isolate ‘a more fundamental mode of vitality’ which it then copies and transmits to a newly constituted body, animated with a ‘shock’ of electricity, or the ‘vital spark’ as Angier puts it (p.345), with obvious echoes of *Frankenstein* and of vitalism’s interest in the relationship between electricity and life.<sup>43</sup>

Hence, the term ‘prestige’ indicates both a condition of being ‘half-dead, half-live’ analogous to the state of suspended animation, and the state of being caught between existence and non-existence, like the ‘product of magic’ which ‘apparently did not exist before the trick was performed’. These two liminal conditions are in turn described in Gothic terms: to be a ‘prestige’ is to be a ghost, a spirit, a wraith. However, at the same time as the term ‘prestige’ indicates a state of ontological uncertainty, it is also closely associated (as I argued in the previous section) with credit of one kind or another, and especially with money. These multiple meanings converge in Angier’s ‘prestige bodies’, each of which is not only

---

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., pp.44-6.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., pp.48-9.

<sup>43</sup> For more on this relationship and its role in *Frankenstein*, see for example Patricia Fara, *An Entertainment for Angels: Electricity in the Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Icon, 2002), pp.166-170.

in a state of suspended animation, but is also marked with a label to indicate a specific amount of guineas, which is the wage Angier earned in the performance that produced each particular body – a wage which, as Foucault points out, ‘is nothing other than the remuneration, the income allocated to [...] human capital’.<sup>44</sup> Indeed, as I observed earlier in this section, these prestige bodies are not only marked with a particular monetary value, but actually seem to be very like coins themselves: identical, unchanging, and marked with an indication of their origin and value.

In this way, Angier’s undead prestige bodies arguably make manifest an already well-established link between undeath and capital, particularly where analyses of Karl Marx’s thought are concerned. For example, Mark Neocleous points to the importance not only of the ‘spectral’ in Marx’s work but also of Marx’s use of the vampire metaphor, and he gestures to a number of influential readings (including that of Franco Moretti) of *Dracula* as a representative of capital.<sup>45</sup> Neocleous posits that Marx’s use of the vampire metaphor reveals a significant link between capital and undeath, especially in terms of the distinction he makes between ‘living labour’ and ‘accumulated labour’, sometimes described as ‘dead labour’ or ‘dead mammon’. However, this ‘dead labour’ is not exactly dead, but rather, ‘under the rule of capital [...] refuses to stay dead: like the vampire, it returns to thrive off and control the living.’ Capital, Neocleous concludes, ‘appears as dead labour turned into a form of life which in turn destroys the workers’, not only through exploiting every last ‘drop of blood’ by prolonging the working day, but also via the process of commodity fetishism, through which ‘human beings are alienated from the activity of labour, from the product and from other human beings and thereby also from themselves’.

---

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., pp.225-26, p.229.

<sup>45</sup> Mark Neocleous, *The Monstrous and the Dead: Burke, Marx, Fascism* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2005), p.36, pp.47-8. See also Franco Moretti, *Signs Taken for Wonders: Essays in the Sociology of Literary Form* (London and New York: Verso, [1983] 2005), pp.83-108.

Ultimately, what ‘vampire-like capital’ does is to damage human beings ‘as sensuous creatures – feeling, experiencing, sensuous creatures’, such that rather being ‘able to *feel* like a genuinely living creature’, human beings are ‘ruled by the dead (capital).’<sup>46</sup>

In *The Prestige*, there is something almost vampiric about Angier’s undead prestige bodies, inasmuch as they retain a parasitical hold over the living as part of the inheritance (along with Angier’s hoard of duplicated coins) which Angier’s descendants will receive. In the case of Kate Angier, her inheritance of capital and prestige bodies and of the feud and secrets they represent has ‘wormed itself into [her] life’, ‘influencing everything’ she does, and ‘inhibiting’ and ‘immobilising’ her as ‘a hostage to the past’ in a metaphorical state of living death (pp.145-6, p.150). Yet although the role of capital in damaging human beings ‘as sensuous creatures’ is important in *The Prestige*, the favoured image in this text is not the figure of the vampire but the state of suspended animation. Again, this state has figured in discussions of political economy, most notably in Catherine Gallagher’s reading of the prevalence of suspended animation in *Our Mutual Friend*. Gallagher turns to Old Harmon’s hoarding of mounds of dust – ‘the assembled debris of a vast number of defunct old lives’ – as a classic example of the common association of ‘deathliness’ and ‘accumulation’. Since any commodity is ‘freighted with mortality, as a sign of spent vivacity’ in the form of the labour that has been expended in its production, it can only have a ‘recuperative potential’ if it is put back into circulation rather than hoarded as ‘a chunk of mortality.’<sup>47</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., pp.47-53.

<sup>47</sup> Catherine Gallagher, *The Body Economic: Life, Death and Sensation in Political Economy and the Victorian Novel* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2006), pp.91-2.

However, for Gallagher, Old Harmon's business is also illustrative of 'the transformative potential in drying out and storing up life's remains', inasmuch as it 'emphasizes that value, as such, is always life expended and accumulated, stored up, and it can be stored for the long term only in inorganic form.'<sup>48</sup> In other words, since political economy traditionally understands labour and value as being drawn from life itself, then what capital seems to do is 'to place sensate life in abeyance, to abstract it from biotic form while preserving its potential force'.<sup>49</sup> Old Harman's 'conversion of life into death' is thus 'not different in principle from any other process of realizing value.' Hence, for those 'who insist most strenuously on the flesh and blood origins of economic value, "life in abeyance" is the definitive condition of commodities and the abstract representation of their value in money.'<sup>50</sup> In this vein, Gallagher also draws attention to Gaffar's insistence in *Our Mutual Friend* that the corpses he fishes from the river are his 'living', a statement which for Gallagher again brings to the fore 'the open secret that money is always ultimately taken out of flesh': indeed, 'since all value is produced at the expense of life', money is ultimately 'just a metaphor for human flesh.'<sup>51</sup>

In *The Prestige*, money and human flesh are brought together quite literally in Angier's prestige bodies. Like the money that they seem to represent, the prestiges are an instance of 'sensate life' placed 'in abeyance' or in suspended animation, of the separation of 'life' from 'biotic form' such that it can be 'stored for the long term'. But what Harmon in *Our Mutual Friend* does to the remains of other lives is what Angier does to his own life. The undead condition of Angier's prestige bodies is not straightforwardly the result of any form of external 'vampiric' exploitation;

---

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p.93.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p.61.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p.93, p.97.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., pp.93-4.

rather, their undead condition is the result of Angier's entrepreneurial management of his own life as human capital. As Bröckling argues, 'the expansion of economic reality into all realms of life' under human capital theory 'necessarily radicalizes political economy into biopolitical economy' – in other words 'the neoliberal interpellation of the entrepreneurial self also takes in a capitalization of one's own life.'<sup>52</sup> Angier's hoard of prestige bodies, analogous to the hoard of coins he produces with the Tesla device (which he uses to augment his innate portion of human capital), can therefore be understood as the manifestation of Angier's entrepreneurial capitalization of his own life.

### **A financial sentence of death**

It is interesting to note that the state of suspended animation in which Angier's 'prestigious' bodies remain is also a popular image in recent studies of biopolitics. For example, Roberto Esposito draws attention to Gilles Deleuze's 'unusual reference' to *Our Mutual Friend*, and to the 'suspended state between life and death' experienced by Rogue Riderhood, in order to think about the possibility of an affirmative biopolitics. According to Esposito, 'the flicker of life that remains to him separates Riderhood from his individual subjectivity so as to present itself in all its simple biological texture, that is, in its vital, bare facticity'. In turn, this might offer a glimpse of 'the singularity of *a* life' which is 'not ascribable to an individual' but is instead 'impersonal' and 'improper'. This impersonal and improper life has the potential to exceed 'a semantics of the person', the category which is subject to politics and the law, thereby allowing for the possibility of conceiving of 'anything that lives [...] in the unity of life' where 'no part of it can be destroyed in favor of another: every life is a form of life and every form refers to life.' However, Esposito

---

<sup>52</sup> Bröckling, p.263.

also observes that this understanding of life separated from any subjectivity and captured ‘in all its simple biological texture’ can equally underpin ‘a politics of death’: ‘[w]hat Dickens calls “outer husk” or a “flabby lump of mortality” has not a little to do with the “empty shells” and “life unworthy of life” of Binding and Hoche’.<sup>53</sup>

The work of Karl Binding and Alfred Hoche also features in Agamben’s analysis of biopolitics, as does this state of suspended animation, this time (as Mitchell notes) in the form of the ‘overcoma’.<sup>54</sup> For Agamben, there can be nothing affirmative about ‘bare life’ when it becomes ‘detached from any brain activity and, so to speak, from any subject’; instead, this separation forms precisely the foundation of modern biopolitics and especially of its thanatopolitical impulses. According to Agamben, the ‘fundamental event’ which enables the development of modern biopolitics lies in the ‘isolation of nutritive life’ in the ‘higher organism’, which is evident in Xavier Bichat’s notion that ‘two “animals” lived together in every higher organism’: the ‘organic’ animal, ‘whose life [...] is merely the repetition of [...] blind and unconscious functions’ such as circulation and respiration, and the ‘external’ animal, whose life ‘is defined through its relation to the external world.’ These two animals ‘live together’ in man but ‘do not coincide; the internal animal’s organic life begins in the fetus before animal life does, and in aging and in the final death throes it survives the death of the external animal.’ This ‘split between the functions of vegetative life and the functions of relational life’ has enormous ‘strategic importance’ not only in medicine but also in politics: for Agamben, the development of modern biopolitics is underpinned by ‘a progressive generalization

---

<sup>53</sup> Roberto Esposito, *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy*, trans. by Timothy Campbell (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), pp.192-94.

<sup>54</sup> Mitchell, *Experimental Life*, pp.1-2, n.3.



and redefinition of the concept of vegetative life (now coinciding with the biological heritage of the nation)' over which 'the State would carry out its new vocation' for 'the care of the population's life'.<sup>55</sup>

Angier's prestige bodies, 'frozen in life, made inert without being made dead' (p.354), are suggestive of this separation of sensate, relational life from some more basic form of vitality which survives the apparent death of the 'external animal', and which underpins the liminal or 'prestigious' state of undeath. But it is important to note that these bodies are also marked with a value indicating Angier's capitalization of his own life, which is suggestive of a relationship between life itself and decisions made in the realm of political economy which Agamben's analysis would be unlikely to take account of. While he argues that the division of life into vegetative and relational functions has a 'strategic function' across multiple 'domains' ranging from law and politics to medicine and biology, Agamben does not include political economy in this list.<sup>56</sup> This is all the more surprising given that, in *Homo Sacer*, Agamben does examine the notion of the value of life itself in the thought of Binding and Hoche, whose work, as Bröckling notes, emerged from Goldschied's earlier theory of a 'human economy', but involved a different kind of 'human-economic accounting' in which '[w]hether the life of a human being was classified as worthy or not of living depended on the balance of his or her cost-benefit value.'<sup>57</sup>

Despite Agamben's provocative assertion that in 'modern biopolitics, sovereign is he who decides on the value or the nonvalue of life as such', and despite

---

<sup>55</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, trans. by Kevin Attell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), pp.13-15.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p.13.

<sup>57</sup> Bröckling, p.256.

his coupling of the ‘politicization’ of life with its ‘valorization’,<sup>58</sup> he does not elaborate on what this ‘value’ of life might be or theorise a place for political-economic decisions concerning life in his conception of biopolitics, which for Bröckling focuses on the sovereign power to take life while overlooking the significance of ‘the economical imperative of added value’ also at work in biopolitics.<sup>59</sup> Indeed, Lemke similarly argues that if biopolitical programmes were only concerned with the isolation and extermination of bare life, politics ‘would exhaust itself in the production of *homines sacri*, which must be regarded as unproductive, for “bare life” is created only to be oppressed and killed’, a situation which contravenes the “bioeconomic” imperative’ of biopolitics ‘to improve chances of survival and the quality of life.’ Theories focusing solely on the persistence of the sovereign power to take life risk overlooking the fundamentally ‘productive’ function of biopolitics: the fact that it ‘is essentially a political economy of life.’<sup>60</sup>

It is interesting to note that in *The Prestige*, although the Tesla device’s primary function seems entangled with death (not only in terms of its production of undead bodies, but also because it does cause the final death of at least one version of Angier), the machine’s primary purpose is the duplication and proliferation of life, not its termination: as Angier remarks of his early uses of the machine, although at first he was ‘disheartened by the imagining of death, of living in an afterlife’, he later comes to experience his transmission ‘as a rebirth, a renewal of self’ (p.285). Yet the machine’s power to take life remains significant, and the ghostly version of Angier ends his diary despairing of his undead condition. This persistence of the sovereign

---

<sup>58</sup> Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. by Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), p.142, p.139.

<sup>59</sup> Bröckling, p.249.

<sup>60</sup> Lemke, p.60.

power to take life in Priest's depiction of Angier's machine – a machine which both manipulates the states of life and death *and* produces money – is arguably reflective of the continued significance of sovereign power over life in the neoliberal formation of political economy which held sway in the period during which *The Prestige* emerged. In human capital theory, the *homo œconomicus* becomes 'not only a capitalist but also the sovereign of him- or herself', whose 'every action [...] maximizes his or her individual advantage' at the same time as it 'exerts power in order to "make life or let die"'. Following this 'economic approach', disease and death 'could be interpreted as the result of (wrong) investment decisions'.<sup>61</sup> In fact, there is a hint of this form of sovereignty in *Homo Sacer*, in which Agamben notes that the politicization of life is 'implicit in the sovereignty of the individual over his own existence'. Furthermore, Agamben links this self-sovereignty to the question of the (economic) value of life in his observations on Binding's use of 'suicide as the expression of man's sovereignty over his own existence' to underpin a 'new juridical category of "life devoid of value"', which 'corresponds exactly [...] to the bare life of *homo sacer*'.<sup>62</sup>

Hence, despite the extent to which Agamben overlooks the productive function of biopolitics as 'a political economy of life', Bröckling does find in *Homo Sacer* some valuable insights into the ways in which sovereign power might operate in neoliberal formations of political economy. This is particularly true of Agamben's analysis of the 'Hobbesian scenario' of the state of nature, in which, once man is 'exposed in a law-free realm to every form of violence', and only survives 'through his own violence [...] "everyone is bare life and a *homo sacer* for everyone else"'.<sup>61</sup>

---

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p.111.

<sup>62</sup> Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, pp.136-39.

Bröckling finds this ‘Hobbesian scenario hidden in the theory of human capital’.

Although human capital theory

promotes each person to a sovereign, it declares him in the same breath to be *homo sacer*: as an acting agent, the individual disposes as he pleases over his own life and over that of others, with legal sanctions or other consequences of his actions entering his calculation as opportunity costs. As the object of both his own and external action, he is thrown back to the status of “bare life,” his existence depending on someone – whether *ego* or *alter* – being available to invest in it. If life becomes an economic function, disinvestment amounts to death.<sup>63</sup>

In *The Prestige*, there are echoes of the *homo aeconomicus*’s simultaneous existence as sovereign of himself and as *homo sacer* where the economisation of his own life is concerned. Certainly, there is evidence of a ‘Hobbesian scenario’ at work in Angier and Borden’s (economic) rivalry, which gradually becomes a struggle to the death, as each magician attempts to murder the other on more than one occasion. A remorseful Angier later describes their attempts on each other’s lives as ‘a descent into brutality’ (p.336), which hints at the resurgence of a Hobbesian state of nature in their rivalry in which each man is *homo sacer* and bare life to the other.

Additionally, there are some notable echoes of the sovereign power to take life evident in Priest’s depiction of Borden’s and Angier’s illusions, which (as is typical of conjurors’ illusions) turn out to be performances of death and resurrection,<sup>64</sup> with each magician disappearing in a terrifying and seemingly deadly flash of electrical light, only to reappear again, alive, whole, and self-identical. In fact, Borden’s patter around the performance of his illusion actually includes references to public executions. In the ‘fractured, French-accented English’ of his stage persona, ‘Le Professeur de Magie’ (p.7), Borden explains that in witnessing his

---

<sup>63</sup> Bröckling, p.264.

<sup>64</sup> See Michael Mangan, *Performing Dark Arts: A Cultural History of Conjuring* (Bristol: Intellect, 2007), p.116.

performance (enabled by ‘the deadly power of the electrical current’), the audience ‘are about to witness a veritable miracle, one in which life and death are chanced with, as in the game of dice [his] ancestors played to avoid the tumbril’ (p.79). Priest’s use of the noun ‘tumbril’ is here striking, given that it often refers to a type of cart most famously used to transport condemned prisoners to their execution, especially during the French Revolution,<sup>65</sup> which Borden suggests the ancestors of his French stage persona were involved in (and it is also worth noting that ‘Decapitation’ appears amongst a list of commonly performed illusions which Angier refers to elsewhere in the novel (p.273)). Of course, the audience knows that Borden is not really going to die on stage: as Michael Mangan points out, audiences can ‘indulge, without too much guilt, in some of darker pleasures of witnessing suffering because they know that this is NOT a public execution [...] or a public punishment, but part of an “act”.’<sup>66</sup> Yet this is less clear in Angier’s performance, in which ‘[w]hat the audience sees is actually what has happened’ (p.282). In other words, what would appear merely as an act to Angier’s audience appears instead as a grim form of public execution to the reader of *The Prestige*, who is initially unaware that the Tesla device does not actually kill the version of Angier which functions as the source body in the transportation.

Moreover, both Borden’s references to ‘the deadly power of the electrical current’ and Angier’s electrically-powered machine are highly suggestive of the electric chair, first invented and used in exactly the period during which Angier and Borden perform their own electrical games with life and death. Although the electric

---

<sup>65</sup> In the *OED*, ‘tumbril’ or ‘tumbrel’ is defined both as an unknown ‘instrument of punishment’ and as a type of cart whose exemplary uses include the transportation of condemned prisoners to a place of execution, while the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* specifically associates this type of cart with the transportation of condemned prisoners to their execution during the French Revolution.

<sup>66</sup> Mangan, p.160.

chair was built by Edison rather than Tesla (who builds Angier's machine), its construction was nevertheless bound up with their entrepreneurial rivalry as the means by which Edison hoped to drive the alternating current pioneered by Tesla from the market, by displaying its deadliness and by implying that its only proper use was for the execution of 'mad dogs or criminals'.<sup>67</sup> In *The Prestige*, the Tesla device (like the electric chair) is thoroughly tested for accuracy at the expense of animal life, although Tesla is horrified to discover that his electrical device has as a side-effect the apparent power to 'murder' any of 'God's creatures' (p.259). Angier's accident with the Tesla device is also strangely evocative of the first human execution by electric chair in 1890, during which technical errors resulted in the machine being turned off before it had delivered sufficient voltage to kill the condemned prisoner instantly, and the apparatus had to be used twice before the prisoner's death could be confirmed.<sup>68</sup> Similarly, Borden switches off the electrical supply to Angier's machine too soon, such that the device supplies only the 'first shock' and not the 'second shock' necessary to complete the performance, leaving both the source version of Angier and the one reproduced by the machine in a similarly disturbing 'half-alive, half-dead condition' (p.306).

Besides referencing executions, the accident with Angier's machine can also be seen to produce a kind of *homo sacer* in the wraithlike 'partial prestige' of Angier. Following the accident, the incomplete version of Angier created by the machine takes on 'the appearance of a spectre', which 'could be seen but also *seen through*', and is 'to most people a hideous vision of the ghostly underworld'

<sup>67</sup> Matthew Josephson, *Edison: A Biography* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1961), p.349.

<sup>68</sup> Stuart Banner, *The Death Penalty: An American History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), pp.186-87. For more on the history of Edison's and Tesla's involvements in the development of the electric chair, see Banner, pp.169-207. For more on both this topic and on the role of animal experimentation in the development of electrocution, see Nicole Shukin, *Animal Capital: Rendering Life in Biopolitical Terms* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), pp.131-80.

(pp.328-29). This appearance puts him ‘in some danger’, because when people do catch sight of him they sometimes react with violence; for example, Angier recounts that ‘strangers have hurled objects’ at him to ‘ward [him] off’, one of which was ‘a lighted oil-lamp’ which almost ‘caught’ him (p.329). Priest consistently relates this exposure to violence to the lack of any ‘legal existence’. In the case of the wraithlike version of Angier, he realises that his lack of ‘legal existence’ and ‘practical being’ means that he ‘cannot live except in squalid half-life’, unable to travel ‘safely’, yet doomed to spend an eternity ‘hovering on the fringes’ of his former life in an existence that ‘has become literally not worth living’ (pp.343-44). This exposure to violence is also a feature of the Borden twins’ lives. The wraithlike version of Angier reasons that as a result of their tampering with ‘the official records that revealed the existence of twins’, only one Borden twin has any ‘legal existence’: hence, the other twin can be killed without any crime being detected (p.331). If this lack of legal existence leaves both the twins and Angier beyond the condemnation of the law – as Angier points out, his own lack of legal existence means that he can commit murder without ever being ‘caught or suspected of the crime’ (p.331) – it also places them beyond the law’s protection by making them ‘invisible to the world, as good as dead’ (p.329). It is here, then, that the term ‘prestige’ acquires its final meaning in the novel, signalling a form of life situated (like the ‘prestige’ of a magic trick) on the very margins of existence, exposed in a ‘half-live, half-dead condition’ before the law.

Again, the Gothic genre is significant here. While there are obvious echoes of H.G. Wells’s *The Invisible Man* in Priest’s depiction of Angier’s wraithlike self, Ruddick also points to its resonances with the figure of the monster in *Frankenstein* (1818). The end of *The Prestige* involves the ‘banishment’ of the wraithlike Angier,

‘a monster strictly neither alive nor dead’, who ‘slouches off into the dark, snowy landscape’ as Frankenstein’s creature does.<sup>69</sup> But the difference between the idea of Frankenstein’s creature as a kind of abandoned *homo sacer* and that of the Borden twins’ or Angier’s abandonment before the law is that Borden and Angier have exercised this sovereign right of life and death over their own lives. Their loss of legal existence and thus of the protection of the law against exposure to violence is the result of the decisions they have made in managing their own human capital: of their disposing (in Bröckling’s terms) as they please over their own lives and each other’s ‘with legal sanctions or other consequences’ entering their ‘calculation’ as ‘opportunity costs’. Having capitalised their lives, having transformed their own lives into ‘an economic function’, they depend ‘on someone – whether *ego* or *alter* – being available to invest’ in their human capital. Once the Borden twins and Angier lack this investment, they become vulnerable to any kind of violence: as Bröckling puts it, when ‘life becomes an economic function, disinvestment amounts to death.’<sup>70</sup> In these terms, Angier’s early statement equating the withdrawal of his allowance to a ‘financial sentence of death’ being ‘pronounced’ and ‘made official’ (p.165) takes on more disturbing connotations; rather than seeming melodramatic, it prefigures this fundamental relationship between financial disinvestment and death in *The Prestige*.

In prioritising this relationship between money, life and death, *The Prestige* can be read as a response to the potentially horrifying consequences of the capitalisation of life in the contemporary era. Each magician’s entrepreneurial management of his human capital ultimately results in the ‘disinvestment’ of their own lives and of the lives of others, the consequences of which are discovered in the

---

<sup>69</sup> Ruddick, p.93.

<sup>70</sup> Bröckling, p.264.



Gothic crypt at the end of the novel. In this unsettling Gothic portrait of live burial, Westley discovers Angier's undead prestige bodies, labelled with their value, which are the result of Angier's sovereign decisions over the value of his own human capital. But the most disturbing prestige Westley finds in this crypt is his own: the body of Nicky Borden, frozen in the same undead condition as Angier's multiple copies of his own body. What is especially troubling about Nicky's body is that it too bears a 'handwritten label' whose contents follow the same format as those found on Angier's bodies: it details the time and place of the body's production, and it also includes a monetary value, this time of '0g', or zero guineas (p.356). While the 'price tags' on Angier's bodies are indicative of the value he places on his own human capital, the label on Nicky's Borden's body is solely indicative of Angier's calculation of the value of the child's life, and what the label reveals is that Nicky's life is worthless to the Angier family. In its chilling depiction of this calculation about the worth of a particular life, *The Prestige* hints at the potential horrors of viewing human life solely in terms of capital, which might always lead to the pronouncement of a 'financial sentence of death'.

## **Chapter 2 – Poor things, poor creatures: biopolitics, biotechnology and immunity in Alasdair Gray’s *Poor Things* (1992) and Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go* (2005)**

### **Introduction: The Modern Epimetheus**

According to Lisa Nocks, rather than ‘The Modern Prometheus’, the subtitle of Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*

might more properly have been ‘A Modern Epimetheus,’ since at the root of the tragedy is Victor’s lack of forethought. The horror of *Frankenstein* is not that a human has been created artificially, but that no provision has been made for him to fit into the community into which he is ‘born.’<sup>1</sup>

Yet the creature’s artificial origins arguably play a central role in his exclusion from the human community. For Philip Armstrong, the creature ‘faces the radical lack of sympathy that results from his ambiguous place in the taxonomic scheme’: as Armstrong points out, ‘[n]o definitive answer to the question of the Creature’s species is permitted by the text, with the result that definitions of the human itself, whether based on sympathy or biology, are also placed under erasure.’<sup>2</sup> Readings of Shelley’s novel certainly respond to this ambiguity concerning the creature’s species; Stephanie Rowe, for example, describes the creature as ‘an assemblage of parts collated from multiple animal species’;<sup>3</sup> while Robert Mitchell posits that the creature may instead have been constructed ‘from a non-organic material such as clay’.<sup>4</sup> An artificially constructed corpse cobbled together from a mixture of human

---

<sup>1</sup> Lisa Nocks, ‘*Frankenstein*, In A Better Light’, *Journal of Social and Evolutionary Systems*, 20 (1997), 137-55 (pp.137-38).

<sup>2</sup> Philip Armstrong, *What Animals Mean in the Fiction of Modernity*, (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2008), p.67.

<sup>3</sup> Stephanie Rowe, “‘Listen to Me’’: *Frankenstein* as an Appeal to Mercy and Justice, on Behalf of the Persecuted Animals’, in *Humans and Other Animals in Eighteenth-Century British Culture: Representation, Hybridity, Ethics*, ed. by Frank Palmeri (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp.137-52 (p.137).

<sup>4</sup> Robert Mitchell, *Experimental Life: Vitalism in Romantic Science and Literature* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2013), pp.174-75.

and animal remains and inorganic substances, and then animated by ‘a spark of being’,<sup>5</sup> is the creature human or animal? Organic body or machine? Is he alive or dead, or something in between?

The ‘lack of forethought’ which Nocks identifies in Frankenstein’s production of his creature nevertheless plays a significant role in the creature’s ‘ambiguous place in the taxonomic scheme’, particularly where the figure of Epimetheus is concerned. According to Bernard Stiegler, the figure of Prometheus ‘makes no sense by itself’, and requires the figure of Epimetheus as its ‘double’. It is Epimetheus who forgets to endow the newly created humans with any compensatory powers as he has the other animals, such that Prometheus decides to steal fire and the gift of skill in the arts for mankind from the gods. For Stiegler, then, humans are the ‘[f]ruit of a double fault – an act of forgetting, then of theft’.<sup>6</sup> Because of this fault, the origins of humankind are bound up with the idea of originary technicity and human nature is always already prosthetic: humanity, wholly ‘without qualities [...] must invent, realize, produce qualities’, thereby compensating for their ‘flaw in being’. ‘Whereas animals are positively endowed with qualities,’ Stiegler continues, ‘it is *tekhne* that forms the lot of humans, and *tekhne* is prosthetic; that is, it is entirely artifice.’ In gifting humankind with technics in order to compensate for their fault, Prometheus ‘gives humans the present of putting them outside themselves’.<sup>7</sup>

Created but given no qualities or attributes, Frankenstein’s creature appears to have been abandoned in this very position. Indeed, the creature refers to himself as

---

<sup>5</sup> Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus*, ed. by Maurice Hindle (London: Penguin, [1818] 2003), p.58.

<sup>6</sup> Bernard Stiegler, *Technics and Time, 1: The Fault of Epimetheus*, trans. by Richard Beardsworth and George Collins (Stanford: Stanford University Press, [1994] 1998), pp.186-88.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p.193.

‘an abortion’,<sup>8</sup> hinting at an originary ‘flaw in being’ (as the *OED* has it, the term can refer in a figurative context to ‘a person or thing not fully or properly formed; an ill-conceived or badly executed action or undertaking; a monstrosity’). The creature’s attempts at educating himself are thus part of a necessary process of compensation: he must acquire language, he must learn how to make fire, and he must learn about politics, which he does from Volney’s *Ruins of Empires* and *Plutarch’s Lives*, in which he reads ‘of men concerned in public affairs governing or massacring their species’.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, the creature’s compensatory education also resonates with a significant aspect of ‘the Protagorean version of the myth’ of Prometheus: politics, which, according to Stiegler, is ‘made necessary by [humanity’s] prematureness, directly ensuing from the technical.’ In order to avoid being attacked by wild beasts, humans must come together in cities for the sake of protection, but once here they must acquire another ‘art’, a ‘technics’, which is politics, in order to avoid destroying each other.’<sup>10</sup> If he hopes to join human society, Frankenstein’s creature must therefore also learn about the founding of cities and about man’s propensity towards ‘vice and bloodshed’, which in turn enables him to ‘conceive [...] why there were laws and governments’.<sup>11</sup>

The creature’s existence at this intersection of life, technology and politics is fundamental to the continuing reliance on *Frankenstein* in contemporary culture. Just as Armstrong suggests that Shelley’s novel places definitions of the human ‘under erasure’, so Judith Halberstam asserts that rather than being ‘about the making of a

---

<sup>8</sup> Shelley, p.224.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p.93, p.117.

<sup>10</sup> Stiegler, p.188, pp.200-201.

<sup>11</sup> Shelley, p.122.

monster’, Shelley’s novel is ‘really about the making of a human.’<sup>12</sup> Insofar as the creature constitutes an experimental response to the question of what life is, the answer he provides is unexpected and disturbing: not only his birth but also his subsequent development emphasise a process of technical compensation – whether through the acquisition of fire or political education – which turns out to be common to supposedly ‘natural’ human life. This might explain why what Philip Ball terms the “‘Franken’ label’ appears at those moments when human life and technology are seen to intersect most obviously and most alarmingly – for example, in popular debates on biotechnological developments ranging from GM foods to IVF and cloning.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, there is even an instance in *Society Must be Defended* when Foucault’s phrasing in a reflection on the relationship between biopower and technology is remarkably evocative of *Frankenstein*. According to Foucault, a ‘formidable extension of biopower’

appears when it becomes technologically and politically possible for man to not only manage life but to make it proliferate, to create living matter, to build the monster, and, ultimately, to build viruses that cannot be controlled and that are universally destructive.<sup>14</sup>

Certainly, the phrase ‘to build the monster’ calls to mind Frankenstein’s ability to artificially produce a living being. In this case, the creature’s ambiguous body enables an imagination of the (always potentially disastrous) meeting point of biotechnology and biopolitics.

Indeed, for Esposito, conceptions of biopolitics must urgently respond to the contemporary moment in which ‘the connection between politics and life is radically redefined by the unstoppable proliferation of technology’. Yet Esposito suggests that

---

<sup>12</sup> Judith Halberstam, *Skin Shows: Gothic Horror and the Technology of Monsters* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1995), p.38.

<sup>13</sup> Philip Ball, *Unnatural: The Heretical Idea of Making People* (London: Vintage, 2011), p.318.

<sup>14</sup> Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76*, ed. by Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana, trans. by David Macey (London: Penguin, 2003), p.254.

the significance of technology in the relationship between life and politics is lacking in both Foucault's and Agamben's conceptions of biopolitics. While Foucault's focus on governmental techniques and on 'technologies of the self' is indicative of his emphasis on the notion of politics as a form of technics, for Esposito the earlier theorist's work nevertheless continues to operate with a conception of the body which, 'although historically determined, ontologically preceded the technical practice destined to transform it.'<sup>15</sup> And in Agamben's case, although bare life as the object of biopolitics seems more properly to inhabit the sphere of *zōē*, of 'life in its simple biological capacity', rather than *bios* or 'qualified life', Esposito points out that *zōē* itself 'can only be defined problematically: what, assuming it is even conceivable, is an absolutely natural life?' If it is indeed the case that 'a natural life doesn't exist that isn't at the same time technological as well; if the relation between *bios* and *zōē* needs by now (or has always needed) to include in it a third correlated term, *technē*', then it becomes impossible 'to hypothesize an exclusive relation between politics and life'.<sup>16</sup>

Agamben is in fact attentive to the idea that the definition of 'life' itself remains problematic; as he insightfully points out in *The Open*, 'the concept never gets defined as such' but is nevertheless 'articulated and divided time and time again through a series of caesurae and oppositions that invest it with a decisive strategic function in domains as apparently distant as philosophy, theology, politics, and – only later – medicine and biology.' As I noted in the final section of the previous chapter, for Agamben the key division of life involves the distinction within the 'higher animals' between 'vegetative' and 'relational' life, with the 'progressive

---

<sup>15</sup> Roberto Esposito, *Immunitas: The Protection and Negation of Life*, trans. by Zakiya Hanafi (Cambridge: Polity, [2002] 2011), p.146.

<sup>16</sup> Roberto Esposito, *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy*, trans. by Timothy Campbell (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, [2004] 2008), pp.14-15.

generalization and redefinition of vegetative life (now coinciding with the biological heritage of the nation)’ underpinning the formation of modern biopolitics. This division ‘passes first of all as a mobile border within living man, and without this intimate caesura the very decision of what is human and what is not would probably not be possible.’<sup>17</sup> For Agamben, the means of making this decision and thus of producing the human lies in the workings of the so-called ‘anthropological machine’ of *homo sapiens*, which functions by ‘isolating the nonhuman within the human’ and disavowing these elements to produce fully human life – although what the machine actually produces is bare life: that of the Jew, ‘the non-man within man’, or of the neomort, ‘the animal separated within the human body itself.’<sup>18</sup> While this analysis of the production of human life via the isolation and separation of ‘the nonhuman within the human’ is both incisive and provocative, in focusing exclusively on the separation of the human from the animal, Agamben risks overlooking other key divisions of the ‘human’ and the ‘nonhuman’, especially the division of the organic from the inorganic, the living from the technical, which are at work in the figure of Frankenstein’s creature and which play a ‘strategic’ role in his abandonment.

In this chapter, I will examine two contemporary British novels, Alasdair Gray’s *Poor Things* and Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go*, which turn to *Frankenstein* and to the Gothic genre more broadly in order to explore the intersection of life, technology, and politics. These novels are concerned both with querying the boundaries which traditionally separate life from technics, and with interrogating the ‘strategic function’ these boundaries have in biopolitical projects of fostering or disallowing certain lives. Broadly speaking, *Poor Things* imagines what

---

<sup>17</sup> Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, trans. by Kevin Attell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), pp.13-15.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.37-8.

might have happened if Frankenstein's creature had taken it upon himself to make his female companion. The greater part of the novel centres on the memoir of Victorian public health officer Archibald McCandless concerning the story of his wife, Bella Baxter, a 'surgical fabrication' created by the aptly named surgeon Godwin Bysshe Baxter (himself apparently also made 'by the Frankenstein method'),<sup>19</sup> who creates her by transplanting the brain of her dead unborn child into her drowned body and reanimating it. This narrative of Bella's life is refuted in a letter from McCandless's wife, now known as Victoria, who describes her husband's 'sham-Gothic' narrative as a 'cunning lie' (p.274). These two narratives are in turn framed by an editorial introduction and 'Notes Critical and Historical'.

Gray's novel (whose setting has been described as 'a late- twentieth-century nineteenth-century eighteenth century')<sup>20</sup> tends to mix twentieth-century developments in biomedicine (such as organ transplants) with eighteenth- and nineteenth-century notions of the nature of life; by contrast *Never Let Me Go* is ostensibly more concerned with twentieth-century developments in the understanding of the concept of life, although scholarly readings of the novel also insist on the significance of its relationship with *Frankenstein*.<sup>21</sup> Ishiguro's novel is narrated by Kathy H., who recounts her childhood and early adulthood spent with a group of fellow clones, who have been created solely to have their organs harvested and transplanted into uncloned humans as part of a broader public health project

---

<sup>19</sup> Alasdair Gray, *Poor Things: Episodes from the Early Life of Archibald McCandless M.D. Scottish Public Health Officer* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, [1992] 2002), p.35, p.274. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>20</sup> John C Hawley, 'Bell, Book and Candle: *Poor Things* and the Exorcism of Victorian Sentiment', *Review of Contemporary Fiction*, 15 (1995), 175-77 (p.175).

<sup>21</sup> See for example Keith McDonald, 'Days of Past Futures: Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* as "Speculative Memoir"', *Biography*, 30 (2007), 74-83, which compares *Never Let Me Go* to *Frankenstein* on the grounds of their shared focus on competing autobiographies. See also Arne de Boever, *Narrative Care: Biopolitics and the Novel* (New York and London: Bloomsbury, 2013), p.68, where de Boever insists on a much closer relationship between the two novels by describing *Never Let Me Go* as a 'rewriting' of *Frankenstein*.



known as ‘the donations programme’.<sup>22</sup> When Kathy and her lover Tommy visit their old teacher, Miss Emily, she reminds them of ‘the great breakthroughs in science’ following the Second World War which led to their creation (p.257). As Arthur Bradley observes, this post-war period constitutes a critical moment in the history of the concept of life, during which the emergence of molecular biology, cybernetics, and information theory contributed to the conclusion that ‘what we call “life” is, in a sense that apparently goes to the very limits of analogy or metaphor, “technical” [...] governed by invariant rules of reproduction, combination and adaptation’ in the form of ‘the genetic code, script or programme’, which ‘can itself be deciphered, broken down and reassembled differently.’<sup>23</sup>

In both novels, this interest in the nature and manipulation of life is depicted in relation to broader biopolitical projects of public health, ranging from medical research and organ donation to the creation of the Welfare State. For this reason, I examine the intersection of biotechnology and biopolitics in *Poor Things* and *Never Let Me Go* in relation to Esposito’s and Derrida’s theorisations of the concept of immunity. As I outline in the first section of this chapter, the concept of immunity functions as a matrix for legal, political, and biomedical ideas concerning both what is proper to human life and the defensive boundaries of the human body and community. I argue that *Poor Things* and *Never Let Me Go* are concerned with what happens to those beings – respectively the ‘poor things’ (p.xiii) and ‘poor creatures’ (p.267) of these novels – who fall on the wrong side of these strategic divisions.

---

<sup>22</sup> Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go* (London: Faber and Faber, 2005), p.256. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>23</sup> Arthur Bradley, *Originary Technicity: The Theory of Technology from Marx to Derrida* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p.1.

The second section of this chapter considers Gray's and Ishiguro's depiction of the figure of the automaton and its role in exploring both the division of human and machine and the strategic uses to which this division is put in the management of populations. Following this, the third section examines the fascination evident in both novels with skin and the image of the open body, which I will read in relation to ideas of the proper and proprietary human body and its place in the history of British legislation on anatomy and welfare. The closing section will turn to the question of care and welfare in both novels, and will consider the extent to which *Poor Things* and *Never Let Me Go* are able to imagine a more affirmative relationship between life, technology and politics.

### **Immunity**

Immunity is of course an obvious concept to turn to when considering two novels in which organ transplants feature prominently. Derrida points to the ways in which organ transplants have complicated the biomedical notion of immunity as a 'reaction' which 'protects the "indemnity" of the body proper in producing antibodies against foreign antigens', by foregrounding 'the positive virtues of immuno-depressants', which enable a limitation of 'the mechanisms of rejection' and thereby 'facilitate the tolerance of certain organ transplants'.<sup>24</sup> Esposito similarly draws attention to the ways in which organ transplants and the use of immuno-suppressants complicate our understanding of immunity. He argues that the process of organ transplantation involves 'the frontline in the clash between [...] two opposing immune systems', those of the donor and the recipient, both of which must be negotiated via immuno-suppressants to the point where 'even to distinguish

---

<sup>24</sup> Jacques Derrida, 'Faith and Knowledge: The Two Sources of "Religion" at the Limits of Reason Alone', trans. by Samuel Weber, in *Acts of Religion*, ed. by Gil Anidjar (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2010), pp.42-101 (p.80, n.27).

between “self” and “non-self” is no longer admissible, since it is not simply the improper that is the intruder, but the proper as well, inasmuch as it is estranged’.<sup>25</sup> However, as Lawrence Cohen observes in his analysis of ‘immunopolitics’, the use of immuno-suppressants has also enabled the identification of ‘specific populations’ as donors far beyond the kinship group of the recipient, thereby turning ‘transplantation into a major industry’ which has come to rely on ‘the bodily tissues of the poor and vulnerable.’<sup>26</sup>

Yet, in order to grasp the complexity of the concept of immunity, and particularly of Lawrence Cohen’s ‘immunopolitics’, it is necessary to look beyond (or rather, before) biomedical understandings of the term to its legal and political history, which Ed Cohen analyses at length in *A Body Worth Defending*. Cohen posits that in the field of biomedicine, neither immunity nor ‘defense’ constitutes ‘a *natural choice of images* for our ability to live as organisms among other organisms’; rather, these terms ‘derive from the ways that Western legal and political thinking accounts for the complex, difficult, and at times violent manner that *humans* live among other *humans*’. They are thus closely intertwined with ‘[m]odern presumptions about personhood and collectivity’, and particularly with the modern idea of the body as ‘a proprietary body’.<sup>27</sup> For Cohen, this development can be traced to the Hobbesian formulation of the proprietary relation between self and body, and of the natural right of man to preserve the life of this body, which led to the idea of self-defence as ‘the natural locus of political subjectivity.’<sup>28</sup> Only later, at the end of the nineteenth century, is this idea of natural self-defence incorporated into

---

<sup>25</sup> Esposito, *Immunitas*, pp.151-52.

<sup>26</sup> Lawrence Cohen, ‘The Other Kidney: Biopolitics beyond Recognition’, in *Commodifying Bodies*, ed. by Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Loïc Wacquant (London: Sage, 2002), pp.9-30 (pp.9-11).

<sup>27</sup> Ed Cohen, *A Body Worth Defending: Immunity, Biopolitics, and the Apotheosis of the Modern Body* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2009), p.3, p.7.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p.55, p.57.

biomedical discourse as the image of the body's immune system, such that 'the organism's own cells now seem to engage in the very warlike actions that the modern state itself enlists to protect its subjects' lives as its most vital asset.'<sup>29</sup>

In constructing his central thesis that modern biopolitics is characterised by a 'paradigm of immunization', Esposito similarly pays close attention to the history of the concept of immunity. He focuses in particular on the etymological link between the terms 'immunity' and 'community', formed by the Latin root *munus*, which 'refers to an office – a task, obligation, duty (also in the sense of a gift to be repaid)'.<sup>30</sup> According to Esposito's reading, the subjects of community are 'united' by this obligation – they are united by 'a debt, a pledge, a gift to be given, and that therefore will establish a lack', a lack on which community itself is founded. Community is concerned not with the proper but with the common, and functions 'by removing what is properly one's own', such that it 'invests and decenters the proprietary subject, forcing him to take leave of himself, to alter himself.' By contrast, the one who is immune is exempt from this obligation, and 'can completely preserve his own position' against the threat community poses to the proprietary self.<sup>31</sup> Thus community is always perceived as a risk, because it 'exposes each person to a contact with, and also to a contagion by, an other that is potentially dangerous.'<sup>32</sup> Hence, *immunitas* is locked in a 'paradigmatic clash' with *communitas*. Esposito argues that 'whereas *communitas* opens, exposes, and turns individuals inside out, freeing them to their exteriority, *immunitas* returns individuals to themselves, encloses them once again in their own skin', such that the movement

---

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p.22.

<sup>30</sup> Esposito, *Immunitas*, p.5.

<sup>31</sup> Roberto Esposito, *Communitas: The Origin and Destiny of Community*, trans. by Timothy Campbell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, [1998] 2010), pp.6-7.

<sup>32</sup> Roberto Esposito, *Terms of the Political: Community, Immunity, Biopolitics*, trans. by Rhiannon Noel Welch (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), p.49.

of immunization constitutes ‘the preventative interiorization of the outside, its neutralizing appropriation’.<sup>33</sup>

Nowadays, this ‘immunitary *dispositif*’, the ‘need for exemption and protection that originally belonged to the medical and juridical fields’, has ‘spread to all sectors and languages of our lives’, such that immunity ‘has become the coagulating point, both real and symbolic, of contemporary existence.’ Of course, as Esposito points out, ‘every society has expressed a need to be protected’ and ‘has posed a fundamental question of how to preserve life’, but he argues that ‘only today, at the end of the modern period, has such a need become the linchpin around which both the real and imaginary practices of an entire civilization have been constructed.’ Immunity crosses domains and practices, ranging from the control of infectious diseases to the supposed dangers presented by increasing numbers of immigrants, such that ‘[e]verywhere we look, new walls, new blockades, and new dividing lines are erected against something that threatens, or at least seems to, our biological, social, and environmental identity.’<sup>34</sup> Indeed, for Esposito it seems that immunitary mechanisms are ‘spiralling out of control.’ Although ‘we need immune systems’, and ‘[n]o individual or social body could do without them [...] when they grow out of proportion they end up forcing the entire organism to explode or implode’, in the manner of autoimmune diseases in which ‘the immune system becomes so strong that it turns against the very mechanism that should be defended and winds up destroying it.’<sup>35</sup>

Immunity and autoimmunity are also central concepts in Derrida’s later work, particularly ‘Faith and Knowledge’, in which, as Michael Lewis points out,

---

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p.49.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p.59.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p.62.

Derrida ‘associates immunity with *community* on exactly the same (etymological) grounds as Esposito’.<sup>36</sup> When analysing community, however, Derrida generally accords ‘the process of auto-immunization, which [...] consists for a living organism [...] of protecting itself against its self-protection by destroying its own immune system’ greater significance than Esposito tends to in his writings on community. Hence, Derrida characterises community ‘as *com-mon auto-immunity*: no community is possible that would not cultivate its own auto-immunity, a principle of sacrificial self-destruction ruining the principle of self-protection (that of maintaining its self-integrity intact)’.<sup>37</sup> Reflecting on Derrida’s emphasis on auto-immunity in his later work on democracy and terrorism, J. Hillis Miller observes that Derrida re-appropriates the ‘social and political vocabulary’ of immunity and autoimmunity from biology ‘and applies it again to the social body’, to the community, which at the same times as it ‘strives to keep itself pure, safe, sacrosanct, uncontaminated by aliens’, is also ‘inhabited by a suicidal tendency to shoot itself in the foot [...] in the act of trying to shoot the invader’.<sup>38</sup> But this is by no means a wholly negative process; rather, as Derrida puts it in ‘Faith and Knowledge’, a community inadvertently ‘cultivate[s] its own auto-immunity [...] in view of some sort of invisible and spectral sur-vival.’ The auto-immune ‘self-contesting attestation’ mechanically at work in every community is what keeps this community ‘alive, [...] open to something other and more than itself: the other, the future, death, freedom, the coming or love of the other’.<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> Michael Lewis, ‘Of (Auto-)Immune Life: Derrida, Esposito, Agamben’, in *Medicine and Society, New Perspectives in Continental Philosophy*, ed. by Darian Meacham (Dordrecht: Springer, 2015), pp.213-32 (p.218).

<sup>37</sup> Derrida, ‘Faith and Knowledge’, p.80 n.27, p.87.

<sup>38</sup> J. Hillis Miller, ‘Derrida Enisled’, *Critical Inquiry*, 33 (2007), 248-76 (pp.269-70).

<sup>39</sup> Derrida, ‘Faith and Knowledge’, p.87.

As Michael Naas puts it, this ‘openness to what it cannot indemnify’ not only applies to community, but also underpins Derrida’s intricate argument in ‘Faith and Knowledge’ on the shared origins of science and religion in the complex relation between ‘a *salut* of sovereignty and ipseity, a *salut* that affirms and sustains identity, [...] that offers either salvation or health, redemption or indemnity’, and ‘the *salut* of unconditional welcoming that [...] compromises every identity and opens it up in an autoimmune fashion to what is beyond or outside it.’<sup>40</sup> But Naas also insists that it is

not only religion that is autoimmune but, Derrida suggests, life itself, life in its supposedly indemnified presence and purity. In order for life itself to continue to be vital, to live on, it must at once appropriate the machine (in the forms of repetition, the prosthesis, supplementarity, and so on) and reject it.<sup>41</sup>

In fact, although Lewis foregrounds the emphasis placed in both Derrida’s and Esposito’s work on the idea that life is not ‘something pure and unscathed, wholly natural and naturally whole, uncontaminated by politics, law, and power’,<sup>42</sup> the work on immunity and autoimmunity of both thinkers also reveals a profound concern with the relationship between life and technics. As I noted in the introduction to this chapter, Esposito draws attention to the necessity of rethinking the relationship between politics and life in light of the fact that ‘a natural life doesn’t exist that isn’t at the same time technological’,<sup>43</sup> but it is in Derrida’s work, as Bradley points out, that we can locate ‘the most self-conscious philosophy of originary technicity we possess’, in which technics ‘emerges [...] as the basic and irreducible condition of nature, matter, ideality, thought, perception, mnemics, affect – in short the entire sphere of “the living”’.<sup>44</sup>

---

<sup>40</sup> Michael Naas, *Miracle and Machine: Jacques Derrida and the Two Sources of Religion, Science, and the Media* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012), p.209, p.51.

<sup>41</sup> Naas, p.202.

<sup>42</sup> Lewis, p.213.

<sup>43</sup> Esposito, *Bíos*, p.15.

<sup>44</sup> Bradley, pp.94-5.

In 'Faith and Knowledge', this concern with the relation between technics and the 'entire sphere of "the living"' manifests itself in Derrida's description of the way in which 'the machine (mechanization, automatization, machination or *mechane*)' always already inhabits 'living spontaneity [...] the *unscathed* property of life': there is 'nothing unscathed in the most autonomous living present', Derrida states, 'without a risk of autoimmunity', both as a 'menace' and 'a chance.'<sup>45</sup> Indeed, as Naas observes, autoimmunity is a particularly apt image for considering the relation between the living and the technical, because it is 'one of those places where life and the machine seem to intersect in a particularly palpable way, where a biological reaction seems to happen with the regularity and automaticity of a machine'.<sup>46</sup> It is thus striking that Esposito's thinking on immunity also leads him into a discussion of *technē*, which for Esposito is 'always about bodies', inasmuch as *technē* constitutes 'the place of the body's opening to what is not itself'. According to Esposito, '[t]he fact that the body is originally technical' indicates that the 'ongoing processes' of its 'infiltration' by technology in the contemporary period 'do nothing but lay bare the mode that is proper – and therefore, necessarily improper to our corporeality.' Once again, this is especially evident in the experience of organ transplantation, which 'constitutes the most radical and at the same time the most sobering state of awareness regarding the meaning of the technicity of one's body: its inability to be in any way exclusively proper to itself', an awareness which centres on the technical exteriorization, the confusion between 'proper' and 'improper', involved in the complex negotiation of 'two opposing immune systems' which underpins the process of grafting a foreign organ into the body.<sup>47</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> Derrida, 'Faith and Knowledge', p.83.

<sup>46</sup> Naas, p.86.

<sup>47</sup> Esposito, *Immunitas*, pp.151-53.



## Automata

Hence, in focusing on organ transplants, both *Poor Things* and *Never Let Me Go* open up a space in which to examine the kinds of complex questions about the nature and defence of life which are bound up in the concept of immunity. In fact, *Poor Things* refers to the discovery of ‘phagocytes’ (p.21), the defensive actions of which were central to Élie Metchnikoff’s conception of the immune system as the body’s defence against other organisms.<sup>48</sup> In turn, this biomedical concept of defence reappears later in Gray’s novel in the published work of Bella’s former husband (the ‘brave warrior’ and arch-imperialist General Blessington) entitled ‘Purging the Planet, a monodrama’ and ‘Political Diseases, Imperial Cures’ (pp.206-207), whose titles are suggestive of an engagement in those ‘warlike actions’ which Ed Cohen argues unites biomedical and biopolitical notions of immunity.<sup>49</sup> Meanwhile, Ishiguro’s depiction of organ transplantation in *Never Let Me Go* can be read as a bleak meditation on the boundaries which Lawrence Cohen argues ‘immunopolitics’ draws between lives that are deemed worthy of being fostered, and the lives of those who are identified as members of the specific population to be targeted for organ harvesting in the service of this project of preserving life.<sup>50</sup>

In this section, through the figure of the automaton, I want to explore the ways in which the operations of this ‘immunopolitics’ are associated in both novels with the functioning of defensive boundaries operating *within* the concept of the human to separate human life from technics. While automata had already been produced for centuries, Jessica Riskin considers those built in the eighteenth century not simply as ‘amusements and feats of technological virtuosity’, but as

---

<sup>48</sup> See Ed Cohen, pp.1-2.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p.22.

<sup>50</sup> See Lawrence Cohen, pp.9-11.

‘philosophical experiments, attempts to discern which aspects of living creatures could be reproduced in machinery, and to what degree, and what such reproductions might reveal about their natural subjects.’ These eighteenth-century automata can therefore be understood to have launched ‘an ongoing taxonomic exercise’ which involves ‘sorting the animate from the inanimate, the organic from the mechanical, the intelligent from the rote’.<sup>51</sup> However, rather than producing any definitive division of the organic from the inorganic, these projects in the creation of artificial life often risked blurring any clear boundaries between life and technics. The more successful automata-makers became at approximating the characteristics of living beings with machinery – for example, through the production of automata that breathed, played chess, and even (apparently) defecated, activities which seemed ‘beyond the bounds of mechanism’ – the more it became difficult to isolate once and for all which qualities should be considered proper only to organic beings, and to human life in particular.<sup>52</sup>

Automata might thus be understood as experiments through which the ‘anthropological machine’ of *homo sapiens* is clearly at work, although the attempt at ‘producing the recognition of the human’ in this case involves the division between the living and the mechanical rather than the human and the animal.<sup>53</sup> Yet, as Riskin points out, automata-makers were concerned with investigating not only what is proper to living beings but also what is proper to machines, their conception of which was ‘no better established than their understanding of life.’<sup>54</sup> In this way, automata can also be read in relation to Bradley’s use of the anthropological machine

---

<sup>51</sup> Jessica Riskin, ‘The Defecating Duck, or, the Ambiguous Origins of Artificial Life’, *Critical Enquiry*, 29 (2003), 599-633 (p.633, p.601, p.613).

<sup>52</sup> Riskin, ‘The Defecating Duck’, p.622.

<sup>53</sup> Agamben, *The Open*, p.26.

<sup>54</sup> Jessica Riskin, ‘Eighteenth-Century Wetware’, *Representations*, 83 (2003), 97-125 (pp.118-19).

to examine ‘the metaphysical philosophy of technology’, which, in posing questions concerning the similarity of living beings and machines in a ‘thoroughly anthropological way’, necessarily ‘presuppose[s] a certain kind of anthropological answer’, such that this philosophy ‘effectively becomes an ironic, self-fulfilling *mechanism* [...] designed to produce, define and shape not simply “technology” but, more importantly, *what is not technology*’. By positing on the one hand ‘a strategically impoverished theory of technology: lifeless, inert and prosthetic’ and valorising on the other ‘a metaphysical natural or human essence that absolutely exceeds technicisation: *anamnesis*, *phusis*, the soul, the *ego cogito*’, this philosophy ‘logically and necessarily excludes an empirico-transcendental middle ground where *phusis* and *technē*, the living and the non-living, mechanism and organism, come together.’<sup>55</sup> This ‘middle ground’, which automata-makers can be seen to flirt with, continues to trouble contemporary conceptions of the division between human life and technology. As Riskin observes, the ‘organizing ambivalences of the current moment’ lie in the simultaneously-held beliefs that ‘the processes of life and consciousness are essentially mechanistic and can therefore be simulated’ *and* that ‘the essences of life and consciousness will ultimately be beyond the reach of mechanical reproduction.’<sup>56</sup>

Hence, the same taxonomic boundaries between animate and inanimate, organic and mechanical, intelligent and rote which troubled automata-makers continue to inform contemporary debates on the simulation or production of ‘the essence of life and intelligence’ in the fields of robotics and cloning.<sup>57</sup> The manifestation of these eighteenth-century preoccupations in contemporary depictions

---

<sup>55</sup> Bradley, p.9.

<sup>56</sup> Riskin, ‘Eighteenth-Century Wetware’, p.97.

<sup>57</sup> Riskin, ‘The Defecating Duck’, p.613, p.633.

of the creation of artificial life can certainly be seen in Ishiguro's representation of cloning in *Never Let Me Go*, in which echoes of one of Jacques de Vaucanson's most famous creations, the so-called 'defecating duck' automaton, are evident in Tommy's drawings of 'imaginary animals'. His fellow clone Kathy compares her 'first impression' of Tommy's animals to the 'impression [...] you'd get if you took the back off a radio set: tiny canals, weaving tendons, miniature screws and wheels were all drawn with obsessive precision' (pp.184-85). This description is strikingly reminiscent of accounts of Vaucanson's automata, whose inner workings were always made visible to spectators and were perceived as imitations of the anatomy of the living creature the automaton represented.<sup>58</sup> Moreover, Tommy's account of his creation of the animals makes them sound less like mere drawings and more like designs. He tells Kathy how they seem 'to come to life by themselves', so that he must 'draw in all these different details for them' to account for 'how they'd protect themselves, how they'd reach things' (p.176). In thinking about the animals coming to life by themselves and in accounting for how they would move and act, it is as though Tommy is designing the animals to be built as automata.

But android automata are also important in *Never Let Me Go*, inasmuch as Tommy's production of art is connected to an attempt to prove that the clones themselves are more than just machines in the guise of humans. Tommy's imaginary animals emerge from his later attempts to rectify his supposed failure to be sufficiently 'creative' and to achieve the high artistic standards demanded as part of the curriculum at Hailsham school, where some of the clones are raised and educated. As children, the clones are aware that the best of their drawings are taken away by a woman they know only as 'Madame' to form part of her mysterious

---

<sup>58</sup> See Riskin, 'The Defecating Duck', p.601.

‘gallery’. When Kathy and Tommy are older, they come to believe that this artwork will in some way ‘reveal their souls’, enabling them to prove that they are truly in love with each other and winning them a brief deferral from beginning (or continuing, in Tommy’s case) to donate their organs (p.173). When they present these drawings to Madame and to their old headmistress, Miss Emily, they learn that the true purpose of the art they were taught to produce was to ‘prove [they] had souls at all’, to prove that they are living human being rather than simply inert technical things, ‘shadowy objects’ in ‘test-tubes’ generated solely for the sake of the parts they provide ‘to supply medical science’ (pp.255-56).

Kathy and Tommy are ‘taken aback’ by this revelation (p.255): although they know that they are ‘created’, engineered beings (p.259), they do not appear to regard their technological origins as any barrier to having ‘souls’. In fact, their view of their own lives stands in stark contrast to Miss Emily’s attitude to the clones. Her assertion that the Hailsham project ‘demonstrated to the world that if students were reared in humane, cultivated environments, it was possible for them to grow to be as sensitive and intelligent as any ordinary human being’ (p.256) demonstrates this project’s entanglement with the same ‘taxonomic exercise’ in dividing the living human from the inert machine, intelligence from mere rote learning, which Riskin identifies at work in the production of automata. Miss Emily’s description of the Hailsham project is suggestive of a belief that without her acts of ‘cultivation’, the clones would revert to their ‘natural’ status as unfeeling mechanical beings who are only capable of accessing knowledge by rote, rather than of being ‘intelligent’ or ‘sensitive’. Hence, even if Tommy had managed to produce drawings of his imaginary animals while at Hailsham, it seems unlikely that they would have been selected for Madame’s gallery, inasmuch as they clearly do not conform to the

standards of ‘humane’ art taught at Hailsham: for Kathy, Tommy’s work is ‘so different from anything the guardians had taught us to do at Hailsham’ that she has no idea ‘how to judge it’ (p.185). Indeed, Peter Boxall argues that Tommy’s animals would require ‘a whole new way of seeing, a whole new language both of art criticism and of biological taxonomy’, because they are ‘made from the failure of the distinctions that allows us to categorise life’, distinctions ‘between one species and another, between the biological and the non-biological, between the inside and the outside of bodies.’<sup>59</sup>

This assessment echoes Armstrong’s identification of the ‘ambiguous place in the taxonomic scheme’ occupied by Frankenstein’s creature which I quoted in the introduction to this chapter,<sup>60</sup> and in fact the same confusion in critical interpretations of the creature’s taxonomic status also abounds in assessments not just of Tommy’s artwork but of the clones themselves in *Never Let Me Go*. While some critical work on the novel emphasises the ways in which Tommy’s artwork (and by extension Ishiguro’s depiction of the clones) might trouble our perceptions of the boundaries between life and technics – for example, John Marks argues that the reader of *Never Let Me Go* might ‘recognize’ in Tommy’s detailed drawings ‘the inhuman workings, the “tiny canals, weaving tendons” – the coils of DNA perhaps – that characterize our own humanity’<sup>61</sup> – other responses to the novel’s depiction of the precarious boundaries between the human and the non-human have a tendency to reassert these divisions. Hence, some readings of the novel insist that the clones are ‘fully human’ or even ‘more human’ than the population for whom they provide

---

<sup>59</sup> Peter Boxall, *Twenty-First-Century Fiction: A Critical Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p.105.

<sup>60</sup> Armstrong, p.67.

<sup>61</sup> John Marks, ‘Clone Stories: “Shallow are the souls that have forgotten how to shudder”’, *Paragraph*, 33 (2010), 331-53 (p.350).

organs,<sup>62</sup> while other readings insist on the clones' fundamental affinity with machines. In the latter case, Kathy's voice and narration attract particular attention. For example, Martin Puchner observes that Kathy's 'lack of outrage [...] makes one wonder whether she is not somehow deficient, perhaps in a way one might expect from a manufactured creature'. Hers is an 'uncanny' voice, marked by 'the disturbing mixture of the familiar and the unfamiliar characteristic of nonhuman automata and doubles'.<sup>63</sup> Hence, one reviewer suggests that there is 'something animatronic' about the clones, while another remarks that 'Kathy is intelligent, but she could be a speaking clock'.<sup>64</sup>

This key division between the intelligent and the rote is also evident in *Poor Things*, a novel in which automata have likewise been identified as significant figures.<sup>65</sup> Here, I want to focus on McCandless's first meeting with Bella, and particularly on her odd behaviour and manner of speaking. When visiting Baxter, McCandless hears music which he discovers is 'being made by a woman seated at a pianola' with her back towards him (p.28). Bella's pose could be seen to echo that of two particularly famous female android automata; one is the 'lady musician' built by the Jaquet-Droz family, a figure which really did play the organ she was seated at,

---

<sup>62</sup> See for example John Mullan's reading of the novel, in which he states that he shares 'the characters' embarrassment about even using the word "clone": John Mullan, 'On First Reading Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*', in *Kazuo Ishiguro: Contemporary Critical Perspectives*, ed. by Sean Matthews and Sebastien Groes (London: Continuum, 2009), pp.104-113 (p.113). See also Anne Whitehead's assertion that in his depiction of the clones' 'affective capacities' and their 'affinities to the human', 'Ishiguro leaves us with little doubt that the clones have more "human" feeling than those who brought them into being': Anne Whitehead, 'Writing with Care: Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*', *Contemporary Literature*, 52 (2011), 54-83 (p.68).

<sup>63</sup> Martin Puchner, 'When We Were Clones', *Raritan Review*, XXII (2008), 34-49 (p.36).

<sup>64</sup> See Louis Menand, 'Something about Kathy', *The New Yorker*, 28 March 2005 <<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2005/03/28/something-about-kathy>> [Accessed 16<sup>th</sup> February 2016]. See Alan Taylor, 'The dawning of the clones', *Sunday Herald*, 20 February 2005 <[http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/12395890.The\\_dawning\\_of\\_the\\_clones/](http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/12395890.The_dawning_of_the_clones/)> [Accessed 16<sup>th</sup> February 2016].

<sup>65</sup> See Dimitris Vardoulakis, 'The "Poor Thing": Cosmopolitanism in Alasdair Gray's *Poor Things*', *SubStance*, 117 (2008), 137-51. Vardoulakis tracks the role in Gray's novel of the relationship between autonomy and automaticity where the notions of Enlightenment rationality and cosmopolitanism are concerned.

and who ‘breathed’ (by means of bellows) and followed the movements of her fingers with her head and eyes as a human player would;<sup>66</sup> the other is that of Olympia in E.T.A. Hoffmann’s ‘The Sandman’, who plays the piano during her first public outing.<sup>67</sup> Indeed, just as Nathanael is unaware during this performance that Olympia is an automaton, so too is McCandless unaware at this first meeting with her that Bella is also a ‘fabrication’, albeit a ‘surgical’ one (p.35); moreover, despite their strangeness, both Olympia and Bella seem to enchant their respective suitors, such that McCandless (like Nathanael) begins to write dreadful poetry after his encounters with Bella (pp.55-6),<sup>68</sup> whom he confesses he has ‘worshipped and longed for’ as ‘the acme of womanly perfection’ since their first meeting (p.53).

If Bella’s initial pose recalls figures such as Olympia and the lady musician, Gray’s description of her strange manner of speaking with ‘each syllable [...] as sweet and distinct as if piped on a flute’ (pp.28-9) recalls another musical automaton, Vaucanson’s flute-player.<sup>69</sup> But Bella’s odd manner of speaking also invokes (like Kathy’s ‘speaking clock’ narration in *Never Let Me Go*) the key taxonomic distinction between the intelligent and the rote which separates human life from machinery. Bella greets Baxter and McCandless ‘carefully’, saying ‘Hell low God win, hell low new man’, with each syllable absolutely ‘distinct’. Later in the conversation, when Baxter corrects her pronunciation of ‘corduroy’, she not only repeats the word correctly as ‘Cord dew roy’ but also follows this up with a definition of the term: ‘a *ribbed* fab brick wove ven from cot ton’. Bella’s strange manner of speaking, which sounds as though she is responding by rote, leads

---

<sup>66</sup> See Riskin, ‘The Defecating Duck’, p.631.

<sup>67</sup> E.T.A. Hoffmann, ‘The Sandman’, in *Tales of Hoffmann*, trans. by R.J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin, 1982), pp.85-127 (p.113).

<sup>68</sup> See Hoffmann, pp.105-106.

<sup>69</sup> See Riskin, ‘The Defecating Duck’, pp.601-602.



McCandless to doubt her intelligence to the extent that he classes her speech alongside that of ‘idiots’ and ‘lunatics’ (pp.29-30). And although Bella’s speech gradually develops, she retains an affinity for odd and mechanical sounding forms of expression, evident in her ‘intensely’ stated admiration for the ‘rapid lingo’ of the detective Grimes, whose curious style of communication as he recounts Bella’s past – ‘Lady vanished fromerome sudden being disturbed distressed distraught’ (pp.211-12) – not only sounds learned by rote but also echoes Bella’s earlier propensity to include lists of multiple adjectives in her speech, and her fondness for a degree of repetition which for Baxter ‘verged on echolalia’ (p.222).

That McCandless compares Bella’s speech to that of ‘idiots’ and ‘lunatics’, rather than describing it as mechanical, points to how the taxonomic divisions at work in the production of the human, such as the division between the intelligent and the rote, pass first of all (as Agamben might put it) as ‘a mobile border within living man’. Here, they assert a ‘strategic function’ in the biopolitical management of populations,<sup>70</sup> especially in terms of their ability to draw defensive boundaries between certain groups within a population. For example, Simon Schaffer argues that the automaton in particular ‘stays in place as a symbol of modernity’ because it helps to make visible the ‘division’ imposed by enlightened science ‘between subjects that could be automated and those reserved for reason’. This division was made apparent in the invention by automata-makers (such as Vaucanson) of automatic machinery which could be substituted for human labour in factories, machinery which highlighted the contrast between ‘instinctual mechanical labor and its rational analysis’. In turn, this division ‘accompanied processes of subordination and rule’ which depended on the idea that ‘some subjects had never been, could

---

<sup>70</sup> Agamben, *The Open*, p.15, p.13.

perhaps never be, enlightened.’<sup>71</sup> Riskin makes a similar point when she observes that the introduction of more and more automated machinery led to a redefinition of intelligent and unintelligent work, to the extent that ‘[c]ertain human occupations came to seem less human and others more human, according to what machines could or could not do.’<sup>72</sup>

This development is in fact referred to in *Poor Things*, in which Bella learns of the industrial development of ‘new machines’ which have ‘made it possible to run factories with the cheap labour of women and children’ (p.157): in other words, with the kinds of subjects whose work can be regarded as unintelligent and thus as open to automation. Indeed, Gray places particular emphasis on the gender politics of this division of life into that which is reserved for reason and that which can only be automated, especially by doubling McCandless’s narrative of Baxter’s creation of Bella as a ‘surgical fabrication’ with McCandless’s wife’s own narrative of her origins as ‘Victoria’ in a Manchester slum. Victoria is thus a ‘poor thing’ created by political rather than surgical techniques, and she is eventually ‘taught freedom’ by Baxter, who illustrates his argument that most people ‘are taught to be tools’ by inviting Victoria to compare two female figures in a dolls house; a doll representing a scullery maid, who is ‘meanly and cruelly used’ by her superiors; and a young female doll playing the piano, whose parents will train her to be suitable for a husband ‘who will use her as a social ornament and breeder of his children.’ Victoria can be made aware of the parallels between these two female dolls because she remembers her own ‘early education’: how her fingers have ‘ached’ both in ‘scrubbing filthy clothes in a washtub of freezing water’ and later in ‘playing

---

<sup>71</sup> Simon Schaffer, ‘Enlightened Automata’, in *The Sciences in Enlightened Europe*, ed. by William Clark, Jan Golinski, and Simon Schaffer (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1999), pp.126-65 (p.164).

<sup>72</sup> Riskin, ‘The Defecating Duck’, p.629.

Beethoven's *Für Elise* nineteen times without stopping on the piano' in order to achieve perfection (pp.262-63) – the kind of repeatable perfection one might associate with the lady musician automata.

Moreover, as Carol Margaret Davison points out, this narrative about the ways in which people are taught to be tools is extended from 'Britain's "poor things" – women and the working classes' – to the colonial subjects discussed by Bella and her travelling companions during her second Mediterranean tour, in which the missionary Dr Hooker 'claim[s] that Britons possess the world's biggest (read *advanced*) brains and function as adults in comparison with infantilised colonials'.<sup>73</sup> Hooker's emphasis on brain size in the division of races into the categories of 'teachers' and children' draws attention to the broader significance of brains in *Poor Things*, especially where the question of which categories of the population are programmable is concerned. That Baxter transplants the brain of Bella's own unborn baby into her body before reanimating her is suggestive of his desire to begin with a blank slate able to be programmed afresh; indeed, Stephen Bernstein suggests that Baxter's tale of Bella's creation can be read as 'merely a coded fantasy of control' played out through the desire for a "'child" bride' after the manner of Dickens's Dora Copperfield.<sup>74</sup> In turn, this same fantasy is also played out over Victoria's brain and body: her father sends her away to be educated in such a way as to produce the 'irresistible' combination of 'the soul of an innocent child within the form of a Circassian houri' (p.215). As Davison suggests, this notion of the child or female brain being programmable is then extended to the 'infantilised' brains of colonial

---

<sup>73</sup> Carol Margaret Davison, 'Monstrous Regiments of Women and Brides of Frankenstein: Gendered Body Politics in Scottish Female Gothic Fiction', in *The Female Gothic: New Directions*, ed. by Diana Wallace and Andrew Smith (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp.196-214 (p.210).

<sup>74</sup> Stephen Bernstein, *Alasdair Gray* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1999), pp.103-104.

subjects, who can never overtake their ‘superior’ masters because ‘their smaller skulls prevent it’ (p.140). Yet in order to maintain this ostensibly ‘natural’ division between those who can and cannot achieve the status of rational and autonomous human beings, it is necessary for Hooker and his ilk to ‘thrash’ the ‘inferior races’ with all the technologies of war – ‘rifles and machine-guns and iron-clad warships and superior military discipline’ – that they possess (p.140), which indicates that this boundary in fact requires constant defensive maintenance through the kinds of warlike actions Cohen associates with both biomedical and biopolitical conceptions of immunity.

A similar anxiety about the need to reinforce divisions between less-than and fully human beings also features in *Never Let Me Go*, in which this issue prompts the novel’s most explicit reference to *Frankenstein*. Miss Emily explains to Kathy and Tommy that the reason for the waning of support for her project of educating the clones lay in the secret work of ‘a scientist called James Morningdale [...] in a remote part of Scotland, where [...] he thought he’d attract less attention.’ Just as Frankenstein retreats to the remotest corner of Scotland to work on his female monster, so Morningdale also goes to Scotland to engage in an act of creation which will likewise go ‘far beyond legal boundaries’: the creation of ‘children with enhanced characteristics’. While it is ‘one thing to create students [...] for the donation programme’, Miss Emily tells the clones, it is quite another to produce ‘a generation of created children’ who are ‘demonstrably superior’ and whom people fear would ‘take their place in society’ (pp.258-59). The fear people have of Morningdale’s project lies in its ability to produce artificial life which is not only ‘as sensitive and intelligent as any ordinary human being’, but *more* intelligent (pp.256-59), thereby challenging the cherished belief ‘that the essences of life and

consciousness will ultimately be beyond the reach of mechanical reproduction'.<sup>75</sup> Hence, the biotechnology which serves to immunise the bodies of the novel's 'normal people' against the risk of disease and death can also be turned against them, in autoimmune fashion, as a threat to their continued existence, their 'place in society'. And just as Frankenstein destroys his half-formed female creature in order to avoid rendering humanity's existence 'precarious and full of terror',<sup>76</sup> so Morningdale's project is also shut down. Even the clones themselves are preventatively created sterile in order to avoid whatever threat their equally 'unnatural' offspring might present to the health of society, and to maintain the divisions between human and non-human life which allow the clones to continue to be regarded as tools.

### **Anatomy**

What Kathy and Tommy discover is that in the eyes of the society they 'supply', they have no value beyond their use in biomedical science, and can thus never attain the status of qualified life or *bios* which would offer them any kind of protection. That they remain 'bare life', only 'shadowy objects in test-tubes', is arguably reflected in the open mechanical bodies of Tommy's imaginary animals; as Sara Wasson points out, there is a tradition of viewing donor organs as spare mechanical parts.<sup>77</sup> But the open bodies of Tommy's mechanical animals can also be read in light of another form of automaton imagined by Vaucanson: the 'moving anatomy'. Vaucanson claimed that 'the conventional approach to anatomical knowledge – earned through careful empirical observation of cadavers and dissection – was by itself inadequate'; hence, a 'moving anatomy' was designed to supplement this

<sup>75</sup> Riskin, 'Eighteenth-Century Wetware', p.97.

<sup>76</sup> Shelley, pp.170-71.

<sup>77</sup> See Sara Wasson, 'Scalpel and Metaphor: The Ceremony of Organ Harvest in Gothic Science Fiction', *Gothic Studies*, 17 (2015), 104-123 (p.113).

observation by ‘a visual demonstration of a working model or lifelike mechanical simulation.’<sup>78</sup> As Joan B. Landes observes, one of the main reasons for this perception of the inadequacy of dissection alone is that anatomy’s ‘ultimate reference point’ is the description and analysis not of the dead body but of the *living* body, its working functions and movements.<sup>79</sup> This resonates with Baxter’s pronouncement in *Poor Things* that ‘morbid anatomy’, although ‘essential to training and research, [...] leads many doctors into thinking that life is an agitation in something essentially dead’, thereby preventing them from paying attention to ‘the living quick’ of the human body (pp.16-17).

For Landes, both anatomists and automata-makers can be seen to have ‘experimented with ways to enliven and ultimately bring dead matter to life’, particularly through the common practice of depicting anatomical subjects as if they were still alive, posing them in a ‘dramatic’, ‘teasingly lifelike’ and ‘animated fashion’ which ‘called attention to the liminal status of the anatomical subject, not alive but also not wholly dead.’<sup>80</sup> One of the most popular kinds of anatomical subjects for this type of depiction was the *écorché*, ‘a flayed skeleton made either from real cadavers or other materials’, from which ‘the envelope of skin and fat has been removed.’ These figures ‘were typically beautifully proportioned and usually shown in action’.<sup>81</sup> That Shelley’s depiction of the creature in *Frankenstein* has been compared to *écorché* figures is unsurprising:<sup>82</sup> like an *écorché*, the creature’s ‘limbs

---

<sup>78</sup> Joan B. Landes, ‘The Anatomy of Artificial Life: An Eighteenth-Century Perspective’, in *Genesis Redux: Essays in the History and Philosophy of Artificial Life*, ed. by Jessica Riskin (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2007), pp.96-117 (p.99).

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.102-103.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, p.97, p.105.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.96-7.

<sup>82</sup> See Andrew Curran, ‘Afterword: Anatomical Readings in the Early Modern Era’, in *Monstrous Bodies/Political Monstrosities in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Laura Lunger Knoppers and Joan B. Landes (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2004), pp.227-46 (p.244).

were in proportion', but his 'yellow skin scarcely covered the work of muscles and arteries beneath'.<sup>83</sup>

Indeed, skin functions as a central motif in the Gothic mode more broadly, whose chief concern, according to Halberstam, is 'a peculiarly modern preoccupation with boundaries and their collapse.' Halberstam traces the motif of skin across numerous Gothic texts, including *Frankenstein*, a text which she views as marking a key shift in the Gothic genre between the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries from terror associated with location to forms of 'body horror'.<sup>84</sup> But in *Frankenstein* the creature's skin also signals his artificial origins. His skin barely covers the inner workings of his body, and has to be stretched over the frame of muscle and bone in order to provide the smoothness necessary for the perception of that 'erasure of articulation' which Barbara Johnson argues is fundamental to the perception of 'organic form'.<sup>85</sup> Moreover, in cinematic adaptations of Shelley's novel, this smoothness is lost, and the depiction of the creature's skin bearing scars and stitch lines gives the impression, as Russell A. Porter points out, of an 'unwholly whole', whose ability to inspire 'horror and revulsion' lies in its 'disjunction'.<sup>86</sup> The creature's skin and its failure to contain what is inside can thus be seen to represent the kind of 'improper' body associated with technics. If, as Stiegler puts it, the gift of technics 'gives humans the present of putting them outside themselves',<sup>87</sup> then a body like that of Frankenstein's creature, which explicitly signals its openness to the outside, in turn embodies this exteriorization associated with technics.

---

<sup>83</sup> Shelley, p.58.

<sup>84</sup> Judith Halberstam, *Skin Shows: Gothic Horror and the Technology of Monsters* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1995), p.23, p.38. p.28.

<sup>85</sup> Barbara Johnson, *Persons and Things* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2008) p.90.

<sup>86</sup> Russell A. Porter, 'Edward Schizohands: The Postmodern Gothic Body', *Postmodern Culture*, 2 (1992), para. 15 <[http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/postmodern\\_culture/v002/2.3potter.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/postmodern_culture/v002/2.3potter.html)> [Accessed 16<sup>th</sup> February 2016].

<sup>87</sup> Stiegler, p.193.

As in *Frankenstein*, then, this ‘improper’ open body functions simultaneously in *Poor Things* and *Never Let Me Go* as a site of horror and as signal of certain bodies’ more explicit relationship with technics. For example, as with many representations of Frankenstein’s creature, Bella’s skin is likewise marked by scars from her creation through a brain transplant and a caesarean section, both of which hint at her particularly unnatural birth. And, like Frankenstein’s creature, both Bella and Baxter have unusually ‘sallow’ skin as a result of being made ‘by the Frankenstein method’ (p.274), which involves being reanimated after some ‘cellular decay’ has already taken place (as with the flesh of an anatomical subject, whose liminal status between life and death both Baxter and Bella can be seen to share). Baxter seeks to pass this sallowness off ‘as a family trait’ (p.35), which, though not completely untrue, signals their shared origins not in terms of blood but in terms of their shared process of ‘fabrication’. Moreover, Baxter in particular seems to be insufficiently contained by his own skin, such that bodily processes which should be invisible are instead performed outside the body in a highly abject fashion. When McCandless dines with Baxter, he observes behind Baxter’s chair ‘a sideboard loaded with carboys, stoppered vials, graduated glasses, pipettes, syringes, litmus papers, thermometers and a barometer’, as well as a ‘Bunsen burner, retort and tubing of a distillation plant’. Because he has ‘little or no pancreas’, Baxter must use this equipment to ‘make his digestive juices by hand, stirring them into his food before chewing and swallowing’, a process which involves the use of his own ‘bodily wastes’, whose ‘odour’ disgusts McCandless (p.72). The miniature laboratory in which Baxter consumes his food constitutes a kind of prosthetic digestive system which testifies to the fabricated nature of his body: like



Frankenstein's creature, Baxter is an 'abortion', a being not properly formed who thus requires certain prosthetic extensions.

A lunchtime scene also provides the setting for Ishiguro's emphasis on the bodily boundaries of artificial creatures in *Never Let Me Go*. When Tommy removes a dressing from his elbow to reveal the partially-healed wound underneath, he is informed by one of the older students at Hailsham that his 'whole elbow [...] can all unzip like a bag opening up' (pp.83-4). Besides providing the clones the enjoyment of some 'body horror' while they play at "'unzipping" bits of themselves' onto another student's plate while he eats, they also absorb this idea of unzipping into their mythology about their future donations, imagining that 'when the time came, you'd be able just to unzip a bit of yourself, a kidney or something would slide out, and you'd hand it over' (p.86). Again, the instability of their skin as a boundary serves as a reminder of their artificial status: unlike natural humans, the clones are designed to be opened again, and some hint of this remains in the idea that their skins hide zips, rather like the surgical scars represented in *Poor Things* and associated with Frankenstein's creature.

However, this interest in 'unzipped' bodies in both novels can also be understood in terms of their depictions of the proprietary body associated with conceptions of immunity, in which skin also serves as a crucial boundary: as Cohen puts it, drawing on immunity's chief association with defensive boundaries, 'modern biomedicine embeds modern political ideology when it represents the singular, epidermally bound organism which defends itself against a relentlessly pathogenic environment as a universal fact.'<sup>88</sup> Skin likewise features as a significant boundary in Esposito's understanding of the paradigm of immunization governing modern

---

<sup>88</sup> Ed Cohen, p.274.

biopolitics: he argues that ‘whereas *communitas* opens, exposes, and turns individuals inside out, freeing them to their exteriority, *immunitas* returns individuals to themselves, encloses them once again in their own skin’. Being returned to and enclosed in one’s own skin re-establishes the proprietary subject and makes this subject immune to the obligation inaugurated by the *munus* ‘to care for the other’. The one who is immune ‘breaks the circuit of social circulation by placing himself or herself outside it’ where he or she is ‘shielded from the obligation and the dangers that affect all others’.<sup>89</sup>

Unsurprisingly, then, Boxall suggests that the ‘the conceit of the unzipped body’ in *Never Let Me Go* is indicative of the clones’ ‘sense of themselves as containers for organs, rather than as “sealed” beings’. This perception is related to the clones’ ‘strangely improprietary relationship with their own being’, which originates in their knowledge that they were created only to be ‘disassembled and used by others’, those who are the ‘rightful owners’ of the body parts of which the clones are only ‘careful stewards’.<sup>90</sup> The proper and proprietary nature of bodies is also a central issue in *Poor Things*, in which contested narratives of ownership over bodies are also figured through the image of the disassembled body. Gray’s novel is composed of a series of competing narratives concerning both Bella’s bodily origins and ownership of her body itself, over which various characters – from her husbands to numerous doctors, lawyers, Victoria McCandless, and the novel’s fictitious editors – fight for ownership. Scattered throughout this unstable and contested narrative of Bella’s proper and proprietary body are body parts (in the form of anatomical drawings), whose presence attests to the ways in which these narratives of ownership

---

<sup>89</sup> Esposito, *Terms of the Political*, p.49, p.59.

<sup>90</sup> Boxall, pp.102-103.

cannot adequately contain their own ‘insides’, which constantly threaten to spill over into excess.

Moreover, in *Poor Things*, the issue of the proper and proprietary body is also related to a key piece of legislation in the history of British biopolitical projects concerned with public health and welfare. The drowned body out of which Baxter constructs Bella in McCandless’s version of events is described as having been ‘advertised, but not claimed’, a description which evokes the 1832 Anatomy Act, which is frequently associated with *Frankenstein*.<sup>91</sup> This Act gave surgeons the right for the first time to dissect the unclaimed bodies of the poor, and was instituted in response to the need to bring an end to practices of body-snatching by so-called ‘resurrectionists’, and particularly in response to the Burke and Hare scandal, involving two men who ‘took graverobbing to its logical conclusion: instead of digging up the dead, they accepted lucrative incentives to destroy the living’, whose bodies they then sold to medical professionals.<sup>92</sup>

There are numerous references to the Act in *Poor Things* besides the one mentioned above. For example, one editor’s note states that among several plays written by McCandless, one is titled ‘The Resurrectionists’ and is a ‘five-act play about the Burke and Hare murders’, which unsurprisingly treats Knox, the surgeon whom Burke and Hare supplied, ‘more sympathetically than usual’ (p.300). Burke and Hare also make a subtle appearance in Baxter’s comments that through his refinements of surgical techniques for the purpose of transplanting organs he ‘could replace the diseased hearts of the rich with the healthy hearts of poorer folk, and make a lot of money’, but he adds that ‘it would be unkind to lead millionaires into

---

<sup>91</sup> See Tim Marshall’s *Murdering to Dissect: Grave-robbing, Frankenstein, and the anatomy literature* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1995).

<sup>92</sup> Marshall, p.4.

such temptation' (p.23). McCandless's response is telling in its failure to pick up on the nuances of Baxter's pronouncement:

You make that sound like murder, Baxter, but the bodies in our dissecting-rooms have died by accident or natural disease. If you can use their undamaged organs and limbs to mend the bodies of others you will be a greater saviour than Pasteur or Lister – surgeons everywhere will turn a morbid science into immediate, living art! (p.23)

What McCandless fails to realise is that Baxter's pronouncement implies not only the use of 'spare parts' from the unclaimed bodies of the poor which the Anatomy Act legally provides for, but (*pace* Burke and Hare) the appropriation of living bodies and the 'temptation' to murder them solely to provide these parts.

But there are also indications in *Poor Things* that the *living* bodies of the poor are already vulnerable to such legal and medical abandonment and violence: as Baxter observes, 'public hospitals are places where doctors learn how to get money off the rich by practising on the poor', which is 'why poor people dread and hate them' (p.17). Moreover, the emphasis Baxter places on the anaesthetic techniques which he hopes will ultimately enable organ transplants – his ability to 'arrest a body's life without ending it' (p.13), evocative of the state of 'suspended animation' which I discussed in my analysis of *The Prestige* – hints at the idea that the living bodies of the poor might be placed into such a 'suspended' state in order to have their organs harvested for the benefit of the rich. In fact, this is precisely the condition in which the clones imagine they will end their lives in *Never Let Me Go*. Towards the end of Ishiguro's novel, Kathy describes the clones' fear that after they have made their fourth (and ostensibly final) donation, even if they have 'technically completed', they will remain 'conscious in some sort of way', and will find that 'there are more donations, plenty of them, on the other side of that line', where they will have 'nothing to do except watching [their] remaining donations' until the

doctors ‘switch’ them off (p.274). The state Kathy describes is that of ‘brain death’ or the ‘overcoma’, which for Agamben is ‘the full fruit [...] of new life-support technology’ which (like Baxter’s suspended animation) allows for ‘a stage of life beyond the cessation of all vital functions’ – and, of course (as Baxter also points out in *Poor Things*) for organ harvesting.<sup>93</sup>

In Ishiguro’s novel, rather than relying on obtaining corpses via the Anatomy Act, medical science has succeeded in *creating* the living bodies necessary to meet this ever-increasing demand. However, the novel also poses the question of whether the clones are actually considered as being alive, or whether they are more akin to inert technical objects like the *écorché* or moving anatomies discussed at the beginning of this section – that they are perhaps simply ‘dead’ or not properly living matter that has been temporarily reanimated for the sake of the improvement of biomedicine and public health. I suggest that Ishiguro’s clones bear something of a resemblance to the figure of W. Gaylin’s ‘neomort’ which Agamben draws attention to in *Homo Sacer*. Neomorts are bodies ‘which would have the legal status of corpses but would maintain some of the characteristics of life for the sake of possible future transplants’: they are, Agamben concludes, ‘really only anatomy in motion, a set of functions whose purpose is no longer the life of an organism.’<sup>94</sup> The lives of Ishiguro’s clones are thus the full fruit of what Gray imagines for the poor in *Poor Things*. The clones have always been regarded as mere prosthetic supplements, as undead technical objects, as ‘moving anatomies’, as bodies (like the neomort or the

---

<sup>93</sup> Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, pp.160-62.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, p.164, p.186.

*faux vivant*) ‘on which it is permitted to intervene without any reservations’,<sup>95</sup> and which are ‘switched off’ only once they have been used to their full capacity.

This image of the suffering, undead body has also been associated with earlier practices around dissection. Megan Stern notes that prior to the Anatomy Act, the only legal source of bodies available for dissection was ‘the executioner’s gallows’, and she argues that this ‘legal use of anatomy as a form of punishment’ inevitably suggested that ‘dissection constituted an extended, post-mortem torment’ at the centre of which was the ‘gothic nightmare’ of ‘the corpse and its capacity for “undead” suffering.’<sup>96</sup> This ‘gothic nightmare’ was one to which the urban poor were legally abandoned following the Anatomy Act, whose effects on the poor Tim Marshall describes not only in terms of ‘the transference of a criminal stigma on to poverty’ but also as a ‘human devaluation’ or even ‘an ontological demotion.’ The Anatomy Act, he argues, had ‘an ontological dimension’ inasmuch as ‘it advanced the cause of life itself’, but only for those wealthy enough to enjoy the health advantages gained from ‘an improving medical education from which the poor remained excluded for the greater part of the modern era’; indeed, the urban poor were instead abandoned ‘into the “unclaimed” category of the law’ as bodies unworthy of care but available for dissection.<sup>97</sup>

Marshall’s understanding of the ‘ontological dimension’ of the Anatomy Act can also be read in relation to the concept of immunity. In advancing ‘the cause of life itself’, the Anatomy Act can be seen as part of a biopolitical project of public health, which seeks to defend life (or rather, certain lives) from the threat of disease

---

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., p.164.

<sup>96</sup> Megan Stern, “‘Yes: — no: — I have been sleeping — and now — now — I am dead’: undeath, the body and medicine”, *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences*, 39 (2008), 347-54 (p.348).

<sup>97</sup> Marshall, p.161.

and death through the advancement of medical knowledge. But the Anatomy Act also invokes the figure of the proper and proprietary body. For those wealthy enough to have their bodies claimed for burial, the Act would maintain the integrity of the proper body, while those bodies legally abandoned to dissection were fated to become open bodies like the figure of the *écorché*, whose defensive boundary of skin has been removed. Moreover, the Anatomy Act can also be read in relation to the division of the proper from the common which characterises the tension between *immunitas* and *communitas*. As ‘an advance clause to the New Poor Law’, which abolished the old system of ‘outdoor relief’ in parishes and forced the destitute into workhouses, the Anatomy Act was involved with ‘legislation which openly turned its back on the old paternalism, and antagonised the poor as a class [...] [paving] the way for the systematic dismantling of older and more humanitarian methods of perceiving and dealing with poverty.’ These acts thus constituted ‘an invitation to self-interest rather than to charity.’<sup>98</sup> In other words, in combination with the New Poor Law, the Anatomy Act rendered certain subjects immune to the obligation inaugurated by the *munus* ‘to care for the other’, and ‘shielded’ them ‘from the obligation and the dangers that affect all others’.<sup>99</sup>

For Clara Tuite, however, the nineteenth-century combination of the Anatomy Act and New Poor Law had the even more sinister purpose of augmenting the supply of corpses available for dissection. She argues that these legal decisions functioned ‘in the interests of the landed’; firstly, the poor laws eliminated parochial poor relief, which both removed any financial obligation from the wealthy and forced the poor to seek ‘indoor relief’ in metropolitan workhouses; and secondly, the

---

<sup>98</sup> Ruth Richardson, *Death, Dissection, and the Destitute* (London: Phoenix Press, [1988] 2001), p.266.

<sup>99</sup> Esposito, *Terms of the Political*, p.59.

indoor relief of these workhouses provided, as Tuite puts it, ‘a necessary blockage’ in the system. The unwholesome conditions of these institutions both checked population growth and provided ‘an efficient central collection point for “unclaimed” human refuse.’<sup>100</sup> This image of the bodies of the ‘socially dead’ as waste is echoed in both novels; in *Poor Things*, Baxter describes having planned for years ‘to take a discarded body and discarded brain from our social midden heap and unite them in a new life [...] hence Bella’ (p.34); while in *Never Let Me Go*, there are also various hints that the biotechnology used to create the clones works in tandem with biopolitical techniques for managing populations. The novel suggests that many clones are kept in places similar to workhouses: Miss Emily mentions ‘vast government “homes”’ for clones (p.260), and the teachers at Hailsham are known as ‘guardians’, perhaps echoing the boards of ‘guardians’ put in place to administer relief under the New Poor Law.

Moreover, Ishiguro’s novel also recalls the Anatomy Act in terms of the source of the bodies involved in the donations programme. After a failed search for her ‘possible’, the person she was cloned from, Ruth claims that it is foolish to believe that her ‘model’ could have worked in an office, stating that the clones are ‘modelled from *trash*. Junkies, prostitutes, winos, tramps. Convicts, maybe, just so long as they aren’t psychos’, and insisting that they should look ‘in the gutter [...] in rubbish bins [...] down the toilet’ if they want to find their ‘possibles’ (p.164). The donations programme depicted in *Never Let Me Go* thus finds its materials, as the Anatomy Act predicted, in the bodies of the poor and vulnerable, people who have already experienced a form of social death. These bodies and the bodies of the clones

---

<sup>100</sup> Clara Tuite, ‘*Frankenstein’s* Monster and Malthus’ “Jaundiced Eye”: Population, Body Politics, and the Monstrous Sublime’, *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 22 (1998), 141-55 (p.144).



form a kind of social detritus which can in turn be used to immunise socially ‘superior’ bodies.

For Ruth Richardson, there are some uncomfortable parallels between the nineteenth-century clamour for corpses to dissect and for organs to transplant in the contemporary period: in both of these periods, ‘once the need was recognised, a supply was obtained; and once a supply was obtained, it always fell short of demand’.<sup>101</sup> The fate of Ishiguro’s clones arguably has a keen resonance with the contemporary global organ trade. The ‘ontological demotion’ which Marshall associates with the Anatomy Act, and which the clones suffer in *Never Let Me Go*, finds a parallel in the contemporary experience of what Nancy Scheper-Hughes terms the ‘ontological insecurity’ suffered by the victims of the global organ trade, who exist ‘in a world that values their bodies more dead than alive, and as a reservoir of spare parts’.<sup>102</sup>

In fact, when read alongside each other, *Poor Things* and *Never Let Me Go* arguably respond to what Richardson describes as ‘the fearful symmetry between past and present’ where ‘the alarming parallels between the procurement of bodies for dissection in the past, and of organs for transplant in the present day’ are concerned.<sup>103</sup> In both Gray’s and Ishiguro’s novels, the violence of apparently superseded techniques for managing life – the appropriation of the bodies of the poor, the presence of workhouses, the creation and appropriation of ‘human refuse’ – are shown to inhabit contemporary politics and its supposedly ameliorated attitude to the vulnerable. Indeed, it is striking that *Poor Things* and *Never Let Me Go* are not

---

<sup>101</sup> Richardson, p.412.

<sup>102</sup> Nancy Scheper-Hughes, ‘Commodity Fetishism in Organs Trafficking’, in *Commodifying Bodies*, ed. by Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Loïc Wacquant (London: Sage, 2002), pp.31-62 (p.32).

<sup>103</sup> Richardson, p.425, p.410.

the only British novels published in the late-twentieth and early twenty-first centuries to look back to nineteenth-century methods of dealing with poverty and social inequality, and particularly to the Anatomy Act itself. For example, like *Poor Things*, Peter Ackroyd's *The Casebook of Victor Frankenstein* (2008) refers to the Anatomy Act and the treatment of the bodies of the poor via a reworking of Shelley's novel; while in *The Giant, O'Brien* (1998) Hilary Mantel 'deploys the act of human dissection as a means to tropologize a brutal class and colonial system'.<sup>104</sup> Moreover, like *Poor Things*, these novels appear in a period Fred Botting argues was 'still reeling from the effects of Thatcherism'. Botting argues that the concerns expressed in *Poor Things* 'with suffering, socialism and the filth of Victorian modernity relate to its present: the dismantling of the Welfare State, the collapse of the Labour Party and, of course, the invocation of Victorian Values as the ideological gloss of monetarist conservatism'.<sup>105</sup> In other words, these British novels appear at a moment when the communal obligation 'to care for the other' is felt to have been eroded to a critical extent by the individualistic policies of the nineteen-eighties.

Moreover, Gray's and Ishiguro's novels suggest that the Gothic may be a particularly apt mode for interrogating this relationship between the biopolitical management of life in the past and the present, not only in terms of the genre's interest in the open body, but also in terms of its central focus on 'the disturbing return of pasts upon presents'.<sup>106</sup> It is striking that in *Never Let Me Go*, the consequences for those abandoned outside the defensive boundaries of the human

---

<sup>104</sup> Elizabeth Klaver, *Sites of Autopsy in Contemporary Culture* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005), p.21.

<sup>105</sup> Fred Botting, *Gothic Romanced: Consumption, Gender and Technology in Contemporary Fictions* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), pp.129-30.

<sup>106</sup> Fred Botting, *Gothic* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), p.1.

community are figured through the ‘horrible stories’ the clones tell each other as children about the woods which ‘cast a shadow over the whole of Hailsham’, so that ‘you never really got away from them.’ One story involves a boy who ‘had had a big row with his friends and run off beyond the Hailsham boundaries’, whose ‘body had been found two days later, tied to a tree with the hands and feet chopped off’; another story relates ‘that a girl’s ghost wandered through these trees’, a Hailsham student who had ‘climbed over a fence just to see what it was like outside.’ Kathy narrates that

this was a long time before us, when the guardians were stricter, cruel even, and when she tried to get back in, she wasn’t allowed. She kept hanging around the fences, pleading to be let back in, but no one let her. Eventually, she’d gone off somewhere out there, something had happened and she’d died. But her ghost was always wandering about the woods, gazing over Hailsham, pining to be let back in. (p.50)

With these stories, the clones narrate their futures; as Wasson observes, their bodies will one day be dismembered like the boy’s body in the story;<sup>107</sup> and like the ghost, Kathy will spend the final years of her short life trying to find Hailsham and to be let back in. Moreover, these stories thereby also reveal the potential for such ‘cruel’ forms of treatment from the past to persist in the present. Yet the clones appear to refuse to recognise their own abandonment in these narratives, and to avoid thinking about the horror of their fates that these stories reveal; indeed, in the section I quoted earlier where Kathy describes the clones’ anxiety about their potential post-mortem torment, she ends by stating that ‘it’s horror movie stuff, and most of the time people don’t want to think of it’ (p.274).

---

<sup>107</sup> Sara Wasson, “‘A Butcher’s Shop where the Meat Still Moved’”: Gothic Doubles, Organ Harvesting, and Human Cloning’, in *Gothic Science Fiction: 1980-2010*, ed. by Sara Wasson and Emily Alder (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011) pp.73-86 (p.81).

By contrast, characters engage directly with the Gothic genre in *Poor Things*. For example, Victoria is remarkably critical of the ways in which her husband's Gothic narrative of her past 'has made a sufficiently strange story stranger still by stirring into it episodes and phrases to be found in Hogg's Suicide's Grave with additional ghouleries from the works of Mary Shelley and Edgar Allan Poe.' (p.272). She goes on to say that:

to my nostrils the book stinks of Victorianism. It is as sham-gothic as the Scott Monument, Glasgow University, St. Pancras Station and the Houses of Parliament. I hate such structures. Their useless over-ornamentation was paid for out of needlessly high profits: profits squeezed from the stunted lives of children, women and men working more than twelve hours a day in NEEDLESSLY filthy factories; for by the nineteenth century we had the knowledge to make things cleanly. We did not use it. (p.275)

As Botting remarks, there is a long tradition of associating the Gothic with the mystification of material circumstances and viewing it as having a 'deceiving and insidious role' in culture,<sup>108</sup> and this certainly seems to be the case in Victoria's perception of her husband's narrative, which depicts her as a surgical fabrication rather than relating the story of her 'real' origins in a Manchester slum. Yet Gray never allows for either McCandless's or Victoria's narratives to stand as the decisive version of events, which undermines any attempt to read *Poor Things* only in terms of Victoria's wholly negative view of the Gothic. Furthermore, it is also the case that the themes and imagery Gray draws from the Gothic (bodies caught in liminal states between human and nonhuman, living and dead, open bodies spilling out excessively beyond the defensive boundary of their skins, and the Gothic's central motif of the intrusion of the past into the present) enable *Poor Things* to undermine any straightforward narrative of social and political improvement where the care or abandonment of certain lives is concerned.

---

<sup>108</sup> Botting, *Gothic Romanced*, p.111.

## Poor Things, Poor Creatures

I want to return now to the argument from Nocks's article on *Frankenstein* with which I began this chapter. For Nocks, Shelley's novel would 'more properly' have been subtitled 'A Modern Epimetheus', because 'at the root of the tragedy is Victor's lack of forethought': the problems encountered by Frankenstein's creature stem not from his having been 'created artificially', but from the fact that 'no provision has been made for him to fit into the community into which he is "born."' <sup>109</sup> By contrast, I argued that the creature's artificial origins, his association with artifice or technics, are crucial factors in his exclusion from the human community: as Armstrong puts it, the creature 'faces the radical lack of sympathy that results from his ambiguous place in the taxonomic scheme'. <sup>110</sup> In his chapter devoted to *Never Let Me Go*, in which he suggests that the novel 'can be read as a rewriting of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*', Arne de Boever poses a similar question about Frankenstein's creature:

What is the life of a living dead man, of a man consisting of the parts of other dead men? Is it the life of a monster? Can we care for this kind of life? Does it care? Or is it a sorry existence that we would prefer not to have any business with? <sup>111</sup>

Over the course of my readings of *Poor Things* and *Never Let Me Go*, I have argued that these texts reveal how divisions made between the organic and the inorganic, the living human and the inert machine, play a critical strategic role in biopolitical decisions concerning which lives are fully human and should thus be fostered, and which abandoned into the 'unclaimed' category of life and disallowed to the point of death. These 'poor things' and 'poor creatures' point to the ways in which a lack of

---

<sup>109</sup> Nocks, pp.137-38.

<sup>110</sup> Armstrong, p.67.

<sup>111</sup> de Boever, p.68.

care is enabled by the experience of an uncertain place in the taxonomic scheme which determines who or what will be allowed inside the defensive boundaries of the human community, and who will be granted only ‘a sorry existence that we would prefer not to have any business with’.

Interestingly, the event which should prompt the greatest risk to the defensive boundaries both of the body and of the human community in *Never Let Me Go* – that is, organ donation – is never shown to pose a risk to these boundaries at all. As I noted earlier in the section on immunity, Esposito argues that in the process of transplantation we can witness ‘the frontline in the clash between [...] two opposing immune systems’, those of the donor and the recipient, both of which must be negotiated to the point where ‘even to distinguish between “self” and “non-self” is no longer admissible, since it is not simply the improper that is the intruder, but the proper as well, inasmuch as it is estranged’.<sup>112</sup> In *Never Let Me Go*, however, donated organs and tissues from the clones arguably do not register as ‘improper’ because they were never proper to the clones themselves in the first place; rather, they have always been viewed as the property of the proprietary bodies of the recipients, for whom these ostensibly ‘foreign’ parts have always already been neutralised and appropriated within the defensive boundaries of their own properly human bodies. At most, the organs might be considered as inert prosthetics: for example, Miss Emily hints that she will soon be able to forego using a wheelchair following a donation from the bodies of the clones (p.251).

There is, however, one moment in *Never Let Me Go* when the immunity of one of the novel’s ‘normal people’ is threatened, and it again concerns that most significant of boundaries, the skin. Though Madame has always been afraid of close

---

<sup>112</sup> Esposito, *Immunitas*, pp.151-52.

contact with the clones, as Kathy and her friend Ruth learned when they were children (p.35), towards the end of the novel she approaches Kathy and Tommy until she stands ‘only a step or two away’ from them. She calls them ‘[p]oor creatures’, and tells them that their stories have ‘touched’ her; then she reaches out with her hand and touches Kathy’s cheek, despite the ‘trembling’ Kathy can feel in her body, and begins to cry again (p.267).

Reflecting on the contemporary obsession with the erection of ‘blockades’ and ‘dividing lines’ to separate ourselves from anything which seems to pose a threat to ‘our biological, social, and environmental identity’, Esposito remarks that

[i]t is as if that fear of being even accidentally grazed has been made worse, that fear that Elias Canetti located at the origin of our modernity in a perverse short circuit between touch [*tatto*], contact [*contatto*], and contagion [*contagio*]. The risk of contamination immediately liquidates contact, relationality, and being in common.<sup>113</sup>

Madame’s act of touching Kathy is therefore perhaps the most radical gesture in the entire novel, the only moment in which any of the so-called ‘normal people’ truly risks contamination through contact with these abandoned beings. Yet this moment of ‘being in common’ cannot be followed by any form of political action: as Madame puts it, ‘I wish I could help you. But now you’re by yourselves’ (p.267). Importantly, however, Madame does acknowledge the failures of the Hailsham project, unlike Miss Emily, who insists that it has brought considerable benefits for Kathy and Tommy, who are ‘educated’ and ‘cultured’ as a result of her work at Hailsham – even though, as Madame tacitly observes, this makes no difference to the fact that they are still going to make their donations and die (pp.254-56).

---

<sup>113</sup> Esposito, *Terms of the Political*, p.59.

In fact, as Liani Lochner points out, the Hailsham project is not concerned with bringing the donations programme to an end, but rather with demanding more ‘humane’ treatment for the clones<sup>114</sup> – with ‘demonstrat[ing] to the world that if students were reared in humane, cultivated environments, it was possible for them to grow to be as sensitive and intelligent as any ordinary human being’ (p.256). The verb ‘rear’ is significant here, inasmuch as its association not only with raising children but also with raising livestock allows for a reading of the Hailsham project in the light of long-running debates about the humane treatment of livestock and laboratory animals. Indeed, the idea of the clones as livestock underlines their connections with the real-life cloned sheep ‘Dolly’, so famous in ‘England, late 1990s’ when *Never Let Me Go* is set. As Marks points out, Dolly was cloned not ‘with a view to subsequent human cloning’ but as part of a ‘pharming’ project for ‘the genetic alteration of animals in order to create what Ian Wilmut calls “living drug factories”’.<sup>115</sup> In effect, the donations programme carries out a similar project with the clones, who (as I observed in the previous section) can be thought of as ‘neomorts’, bodies grown solely for transplantation and medical research. In situating the Hailsham project in relation to this broader ‘pharming’ project which underpins the donations programme, Ishiguro hints that the Hailsham project is merely posing the question of what kind of lives the clones, as a form of livestock (or ‘pharm’ animals), should lead prior to their inevitable slaughter: should they be ‘battery’ clones or ‘free-range’ clones? As one of the guardians, Miss Lucy, tells the students, although there are fences at Hailsham, they ‘aren’t electrified’, unlike those

---

<sup>114</sup> Liani Lochner, “How dare you claim these children are anything less than fully human?”: The Shared Precariousness of Life as a Foundation for Ethics in *Never Let Me Go*, in *Kazuo Ishiguro in a Global Context*, ed. by Cynthia F. Wong and Hülya Yildiz (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), pp.101-110 (p.106).

<sup>115</sup> Marks, p.336.



in the ‘deplorable’ homes in which the majority of clones are ‘reared’, where there are ‘terrible accidents sometimes’ (p.77).

Miss Lucy makes these remarks in the context of a lesson she is giving on prison camps in the Second World War, but for Shameem Black the memory of other camps from this era is present in Ishiguro’s novel, in which Hailsham, like the concentration camp, ‘provides precisely such a shadowy territory beyond the admissible political life of the realm it inhabits and enables’, a shadowy territory inhabited in this case by the bare life of the clones.<sup>116</sup> Black’s identification of these links between the donations programme and Nazi atrocities is indicative of the extent to which *Never Let Me Go* suggests that biopolitical projects instituted for the care and protection of life seem to be inevitably transformed into thanatopolitical projects. But this movement from biopolitics to thanatopolitics can also be associated with the novel’s depiction of the relationship between automaticity and self-destruction, something which is evident in the clones’ much-discussed failure to rebel.<sup>117</sup> By having the clones succumb passively to their fate, Ishiguro might in turn be said to succumb to a narrative about cloning of which Derrida is particularly critical. According to Derrida, objections to human cloning are typically raised in the name of ‘human freedom and human specificity’, of ‘the singularity and *nonrepetitive* unicity of the human person’ who constitutes ‘a unique, irreplaceable, free, and thus nonprogrammable living being’. Despite the myriad ways in which *Never Let Me Go* interrogates the boundaries separating the human from the nonhuman, Ishiguro’s depiction of the clones’ failure to rebel is arguably tinged by a

---

<sup>116</sup> Shameem Black, ‘Ishiguro’s Inhuman Aesthetics’, *Modern Fiction Studies*, 55 (2009), 785-807 (p.789).

<sup>117</sup> See Black, p.791, p.793.

residual anthropocentrism which assumes that the clones, as technical beings, ‘will be indistinguishable and subservient to the calculation that has given them birth’.<sup>118</sup>

This association of automaticity with death is also evident in *Poor Things*, in which Victoria reports both her distaste for seeing soldiers ‘marching in regular rows, each imitating the stiff movements of a clockwork doll while their movements are controlled by a single screaming sergeant’ (p.253), and her despair at the fact that her own sons, despite their progressive education at her hands, become soldiers and succumb to ‘the religion of man-killing, in which the best soldier was he who regarded his own body as the least sensitive machine – not even his own machine, but a machine steered by remote controllers’, which they obey in ‘an epidemic of suicidal obedience’ (p.306). The link drawn here between automaticity and suicide resonates with Derrida’s conception of the ‘irrepressibly mechanical and apparently automatic fashion’ through which the body ‘auto-affect[s] itself’ in an autoimmune crisis.<sup>119</sup> Yet (as I noted in the earlier section on immunity), it is nevertheless important to recognise that for Derrida, autoimmunity is also that which allows a body or community to live on, keeping it ‘alive, [...] open to something other and more than itself: the other, the future, death, freedom, the coming or love of the other’, an other that might function both as a ‘menace’ and as a ‘chance’.<sup>120</sup> As Naas argues, drawing on Derrida’s thought, the immune movement of ‘complete self-indemnification [...] would put an end to the life of the self or the community that is being protected’ by eradicating the ‘autoimmune movement – a kind of death drive – that at once threatens any organism or community and allows it to live on.’ Without

---

<sup>118</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, trans. by Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), p.147.

<sup>119</sup> Jacques Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign, Volume II*, ed. by Michel Lisse et al. ,trans. by Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2011), pp.83-4.

<sup>120</sup> Derrida, ‘Faith and Knowledge’, p.87.

this ‘attack on or protection against one’s own mechanisms of self-protection’, there would ultimately ‘be no possibility of a supplement that might destroy *or* save’: absolute immunity, Naas concludes, ‘is nothing short of absolute death.’<sup>121</sup>

In fact, despite the association of automatic beings with ‘suicidal obedience’ in *Poor Things*, the novel also hints at the necessity of embracing the autoimmune risks associated with technics. Whereas in Shelley’s novel, the creature’s rebellion is seen by his creator to pose a threat to the entire human species, in *Poor Things* Baxter ultimately does not lament the fact that his ‘surgical fabrication’ takes on a life of her own and becomes wayward. Indeed, while Ishiguro’s depiction of the clones’ ultimate subservience to the calculation that has given them birth can be seen to echo traditional assumptions about what divides the living being from the inert technical object, Gray’s depiction of Bella in *Poor Things* suggests that it is always possible for a ‘surgical fabrication’ to exceed its ‘programming’. As Botting observes, although Bella begins life as ‘a poor thing, a creation of male fantasy’ – whether of Baxter, who creates her as a sexual companion, of McCandless, who views her as ‘the acme of womanly perfection’, or Duncan Wedderburn, who views her as a sexual conquest – she reveals herself to be ‘much more than an object, exceeding the fantasmatic projections that make her and the limits imposed on her.’<sup>122</sup> Irrepressible and exuberant, Bella is not ‘anyone’s helpless plaything’ (p.68) and, in either version of her life, whether she begins as a technical ‘thing’ or as a ‘poor thing’ in a slum, Bella/Victoria continually exceeds the boundaries put in place to contain her.

---

<sup>121</sup> Naas, pp.82-3.

<sup>122</sup> Botting, *Gothic Romanced*, p.121.

*Poor Things* is, however, less sanguine about the possibilities of exceeding the calculations made about life by political techniques. In a letter written at the inception of the Welfare State in 1946, Victoria celebrates the inevitability that ‘we WILL get social welfare and national health care for all’, along with nationalised industries and ‘a workers’ co-operative nation’ (p.316). What Victoria imagines, then, is a form of life founded on the common, not on the immunity of the proper. While this vision never truly comes to fruition, in the figure of Bella/Victoria, and in her hopes for a ‘co-operative’ form of politics and her attempt to establish a positive biopolitical project for the care of vulnerable women in ‘The Godwin Baxter Natal Clinic’ (p.240), Gray offers something which arguably approximates the approach to biopolitics which Esposito argues is necessary: not a biopolitics *over* life (which he associates with Foucault’s ‘biopower’), but a biopolitics *of* life, ‘one that doesn’t superimpose already constituted (and by now destitute) categories of modern politics on life, but rather inscribes the innovative power of a life rethought in all its complexity and articulation in the same politics.’<sup>123</sup> Of course, this would mean accepting life in all its risky, repetitious, mechanical, automatic, open, exteriorized, autoimmune form: life which can never be definitively immunized, and thus might exceed its defensive boundaries and transform the political and social sphere for good or ill. This biopolitics of life is never imagined as a possibility within the thanatopolitical framework of *Never Let Me Go*, and never comes to fruition in *Poor Things*. Yet the latter novel’s engagement with Gothic imagery of open bodies whose skin fails to act as a defensive boundary or to contain their excess, and of liminal states between the human and the nonhuman and between the living and the dead, opens up a space for questioning the category of the human and the

---

<sup>123</sup> Esposito, *Bíos*, p.157.

relationship between politics and life which is not easily closed down – or sealed inside the novel's own skin – at the end of *Poor Things*.

### **Chapter 3 – ‘Civilised society doesn’t just happen’: the animal, the law and ‘Victorian values’ in Kim Newman’s *Anno Dracula* (1992)**

#### **Introduction: a reversion towards barbarism**

In a speech given not long after her first general election victory in 1979, Margaret Thatcher described the events of the preceding winter – when ‘children were locked out of school’, ‘the old were left unattended’, ‘the dead were not buried’, and ‘flying pickets patrolled the motorways’ – as a ‘reversion towards barbarism’ during which ‘there can have been few in Britain who did not feel, with mounting alarm, that our society was sick – morally, socially and economically.’ In place of the ‘socialist’ principles which she believed had led to this decline, Thatcher asked the electorate to put its faith in ‘the working of a market economy in a free society’.<sup>1</sup> However, given that the period of her own premiership was characterised by massive social unrest (particularly in the form of urban riots), Thatcher’s economic medicine was clearly insufficient when it came to halting this ‘reversion towards barbarism’. Rather than acknowledging the economic and political explanations for this unrest, Thatcher’s tendency, according to Simon Joyce, was ‘to impose a moral etiology on deviant behaviour’, and to characterise the ‘ordinary citizens’ of middle-class society as the victims of the poor and the ‘roofless’.<sup>2</sup> Besides drastic changes in economic policy, then, for Thatcher the solution to social decline lay in the return to a ‘firm and traditional government’, which would ‘mount [...] a real war against crime and against the criminal’.<sup>3</sup> Hence the birth of what Stuart Hall terms ‘the law and order

---

<sup>1</sup> Margaret Thatcher, ‘Speech to the Conservative Political Centre Summer School: The Renewal of Britain’, 6<sup>th</sup> July, 1979. Available from <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/104107> [Accessed 10<sup>th</sup> December 2013].

<sup>2</sup> Simon Joyce, *The Victorians in the Rearview Mirror* (Athen: Ohio University Press, 2007), pp.116-17.

<sup>3</sup> Thatcher, ‘Speech to the Conservative Political Centre Summer School: The Renewal of Britain’.

society' of the Thatcher era, which he argues was established amidst a 'moral panic' stirred up by the government's rhetoric 'of "good" versus "evil", of civilised and uncivilised standards, of the choice between anarchy and order'.<sup>4</sup> Following her third general election victory in 1987, Thatcher was still at pains to emphasise that 'civilised society doesn't just happen', but 'has to be sustained by standards widely accepted and upheld'. 'All of us,' she argued, 'have a responsibility to uphold the civilised values which underpin the law'.<sup>5</sup>

One set of civilised values Thatcher had already invoked in this period can be found in the famous call for a return to 'Victorian values',<sup>6</sup> and it is interesting to note that in the late eighties and early nineties, a number of authors turned to the Victorian period (and to its most notorious crimes) in their fiction as a means of exploring contemporary approaches to law and order. This is particularly true of those neo-Victorian texts which Elizabeth Ho classifies as 'Ripperature' – 'fictionalised accounts of the Whitechapel murders and Jack the Ripper'.<sup>7</sup> Texts such as Alan Moore and Eddie Campbell's *From Hell* (1989-1996), Peter Ackroyd's *Dan Leno and the Limehouse Golem* (1994) and Iain Sinclair's *White Chappell, Scarlet Tracings* (1987) are often regarded as responding specifically to the politics of Thatcherism. Ho, for example, argues that in *From Hell* Moore and Campbell 'create a nineteenth-century nightmare born out of the values admired by "eminent neo-

---

<sup>4</sup> Stuart Hall, *The Hard Road to Renewal: Thatcherism and the Crisis of the Left* (London: Verso, 1988), p.56.

<sup>5</sup> Margaret Thatcher, 'Speech to Conservative Party Conference', 9<sup>th</sup> October, 1987. Available from <http://www.margarethatcher.org/document/106941> [Accessed 10<sup>th</sup> December 2013].

<sup>6</sup> See for example Margaret Thatcher, 'Speech to Glasgow Chamber of Commerce', 28<sup>th</sup> January 1983. Available from <http://www.margarethatcher.org/document/105244> [Accessed 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2016].

<sup>7</sup> Elizabeth Ho, *Neo-Victorianism and the Memory of Empire* (London: Continuum, 2012), p.28.

Victorians” such as Thatcher’;<sup>8</sup> while Alex Murray asserts that Sinclair’s novel constitutes ‘an investigation of the obscene underside of “Victorian Values”’.<sup>9</sup>

While the novels mentioned above have received considerable scholarly attention, Kim Newman’s 1992 neo-Victorian Gothic novel *Anno Dracula*, which likewise returns to the Ripper murders, has been largely overlooked in critical work on neo-Victorianism. In his afterword to the recently republished edition of the text, Newman describes the novel as an attempt ‘to mix things I felt about the 1980s, when the British Government made “Victorian Values” a slogan, with the real and imagined 1880s, when blood was flowing in the fog and there was widespread social unrest’.<sup>10</sup> *Anno Dracula* is the first in a quartet of books which, taking *Dracula* (1897) as their starting point, imagine what might have happened if Bram Stoker’s infamous vampire had succeeded in seizing control of Victorian Britain and its empire. The novel begins shortly after Dracula has married and ‘turned’ Queen Victoria, with both the Queen and her new Prince Consort (also the self-styled ‘Lord Protector’) declaring themselves ‘much concerned with law and order’.<sup>11</sup> Against the backdrop of a growing rebellion against the new regime, involving a cast of characters borrowed from history and from Victorian fiction, Jack Seward stalks the slums of Whitechapel as Jack the Ripper, murdering vampire prostitutes in an effort to complete the work he and Van Helsing began with Lucy Westenra.

---

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Alex Murray, *Recalling London: History and Fiction in the Work of Peter Ackroyd and Iain Sinclair* (London: Continuum, 2007), p.73.

<sup>10</sup> Kim Newman, ‘Afterword’, in *Anno Dracula* (London: Titan, [1992] 2011), pp.449-56 (p.455).

<sup>11</sup> Kim Newman, *Anno Dracula* (London: Titan, [1992] 2011), p.127. Subsequent references to this edition given in parentheses.



In depicting the moment at which a regime changes, *Anno Dracula* explores something akin to the ‘renewal of Britain’ outlined by Thatcher in her early speech,<sup>12</sup> albeit along rather different lines. The novel therefore raises key questions about the legitimation of authority and the role of violence in the origin of the *polis*. Indeed, in an article on representations of Dracula in popular culture, Newman traces the numerous reappearances of Stoker’s vampire at diverse points in history, which he suggests are united as ‘site[s] of major economic and social upheavals’. Dracula, he concludes, ‘evidently appears to nations in crisis.’<sup>13</sup> In this chapter, drawing on the etymological relationship between the noun ‘crisis’ and the noun ‘decision’,<sup>14</sup> I argue that in *Anno Dracula* Newman explores the decisions which underpin the formation of the *polis*, decisions which are always bound up with processes of exclusion and their associated forms of violence.

According to Mitchell Dean, such decisions are fundamental to the biopolitical management of populations, which always involves ‘the division of life into sub-groups that will contribute to or retard the general welfare and life of the population’. In turn, this leads to ‘the discovery among the population of the criminal and dangerous classes, the feeble-minded and the imbecile, the invert and the degenerate, the unemployable and the abnormal, and to attempts to prevent, contain or eliminate them’.<sup>15</sup> In its focus on prostitutes, drug addicts, homosexuals, immigrants, political dissidents, and the poor and unemployed, *Anno Dracula* foregrounds the question of which beings must be excluded from a society in order for it to be regarded as ‘civilised’.

---

<sup>12</sup> See Thatcher, ‘Speech to the Conservative Political Centre Summer School: The Renewal of Britain’.

<sup>13</sup> Kim Newman, ‘Bloodlines’, *Sight and Sound*, 3 (1993), 12-13 (p.12).

<sup>14</sup> As the OED states, ‘crisis’ has its origins in the Greek *κρίσις*, indicating ‘discrimination’ and ‘decision’.

<sup>15</sup> Mitchell Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (London: SAGE, 2010), pp.117-19.

Critics of Thatcher's government certainly noted its impulse towards identifying and expelling threatening sub-groups from the population. Hall, for example, emphasises Thatcher's attempts to 'expel symbolically one sector of society after another from the imaginary community of the nation'.<sup>16</sup> Likewise, Alan Sinfield comments on the Thatcher government's repeated attempts to 'outlaw sections of the population (disadvantaged sections, of course)', including 'blacks and "scroungers"' and the homosexual community, among many other 'out-groups', who would 'bear much of the brunt of such scapegoating in modern Britain'.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, this process of exclusion can be understood to be intimately bound up with the idea of 'Victorian values': as Kate Mitchell observes, Thatcher used this term 'as a measure against which to identify the social ills of her milieu – a regulated economy, welfare dependency and the decline of the family', and as means of reasserting 'traditional and naturalised boundaries between normalcy and deviancy, morality and perversity'.<sup>18</sup>

In *Anno Dracula*, the assertion of such boundaries and their resultant forms of exclusion are shown to underpin 'the civilised values that uphold the law'. I argue that Newman explores this process through the figure of the animal, particularly in terms of the construction of the precarious border between human and non-human animals. The novel includes a number of human-animal hybrids, from the vampires who shape-shift into rats, bats and wolves, to 'warm' humans bearing the marks of the non-human criminal or used as 'cattle' for vampires to feed on. Moreover, Newman also draws significantly on the themes and imagery of the late-Victorian

---

<sup>16</sup> Hall, p.8.

<sup>17</sup> Alan Sinfield, *Literature, Politics and Culture in Postwar Britain* (London: Athlone Press, 1997), pp.348-49.

<sup>18</sup> Kate Mitchell, *History and Cultural Memory in Neo-Victorian Fiction: Victorian Afterimages* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p.48.

Gothic and detective fiction, genres which are fundamentally concerned with the precarious boundary between the human and the non-human. This border is also crucial to contemporary thought on biopolitics, because it is along the human/animal distinction that the boundaries of the *polis* or of ‘civilised society’ are drawn. As Cary Wolfe puts it, the animal is ‘before the law’, not only spatially, in the sense of standing before its judgement, but also (and more significantly for *Anno Dracula*) temporally ‘before the law’. For Wolfe, the animal is ‘ontologically [...] antecedent to the law’ and exists prior to the enactment of the law’s ‘originary violence’, its decision on ‘who’s in and who’s out’.<sup>19</sup>

Following this introduction, the chapter will be divided into three further sections. The first section focuses on the role of the human/animal division in discourses on crime and law, and examines the emphasis placed in *Anno Dracula* on the function of the animal in producing forms of bare life which can be killed without the commission of homicide. The second focuses on Newman’s depiction of the figure of the wolf or werewolf as a means of exploring the violence which underpins the institution of the law and of ‘civilised society’. I also explore some of the problematic aspects of Newman’s depiction of the human/animal and civilisation/barbarism binaries in *Anno Dracula*. The final section turns to the novel’s interrogation of contemporary political uses of the past, with a particular emphasis on the complex relationship between biopolitical projects of the Victorian era and the Thatcherite approach to the state (and especially the welfare state) in the twentieth century.

---

<sup>19</sup> Cary Wolfe, *Before the Law: Humans and Other Animals in a Biopolitical Frame* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2013), pp.8-9.

### **An ape with a straight razor: the production of the juridical subject**

On a walk through Whitechapel pursuing clues in the Ripper case, Charles Beauregard (an agent of the Diogenes Club tasked with investigating the murders) speculates that the murderer might be ‘a simple madman [...] possessed of no more purpose than an orang-utan with a straight razor’ (p.204). On one level, this reference to Edgar Allan Poe’s ‘The Murders in the Rue Morgue’ (1841) is merely historically apt, given that the press at the time of the Whitechapel murders occupied themselves by ‘fancying a renewal of Poe’s *Rue Morgue*’.<sup>20</sup> Yet this reference to ‘The Murders in the Rue Morgue’ has a wider significance in *Anno Dracula*, since Poe’s tale is concerned, as Peter J. Hutchings points out, with ‘the identification of murder itself’ – and thus also, he argues, with ‘a definition of the human’. Hutchings notes that the definition of murder depends on two things: ‘the humanity of the killer and of the killed’. In order to commit murder, ‘one must come under a legal narrative of the human, and a psychological narrative of volition and intention involving *mens rea*’: hence, the definition of murder involves ‘a definition of legal, especially criminal, subjectivity’ which reflects ‘presumptions of rational humanity’. Those who lack ‘the appropriate volitional and cognitive qualifications’, such as ‘the mad person’, are ‘placed below the threshold of legal humanity’, a position from which they can then be used ‘to delineate the limits of the responsible legal subject.’<sup>21</sup>

Jacques Derrida makes a similar point when he observes that ‘classical and traditional’ discourses on crime are underpinned by the idea ‘that what is proper to man, the origin of man, the place where humanity begins, is the Law, the relation to

---

<sup>20</sup> Max Duperray, “‘Jack the Ripper’ as Neo-Victorian Gothic Fiction: Twentieth-Century and Contemporary Sallies into a Late Victorian Case and Myth’, in *Neo-Victorian Gothic: Horror, Violence and Degeneration in the Re-imagined Nineteenth Century*, ed by Marie-Luise Kohkle and Christian Gutleben (Amsterdam & New York: Rodopi, 2012), pp.167-95 (p.169).

<sup>21</sup> Peter J. Hutchings, *The Criminal Spectre in Law, Literature and Aesthetics: Incriminating Subjects* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), p.57, pp.53-4.

the Law'. It is this experience of law that 'separates Man from Beast', because only man has the liberty to 'obey or not obey the Law', which means that 'crime, as transgression of the Law, would be proper to man'.<sup>22</sup> Hence, in Poe's tale, the detective will discover that there has been no murder, because 'the agent of this horrific event is non-human'.<sup>23</sup> In being non-human, though, this 'agent' draws attention to the structural significance of the division of the human from the animal in the operations of the law. Hutchings notes that the detective Dupin's conjectures about the potentially non-human identity of the 'murderer' serve 'to delineate the very limits of criminal – which is to say, human – subjectivity', such that the narrator becomes aware 'of something lying beneath the limits of the human, something prehuman, an almost forgotten precursor to humanity'.<sup>24</sup>

Poe's tale is thus concerned with that which (in Wolfe's terms) comes 'before the law', that which is 'ontologically [...] antecedent to the law' but is nevertheless critical to the operation of the law's judgments on 'who's in and who's out'.<sup>25</sup> In *Anno Dracula*, Beauregard's comparison of the 'madman' to the 'ape' draws on these same distinctions which inform the production of juridical subjectivity. This is also evident earlier in the novel when he attends a gathering of notorious criminals (including Arthur Conan Doyle's Professor Moriarty and Charles Dickens's Bill Sikes) who are troubled by the disruption the Ripper is bringing to their 'shadow community'. At this meeting, Beauregard observes that despite there being present 'two of the three most dangerous men in the world', it is only Sikes, 'pig-faced' and 'burly and brutal', who is 'the image of a criminal' (p.91).

---

<sup>22</sup> Jacques Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign, Volume I*, ed. by Michel Lisse et al, trans. by Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2009), p.102.

<sup>23</sup> Hutchings, p.57.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., pp.58-9.

<sup>25</sup> Wolfe, pp.8-9.

Indeed, *Anno Dracula* is centrally concerned with another question posed by Beaugregard in connection with the murders. ‘The question of the age’, he states, ‘was: how much does a human being have to change before she is no longer human?’ (p.313). The notion of the ‘prehuman’, of that which comes ‘before the law’, is crucial to the novel’s various responses to this question, something which is particularly evident in terms of the material Newman incorporates from late-Victorian Gothic and detective narratives – not least, of course, from *Dracula* itself. According to Nina Auerbach, *Dracula* inaugurates the tradition of the shape-shifting, animalised vampire,<sup>26</sup> a figure which arguably corresponds to a wider fascination in *fin-de-siècle* Gothic fiction with the ‘abhuman’, that which is ‘bodily ambiguated or otherwise discontinuous in identity’.<sup>27</sup> Kelly Hurley emphasises the relationship between these ‘abhuman’ figures and the law, particularly in relation to the discourse of criminal anthropology, whose presence is evident in Mina’s identification of Dracula as ‘criminal and of the criminal type’, a judgement for which she cites the authority of Max Nordau and the criminologist Cesare Lombroso.<sup>28</sup>

Dracula’s ability to shapeshift into various animal forms certainly underscores his relationship with ‘the criminal anthropological theory of the atavist, whose body was a compendium of human and not-human morphic traits.’<sup>29</sup> The adjective ‘morphic’ here is key, inasmuch as it underpins the connection between criminology anthropology and evolutionism. According to Hurley, criminal anthropology and degeneration theory (associated with Nordau) can be understood as ““gothic” versions of evolutionism – discourses which emphasized the potential

---

<sup>26</sup> Nina Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p.86.

<sup>27</sup> Kelly Hurley, *The Gothic Body: Sexuality, Materialism, and Degeneration at the Fin de Siècle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p.5.

<sup>28</sup> Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, ed. by Maurice Hindle (London: Penguin, [1897] 2003), p.363.

<sup>29</sup> Hurley, p.20.

indifferentiation and changeability of the human species’, particularly in terms of ‘the reversal of evolution’. While degeneration theory ‘described the disastrous effects of the inheritance of undesirable traits within a familial line’ (effects which always threaten to extend into a form of ‘social contamination, which could launch a nation into a downward spiral into barbarity and chaos’), criminal anthropology ‘focused on a human liability to atavism or reversion, used to explain the predilection of certain individuals for criminal behaviors.’<sup>30</sup>

Criminal anthropology and degeneration theory can thus be understood to be concerned with that which comes ‘before the law’ in the form of a non-human or pre-human element which always threatens to resurface. Esposito draws attention to this idea in his analysis of degeneration theory, which he carries out in part via a reading of *Dracula* – a novel in which ‘[t]he championing of contemporary degenerative theory is so absolute that the text cannot fail to cite the relevant authors’.<sup>31</sup> The understanding of the degenerate which underpins *Dracula* depends above all on the reconfiguration of ‘abnormality’ from an ‘intraspecies dimension’ to ‘the limits of the human itself.’ To say that the degenerate is ‘abnormal’, Esposito argues, is to push him ‘toward a zone of indistinction that isn’t completely included in the category of the human’ – or, he continues, ‘it means enlarging the latter category so as to include its own negation: the non-man in man and therefore the man-animal.’<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p.10.

<sup>31</sup> Roberto Esposito, *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy*, trans. by Timothy Campbell (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), p.126.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p.119.

The complementary concept of atavism is ‘configured as a sort of biohistorical anachronism that reverses the line of human evolution until it has been brought back into contact with that of the animal’, such that

[d]egeneration is the animal element that reemerges in man in the form of an existence that isn’t properly animal or human, but exactly their point of intersection: the contradictory co-presence between two genera, two times, two organisms that are incapable of producing a unity of the person and consequently for the same reason incapable of forming a juridical subjectivity.<sup>33</sup>

This last point concerning juridical subjectivity is crucial, because degeneration theory can be understood to function as a key site for what Esposito describes as an ‘improper exchange between biology and law’, not least through the discipline of criminal anthropology. Ideas of heredity are especially important here: the degenerate criminal was not understood as an ‘individual [...] in a modern sense as the subject of law and of judgement’, but instead in relation to ‘the line of descent in which he constitutes only the final segment’, and which will determine and define all his ‘movements’. The ‘most celebrated expression’ of this belief is the ‘Lombrosian figure of the “born delinquent”’, a figure who embodies ‘the ancient wisdom of the myth’ that ‘the faults of the fathers always devolve upon their sons.’<sup>34</sup>

Given that the Gothic genre’s central motif, according to John Fletcher, concerns the ways in which the ‘sins of the fathers’ are revisited on subsequent generations,<sup>35</sup> it is perhaps unsurprising that the Gothic should prove such a fertile genre for ideas and imagery related to degeneration – nor that *Dracula* should prove to be a significant resource for contemporary work on biopolitics. In his reading of the novel, Esposito argues that the vampire ‘encapsulates in himself all of the

---

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p.119.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., pp.119-20.

<sup>35</sup> John Fletcher, ‘The sins of the fathers: the persistence of Gothic’, in *Romanticism and Postmodernism*, ed. by Edward Larrissy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp.113-40 (pp.123-24).



characteristics of the degenerate – he is no longer the other in man, but the other from man’. As ‘wolf, bat, and bloodsucker’, Dracula comes to function as ‘the *principle of contamination*’, not only living ‘on the blood of others’, but also ‘reproduc[ing] by multiplying himself in his victims.’ The ‘ultimate crime’ committed by the vampire is ‘the biological one of the transmission of infected blood.’<sup>36</sup>

Infected blood is certainly at issue in *Anno Dracula*, in which London ‘is full of very sick vampires’ (p.203), whose vampiric ‘offspring’ are afflicted with ‘running sores’ (p.44). Given that this novel was published at the beginning of the nineteen-nineties, its emphasis on infected blood has some obvious resonances with the AIDS crisis: indeed, Aspasia Stephanou refers to Esposito’s reading of *Dracula* and his focus on immunity in her analysis of representations of the vampire’s ‘propagation through infection’, which over the course of the nineteen-eighties came to be associated with HIV/AIDS.<sup>37</sup> However, *Anno Dracula*’s interest in infected blood is in fact more closely associated with degeneration, particularly in terms of familial inheritance: the ‘sick vampires’ have been ‘turned’ by a ‘father’ or ‘mother-in-darkness’ whose bloodline is ‘polluted’ (p.203). Hence, although Beauregard’s fiancée Penny wishes for them to become vampires – because ‘[o]nly vampires get anywhere’ – she recognises that bloodline is ‘important’, and is determined to avoid being turned by Dracula, whose ‘bloodline is dreadfully polluted’, preferring instead to be turned by Arthur Holmwood (‘Ruthven’s get’), whose bloodline is ‘simon-pure’ (p.124).

---

<sup>36</sup> Esposito, *Bíos*, p.126.

<sup>37</sup> Aspasia Stephanou, *Reading Vampire Gothic Through Blood: Bloodlines* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp.61-2.

However, Beauregard is quick to point out that there is no way of being sure how the ‘turning’ will affect them – particularly when so many ‘new-borns are twisted out of true’ by ‘something beastly’, which ‘takes over, and shapes them’ (p.124). Beauregard’s fears of becoming in some way ‘abhuman’ are dismissed by Penny, who insists that it is only ‘very common vampires’ who are ‘twisted out of true’ by something ‘beastly’, which suggests that there is already something atavistic about these ‘common’ humans waiting to be released when they are ‘turned’. In fact, vampires are very clearly divided along class lines in *Anno Dracula*. While the aristocratic and sought-after Lord Ruthven becomes prime minister and disperses his ‘get’ throughout ‘government offices’ (p.65), people comment on ‘the regrettable spread of vampirism among the lower classes’ (p.109), who are far more likely to be turned by vampire prostitutes of polluted bloodlines, from whom one could buy immortality ‘for an ounce or two’ of blood (p.72). In this way, the novel draws attention to the use of the label ‘degenerate’ as a political tool, which could be applied to ‘an ever vaster number of social categories’, including not just ‘alcoholics, syphilitics, homosexuals, prostitutes, the obese’ but also ‘the urban proletariat’.<sup>38</sup> In *Anno Dracula*, the urban proletariat are certainly perceived as threatening by their social ‘superiors’, who associate ‘the regrettable spread of vampirism among the lower classes’ with an inevitable ‘decline of public order’ (p.109).

The depiction in *Anno Dracula* of ‘sub-groups that will contribute to or retard the general welfare and life of the population’<sup>39</sup> in terms of ‘polluted’ or degenerate bloodlines is not only reflective of the novel’s *fin-de-siècle* sources, but also of the attitudes towards the urban poor and their association with degeneracy (and especially criminality) in the nineteen-eighties. Thatcher’s narrative of a

---

<sup>38</sup> Esposito, p.119.

<sup>39</sup> Dean, p.119.

‘reversion towards barbarism’ and of a ‘sick’ society certainly resonates with the kind of rhetoric evident in nineteenth-century discourses of degeneration and criminal anthropology, but perhaps the most infamous emergence of the concept of degeneration itself in contemporary political rhetoric can be found in a speech given in 1974 by Keith Joseph. One of the architects of Thatcherism, Joseph had long been interested in the notion of ‘transmitted deprivation’,<sup>40</sup> and he used this speech to argue that ‘our human stock is threatened’ due to the high proportion of children being born to ‘those least fitted’ to be parents. These children, he argued, would become ‘problem children’, the future ‘unmarried mothers, delinquents, denizens of our borstals, sub-normal educational establishments, prisons, hostels for drifters.’ Joseph thus depicted the health of the population as under threat from degenerate sub-groups breeding society’s future criminal element: ‘if we do nothing,’ he argued, ‘the nation moves towards degeneration’.<sup>41</sup> Nor have these attitudes been entirely supplanted in British politics: much more recently, the Conservative peer Howard Flight controversially echoed Joseph’s speech when he argued that the removal of child benefit from the middle classes was misguided, because it meant that they would be ‘discouraged from breeding’, while those receiving benefits would have ‘every incentive’ to have numerous children.<sup>42</sup>

Perceptions of criminality in the nineteen-eighties were also problematically bound up with race, particularly through what Paul Gilroy describes as the narrative of ‘black criminality’, which contributed to a broader narrative concerning ‘the white British people and their traditional culture, locked in a struggle against the disruptive

---

<sup>40</sup> For more on Joseph and the notion of ‘transmitted deprivation’, see John Welshman, *Underclass: A History of the Excluded Since 1880* (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp.119-38.

<sup>41</sup> Keith Joseph, ‘Speech at Edgbaston: “Our Human Stock is Threatened”, 19<sup>th</sup> October, 1974. Available from <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/101830> [Accessed 10<sup>th</sup> December 2013].

<sup>42</sup> See Nicholas Watt, ‘Howard Flight echoes Keith Joseph’s 1974 warning that “our human stock is threatened”’, *The Guardian*, 25 November 2010 <<http://www.theguardian.com/politics/wintour-and-watt/2010/nov/25/conservatives-davidcameron>> [accessed 18 November 2013].

criminal encroachment of the blacks.’<sup>43</sup> This was especially the case in the urban riots of the nineteen-eighties: as Lucienne Loh points out, these riots raised ‘the specter of race’ in terms which ‘articulated the culmination of frustrations over a foregone imperial identity, shrouded in racism, in open conflict with the realities of a multicultural society.’<sup>44</sup> Echoes of these anxieties are evident in *Anno Dracula*, in which Newman depicts the police commissioner tasked with combating urban rioters as an army commander more used to military service in the empire, who thus approaches social unrest as though ‘in the thick of an African battle’ and thinks of the rioters as ‘natives’ and ‘cannibals’ (pp. 350-51). In the nineteen-eighties, this narrative of ‘black criminality’ extended from senior police officers – whose comments on Jamaicans being ‘constitutionally disorderly’ as a result of their ‘make up’ Gilroy uses as an epigraph to a chapter titled ‘Lesser breeds without the law’<sup>45</sup> – to the cabinet. Indeed, the emergence of cabinet papers in 2015 from the period encompassing the riots in Tottenham and Handsworth in 1985 have proven embarrassing for the current Conservative government, because they reveal that David Cameron’s chief policy adviser, Oliver Letwin, was instrumental in persuading Thatcher not to implement policies designed to reach out to disenfranchised black communities in these areas. Along with Hartley Booth, Letwin insisted that because lower-class white people apparently did not riot despite living in the same impoverished circumstances, the riots in predominantly black areas were clearly the result of inherently ‘bad moral attitudes’, which could only be combated by a keen enforcement of family values, personal responsibility, respect for the

---

<sup>43</sup> Paul Gilroy, *There Ain’t No Black in the Union Jack: The cultural politics of race and nation* (London and New York: Routledge, [1987] 2002), p.87.

<sup>44</sup> Lucienne Loh, ‘Rural Heritage and Colonial Nostalgia in the Thatcher Years: V.S. Naipaul’s *The Enigma of Arrival*’, in *Thatcher and After: Margaret Thatcher and her Afterlife in Contemporary Culture*, ed. by Louisa Hadley and Elizabeth Ho (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp.96-115 (p.96).

<sup>45</sup> Gilroy, p.84.

police, and ‘a new moral “youth corps”.’ According to Letwin and Booth, any money channelled towards regenerating impoverished black communities would only fuel the drugs trade.<sup>46</sup> Race thus proves to be a division along which biopolitical decisions are made about which lives are worthy of being fostered (in the sense of being invested in) and which should be disallowed.

Likewise, these divisions of life along racial lines are evident in *Anno Dracula*, particularly in the chapter of the novel in which Beauregard and the elder vampire Geneviève visit Doctor Jekyll and Doctor Moreau in order to consult them about the Ripper. During this visit, Moreau argues that the shape-shifting vampires ‘are evolution run backwards, an atavism’, and constitute ‘the first footfall on the path of regression to savagery’. He and Jekyll seek a form of vampirism which would grant immortality without this ‘regression’, and they see in Geneviève the ultimate (and eugenic) goal of ‘humanity perfected’ (p.219). When Geneviève questions how vampires would feed if everyone became one, Moreau responds, ‘as if pointing out to a dunderhead that the sky was blue’, that they ‘would import Africans or South Sea Islanders [...] or raise lesser beasts to human form’ (p.221). Moreau thus assumes a natural distinction between what kind of life is worthy of being ‘perfected’ and what kind of life is closer to the animal or ‘savage’ and is therefore expendable – a distinction which clearly operates for him in relation to race, such that ‘Africans’ and ‘South Sea Islanders’ are categorised as ‘lesser beasts’, and thus also as expendable lives.

What Moreau’s speech also hints at is the mobility of the border between human and animal – at the way in which what counts as human life at any particular

---

<sup>46</sup> See Alan Travis, ‘Oliver Letwin blocked help for black youth after 1985 riots’, *The Guardian*, 30 December 2015 <<http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/dec/30/oliver-letwin-blocked-help-for-black-youth-after-1985-riots>> [accessed 14 March 2016].

moment is the product, as Giorgio Agamben puts it, of ‘a ceaselessly updated decision’.<sup>47</sup> Indeed, just as civilised society doesn’t simply happen, the human subject which is the source and object of its laws and values likewise has to be constructed and maintained. As I noted in the previous chapter, Agamben describes this process in terms of the ‘anthropological machine’ of *Homo sapiens*, which functions ‘by isolating the non-human within the human’ and then disavowing these non-human or animal elements in order to produce ‘the truly human being’.<sup>48</sup> However, this process of the separation of man from animal is never complete. Instead, it constitutes ‘a mobile border within living man’, an ‘intimate caesura’, and the truly human being which should be produced in fact never appears, being instead ‘only the place of a ceaselessly updated decision in which the caesurae and their rearticulation are always dislocated and displaced anew’.<sup>49</sup> What the machine actually produces is ‘bare life’, which Agamben has elsewhere equated with the life of the *homo sacer* or sacred man, the archaic figure in Roman law who is banned from the community and can be killed without the commission of homicide, but can never be sacrificed.<sup>50</sup>

The action of ‘cutting’ is particularly significant in the functioning of the anthropological machine; indeed, Agamben’s ‘intimate *caesura*’ finds a parallel in Esposito’s characterisation of ‘human-animal zootechnics, in which the human must be surgically separated from time to time from the animal that inhabits it.’<sup>51</sup> Surgery also plays a central role in *Anno Dracula*, in which the relationship between

---

<sup>47</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, trans. by Kevin Attell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), p.38.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.37-8.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p.15, p.38.

<sup>50</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. by Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), p.8.

<sup>51</sup> Roberto Esposito, *Third Person: Politics of Life and Philosophy of the Impersonal*, trans. by Zakiya Hanafi (Cambridge: Polity, 2012), p.57.

‘incisions’ and ‘decisions’ (also etymologically linked to the idea of cutting) features prominently in scenes of the surgical separation of the human from the animal. In particular, Moreau’s role as a vivisectionist in both *Anno Dracula* and in the novel from which he is borrowed brings the etymological basis of the noun ‘decision’ to the fore, since he literally cuts into and rearranges the bodies of animals into more ‘human’ shapes. This also forges a clear link between Moreau and Seward (the Ripper or ‘Silver Knife’) who likewise makes his decisions/incisions along the human/animal division. He describes his work killing vampire prostitutes – one of whom he describes as a ‘thing’ which ‘had time to screech’ while he killed her (p.15) – as a necessary form of surgery, stating that he is ‘a surgeon, cutting away the diseased tissue’, and that it is his duty ‘to cut out the corrupt heart of the city’ (p.212).

Seward’s descriptions of the vampire prostitutes as ‘things’ and ‘diseased tissue’ also points to the other key feature in the ‘identification of murder’ with which I began this section. According to Hutchings, the definition of murder depends not only on the humanity of the killer, but also on that of the ‘killed’, which must ‘come under a legal narrative of the human’.<sup>52</sup> Again, then, murder involves a consideration of the boundaries of human life in the production of juridical subjectivity. In the case of the victim, however, this also involves a decision on what kind of life can be killed without the commission of homicide as a result of being excluded from the frame of human life and thus also from the protection of the law. This decision has been a particular focus of Derrida’s work: for example, in the 1991 interview entitled ‘Eating Well’, he comments on the ways in which the ‘denegation of murder’ and the idea of a ‘noncriminal putting to death’ of animal life underpin

---

<sup>52</sup> Hutchings, pp.53-4.

‘the violent institution of the “who” as a subject’.<sup>53</sup> He returns to these ideas many years later in *The Beast and the Sovereign* seminars, where he points out that the fact that there is ‘no “crime against animality” nor crime of genocide against nonhuman living beings’ has implications for all living beings, because ‘the worst, the cruellest, the most human violence has been unleashed against living beings, beasts or humans, and humans in particular, who precisely were not accorded the dignity of being fellows’.<sup>54</sup>

It is precisely this kind of non-criminal putting to death which is at issue in *Anno Dracula*. This is especially evident in the chapter entitled ‘A Premature Post-Mortem’, in which one of Seward’s victims, the vampire prostitute Liz Stride, is brought to Toynbee Hall (where he works as a doctor for the poor and for new-born vampires) for post-mortem. This victim, however, is still alive (or at least still undead), and she is laid out before the gaze of both the law (in the form of Inspector Lestrade and his constables) and of medicine (in the form of Seward). Already an outcast due to her poverty and profession, on the post-mortem table Liz Stride is found to be lacking the attributes necessary for being considered as a juridical subject. For example, she can no longer reason, having lost her mind when ‘the human part’ of her was ‘burned away’ (p.195). Even more significantly, she can no longer speak, because her vocal cords have been severed by the Ripper’s knife. She is thus unable to identify her killer; but, more importantly, she has lost access to the defining characteristic of human life, which is language. It is language that allows the living being to become a member of the *polis*, because it is only through language that one can gain access to politics and to the law. This is something

---

<sup>53</sup> Jacques Derrida, ‘Eating Well, or the Calculation of the Subject’ (1991), trans. by Peter Connor and Avital Ronell, in *Points: Interviews, 1974-1994*, ed. by Elisabeth Weber, trans. by Peggy Kamuf and others (Stanford: Stanford University Press, [1992] 1995), pp.255-87 (pp.277-8, p.283).

<sup>54</sup> Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign, Volume I*, p.110, p.108.



Agamben emphasises when he analyses Aristotle's *Politics*, noting that Aristotle 'situates the proper place of the *polis* in the transition from voice to language.' Whereas the animal can only make inarticulate sounds of pain or pleasure, in possessing language man has the ability to articulate 'the just and the unjust'.<sup>55</sup>

This distinction between voice and language is central to a number of nineteenth-century texts which inform *Anno Dracula*, not least Poe's 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue', in which various witnesses struggle to identify the unseen killer's language, each one describing the sounds produced as foreign but each witness selecting a different nationality. The ape, however, with his 'fiendish jabberings',<sup>56</sup> has voice but not language. Moreover, the fact that the ape cuts the victim's throat again draws attention to the particular anatomical point which proves decisive in the definition of human life, a point which is also important in H. G. Wells's *The Island of Dr Moreau*, in which Moreau informs Prendick that 'the great difference between man and monkey is in the larynx [...] in the incapacity to frame delicately different sound-symbols by which thought could be sustained.'<sup>57</sup> This 'incapacity' is something that Moreau overcomes in his vivisections, after which his 'beast-people' are able to sustain thought – and, more importantly, to speak the law. They perform what Prendick describes as 'the strange litany of the Law', in which they recite 'a long list of prohibitions' to prevent them from lapsing into their prior animal state.<sup>58</sup>

Again, the action of cutting is important here. Under the vivisectionist's knife the beast-people have been remade, but the animal part is never conclusively

---

<sup>55</sup> Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, pp.7-8.

<sup>56</sup> Edgar Allan Poe, 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue', in *The Fall of the House of Usher and Other Writings*, ed. by David Galloway (London: Penguin, 2003), pp.141-76 (p.175).

<sup>57</sup> H.G. Wells, *The Island of Doctor Moreau*, ed. by Patrick Parrinder (London: Penguin, [1896] 2005), p.73.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.59-61.

removed by this surgery, and so they must continue to articulate the incisions/decisions which are supposed to distinguish them from the animal. Likewise, in the premature post-mortem of Liz Stride (in reality a potential vivisection, thereby echoing Moreau's work), the surgeon's table is again the site on which the precarious border between human and animal is determined. Under the weight of the medical and legal gazes of Seward and Lestrade, Liz Stride begins to transform into an animal, into a 'half-creature' (p.198), and attacks her killer in this animalised form because she cannot speak his name. By contrast, her killer keeps (as he does in *Dracula*) extensive phonographic records of his deeds as the Ripper, which he builds into a 'case history' both medical and legal, desiring that his 'motives and methods' should be 'made known and clear' (pp.11-12).

Yet for Seward these acts ultimately need no justification: he regards every murder he undertakes as one of a series of post-mortems, which he carries out with a post-mortem scalpel plated in silver, believing that 'it is fitting [...] to employ a tool intended for rooting around in corpses' (p.15). For Seward, then, his victims can be killed without the commission of homicide not just because they are not considered human, but also because they are not properly alive in the first place. The Ripper's vampire victims are, in Esposito's terms, 'above all else "undead," repulsed by life and by death into an abyss that cannot be bridged.'<sup>59</sup> Esposito argues that this notion of life that is not properly alive became increasingly prominent in the decades following *Dracula*'s publication, especially in the growing shift under Nazism towards the practice of euthanasia as a eugenic tool. This move firmly establishes the idea that in the case of some beings, 'the right/obligation to die, rather than falling from on high in a sovereign decision on the body of citizens, springs from

---

<sup>59</sup> Esposito, *Bios*, p.126.

their own vital makeup’, such that death appears not as a ‘negation’ but ‘as the natural outcome of certain conditions of life.’ This form of death is thus ‘juridically irreproachable’ because ‘the persons whom it strikes are *already* dead’, are lives ‘reduced to bare existence.’<sup>60</sup>

The vampire is an apt metaphor for such ‘bare existence’. Indeed, according to Auerbach, vampires ‘are neither inhuman nor nonhuman nor all-too-human; they are simply more alive than they should be.’<sup>61</sup> This statement takes on more sinister connotations in *Anno Dracula*, in which Seward sets out to rectify this flawed distribution of life and death. Moreover, he believes that for his victims death is not only inevitable but also welcome. In his murder of the vampire prostitute Lulu Schonn in the novel’s opening chapter, Seward believes that he finds in his victim ‘an acceptance of [his] gift’, and that she is ‘relieved, at the last, to have her soul cleansed’ (p.15). Esposito argues that in Stoker’s novel, what Van Helsing and Seward dole out to Lucy is a ‘salvific death’, one which he finds disturbingly prescient in its anticipation of the horrors that will be carried out in the coming twentieth century in the name of saving life that is considered worthy of being lived.<sup>62</sup> In *Anno Dracula*, Seward continues these same ‘operations’ in the name of ‘cleansing’ and ultimately saving his victims’ souls.

In the case of Seward’s victim, in the end only Beauregard is able to see Liz Stride on the post-mortem table as ‘a human being, not a clue’, and to believe that she is ‘worth doing something for’ (pp.196-7). Nevertheless, he is forced to shoot her, to ‘put her down like a dog’ and ‘finish the Ripper’s work with her’ (p.313), in one of the novel’s many examples of the noncriminal putting to death experienced

---

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., pp.133-4.

<sup>61</sup> Auerbach, p.6.

<sup>62</sup> Esposito, *Bios*, p.126.

by those who fall outside the frame of human life and are thus disposable. This notion of disposability is central not merely to the psychology of Seward as the Ripper, but also to the novel's plot. It transpires that Beauregard's employers, the Diogenes Club, have engineered the majority of events in order to have Beauregard catch the Ripper and be granted an audience with Dracula and Queen Victoria, during which he will provide the means (the Ripper's silver scalpel) for the vampire Victoria to end her life and so bring an end to Dracula's claim to the throne. Thus another Diogenes agent, the vampire Sergeant Dravot, has been shadowing Jack the Ripper all along, and in Genevieve's eyes it is he who is the true Ripper, insofar as he has simply allowed the vampire prostitutes to be murdered under his gaze. He allows them to die for what his employers believe is a greater political purpose, albeit one which sanctions the deaths of some in order to protect other lives considered more worthy of being lived.

### **Hunting in packs on Pall Mall: the wolf and the state of exception**

Liz Stride's transformation into a 'half-creature' (p.198) on the post-mortem table is one of many examples of human-animal hybridity in *Anno Dracula*. As I noted in the previous section, Newman's depiction of her shapeshifting before the medical and legal gaze, and of her being 'put down' like a 'dog', opens up a space to consider the role of 'noncriminal putting to death' in the production of the juridical subject. However, at times the depiction of human-animal hybridity in *Anno Dracula* is troubling, something which is particularly evident in Newman's representation of Geneviève. She is arguably the novel's most admirable vampire – and yet her greatest advantage is revealed to be her distance from the atavistic, shape-shifting, human-animal hybrids of Dracula's line. While they grow fur and wings and die in the attempt to shape-shift, Geneviève only occasionally wears 'a beast-like mask',

which, of course, she can remove at will, because unlike her degenerate counterparts, she is ‘of the pure bloodline of Chandagnac’ (pp.83-4).

Moreover, Geneviève’s critique of Doctor Moreau is also of interest here. On the one hand, Moreau’s attitude to the disposable nature of certain lives which are considered to be closer to animal life is viewed in an extremely negative light by the novel’s protagonists, Beaugard and Geneviève. On the other hand, Geneviève’s own observations of Moreau return in a disquieting way to ‘The Murders in the Rue Morgue’ and to the figure of the ape. In an echo of Beaugard’s earlier remarks on the Ripper possibly being ‘a simple madman [...] possessed of no more purpose than an orang-utan with a straight razor’ (p.204), Geneviève speculates that there is ‘something almost of the ape about [Moreau’s] physique’: ‘[i]t would be nothing to him’, she concludes, ‘to cut a throat or perform a swift dissection, dragging a silver blade through resisting meat, sawing apart bones’ (p.219). Again, the diagnosis of potential criminality is made with reference to a physical similarity to nonhuman animals; indeed, Geneviève’s observations about Moreau’s physical being also echo Beaugard’s description of Bill Sikes as the ‘image of a criminal’ purely because he is ‘pig-faced’ and ‘burly and *brutal*’ (p.91, my emphasis). These perceptions are ultimately based on the same divisions Moreau makes between ‘Mankind’, which ‘stands atop of the parabola of life on earth’, and the atavistic shape-shifting vampires, who are ‘the step over the prow, the first footfall on the path of regression to savagery’ – and who thus threaten to reveal what ‘all of us, if freed from the restraints of civilised behaviour’ are capable of (p.219).

At times, then, *Anno Dracula* appears to re-inscribe the very divisions between human and animal, and between the civilised and the barbarous, whose associations with violence and with forms of noncriminal putting to death also

feature prominently in the novel. This contradictory approach can perhaps be understood as an effect of Newman's engagement with the Gothic mode itself, whose 'principal defining structure', according to Robert Mighall, 'is its attitude to the past and its unwelcome legacies.'<sup>63</sup> Earlier Gothic texts figure this return of the past through specific 'locales' which function as sites for 'the conflict between the civilized and the barbaric, the modern and the archaic, the progressive and the reactionary', in which the barbarism of the past ultimately serves as a 'foil' for and 're-enforces the superiority' of the modern 'enlightened age'. By contrast, nineteenth-century 'evolutionary, ethnological, and criminological discourses' serve 'to demarcate a new territory for Gothic representation', one which still depended on 'the conflict between the civilized and the barbaric', but in which the body, rather than 'traditional Gothic locales', became 'the focus for horrific returns.'<sup>64</sup>

This 'somatic reconfiguration'<sup>65</sup> of the civilised/savage binary is evident in many of the *fin-de-siècle* Gothic texts from which Newman borrows, and their rhetoric comes to inhabit parts of *Anno Dracula* – even and perhaps especially where the novel appears to be criticising the anthropological machine's attempt at producing fully human life through the expulsion of supposedly atavistic and degenerate sub-groups. That Geneviève's critique of Moreau's views repeats the same terms of his beliefs about atavism – she describes him as 'ape-like' and a 'cave-dweller' (p.219, p.224) – is indicative of the extent to which the Gothic genre's structural emphasis on the distinction between the modern and the barbaric in turn provides the logic for Newman's interrogation of the effects of this very binary, which is shown to play a central role in the exclusion of certain beings from

---

<sup>63</sup> Robert Mighall, *A Geography of Victorian Gothic Fiction: Mapping History's Nightmares* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.xix.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.2-3, p.153.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p.153.

the frame of human life and law and their abandonment to any kind of violence. This problem is exemplary of Kate Soper's analysis of the contradictions inherent in the West's attempts to criticise its own 'savage' and 'inhuman' history of imperial violence and oppression. As Soper points out, the very idea of civilisation, and particularly of 'civilized man', is bound up with a certain conception of the human subject, one which 'has been used to justify the historical oppression, and even extermination, of "savage" or "primitive" communities'. Problematically, then, this conception of the civilised human subject remains embedded in those discourses which later attempt to critique 'the suppressions and abuses [...] that have been perpetrated in the name of "civilization".' Soper therefore concludes that 'when Western society condemns its own "savagery" or "inhumanity", it does so from a perspective that has already conceptualized what it is to be properly human in the light of its own modes of comportment'.<sup>66</sup>

*Anno Dracula* is in fact very interested in these violent histories of imperialism, perhaps not least because conceptions of empire were especially relevant in the period during which the novel was produced: as Jason Mezey points out, the 'fetishization of the imperial past' and attempts to 'restore a sense of England's might as a reigning colonial and political power in world affairs' played a significant role in Thatcher's rhetoric, particularly where the Falklands War was concerned.<sup>67</sup> In some parts of the novel, Newman does draw attention to the horrors of this fetishized empire in a productive way: for example, the novel refers to 'a new mutiny in India', in which Sir Francis Varney, the face of colonial rule in this part of

---

<sup>66</sup> Kate Soper, *What is Nature?: Culture, Politics and the Non-Human*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), p.66.

<sup>67</sup> Jason Mezey, 'The Gospel of *Gandhi*: Whiteness and State Narcissism in Thatcherite England', in *Thatcher and After: Margaret Thatcher and her Afterlife in Contemporary Culture*, ed. by Louisa Hadley and Elizabeth Ho (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp.75-95 (p.78).

the empire, has been ‘bound over the muzzle’ of a gun and ‘blown away’ (p.401), in an echo of the punishment historically meted out to the so-called mutineers.<sup>68</sup>

However, Newman’s depiction of slums in colonial terms is more suspect. In *Anno Dracula*, those who have been removed or banned from civilised society end up in the slums of Whitechapel, especially in the fictional rookery of the Old Jago, ‘where the worst cases ended up, new-borns shape-shifted beyond any resemblance to humanity, criminals so vile other criminals would not tolerate their society’ (p.282). Like the so-called sink estates of modern Britain’s inner cities, where Thatcher noted ‘pedestrians fear to tread’,<sup>69</sup> the Jago is a place where ‘even vampires are afraid’ (p.281). It is a place ‘before the law’, not only because those who inhabit it (especially the ‘vile’ criminals) are before the law’s judgement, but also temporally, insofar as it represents the incursion of an anomic past in a modern, ‘civilised’ city. *Anno Dracula* invokes depictions of London from a number of late nineteenth-century texts which focused, according to Maurizio Ascari, ‘on the dark face of London, an unexplored and virtually impenetrable world of crime and poverty, that coexisted side by side with the throbbing heart of modernity.’ These ‘diurnal and nocturnal’ sides of London were figured in moral terms as aspects of the conflict ‘between civilisation and the primitive [...] along an urban frontier at the very heart of the empire’.<sup>70</sup>

---

<sup>68</sup> See Rebecca Merritt, ‘Public Perceptions of 1857: An Overview of the British Press Responses to the Indian Uprising’, in *Mutiny at the Margins: New Perspectives on the Indian Uprising of 1857, Vol. 2: Britain and the Indian Uprising*, ed. by Andrea Major and Crispin Bates (New Delhi and London: SAGE, 2013), pp.1-24 (pp.14-15).

<sup>69</sup> Thatcher, ‘Speech to Conservative Party Conference’, 9<sup>th</sup> October, 1987.

<sup>70</sup> Maurizio Ascari, *A Counter-History of Crime Fiction: Supernatural, Gothic, Sensational* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p.133.



Hence the frequent descriptions of the East End as an ‘exotic colony’,<sup>71</sup> a trend *Anno Dracula* revisits when Geneviève states of the Old Jago that ‘This was not England, this was a jungle’ (p.282). In the urban Gothic texts of the Victorian period, these ‘jungles’ in the heart of the city were the places where ‘half-human monsters’ dwelled,<sup>72</sup> and Newman’s novel picks up on this theme with the character of Carrotty Nell, a new-born vampire prostitute who is becoming more and more wolf-like ‘with every moonrise’, such that she will soon have ‘to go to Africa and live in the jungle’ (p.247) – or, of course, to the Jago. Again, then, Newman re-inscribes the boundary between the civilised and the savage, and the human and the animal, along colonial lines.

Having said this, the figure of the werewolf does open up a more productive space in *Anno Dracula* to consider the civilisation/barbarism binary, in which it becomes a means of exploring the violence bound up with the origins of the law: that which Agamben terms ‘constituent violence’, the ‘violence that makes the law’.<sup>73</sup> Given the wolf’s well-documented relationship with the history of politics and the state, it is unsurprising that this figure should feature so prominently in a text concerned with a moment of crisis and the founding of a new regime. As Derrida points out, ‘where man tells himself the story of politics’, there is usually a wolf involved, particularly in the Hobbesian story of the transition from the state of nature (when ‘man is wolf to man’) to the state of culture.<sup>74</sup>

Agamben also emphasises the significance of the wolf in the history of law and politics. He traces the relationship between the *homo sacer* and the *wargus* or

---

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Mighall, p.33.

<sup>73</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, trans. by Kevin Attell (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, [2003] 2005), p.88.

<sup>74</sup> Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign Volume I*, p.9.

wolf-man, in which the werewolf becomes synonymous with the figure of the bandit or outlaw who has been banned from the city of men.<sup>75</sup> This relationship between the werewolf and the outlaw is certainly evident in *Anno Dracula*, in which both the vampire prostitute Nell, who lives on the margins of society, and the Ripper are compared to werewolves (p.167). That Nell is described as being only fit for the jungle (or Jago) also underlines the connection between the werewolf and the anomic spaces that exist before the law. Yet according to Agamben – and as Newman’s novel makes clear – this ‘Hobbesian state of nature’ is not ‘a prejudicial condition that is indifferent to the law of the city’ but ‘the exception and the threshold that constitutes and dwells within it’.<sup>76</sup> Just as the human/animal division is never complete and must be ceaselessly refigured, so the founding of the city out of the state of nature is never achieved once and for all. Hence the werewolf comes to inhabit and represent this ‘zone of indistinction and continuous transition between man and beast, nature and culture’.<sup>77</sup> In *Anno Dracula*, the city is inhabited by just such human/animal hybrids, who are ‘hunting in packs on Pall Mall’ (p.18).

Urban spaces also seemed on the brink of anomie at various points throughout the nineteen-eighties. According to Graham Stewart, at the start of this decade Britain’s urban appearance had ‘reached a nadir’, and the UK’s urban centres were troubled throughout the nineteen-eighties by a series of riots. Some of the worst violence occurred in the summer of 1981, during which, according to the subsequent Scarman Inquiry, the police ‘stood between our society and a total collapse of law and order on the streets’. For Thatcher, ‘respect for the police was a central tenet of

---

<sup>75</sup> Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, pp.104-5.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p.106.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p.109.

the good society’;<sup>78</sup> indeed, in the same speech in which she stated that ‘civilised society doesn’t just happen’, she also insisted that ‘when left-wing councils and left-wing teachers criticize the police they give moral sanction to the criminally inclined.’<sup>79</sup> Similarly, in her party conference speech of 1981, given not long after the violence of the summer riots, Thatcher sought to remind people that ‘a breakdown of law and order strikes at everyone’, and that ‘no one is exempt when the terrorists and the bully boys take over’. For this reason, she argued, we must ‘look to the police and to the courts to protect the freedom of ordinary people, because without order none of us can go about our daily business in safety.’<sup>80</sup>

Thatcher’s reference to terrorism here is worth noting, inasmuch as terrorism was a real and growing threat in urban spaces in the nineteen-eighties, especially where the actions of the IRA were concerned – something which is paralleled in *Anno Dracula* through Newman’s inclusion of dynamite attacks attributed to ‘Fenian’ groups (p.280, p.330), who were also operational in the eighteen-eighties.<sup>81</sup> Not only did the policing of urban riots on the mainland in the nineteen-eighties involve the increasing use of tactics from colonial spaces – evident, for example, in the use of CS gas in Toxteth and the use of ‘snatch squads’ (a tactic common in Ulster) in Manchester’s Moss Side<sup>82</sup> – but this period also saw a broader shift towards the use of more extraordinary legal measures to tackle crime: for example, Willie Whitelaw proposed the use of army camps to hold those detained on charges

---

<sup>78</sup> Graham Stewart, *Bang! A History of Britain in the 1980s* (London: Atlantic Books, 2013), p.96, p.87.

<sup>79</sup> Thatcher, ‘Speech to Conservative Party Conference’, 9<sup>th</sup> October, 1987.

<sup>80</sup> Margaret Thatcher, ‘Speech to Conservative Party Conference’, 16<sup>th</sup> October, 1981. Available from <http://www.margarethatcher.org/document/104717> [Accessed 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2013].

<sup>81</sup> For more on ‘Fenian’ terror in the Victorian era and its associations with *Dracula*, see Adrian Wisnicki, *Conspiracy, Revolution, and Terrorism from Victorian Fiction to the Modern Novel* (New York and London: Routledge, 2008), pp.176-7.

<sup>82</sup> Stewart, p.93.

during the riots.<sup>83</sup> Moreover, Joe Sim and Philip A. Thomas argue that the government's enthusiastic approach to renewing the Prevention of Terrorism Act in 1983 was part of a broader 'rightward shift towards increased authoritarianism and repression' which had been ongoing since the 1970s. They locate this increased level of authoritarianism in the move to make the 'temporary' and 'extraordinary' powers granted by the Act 'more permanent, more ordinary and more central to the administration and practice of criminal justice in Britain'.<sup>84</sup> Any resistance to these measures would, Thatcher stated, 'weaken society' and weaken its 'resistance to the modern scourge of terrorism.'<sup>85</sup>

Terrorism is also especially interesting here because although it acts in opposition to the law of the state, its relationship with constituent power means that it can also be understood as 'the essential manifestation of [the state's] sovereignty':<sup>86</sup> in other words, terrorism raises the spectre of the law's founding violence, that which might always reappear in moments where 'a reversion towards barbarism' occurs. Drawing on Walter Benjamin's 'Critique of Violence', Derrida argues that '[w]hat the state fears, the state being law in its greatest force, is not so much crime or robbery': instead, '[t]he state is afraid of *founding* violence – that is, violence able to justify, to legitimate [...] or transform the relations of law'. This violence 'is not an accident arriving from outside the law' but 'already belongs [...] to the origin of law', since the founding of the law and of the state always occurs in a 'revolutionary' situation, and is thus inaugurated 'in violence'.<sup>87</sup> This founding or

---

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p.94.

<sup>84</sup> Joe Sim and Philip A. Thomas, 'The Prevention of Terrorism Act: Normalising the Politics of Repression'. *Journal of Law and Society*, 10:1 (1983), 71-84 (pp.71-2).

<sup>85</sup> Thatcher, 'Speech to Conservative Party Conference', 9<sup>th</sup> October, 1987.

<sup>86</sup> Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign, Volume I*, p.41.

<sup>87</sup> Jacques Derrida, 'Force of Law: The "Mystical Foundation of Authority"', trans. by Mary Quaintance, in *Acts of Religion*, ed. by Gil Anidjar (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2010), pp.228-298 (pp.268-69).

law-making violence ‘could not itself have authorized itself by any anterior legitimacy, so that, in this initial moment, it is neither legal nor illegal’.<sup>88</sup> This violence is thus ‘before the law’ – until it is codified in the form of ‘law-preserving’ violence and wielded by the state.<sup>89</sup>

Yet, as Derrida points out, there can be ‘no rigorous opposition’ between the ‘positing’ and the ‘preserving’ of the law, since positing ‘is already iterability’ and every preservation ‘refounds’ the law.<sup>90</sup> This inherent instability is at issue in *Anno Dracula*, a novel which focuses not merely on crime but also on the founding of a new regime, and on subsequent attempts to overthrow this new regime in a wave of revolutionary violence. In an echo of the typically Gothic emphasis on the distinction between barbarism and modern, civilised times, Dracula’s rise to power heralds the reappearance of ‘barbarous times’ in the form of the return of a ‘medieval legal system’ underpinned by the sovereign power to take life (p.119). For Derrida, this decision on ‘placing the other outside the law [...] is always determined from the place of some wolf’:<sup>91</sup> in *Anno Dracula*, this wolf is Dracula himself, who enacts the sovereign power to take life and let live with a ‘wolf’s grin’ (p.174). Dracula also assumes the unique sovereign privilege of being able to suspend the law and declare a state of exception through the passage of an ‘Emergency Powers Act’ (p.291) after his troops have been attacked by terrorists. As Dracula’s Prime Minister Lord Ruthven puts it, ‘laws are dumb in times of war’ (p.291), but this state of exception can be extended indefinitely at the sovereign’s whim, and in *Anno Dracula* these ‘emergency regulations’ rapidly become the norm (p.315). This permanent suspension of the law heralds the Gothic return of tyranny and of the archaic

---

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p.234.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p.272.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign Volume I*, p.96.

violence that founds the law and the city, but the right to wield this violence is monopolized by the sovereign or (in modern biopolitics) by the state. As Beauregard remarks when collecting his newly silver-plated sword (silver being one of the few means of killing vampires in the novel), ‘power is based, at bottom, on the ability to kill; thus the means of killing have to be available, if only to a select few’ (p.150).

Furthermore, Newman’s inclusion of a criminal as famous as the Ripper resonates with Derrida’s analysis (which again draws on Benjamin’s work) of our ‘fascination’ with the figure of the great criminal, which he argues lies not in the particular crimes such criminals commit, but in the act of ‘defying the law’ itself. This defiance ‘lays bare the violence of the juridical order’ that reserves the right to ‘monopolize violence’.<sup>92</sup> This is why *Anno Dracula* has the Ripper, despite the horrors of his crimes, celebrated by the population as ‘an outlaw hero’ (p.160), something which Ruthven fears and seeks to avoid – thus the Ripper, with his silver-plated surgical tools, will not be tolerated, unlike Beauregard with his silver-plated sword, which is supposedly at the sovereign’s service.

Yet the criminal and the sovereign have more in common than may first appear. For Derrida, the sovereign and the criminal (and also the beast) share the state of being ‘outside-the-law’, of inhabiting an extra-legal zone – in the sovereign’s case due to his unique ability to suspend the law and declare the state of exception. There is thus an ‘uncanny reciprocal haunting’ between beast, sovereign and criminal,<sup>93</sup> something which is reflected in *Anno Dracula* through the juxtaposition of the meetings Beauregard has with the Diogenes Club, who ostensibly (but unofficially) represent the monarch, and with the representatives of the criminal

---

<sup>92</sup> Derrida, ‘Force of Law’, pp.266-7.

<sup>93</sup> Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign, Volume I*, p.17.

underworld. Despite the former group apparently serving the law and the latter group transgressing it, both the Diogenes Club and the criminals operate in zones before or beyond the law; the Diogenes Club operates in what Beauregard describes as ‘a world of shadow empires’; and the Limehouse criminals in ‘a shadow community’ (p.252), from which they remind Beauregard, in connection with his own semi-official activity on behalf of the monarch, that ‘what is official and what is effective are not the same thing’ (p.91). In emphasising such parallels between criminals and agents of the law, Newman once again draws attention to the extent to which extra-legal measures are discovered to underpin the legal order itself.

Indeed, for Hutchings, ‘the discourse of crime [...] is the state’s reflection of its own foundational criminal violence, transferred on to its subjects, most of whom are its victims’, such that ‘criminal subjectivity’ can be understood as ‘the revenance of the state’s own birth’.<sup>94</sup> This extension of criminal subjectivity was a feature, according to Sim and Thomas, of legislation introduced in the areas of terrorism and crime in the nineteen-eighties, which involved the ‘criminalisation of certain groups’, particularly ‘problem groups such as gays, nuclear disarmament campaigners, welfare recipients, nationalists, blacks and the Irish’.<sup>95</sup> In *Anno Dracula*, criminal subjectivity is shown to be extended at the whim of the sovereign to anyone who is ‘unable to come to an accommodation with the new regime’ and its specific values (p.73), many of whom are sentenced to death by being ‘publicly impaled’, such that Tyburn has become ‘a forest of dying thieves, exquisites and seditionists’ (p.204).

---

<sup>94</sup> Hutchings, p.4.

<sup>95</sup> Sim and Thomas, p.71.

The punishments proposed for specific groups in *Anno Dracula* also extend to incarceration in extra-legal spaces, most notably in concentration camps on the Sussex Downs, to which one politician suggests not only criminals but also ‘any simply healthy specimens’ amongst ‘the warm’ should be sent, where they can ‘serve as cattle for the vampires of breeding essential to the governance of the country’ (p.73). These concentration camps, where dissidents including Sherlock Holmes and Oscar Wilde are interned, are arguably the ultimate space of exception in *Anno Dracula*. In such spaces, life is transformed by the anthropological machine into the bare life of the *homo sacer*, life that can be killed without committing homicide. Although this extreme space might at first glance appear out of place in a neo-Victorian novel like *Anno Dracula*, Newman does hint at the historical connections between British colonial policies in the late-nineteenth century and the rise of the concentration camp in the twentieth century. Beauregard’s brief mention of his role in negotiating with the ‘Amahagger’ during the ‘Boer Rebellion’ (p.74) refers to the tribe depicted in H. Rider Haggard’s *She* (1887), a text strongly linked to colonialism in South Africa. During the Second Anglo-Boer War, the British relocated Boer civilians to concentration camps as part of a broader tactic of flushing out the remaining guerrillas. The British tactics, and especially the use of camps, were eventually condemned as ‘methods of barbarism’.<sup>96</sup>

Interestingly, according to Thomas Pakenham, this campaign against the guerrillas was organised by Kitchener ‘like a sporting shoot, with success defined in a weekly “bag” of killed.’<sup>97</sup> For Wolfe, such processes of ‘animalization’ have been one of the ‘main resources’ of modern biopolitics,<sup>98</sup> something which is also

---

<sup>96</sup> Thomas Pakenham, *The Boer War* (London: Abacus, 1991), p.534.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, p.493.

<sup>98</sup> Wolfe, p.10.



especially evident in the transformation of the ‘warm’ internees into ‘cattle’ in *Anno Dracula*. In fact, Newman’s depiction of this process is disturbingly reminiscent of the acts of animalization which Esposito associates with the Nazi camps. He argues that ‘one of the most effective tools used in the Nazi deconstruction of the person was language’, such that in the camps vocabulary related to the feeding of livestock was used to refer to the provision of food for the prisoners.<sup>99</sup>

Moreover, Esposito has elsewhere drawn attention to the links between nineteenth-century theories of degeneration and the Nazi atrocities of the early twentieth century. The eugenics movement, he argues, will ‘take up the task’ of ‘translating [...] into reality’ the kinds of ‘literary hallucinations’ concerning degeneracy which are evident in texts such as *Dracula*. This translation culminates in the ‘racial hygiene’ of the Nazis: indeed, Esposito traces a line of descent from Dracula, ‘an already dead, a half dead, a living dead’ being, to those ‘other vampires some fifty years later’ who ‘will be designated with a yellow star on their arms’. The ‘salvific death’ which Stoker’s vampires are subjected to, he concludes, ‘will shortly be enlarged liberally to include millions of “degenerates.”’<sup>100</sup>

In *Anno Dracula*, the animal is shown to be a key figure in the creation and functioning of spaces of exception in which life is transformed into bare life. Whether it is the Old Jago slum in Whitechapel or the concentration camps on the Sussex Downs, in these spaces all life becomes subject to the kind of non-criminal putting to death experienced by the animal. Indeed, the bare lives of the ‘warm’ humans who may go on to be interned as ‘cattle’ in the concentration camps are paralleled by the domestic animals kept in the pubs of Whitechapel, where vampires

---

<sup>99</sup> Esposito, *Third Person*, p.62.

<sup>100</sup> Esposito, *Bios*, p.128, p.126.

drink pig's blood drawn from live animals 'trussed behind the bar', who 'squealed and fought in their leather straps' (p.76). These animals and their human 'livestock' counterparts in the camps are therefore joined in their experience of the non-criminal putting to death suffered by those who fall outside the frame of human life and law: both form of 'livestock' end up, as Derrida puts it, 'in the same abattoirs'.<sup>101</sup>

### **Alternative histories**

According to Agamben, concentration camps were places in which human beings were 'so completely deprived of their rights and prerogatives that no act committed against them could appear any longer as a crime.'<sup>102</sup> However, for Agamben the camp does not belong to history, but rather remains central to present-day reality. He insists that it is necessary 'to regard the camp not as a historical fact and an anomaly belonging to the past (even if still verifiable) but in some way as the hidden matrix and *nomos* of the political space in which we are still living.' The camp, he argues, 'consists in the materialization of the state of exception and in the subsequent creation of a space in which bare life and the juridical rule enter into a threshold of indistinction': hence, 'we must admit that we find ourselves virtually in the presence of a camp every time such a structure is created, independent of the kinds of crime that are committed there and whatever its denomination and specific topography.'<sup>103</sup>

As Leland de la Durantaye points out, this assertion can be understood as a 'radicalization of Foucault's paradigmatic method' rather than as a deeply insensitive appropriation of an historical event; however, a good deal of criticism on *Homo Sacer* has taken the latter route, and has centred on the perceived failure in

---

<sup>101</sup> Jacques Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, ed. by Marie-Louise Mallet, trans. by David Wills (New York: Fordham University Press, [2006] 2008), p.26.

<sup>102</sup> Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, p.171,

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, p.166, p.174.

Agamben's text to 'strike an exceptionally delicate balance between respect for the uniqueness of historical phenomena and the use to be made of those phenomena for understanding *other* situations'.<sup>104</sup> Whether or not one objects to Agamben's use of the camp as a paradigm for 'the political space of modernity itself',<sup>105</sup> there is no doubt that in *Anno Dracula* at least, the concentration camp hovers in the background as the most extreme example of the way in which biopolitics can be transformed into thanatopolitics. And, as I suggested in the previous section, by including concentration camps in *Anno Dracula*, Newman is not ignoring the specific histories of these spaces; rather, the novel emphasises the links between the development of the biopolitical discourses of degeneration and atavism in late nineteenth-century Europe and their manifestation in colonial spaces (such as the concentration camps in the Boer conflict), and later in the extreme spaces of Nazi death camps.

Where Newman's approach to political history becomes problematic, however, is in the relationship *Anno Dracula* invokes between Dracula's totalitarian regime in the eighteen-eighties and British democracy in the nineteen-eighties, which risks collapsing the very necessary distinctions between the biopolitical practices of democratic and totalitarian states. Again, this is a criticism often levelled at Agamben: for example, Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose argue that the problem with Agamben's approach lies in its lack of 'capacity to make distinctions', which is particularly evident in his insistence on seeing the death camp as 'the hidden possibility in every instance where living beings enter the scope of regulation'. They argue that while Agamben is right to identify the presence of the 'power to command

---

<sup>104</sup> Leland de la Durantaye, *Giorgio Agamben: A Critical Introduction* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), p.223.

<sup>105</sup> Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, p.174.

under threat of death' at work in the politics of all states, he fails to 'demonstrate' that this power is necessarily 'the guarantee or underpinning principle of all forms of biopower in contemporary liberal societies'; nor, they point out, 'is it useful to use this single diagram to analyse every contemporary instance of thanatopolitics'.<sup>106</sup>

Having said this, although Newman's approach to the distinction between totalitarian and democratic forms of rule in *Anno Dracula* does not always provide the most subtle or nuanced response to the politics of Thatcherism, it does arguably draw attention to the ways in which, as Dean puts it, liberal styles of government are always 'interlaced with forms of despotism'.<sup>107</sup> He notes that liberalism is founded on the idea of the liberal subject, who is rational, autonomous and self-disciplined. Throughout the history of liberal government, those who fall short of this standard – traditionally, women, children, the indigent and so on – have been 'subjected to all sorts of disciplinary, bio-political and even sovereign interventions' in the name of safeguarding the health of society.<sup>108</sup> This conception of the liberal subject certainly underpinned Thatcher's rhetoric following the summer riots in 1981. She stated that 'order depends upon discipline, overwhelmingly upon self-discipline', and that when this 'self-discipline breaks down [...] society has to impose order' and the government 'must be strong, strong to uphold the rule of law, strong to maintain order, strong to protect freedom'.<sup>109</sup> As Dean observes, then, liberalism 'always contains the possibility of non-liberal interventions into the lives of those who do not possess the attributes required to play the city-citizen game'.<sup>110</sup> In *Anno Dracula*, the division of life into sub-groups and the identification of those who require discipline

---

<sup>106</sup> Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose, 'Biopower Today', *Biosocieties*, 1 (2006), 195-217 (pp.200-201).

<sup>107</sup> Dean, p.172.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., p.158.

<sup>109</sup> Thatcher, 'Speech to Conservative Party Conference', 16<sup>th</sup> October, 1981.

<sup>110</sup> Dean, p.162.

is underpinned by the human/animal division, which determines, as Wolfe puts it, ‘who’s in and who’s out’, and, consequently, which lives are disposable.

The foregrounding of this relationship between liberalism and ‘despotism’ in *Anno Dracula* can also be understood as an effect of Newman’s engagement with the genre of ‘alternative history’ – whose most prominent theme, he suggests, is ‘the Nazis won the war’.<sup>111</sup> Indeed, Newman has also written alternative history texts directly concerned with this theme. A particularly good example is the short story ‘Slow News Day’, in which John Major, prime minister of United Britain, leads the celebration of the successful Nazi ‘Invasion of Liberation’ under the watchful eye of his predecessor, the ‘Iron Duchess’, who wishes ‘to return to the Iron Values of the Occupation’.<sup>112</sup> Again, this points to a fascination evident across Newman’s *oeuvre* with placing the totalitarian regimes of the past in conversation with British politics in the nineteen-eighties and nineties.

However, Newman’s interest in alternative history in *Anno Dracula* is also concerned with contemporary political uses of the label ‘Victorian’. In his afterword to *Anno Dracula*, Newman implies that by invoking the idea of ‘Victorian values’ in a positive light, Thatcher was producing her own alternative history of a period ‘in which blood was flowing in the fog, and there was widespread social unrest.’<sup>113</sup> What Newman’s novel makes clear (in both productive and problematic ways) is that to invite the nineteenth century into one’s politics is also to invite what Murray describes as “the obscene underside” of those same resurrected values,<sup>114</sup> underpinned by those biopolitical discourses – degeneration, eugenics, criminology –

---

<sup>111</sup> Kim Newman, ‘Drac the Ripper’, in *Anno Dracula* (London: Titan, [1992] 2011), pp.529-32 (p.530).

<sup>112</sup> Kim Newman, ‘Slow News Day’, in *Unforgivable Stories* (London: Pocket Books, 2000), pp.167-75 (p.168).

<sup>113</sup> Newman, ‘Afterword’, p.455.

<sup>114</sup> Murray, p.73.

which rose to prominence in the nineteenth century and which seek to produce an ostensibly ‘civilised’ society by assigning value to or withholding value from life based on its proximity to the non-human.

Moreover, besides the ethical issues raised when invoking the Victorian period as a source of moral and social values, *Anno Dracula* also points to the historical complications created by looking to the Victorian era for an alternative model of social care to the welfare state. Emily Robinson argues that Thatcher’s response to the Victorian period was part of ‘a greater debate concerning the interpretation of the Industrial Revolution’, one in which ‘Thatcher felt that the story of successful entrepreneurial progress had to be rescued from the social historians’ accounts of oppression, poverty and class conflict.’ For Robinson, the implication of Thatcher’s position ‘was that the poor were, despite the arguments of the left, better provided for by Victorian philanthropy than they now were by the welfare state’.<sup>115</sup> Newman explores the limits of such Victorian philanthropy in his depiction of Toynbee Hall, where both Geneviève and Seward work. Joyce points out that although this institution was founded by private philanthropists, it became the training ground for ‘an entire generation of politicians and social legislators who would oversee the development of the twentieth-century welfare state’, including William Beveridge, who worked there as a subwarden for a time. Joyce argues that the founders of Toynbee Hall came to see that private philanthropy was insufficient to meet the needs of the poor,<sup>116</sup> an impression Geneviève articulates in *Anno Dracula* when she compares herself to ‘Sisyphus, forever rolling a rock uphill, losing a yard for every foot gained’ (p.25). Thus, these private philanthropists

---

<sup>115</sup> Emily Robinson, *History, Heritage and Tradition in Contemporary British Politics* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2012), p.113.

<sup>116</sup> Joyce, p.136.

eventually came to advocate ‘the centralized provision of health, education, and welfare relief’ which would eventually culminate in the creation of the welfare state.<sup>117</sup>

According to Joyce, then, what the Victorians actually bequeathed to modern Britain was precisely that vast extension of state oversight of citizens’ welfare which Thatcher objected to so strenuously in her speeches.<sup>118</sup> Similarly, Louisa Hadley comments on ‘the irony that Margaret Thatcher pursued a policy of decreasing state intervention whilst evoking the era that saw the first movements towards the establishment of the Welfare State’<sup>119</sup> Indeed, Thatcher’s invocation of the Victorian period is strikingly at odds with her insistence that (unlike socialist administrations) her government’s creed ‘never set out to dominate the whole of life’.<sup>120</sup> As Hadley asserts, the Victorian era in fact saw the entrenchment of the ability of governments to ‘dominate the whole of life’ through ‘the development of new techniques for documenting individuals’, including ‘the establishment of regular censuses and registers of births, deaths and marriages’. Although Hadley initially focuses on how these statistical innovations now enable people to access extensive information about their Victorian ancestors and thereby help to establish the earlier period’s ‘physical presence in the present’, she later draws attention to the ways in which these new technologies for ‘identifying and documenting the individual’ were linked to the monitoring of criminality and to the wider ability of the state ‘to account for its citizens’.<sup>121</sup> These new governmental technologies, part of a broader biopolitical agenda to monitor the life processes of the population, were thus significantly linked

---

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., pp.113-14.

<sup>119</sup> Louisa Hadley, *Neo-Victorian Fiction and Historical Narrative: The Victorians and Us* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p.10.

<sup>120</sup> Margaret Thatcher, ‘Speech to Conservative Party Conference’, 13<sup>th</sup> October 1989. Available from <http://www.margarethatcher.org/document/107789> [Accessed 18<sup>th</sup> November 2013].

<sup>121</sup> Hadley, p.7, p.20, p.65.

to social discipline, and were equally central to the practices of the Thatcher government, whose ‘professed anti-statist stance acted as a cover’, Joyce argues, for its willingness to be ‘ruthlessly centralizing and authoritarian’ in its social policies.<sup>122</sup>

For Robinson, Thatcher’s rhetoric in relation to the Victorian period is a perfect example of the recognition that ‘pastness’ is ‘a valuable political commodity’ that can be used in various (and often contradictory) ways.<sup>123</sup> At some moments, the Victorian was a positive signifier in Thatcher’s rhetoric, but she was also prone, as Raphael Samuel remarks, to use the term ‘Victorian’ in a pejorative manner to describe anything she felt was out of date and overly bureaucratic.<sup>124</sup> Indeed, according to Robinson, Thatcher was a radical moderniser at heart, with her sights ‘clearly set on the future’. Her fondness for the idea of ‘Victorian values’ was thus part of a broader political project in which she was ‘using a heritage sheen to soften radical modernisation.’<sup>125</sup> A similar use of the Victorian era persists in more recent British politics. For example, as Catherine Marshall and Stéphane Guy have recently observed, the ‘one nation’ rhetoric which underpins the ‘Cameronite “Big Society” project’ disguises the fact that this ‘big society’ is a manifestation of the same ‘State-wary culture’ which underpinned Thatcherism, and they suggest that David Cameron’s promise of ‘a balanced budget and a containment of the State could be yet another embodiment of the Victorian ethic’ in British politics.<sup>126</sup>

---

<sup>122</sup> Joyce, p.121.

<sup>123</sup> Robinson, p.114.

<sup>124</sup> Raphael Samuel, *Theatres of Memory: Past and Present in Contemporary Culture* (London and New York: Verso, 2012), p.291.

<sup>125</sup> Robinson, p.114.

<sup>126</sup> Catherine Marshall and Stéphane Guy, ‘Introduction’, in *The Victorian Legacy in Political Thought*, ed. by Catherine Marshall and Stéphane Guy (Bern: Peter Lang, 2014), pp.11-35 (p.33, pp.29-30). For more on the legacies of nineteenth-century thought in Cameron’s ‘Big Society’, see



The Ripper also remains a popular figure in contemporary culture, albeit a complex and often troubling one. On the one hand, as Ho observes, ‘Ripperature’ can serve as a particularly convenient site from which to establish a critique of Thatcherism and the uses of history because of its ‘ability to strike a delicate balance between heritage, as it is often packaged, and its potential to retain a catalog of hypocrisy, misogyny, violence, poverty and prurience often excised from the national past’.<sup>127</sup> In *Anno Dracula*, Newman refuses to excise the ‘blood flowing in the fog’ and the ‘widespread social unrest’ from his treatment of the Victorian period,<sup>128</sup> and he continually emphasises the violence encoded in those elements of the Victorian era most admired by the Thatcher administration, not least its imperial successes.

On the other hand, the mythology surrounding the Ripper can also easily be totally assimilated into heritage culture. The idea of heritage was a particularly contentious one in the nineteen-eighties and nineties, and there is a nod to this controversy in *Anno Dracula*, in which (while committing murder) Seward notices ‘one of those cursed blue plaques’ attached to one of Dracula’s former residences (p.12). Yet in some ways what Newman describes as his own ‘spot-the-reference’ game in the novel is not so far from these ‘cursed blue plaques’. Readers of *Anno Dracula* who possess an extensive knowledge of Victorian fiction, especially of obscure or ‘forgotten’ texts and characters, can participate in this spot-the-reference game, which, according to Newman, allows him ‘to make the novel as much a playground as a minefield, and go beyond historical accuracy’.<sup>129</sup> The novel thus

---

Nadine Boehm-Schnitker, ‘From Public Opinion to the Big Society: Modulations of Surveillance in the (Neo)Nineteenth Century’, *Journal for the Study of British Cultures*, 19 (2012), 29-44.

<sup>127</sup> Ho, p.28.

<sup>128</sup> Newman, ‘Afterword’, p.455.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, p.453.

takes the reader on a kind of heritage tour of Victorian literature (not to mention a kind of ‘Ripper walk’), in which novels and characters are unmoored from their specific contexts and the reader can simply enjoy the general sense of ‘pastness’ they might derive from generic ‘gaslit, fogbound London romances’.<sup>130</sup>

More recently, the Ripper ‘industry’ has become embroiled in a controversy which involves the same troubling decisions on the worth of particular lives emphasised in *Anno Dracula*. A museum opened in July 2015 in East London, which originally promised to be dedicated to the histories of women in the East End and to the suffragettes, turned out instead to be a museum dedicated to Jack the Ripper. On the front of the museum are two plaques ‘made to resemble London’s official English Heritage blue plaques’, one of which names ‘George Chapman’ as a suspect in the Ripper murders, and the other which ‘names his fourth victim, Lizzie Stride.’<sup>131</sup> Rather than celebrate women’s achievements as historical actors, as subjects in possession of the attributes of qualified life, this museum signals its preference for women as mute victims appropriated as part of a titillating heritage crime narrative. By contrast, Newman stages Liz Stride’s ‘premature post-mortem’ – which she awaits with her vocal chords severed and ‘the human part’ of her ‘burned away’ (p.195) – as a means to interrogate the ways in which these very narratives are underpinned by the decision on which lives fall outside the frame of human life and law, and are thus not ‘worth doing something for’ (p.196) – whether in terms of care, justice or remembrance.

---

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Nadia Khomami, ‘Museum billed as celebration of London women opens as Jack the Ripper exhibit’, *The Guardian*, 29 July 2015 < <http://www.theguardian.com/culture/2015/jul/29/museum-billed-as-celebration-of-london-women-opens-as-jack-the-ripper-exhibit> > [Accessed 15<sup>th</sup> March 2016].

**Chapter 4 – ‘I am a settlement, a place of safety, a  
bombproof shelter’: security, hospitality and living ghosts  
in Hilary Mantel’s *Beyond Black* (2005) and Nicola  
Barker’s *Darkmans* (2007)**

**Introduction: biopolitics and space**

According to Claudio Minca, although Giorgio Agamben’s work has had both a significant and productive impact on the work of geographers, their scholarship has surprisingly ‘contributed little to a reflection on the *spatial theory* that guides Agamben’s thought.’ For Minca, Agamben’s attempt at a ‘unitary theory of power’ also entails the ‘production of a distinctly *spatial* theory of power [...] able to describe the very constitution of sovereign power and the inscription of the *homo sacer* within modern politics’. This theory relies on ‘the (eminently spatial) concepts of the camp and the ban’ in order to allow for a radical ‘re-consideration of the very process of the foundation of the modern city’.<sup>1</sup> The spatial concepts of the ban and the camp were certainly prominent in my reading of *Anno Dracula* in the previous chapter, in which I examined Kim Newman’s emphasis on the figure of the werewolf and the role of founding violence of the *polis*, and in which I commented on the inclusion of concentration camps in the novel.

In the final section of Chapter Three, I also pointed to some of the criticisms levelled at Agamben’s use of the concentration camp as a paradigm for ‘the political space of modernity itself’, and his insistence on a ‘secret complicity’ between totalitarian and democratic regimes.<sup>2</sup> As I noted in Chapter Three, Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose suggest that Agamben’s analysis of biopolitics suffers from a lack of

---

<sup>1</sup> Claudio Minca, ‘Agamben’s geographies of modernity’, *Political Geography*, 26 (2007), 78-97 (pp.80-81).

<sup>2</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. by Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), p.174.

‘capacity to make distinctions’: the death camp, they point out, is not necessarily ‘the hidden possibility in every instance where living beings enter the scope of regulation’, particularly in contemporary liberal democracies.<sup>3</sup> Rabinow and Rose’s critique suggests that more nuanced ‘spatial concepts’ than those identified by Minca (the ban and the camp) are necessary for an analysis of the biopolitical techniques in operation in twentieth and twenty-first century liberal democracies; indeed, their identification of the lack of ‘distinctions’ made in Agamben’s work is echoed by Thomas Lemke, who discovers ‘a lack of conceptual differentiation’ in Agamben’s theorisation of biopolitics, particularly where ‘different values of life’ are concerned. As Lemke observes, ‘[e]ven if all subjects are *homines sacri*, they are so in very different ways.’<sup>4</sup> This point is also taken up by Catherine Mills, who argues that Agamben’s theorisation of bare life often ‘begs the question of what significance race, gender, sexuality, class and other determinants of political subjectivity and power have within the context of global biopolitics’. She points out that Agamben’s formulation of biopolitics ‘risks abstracting too far from any recognition of the unequal distribution of the burdens of vulnerability and violence across social, economic and (geo)political spheres’.<sup>5</sup>

In this chapter, I explore the depiction of this ‘unequal distribution of the burdens of vulnerability and violence’ in two novels set in late twentieth and early twenty-first century Britain: Hilary Mantel’s *Beyond Black* (2005) and Nicola Barker’s *Darkmans* (2007). Both of these novels move decisively away from the public and political space of the city, as well as avoiding the more extreme locations, such as the concentration camp, which have become so central to analyses of

---

<sup>3</sup> Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose, ‘Biopower Today’, *Biosocieties*, 1 (2006), 195-217 (pp.200-201).

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Lemke, *Biopolitics: An Advanced Introduction*, trans. by Eric Frederick Trump (New York and London: New York University Press, 2011), p.58.

<sup>5</sup> Catherine Mills, *The Philosophy of Agamben* (Stocksfield: Acumen, 2008), pp.135-6.

twentieth and twenty-first century biopolitics. *Beyond Black* charts the journeys of the medium Alison Hart and her manager Colette as they endlessly circle London's orbital road attending psychic fayres in the surrounding commuter towns. The latter half of the novel also focuses on Alison and Colette's move to a new-build suburban house in Surrey in a bid to outrun the 'fiends' from Alison's abusive childhood, who now continue to haunt the medium from beyond the grave, and who eventually begin to invade her suburban idyll. *Darkmans* is also set in the south-east of England, this time in Ashford, and concerns the unwelcome Gothic return of the past in the form of the haunting and possession of Ashford's residents by the ghost of a medieval court jester, who creates chaos amidst the ring roads, business parks and suburban estates of the modern-day town.

I am interested in the ways in which Mantel and Barker use such ostensibly mundane locations to explore the role of what Mills describes as different 'determinants of political subjectivity and power' in the production of bare life, and in what these novels suggest about 'the unequal distribution of the burdens of vulnerability and violence' produced by the management of biological life in contemporary Britain. Both *Beyond Black* and *Darkmans* examine these different and unequal forms of abandonment through forms of haunting: indeed, according to Sara Knox, Mantel's figuring of the dead is 'constitutive to the ways in which [she] explores the moral consequences of proximity of belonging and displacement in home, neighbourhood, city and nation',<sup>6</sup> and I suggest that the same is true of Barker's emphasis on the return of the dead in *Darkmans*. I will focus on the novels' depictions of dead and socially dead figures haunting two specific types of location which feature prominently in both novels: suburban spaces and non-places.

---

<sup>6</sup> Sara Knox, 'Giving Flesh to the "Wraiths of Violence": Super-realism in the Fiction of Hilary Mantel', *Australian Feminist Studies*, 25 (2010), 313-23 (p.314).

The first section of this chapter focuses on suburbs, and is divided into three parts. The first part outlines the key features of suburban spaces, and addresses the difficulties in attempting to think about suburban and domestic spaces in biopolitical terms, especially where the issue of women's uncertain status in relation to forms of political abandonment is concerned. Following this, the second and third parts examine how Barker and Mantel figure the experience of contemporary security anxieties through women's exposure to bodily vulnerability in the home, and in relation to dilemmas surrounding the violence that might be done to certain vulnerable populations in making a home, community, or nation secure.

The second section of this chapter turns to non-places, and is divided into two further parts. The first part explores the ways in which hauntings are bound up with ideas of history and citizenship in both novels. I examine how Barker and Mantel use the idea of haunting and the production of 'living ghosts' in non-places to figure the possibilities and challenges engendered by the erasure of different people's connections to specific places, with a particular focus on the key figures of the tourist and the vagabond. Finally, the second part considers what both novels suggest about the possibilities of continuing to live a life that has been disallowed rather than fostered in contemporary Britain.

## **Letting the right one in: scenes of (in)hospitality in suburbia**

### **Suburbs, biopolitics, and gender**

Suburban spaces, as Martin Dines and Timotheus Vermeulen have recently noted, are notoriously difficult to define: the term 'implies a spatial relationship (denoting a place at or beyond the limits of a city, or at least beyond its centre)', but this relationship is often difficult to describe, such that suburbs are simply figured in

terms of ‘an in-between, a middle’.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, as Ged Pope observes, the term ‘suburb’ is used to encompass a wide variety of built spaces, including not only ‘the familiar middle-class semis’, but also ‘that much wider range of peripheral built environments’ which comprises the ‘council estates, New Towns, gated communities and exurbs that have formed, over the past century and a half, the key domestic habitat of modernity in the developed world.’<sup>8</sup> However, despite the fact that suburbia has ‘long been a popular and well-populated site of mass domestic habitation’, suburbs are often regarded as having little or no history, and are thus frequently overlooked.<sup>9</sup> Yet suburbs do in fact have a long history, and one which is of particular interest to me in this chapter, because of the role this history plays in the depiction of the proximity of fostered and disallowed lives in the suburban spaces of *Beyond Black and Darkmans*.

‘Etymologically “beyond the city”’, as well as in some sense ‘beneath’ it, by the sixteenth century the early suburb contained all the ‘unwanted and inassimilable elements’ that had been ‘banished’ from the city in its ‘originary, bounded, walled medieval’ form. These ‘proto-suburban sites’ were thus constructed as ‘subordinate site[s] for deviancy and unorthodoxy, for criminality, unassimilated immigrants, commercialised or deviant sexuality, even for irregular economic activity’.<sup>10</sup> However, a different kind of suburban space also began to develop from the late eighteenth century, after which suburbia gradually came to designate not ‘a negative, debased space containing deviant elements unhappily *expelled* from a broadly

---

<sup>7</sup> Martin Dines and Timotheus Vermeulen, ‘Introduction: New Suburban Stories’, in *New Suburban Stories*, ed. by Martin Dines and Timotheus Vermeulen (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp.1-13 (p.5, p.3).

<sup>8</sup> Ged Pope, *Reading London’s Suburbs: From Charles Dickens to Zadie Smith* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p.205.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p.9.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p.4.

assimilative core’, but instead a ‘potential welcome space for expansive elements actively *escaping* a threatening core urban milieu.’<sup>11</sup>

In particular, suburbia came to be associated with an idealised separation of the ‘the public world of work and politics’ and ‘the private world of the home’, something Janet Wolff argues was ‘marked, as well as constructed, by both geography and architecture’ in these new suburban spaces.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, this idealised separation of public and private has implications for an understanding of the importance of gender in affluent suburban spaces. For example, Alison Blunt and Robyn Dowling argue that suburbia’s ‘socio-spatial separation of spheres of home and work’ enables the production and maintenance of boundaries between ‘public and private, masculine and feminine spaces’;<sup>13</sup> while Pope identifies suburban development with a ‘reorganisation and compartmentalising of spatial function’ around the association of men with ‘public roles and the spaces of work’ and women with ‘domestic ideology’.<sup>14</sup>

The dual history of suburban spaces and the association of affluent suburbs with the maintenance of boundaries between public and private creates certain anxieties about the security of the borders protecting this ‘welcome space’ from the ‘threatening’ elements its inhabitants are attempting to escape – anxieties which are often considered to be at the heart of suburban ghost stories. Pope, for example, paints a rather Gothic portrait of affluent suburban spaces, arguing that they are troubled by a ‘permeable’ temporal boundary between slum and suburb, through which ‘a horrible slum past of indiscriminate co-mingling threatens to return to the

---

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Janet Wolff, ‘The culture of separate spheres: the role of culture in nineteenth-century public and private life’, in *The Culture of Capital: Art, Power and the Nineteenth-Century Middle Class*, ed. by Janet Wolff and John Seed (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), pp.117-34 (pp.118-19).

<sup>13</sup> Alison Blunt and Robyn Dowling, *Home* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2006), p.101.

<sup>14</sup> Pope, p.25.



desired suburban present.’<sup>15</sup> Similarly, for Lara Baker Whelan, it is this essential ‘mutability’ of suburban territory which ushers in ghosts.<sup>16</sup>

Suburban spaces are depicted as haunted in *Beyond Black* and *Darkmans*, but not necessarily by the returning dead; rather, suburban ghosts in these novels are often dispossessed beings banished from the city or *polis*. The opening pages of *Beyond Black*, for example, chart one of Alison’s many journeys around the orbital road, where she moves through a landscape peopled by ‘outcasts and escapees’, by ‘life forms’ that are ‘rejects, or anomalies’, by ‘scapegoats, scarred with bottle and burn marks’ who come ‘limping from the cities with broken ribs’.<sup>17</sup> Meanwhile, Alison’s childhood home, from which her mother practised her trade as a prostitute, was located on a suburban estate peopled by criminals and surrounded by ‘waste ground’ (p.234). Similarly, in *Darkmans*, many of the people who linger in the suburban spaces of Ashford have ‘been washed up and spat out by the recent economic boom’,<sup>18</sup> including so-called ‘problem families’, drug addicts and dealers, and illegal immigrants.

These abandoned people haunting suburbia can be understood as examples of what Esther Peeren describes as ‘living ghosts’, ‘marginalized’ figures who are understood to be ‘in some way ghostly, spectral, phantasmatic or spooky’, and who can be read in relation to ‘spectralized figures’ such as Agamben’s *homo sacer*. And yet, Peeren rightly cautions that not all of those figures who occupy ‘marginalised social positions’ and are represented as ghosts (in her study Peeren focuses on

---

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, p.25, p.22.

<sup>16</sup> Lara Baker Whelan, *Class, Culture and Suburban Anxieties in the Victorian Era* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2010), p.76, p.78.

<sup>17</sup> Hilary Mantel, *Beyond Black* (London: Harper Perennial, 2005), p.1. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>18</sup> Nicola Barker, *Darkmans* (London: Harper Perennial, [2007] 2008), p.5. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

undocumented migrants, domestic workers, missing persons and mediums – including Alison in *Beyond Black*) are ‘ghostly in exactly the same manner or degree’. Rather, she insists that it is necessary to be mindful of ‘differential incarnations of the spectral metaphor’.<sup>19</sup>

The idea of suburban space as a ‘dumping ground’ for that which is banned from the city corresponds well to Agamben’s conception of biopolitics, and many of the socially dead figures depicted in *Beyond Black* and *Darkmans* can be understood to inhabit the same terrain as the one in which the *homo sacer* is abandoned: ‘the no-man’s land between the home and the city’, a zone of indistinction in which bare life is both produced and ‘dwells’.<sup>20</sup> But ghostly activity in both novels is also concerned with a gendered form of vulnerability and abandonment to violence associated with dwelling in domestic spaces, an experience of social death which is very difficult to read in relation to Agamben’s theorisation of biopolitics. Domestic spaces occupy a curious position in Agamben’s account of the development of biopolitics through the production of the bare life whose inclusive exclusion founds the *polis*. Bare life might be produced and may dwell in a zone of indistinction between the home and the city, but as Penelope Deutscher points out, even as Agamben begins his analysis of biopolitics with this ‘constitutive exclusion’, he simultaneously refers to ‘what appears to be a related type of exclusion, of uncertain status’.<sup>21</sup> This other ‘uncertain’ form of exclusion lies in the distinction he makes (drawing on Aristotle) between ‘simple natural life’, which is ‘excluded from the *polis* in the strict sense, and remains confined – as mere reproductive life – to the sphere of the *oikos*, “home”’,

---

<sup>19</sup> Esther Peeren, *The Spectral Metaphor: Living Ghosts and the Agency of Invisibility* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p.4, p.15.

<sup>20</sup> Agamben, p.90.

<sup>21</sup> Penelope Deutscher, ‘Sacred Fecundity: Agamben, Sexual Difference, and Reproductive Life’, *Telos*, 161 (2012), 51-78 (p.58).

and *bios* or ‘political life’.<sup>22</sup> As Deutscher observes, it is unclear how this exclusion of ‘simple natural life’, of ‘reproductive life’, from the *polis* relates to ‘the included exclusions of the political life of the citizen’<sup>23</sup> – which, Agamben later insists, ‘is politicized only through an abandonment to an unconditional power of death.’<sup>24</sup>

What is in question here is ‘the status of the domestic domain, where one finds the kind of beings responsible for basic life processes that are understood to belong to the household’. Deutscher discovers in Agamben’s work an ‘elision’ between the status ‘of the political citizen as the (perhaps) also included exclusion of that which is merely alive’, and the status of the political citizen ‘as the included exclusion of those entities primarily responsible for merely reproductive processes that take place in the *oikos* (women, servants, and slaves).’ Moreover, Deutscher locates another example of this ‘elision’ in *Homo Sacer* in Agamben’s insistence that under the *vitae necisque potestas* in Roman law, the exposure of the son and the citizen ‘to possible death through the power over them of the father or the sovereign’ is different to the exposure ‘of the wife and daughter (in this respect, akin to the servant) to possible death at the hands of household head’; it is only the former that is ‘identified by Agamben as the “originary political element.”’ In separating the wife and the daughter from the son and political citizen, Agamben has ‘again embedded in his text the difference between these as exposed forms of life, distinguishably exposed to possible death at the hands of power over them’. What he is ‘telling us’, Deutscher concludes, is that ‘the kind of exposure of one’s life is not the same and is marked by sexual difference.’<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> Agamben, pp.1-2.

<sup>23</sup> Deutscher, p.59.

<sup>24</sup> Agamben, p.90.

<sup>25</sup> Deutscher, pp.59-60.

And yet Agamben never elaborates on this ‘differentiation of the political citizen from those responsible for his domestic, reproductive life, who are, as such, subordinate to him’; instead, he immediately ‘directs our attention to the son’s status as concurrently political and vulnerable’, such that

we depart from, as quickly as we have broached, this other included exclusion, domestic life, and the politically liminal status of the beings considered primarily responsible for the cares and duties of simple natural life, reproductive life, and their very different exposure, under certain circumstances, to certain forms of paternal and sovereign power.<sup>26</sup>

Unsurprisingly (and justifiably), Agamben’s failure to address ‘the politically liminal status’ of these excluded ‘beings’ and of the domestic realm has prompted considerable criticism of his theorisation of biopolitics, particularly where the issue of gender is concerned. For example, Lemke argues that Agamben actively ‘suppresses the significance that gender has for his line of inquiry’, and therefore ‘does not investigate to what extent the production of “bare life” is also a patriarchal project, one that codifies gender difference through a strict and dichotomous apportionment of nature and politics’.<sup>27</sup> Similarly, Mills criticises Agamben for remaining ‘silent on issues of gender in his reference to Aristotle’s distinction between the life of the *oikos* and politics’, despite gender being ‘insistently present in the designation of the *oikos* as the domain of reproduction that necessarily precedes and supports the life of politics.’<sup>28</sup>

What Agamben’s theorisation of biopolitics arguably fails to account for is the idea that simple biological life inside the home may always have been captured in the political sphere, and that both *zoē* and *bios*, and *oikos* and *polis* may have constituted a ‘zone of indistinction’ long before the ‘decisive event of modernity’

---

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Lemke, p.63.

<sup>28</sup> Mills, p.114.

which he describes as ‘the entry of *zoē* into the sphere of the *polis* – the politicization of bare life as such’.<sup>29</sup> This is especially the case for certain populations, such as women, whose lives are always already exposed to political power as well as to the violence experienced by those who are excluded from full political and juridical subjectivity. Indeed, according to Geraldine Pratt, it is necessary for ‘the wealth of feminist theorizing on the way that the private-public divide works *within* modern democracy [...] to be brought to bear on processes of legal abandonment’: after all, feminist theory has long drawn attention to the ways in which ‘women’s issues are often depoliticized by being enclaved within the private sphere’, something which is evidently still the case, given that the act of ‘[r]ecasting private domestic issues such as childcare and domestic assault as public ones remains an area of intense political contest.’ But the point for Pratt is ‘not only that many of those who are placed in the position of bare life are women’; rather, it is also the case ‘that both admission to citizenship and rendering of individuals as bare life are accomplished through [...] a complex and gendered layering and enfolding of geographies of public and private, one into the other’, in which ‘gender hierarchies support and relay the split between biological and political life, which is both cause and effect of abandonment.’<sup>30</sup>

### **Homes are very unsafe places to linger**

The impossibility of separating the spheres of the private and the public, the home and the *polis*, is certainly something of which Mantel is highly aware. She insists that ‘[h]omes are very unsafe places to linger. The crime statistics will tell you the streets are safer. Everything, even warfare, happens first in the kitchen, in the nursery, in the cradle’. And yet we continue to hear

---

<sup>29</sup> Agamben, p.4.

<sup>30</sup> Geraldine Pratt, ‘Abandoned Women and Spaces of the Exception’, *Antipode: Journal of Radical Geography*, 37 (2005), 1052-78 (pp.1056-7).

from female critics as well as male, a regular complaint, a bleat [...] that even today women writers play safe with small, domestic novels. They have forgotten that grand truth we learned, or relearned, at the close of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: the personal is political. The domestic novel need not be small, or tame.<sup>31</sup>

It is striking that one such ‘bleat’ – perhaps even the particular bleat Mantel may have in mind in this article – should feature in the *Scotsman*’s review of *Darkmans*, which begins by citing Toby Litt and Ali Smith’s comments on contemporary female writers in their introduction to the 2005 edition of *New Writing*. Here, they remark that most of ‘the submissions from women were disappointingly domestic, the opposite of risk-taking’, but that there are some female writers ‘who refute this strange trend’ of being ‘good’ and ‘saying the right thing, aping the right shape’. The first name they list is Nicola Barker’s, whose ‘understanding of the strangeness of social structure’ apparently goes far beyond the ‘disappointingly domestic’, and whose submission to the collection was in fact an extract from the as-yet unpublished *Darkmans*.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, *The Scotsman*’s review of *Darkmans* also cites Muriel Gray’s remarks on judging the submissions for the 2007 Orange Prize, many of which were ‘about personal female issues, the loss of a child, the break-up of a marriage, thinly veiled autobiographical things of no consequence’ whose authors ‘don’t seem to be dreaming big dreams.’ Although the reviewer is quick to point out that ‘similar things could be said of men’s writing’, this statement is swiftly followed by the reassurance that the potential reader of *Darkmans* can ‘take heart’, because in this novel Barker is ‘dreaming big nightmares and taking jaw-dropping risks’.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup> Hilary Mantel, ‘Author, author’, *The Guardian*, 24 May 2008

<<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2008/may/24/1>> [accessed 12<sup>th</sup> August 2015].

<sup>32</sup> Toby Litt and Ali Smith, ‘Introduction’, in *New Writing 13* (Basingstoke and Oxford: Picador, 2005) pp.ix-xi (p.x).

<sup>33</sup> ‘Comfort of strangeness’, *The Scotsman*, 4 May 2007

<<http://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/books/comfort-of-strangeness-1-747086>> [accessed 12<sup>th</sup> August 2015].

These disavowals of the ‘disappointingly domestic’ neatly illustrate Pratt’s point about the difficulties of ‘recasting’ supposedly ‘private domestic issues’ which pertain to women’s experiences in the home as public and political ones.<sup>34</sup> They are also extraordinary remarks to make about *Darkmans*: as I will illustrate below, Barker’s understanding of the ‘strangeness of social structure’ in this novel, along with Mantel’s in *Beyond Black*, are inextricably linked to domestic spaces. The ostensibly mundane territory of the suburban home is crucial to these novels’ explorations of experiences of being exposed to death in twentieth and twenty-first century Britain – not because this space merely stands in for more important stages on which more momentous global issues are played out, but because both novels insist on the difficulties of separating the large from the small, the public from the private, the global from the local, and both foreground the structural relationships between experiences of exclusion and abandonment to violence – ranging from domestic violence to being stateless – which are evident in these spaces.

In fact, suburban homes are arguably ideal locations for investigating these connections, inasmuch as they are sites which ultimately attest to the failure of attempts to separate the public and the private, the global and the local. In *Beyond Black* and *Darkmans*, suburban homes therefore become the sites on which contemporary security anxieties ranging from crime to global terrorism are played out, particularly through narratives of women’s experiences of insecurity and bodily vulnerability, which also feature in Judith Butler’s post-9/11 reflections on biopolitics and ‘precarious life’. Butler points out that women have been negotiating their ‘bodily vulnerability’ and ‘exposure to violence’ in ‘nearly all times’, and have thus always been familiar with the urgent dilemma of ‘at what price, and at whose

---

<sup>34</sup> Pratt, p.1057.

expense' one can 'gain a purchase on "security"', of how to 'negotiat[e] a sudden and unprecedented vulnerability' without becoming 'mimetically violent'.<sup>35</sup> This dilemma is addressed in *Beyond Black* and *Darkmans* through a focus on the dichotomy of security and hospitality in suburban homes.

To return to Mantel's comments with which I opened this section, the idea that '[e]verything, even warfare' happens first in homes is foregrounded in both *Beyond Black* and *Darkmans*. In fact, Mantel's novel places military violence and aggression directly inside the home. Alison grows up in the 'British Army town' of Aldershot, in which her prostitute mother's main customers are soldiers, including many of the 'fiends' who torment Alison when they are alive and who return to haunt her after their deaths, 'reassembling themselves' with a 'military rattle, as bone clicked into joint' (p.207), and performing 'some sort of military exercise' in her garden at the affluent suburb of Admiral Drive (p.406), whose name also hints at this military connection. But Mantel also suggests that this sort of violence is always already at work in domestic spaces by figuring young children playing in a suburban garden as 'scavenging and savaging, leaving scorched earth behind them, like child soldiers in an African war', while their mother is inside the house 'training up another one' (p.274).

In *Darkmans*, Barker also connects children in domestic spaces with military violence. The novel hints that the means by which Scogin's ghost is able to enter Dory and Elen's suburban new-build is by crossing a 'bridge' built by their son, Fleet, as part of a miniature matchstick version of the Gothic Cathedral of Sainte-Cecile at Albi and its surrounding buildings. Elen describes her son's construction as 'a menacing, fortress-style basilica' (p.148), which she discovers was 'built by a

---

<sup>35</sup> Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London: Verso, 2004), p.42.



cruel bishop' as part of the Catholic Church's brutal military suppression of the Cathars in medieval France (p.156). This imagery is made all the more disturbing by the fact that Fleet builds his matchstick version of the cathedral using 'a trusty pair of children's paper-cutting scissors' whose blades 'he'd secretly stropped on a stone until they were razor-sharp' (p.144).

As the above examples suggest, these novels also point to the prominent role ghosts have in exposing the insecurity of domestic boundaries. In making 'a foray into the domestic realm', Michael Newton argues, 'the ghost raids our privacy.' Ghosts 'are the intrusion – the link – between the private and the public. Their haunting demonstrates that this secure place is not sealed off, but lies open to previous inhabitants, to strangers.'<sup>36</sup> This is true not only of the ghost story but also of the Gothic genre itself, in which supernatural events emphasise the insecurity of the boundary between the home and the world outside. In her influential study of the relationship between the Gothic genre and 'domestic ideology', Kate Ferguson Ellis draws attention to the rise of the ideology of separate spheres – which rests on an image of the home as 'a refuge from violence' – and the simultaneous emergence of the Gothic as a 'popular genre [...] that assumes some violation of this cultural ideal.'<sup>37</sup> It is the 'failed home' which takes centre stage in Gothic novels as a site of potential and actual violence, which manifests itself in supernatural events and is largely directed at women. That is not to say that either *Beyond Black* or *Darkmans* can be straightforwardly classified as examples of the so-called 'female Gothic', which is itself a notoriously slippery label, as Diana Wallace and Andrew Smith discuss in their introduction to one of the most recently published scholarly

---

<sup>36</sup> Michael Newton, 'Introduction', in *The Penguin Book of Ghost Stories* (London: Penguin, 2010), pp.xv-xxxv (pp.xxvi-xxvii).

<sup>37</sup> Kate Ferguson Ellis, *The Contested Castle: Gothic Novels and the Subversion of Domestic Ideology* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), p.3.

collections on the topic.<sup>38</sup> But there are some features generally identified with the female Gothic – particularly its emphasis on ‘the troubled politics of domestic ideology’ and its often ‘nightmarish figuration’ of women’s experiences in the home<sup>39</sup> – which are prominent in *Beyond Black* and *Darkmans*, and which are central to the novels’ investigations of the ideas of hospitality and security.

In *Beyond Black*, Mantel’s exploration of the dilemmas surrounding the pairing of hospitality and security centres on Alison, whose livelihood as a medium depends on her being hospitable, on her making room for ‘a crowd of dead strangers whose intentions towards us we cannot know’ (p.19). These ‘dead strangers’ take up room both in Alison’s house and in her body: hence she remarks ‘I have to house so many people. My flesh is so capacious; I am a settlement, a place of safety, a bombproof shelter’ (p.347). As Alison points out in the novel’s opening pages, she has never ‘had a choice’ over whether she allows the dead to seek refuge in her body (p.2), but she does have some agency when it comes to the question of whether she allows them to remain with her. For example, she considers sending the elderly female spirits who cluster in her new-build house ‘zinging to the next stage’, but balks at the idea of ‘her strong psychic grip [...] snapping their feeble bones under her hand’ (p.289). Although ‘she knows psychics who will call in a clergyman at the least excuse’, the violence of such exorcisms disturbs Alison: she likens it to ‘sending the bailiffs in’ (p.289).

However, Alison is also highly aware of the risks such hospitality poses, a sense of risk which is a common theme in the Gothic genre. In fact, hospitality itself,

---

<sup>38</sup> See Diana Wallace and Andrew Smith, ‘Introduction: Defining the Female Gothic’, in *The Female Gothic: New Directions*, ed. by Diana Wallace and Andrew Smith (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp.1-12.

<sup>39</sup> Tamara Heller, *Dead Secrets: Wilkie Collins and the Female Gothic* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), p.14.

as Joanne Watkiss has recently argued, is a central but relatively underexplored theme in Gothic texts, in which the ‘parasitical’ or ‘hostile guest’ constitutes ‘the persistent Gothic threat’. For Watkiss, it is not the stranger (as Newton suggests) but the invited guest who most often constitutes the real threat, and she thus argues that ‘the Gothic persistently advises us to *Let the Right One In*.’<sup>40</sup> This advice is evident in Alison’s warning to one of her audiences concerning the dangers of ‘dabbling’ in the psychic trade; as with her comments on exorcisms and bailiffs, she uses images related to houses to illustrate her point. Some spirits, she tells her audience, are ‘like those kids you see on sink estates hanging about parked cars [...] those sort of kids, you wouldn’t ask them into your house, would you?’. She concludes that ‘people are right to be afraid of ghosts’ (p.193).

Indeed, this fear is something Alison knows first-hand through her own experience of being haunted by Morris, who describes her as ‘his hostess, his missus’ (p.164), and whose physical and sexual abuse of Alison during her childhood continues to haunt her adulthood. One of the main narrative threads of *Beyond Black* concerns Alison’s attempts to make sense of what happened to her as a child, for which her only clues (besides a highly unreliable memory) are the scars from wounds she received in an outbuilding of her childhood home at the hands of Morris and his cohort, scars which look ‘as if she had been whipped with wire’ (p.149). Women’s experiences of bodily vulnerability in the home are also emphasised by Alison’s garbled recollections of the fate of Gloria, a prostitute who haunted Alison’s house during her childhood. Given that a woman’s body parts keep appearing and disappearing before Alison’s eyes, she believes that Gloria may have

---

<sup>40</sup>Joanne Watkiss, ‘Welcome the Coming, Speed the Parting Guest: Hospitality and the Gothic’, in *A New Companion to the Gothic*, ed. by David Punter (Oxford: Blackwell, 2012), pp.523-34 (p.523, p.533).

been murdered and dismembered by Morris and the other ‘fiends’, imagery which resonates with the frequent depiction of women who have been trapped, murdered, dismembered or buried alive in houses in Gothic novels.<sup>41</sup>

Moreover, Alison’s experience of abuse from these men continues into her adulthood. She and her fellow psychic Mandy discuss what the ‘guides’ do ‘while you’re asleep’ – a ‘creak at the door, then a hand on the duvet, a hairy paw tugging at the sheet’, followed by a ‘violation’ (p.157). Morris’s attempts at violation are particularly focused on Mandy, the ‘unknowing hostess’ in whom he hopes to be ‘carried’ and born again (p.205). Mantel’s depiction of Alison’s and Mandy’s experiences of ‘hosting’ spirits speaks to the prevalence of women’s bodily vulnerability which Judith Still and Rosalyn Diprose identify in narratives of hospitality; Diprose, for example, focuses on ‘the sacrifice of women’s bodies’ in the biblical examples of hospitality used by Derrida;<sup>42</sup> while Still highlights the prevalence of rape, ‘the most invasive of crimes’, in these same narratives.<sup>43</sup>

Women’s bodily vulnerability in narratives of hospitality is also a prominent theme in *Darkmans*. When Dory, Elen and Fleet are admitted to a cottage Dory claims to have once lived in (although, as he is possessed by Scogin’s ghost at the time, this may not be his own past he is narrating), Elen thanks the young woman who lives there for her hospitality, but makes her ‘promise’ to ‘be extra wary when strangers call’, and ‘words [fail] her’ when she tries to explain the possible consequences of unwary hospitality (pp.436-7). Indeed, like Alison, Elen

---

<sup>41</sup> See Diana Wallace, “‘The Haunting Idea’: Female Gothic Metaphors and Feminist Theory”, in *The Female Gothic: New Directions*, ed. by Diana Wallace and Andrew Smith (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp.26-41 (p.27).

<sup>42</sup> Rosalyn Diprose, ‘Women’s Bodies Giving Time for Hospitality’, *Hypatia*, 24 (2009), 142-63 (p.145).

<sup>43</sup> Judith Still, ‘Acceptable hospitality: from Rousseau’s Levite to the strangers in our midst today’, *Journal of Romance Studies*, 3 (2003), pp.1-14 (p.2).

experiences for herself the violent physical consequences of having a hostile supernatural guest in her home. In Barker's novel, men who are possessed by Scogin's ghost have a tendency to physically attack Elen, leaving her covered in 'terrible bruises: hand-prints, finger-prints, in a remarkable array of greens and purple-pinks' (p.266). She explains her bruising to her colleagues in terms which have become clichés in depictions of domestic violence – for example, that she accidentally fell into a cupboard door (p.777). These attacks on Elen often mirror those of Scogin against his own wife, such that her friend Kane is able to witness 'the same memory, the same transaction, the same *idea*' in a vision of his father's attack (when possessed by Scogin) on Elen in his bathroom, with Elen 'clawing, terrified, at his neck, his cheek', and in a vision of Scogin forcibly 'bleeding' his own 'screaming' wife (pp.772-73). Additionally, Scogin's possession of Dory also opens onto a consideration of women's bodily vulnerability. In becoming 'the channel, the body, the vessel' (p.731) for Scogin's ghost, Dory develops an 'inability to cope' which he believes undermines his 'masculinity', his ability 'to be a successful male' and remain in control of his own borders (p.55).

### **Hostility and hospitality**

Of course, as Jacques Derrida points out, in order to be able to offer hospitality at all, 'in order to protect or claim to protect one's own hospitality', it is necessary first to delineate the borders of 'the own home that makes possible one's own hospitality'. Hence, paradoxically, 'one can become virtually xenophobic' in order to protect one's 'ipseity', one's 'power of hospitality' and 'sovereignty as host'.<sup>44</sup> In *Darkmans*, Elen is therefore baffled when she observes properties on a beach which

---

<sup>44</sup> Jacques Derrida and Anne Dufourmantelle, *Of Hospitality*, trans. by Rachel Bowlby (Stanford: Stanford University Press, [1997] 2000), pp.53-5.

are ‘self-consciously open plan’, with ‘no real fences – no boundaries – as if the fearless inhabitants were perfectly content to own both everything and nothing, concurrently’ (p.410). Likewise, Beede is surprised by the home of a builder he visits, which at first appears to be an ‘uncontentious and coherent whole’, but on closer inspection proves to be ‘nothing more than the sum of its well-executed parts [...] not so much as house as a perplexing amalgam of sudden whims, capricious fancies and afterthoughts’, topped off with gates which are notably ‘left casually open’ (p.787).

The ability to find some measure of balance between security and hospitality while doing the least amount of violence is presented as an admirable trait in *Darkmans*, while in *Beyond Black* the act of giving hospitality is one which might even save Alison from the ‘fiends’ who haunt her: she believes that if she is able to ‘do a good action’ – especially by giving hospitality to a homeless man – she will somehow be able ‘to stop Morris coming back’ (p.340). In both novels, scenes of (in)hospitality are used to foreground the question I noted earlier of the costs which might be borne by others when one attempts to gain a purchase on security. These novels suggest that while homes are unsafe places for women to linger in, they are likewise dangerous places for those guests whose hosts turn hostile, and their boundaries also reinforce the profound insecurity of those who are denied hospitality and excluded completely: the *homines sacri* abandoned a zone of indistinction between the home and the city.<sup>45</sup>

According to Heidrun Friese, hospitality is concerned with ‘questions of territory and border, of private and public spaces, [...] of belonging, membership, citizenship, and exclusion’. These questions thus ‘concern the foundations of social

---

<sup>45</sup> Agamben, p.90.

life',<sup>46</sup> foundations which are especially precarious in suburbia because of the early history of suburban spaces as slums for the excluded and the subsequent development of these spaces as retreats for the affluent. Those moments when particular kinds of strangers appear to encroach on affluent suburban territories therefore threaten to expose the proximity of slums and suburbs, and of the fostered and disallowed lives which inhabit these spaces. In *Beyond Black* and *Darkmans*, the security anxieties depicted in suburban spaces focus not only on the local poor (especially the homeless) but also on global fears of immigrants and the stateless, and especially on contemporary anxieties about terrorism and related issues of border security.

This decision to stage concerns over national and international border security in small, local spaces would come as no surprise to Amy Kaplan, who argues that the concept of security 'does the seductive work of creating a framework for seeing and experiencing the world in a way that fuses the macro level of global and national politics with the intimate world of home and psyche'.<sup>47</sup> As I noted in the previous part of this section, ghosts are apt figures for demonstrating the precarious borders of 'the intimate world of home and psyche', especially in terms of divisions between the private or domestic and public spheres.<sup>48</sup> In suburban ghost stories in particular, the presence of the ghost is associated with the disturbance of the precarious boundaries between slum and suburb. Whelan argues that over the course of its development, suburbia formed 'a constantly shifting, socially heterogeneous space where once respectable middle-class neighbourhoods could become working-class refuges within ten years, and full-blown slums within forty.'

---

<sup>46</sup> Heidrun Friese, 'Spaces of hospitality', trans. by James Keye, *Angelaki*, 9 (2004), 67-79 (p.74).

<sup>47</sup> Amy Kaplan, 'In the Name of Security', *Review of International American Studies*, 3.3-4.1 (2008/2009), 15-25 (p.16).

<sup>48</sup> See Newton, pp.xxvi-xxvii.

Hence, instead of finding ‘a green suburban idyll’, people who moved in search of a pleasant middle-class enclave found ‘a repetition of the evils of urban living they had been trying to escape’, including ‘poorly constructed houses’ and ‘bad drains’. This disturbing mutability of suburban territory manifests itself in the figure of the ghost, which was often depicted (especially in the Victorian suburban ghost stories) as ‘a member of the “wrong crowd”’ who would inevitably bring ‘other unsavoury elements’ to threaten the sanctity of this middle-class space.<sup>49</sup>

In *Beyond Black* and *Darkmans*, the dream of the suburban new-build as a fresh start fails partly due to shoddy building work, and characters find themselves in what Dory thinks of as ‘New Build Hell’ (p.185). Elen discovers that there are on average ‘218’ faults on new-build houses (p.165), which range in her case from badly hung cupboard doors to a roof that ‘didn’t work’ (p.169); while in *Beyond Black*, Alison and Colette’s kitchen ceiling falls down, and they observe other ‘householders running out into the streets [...] fleeing from gas leaks, floods and falling masonry’ (p.235). According to Catherine Spooner, the ‘hastily built and shoddily finished architecture’ of Alison and Colette’s new house ‘readily offers itself up for possession by malevolent spirits’,<sup>50</sup> but shoddy construction is only part of the problem with suburban new builds in *Beyond Black* and in *Darkmans*. In Barker’s novel, Elen suspects that the other problem with their new house lies with the type of land on which these new suburban estates are typically constructed. Elen observes that whereas ‘our ancestors’ were ‘obstinately – *neurotically*, even – attached to mounds and to hillocks’, contemporary estates are ‘sited on meadowland – bogs – flood plains; on the outskirts of town; the left-over bits of land; bits that

---

<sup>49</sup> Whelan, pp.1-2, p.82.

<sup>50</sup> Catherine Spooner, “[T]hat eventless realm”: Hilary Mantel’s *Beyond Black* and the Ghosts of the M25’, in *London Gothic: Place, Space and the Gothic Imagination*, ed. by Lawrence Philips and Anne Witchard (London and New York: Continuum, 2010), pp.80-90 (p.87).



nobody had ever bothered with before.’ She believes that the ‘*damn politicians*’ and ‘*evil-bastard, money-grabbing contractors*’ of contemporary Britain wilfully ignore the fact that ‘available sites were often empty for perfectly good reasons’ – including ‘landfill somewhere in the general vicinity (oozing a terrifying cocktail of poisonous gases out into the stratosphere)’ and almost definitely water (pp.166-67). In *Beyond Black*, this is a lesson about land which Alison and the other residents of Admiral Drive also learn when the children’s play area on the estate is rapidly afflicted with ‘black sludge’, which the local paper insists is a consequence of Japanese knotweed, but which the homeowners believe to be the result of ‘an unexploded bomb’ or the presence of radioactivity. The householders thus find themselves troubled by frequent visits from ‘drain officials’ and ‘environmental health’ (pp.251-53).

In both novels, then, people who seek out desirable new suburban ‘idylls’ find themselves instead inhabiting the kinds of dumping grounds or ‘proto-suburban sites’<sup>51</sup> – ‘the outskirts of town; the left-over bits of land’ – to which those expelled from the city were relegated. Hence, the ghosts who haunt these spaces are inevitably members of the ‘wrong crowd’ come to attest to the precarious distinction between different kinds of suburban territories. For example, as Spooner points out, the ‘belching, farting spirit guide’ Morris’s attempts at haunting Alison’s suburban idyll in *Beyond Black* can be interpreted as the return of Alison’s own ‘ignominious background’, ‘the haunting of the recently middle class by their lower-class upbringing.’<sup>52</sup> Certainly, Alison’s immediate reaction to news of the problems with the land is to hope that it is not her ‘fault’, and to wonder whether Morris has ‘pissed on the plot’ (p.251).

---

<sup>51</sup> Pope, p.4.

<sup>52</sup> Spooner, p.84.

Similarly, in *Darkmans*, Dory's antics while he is possessed by Scogin's ghost undermine his 'intrinsically law-abiding' nature (p.52) and his middle-class respectability: he engages in a number of embarrassing and often criminal acts, which range from stealing horses to finally burning his ill-fated suburban house to the ground. Moreover, Scogin's haunting of Ashford brings its affluent suburban residents into close contact with the 'wrong crowd' in the form of the Broad family, a 'problem family' whose deviant and criminal behaviours have made them 'notorious' in Ashford and the surrounding town – they have even featured briefly on the South Eastern portion of 'Crimewatch UK' (p.40). Dory finds himself hiring Harvey Broad, 'the world's shonkiest builder' (p.40), to fix his house. It is gradually revealed that Harvey's ancestor may have been the one to produce not only the typical Gothic 'found manuscript' which drives much of the action of *Darkmans* (*Scogin's Jest*s), but also (rather ironically) '*The boke for to lerne a man to be wyse in bylding of his house for the helthe of his soul*' (p.596). The manuscript copy of *Scogin's Jest*s also brings Harvey's niece Kelly Broad and Scogin's ghost itself into the home of Dory's sometime friend and colleague, Beede, whose apparent suburban respectability is threatened when Kelly scales the wall of his gated estate to deliver the manuscript – and ultimately also the ghost – into his home, whereupon Scogin also begins to possess him.

That is not to say that the security strategies of this gated estate fail completely: in the process of climbing the wall, Kelly breaks her leg and ends up stranded on Beede's threshold. The idea of making one's property not only difficult but actively dangerous for the uninvited to enter is also highlighted in *Beyond Black*. When Colette's neighbours remind her of the risks of having 'no lock on their side gate', she jokes that she and Alison should 'get some barbed wire on top', a strategy

to which her neighbours object only because it would be ‘unsightly’. They advise her instead to attend the neighbourhood watch’s ‘next meeting with community policing’ (p.287-88). The fact that the neighbourhood watch in *Beyond Black* works in tandem with the police resonates with Jef Huysmans’s argument that such ‘local initiatives’ are not examples of ‘autonomous practice’, but instead of ‘a conduct that is to a certain extent governed by security apparatuses operating in the name of the state.’<sup>53</sup> Indeed, the defensive strategies depicted in both novels – including the use of private security guards, gated estates, and neighbourhood watch patrols – have echoes of what Antonio Tosi describes as ‘policies for the management of territoriality’ which seek to control undesirable populations in urban spaces. These policies include ‘the strengthening of barriers’ between affluent and ‘abandoned’ areas, and ‘the multiplication of acts of territorial control’ through strategies such as the ‘defence of the neighbourhood’.<sup>54</sup>

Such approaches to the management of territory are not aimed at ‘integrating’ populations such as the homeless, but rather at protecting the affluent from their proximity and making them less visible, particularly because in their visibility homeless people ‘communicate the risk of exclusion strongly’.<sup>55</sup> Hence, the ‘slogan’ becomes, as Zygmunt Bauman observes, ‘to “make our streets safe again”’, a strategy which necessitates ‘the removal of the danger-carriers into spaces out of sight and out of touch’, and which calls for ever-stronger security measures, including ‘burglar alarms, the watched and patrolled neighbourhood, the guarded

---

<sup>53</sup> Jef Huysmans, *The Politics of Insecurity: Fear, Migration and Asylum in the EU* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2006), p.33.

<sup>54</sup> Antonio Tosi, ‘The Excluded and the Homeless: the Social Construction of the Fight Against Poverty in Europe’, in *Urban Poverty and the Underclass: A Reader*, ed. by Enzo Mingione (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), pp.83-104 (pp.100-101).

<sup>55</sup> Tosi, p.89, p.100, p.91.

condominium gates'.<sup>56</sup> Yet these strategies sometimes malfunction in such a way as to bring the very people the residents of these well-defended suburban spaces most dread into unexpectedly and undesirably close proximity. In *Darkmans*, the reason Kelly ends up climbing over the wall to deliver the manuscript to Beede is that the gated community's entry-phone system is broken. This incident thus also marks the first appearance in the novel of Gaffar, an 'entry-phone engineer' who has come to fix the broken intercom (p.60), thereby restoring the residents' (highly controlled) channel of communication with the world beyond their gates. However, Gaffar's job hints that he may be as adept at slipping through such security systems as he is at restoring them, and this does indeed turn out to be the case: Gaffar is an illegal Kurdish immigrant who has already 'niftily slipped the border' in order to end up – through various convoluted and often criminal routes – in Ashford for 'his Brand New Start' (p.70). He niftily slips another border into Beede and Kane's home, where he is unexpectedly granted some form of hospitality not only by the dissolute Kane, but also by the apparently upright Beede.

However, *Darkmans* does hint at the hostility a figure such as Gaffar would typically encounter. Gaffar points out to Beede that his son Kane has been a less than hospitable host: he tells Beede (mostly in Turkish, as indicated by Barker's typographical device of printing Gaffar's Turkish speech in a bold font) that Kane '**turned up from out of nowhere and threw hot coffee all over me. Smashed my Thermos. Ruined my shirt. Got me the sack. [...] Which was when [...] he kindly invited me inside and let the dogs maul me**' (pp.76-7). Gaffar also immediately assumes that Beede will ask him to leave: '**this is not my home**', he tells Beede, '**a fact I'm sure you'll be only too keen to acquaint me with, eh?**' (p.75). But it is

---

<sup>56</sup> Zygmunt Bauman, *Globalization: the Human Consequences* (Cambridge: Polity, 1998), p.122.

never clear in this household who really has the upper hand; whether Gaffar is a guest or a parasite; whether he holds Beede and Kane hostage or is himself held hostage to them. Kane employs him as a drug runner, but in turn Gaffar frequently tricks Kane and ‘fleeces’ Beede by gambling with him (p.77).

Despite this, Beede provides a fundamental form of hospitality to Gaffar by trying to speak to him in his own language, and helping him to translate where necessary. Hospitality, as Ranjana Khanna observes, is in many ways ‘the welcoming of (and the possibility of being held hostage to) another’s language, with all its secrets, phantoms, specters, and prehistories’.<sup>57</sup> Indeed, although Beede welcomes Gaffar’s language, he is himself (along with many other characters) shown to be held hostage to the phantoms of another language. Characters possessed by the ghost of Scogin find themselves inadvertently tracing the etymology of words, or using past forms which at first glance seem foreign. Moreover, through its title and epigraph, Barker’s novel also draws on yet another language – the thieves’ cant recorded in Thomas Harman’s *A Caveat for Common Cursitors, Vulgarly Called Vagabonds*, from which Barker borrows both her novel’s title (‘darkmans’ is thieves’ cant for ‘night’) and its epigraph, which refers to ‘demanders for glimmer’, or those who falsely claim compensation after a fire.

Furthermore, this epigraph is also neatly linked by Barker to a narrative from *Scogin’s Jest*s which illustrates the dangers of encountering a hostile host. This narrative concerns Scogin’s invitation to a group of ‘pesky local beggars’ who have annoyed his wife to seek shelter in his barn. They wait ‘patiently inside in the misguided belief that he’s going to distribute alms’, when instead he simply ‘sets fire to the barn’ (pp.642-43). Surprisingly, considering Ashford’s proximity to a major

---

<sup>57</sup> Ranjana Khanna, ‘Frames, Contexts, Community, Justice’, *diacritics*, 33 (2003), 11-41 (p.27).

national border in the form of the Channel Tunnel, such hostility towards outsiders generally remains an undercurrent in *Darkmans*, in which even Gaffar's dubious immigration status is subjected to very little scrutiny. Beede does briefly query whether Gaffar has 'an *immigration* issue', but Gaffar responds 'dismissively', although Barker makes a point about contemporary hostility towards immigrants when she has Beede mangle the Turkish and say '**policemans**' to Gaffar (p.233). This mistake echoes the novel's title, and thus links the forces of law and order to a word from thieves' cant, and to the 'darkmans' himself, Scogin, whose treatment of outcast populations is notoriously harsh.

By contrast, in *Beyond Black* Mantel depicts a significant level of paranoia where the figures of the foreigner or immigrant are concerned. For example, Alison explains to Colette that they have to be careful with their choice of location for her psychic ancestors: Russia and Italy are fine, but nowadays to claim 'Romany' ancestry is to risk 'put[ting] anxiety in the clients' minds, about fly-tipping, head lice, illegal tarmac gangs, or motorhomes invading the green belt' (p.12). The multicultural nature of many British cities and towns also proves to be a problem for Alison, who cannot practise her psychic trade on 'ethnics', partly because of the 'language barrier', and partly because different beliefs about the afterlife cause confusion (pp.150-51). Morris, on the other hand, doesn't 'do ethnics' for purely racist reasons; though he likes the idea of being reborn, he does not want 'to come back as some nig' but 'free, white and twenty-one', and in Brighton rather than 'in bloody wogland' (p.205).

Indeed, Mantel suggests that socially dead figures find the same forms of persecution 'airside' as they do 'earthside'. This is especially evident when Morris returns to inform Alison that he has been on a course, and has a new 'mission [...] to

track down useless and ugly people and recycle them’, to ‘[chase] out all spooks what are asylum seekers, derelicts, vagrants and refugees’, so that nobody can ‘take up room they ain’t entitled to’ (p.386). For the suburban residents of Admiral Drive, the homeless man Mart, to whom Alison extends some hospitality, comes to stand in for all of these threatening figures. He is frequently coupled with ‘illegal immigrants’ and ‘asylum seekers’ in conversations Alison has with Colette and with the neighbourhood watch, who view Mart as a serious security threat. Alison’s offer of hospitality to Mart thus brings her into conflict not only with Colette but with all the residents of Admiral Drive, who tell Alison that they will call the police, inform the chairman of the neighbourhood watch, and start a petition against her if she continues ‘aiding and abetting’ Mart (p.406). Alison’s hospitality is therefore interpreted as a ‘crime of hospitality’, an instance of ‘harbouring’ and ‘failing to denounce’ the illegal, the unwanted, an act through which she herself risks becoming a criminal.<sup>58</sup>

The security anxieties stirred up by Mart’s presence in Admiral Drive reach their apogee when Colette describes Mart as a terrorist (p.317). Published only four years after the events of 9/11 (and only a few months before the 7/7 bombings), *Beyond Black* was written during a period in which, according to Kaplan, ‘the language of security has been colonizing every arena and idiom of daily life and political culture’:<sup>59</sup> indeed, Colette describes the time ‘before the towers burned’ as ‘another era, another world’ (p.140). Hence, alongside their fears about homeless people, paedophiles, asylum seekers, Japanese Knotweed, and illegal immigrants, the residents of Admiral Drive receive lectures from the local police at their

---

<sup>58</sup> See Judith Still, ‘Derrida: Guest and Host’, *Paragraph*, 28 (2005), 85-101 (p.92).

<sup>59</sup> Kaplan, p.16.

neighbourhood watch meetings on what to do ‘in case of terrorist outrage or nuclear explosion’ (pp.344-45).

Interestingly, Mantel’s emphasis on the fear of terrorism in suburban locations like Admiral Drive seems strangely prescient in the light of newspaper headlines published after the London bombings which emphasised the attackers’ mundane suburban upbringings. Chris Rumford suggests that the figure of the ‘homegrown terrorist’ is beginning to replace ‘the “foreigner” and the “migrant” as a particularly threatening stranger figure’, not least because this figure ‘emerges from hiding within society’<sup>60</sup> – and not just from outcast suburbs (in *Beyond Black*, Alison imagines ‘terrorists in the ditches [...] fundis hoarding fertiliser [...] fanatics brewing bombs on brownfield sites’ (p.450)), but from affluent ones. Before committing an act of terrorism, the homegrown terrorist is ‘an apparently ordinary and unremarkable citizen, a regular member of the community’.<sup>61</sup>

Strikingly, the same cannot be said of Mart. After sneaking into the neighbourhood watch meeting about terrorism, Mart tells Alison that ‘the message’ in case of a ‘terrorist outrage’ is to ‘go indoors’ and wait until Constable Delingbole comes to retrieve you – although Mart suggests that as Delingbole hates him, he will probably fail to tell Mart and will let him ‘starve to death’. Alison promises Mart that ‘in case of terrorist outrage or nuclear explosion’, he can ‘come and live in [the] house’, not just the shed (pp.344-45). Later, she imagines seeing a ‘fugitive movement’, which she worries might be Morris and the other dead men from her childhood infiltrating her suburban idyll, but which she also thinks ‘could be Mart, seeking shelter from some civic catastrophe’ (p.354). The adjective ‘civic’ here is

---

<sup>60</sup> Chris Rumford, *The Globalization of Strangeness* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p.83.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p.83.



interesting, inasmuch as it is highly doubtful that Mart can be thought of in relation to the normal rights and duties of citizenship, or as belonging to any community of citizens. As Tosi observes, it is necessary to question ‘whether the poor actually “belong” to the society in which they find themselves – with the possibility of denying that they belong in terms of rights.’ Whether viewed as ‘objects of fear or compassion’, Tosi argues, the poor ‘represent constructions that are opposed to the “logic of rights”’.<sup>62</sup> In the next section of this chapter, I want to examine this relationship between rights and belonging in more detail, and to turn in particular to the novel’s depictions of non-places, and of the effects of their associated mobility and transience on both invested and disinvested lives.

### **‘Weren’t all true nomads at their happiest in limbo?’: tourists, vagabonds and non-places**

#### **The bewildered dead**

Towards the end of *Darkmans*, Kane finds himself stuck in a traffic jam and decides to pass the time by reading *Scogin’s Jest*s, in which he discovers a story about Scogin being banished to France by the king for offending the queen. Rather than accepting defeat, however, Scogin sees in his exile the opportunity to play yet another jest. Having been ‘commanded never to set foot on British soil again’, he responds ‘by journeying to France, filling his shoes with French soil, then returning, in triumph, and smartly informing the enraged king that he wasn’t actually contravening the rules of his exile – the soil that he stood on was *French*, after all’ (pp.816-17). Scogin thus cleverly finds his way around the sovereign ban which has been issued against him by making the link between belonging to a particular territory and the conferment or loss of the rights of citizenship absolutely literal – in

---

<sup>62</sup> Tosi, p.91.

filling his boots with foreign soil in order to maintain his exile, he underscores the importance of the *jus soli* in determining who has citizenship rights in a particular territory. In this section, I want to examine Mantel's and Barker's depictions of the importance of connections between people and particular places, and of the different ways in which the loss of these connections renders certain lives increasingly or completely insecure, reproducing people as 'living ghosts'.

The link between people and particular places is arguably being transformed and even eroded in the contemporary era, in which the boundaries between inside and outside, home and abroad, domestic and foreign are becoming much more porous and unstable. Rumford, for example, argues that although 'strangers' still exist, rather than thinking of them purely in terms of outsiders, 'they are best understood within the context of a more generalized societal strangeness in which differentiating between "us and them" is increasingly problematic.' This 'societal strangeness' is broadly the result of globalisation, whose 'world of mobilities, flows and connectivities is ushering in a world of unfamiliar spaces, a world of strangeness', which 'is encountered when there exists the realization that the social world is unrecognizable in many ways, and where familiar reference points no longer exist (or are far from reliable).'<sup>63</sup>

In particular, Rumford notes that this experience of strangeness is often associated with non-places.<sup>64</sup> The term 'non-place' was coined by the anthropologist Marc Augé, who used it to describe the development of places such as airport lounges, business parks and chain hotels in the twentieth century which cannot easily be defined as 'relational, historical and concerned with identity' and which 'do not integrate into earlier places'. They are the 'transit points and temporary abodes'

---

<sup>63</sup> Rumford, p.1, p.xiii.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p.66.

produced by ‘supermodernity’ which proliferate under both ‘luxurious and inhumane conditions’.<sup>65</sup> This dichotomy of the luxurious and the inhumane is the key to understanding the two dominant theorisations of non-places outlined by Sarah Sharma. The first theorisation involves depicting non-places (such as airport terminals and train stations) as disorienting locations characterised solely by speed and consumption. For Sharma, the problem with this approach lies in the fact that it ‘theorizes exclusively from the point of view of the traveller/consumer’ and positions non-places in opposition to ‘the idealist tenets of public space’, such that these locations are understood to provide ‘a ruse of democratic civic life wherein all the virtues of political possibility get lost in abstraction, acceleration, and continuous movement’.<sup>66</sup>

Equally problematic, however, is the second approach to theorising non-places, which takes its cue from Agamben’s insistence on the logic of the camp as the hidden logic of all contemporary space. This biopolitical approach characterises the non-place as one in which ‘bare life/legally protected bodies and the exception/order are caught in increasing zones of indistinction.’<sup>67</sup> Like refugee camps and detention centres, non-places are thus seen to operate ‘within a similarly coded logic of exclusion’ and ‘confinement’ that characterises all spaces organised under the logic of the state of exception.<sup>68</sup> Although this approach, unlike the former one, does politicise the non-place, it nevertheless ‘generalizes the state of emergency and makes its power seem rather arbitrary’, such that ‘all populations are vulnerable to a mobile and sudden ban framed along a spectrum of indeterminate possibility.’

---

<sup>65</sup> Marc Augé, *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, trans. by John Howe (London: Verso, 1995), pp.77-8.

<sup>66</sup> Sarah Sharma, ‘Baring Life and Lifestyle in the Non-Place’, *Cultural Studies*, 23 (2009), 129-48 (p.130, pp.133-34).

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.134-35.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.135-36.

Sharma therefore argues that this latter approach to non-places ‘fails to consider the improbability that all populations *are* insecure in the *same way*.’<sup>69</sup>

Sharma’s critique of these theorisations of non-places therefore appears to position these locations as particularly apt ones for considering what Mills describes as ‘the unequal distribution of the burdens of vulnerability and violence across social, economic and (geo)political spheres’.<sup>70</sup> Indeed, Sharma views non-places as the ideal locations through which to evolve ‘a differential theory of biopolitics’, one which takes into account the fact that while the ‘biopolitical regulation of life reduces *certain* life to bare life’, it also ‘invests in the lives of others, as in the maintenance of lifestyles’. The non-place, Sharma argues, is ‘an architecture that houses the interdependent worlds of camp and spectacle’, in which ‘investments and reductions in what it means to be human [...] occur simultaneously and side by side, and prove to be equally productive for the effective functioning of global corporate capital.’ Accordingly, Sharma describes those lives that are reduced as ‘bare lives’, and those that are ‘overly invested’ as ‘bare lifestyles’, which are more often than not ‘built upon the labor and bodies of the disinvested.’<sup>71</sup> This proximity of ‘bare lives’ and ‘bare lifestyles’ is certainly at issue in *Beyond Black* and *Darkmans*, in which the presence of non-places renders once-familiar spaces strange and un navigable, thereby dislocating people from their surroundings and from both personal and collective forms of history. For some people, this engenders a useful form of mobility, while for others it means losing any purchase they may have on a secure place in the community or nation.

---

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p.138.

<sup>70</sup> Mills, pp.135-36.

<sup>71</sup> Sharma, pp.138-39.

Characters in both novels spend a good deal of time moving through the kinds of non-places identified by Augé – business parks, supermarkets, car parks, chain hotels and restaurants, and especially motorways and ring roads – whose presence seems to have rendered the towns these characters inhabit less liveable and hospitable. In *Beyond Black*, for example, Alison finds herself working in commuter towns ‘where nobody comes from, these south-eastern towns with their floating populations and their car parks where the centre should be’ (p.17). Similarly, in *Darkmans*, one Ashford resident remarks on the town’s ‘conflicting layers’, its ‘chaos of buildings and roads from every conceivable time-frame’, over which a different organisation of space has been ‘clumsily imposed’, a ‘crazy mish-mash of through-roads and round-roads and intersections and dead-ends – Business Parks, Superstores, train stations [...] apparently *aiding* it on the one hand, yet completely *disregarding* it on the other’ (pp.398-99). The effect of this imposition of new structures on Ashford is that the town becomes not only ‘un navigable’ but also ‘increasingly unrecognisable’, such that Beede, ‘born and bred; a true denizen’ – someone who has even been given ‘the Freedom of the Borough’ as a result of his being ‘a model citizen’ (p.5), which means that ‘he can go anywhere he likes in the town without any kind of restriction’ (p.278) – can ‘no longer locate himself’ in his home town (p.5).

Beede’s experience of Ashford recalls the idea of so-called ‘uncanny modernity’. On this view, the uncanny constitutes ‘an experience of disorientation, where the world in which we live suddenly seems strange, alienating, or threatening’, a definition which draws not only on Sigmund Freud but on another ‘stream of influence’ from figures such as Karl Marx and Walter Benjamin, who locate the uncanny ‘in relation to [...] the transformation of the urban world into a

visual and spatial spectacle inhabited also by the shadowy hauntings of the fleeting and insubstantial'.<sup>72</sup> In *Darkmans*, Beede is certainly 'waging his own private war on modernity',<sup>73</sup> whose objectionable characteristics are often best embodied, as Marsh points out, by Beede's own son, Kane.<sup>74</sup> But Beede's war on modernity is waged chiefly against Tom Higson, a wealthy businessman whose 'dream home', modelled on the design of 'palatial' but anonymous Saudi hotels (pp.659-60), is under a stealthy attack from Beede, who has paid a forger to replace various objects in the house with an identical copy with 'a tiny fault' built in, in order 'to help generate this indefinable sense of unease' (p.821) – in other words, Beede seeks to make Higson's home uncanny in the same way that Higson and his ilk have done with Beede's home town. Higson's crime, in Beede's eyes, is no less than being involved in 'killing History' (p.11): he was one of a number of contractors who worked on the re-modelling of Ashford in the wake of the construction of the Channel Tunnel, and may have been involved in the theft of some ancient roof tiles with which Beede has become obsessed.

Moreover, if the living have lost their way in both novels, then the dead are equally confused; indeed, in *Beyond Black*, even the division between the 'earthside' world of the living and the 'airside' world of the dead is figured in relation to the non-place of the airport. People's diminishing personal connection to particular places makes Alison's work extremely difficult on two levels; firstly because 'in these towns where nobody comes from', many of her audience members have a

---

<sup>72</sup> Jo Collins and John Jervis, 'Introduction', in *Uncanny Modernity: Cultural Theories, Modern Anxieties*, ed. by Jo Collins and John Jervis (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp.1-9 (p.2).

<sup>73</sup> 'Comfort of strangeness', *The Scotsman*.

<sup>74</sup> Huw Marsh, 'Nicola Barker's *Darkmans* and "the vengeful tsunami of history"', *Literary London: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Representation of London*, 7 (2009), <<http://www.literarylondon.org/london-journal/september2009/marsh.html>> [accessed 12<sup>th</sup> August 2015].

‘family memory so short’ that they are unable to acknowledge their own relatives during Alison’s stage shows (p.16); and secondly, because of the confusion of ‘the bewildered dead’ themselves, who are lost in ‘the high streets and shopping malls of the denatured towns’. She finds them

clustered among the skips outside the burger bars, clutching door keys [...] or queuing with their lunch boxes where the gates of small factories once stood [...] dithering on the kerbs of new arterial roads and bypasses [...] congregating under railway arches and under the stairwells of multi-story car parks. (pp.265-66).

The question of what happens to the dead when they no longer know or cannot locate their own origins is also raised in *Darkmans*, in which Gaffar wonders where his father – a stateless person who has kept more than one faith and culture in his lifetime – has gone after death, and questions whether ‘all true nomads’ might be ‘at their happiest in limbo’ (p.67). But it is the living as well as the dead in both novels who seem to be stuck in limbo – or rather, in purgatory. It is no accident that ring roads feature prominently in both texts, given that structures such as the London Orbital and the Ashford Ring Road enable constant motion without ever necessarily delivering people to a destination.

These ‘stagnant loop[s]’ (as Spooner describes the M25) trap the dead who end up travelling on them in ‘a kind of spiritual traffic jam’,<sup>75</sup> which turns out to have unpleasant consequences for the living. Ghosts, Spooner points out, are often regarded as making places habitable; because they are historically rooted in a place, ghosts ‘deliver a sense of place’ and of ‘communal identity’ to its inhabitants. In *Beyond Black*, however, ghosts ‘indicate an entire culture adrift.’ Spooner argues that in relocating ‘the historically rooted urban and rural ghosts of folklore and Gothic narratives to the suggestive non-places of the outer suburbs’, Mantel ‘blocks,

---

<sup>75</sup> Spooner, p.89, p.86.

or reverses, the traditional function of hauntings.’ Rather than being ‘a manifestation of the past returning’, the ghosts of *Beyond Black* ‘indicate not the presence of history, but its erasure.’<sup>76</sup> The same could be argued of *Darkmans*, in which Scogin’s haunting of Ashford represents the return of history in a culture which has completely lost touch with its past. Of course, as Spooner observes, in *Beyond Black* Mantel does provide Alison with a more traditional personal experience of haunting as the return of the traumatic or repressed past.<sup>77</sup> Something similar happens for Kane and Beede in *Darkmans*, who are haunted by something like a ghost in the memory of Kane’s mother, whose early and unpleasant death has resulted in the estrangement of father and son. They are only able to reunite when they both rediscover and work on finishing the cross Kane had been making for his mother’s grave – in other words, they are able to reunite once they finally bury her properly.

By contrast, most ghosts in these novels are detached from their sites of origin and do not have a definite burial site to be returned to. In her analysis of *Beyond Black*, Spooner reads hauntings occurring in non-places as a manifestation of the ‘spatial turn’ Frederic Jameson identifies in postmodern culture: in the case of haunted non-places, she argues, ‘geography is privileged over history, and the place (or non-places) that the ghosts inhabit predominate over their pasts.’ ‘Haunting’, she concludes, ‘has become lifestyle’.<sup>78</sup> In many ways, Spooner’s approach to hauntings in non-places resonates with Sharma’s description of typical approaches to non-places (outlined at the beginning of this section). Sharma observes that Jameson’s seminal account of the experience of spatial disorientation as a result of ‘the fleeting conditions of spaces of transit’ has spawned numerous readings of non-places in

---

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p.81.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p.83.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., p.87.



which they function ‘as a theoretical footnote to signal the loss of politics, the rise of the transaction over interaction, and the sad life of the lost traveler/citizen in the tragedy of contemporary civic life.’<sup>79</sup>

Yet it is vital to be aware, Sharma argues, that ‘getting lost in space is only one experience of the non-place.’<sup>80</sup> Indeed, the ‘traveler/citizen’ may risk getting lost in non-places, but for those whose lives are disinvested, the erasure of history can have devastating consequences. Hence, while Spooner’s reading of the relationship between hauntings and the erasure of history is in many ways apt, I suggest that her approach to hauntings in non-places never fully interrogates the politics of the erasure of personal and collective forms of history. The apparently incongruous association of ghosts with non-places in *Beyond Black* and *Darkmans* does not only attest to the erasure of history and communal identity associated with traditional hauntings. Rather, the association of ghosts with non-places in these novels also attests to how the fundamentally inhospitable nature of certain places for specific populations reproduces these populations as Peeren’s ‘living ghosts’,<sup>81</sup> those who have been expelled from the human community and whose lack of personal or historical connection to a place signals the absence of even basic rights. As Lyndsey Stonebridge puts it, being ‘beyond the periphery of political and historical life’ can leave people ‘cast into “the dark background of difference”’, in which they risk experiencing ‘the acute vulnerability of the merely human’.<sup>82</sup> In other words, the sovereign ban and the associated loss of the rights of citizenship – which is the subject of a jest for Scogin in the anecdote from *Darkmans* about his exile which I

---

<sup>79</sup> Sharma, p.129.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> See Peeren, p.9.

<sup>82</sup> Lyndsey Stonebridge, *The Judicial Imagination: Writing After Nuremberg* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), p.104, p.130.

quoted at the beginning of this section – produces the bare life of the *homo sacer*, the ‘living dead man’.

As with the experience of being abandoned to violence in suburban spaces, it is again important to distinguish between different experiences of vulnerability in relation to non-places. While Sharma chooses to distinguish between what she terms ‘bare life’ and ‘bare lifestyle’, in light of the emphasis placed on mobility in Mantel’s and Barker’s novels, I want to turn instead to Bauman’s pairing of the tourist and the vagabond, the latter of which is a central figure in both novels. As Bauman has persuasively argued, the ‘capacity to move has become the major, perhaps the paramount stratifying factor of the emergent global hierarchy’, and as such is ‘allocated highly unevenly’. For Bauman, the tourist is characterised by freedom of movement, by the ability to ‘go *where* the chances are and *when* they appear’, to be ‘never hampered by local commitments, free to cut the local ties and pack up at short notice, leave the chattels behind and travel light.’<sup>83</sup> This description certainly fits Colette in *Beyond Black*: ‘fast and thin’ (p.13), specialising in packing light (p.195), and in possession of a mind that is ‘quick, shallow and literal’, Colette has a job (before she meets Alison) which involves travel and she marries ‘an itinerant software developer’ (pp.52-3). Kane is a similarly good example of a tourist in *Darkmans*, someone who is broadly able to move around Ashford’s non-places as he wishes, and who is completely comfortable in these places, unlike Beede, who attempts to avoid them at all costs. For Colette and Kane, the erasure of memory and history in non-places enables their freedom of movement rather than disorienting them.

---

<sup>83</sup> Zygmunt Bauman, *Society Under Siege*, (Cambridge: Polity, 2002), p.83.

That is not to say that people with the freedom to move legitimately never seek out their familial pasts. In *Beyond Black*, although the desire to seek out ‘dead relatives’ on the part of the ‘floating populations’ who attend Alison’s séances may constitute, as Spooner suggests, ‘a solipsistic activity, a means of seeing their own lives reflected and confirmed’,<sup>84</sup> it may also signal a desire to reconnect with particular places via the links provided by ancestry. Even for a tourist such as Colette, the connections provided by ancestry are important. In one of her early consultations with a psychic, she finds that the man she thought of as her uncle is in fact her father, a revelation which leaves her feeling as though she has ‘lost her lottery ticket in life, lost her dad, and lost her home’ (p.92). While Colette recovers her equilibrium fairly rapidly after these losses, for others such attempts to seek out their ancestry are far more loaded. In *Darkmans*, for example, Kelly is thrilled to discover the possibility that her ancestor may have been a physician and may have written *Scogin’s Jest*s. She tells the academic who provides her with this (probably incorrect) information that she always thought that the Broads were ‘just shit’, but that now they have ‘class’ and ‘pedigree’ (pp.597-98). Without this, they are simply ‘notorious’, which Kelly insists means that people ‘always end up getting wasted’ (p.42).

The stakes in rediscovering her family past are also much higher for Alison, who spends a good deal of *Beyond Black* attempting to record (with Colette) the events of her childhood, to get things ‘straight’, something which is particularly difficult to achieve for someone who is constantly ‘forced to know the biographies of strangers’ (p.297). Alison seeks out her ancestry partly in order to uncover a kind of Gothic secret concerning the violence done to her as a child and the violence she

---

<sup>84</sup> Spooner, p.87.

may have inflicted in retribution, but also because, as Wolfgang Funk points out, she is somewhat spectral herself – in fact, ‘she does not even own a birth certificate’.<sup>85</sup> In seeking out her father, then, Alison is also seeking a coherent biography for herself which might provide her with a more secure place in the world, because she is acutely aware of the precariousness of her social position given the nature of her ‘infliction’ (p.258). As she remarks to Colette, ‘the difference between me and the people who are mad’ and live ‘on the streets’ is that ‘they don’t call you mad, if you’re making a living’ (p.259), which implies that if Alison should ever stop making a living, she too would end up on the streets or ‘diagnosed and put in hospital’ (p.259), and would in either case be deprived of her rights.

For some people, then, the loss of personal history and of connections to particular places is linked to the experience of living the extremely precarious life of the vagabond. Although some ‘tourist’ characters are described in spectral terms – Kane, for example, is described as ‘a transient ghoul, a fugitive spectre’ (*Darkmans*, p.801), while Colette is likewise described as a ‘ghoul’ (*Beyond Black*, p.5) – their experiences of disorientation and dislocation are strikingly different from those of people who are systematically expelled from various locations, and who are thus perpetual wanderers. Bauman defines the vagabond as somebody who wanders not through choice but ‘because they find the world within their (local) reach unbearably *inhospitable*’, those who travel ‘because *they have no bearable choice*’.<sup>86</sup> Mart is a good example of a vagabond: in fact, he is frequently referred to as a ‘vagrant’ (pp.315-16, p.359), a figure Bridget Anderson describes as ‘the unruly person who

---

<sup>85</sup> Wolfgang Funk, ‘Ghosts of Postmodernity: Spectral Epistemology and Haunting in Hilary Mantel’s *Fludd* and *Beyond Black*’, in *Twenty-First Century Fiction: What Happens Now*, ed. by Sian Adiseshiah and Rupert Hildyard (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp.147-61 (p.156).

<sup>86</sup> Bauman, *Globalization: The Human Consequences*, pp.92-3.

moves' and who has long been considered as the foundation for every type of criminal activity,<sup>87</sup> which is evident in the accusations levelled at Mart concerning burglary, paedophilia, murder and even terrorism (p.317). Moreover, Mart is also frequently associated with migrants, whose ability to provoke profound social and political anxiety has its roots, according to Anderson, in the figure of the vagrant.<sup>88</sup> This connection between the vagrant and the migrant is also identified by William Walters, who queries whether there might be 'echoes of the treatment of the vagrant and the pauper' in contemporary policies on asylum.<sup>89</sup>

Walters also observes that the 'mobile worlds' produced by globalisation are by their very nature 'open worlds', a fact which renders these 'extended social and economic spaces [...] vulnerable' in the face of 'the proliferation of illicit and clandestine mobilities – the movement of illegal immigrants, drugs, biohazards, contraband, weapons, terrorists, and so on'<sup>90</sup> – in short, an apt checklist for the security hazards the residents of Admiral Drive attach to Mart. The security anxieties surrounding the figure of the vagabond are also prominent in *Darkmans*, which gives a greater historical perspective on vagrancy. As I noted in the previous section, Barker draws significantly not only on jest books but also on early modern rogue literature such as Thomas Harman's *A Caveat for Common Cursitors, Vulgarly Called Vagabonds*, in which, according to Linda Woodbridge, Harman 'adopted the posture of a proto-Homeland Security officer, warning the general public about

---

<sup>87</sup> Bridget Anderson, *Us and Them? The Dangerous Politics of Immigration Control* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p.12.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p.9, p.13.

<sup>89</sup> William Walters, 'Secure borders, safe haven, domopolitics', *Citizenship Studies*, 8 (2004), 237-60 (p.243).

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p.245.

vagrants'.<sup>91</sup> Similarly, Arthur Kinney notes that Harman's text purported to expose the workings of a dangerous criminal anti-society composed of vagabonds and so-called 'sturdy beggars', as opposed to the 'deserving poor', in order to warn against the risks the former group posed to the social and political order of the day.<sup>92</sup>

Many of the figures and associated crimes identified by Harman appear in *Darkmans* (whose title is drawn from the thieves' cant Harman painstakingly records in his text), including the 'Jarkman' or forger and 'the prigger of prancers' or horse thief, whose entry in Harman's book is quoted in Barker's novel (p.314, p.317). The comparable criminal anti-society of the 'fiends' which features in *Beyond Black* also contains figures who readily correspond to Harman's taxonomy – for example, Pikey Pete the horse thief (p.127). Perhaps even more than the rogue figures identified in *Darkmans*, the depiction of the 'fiends' in *Beyond Black* resonates with Derrida's definition of the *voyoucratie* as 'a sort of occult or marginal power, the delinquent counterpower of a secret society or conspiracy, the counterinstitution of a clandestine brotherhood that brings together outlaws and the wayward'.<sup>93</sup> The novel's epigraph – 'There are powers at work in this country about which we have no knowledge' – certainly hints at the idea of an 'occult or marginal power' threatening to disrupt the usual order.

Nevertheless, the fiends' 'mission' to '[chase] out all spooks what are asylum seekers, derelicts, vagrants and refugees' (p.386) is couched in the language of official government agencies involved in the biopolitical management of

---

<sup>91</sup> Linda Woodbridge, 'The Neglected Soldier as Vagrant, Revenger, Tyrant Slayer in Early Modern England', in *Cast Out: Vagrancy and Homelessness in Global and Historical Perspective*, ed. by A.L. Beier and Paul Ocozbek (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2008), pp.64-87 (p.64).

<sup>92</sup> Arthur F. Kinney, 'Introduction', in *Rogues, Vagabonds and Sturdy Beggars*, ed. by Arthur F. Kinney (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, [1973] 1990), pp.11-57 (p.42).

<sup>93</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, trans. by Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), p.65.

populations. Morris tells Alison they have ‘targets’ and ‘a clear-up rate’ set by ‘Old Nick’, who is ‘manager of us all’ (p.387). Not only does this choice of vocabulary allow for a striking parallel to emerge between the work of government agencies and the work of the devil when it comes to the decision of which lives to foster and which to disallow to the point of death, Mantel’s emphasis on the importance of the figure of the vagrant in attempts to control the mobility and entitlements of specific outcast groups also hints at the usefulness of this category in the biopolitical management of populations. As Paul Ocobock points out, the real value of the notion of the vagabond lay in its definition. Vagrancy laws are ‘unique’, inasmuch as they ‘make no specific action or inaction illegal’, and are instead ‘based on personal condition, state of being, and social and economic status’: hence, one need only ‘exhibit the characteristics or stereotypes of vagrants in order to be arrested’. Here, for Ocobock, lies the ‘legal importance’ of vagrancy laws ‘as a broad, overarching mechanism to control and punish a selective group of people.’<sup>94</sup>

### **Indifference is a kind of murder, a death of care**

This biopolitical use of the category of the vagrant is certainly borne out by Mart’s experience of the law in *Beyond Black*. Although he never commits any specific crime, he remains subject to constant harassment from Constable Delingbole purely because of his ‘state of being’, his visibility, his very existence – indeed, Tosi remarks that where policies to protect society from the homeless population are concerned, visibility is targeted as the main problem to the extent that visibility becomes ‘synonymous with existence’.<sup>95</sup> Similarly, Carol McNaughton describes the experience of homelessness – variously understood as ‘a lack of material shelter,

---

<sup>94</sup> Paul Ocobock, ‘Introduction: Vagrancy and Homelessness in Global and Historical Perspective’, in *Cast Out: Vagrancy and Homelessness in Global and Historical Perspective*, ed. by A.L. Beier and Paul Ocobock (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2008), pp.1-34 (p.1).

<sup>95</sup> Tosi, p.101.

lack of privacy, [...] of the citizenship rights, lack of ownership over space [...] a sense of belonging, and with it a secure sense of identity’ – as an ‘ontological crisis’.<sup>96</sup> Unsurprisingly, then, Mart’s is one of the few ‘biographies of strangers’ which Alison cannot make any sense of. She reflects that

You could spend your life trying to fit Mart together [...]. There’s no cause and effect to him. He feels as though he might be the clue to something or other, made up as he is out of bits and pieces of the past and the fag end of other people’s phrases. He’s like a picture where you don’t know which way up it goes. He’s like a walking jigsaw, but you’ve lost the box lid to him. (p.344)

This description of Mart being composed of leftover and lost or damaged objects resonates with Emily Horton’s recent work on the homeless person as a figure of ‘human waste’ in a new sub-genre which she terms the ‘post-millennial Gothic’, a description which applies to contemporary novels in which ‘the centrality of ghosts and haunting reflects a topical preoccupation with discourses of trauma, violence and socio-economic abjection specific to twenty-first century life’.<sup>97</sup> Horton focuses on contemporary British novels such as Jon McGregor’s *Even the Dogs* (2010) and Ali Smith’s *Hotel World* (2002), but *Beyond Black* – in which both Alison and Colette believe Mart to be already ‘in spectral form’ when they first encounter him (p.293) – displays a similar approach to the relationship between haunting and socio-economic abjection.

Moreover, Mart also recalls the figure of the Gothic wanderer, which embodies, for Horton, the Gothic’s longstanding interest in ‘homelessness and

---

<sup>96</sup> Carol McNaughton, *Transitions through Homelessness: Lives on the Edge* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p.7.

<sup>97</sup> Emily Horton, ‘A Voice Without a Name: Gothic Homelessness in Ali Smith’s *Hotel World* and Trezza Azzopardi’s *Remember Me*’, in *Twenty-First Century Fiction: What Happens Now*, ed. by Sîan Adiseshiah and Rupert Hildyard (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp.132-46 (pp.132-33).



homeless trauma'.<sup>98</sup> The same might be said of Gaffar in *Darkmans*. In being Kurdish, Gaffar is an example of someone who is not newly or temporarily displaced, but of someone who is permanently stateless; in fact, Barker also makes him part of an even more reviled and 'outlandish sect' in Sinjar in Iraq, the Yazidis (p.565) (a strikingly prescient choice for exemplifying contemporary experiences of abandonment, given the current suffering of the Yazidi people at the hands of the so-called 'Islamic State'). Gaffar's statelessness is arguably another instance of what McNaughton describes as the 'ontological crisis' undergone by those who lose (or never have) any place to belong, a connection with or grounding in any particular territory. Indeed, Arendt observes that the 'fundamental deprivation of human rights is manifested first and above all in the deprivation of a place in the world', which occurs at the moment 'when belonging to the community into which one is born is no longer a matter of course and not belonging no longer a matter of choice'. This 'loss of home and political status' becomes, according to Arendt, 'identical with expulsion from humanity altogether.'<sup>99</sup> Hence, the refugee is for Agamben another instance of the appearance of the *homo sacer*, 'a new living dead man'.<sup>100</sup>

Some Gothic novels, such as *Caleb Williams* (1794), focus primarily on the horrors of being cast out and becoming a 'living dead man'. In Godwin's novel, this experience leaves Caleb, like the *homo sacer*, vulnerable to violence without redress at the hands of any man, while he remains tied to the sovereign-like figure of Falkland through his very banishment. Yet, as Horton points out, Gothic texts often risk 'romanticising' the homeless wanderer as a kind of 'rebel', at the expense of acknowledging the 'actual lived experience and material poverty' of being

---

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., p.134.

<sup>99</sup> Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, pp.296-97.

<sup>100</sup> Agamben, p.131.

homeless.<sup>101</sup> Something similar to this takes place in *Darkmans* in relation to the figure of the vagabond. At the end of the novel, Gaffar finally encounters Scogin, the ‘darkmans’ himself, who shows Gaffar various moments in the history of his peoples, particularly the destruction of his home and family and ancient places, thereby making Gaffar’s statelessness and homelessness highly visible to him. Yet Gaffar is able to resist Scogin’s powers in a way no other character can, telling him ‘I make my own history’, and offering to play dice with him (pp.836-38). Gaffar thus greets the ghost, the spectre, the absolute other, with the kind of openness Derrida valorises in *Specters of Marx*, saying ‘the “yes” to the arrivant(e), the “come” to the future that cannot be anticipated’.<sup>102</sup> In gambling with the darkmans, Gaffar appears to embrace a kind of perpetual risk and insecurity, and his experience of permanent wandering seems to be the source of his power and resilience – he is a ‘true nomad’ who is thus ‘happiest in limbo’ (p.67). Barker also celebrates the figure of the vagabond through Kane’s decision to rename himself as a ‘medical vagabond’, which frees him from his previous torpor (p.784, p.834).

Barker’s celebration of the vagabond emphasises the fact that *Darkmans* has its generic roots not only in the Gothic genre but also in rogue literature, which according to Woodbridge ‘is basically a comic genre’. She argues that forms of comic storytelling similar to those present in jest books such as *Scogin’s Jests* can also be found in Harman’s *Caveat*, although this is rarely acknowledged by scholars who wish to read Harman’s work purely as a form of ‘proto-sociology’.<sup>103</sup> Moreover, Anthony Vidler points to a long tradition of celebrating the vagabond as an

---

<sup>101</sup> Horton, pp.134-36.

<sup>102</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*, trans. by Peggy Kamuf (New York and London: Routledge, [1994] 2006), p.211.

<sup>103</sup> Linda Woodbridge, ‘Jest Books, the Literature of Roguery, and the Vagrant Poor in Renaissance England’, *English Literary Renaissance*, 33 (2003), 201-210 (pp.207-208).

oppositional figure, and of reading ‘the characteristics of vagabondage’ as ‘an inherent critique of social and legal norms.’ Vidler associates this tradition with works such as Johan Huizinga’s *Homo Ludens* – a text which features among the many books Kane is surprised to find that Beede has been reading (p.88) – and with the concept of the carnival, that which ‘invades its “host” cities like a band of ruffians’ and ‘overturns daily routines and commonplace thoughts, upsetting hierarchies and crowning fools’.<sup>104</sup> In *Darkmans*, Scogin displays some of these qualities; indeed, Marsh suggests that Scogin’s presence unleashes a form of ‘medieval misrule’ which invigorates the present;<sup>105</sup> while Victor Sage suggests that Barker’s focus on the ‘grotesque body’ in much of her writing has its ‘most obvious source’ in ‘Bakhtin’s classic account of Rabelais’.<sup>106</sup> *Darkmans* can thus be read as a celebration of the kind of disorder associated with the vagabond, a figure Giovanna Procacci describes as ‘order’s itinerant nightmare’.<sup>107</sup> Indeed, even the novel itself, which wanders considerably and lacks any straightforward plot, can be said to share some of the qualities of the vagabond: certainly, the novel’s ‘untidiness’ has been associated with its failure to win the Man Booker Prize despite its being shortlisted.<sup>108</sup>

Yet a sense of menace remains underneath the comic and unruly narrative of *Darkmans*. As one reviewer points out, figures such as jesters and clowns may be

---

<sup>104</sup> Anthony Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely* (Cambridge, MA and London: The MIT Press, 1992), p.209.

<sup>105</sup> Marsh, ‘Nicola Barker’s *Darkmans* and “the vengeful tsunami of history”’.

<sup>106</sup> Victor Sage, ‘The Ambivalence of Laughter: the development of Nicola Barker’s Grotesque Realism’, *Review of Contemporary Fiction*, 32 (2012), 87-97 (pp.89-90).

<sup>107</sup> Giovanna Procacci, ‘Social economy and the government of poverty’, in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, ed. by G. Burchell, C. Gordon and P. Miller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp.151-68 (p.161).

<sup>108</sup> See Merritt Moseley, ‘Tidy and Untidy Novels: The Booker Prizes 2006-2007’, *Sewanee Review*, 116 (2008), pp.289-303 (pp.301-303).

comical, but their comedy is often malevolent.<sup>109</sup> This is certainly true of the particular exploits of Scogin which Barker chooses to recount in this novel, especially the oft-repeated story of Scogin burning the beggars who come to him to seek alms, which hints at the extreme violence to which the dispossessed are often subjected. *Beyond Black* also emphasises the malevolent nature of jester figures and clowns: although Alison describes Morris to Colette and to her audiences as a ‘little bouncing circus clown’ (p.89), Colette quickly discovers that this is far from the truth. However, despite this similarity between the novels, amidst its black humour *Beyond Black* foregrounds the vulnerability of the dispossessed to a greater extent than *Darkmans*. Whereas Funk argues that the ghosts in *Beyond Black* are ‘spectres in a Derridean sense’ which ‘rejoice in the liberating potential of uncertainty’,<sup>110</sup> I argue that there is nothing particularly celebratory in Mantel’s depiction of those ‘living ghosts’ who eke out a precarious existence beyond the protection of the law.

However, the same question persists in both *Beyond Black* and *Darkmans*: whether it is better to continue to attempt to eke out such a precarious existence rather than bringing oneself under the biopolitical management of state institutions, which might in fact engender a further loss of rights and freedoms. As Mitchell Dean points out, in liberal forms of government there is a ‘long history’ of those sub-populations deemed to lack the attributes of autonomy and responsibility expected of the active citizen being ‘subjected to all sorts of disciplinary, bio-political and even sovereign interventions’ in order to ensure that the remainder of the population, who have achieved ‘the maturity required of the liberal subject’, are safeguarded against

---

<sup>109</sup> Patrick Ness, ‘A roar, a titter, and a tee-hee-hee’, *The Guardian*, 5 May 2007 <<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/may/05/featuresreviews.guardianreview3>> [accessed 12<sup>th</sup> August 2015].

<sup>110</sup> Funk, p.157.

the risks these sub-populations present.<sup>111</sup> One of the favoured techniques of the contemporary period is that of ‘case-management risk’, which subjects those considered to be ‘at risk of being a danger to the wider population’ to ‘a range of therapeutic (e.g. counselling, self-help groups, support groups), sovereign (prison, detention centres) and disciplinary (training and retraining) practices in an effort either to eliminate them completely from communal spaces [...] or to lower the dangers posed by their risk’.<sup>112</sup>

In *Darkmans*, one of the clearest examples of the deployment of this ‘case-management risk’ can be seen in the Broad family, who have been identified as posing a high level of risk to the population of their local area. Several members of the family have been subjected to disciplinary and sovereign interventions (for example, through being imprisoned) but certain members also require case management from social workers. Kelly’s mother, Dina Broad – described as ‘Jabba the Hut with a womb, chronic asthma and a council flat’ (p.107) – has her life (figured by Barker as ‘The Dina Broad Experience’) managed by a number of ‘technical staff’, including ‘the doctor, the social worker, the neighbour, the policeman’ (p.105). In *Beyond Black*, the clearest example of ‘case-management risk’ lies less in such official agencies and more in the relationship between Alison and Colette, who controls and maximises Alison’s economic situation, even considering the ‘demographics’ of her audiences in order to calculate the probabilities of success in particular towns (p.7, p.18). Moreover, she tries to manage Alison’s health, partly by encouraging her to join private health insurance schemes and have health checks (p.388), and partly by attempting to exert ruthless control

---

<sup>111</sup> Mitchell Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (London: SAGE, 2010), p.158.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.218-19.

over Alison's diet; and she also urges Alison to make herself 'useful to society' by working with such official agencies as the police (p.178).

That the majority of 'case-management' work in *Beyond Black* is carried out by 'private' providers (so to speak), rather than official institutions, speaks to the waning of the presence of welfare institutions in contemporary Britain. For example, one would expect someone like Mart in *Beyond Black* to be subject to case-management techniques. As McNaughton observes, homeless people are considered to 'require the explicit interventions of specialist agencies to assist them', which manifests itself in an 'entrenchment in contact with welfare services'.<sup>113</sup> Yet Mart appears to have little or no contact with any specialist agencies. The drop-in centre he used to attend has closed as part of 'a policy', and he tells Alison that he has come 'through the net', that he was 'on a list' but is 'not computerate yet', that the list he was on 'has been lost' (p.299). This is in fact a common theme in Mantel's work: in her early novel *Every Day is Mother's Day* (1985), for example, Muriel Axon's social worker loses her file when she takes her car into a garage. The decade in which this earlier novel was written saw the beginning of a considerable retrenchment in welfare services. Whereas under welfare capitalism, the state had functioned as 'the primary guarantor against the vagaries and uncertainties of everyday life', this function was gradually eroded in the eighties, after which individuals were expected to become responsible for their own risks.<sup>114</sup>

The sense of being neglected or even utterly abandoned as a result of the erosion of welfare provision is a common one for the dead Alison encounters, who

---

<sup>113</sup> McNaughton, p.26.

<sup>114</sup> Patricia, Kennet, 'Homelessness, citizenship, and social exclusion', in *Homelessness: Exploring the New Terrain* ed. by Patricia Kennet and Alex Marsh (Bristol: The Policy Press, 1999), pp.37-60 (p.41, p.43).

‘think they’ve been abandoned in a car park’ or ‘in a corridor, lying on a trolley, and nobody comes [...] they’ve actually gone over, but they think it’s just the NHS’ (p.150). Yet *Beyond Black* also hints that the abandonment of people such as Mart is less an unintended consequence of reduced provision than a deliberate strategy to disallow certain lives to the point of death. The way in which Mart defines the term ‘policy’ for Alison is particularly striking in this regard. He tells Alison that a policy is ‘either like, shutting down, or it’s like, admissions, or it’s...removals. You go to another place’ (p.295).

In *Darkmans*, despite the emphasis on an interventionist approach in the case of the Broads, Kane also remarks on the abandonment of specific groups by official agencies. He tells Gaffar about the condition of one of his ‘clients’ before Kane began dealing prescription medicine to him: the man ‘was pretty much a tramp’ when Kane first encountered him, after having been prescribed medication which was ‘a disaster’ by the same doctor who kept Kane’s own mother ‘*criminally* undermedicated right up until the end’ (p.498). Kane’s drug dealing, which he describes earlier in the novel as an attempt to ‘manage pain’ and later as the role of being a ‘medical vagabond’, thus comes to take the place of official agencies who have withdrawn or provided the wrong kind of support – although Kane is easily distracted from this more noble and political slant on his work, and his ‘horror [...] immediately assuaged’, merely ‘by the prospect of food’ (p.499). The problems with this ability to turn away so quickly, to be indifferent to the welfare of certain groups of people, are neatly summed up by Barker’s description of Kane’s relationship with his father: his ‘sheer indifference’ to Beede prompts the question ‘wasn’t indifference a kind of murder, anyway? A death of care? Of *interest*?’ (p.73).

Yet both *Darkmans* and *Beyond Black* also hint that indifference is not necessarily the worst thing, where the only alternative is an intervention that amounts to a form of social death anyway. In *Darkmans*, Dory battles ‘merely to function; to hold down a job; to raise a family’, in order to avoid becoming ‘some psychological experiment’ (p.51), to avoid being ‘diagnosed [...] to be boxed up, to be compartmentalised, to be made separate, to be lost’. Better, he believes, to struggle alone than to hand himself over to ‘medical practitioners’ (p.56). As I noted in the previous section, in *Beyond Black* Alison is likewise mindful of the risks of being called ‘mad’, of being ‘diagnosed and put in hospital’ (p.259). As is the case for the Kurds in *Darkmans*, who are ‘at worst persecuted, at best loathed and ignored’ (p.66), so the ending of *Beyond Black* also hints that being forgotten may have its benefits where persecution is the only alternative.

Indeed, although Spooner describes the ending of Mantel’s novel as ‘comic and partially affirmative’ and insists that ‘the doom-laden atmosphere’ of the novel’s early pages ‘has been replaced by one of jollity and fun’,<sup>115</sup> I argue that it is difficult to view the novel’s ending as a particularly happy one. If anything the text is circular – it ends more or less where it begins, with Alison travelling the orbital road through the ‘motorway wastes’. Alison’s situation is certainly a little less bad by the end of the novel; she is no longer obviously persecuted by the fiends, and she has new and benign spirit guides who offer her some measure of care; but her ‘infliction’ still remain to exhaust and torment her, and she now seems to be a perpetual wanderer, having left any attempts at creating a secure home behind her. ‘Unmolested, unobserved,’ Alison and her new spirit guides ‘flee before the storm.’ ‘If the universe is a great mind,’ we are told, ‘it may sometimes have its absences’ (p.451).

---

<sup>115</sup> Spooner, p.81, p.89.



The novel thus hints that slipping under the radar but still managing to function is the best outcome Alison can hope for, and may constitute a level of vulnerability with which she can just about live. As she reflects in the parallel motorway journey in the novel's opening pages, 'This is our life and we have to lead it. Think,' she warns, 'of the alternative' (p.2).

## **Chapter 5 – From the cradle to the grave: haunting at the founding of the welfare state in Sarah Waters’s *The Little Stranger* (2009)**

### **Introduction: the nature of the haunting**

In her review of Sarah Waters’s *The Little Stranger*, Tracy Chevalier suggests that the novel bears traces of the ‘inherent’ structure of the ghost story, which is that of ‘a futile argument between sceptic and believer’.<sup>1</sup> *The Little Stranger* tells the story of the aristocratic Ayres family and their crumbling mansion, Hundreds Hall, which is haunted by a mysterious and malevolent presence, a ‘little stranger’, which busies itself by animating everyday objects, setting fires, possessing the family’s dog, biting and scratching the family, and eventually driving each member of the Ayres family to madness and self-destruction. Yet the house is also undergoing a more mundane form of destruction at the hands of the newly-elected post-war Labour Government, which is ‘slowly sucking the life out of the whole family.’<sup>2</sup> In *The Little Stranger*, the apparently supernatural chaos within the house is paralleled by the rapid transformation and modernisation of the world outside, which is symbolised by the inauguration of the welfare state and of the National Health Service, institutions which seem to herald the final death throes of the landed gentry.

For Chevalier, it is in this emphasis on social class that *The Little Stranger* ‘really shines’, particularly in Waters’s depiction of the novel’s narrator, Doctor Faraday, a local working-class boy who has risen by middle age to an uneasy position in the professional middle classes, and who becomes obsessed with

---

<sup>1</sup> Tracy Chevalier, ‘Class-ridden Britain gives up the ghost’, *The Guardian*, 31 May 2009 <<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2009/may/31/sarah-waters-the-little-stranger>> [accessed 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014].

<sup>2</sup> Sarah Waters, *The Little Stranger* (London: Virago, 2009), p.378. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

Hundreds Hall. However, the novel's reliance on the 'futile argument between sceptic and believer' drawn from the 'fusty genre' of the ghost story means that '[p]oor Dr Faraday has the thankless task of trying to convince the Ayres that every odd sight and sound and incident has a rational explanation.' Chevalier recounts that she 'eventually grew tired of vacillating between wondering if there was a real ghost and expecting the housemaid to be behind it all'; she wishes for 'a credible third way', which 'Waters hints at', but its 'supernaturalism disguised with psychology' leaves Chevalier 'dissatisfied'.<sup>3</sup>

This 'vacillation' between possible explanations – a 'real ghost', human agency, or 'supernaturalism disguised with psychology' – is evident in the final pages of the novel, which ends with Faraday wandering about Hundreds Hall some three years after the disturbing events which led to the deaths of Mrs Ayres and her daughter Caroline, and to the incarceration of the son, Roderick, in an asylum. Faraday is 'troubled' by the fact that he remains 'no nearer now to understanding just what happened at the Hall' than he was at the time of these events. He mentions the Gothic narrative told in the local area about Hundreds being haunted 'by the spirit of a servant-girl who was badly treated by a cruel master, and who jumped or was pushed to her death from one of the upstairs windows' (p.495). By contrast, his colleague, Doctor Seeley, has apparently 'come down firmly in favour of his old, rational view that Hundreds was [...] defeated by history', that 'the Ayreses, unable to advance with the times, simply opted for retreat – for suicide, and madness', like many other 'old gentry families' in this post-war period. Though Faraday would like to accept this 'rational view', which he describes as 'convincing enough', he remains 'troubled' by the memory of Seeley's 'other, odder theory: that Hundreds was

---

<sup>3</sup> Chevalier, 'Class-ridden Britain gives up the ghost'.

consumed by some dark germ, some ravenous shadow-creature, some “little stranger”, spawned from the troubled unconscious of someone connected with the house’. In any case, if the Hall is haunted, Faraday concludes, ‘its ghost doesn’t show itself to me. For I’ll turn, and am disappointed – realising that what I am looking at is only a cracked window-pane, and that the face gazing distortedly from it, baffled and longing, is my own’ (pp.498-99).

Of the three explanations evident here – the ghost, the ‘rational view’, and the ‘odder theory’ of the ‘little stranger’ (which corresponds to the ‘third way’ Chevalier finds dissatisfying) – critical work on *The Little Stranger* often turns to Seeley’s ‘odder theory’, although in a nod to the ‘rational view’ which emphasises post-war social transformation and anxieties about shifting class boundaries, readings of the novel are more likely to identify Faraday himself as the source of ‘the little stranger’, rather than agreeing with Seeley that ‘it’s generally women [...] at the root of this sort of thing’ (p.380). Faraday’s background and profession make him especially aware of the need for the social changes brought about by the newly-elected Labour government which are ‘slowly sucking the life’ out of the landed gentry, and he confesses to harbouring a ‘dark dislike’ of the Ayres family’s snobbish attitudes (p.27). Yet he is also fearful of the new political order, especially as regards the financial repercussions the creation of the NHS might have for his small practice; moreover, despite his distaste for the family’s snobbery, Faraday also desperately wants to possess their house and their social status, a desire which first manifests itself in his childhood vandalism of the Hall for the sake of a memento, an act he compares to that of ‘a man [...] wanting a lock of hair from the head of a girl he had suddenly and blindingly become enamoured of’ (p.3). It is this obsession and vandalism, coupled with Faraday’s encounter with his own reflection when

searching for the Hundreds ‘ghost’, which lead critics such as Ann Heilmann to identify the ‘little stranger’ as Faraday’s ‘spectral *Doppelgänger*’, which either possesses Faraday or emerges from him as a ‘phantasm’ and attacks the Ayreses; meanwhile, Emma Parker suggests that the ‘poltergeist embodies [Faraday’s] fury at class inequality.’<sup>4</sup>

However, it is arguably more productive to ‘vacillate’ between explanations, as Chevalier reluctantly does, than to attempt to come to any final decision on the nature of the ‘haunting’ or the identity of the ‘little stranger’. What interests me in this chapter is the issue of *when* these apparent hauntings take place. Chevalier, Heilmann, and Parker are right to identify post-war social transformation as important, but I want to emphasise the biopolitical nature of these social transformations, which are driven by the founding of the welfare state and the NHS. Their effects on the Hall and the surrounding area are narrated from the point of view of a GP; moreover, as both Monica Germanà and Georges Letissier have observed, Hundreds Hall is frequently depicted as an ‘organic entity’ or a ‘living organ’.<sup>5</sup>

*The Little Stranger* is centrally concerned with the inauguration of a biopolitical project for the care of a population’s life, one which will inevitably involve decisions on which lives should be fostered and which should be disallowed – decisions whose effects (as in all the novels I have examined thus far) are figured

---

<sup>4</sup> Ann Heilmann, ‘Specters of the Victorian in the Neo-Forties Novel: Sarah Waters’s *The Little Stranger* (2009) and its Intertexts’, *Contemporary Women’s Writing*, 6 (2012), 38-55 (p.47). Emma Parker, ‘The Country House Revisited: Sarah Waters’ *The Little Stranger*’, in *Sarah Waters*, ed. by Kaye Mitchell (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp.99-113 (p.106).

<sup>5</sup> Monica Germanà, ‘The Death of the Lady: Haunted Garments and (Re-)Possession in *The Little Stranger*’, in *Sarah Waters*, ed. by Kaye Mitchell (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp.114-28 (pp.115-16). Georges Letissier, ‘Hauntology as Compromise between Traumatic Realism and Spooky Romance in Sarah Waters’s *The Little Stranger*’, in *Trauma and Romance in Contemporary British Literature*, ed. by Jean-Michel Ganteau and Susana Onega (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2013), pp.34-50 (p.46).

in relation to forms of haunting and of living death. In this chapter, I examine how the different explanations of the haunting, and especially different interpretations of the figure of the ‘little stranger’, relate to the representation of the biopolitical management of life in the novel. In order to do this, I turn to Roberto Esposito’s analysis of the category of the ‘person’, in which he elaborates its biopolitical role in dividing and managing the life of a population. I also return to Giorgio Agamben’s analysis of Xavier Bichat’s division of life into vegetative and relational parts, which I discussed in the first and second chapters of this thesis. Bichat’s division of life is likewise central to Esposito’s theorisation of the category of the person, and I suggest that his and Agamben’s emphasis on how biopolitics targets vegetative life constitutes a productive way of exploring Waters’s depiction of the ways in which certain lives are selected to be fostered or disallowed at the behest of what Esposito describes as ‘the “deciding” machine of the person’.<sup>6</sup>

Following an initial section which outlines this theoretical material, this chapter is divided into three further sections. The second focuses primarily on the figure of the little stranger as something more akin to the ghost or the returning dead in Gothic texts, whose presence attests to the violent effects of discourses relating to social class and imperialism which are built into the very fabric of Hundreds Hall, and which are shown to have been involved in biopolitical decisions which strip life of attributes and depersonalise certain categories of living beings. By contrast, the third section considers the little stranger not in relation to the bare life which remains once the subject has been stripped of political life, but of the life which precedes the creation of this subject. I turn here to Seeley’s ‘odder theory’ about the events in the Hall, which he suggests may be caused by a ‘little stranger’ (a nineteenth-century

---

<sup>6</sup> Roberto Esposito, *Third Person: Politics of Life and Philosophy of the Impersonal*, trans. by Zakiya Hanafi (Cambridge: Polity, 2012), p.99.

euphemism for an unborn child),<sup>7</sup> which has begun ‘to grow, like a child in the womb’ (p.380) of the house-body. The idea of the presence in the Hall as an unborn child opens up a space for examining the haunting as related not simply to the past but also to the novel’s post-war setting and to the contemporary period in which the novel was published. I focus on the novel’s representation of problematic ideas about reproduction and particularly the targeting of women’s bodies as potentially reproductive, and on how these ideas are embedded in many of the policies of the welfare state – a biopolitical project dedicated to the care of life ‘from the cradle to the grave’.<sup>8</sup> The closing section of this chapter then returns to the ‘rational view’ of Hundreds Hall and the Ayres family being ‘defeated by history’ in order to consider how Waters depicts a more complex narrative in *The Little Stranger* than that of the old order being supplanted by the new, and how she draws on the Gothic mode to suggest that the problems of the old order remain embedded in the biopolitical tools used to rebuild post-war Britain.

### **Persons and things**

The category of the person, ‘endowed with a higher degree of universality than the modern concept of citizenship’,<sup>9</sup> was particularly significant in the post-war period in which *The Little Stranger* is set. At this point, it was considered to be the best means of securing the subjective rights of every human being, regardless of their status as citizens – rights which would be codified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Yet the category of the person has clearly failed to live up to its promised ability to ‘unite human beings and citizens, body and soul, law and life’: as Esposito points out, ‘we are forced to admit that no right is less guaranteed today

---

<sup>7</sup> Parker, p.105.

<sup>8</sup> Winston Churchill, quoted in Peter Clarke, *Hope and Glory: Britain 1900-2000* (London: Penguin, [1996] 2004), p.221.

<sup>9</sup> Esposito, *Third Person*, p.3.

than the right to life.’<sup>10</sup> In order to understand this dilemma, it is necessary to look to the history of the concept of the person.

In classical Latin, the term *persona* described ‘a stage garment or theatrical costume’, a mask which, over time, ‘also began to designate the individual who wore it’, until it became ‘imprinted on the face of the wearer [...] correspond[ing] in every detail’. This ‘integration between representation and reality’ was further developed in the creation of death masks which, once incorporated into Christianity, came to represent not the ‘bodily dimension’ of the human being, but ‘its spiritual dimension’. This distinction persisted in the thought of René Descartes and John Locke, for whom the idea of the person ‘qualifies that which, in a human being, is other than and beyond body’, and therefore names ‘the irreducible difference that separates the living being from itself.’<sup>11</sup>

The other key source for contemporary notions of personhood lies in the Roman legal tradition, in which the concept of the person operated as a ‘general category’ within which human beings were ‘arranged’ in ‘abstract categories’ according to how they were ‘subordinate [...] to an external form of mastery that made them objects rather than subjects of law.’ Depending on their particular status in relation to the category of the person, human beings could be ‘legitimately killed, sold, used, or even freed by the *paterfamilias*’, the only living being who was autonomous before the law. However, figures such as the slave, who was ‘both a thing with the role of a person and a person reduced to the status of a thing’, produced ‘disruptive effects’ in this system of categorisation by hovering in a ‘zone

---

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp.3-4.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., pp.74-6.



of indistinguishability' between different statuses.<sup>12</sup> According to Esposito, this 'zone of indistinguishability' between person and thing opened up in Roman law persists in contemporary definitions of personhood: '[a]s long as the identity of the person is derived negatively from the thing – from its not-being a thing – the thing is destined to become the continually expanding space of everything the person distinguishes and distances itself from.' The resultant processes of 'personalization and depersonalization' are therefore 'nothing but different flows of the same process, one that is ancient in origin but whose effects are far from being exhausted.'<sup>13</sup>

However, in the modern era the category of the person has 'ceased to be a general category' which someone can pass 'in and out of' as they did under Roman law. Instead, it has become 'a quality implicit in every human being', which is 'identified with the rational and volitional or moral part of the individual, the part invested with a universal value'. Hence the category of the person signifies 'a splitting action' which divides the human being into 'two areas': 'a biological body and a site of legal imputation, the first being subjected to the discretionary control of the second.'<sup>14</sup> Esposito accounts for this transformation by turning to the work of Xavier Bichat, which (as I noted in Chapter One) likewise plays a central role in Agamben's theorisation of biopolitics in *The Open*. According to Agamben, Bichat's notion that 'two animals' exist in 'every higher organism' – the 'internal animal', whose 'vegetative life' is 'merely the repetition of [...] blind and unconscious functions' such as circulation and respiration, and the 'external animal', whose life is 'defined through its relation to the external world' – produces an

---

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., pp.76-7.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p.96, p.99.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p.80, pp.82-3.

‘intimate caesura’ inside every humans being which enables ‘the very decision of what is human and what is not’.<sup>15</sup>

Moreover, in *Remnants of Auschwitz*, Agamben draws attention to Bichat’s idea that ‘life can survive itself’: that life’s being ‘constitutively fractured into a plurality of lives’ in turn entails a plurality of ‘deaths’.<sup>16</sup> This plurality of deaths also interests Esposito in *Third Person*, in which he foregrounds Bichat’s vitalist notion that the ‘specific status of the living body’ lies ‘precisely in its active opposition to the pressure of death.’ Bichat’s interest in ‘apparent death’ (such as the forms of ‘suspended animation’ I discussed in Chapters One and Two) led him to characterise death not as ‘a clean cut’ which extinguishes life instantly, but ‘as a dull murmur accompanying and silently gnawing at every moment of life, distributing itself into many little deaths, which only at a certain point join together to form one lethal event.’ As with Agamben, Esposito emphasises the link between this ‘duplication of death’, involving ‘partial deaths, local entropies and continuous, unbridled mortality’, and the ‘duplication of life itself’: ‘organic life’, with its ‘vegetative functions’, and ‘animal life, which governs the motor, sensory, and intellectual activities involving relations with the outside.’ Just as death takes precedence over life, so too does organic life prevail over animal life; firstly, because ‘organic life continues even during sleep, while animal life is instead interrupted’; and secondly, because ‘there is organic life before birth, when the fetus experiences only a nutritive

---

<sup>15</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, trans. by Kevin Attell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), pp.13-15.

<sup>16</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive*, trans. by Daniel Heller-Roazen (New York: Zone, [1998] 2008), pp.151-52.

life', and organic life which 'continues for some time' after the 'first death' of the external animal.<sup>17</sup>

While Agamben is especially interested in the biomedical implications of Bichat's division of life (for example, in the form of life support and transplant technologies, as I noted in chapter two),<sup>18</sup> Esposito foregrounds its impact on modern political philosophy's assumption that 'subjects endowed with a rational will [...] by collective choice, establish a certain political order', thereby creating a decisive break with the state of nature. Bichat's work undermines this conception of the 'political subject' as 'a source of voluntary action', because although the will is 'linked to animal life', it remains 'deeply innervated in a bodily system that is sustained and to a large extent governed by its vegetative part.' Hence, once the human being has been divided into 'a vegetal life and an animal life', the conception of the person 'as a site of legal and political imputation' begins to 'break down'. The person is now 'traversed by a power that is foreign to it, which shapes its instincts, emotions and desires into a form that can no longer be ascribed to a single element': it is 'as if a non-human – something different from and earlier than animal nature itself – had taken up residence inside the human being; or as if it had always been there, with dissolutive effects on the personal modality of this being.'<sup>19</sup>

Agamben identifies the 'isolation of nutritive life (which the ancient commentators will already call vegetative)' as 'a fundamental event' whose 'strategic importance' lies not only in its biomedical implications but also in the development of modern biopolitics, which is founded on 'a progressive generalization and redefinition of the concept of vegetative life (now coinciding with

---

<sup>17</sup> Esposito, *Third Person*, pp.20-23.

<sup>18</sup> Agamben, *The Open*, p.15.

<sup>19</sup> Esposito, *Third Person*, pp.23-4.

the biological heritage of the nation)', over which the modern state from the seventeenth century onwards 'would carry out its new vocation' for 'the care of the population's life'.<sup>20</sup> Esposito also associates Bichat's division of life with the transformation of politics, which was concerned with 'the relationship between human beings', into biopolitics, which concerns itself with 'the precise point at which the frontier is located between what is human and what, inside the human itself, is other than human.'<sup>21</sup> For Agamben, this is the task of the 'anthropological machine';<sup>22</sup> for Esposito, it is the task of 'the "deciding" machine of the person', which 'legally separates life from itself' and makes life 'the terrain for a preliminary decision about what must live and what may die, because it is a simple thing in the hands of those who, thanks to their superior ontological status, are exclusively qualified to dispose of it'.<sup>23</sup> This division applies not only to the individual body but also to the human species, which is divided 'into two juxtaposed areas of unequal value' and 'endowed with a different right to survival', depending on the extent to which they are capable of mastering 'the blind corporeality of their vegetative life'.<sup>24</sup>

### **The deciding machine of the person**

This view of the person persists in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which (following the atrocities of war) sought to endow human beings 'with a rational will in relation to themselves' as 'masters of their own fate'.<sup>25</sup> For Jacques Maritain, one of the key figures involved in drafting the UDHR, human rights were fundamentally linked to the category of the person, understood as 'the entity that is qualified by its dominion over its own biological substrate, a whole that can unify

---

<sup>20</sup> Agamben, *The Open*, pp.14-15.

<sup>21</sup> Esposito, *Third Person*, p.24.

<sup>22</sup> Agamben, *The Open*, p.37.

<sup>23</sup> Esposito, *Third Person*, p.99.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.6-7.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.6-7, p.72.

and dominate its parts.’<sup>26</sup> This ability to unify and dominate one’s ‘parts’ is precisely what is at stake in *The Little Stranger*, in which Hundreds Halls is apparently haunted by somebody’s failure to achieve this: as Caroline puts it, the things haunting the Hall are ‘not ghosts’ but ‘parts of a person [...] Unconscious parts, so strong or so troubled they can take on a life of their own’ (p.364).

Moreover, Waters’s depiction of the Hall itself also resonates in some striking ways with the ideas about the person outlined above. As I noted in the introduction to this chapter, Germanà asserts that in *The Little Stranger*

the architectural space [...] forms a symbiotic relationship with the novel’s characters, encouraging a reading of the decaying mansion as an organic entity, not simply accommodating the supernatural episodes which take place within its walls, but nurturing the malevolent force that ultimately drives all of its inhabitants away.<sup>27</sup>

Letissier also identifies the house as a ‘living organ’, although he remarks that the mansion is characterised by ‘a peculiar ambience, amounting to death-in-life, life-in-death’, which he likens to the ‘spell of lethargy’ cast over ‘the castle of the *Belle au bois dormant*’ which is mentioned twice in the novel (p.242, pp.386-87); indeed, as in the fairy tale, the gardens of the Hall continue to grow until they are ‘overrun with nettles and blindweed’.<sup>28</sup> The idea of this continued growth of vegetation while Hundreds Hall ‘sleeps’ is also suggestive of the continuance of the functions of organic life during those periods when the functions of animal life are suspended in sleep. Moreover, if the house can be understood as an ‘organic entity’, it is more akin to a dying body than a living one; or, rather, an undead and decaying body. The house/body does not suffer one ‘lethal event’ but is instead troubled by a series of ‘partial deaths’ and ‘local entropies’: the Hall has ‘reached a point of dilapidation

---

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p.88.

<sup>27</sup> Germanà, pp.115-16.

<sup>28</sup> Letissier, p.46.

where one defect was almost setting off another' (p.331), such that one by one the rooms are gradually shut up and let go, 'dead as paralysed limbs' (p.233). The activity of the 'little stranger', which contributes to the gradual destruction of various rooms, can be understood as the 'dull murmur' of death occupying the house/body, 'accompanying and silently gnawing at every moment of life, distributing itself into many little deaths'.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, the figure of the little stranger is closely associated with death, particularly through Mrs Ayres's belief that the presence in the house is that of her dead firstborn daughter, Susan.

As a result of this apparent haunting, Hundreds Hall seems to be 'traversed by a power that is foreign to it': it is as if something other than the human – the 'little stranger' – has 'taken up residence [...] with dissolutive effects' on the mansion's cultivated 'lines and Georgian symmetries' (p.498).<sup>30</sup> Roderick Ayres's description of the little stranger's behaviour is particularly suggestive of this figure's proximity to organic life. Convinced that the little stranger is animating the 'ordinary' objects in his room, Roderick tells Faraday that 'the *wrongness* of the thing' lies in the fact that the objects seem to be 'acting somehow impersonally', as though animated 'by blind, thoughtless motion' (p.162) – rather like the 'blind corporeality' or 'the repetition of [...] blind unconscious functions' which Esposito and Agamben respectively associate with vegetative life.<sup>31</sup>

Roderick believes that this 'blind, thoughtless motion' has possessed him: he is convinced that the Hall's 'infection' is 'inside' him, and tells Faraday that 'it's *changing* me [...] making me *like* it [...] it's been working *through* me' (p.225). Even the sceptical Faraday worries that the 'thing' that had begun

<sup>29</sup> See Esposito, *Third Person*, pp.20-23.

<sup>30</sup> See Esposito, *Third Person*, pp.23-4.

<sup>31</sup> Esposito, *Third Person*, p.6. Agamben, *The Open*, p.14.

as a “nip” or a “whisper” [...] had been slowly gathering in strength. It had moved objects about, lit fires, put scribbles on a wainscot. Now it could run on pattering feet. It could be heard, as a struggling voice. It was growing, it was developing... (p.382)

Faraday's ruminations on the little stranger's development appear just after Seeley has described this figure as 'a Mr Hyde', and beyond the obvious association of the 'shadow self' (p.380) with the figure of the double, there are some notable similarities between the two creatures. For example, like Hyde, the little stranger grows in strength over time, and is able to possess its 'host' at will; moreover, the little stranger also shares Hyde's association with undeath. What horrifies Roderick about the little stranger is the same thing which disturbs Jekyll about Hyde: that something which is seemingly 'dead' and 'has no shape' is nevertheless able to 'usurp the offices of life'.<sup>32</sup>

Hence, like Jekyll, Roderick fears being 'deposed out of life';<sup>33</sup> in fact, this is precisely what appears to happen to him, inasmuch as the stronger the little stranger grows, the more Roderick becomes akin to the inanimate objects in his room which have been animated by 'blind, thoughtless motion'. Just as these objects move with 'a jerky, halting gait' (p.161), so Faraday describes Roderick beginning to move 'automatically' (p.61) and as though he has 'odd little weights inside him, rolling unpredictably about' (p.151). This slippage between persons and things in *The Little Stranger* resonates with Esposito's observation that the identity of the person is 'derived negatively from the thing – from its not being a thing'.<sup>34</sup> The little stranger's association with both the foetus (the unborn child) and the corpse (the dead firstborn child of the Ayres family) is especially significant, since these figures

---

<sup>32</sup> Robert Louis Stevenson, *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* [1886], in *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde and Other Tales*, ed. by Roger Luckhurst (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp.5-66 (p.65).

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Esposito, *Third Person*, p.96.

open up ‘passageways’ between the ‘two spheres of person and thing’. For Esposito, the corpse and the foetus indicate that ‘what precedes and follows being a person is never a simple thing, but perhaps a not-yet-person or a no-longer-person, located halfway on the route from thing to person and from person to thing’.<sup>35</sup>

It is significant that Faraday should be the one to describe Roderick in terms which depersonalise him and push him towards the domain of the thing, because as his doctor Faraday wields considerable power, and is ultimately responsible for ensuring that Roderick is committed to an asylum. In other words, it is for Faraday to decide the point at which Roderick is no longer capable of holding the subjective rights of the rational person. As Esposito points out, ‘what really qualifies as a “person”’ only includes ‘adult, healthy individuals’. Outside of this classification, he argues, ‘lies the no man’s land of the non-person (the fetus), the quasi-person (the infant), the semi-person (the elderly, no longer mentally or physically able), the no-longer person (the patient in a vegetative state)’.<sup>36</sup> The designation of Roderick as a ‘semi-person’ no longer capable of holding subjective rights – or perhaps even as a ‘no-longer person’, since by the end of the novel he is ‘kept almost permanently sedated’ (pp.494-95) – can be understood as an example of ‘the “deciding” machine of the person’ at work in Faraday actions, which are sanctioned by his ‘superior ontological status’ as a doctor.<sup>37</sup>

Faraday is by no means the first doctor to appear in the novels I have analysed thus far, and the tendency to figure these doctors in sinister terms (the murderous Doctor Seward in *Anno Dracula*, for example) is perhaps reflective of Agamben’s observation that ‘in the biopolitical horizon that characterizes modernity,

---

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., pp.93-4.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p.97.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p.99.



the physician and the scientist move in the no-man's-land which at one point the sovereign alone could penetrate.<sup>38</sup> The disturbing nature of the physician's power over life and death in modern biopolitics is also something Waters hints at in *The Little Stranger*; for example, Caroline objects to dancing with one of Faraday's surgical colleagues because she thinks he is 'sizing [her] up for the knife' (p.256); moreover, Faraday tells Roderick that doctors are 'used to looking at human beings as it were without their skins [...] I've known one or two who've seen so much weakness they've developed a sort of contempt for mankind' (p.154).

Later in the novel, Faraday will see Mrs Ayres quite literally without her skin when he performs her post-mortem after the activities of the little stranger have led her to commit suicide – by terrifying her to the extent that she feels 'jolted out of her skin' (p.341). While in *Anno Dracula* the vampire Liz Stride begins to transform into a 'half-creature' on the post-mortem table before Doctor Seward's gaze,<sup>39</sup> in *The Little Stranger* Mrs Ayres lies before Doctor Faraday's gaze as 'the body' (p.419), a 'no-longer person' located 'halfway on the route' to the domain of the 'thing'.<sup>40</sup> In Caroline Ayres's case, Faraday begins depersonalising her even before her death; for example, he describes her moving 'like a puppet being twitched into life' (p.417) and her arms hanging 'loose as a jointed doll's' (p.436). Later, at the inquest into her death, Faraday is asked to confirm that Caroline was of 'an unbalanced state of mind' (pp.490-91): in other words, he is again called upon to decide her proximity to the category of the rational person, which, following a 'moment of giddiness', he does, supporting the coroner's verdict of 'suicide whilst of unsound mind' (pp.491-92).

---

<sup>38</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. by Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, [1995] 1998), p.159.

<sup>39</sup> Kim Newman, *Anno Dracula* (London: Titan, [1992] 2011), p.195.

<sup>40</sup> Esposito, *Third Person*, pp.93-4.

Yet by depicting Faraday as the most likely candidate to have spawned ‘the little stranger’, Waters undermines the notion that he is a sovereign subject, a person, ‘a whole, master of itself and of its acts’.<sup>41</sup> The novel thereby cleverly undercuts not only Faraday’s assertions about his own rationality – ‘I see what’s in front of me’, he tells Caroline, ‘[t]hen I make sensible deductions. That’s what doctors do’ (p.353) – but also the biopolitical structures whose decisions on assigning personhood rest on this very quality of being a sovereign subject which Faraday, endowed with the right to make such decisions, potentially lacks. The category of the person is thus exposed as a useful biopolitical tool for dividing populations, rather than a natural or self-evident state of being possessed by certain ‘ontologically superior’ individuals who are endowed with the right to depersonalise other living beings.

However, in *The Little Stranger*, this process of depersonalisation does not rest with Faraday alone; rather, its uses and effects are shown to be built into the very fabric of Hundreds Hall in the form of histories of class-based and colonial forms of oppression and violence, which are underpinned by the division of populations in terms of their access to rationality and their proximity to the non-human. Moreover, these histories can be understood to have given rise to the figure of the little stranger. Although many readings of the novel identify Faraday as the source of the presence in the Hall, the little stranger can also be interpreted (as Germanà puts it) as a ‘composite’ figure,<sup>42</sup> which embodies a diverse range of socially dead beings seeking some form of revenge. Certainly, Caroline believes that the strange entity occupying the Hall has come to ‘punish’ her family (p.352).

---

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p.72.

<sup>42</sup> Germanà, p.128.

Early in the novel, the histories of divisions and oppressions related to social class are shown to have been built into house. For example, when Faraday begins to experience a ‘dark dislike’ of the Ayres family’s habit of ‘playing gaily at gentry life’ and ‘laughing’ at their working-class servants and tenants, he reflects that the Hall ‘had been made and maintained [...] by the very people they were laughing at now’, people who ‘[a]fter two hundred years [...] had begun to withdraw their labour, their belief in the house; and the house was collapsing, like a pyramid of cards’ (p.27). There is in fact something parasitical or even vampiric about the Hall, which Caroline describes as ‘a sort of lovely monster’ needing ‘to be fed all the time, with money and hard work’ (p.69). Without the ‘labour’ – indeed, the vitality – of the working classes to ‘feed’ on, the Hall begins to die. The family are left with only one live-in servant, Betty, who hates working there and wants to work in a factory instead (p.13). While the Ayreses do not actively mistreat Betty, they are nevertheless by turns neglectful and disdainful of her. These attitudes are especially evident in Roderick’s jokey remark to Faraday that ‘neglecting the servants is a capital offence these days’ and that ‘they’re to get better treatment than us, apparently’ (p.6), and in Caroline’s defensive comments (concerning her neglect of Betty) that she ‘eats the same food as us’ and is really ‘better off than we are’ (p.16).

As Hilary Mantel observes in her review of the novel, ‘it is a mark of the author’s perfect understanding of her period that Dr Faraday and her employers regard Betty as being hardly on the human level.’<sup>43</sup> Indeed, the Ayres family has a history of unpleasantness towards servants. Caroline and Roderick regale an uncomfortable Faraday (whose mother once worked in the Hall) with tales of the

---

<sup>43</sup> Hilary Mantel, ‘Haunted by Shame’, *The Guardian*, 23 May 2009  
 <<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2009/may/23/little-stranger-sarah-waters>> [accessed 16 July 2014].

tricks they played as children on one servant described by Roderick as ‘a moron’ (p.27). Moreover, the Ayreses also have a penchant for describing their past and present servants in terms of inanimate objects; Mrs Ayres compares maids to ‘specks of grit’ which come into the house and ‘leave one as pearls’ (p.73); Caroline describes a servant whose hands ‘could wring clothes better than a mangle’ and whose fingers ‘were always cold [...] like sausages straight from the meat-safe’ (p.26); and Roderick compares Betty to ‘a machine for keeping rooms in order’ (p.60). As Katherina Boehm notes, it is therefore notable that the ‘violent objects in *The Little Stranger* are directly linked to domestic labor’ and only ‘become visible in the very moment in which they stop working properly, thus contesting their status as silent inanimate servants of their proprietors’.<sup>44</sup> At times it seems as though the working classes, rather than simply withdrawing their labour, have begun to take revenge against the Ayres family through the activity of little stranger.

Moreover, Betty is also depersonalised through being associated with animals, both by Faraday, who describes her (following a brief show of temper) as a ‘faintly dangerous young animal’ (p.14), and by Mrs Ayres. When she discovers that she is beginning to misplace more and more of her possessions, Mrs Ayres states that

I shouldn’t be surprised, you know, if I were to finish up like my father’s Aunt Dodo. She used to mislay her things so often, one of her sons gave her a little Indian monkey. He strapped a basket to its back and she kept her scissors and thimbles and so on in it, and led it around on a ribbon. (p.242)

Caroline tells her mother that they could find her a monkey if she wishes, but she replies thus: ‘Oh, one could never do such a thing today [...]. Some society or other would prevent it, or Mr Gandhi would object. Probably monkeys have the vote in India now’ (p.242). The fact that Mrs Ayres mentions the monkey’s role in minding

---

<sup>44</sup> Katherina Boehm, ‘Historiography and the Material Imagination in the Novels of Sarah Waters’, *Studies in the Novel*, 43:2 (2011), 137-57 (p.255).

her great-aunt's possessions just after Betty is sent off to retrieve the lost glasses suggests that for the Ayreses, monkeys and servants are equivalent beings, and Betty could easily be replaced by one – or, as Roderick puts it, by a 'machine for keeping rooms in order' (p.60).

But there are other problematic hierarchies besides those related to social class at work in Mrs Ayres's remarks. Her comments about Gandhi and about monkeys having the vote in India point to another key contextual detail for *The Little Stranger*: the post-war period of decolonization, and particularly the loss of India in 1947, the same year during which the apparently supernatural events at Hundreds Hall begin to take place. Mrs Ayres's act of ridiculing the acquisition of subjective rights by former colonial subjects by comparing them to the notion of animal rights (promoted by 'some society or other') is again suggestive of Waters's 'perfect understanding of her period'. For example, the same thing happens in *The Franchise Affair* (published in 1949 and one of *The Little Stranger*'s many intertexts) in which the right to political asylum is ridiculed through a comparison with anti-vivisection protests, which are described as 'frightfully last-century' and as the mainstay of 'a few cranks'.<sup>45</sup> These comparisons also resonate with Hannah Arendt's observation that groups formed in the twentieth century 'for the protection of the Rights of Man' and their attempts at issuing declarations 'showed an uncanny similarity in language and composition to that of societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals.' 'No statesmen,' she concludes, 'no political figure of any importance could possibly take them seriously.'<sup>46</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> Josephine Tey, *The Franchise Affair* (London: Arrow, [1949] 2003), p.48.

<sup>46</sup> Hannah Arendt, 'The Perplexities of the Rights of Man', in *The Portable Hannah Arendt*, ed. by Peter Baehr (London: Penguin, 2000), pp.31-45 (p.33).

What these comments point to is the fundamental role of the animal in decisions on which beings count as persons capable of possessing subjective rights: as Paul Gilroy observes, the struggles of colonial subjects in particular to obtain liberty and rights were consistently connected to the question of ‘who is human enough to qualify for rights and recognition’.<sup>47</sup> The role of the animal in such decisions is also something Esposito draws attention to. He suggests that nineteenth-century anthropology’s ‘insertion of the animal [...] as a point of reference’ within ‘the series of human races’ meant that rather than constituting ‘the place of origin of the human species’, the animal becomes ‘the measure of its internal difference’. In turn, this allows for the creation of a hierarchy in which ‘higher animals are closer to humans than to other lower animals’ but in which ‘lower humans are more similar to animals’ than they are ‘to the higher humans.’<sup>48</sup>

Esposito associates the ‘outcome of this biopolitical decision’, which is ‘located at intersection and overlap between the humanization of the higher animals and the animalization of the lower humans’, with colonialism, and with the attendant belief in the ‘Indo-Germanic peoples’ having ‘triumphed all over the world thanks to the biological power of their brain development.’<sup>49</sup> As I noted in Chapter Two, this hierarchy was certainly evident in *Poor Things*, in terms of Doctor Hooker’s insistence on the global triumph of the ‘Anglo-Saxon race’ thanks to their superior brains.<sup>50</sup> In *The Little Stranger*, these racial hierarchies are shown to be built into the Hall itself, not only because many country houses are constructed, as Parker

---

<sup>47</sup> Paul Gilroy, *Postcolonial Melancholia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), p.10.

<sup>48</sup> Esposito, *Third Person*, p.33, p.52.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p.53.

<sup>50</sup> Alasdair Gray, *Poor Things: Episodes from the Early Life of Archibald McCandless M.D. Scottish Public Health Officer* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, [1992] 2002), p.140.

observes, from the profits of enterprises such as slavery and colonialism,<sup>51</sup> but also through the Hall's Georgian architecture. This architectural style is closely associated with colonialism; indeed, Roger Leech draws attention to a 'Georgianisation' of architecture in colonial spaces, through which principles of 'symmetry and order came to dominate the design of houses',<sup>52</sup> principles which are associated with the broader role of country houses as 'prominent signpost[s] of the British civilizing mission'.<sup>53</sup> This can also be seen in country houses located in Britain; as Ian Baucom points out, these houses are 'not only symbols of the wealth and power of the upper classes, but also play a role in a vaster imperial cartography of culture and discipline.'<sup>54</sup>

It is therefore particularly striking that Hundreds should perhaps first become 'infected' by the little stranger when Faraday vandalises it on Empire Day in 1919, a celebration during which children 'were encouraged to reflect on the merits and durability of the British Empire', despite this empire already being in sharp decline.<sup>55</sup> The 'steady decline' of Hundreds (p.4) following this event parallels the further decline of the empire, particularly because the house's decline is especially visible in its architectural features. As Faraday remarks on his return to Hundreds as an adult, the house's 'Georgian outline', already 'uncertain' when he visited as a child on Empire Day, now seems 'even more tentative than before' (p.5). The 'civilising mission' of the country house breaks down here, and Hundreds instead comes to

---

<sup>51</sup> Parker, pp.101-102.

<sup>52</sup> Roger H. Leech, 'Lodges, garden houses and villas: the urban periphery in the early modern Atlantic world', in *Slavery and the British Country House*, ed. by Madge Dresser and Andrew Hann (Swindon: English Heritage, 2013), pp.54-8 (p.54).

<sup>53</sup> Carol Margaret Davison, 'Burning Down the Master's (Prison)-House: Revolution and Revelation in Colonial and Postcolonial Female Gothic', in *Empire and the Gothic: The Politics of Genre*, ed. by Andrew Smith and William Hughes (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp.136-54 (p.137).

<sup>54</sup> Ian Baucom, *Out of Place: Englishness, Empire, and the Locations of Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), p.170.

<sup>55</sup> Roy Douglas, *Liquidation of Empire: The Decline of the British Empire after the Second World War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p.1.

resemble Western imaginings of colonial spaces – ‘where the writ of modernity reached the limits of Western power’ – as the most ‘privileged locales’ for accounts ‘savage superstitions’ and occult happenings.<sup>56</sup>

### **From the cradle to the grave**

Yet superstition and the occult also operate more locally in *The Little Stranger*, especially in relation to Betty. When Caroline hears of Betty’s fears that the Hall is haunted, she remarks that ‘country girls’ are ‘either hard as nails, wringing chickens’ necks and so on; or going off into fits, like Guster’ (p.15). While such behaviour is apparently expected of the working-class Betty, it is considered to be a sign of ‘serious deterioration’ in the aristocratic Caroline when she later comes to express superstitious views about the house being haunted. As the coroner at the inquest into Caroline’s death puts it, it is one thing to consider that ‘the Hundreds parlour-maid should have come to suppose herself haunted’, but it is quite another thing in the case of ‘an intelligent, healthy, well-bred girl like Caroline Ayres’ (p.490).

If Caroline and Betty are divided by social class, however, what they do share is their gender, which plays a central role in Seeley’s explanation of the apparently supernatural events taking place in Hundreds Hall. Interestingly, the explanation Seeley gives to Faraday – who presents himself, as Parker puts it, ‘as a champion of reason and rationality’<sup>57</sup> – is very similar to the one Caroline provides, but while Faraday dismisses Caroline’s views as Gothic superstitions, exclaiming ‘God! Why not vampires, or werewolves?’ (p.364), he listens to Seeley, perhaps

---

<sup>56</sup> Roger Luckhurst, *The Invention of Telepathy 1870-1901* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p.152.

<sup>57</sup> Parker, p.112.



because both men enjoy not only the authority which accompanies their profession, but also the ‘long-standing co-imbrication of rationality and maleness’.<sup>58</sup>

By contrast, Seeley’s explanation of the events at the Hall points to an equally long-standing co-imbrication of irrationality and femaleness. Seeley takes the idea that women are predisposed to fail at controlling and mastering their ‘parts’ for granted when he insists that it is ‘generally women’ at the ‘root’ of the ‘dangerous energy’ underlying apparently supernatural happenings, which he believes are caused by ‘hysteria’ (p.377). Seeley’s theory that the odd events in the Hall are caused by a ‘little stranger’ which has begun ‘to grow, like a child in the womb’ (p.380) gestures to the etymological origins of the term ‘hysteria’ – a disorder which is, ‘by definition, a female complaint’<sup>59</sup> – and thus also to a biological basis for women’s exclusion from full possession of the rational will associated with the category of the person.

Moreover, Seeley’s description of the presence in the house as an unborn child again draws attention to strange existence of Hall which I discussed in the previous section. Letissier describes the estate being caught in an odd ‘spectral condition’ which at times seems ‘not so much that of the undead – “Dracula’s daughter” – as that of the unborn, or perhaps half-born’.<sup>60</sup> The idea of the presence in the Hall as something ‘unborn’ or ‘half-born’ suggests that the ‘little stranger’ can be read not simply as that which remains after the death of the external animal, but also as that which comes before external life: the little stranger is a ‘germ’ which

---

<sup>58</sup> Anna Grear, “Framing the project” of international human rights law: reflections on the dysfunctional “family” of the Universal Declaration’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Human Rights Law*, ed. by Costas Douzinas and Conor Gearty (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp.17-35 (p.30).

<sup>59</sup> Vieda Skultans, *English Madness: Ideas on Insanity, 1580-1890* (London, Boston, and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), p.77.

<sup>60</sup> Letissier, p.43.

‘grow[s], like a child in the womb’ (p.380), where it experiences only nutritive life. To return to the comparison between this figure and Hyde which I drew in the previous section, it is notable that the idea of Hyde as an ‘insurgent horror’ which lies ‘caged in [Jekyll’s] flesh’, where he hears it ‘mutter’ and feels it ‘struggle to be born’, especially ‘at every hour of weakness, and in the confidence of slumber’,<sup>61</sup> is echoed in *The Little Stranger*: Roderick too hears ‘noises’, at first believing them to be ‘something scratching, wanting to get in’, but then realising that this ‘scratching’ is already ‘inside [...] trying to get out’, waiting for him to be ‘weak’ and to go to sleep so that it too can be born (p.225).

Furthermore, if the Hall is decaying, it is also paradoxically troubled by excessive fertility and growth in the grounds and gardens, which are operated by the same ‘blind and unconscious functions’ of nutritive life which continues alone not just during sleep (as I noted in the previous section) but also before birth.<sup>62</sup> This excessive growth is best exemplified by the parallels Diana Wallace identifies between Faraday’s first glimpse of the Hall as an adult and the narrator’s dream in the opening pages of Daphne Du Maurier’s *Rebecca* (1938) of returning to Manderley after its destruction.<sup>63</sup> In both texts, the country house, a symbol of rational human endeavour, is gradually overcome by what seems to be the return of a state of nature. In *Rebecca*, the narrator finds to her surprise that in her dream, the drive which leads to the house is ‘narrow and unkept, not the drive that we had known’, because ‘nature [...] in her stealthy, insidious way had encroached [...] with long, tenacious fingers’, and ‘the woods, always a menace even in the past, had

---

<sup>61</sup> Stevenson, p.65.

<sup>62</sup> Agamben, *The Open*, pp.14-15.

<sup>63</sup> Diana Wallace, *Female Gothic Histories: Gender, History and the Gothic* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013), p.190.

triumphed in the end'.<sup>64</sup> Similarly, Faraday finds that although he 'remembered a long approach to the house through neat rhododendron and laurel', the park 'was now so overgrown and untended' that his 'small car had to fight its way down the drive' (p.5). At the top of the drive, Faraday discovers terrible 'signs of decay', remarking that ivy 'hung like tangled rat's-tail hair' all over the house, and that 'the steps leading up to the broad front door were cracked, with weeds growing lushly up through the seams' (p.5). The 'creeping chaos of nettle and weed' (p.14) which Faraday discovers at the house recalls the unchecked 'jungle growth' dreamt up by the narrator of *Rebecca*,<sup>65</sup> and Hundreds, like Manderley, continues to function as a site of excessive growth even after it ostensibly becomes lifeless, such that by the end of the novel the gardens have become 'hopelessly overgrown' and 'the terrace has been lost to the weeds' (p.497).

Yet while they are troubled by the excessive fertility of their grounds, the Ayreses themselves are notably beset by sterility. During a conversation about selling of some of his land to developers for the building of the new council houses, emblematic of the new social order, Roderick announces that his 'sort' – the remains of the landed gentry – have

certainly put up a pretty poor show of saving ourselves [...]. Just look at Caroline and me, prize heifer and prize bull. We're hardly doing our bit to further the herd! Anyone would think we were going out of our way to make ourselves extinct. (p.190)

For Letissier, Waters uses the 'paradigmatic plot of the ghost tale' to depict 'the extinction of a dynasty': in particular, "No heirs for the Ayres" could sum up the last part of the novel' which focuses on 'the preparations for the unlikely wedding between Dr. Faraday and Caroline Ayres'. Letissier reads this 'paradigmatic plot' in

---

<sup>64</sup> Daphne Du Maurier, *Rebecca* (London: Virago, [1938] 2003), p.1.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p.2.

relation to Mrs Ayres's trauma over the loss of her first child, which Waters figures 'by transforming the prospect of progeny at Hundreds Hall into the metaphoric birth of a monstrous phantom/phantasm which entraps the last surviving Ayres in a spectral curse.'<sup>66</sup> However, I read the connections between haunting and 'the prospect of progeny' rather differently, especially in terms of the historical context in which Waters chooses to locate this 'paradigmatic plot'. The idea of the presence haunting the Hall as an unborn child can be understood in the context of the post-war welfare policies connected to the biopolitical issues of reproduction and birth rates. In this context it is not Mrs Ayres but her daughter Caroline who is the key figure; indeed, she is identified as the source of the little stranger, as the member of the household who may have 'given birth to some violent shadowy creature' (p.400) by two of the novel's medical men, Faraday and Seeley.

In particular, Seeley's identification of the dangers of Caroline's 'untapped' and frustrated 'sexual impulse' as the source of the 'dangerous energy' and '*miasma*' in the house, augmented by Betty's adolescent urges 'to flirt with the boys', and by the 'queer time, psychically' undergone by the 'menopausal' Mrs Ayres (pp.380-81), resonates with what Michel Foucault terms the 'hysterization of women's bodies' and its 'instrumentality' in 'power relations'. Having been identified as being 'thoroughly saturated with sexuality', the woman's body was then 'integrated into the sphere of medical practices, by reason of a pathology intrinsic to it', before finally being 'placed in organic communication with the social body (whose regulated fecundity it was supposed to ensure), the family space (of which it had to

---

<sup>66</sup> Letissier, pp. 43-4.

be the substantial and functional element), and the life of the children (which it produced and had to guarantee)'.<sup>67</sup>

According to Penelope Deutscher, Foucault's emphasis on 'nineteenth-century natalist politics' in terms of 'the hystericization and preoccupation with women's bodies' is one of the few places in prominent theorisations of biopolitics where 'the constitution of reproductivity as a biopolitical substance' is foregrounded.<sup>68</sup> Moreover, Deutscher argues elsewhere that even when reproduction does feature in contemporary work on biopolitics, this issue is generally 'hijacked' by a consideration of the 'fetal', which 'pulls attention away from a possible reflection on the politicization and biopoliticization of maternal life (as bare, immune, or precarious)'.<sup>69</sup> As I noted in the previous chapter, again drawing on Deutscher's work, current theorisations of biopolitics – and Agamben's in particular – by turns struggle and neglect to account for 'women's simultaneously included and excluded status as political'; not least, as Deutscher points out, where the central fact that women's status in relation to political life and bare life is inextricably linked to the 'politicization' of their 'reproductive biology' is concerned. A focus on 'maternal life' could open up a valuable space to think about women's position 'on the threshold of biological and political life insofar as they are valued, problematized, and rendered significant in their capacity to bear and produce new life'; in turn, this

---

<sup>67</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume One, The Will to Knowledge*, trans. by Robert Hurley (London: Penguin, [978] 1998), pp.103-104.

<sup>68</sup> Penelope Deutscher, 'The Inversion of Exceptionality: Foucault, Agamben, and "Reproductive Rights"', *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 107 (2008), 55-70 (p.57).

<sup>69</sup> Penelope Deutscher, 'The Precarious, the Immune, and the Thanatopolitical: Butler, Esposito, and Agamben on Reproductive Biopolitics', in *Against Life*, ed. by Alastair Hunt and Stephanie Youngblood (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2016), Amazon Kindle e-book (loc. 3143).

‘same capacity’ can also be understood as that which leaves women ‘exposed to injunction, violence, or loss of life’.<sup>70</sup>

Deutscher does draw attention to some brief moments in biopolitical theory where an analysis of ‘the politicization of women’s reproductive biology’ is evident: for example, she suggests that Esposito’s analysis in *Bíos* of the Nazi projects of forced sterilisation and their ‘deadly consequences for women’ emphasises the idea that ‘the politicization of women’s reproductivity trends towards the thanatopolitical’.<sup>71</sup> Moreover, she also identifies scope for such an analysis in ‘Agamben’s account of bare life becoming the concern of politics’, which has resulted in the production of ‘new internal divisions’, one of which might be a ‘new kind of phenomena – the reduction of women’s political significance to their reproductive life with results ranging from the coercive, punished, sanctioned, violent, or deadly.’ For Deutscher, it is crucial to recognise that ‘it is *as* responsible for reproductive life that the woman is targeted in the context of a specific biopolitical aim that will also have a thanatopolitical correlate.’<sup>72</sup>

There may also be some possibilities for thinking about this biopolitical targeting of women’s reproductive capacities in Esposito’s and Agamben’s work on vegetative life. In *Third Person*, Esposito identifies nutritive or organic life with the life of the foetus, and comments on ‘the slippery terrain of bioethics’ centred on abortion debates, which ‘hinge’ on ‘determining the exact moment when a living being – or on defining what type of living being – can be considered a person’, with the ‘entrance into the regime of personhood’ granting life ‘unquestionable value.’<sup>73</sup>

---

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., loc. 3131, loc. 3143.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., loc. 3361.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., loc. 3434, loc. 3446.

<sup>73</sup> Esposito, *Third Person*, p.2.

Again, this consideration of reproduction as a biopolitical substance focuses on foetal life, but Esposito's emphasis on the assignation of personhood as the moment when foetal life is granted 'unquestionable value' might also be extended to an analysis of the political status of the woman. As Deutscher points out, the biopolitical valuation of women's lives can involve 'negative representations of some women's reproductivity as threatening political or economic futures': for example, this is the case in 'the devalued pregnancies of the illegal immigrant, the depreciation of the "welfare mother"', and 'historical anxieties about categories of women who reproduce too little, too much or non-selectively'.<sup>74</sup> Hence, it is possible to understand the questionable or unquestionable value attached to any potential 'personal' life in the form of the organic life of the foetus as a factor which relates to or even determines the value placed on particular women's lives.

Indeed, there is also a space open in Agamben's theorisation of biopolitics for a consideration of how the politicisation of the organic life of the foetus relates to the biopoliticisation of maternal life. Although Agamben does not refer to women when he discusses the 'organic life' which 'begins in the fetus before animal life does', his insistence that the transformation of politics into biopolitics occurred 'primarily by means of a progressive generalization and redefinition of the concept of vegetative life (now coinciding with the biological heritage of the nation)',<sup>75</sup> does open up a space for thinking about the vegetative life of the foetus as what Deutscher terms a 'biopolitical substance'. The value accorded to this life in broader terms as a substance which comes to coincide with the biological heritage of the nation leads to the question (unanswered in Agamben's work) of what the biopolitical and thanatopolitical implications are for women as those responsible for reproducing 'the

---

<sup>74</sup> Deutscher, 'The Precarious, the Immune, and the Thanatopolitical', loc. 3468, loc. 3477.

<sup>75</sup> Agamben, *The Open*, p.15.

biological heritage of the nation' – particularly where this reproduction is either desirable or viewed as a threat to the national body.

In light of this, I want to turn to consider in more detail the question of reproduction and the biopoliticisation of women's reproductive bodies in the context in which Waters locates the haunting of the Hall by a 'little stranger'. Roderick's remarks about the decline of the upper classes, and particularly about his and Caroline's failure at 'doing [their] bit to further the herd' despite being 'prize bull' and 'prize heifer', can be understood in the context of broader anxieties about population growth and the biological future of the nation in the period during which the novel is set. As Clare Hanson points out, the nineteen thirties saw the development of 'an informal network of eugenicists, demographers and birth control campaigners' which 'raised alarm [...] about the prospect of a declining birth-rate in Britain', as well as about 'the threat of higher population growth among non-white peoples.' This 'dual threat' of 'internal decline and external growth [...] was duly inscribed in the report of the Royal Commission on Populations, which was commissioned by Winston Churchill in 1944 and published in 1949'<sup>76</sup> – the year after the final removal of the Ayres family from Hundreds Hall and after founding of the NHS.

According to Richard A. Soloway, following the war, anxieties about the relentlessly declining birth-rate and the possible extinction of the British 'race' became significant again and the 'demographic needs of the new, postwar society to be built on the rubble of the old' became paramount in the formulation of welfare

---

<sup>76</sup> Clare Hanson, *Eugenics, Literature, and Culture in Post-war Britain* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), p.122.



policies.<sup>77</sup> Hence these policies were often addressed to the family as ‘a privileged site for social renewal’, especially because of its role in ‘creating future healthy citizens’.<sup>78</sup> Priority in social expenditure was thus given to the care of childhood and maternity, particularly through the provision of family allowances, which were supposed to ‘help restore the birthrate to at least a replacement level’, both by ‘making it possible for parents who desired more children to bring them into the world without damaging the chances of those already born’, and by signalling ‘national interest in larger families.’<sup>79</sup>

As Roderick’s remarks about his and Caroline’s failure at ‘doing their bit to further the herd’ indicate, within Hundreds Hall ‘the family itself is in crisis’; ‘the Colonel, symbol of traditional authority’ is ‘long dead’ and his son is ‘in a fragile state of mental and physical health.’<sup>80</sup> Faraday’s entrance to the house and his role as a medical professional suggest that he may function as an institutional substitute for this paternal and patriarchal authority. In particular, he appears to aim at regulating and normalising the bodies and minds of Roderick and Caroline. Yet, as Heilmann observes, Rod’s mental and physical health are too fragile, and Faraday’s efforts are largely focused on the incredibly ‘healthy’ Caroline (p.72, p.133, p.490).

Both Seeley and Faraday find Caroline strangely attractive, despite her being ‘notoriously plain’ (p.264), and despite her failure to conform to ‘an acceptable model of femininity’.<sup>81</sup> for example, one of the first things Faraday notices about her when they meet at the beginning of the novel is that she neglects to shave her legs,

---

<sup>77</sup> Richard A. Soloway, *Demography and Degeneration: Eugenics and the Declining Birthrate in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), p.341.

<sup>78</sup> Hanson, p.44.

<sup>79</sup> Soloway, p.330.

<sup>80</sup> Heilmann, p.42.

<sup>81</sup> Parker, p.111.

and has to be scolded by her mother into behaving more ‘demurely’ (p.24). However, as Seeley puts it, there is ‘something there, definitely’ (p.263), ‘something’ which Faraday also notices when he dances with Caroline and enjoys ‘the spring of her full bosom against [his] chest, the solid push of her hips’ (p.257). Yet Faraday also experiences ‘some dark current of unease, almost of distaste’ when he attempts to act on his desires (p.275). In fact, for both men, there appears to be something ‘dangerous’ about Caroline’s ‘untapped’ ‘sexual impulse’ – which can also be understood as her reproductive potential (she is a ‘prize heifer’) – inasmuch as Seeley implies that what she ‘needs’ is to release this untapped resource in the confines of heteronormative marriage to Faraday; after all, she ‘isn’t getting any younger’ (p.381). Moreover, both Seeley and Faraday identify something ‘grotesque’ about her refusal to marry and reproduce. The idea that her ‘untapped’ procreativity is the source of the ‘miasma’, of the ‘little stranger’ growing in the ‘womb’ of the house (p.381), suggests that the house simply ‘births’ what she refuses to, but does so in monstrous form, in a form intended to punish her for her failure to enter into a reproductive relationship through marriage as a site of ‘regulated fecundity’.<sup>82</sup>

Indeed, there is a sense that without regulation, women like Caroline are actively dangerous, inasmuch as they present a point of resistance to the discourses embedded in post-war welfare policies which sought to promote the critical role of women as housewives and mothers in the continuance and flourishing of the national body.<sup>83</sup> Waters’s depiction of Faraday’s attitude to Caroline’s friend Brenda is notable in this regard. Caroline confesses to Faraday that she helped Brenda to procure an abortion (p.270), and relates Brenda’s remarks on the benefits of sleeping

---

<sup>82</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p.104.

<sup>83</sup> Nicholas Timmins, *The Five Giants: A Biography of the Welfare State* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), p.34.

with ‘a medical man’ – that ‘one was never so afraid of “tripping up”’. In response, Faraday diagnoses Brenda as a ‘thoroughly unpleasant young woman’ (p.271), and has already privately considered her ‘rather worldly-looking’ (p.259).

However, whereas Brenda is someone to whom ‘good luck’ happens (p.270), Caroline is not, and her deviations from conventional femininity and her refusal to marry and reproduce leave her (in Deutscher’s terms) ‘exposed to injunction, violence, or loss of life’.<sup>84</sup> In her depiction of Caroline’s death at the end of the novel following her rejection of Faraday, Waters literalises the most extreme kind of ‘psychic and somatic penalties’ Soloway argues were thought to be reserved for women who ‘attempted to transgress the boundaries of biologically determined gender spheres’. These penalties were described in ‘a virtual genre of medical literature’ in which they ranged from ‘minor gynaecological and neurotic disorders’ to ‘everything from masculinizing sterility and certifiable lunacy’, along with ‘a variety of terminal cancers’.<sup>85</sup>

Yet Waters also imagines Caroline’s punishment in imagery drawn from the female Gothic, whose emphasis on violence against women in confined domestic spaces I discussed in the previous chapter. In particular, Heilmann points to *The Yellow Wallpaper* (1892) as a key intertext for *The Little Stranger*, and argues that Caroline, like Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s narrator, struggles to ‘extricate herself from [...] medico-marital control’ at the hands of a doctor-husband,<sup>86</sup> whom she fears will likewise ‘keep [her] upstairs in the nursery’, where ‘the bars are already on the windows’ (p.448) – a form of incarceration in an attic which is also evocative of both *Jane Eyre* (1847) and *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966). It is particularly striking that

---

<sup>84</sup> Deutscher, ‘The Precarious, the Immune, and the Thanatopolitical’, loc. 3143.

<sup>85</sup> Soloway, p.112.

<sup>86</sup> Heilmann, p.45.

Caroline should imagine being confined not simply in an attic but in the attic nursery, a site whose purpose only emphasises her refusal to reproduce, and which has already been the site of so much of the little stranger's activity in the Hall. In fact, this is the space to which Caroline ascends on the night of her death, 'drawn upwards by a familiar voice', belonging to 'some shadowy, dreadful thing' (pp.491-92). That this 'little stranger' (perhaps a manifestation of Faraday's desire to punish her, on what should have been their wedding night, no less, for her refusal to go through with their marriage) should lure Caroline to and then push her from the nursery-level of the house resonates with the extent to which, as Deutscher puts it, 'the politicization of women's reproductivity' often opens out onto 'the thanatopolitical'.<sup>87</sup>

### **A failed modernity narrative**

On one of his many visits to the Hall some three years after Caroline's death, Faraday encounters Betty, and reflects that although they are 'a very unremarkable pair', they are nevertheless 'the only survivors' out of 'the wreckage of that terrible year' (p.496). If anything Betty has thrived: her 'slightness' has been replaced by an 'improve[d]' figure, and her interactions with her 'young man' are suggestive of her future potential as a wife and mother (pp.495-97). Indeed, it is significant that Faraday should encounter Betty at the new council houses built on land sold off by the Ayres family. If Hundreds Hall is symbolic of the old oppressive order, these council houses (and especially their location) are symbolic of the new post-war world. Despite Faraday's distaste for the 'livid, brutal-looking machine-made bricks' and for the size of the houses, whose foundations 'look scarcely bigger than a boxing-ring' (pp.246-47), he has to acknowledge the benefits of the houses. There

---

<sup>87</sup> Deutscher, 'The Precarious, the Immune, and the Thanatopolitical', loc. 3361.

will be ‘no more damp floors and low ceilings’; instead, the houses will have ‘fine sanitation’ and ‘separate rooms for the boys and the girls’, features his own mother ‘would have been glad of’ (p.249). And unlike the Hall, in these new houses there will be ‘no nasty gaps’ and ‘no odd corners’ (p.249) in which ghosts might choose to linger.

Yet these houses are of course also closely linked to the biopolitical management of the population’s health; as David Gladstone notes, housing was part of Aneurin Bevan’s Ministry of Health alongside the NHS.<sup>88</sup> Hence Babb, the man in charge of the project, tells the Doctor that he is ‘very glad’ to have his work inspected by ‘a medical man’, having already had a visit from ‘the sanitary inspector’, whose verdict – that ‘there’ll be nothing to beat these places in terms of air and drainage’ (p.246) – he happily reports to Faraday. Moreover, the spatial arrangements of these houses can be read in relation to the broader aim of welfare policies to regulate family life. Waters’s description of these houses resonates with Foucault’s remarks on the ‘rationally planned layout of the model town’ and its realisation in ‘working-class housing estates, as they existed in the nineteenth century’. The layout and ‘grid pattern’ of these estates, he argues, ‘articulated, in a sort of perpendicular way, the disciplinary mechanisms that controlled the body, or bodies, by localizing families (one to a house) and individuals (one to a room)’ – regulations which also characterise the new houses in *The Little Stranger*, with their ‘separate rooms for the boys and the girls’ (p.249) – as well as making individuals ‘visible’ and subject to the ‘normalization of behaviour’.<sup>89</sup> The ‘regulated fecundity’ suggested by these spaces stands in opposition to the depiction of a squatters’ hut

---

<sup>88</sup> David Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), p.44.

<sup>89</sup> Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the college de France, 1975-76*, ed. by Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana, trans. by David Macey (London: Penguin, 2003), pp. 250-51.

Faraday visits earlier in the novel, which he describes as ‘a chaos of mattresses and sleeping bodies: adults, children, babies, dogs, and squirming blind-eyed puppies’ (p.471). The use of listing here not only adds to the impression of overcrowding but also – given the ‘children’, ‘babies’ and ‘squirming blind-eyed puppies’ – to one of excessive and unstoppable levels of reproduction. Indeed, the ‘chaos’ of the hut also echoes the ‘creeping chaos of nettle and weed’ (p.14) with which Hundreds Hall is beset.

In the third chapter of this thesis, I discussed anxieties about excessive reproduction amongst the poor, particularly as expressed by Conservative politicians in relation to welfare policies, such as the provision of child benefit and the incentives it engenders for specific classes to ‘breed’. These same attitudes and ideas were also at work in the period Waters depicts in *The Little Stranger*: for example, the major eugenic risk supposedly presented by the poor was identified by William Beveridge in his 1943 ‘Galton Lecture’ to the Eugenics Society, in which he commented on the dangers of the middle- and upper-classes being (as Hanson puts it) ‘outbred’ by the ‘genetically inferior working-classes’. It is striking that Beveridge should have given this lecture just after his report, ‘which laid the foundations for post-war reconstruction and the Welfare State’, had its first debate in the House of Commons. As Hanson points out, despite ‘the shadow of Nazi atrocities’, eugenics ‘remained an important resource’ in post-war Britain ‘as policy makers grappled with ways of tackling the “five giants” Beveridge identified as obstacles to social progress’. In fact, many of the ‘chief architects of post-war

reconstruction, including William Beveridge [...] were closely involved with the eugenics movement'.<sup>90</sup>

Yet, as Hanson observes, Beveridge struggled to reconcile the diverse aims of welfare provision and eugenics.<sup>91</sup> The chief problem Beveridge had lay in convincing eugenicists that his welfare proposals would not have dysgenic effects: for example, eugenicists such as Cecil Binney argued that these 'socialist schemes to make babies' – in the form of family allowances – were doomed to fail, and would encourage the 'Social Problem Group' to have even more children, while the heavy costs of this plan 'would effectively sterilize the remainder of the taxpaying classes who had not already given up on trying to bring more children into the world.'<sup>92</sup> But it was not only the 'social problem group' who were regarded in eugenic terms as being 'biologically weak'; rather, as the link drawn between the 'chaos' of the squatters' hut and Hundreds Hall in *The Little Stranger* suggests, the same applied to the aristocracy, which was considered capable of 'surviving only because it is protected from the pressures of natural selection by privilege'.<sup>93</sup> This attitude is reflected in Seeley's 'rational explanation' that, like 'other old gentry families', the Ayres family, 'unable to advance with the times, simply opted for retreat – for suicide, and madness' (p.498). No longer protected from 'the pressures of natural selection' in the post-war social and economic environment, the Ayreses are unable to cope: as Seeley tells Faraday earlier in the novel, 'class-wise, they've had their chips. Nerve-wise, perhaps they've run their course' (p.378), with these parallel sentences neatly connecting the sociological and biological causes of the family's downfall.

---

<sup>90</sup> Hanson, p.1.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Soloway, pp.359-60, pp.361-62.

<sup>93</sup> Hanson, p.3.

Indeed, as Scarlett Thomas points out in her review of *The Little Stranger*, it is striking that in order to bring about a final end to the dominance of the landed classes and make way for the new post-war consensus – for Hundreds Hall to give way to the council houses – it seems to be insufficient for Caroline and Roderick to simply go on failing to reproduce, or for Caroline to relinquish her claim on the house and make her planned escape to Canada. Instead, the plot of *The Little Stranger* sees the Ayreses ‘literally, and rather gothically [...] killed off or removed from Hundreds Hall’, an outcome which seems to trouble Thomas, who argues that ‘one is left with the uncomfortable sense that the Ayreses have been needlessly murdered by progress and social change’.<sup>94</sup> Although Germanà’s suggestion that Thomas is suffering from ‘conservative nostalgia’ may have merit,<sup>95</sup> there is something disturbing about the logic she identifies – a logic which might be understood in relation to the operations of eugenics.

According to Esposito, eugenics ‘is characterized by the technical’, and although ‘applied to life’, it is applied ‘in a form that intends precisely to modify spontaneous development.’ The discourse of eugenics ‘declares that it wants to correct procedures that have negatively influenced the course of nature’, particularly ‘those social institutions and [...] protective practices with regard to individuals who are biologically speaking inadequate with respect to natural selection (and which, if left to its own devices, natural selection would eliminate).’ Yet in order ‘to affirm a good *genos*’, the ‘negative’ element must be ‘neutralized’, which is why, according to Esposito, ‘positive eugenics’ is ‘always accompanied by a negative eugenics, one designed to impede the diffusion of dysgenic exemplars.’ After all, as Esposito puts

---

<sup>94</sup> Scarlett Thomas, ‘House Calls’, *The New York Times*, 29 May 2009 <[http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/31/books/review/Thomas-t.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/31/books/review/Thomas-t.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0)> [accessed 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014].

<sup>95</sup> See Germanà, p.125.



it, ‘where would the space for increasing the best exemplars be found if not in the space produced by the elimination of the worst?’<sup>96</sup>

With the exception of constant references to Caroline’s apparent good health, in *The Little Stranger*, Waters persistently draws attention to the fact that the Ayreses are perceived as being *biologically* weak. As Germanà points out, the novel’s ‘intertextual structure’ includes several ‘recognizable references to the Gothic canon, with a particular emphasis on (late) nineteenth-century texts dealing with pathology and sickness, both of a biological and social nature.’<sup>97</sup> Caroline twice refers to herself as ‘Dracula’s daughter’ (p.435, p.436), thereby hinting at the idea that there is something unnatural or even parasitic in her family line; moreover, like the family in Poe’s ‘The Fall of the House of Usher’ (1839), to whom Roderick is linked by his first name, the Ayres family line also apparently comes to an end as a result of ‘a case of inherited family madness – a family “taint”’, on which the coroner at Caroline’s inquest fixates (p.491).

If the Ayreses, as ‘dysgenic exemplars’, do have to die out in order to make ‘space for increasing the best exemplars’,<sup>98</sup> the question remains in the novel as to who the best exemplars to replace them would be. The positions of both Faraday and Seeley in the professional middle classes point to one possible answer. Rather than reading Faraday (particularly in his potential capacity as the ‘little stranger’) as an avatar for working-class revenge on the aristocratic Ayres family, he might be better understood as an avatar for the professional middle classes, possessed of a class consciousness ‘rooted in merit’ rather than inherited privilege, and keen to achieve a

---

<sup>96</sup> Esposito, *Bíos*, pp.127-8.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.115-16.

<sup>98</sup> Esposito, *Bíos*, pp.127-8.

status in life ‘commensurate with its education, talent, and ability.’<sup>99</sup> In fact, in the early twentieth century, the qualities necessary for race regeneration were thought to reside in the professional middle classes, who would form an emerging ‘aristocracy of talent’ which would displace the hereditary aristocracy – a theme often evident, Hanson remarks, in country house novels.<sup>100</sup>

Waters hints at Faraday’s belief in his inherent entitlement to the Hall from the very first pages of the novel. His act of vandalism, he states, had nothing to do with being ‘a spiteful or destructive boy’; instead, he insists that ‘it was simply that, in admiring the house, I wanted to possess a piece of it – or rather, as if the admiration itself, which I suspected a more ordinary child would not have felt, entitled me to it’ (p.3). Faraday’s later obsession with the Hall is rooted in his fear of failing to achieve a position in life commensurate with this supposedly extraordinary capacity to admire its ordered beauty. Having wished ‘desperately to live up to [his] own reputation for cleverness’ (p.4), he finds himself haunted as an adult by the sense that he has already failed (in fact, as Charles Webster points out, general practice was often regarded as ‘the province of the failure’ in this era).<sup>101</sup>

Moreover, Faraday’s obsession with the Hall marks another point at which Caroline is targeted and valued in terms of her reproductive capacity. At a much more local level than the post-war anxieties about birth-rates which I discussed in the previous section, Faraday’s desire to marry Caroline also involves a valuation of her life purely in terms of her reproductive biology: she is a means for Faraday to insert himself *biologically* into the Ayres family line, thereby allowing him to legitimately

---

<sup>99</sup> Soloway, p.63.

<sup>100</sup> Hanson, p.80.

<sup>101</sup> Charles Webster, *The National Health Service: A Political History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p.52.

possess the Hall. This marriage is regarded with some suspicion by Mrs Ayres; moreover, given that she communicates this unease to Faraday on a walk through the Hall's overgrown gardens, her fears may concern the strange offspring which might grow from this union. As Hanson points out, in some mid-twentieth century texts (such as *Room at the Top*) reproduction between supposedly 'biologically distinct' social classes was often 'represented as being almost as dangerous as miscegenation'.<sup>102</sup> Faraday's marriage to Caroline could thus be read as an 'alien marriage', like that of the plants in the narrator's dream in *Rebecca* (whose narrator also enters into an 'alien marriage' outside her own social class) which might produce 'poor, bastard things [...] conscious of their spurious origin'.<sup>103</sup> Indeed, the figure of the little stranger might be read as the unborn child of Faraday and Caroline which threatens to disrupt the legitimate family line. As Betty puts it, the 'bad thing' haunting the house might not be an old thing but 'a new thing' (p.130), even though the little stranger does its best to legitimise its claim to the Hall by masquerading as Mrs Ayres's dead firstborn child.

Hence, like the majority of Gothic novels, the plot of *The Little Stranger* arguably turns on inheritance and its violation, in this case through Faraday's obsession with possessing the Hall, the place aptly described by Heilmann as the scene of his 'class dysphoria'.<sup>104</sup> Indeed, narratives of middle-class legitimation can be understood to be closely linked to the Gothic genre. Gothic novels often celebrate the waning of the tyranny of the old feudal order and the rise of the virtuous bourgeoisie who will take their place: as Anthony Vidler points out, the anxiety provoked by 'alien encounters' with the uncanny in these texts is symptomatic of 'a

---

<sup>102</sup> Hanson., pp.24-5.

<sup>103</sup> Du Maurier, pp.2-3.

<sup>104</sup> Heilmann, p.48.

fundamental insecurity: that of a newly established class, not quite at home in its own home.<sup>105</sup> Similarly, Simon Hay regards ghosts ‘as marking middle-class anxieties about [...] identity formation’.<sup>106</sup> It is thus striking that Faraday should make various attempts to Gothicise the Hall. He remembers from his childhood visit that the basement kitchen is ‘reached by a cool vaulted corridor with something of the feel of a castle dungeon’ (p.2), but when he returns to the Hall as an adult, he is disappointed to find that the passage he pictured ‘as something like a crypt or dungeon’ is instead ‘the glossy cream-and-green of police- and fire-stations’ (p.7), the same ‘drab institutional paint’ he finds in Betty’s room (p.9). Having been disappointed by the Hall’s apparent lack of Gothic credentials, Faraday perhaps compensates by terrifying the family quite literally to death so that he can finally possess the Hall.

I want to return finally to Seeley’s ‘old, rational view that Hundreds was [...] defeated by history’, that ‘the Ayreses, unable to advance with the times, simply opted for retreat – for suicide, and madness’, like many other ‘old gentry families’ in this post-war period. In fact, this ‘rational explanation’ can be understood as something of a ‘Gothic’ narrative: as Robert Mighall points out, ‘Gothic fiction is essentially Whiggish’, in the sense that it generally adheres to ‘the Whig interpretation of the historical past’, which ‘reflects and endorses the values of the present’, at the same time as it works ‘to identify and stigmatize perceived abuses

---

<sup>105</sup> Anthony Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely* (Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press, 1992), pp.3-4.

<sup>106</sup> Simon Hay, *A History of the Modern British Ghost Story* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p.9.

persisting into the present that are associated with the past, with “pastness” of necessity carrying negative connotations.’<sup>107</sup>

There is room for such a ‘Whiggish’ interpretation of *The Little Stranger* itself. Welfare policies are understandably often presented in a positive light in *The Little Stranger*: the new council houses are described as a ‘great success’ (p.495), and the ready access to medical care for Faraday’s ‘poorer patients’ (p.247) is undeniably a triumph. Yet, at the same time, one can legitimately identify ‘perceived abuses persisting into the present that are associated with the past’: for example, Parker argues that ‘although set in the past, Waters’ treatment of the country house has a powerful contemporary resonance’, inasmuch as ‘throughout the noughties, numerous reports [...] illustrated that social mobility has *declined* since the end of World War Two and Britain remains a country in which economic success and social status are determined by birth rather than worth.’ *The Little Stranger*, Parker concludes, ‘protests the class divisions that – as the veneration of the country house in contemporary culture attests – continue the haunt Britain.’<sup>108</sup>

According to Hay, the ghost story can be understood as ‘a *failed* modernity narrative’, one which figures ‘the troubled transition from a feudal-aristocratic state to a modern one’ and whose ‘whole point [...] is that the present *cannot* wrench free of the past’.<sup>109</sup> On Parker’s reading, *The Little Stranger* can certainly be understood as a failed modernity narrative, but it is also necessary to question the terms of this failure, which the novel hints may have less to do with a failure to properly implement or extend welfare policies, and more to do with the ideas and attitudes underpinning these policies. By having Faraday confuse the ‘drab institutional paint’

---

<sup>107</sup> Mighall, p.6.

<sup>108</sup> Parker, pp.112-13.

<sup>109</sup> Hay, p.8, pp.14-15.

of the Hall's lower levels with the dungeons of a Gothic castle in his memory, Waters creates a connection between the spaces of the haunted Hall and the new 'institutions' connected to the inauguration of the welfare state, such that something of the history of violence and oppression bound up with the creation of the Hall might be seen to linger in the new social order, even in its most 'drab' forms.

Moreover, as I noted in Chapter Three, the discourses of degeneration and eugenics which circulated through the creation of welfare policies still linger in contemporary political rhetoric. In fact, one recent debate about the provision of child benefit (once Beveridge's family allowances) touches not only on the perceived risks of encouraging welfare recipients to have children, but also on the biopoliticisation of women's reproductive biology which was also bound up with early welfare policies. The Scottish National Party MP Alison Thewliss has recently launched a campaign against the Government's plans to restrict the child-focused element of tax credits to two children. Thewliss's objections lie not only in the idea that the cuts are 'tantamount to social engineering' – in Deutscher's terms, they involve the targeting of the 'welfare mother', of women who 'reproduce too much' (and from the 'wrong' social class).<sup>110</sup> Rather, her objections centre on the idea that women who conceive a third child as a result of rape or coercive control will have to prove their circumstances to the government in some way in order not to be financially penalised.<sup>111</sup> Having already been subjected to terrible violence, these women will have to appeal against the threat of being sanctioned by a policy which

---

<sup>110</sup> Deutscher, 'The Precarious, the Immune, and the Thanatopolitical', loc. 3648

<sup>111</sup> Libby Brooks, 'SNP MP launches campaign against tax credit "rape clause"', *The Guardian*, 17 January 2016 <<http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/jan/17/snp-mp-launches-campaign-against-tax-credit-clause>> [accessed 20<sup>th</sup> March 2016].

already targets the value of their lives in terms of their potential reproductivity as ‘threatening political or economic futures’.<sup>112</sup>

The idea that certain problematic discourses linger in the foundations of the welfare state can also be seen in Waters’s depiction of the new council houses. Despite the fact that these new buildings, with their lack of ‘nasty gaps’ and ‘odd corners’ for ghosts to linger in, ought to be the very opposite of a haunted house like the Hall, Waters nevertheless insists on their foundational connection with the Hall and its histories: in fact, the council houses have foundations built from pieces of the Hall’s demolished park wall, and have also been built in a shade of brick designed to blend in with the Georgian mansion (pp.245-47). This suggests not that the old order is supplanted by the new, but that something of the old order underpins and inhabits the new one – that a project instigated for the care and fostering of life from cradle to grave might also be haunted by the same calculations about the worth and disposability of life, the same history of prejudice, injustice and violence, which are built into Hundreds Hall: in other words, these houses too might yet spawn their own ‘little strangers’.

---

<sup>112</sup> Deutscher, ‘The Precarious, the Immune, and the Thanatopolitical’, loc. 3648.

## Conclusion

The publication of *The Little Stranger* in 2009 leads me to the end of the twenty-year period I set out to explore in this thesis. While Waters's novel looks back to the inauguration of the post-war Labour government, 2010 marked the end of a thirteen-year period of New Labour, and the creation of the first governing coalition since the Second World War. Moreover, while *The Little Stranger* concerns the founding of the welfare state and the National Health Service, 2010 marked the beginning of a massive programme of economic austerity in response to the global financial crash of 2008, which saw a return to the kind of economic crises and anxieties of the nineteen-eighties and nineties which I outlined in the first chapter of this thesis. This period of austerity has involved a series of controversial decisions concerning the state's obligation to care for certain populations through the provision of welfare. So-called benefit 'sanctions' have become common practice, and the Conservative Government was forced in 2015 (following a series of freedom of information requests) to release mortality statistics revealing that more than eighty people a month are dying after having been declared 'fit for work'.<sup>1</sup> The 'financial sentence of death' explored by Christopher Priest in *The Prestige* seems disturbingly prescient in the light of the contemporary effects the state's disinvestment in the lives of certain populations.

However, these populations have not remained silent, and groups ranging from disability charities to feminist activist groups such as Sisters Uncut have staged numerous protests against welfare cuts. Indeed, at the time of submission of this

---

<sup>1</sup> Frances Ryan, 'Death has become a part of Britain's benefits system', *The Guardian*, 27 August 2015 <<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/aug/27/death-britains-benefits-system-fit-for-work-safety-net>> [accessed 20<sup>th</sup> March 2016].



thesis, industrial action over the imposition of new contracts for junior doctors also seems increasingly likely to result in the first full walkout in the history of the NHS in April 2016.<sup>2</sup> Margaret Thatcher's notion of a 'reversion towards barbarism', which I discussed in Chapter Three, looks set to make a return in twenty-first century Britain. Meanwhile, on a broader scale, Europe is playing reluctant (and sometimes outright hostile) host to a growing refugee crisis, which has seen the bodies of vagabonds – Agamben's 'new living dead' – washing up on the tourist beaches of Europe, as borders are closed and sealed with barbed wire fences of the sort that would impress the residents of Admiral Drive in *Beyond Black*.

I began this thesis by foregrounding the significance of the strange state of being undead before political power over life in contemporary theorisations of biopolitics and of biopolitical issues by Giorgio Agamben, Jacques Derrida, and Roberto Esposito. I set out to examine the depiction of what Thomas Carl Wall describes as the 'fragile' and 'politically slick' conditions of the 'certainty of belonging to the human race, the certainty of being alive'<sup>3</sup> in novels by seven contemporary British writers, who draw on the themes and imagery of the Gothic genre to represent this experience of being expelled from the human community and exposed to death. I also determined to explore those moments where the novels in question proved (in Derrida's terms) to be 'less inappropriate' or 'more relevant' vehicles for examining 'sovereignty, the animal, the living dead, the buried alive,

---

<sup>2</sup> Esther Addley, 'Junior doctors escalate industrial action to all-out strike next month', *The Guardian*, 23 April 2016 <<http://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/mar/23/junior-doctors-to-escalate-industrial-action-to-all-out-strike-next-month>> [accessed 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2016].

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Carl Wall, 'Au Hasard', in *Politics, Metaphysics, and Death: Essays on Giorgio Agamben's Homo Sacer*, ed. by Andrew Norris (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005), pp.31-48 (p.35).

etc., the spectral and the posthumous' than 'the authority of wakefulness, and the vigilance of the ego, and the consciousness of so-called philosophical discourse.'<sup>4</sup>

The picture of the management of life in contemporary Britain which has emerged from my analysis of these novels through the theoretical material accords well with what Timothy Campbell describes as the 'negative tonality' of Agamben's theorisation of biopolitics, in which political power over life tends to slip inevitably towards thanatopolitics.<sup>5</sup> It is only in *Poor Things* that any avenue for thinking about a more affirmative vision of biopolitics – a biopolitics *of* rather than *over* life, in Esposito's terms – appeared to open up in the excessive and exuberant figure of Bella, the 'surgical fabrication' made 'by the Frankenstein method' who nevertheless constantly exceeds her 'programming'. However, even here, Alasdair Gray's novel still tends towards a lamentation of the waning of the state's obligation to care for life in contemporary Britain, something which is also evident in *Beyond Black* and *Darkmans* in particular, where 'indifference is a form of murder, a death of care', and the best some populations can hope for is to slip under the radar, unprotected but at least 'unmolested'. But this latter point also opens out onto *The Little Stranger's* insistence on looking to the welfare state and the NHS as biopolitical projects which are themselves underpinned by some troubling discourses on the nature and value of life, and which are of course still involved in making decisions – often economic ones, to return to Chapter One – as to which lives should be fostered and which disallowed to the point of death.

---

<sup>4</sup> Jacques Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign, Volume II*, ed. by Michel Lisse et al., trans. by Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2011), p.185.

<sup>5</sup> Timothy Campbell, 'Bíos, Immunity, Life: The Thought of Roberto Esposito', in *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy*, trans. by Timothy Campbell (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, [2004] 2008), pp.vii-xlii (p.xx).

What has also emerged from my analysis of depictions of undeath in these novels is the extent to which themes and imagery borrowed from the Gothic genre have proven to be productive ways of exploring forms of political and social death. In particular, those places where contemporary writers have borrowed the Gothic's central theme of foregrounding the unexpected and often disturbing return of the past in the present have allowed their novels to place contemporary concerns about biopolitics in a much longer history of the management of life, and thus to foreground the ways in which past ideas and decisions on the nature and value of life continued to inhabit and influence (even to haunt) biopolitics in the present day. The references to nineteenth-century legislation on anatomy and poverty in *Poor Things* and *Never Let Me Go* are one of many examples of this trend.

Moreover, the Gothic genre has also provided a wealth of useful imagery for contemporary writers when it comes to depicting beings whose existences can be understood in relation to that of the *homo sacer* – not only in terms of ghosts, for example, but also more bodily forms, such as those which relate to Frankenstein's creature, or the doubling and divisions of life evident in the relationship between figures such as Jekyll and Hyde. Additionally, as I noted in Chapter One, the Gothic genre's emphasis on forms of live burial and 'suspended animation' has provided some apt ways of thinking about crucial connections between life and money; meanwhile, the Gothic emphasis on the abandonment of the homeless wanderer has provided a useful figure for contemporary novelists in representations of forms of dispossession, and of the living dead man as a refugee or vagabond. Furthermore, as I noted in Chapters Four and Five especially, drawing on the so-called 'female Gothic' provides scope for writers to consider the specific forms of vulnerability and abandonment which affect women.

Indeed, thinking more broadly, my brief readings of Gothic texts ranging from *Frankenstein* to *Rebecca* indicate that there is clearly scope for more sustained work to be done on reading texts from the Gothic canon more explicitly in relation to theories of biopolitics. Nevertheless, my analysis of my primary texts has also exposed some difficulties with drawing on the Gothic genre to figure the ‘fragile’ and ‘politically slick’ conditions of ‘belonging to the human race’ and ‘of being alive’. As I outlined in the final section of Chapter Five, the Gothic genre’s imbrication in a ‘Whiggish’ approach to history, which emphasises progress and modernisation, may function productively to highlight ‘the perceived abuses persisting into the present that are associated with the past’<sup>6</sup> where the history of violence embedded in the management of life is concerned. At the same time, however, this approach may obscure the extent to which certain troubling discourses underpin the very ideas of progress and modernisation. I drew attention to this especially in Chapter Three in my analysis of Kim Newman’s problematic re-inscription of the civilisation/barbarism and human/animal binaries in *Anno Dracula*, binaries which the novel elsewhere suggested were fundamental to decisions which engender the abandonment of certain lives to any kind of violence.

Despite these difficulties, the novels I have analysed have in turn frequently exposed gaps and limits in current theorisations of the relationship between political power and life – first and foremost in terms of the need to differentiate between experiences of being ‘undead’. If the conditions of belonging to the human race and being alive are indeed ‘politically slick’, then this suggests that some beings may have greater ‘traction’ on these conditions than others. Novels such as *Beyond Black*

---

<sup>6</sup> Robert Mighall, *A Geography of Victorian Gothic Fiction: Mapping History’s Nightmares* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.6.

and *Darkmans* in particular have foregrounded the extent to which it is necessary to be attentive to diverse experiences of vulnerability in contemporary Britain.

My readings of these novels also raise some more specific difficulties with contemporary biopolitical theory. As is obvious from the very beginning of my analysis of *The Prestige* in Chapter One, there remain significant openings for a more consistent theorisation of the relationship between biopolitics and political economy, a relationship which has become all the more relevant in the light of contemporary neoliberal programmes of austerity operating in Britain and the ideas about the economic value of life which underpin such programmes. Equally significant are the problems which arise in relation to the place (or more properly the lack of place) given to gender and reproductive life in theorisations of biopolitics. The uncertain status of women in relation to both bare life and political life which I discussed in Chapter Four, and the biopolitical and thanatopolitical implications of understanding the value of women's lives in relation to reproduction which I explored in Chapter Five, are notable areas where contemporary work on biopolitics might be expanded, and where a more nuanced conception of the relationship between politics and biological life might arise.

One potentially productive area for this expansion, as I suggested in Chapter Five, lies in the attention both Agamben and Esposito pay to Xavier Bichat's division of life into vegetative and relational functions; indeed, it is worth noting that my readings of the novels have proven more likely to turn to this division rather than to the more problematic one between *zoē* and *bios* in Agamben's work – perhaps because drawing on Bichat's divisions allows for a more historically specific and sensitive approach to the development of modern biopolitics, and perhaps because these categories of life are not always already marked by the same troubling and

under-examined associations with gendered divisions of life as the Ancient Greek categories Agamben favours in *Homo Sacer*.

Nevertheless, the theories of biopolitics which I have engaged with in this thesis will clearly continue to be relevant to an analysis of depictions of biopolitical issues in contemporary British fiction. Indeed, texts published after the end of the historical period I examined have continued to engage with bare life and undeath, and have continued to figure this engagement through themes and ideas associated with the Gothic genre. For example, Jon McGregor's *Even the Dogs* (2010) uses imagery of living ghosts to think about states of homelessness and dispossession;<sup>7</sup> while Andrew Miller's *Pure* (2011) makes a detour to pre-Revolutionary France to think about public health in relation to the exhumation of bodies in the Holy Innocents' Cemetery. Again, these novels point to a persistent and urgent concern in contemporary British writing with the difficulties inherent in gaining a purchase on those fragile conditions of being human, and being alive, before political power over life and death.

---

<sup>7</sup> See Emily Horton, 'A Voice Without a Name: Gothic Homelessness in Ali Smith's *Hotel World* and Trezza Azzopardi's *Remember Me*', in *Twenty-First Century Fiction: What Happens Now*, ed. by Sîan Adiseshiah and Rupert Hildyard (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp.132-46.

## Bibliography

### Primary Texts

Barker, Nicola, *Darkmans* (London: Harper Perennial, [2007] 2008)

Gray, Alasdair, *Poor Things: Episodes from the Early Life of Archibald McCandless M.D., Scottish Public Health Officer* (London: Bloomsbury, [1992] 2002)

Ishiguro, Kazuo, *Never Let Me Go* (London: Faber and Faber, 2005)

Mantel, Hilary, *Beyond Black* (London and New York: Harper Perennial, 2005)

Newman, Kim, *Anno Dracula* (New York and London: Pocket Books, 1992)

Priest, Christopher, *The Prestige* (London: Gollancz, [1995] 2004)

Waters, Sarah, *The Little Stranger* (London: Virago, 2009)

### Secondary Texts

Abraham, Nicolas, 'Notes on the Phantom: A Complement to Freud's Metapsychology' [1975], in *The Shell and the Kernel, Volume I*, ed. and trans. by Nicolas T. Rand (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp.171-76

——, and Maria Torok, 'Mourning or Melancholia: Introjection versus Incorporation' [1972], in *The Shell and the Kernel, Volume I*, ed. and trans. by Nicolas T. Rand (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp.125-38

——, and ——, *The Wolf Man's Magic Word: A Cryptonymy*, trans. by Nicholas Rand (Minneapolis: University Of Minnesota Press, 1986)

Ackroyd, Peter, *The Casebook of Victor Frankenstein* (London: Chatto and Windus, 2008)

——, *Dan Leno and the Limehouse Golem* (London: Vintage, [1994] 2007)

Addley, Esther, 'Junior doctors escalate industrial action to all-out strike next month', *The Guardian*, 23 April 2016 <<http://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/mar/23/junior-doctors-to-escalate-industrial-action-to-all-out-strike-next-month>> [accessed 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2016]

Agamben, Giorgio, *The Coming Community*, trans. by Michael Hardt (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, [1990] 2009)

——, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. by Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, [1995] 1998)

——, *Infancy and History: The Destruction of Experience*, trans. by Liz Heron (London and New York: Verso, [1978] 2007)

——, *Means Without End: Notes on Politics*, trans. by Vincenzo Binetti and Cesare Casarino (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000)

——, *The Open: Man and Animal*, trans. by Kevin Attell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, [2002] 2004)

——, *Potentialities: Collected essays in Philosophy*, ed. and trans. by Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999)

——, *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive*, trans. by Daniel Heller-Roazen (New York: Zone, [1998] 2008)

——, *State of Exception*, trans. by Kevin Attell (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, [2003] 2005)

Ahmed, Sara, and others, eds, *Uprootings/Regroundings: Questions of Home and Migration* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2003)

Alexander, Denis R. and Ronald L. Numbers, eds, *Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010)

Alexander, Sarah C., *Victorian Literature and the Physics of the Imponderable* (London and New York: Routledge, 2015)

Anderson, Bridget, *Us and Them? The Dangerous Politics of Immigration Control* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013)

Anker, Peder, *Imperial Ecology: Environmental Order in the British Empire, 1895-1945* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2001)

Arata, Stephen, *Fictions of Loss in the Victorian Fin de Siècle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996)

Archer, John, 'Colonial Suburbs in South Asia, 1700-1850, and the Spaces of Modernity', in *Visions of Suburbia*, ed. by Roger Silverstone (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), pp.26-54

Arendt, Hannah, *The Human Condition* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, [1958] 1998)

——, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (San Diego, New York and London: Harcourt, [1951] 1968)

——, 'The Perplexities of the Rights of Man', in *The Portable Hannah Arendt*, ed. by Peter Baehr (London: Penguin, 2000), pp.31-45

Arias, Rosario and Patricia Pulham, 'Introduction', in *Haunting and Spectrality in Neo-Victorian Fiction: Possessing the Past*, ed. by Rosario Arias and Patricia Pulham (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp.xi-xxvi

Ariès, Philippe, *The Hour of Our Death*, trans. by Helen Weaver (Harmondsworth: Penguin, [1977] 1981)



- Armstrong, Philip, *What Animals Mean in the Fiction of Modernity* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2008)
- Armstrong, Tim, *Modernism, Technology, and the Body: A Cultural Study* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998)
- Ascari, Maurizio, *A Counter-History of Crime Fiction: Supernatural, Gothic, Sensational* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007)
- Auchter, Jessica, *The Politics of Haunting and Memory in International Relations* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014)
- Auerbach, Nina, *Our Vampires, Ourselves* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995)
- Augé, Marc, *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, trans. by John Howe (London: Verso, 1995)
- Austen, Jane, *Northanger Abbey* (London: Penguin, [1818] 2006)
- Backhouse, Roger E. and Tamotsu Nishizawa, eds, *No Wealth But Life: Welfare Economics and the Welfare State in Britain, 1880-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010)
- Baldick, Chris, *In Frankenstein's Shadow: Myth, Monstrosity, and Nineteenth Century Writing* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987)
- , and Robert Mighall, 'Gothic Criticism', in *A Companion to the Gothic*, ed. by David Punter (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), pp.209-228
- Balfour, Ian, ed., *Late Derrida* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007)
- Ball, Philip, *Unnatural: The Heretical Idea of Making People* (London: Vintage, 2011)
- Banner, Stuart, *The Death Penalty: An American History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002)
- Barker, Nicola, *Behindlings* (London: Flamingo, 2002)
- , *Wide Open* (London: Faber and Faber, 1998)
- Baucom, Ian, *Out of Place: Englishness, Empire, and the Locations of Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999)
- Bauman, Zygmunt, *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001)
- , *Globalization: the Human Consequences* (Cambridge: Polity, 1998)
- , *Society Under Siege* (Cambridge: Polity, 2002)
- , *Wasted Lives: Modernity and its Outcasts* (Oxford: Polity, 2004)

Beier A.L. and Paul Ocobock, eds, *Cast Out: Vagrancy and Homelessness in Global and Historical Perspective* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2008)

Benhabib, Seyla, *Another Cosmopolitanism: Hospitality, Sovereignty, and Democratic Iterations*, ed. by Robert Post (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006)

———, *The Rights of Others: Aliens, Residents, and Citizens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004)

Bann, Stephen, ed., *Frankenstein, Creation and Monstrosity* (London: Reaktion, 1994)

Benjamin, Walter, *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writing*, ed. by Peter Demetz, trans. by Edmund Jephcott (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1978)

Bennington, Geoffrey, *Interrupting Derrida* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000)

Bernstein, Stephen, *Alasdair Gray* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1999)

Berthin, Christine, *Gothic Hauntings: Melancholy Crypts and Textual Ghosts* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010)

Binswanger, Hans Christoph, *Money and Magic: A Critique of the Modern Economy in the Light of Goethe's Faust*, trans. by J.E. Harrison (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, [1985] 1994)

Black, Shameem, 'Ishiguro's Inhuman Aesthetics', *Modern Fiction Studies*, 55 (2009), 785-807

Bland, Lucy and Laura Doan, eds, *Sexology in Culture: Labelling Bodies and Desires* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998)

Blunt, Alison, and Robyn Dowling, *Home* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2006)

Boehm, Katherina, 'Historiography and the Material Imagination in the Novels of Sarah Waters', *Studies in the Novel*, 43:2 (2011), 137-57

Boehm-Schnitker, Nadine, 'From Public Opinion to the Big Society: Modulations of Surveillance in the (Neo)Nineteenth Century', *Journal for the Study of British Cultures*, 19 (2012), 29-44

Borradori, Giovanna, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror: Dialogues with Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2003)

———, and Jacques Derrida, 'Autoimmunity: Real and Symbolic Suicides, A Dialogue with Jacques Derrida', trans. by Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas, in Giovanna Borradori, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror: Dialogues with Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2003), pp.85-136

Bosniak, Linda, *The Citizen and the Alien: Dilemmas of Contemporary Membership* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2006)

Botting, Fred, *Gothic* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996)

———, *Gothic Romanced: Consumption, Gender and Technology in Contemporary Fictions* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008)

———, *Limits of Horror: Technologies, Bodies, Gothic* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2008)

———, *Making Monstrous: Frankenstein, Criticism, Theory* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1991)

Boxall, Peter, *Twenty-First-Century Fiction: A Critical Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013)

Bradley, Arthur, *Originary Technicity: The Theory of Technology from Marx to Derrida* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011)

———, “‘Untimely Ripp’d’: Shakespeare, Sovereignty and Unbearable Life’, *English Studies*, 94 (2013), 788-98

Brantlinger, Patrick, *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914* (New York and London: Cornell University Press, 1988)

Brindle, Kym, *Epistolary Encounters in Neo-Victorian Fiction: Diaries and Letters* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013)

Bröckling, Ulrich, ‘Human Economy, Human Capital: A Critique of Biopolitical Economy’, in *Governmentality: Current Issues and Future Challenges*, ed. by Ulrich Bröckling, Susanne Krasmann and Thomas Lemke (New York and London: Routledge, 2011), pp. 247-68

Brontë, Charlotte, *Jane Eyre* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, [1847] 1975)

Brooks, Libby, ‘SNP MP launches campaign against tax credit “rape clause”’, *The Guardian*, 17 January 2016 <<http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/jan/17/snp-mp-launches-campaign-against-tax-credit-clause>> [accessed 20<sup>th</sup> March 2016].

Brown, Laura, *Homeless Dogs and Melancholy Apes: Humans and Other Animals in the Modern Literary Imagination* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2010)

Bud, Robert, Bernard Finn and Helmuth Trischler, eds, *Manifesting Medicine: Bodies and Machines* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1999)

Burchell, Graham, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller, eds, *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991)

Burrows, Roger, ‘Introduction: entrepreneurship, petty capitalism and the restructuring of Britain’, in *Deciphering the Enterprise Culture: Entrepreneurship, Petty Capitalism and the Restructuring of Britain*, ed. by Roger Burrows (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, [1991] 2015), pp.1-16

Buse, Peter and Andrew Stott, eds, *Ghosts: Deconstruction, Psychoanalysis, History* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999)

Butler, Judith, *Antigone's Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002)

———, *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* (London and New York: Verso, 2008)

———, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London and New York: Verso, 2004)

———, and Athena Athanasiou, *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013)

Butler, Marilyn, 'Introduction', in *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus*, ed. by Marilyn Butler (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp.ix-li

Byrne, David, *Social Exclusion* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2005)

Calarco, Matthew, *Zoographies: The Question of the Animal from Heidegger to Derrida* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008)

———, and Peter Atterton, eds, *Animal Philosophy: Essential Readings in Continental Thought* (London and New York: Continuum, 2004)

Caldwell, Janis McLarren, *Literature and Medicine in Nineteenth Century Britain: From Mary Shelley to George Eliot* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004)

Campbell, Chloe, *Race and Empire: Eugenics in Colonial Kenya* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007)

Campbell, Timothy, 'Bíos, Immunity, Life: The Thought of Roberto Esposito', in *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy*, trans. by Timothy Campbell (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, [2004] 2008), pp.vii-xlii

———, *Improper Life: Technology and Biopolitics from Heidegger to Agamben* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2011)

Cantor, Geoffrey, and others, eds, *Science in the Nineteenth-Century Periodical: Reading the Magazine of Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004)

Carroll, Rachel, 'Imitations of life: cloning, heterosexuality and the human in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*', *Journal of Gender Studies* 19 (2010), 59-71

Castle, Terry, *The Apparitional Lesbian: Female Homosexuality and Modern Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993)

———, *The Female Thermometer: Eighteenth-Century Culture and the Invention of the Uncanny* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995)

Castricano, Jodey, *Cryptomimesis: The Gothic and Jacques Derrida's Ghost Writing* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001)

Castronovo, Russ, *Necro Citizenship: Death, Eroticism, and the Public Sphere in the Nineteenth-Century United States* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001)

Chaplin, Susan, 'Contemporary Gothic and the law', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Modern Gothic*, ed. by Jerrold E. Hogle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp.37-52

——, *The Gothic and the Rule of Law, 1764-1820* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007)

Cheah, Pheng and Suzanne Guerlac, eds, *Derrida and the Time of the Political* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2009)

Chevalier, Tracy, 'Class-ridden Britain gives up the ghost', *Guardian*, 31 May 2009 <<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2009/may/31/sarah-waters-the-little-stranger>> [accessed 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014]

Childs, Donald J., *Modernism and Eugenics: Woolf, Eliot, Yeats and the Culture of Degeneration* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001)

Clark, Peter, *Hope and Glory: Britain 1900-2000* (London: Penguin, 2004)

Clark, William, Jan Golinski and Simon Schaffer, eds, *The Sciences in Enlightened Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999)

Clemens, Justin, Nicholas Heron and Alex Murray, eds, *The Work of Giorgio Agamben: Law, Literature, Life* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008)

Clery, E. J., *Women's Gothic: from Clara Reeve to Mary Shelley* (Plymouth: Northcote House, 2000)

Clough, Patricia Ticineto, *Autoaffection: Unconscious Thought in the Age of Teletechnology* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2000)

Cohen, Ed, *A Body Worth Defending: Immunity, Biopolitics, and the Apotheosis of the Modern Body* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2009)

Cohen, Lawrence, 'The Other Kidney: Biopolitics beyond Recognition', in *Commodifying Bodies*, ed. by Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Loïc Wacquant (London: SAGE, 2002), pp.9-30

Colella, Silvia, 'Olfactory Ghosts: Michel Faber's *The Crimson Petal and the White*', in *Haunting and Spectrality in Neo-Victorian Fiction: Possessing the Past*, ed. by Rosario Arias and Patricia Pulham (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp.85-110

Collins, Jo, and John Jervis, 'Introduction', in *Uncanny Modernity: Cultural Theories, Modern Anxieties*, ed. by Jo Collins and John Jervis (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp.1-9

'Comfort of strangeness', *The Scotsman*, 4 May 2007 <<http://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/books/comfort-of-strangeness-1-747086>> [accessed 12<sup>th</sup> August 2015]

Connor, Steven, 'Afterword', in *The Victorian Supernatural*, ed. by Nicola Brown, Carolyn Burdett and Pamela Thurschwell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 258-77

———, *The English Novel in History, 1950-1995* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996)

Cooper, Lydia R., 'Novelistic practice and ethical philosophy in Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day* and *Never Let Me Go*', in *Kazuo Ishiguro: New Critical Visions of the Novels*, ed. by Sebastien Groes and Barry Lewis (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp.106-17

Cooper, Melinda, *Life as Surplus: Biotechnology & Capitalism in the Neoliberal Era* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2008)

Copeland, Edward, *Women Writing about Money: Women's Fiction in England, 1790-1820* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995)

Cornell, Drucilla, Michel Rosenfeld and David Gray Carlson, eds, *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice* (New York and London: Routledge, 1992)

Cornwell, Neil, *The Literary Fantastic: From Gothic to Postmodernism* (Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990)

Crawford, Joseph, *Gothic Fiction and the Invention of Terrorism: The Politics and Aesthetics of Fear in the Age of the Reign of Terror* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp.189-98

Cresswell, Tim, *Place: A Short Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2014)

Cross, Gary, 'The Suburban Weekend: Perspectives on a Vanishing Twentieth-Century Dream', in *Visions of Suburbia*, ed. by Roger Silverstone (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), pp.108-31

Csengei, Ildiko, *Sympathy, Sensibility and the Literature of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012)

Curran, Andrew, 'Afterword: Anatomical Readings in the Early Modern Era', in *Monstrous Bodies/Political Monstrosities in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Laura Lunger Knoppers and Joan B. Landes (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2004), pp.227-46

Currie, Mark, 'Controlling Time: Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*', in *Kazuo Ishiguro: Contemporary Critical Perspectives*, ed. by Sean Matthews and Sebastien Groes (London and New York: Continuum, 2009), pp.91-103

Darwin, John, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830-1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009)

———, *Unfinished Empire: The Global Expansion of Britain* (London: Penguin, 2013)

Davies, Owen, *The Haunted: A Social History of Ghosts* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007)

Davis, Colin, *Haunted Subjects: Deconstruction, Psychoanalysis and the Return of the Dead* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007)

Davison, Carol Margaret, 'Burning Down the Master's (Prison)-House: Revolution and Revelation in Colonial and Postcolonial Female Gothic', in *Empire and the Gothic: The Politics of Genre*, ed. by Andrew Smith and William Hughes (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp.136-54

——, 'Monstrous Regiments of Women and Brides of Frankenstein: Gendered Body Politics in Scottish Female Gothic Fiction', in *The Female Gothic: New Directions*, ed. by Diana Wallace and Andrew Smith (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp.196-214

Day, Graham, *Community and Everyday Life* (London: Routledge, 2006)

Dayan, Colin, *The Law is a White Dog: How Legal Rituals Make and Unmake Persons* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2011)

Dean, Mitchell, *Governing Societies: Political Perspectives on Domestic and International Rule* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2007)

——, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (London: SAGE, 2010)

de Boever, Arne, *Narrative Care: Biopolitics and the Novel* (New York and London: Bloomsbury, 2013)

de la Durantaye, Leland, *Giorgio Agamben: A Critical Introduction* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009)

Delanty, Gerard, *Community* (London: Routledge, 2003)

Delbourgo, James, *A Most Amazing Scene of Wonders: Electricity and Enlightenment in Early America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006)

de Groot, Jerome, *The Historical Novel* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010)

Derrida, Jacques, *Acts of Literature*, ed. by Derek Attridge (New York and London: Routledge, 1992)

——, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, ed. by Marie-Louise Mallet, trans. by David Willis (New York: Fordham University Press, [2006] 2008)

——, *The Beast and the Sovereign, Volume I*, ed. by Michel Lisse, Marie-Louise Mallet and Ginette Michaud, trans. by Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, [2008] 2009)

——, *The Beast and the Sovereign, Volume II*, ed. by Michel Lisse, Marie-Louise Mallet and Ginette Michaud, trans. by Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, [2010] 2011)

——, *The Death Penalty, Volume I*, ed. by Geoffrey Bennington, Marc Crépon, and Thomas Dutoit, trans. by Peggy Kamuf (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2014)

——, 'Eating Well, or the Calculation of the Subject' (1991), trans. by Peter Connor and Avital Ronell, in *Points: Interviews, 1974-1994*, ed. by Elisabeth Weber, trans. by Peggy Kamuf and others (Stanford: Stanford University Press, [1992] 1995), pp.255-87

——, 'Faith and Knowledge: The Two Sources of "Religion" at the Limits of Reason Alone', trans. by Samuel Weber, in *Acts of Religion*, ed. by Gil Anidjar (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2010), pp.42-101

——, 'Force of Law: The "Mystical Foundation of Authority"', trans. by Mary Quaintance, in *Acts of Religion*, ed. by Gil Anidjar (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2010), pp.228-98

——, 'Fors: The English Words of Nicholas Abraham and Maria Torok', trans. by Barbara Johnson, in *The Wolf Man's Magic Word: A Cryptonymy*, trans. by Nicholas Rand (Minneapolis: University Of Minnesota Press, 1986), pp. xi-xlvi

——, *Given Time: I. Counterfeit Money*, trans. by Peggy Kamuf (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1992)

——, 'How to Avoid Speaking: Denials', trans. by Ken Frieden, in *Languages of the Unsayable: The Play of Negativity in Literature and Literary Theory*, ed. by Sanford Budick and Wolfgang Iser (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987), pp.3-70

——, 'Le Facteur de la Vérité', in *The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond*, trans. by Alan Bass (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, [1980] 1987), pp.413-96

——, 'Limited Inc a b c...', in *Limited Inc*, trans. by Samuel Weber (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, [1977] 1988), pp.29-110

——, *Of Grammatology*, trans. by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, [1967] 1997)

——, *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, trans. by Mark Dooley and Michael Hughes, London: Routledge, 2001)

——, *Paper Machine*, trans. by Rachel Bowlby (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005)

——, *Points: Interviews, 1974-1994*, ed. by Elisabeth Weber, trans. by Peggy Kamuf and others (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995)

——, *The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond*, trans. by Alan Bass (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1987)

——, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, trans. by Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005)



——, ‘Signature Event Context’, in *Limited Inc*, trans. by Samuel Weber (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, [1972] 1988), pp.1-23

——, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*, trans. by Peggy Kamuf (London and New York: Routledge [1994] 2006)

——, *Speech and Phenomena and Other Essays on Husserl’s Theory of Signs*, trans. by David B. Allison (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973)

——, ‘Telepathy’, trans. by Nicholas Royle, in *Deconstruction: A Reader*, ed. by Martin McQuillan (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), pp.496-526

——, *The Work of Mourning*, ed. by Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2001)

——, *Writing and Difference*, trans. by Alan Bass (London: Routledge, [1978] 1997)

——, and Anne Dufourmantelle, *Of Hospitality*, trans. by Rachel Bowlby (Stanford: Stanford University Press, [1997] 2000)

Deutscher, Penelope, ‘The Inversion of Exceptionality: Foucault, Agamben, and “Reproductive Rights”’, *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 107 (2008), 55-70

——, ‘The Precarious, the Immune, and the Thanatopolitical: Butler, Esposito, and Agamben on Reproductive Biopolitics’, in *Against Life*, ed. by Alastair Hunt and Stephanie Youngblood (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2016), Amazon Kindle e-book

——, ‘Sacred Fecundity: Agamben, Sexual Difference, and Reproductive Life’, *Telos*, 161 (2012), 51-78

Dickens, Charles, *Our Mutual Friend*, ed. by Michael Cotsell (Oxford, Oxford University Press, [1865] 2008)

Dickenson, Donna, *Body Shopping: Converting Body Parts to Profit* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2008)

Dietz, Mary G., *Turning Operations: Feminism, Arendt, and Politics* (New York and London: Routledge, 200)

Diken, Bülent, ‘From refugee camps to gated communities: biopolitics and the end of the city’, *Citizenship Studies*, 8 (2004), 83-106

Dines, Martin and Timotheus Vermeulen, ‘Introduction: New Suburban Stories’, in *New Suburban Stories*, ed. by Martin Dines and Timotheus Vermeulen (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp.1-13

Diprose, Rosalyn, ‘Women’s Bodies Giving Time for Hospitality’, *Hypatia*, 24 (2009), 142-63

Donald, Diana and Frank O’Gorman, eds, *Ordering the World in the Eighteenth Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006)

Douglas, Roy, *Liquidation of Empire: The Decline of the British Empire after the Second World War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002)

Douthwaite, Julia V., *The Wild Girl, Natural Man, and the Monster: Dangerous Experiments in the Age of Enlightenment* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2002)

Douzinas, Costas, *Human Rights and Empire: The Political Philosophy of Cosmopolitanism* (London: Routledge, 2007)

Doyle, Arthur Conan, *The Penguin Complete Sherlock Holmes* (London: Penguin, [1927] 2009)

Drakakis, John, and Dale Townshend, eds, *Gothic Shakespeares* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008)

Drayton, Richard, *Nature's Government: Science, Imperial Britain and the 'improvement' of the World* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000)

du Maurier, Daphne, *Rebecca* (London: Virago, [1938] 2003)

Duperray, Max, "'Jack the Ripper' as Neo-Victorian Gothic Fiction: Twentieth-Century and Contemporary Sallies into a Late Victorian Case and Myth', in *Neo-Victorian Gothic: Horror, Violence and Degeneration in the Re-imagined Nineteenth Century*, ed. by Marie-Luise Kohkle and Christian Gutleben (Amsterdam & New York: Rodopi, 2012), pp.167-95

Eagleton, Robert, *Contemporary Fiction: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013)

Edwards, Alice and Carla Ferstman, eds, *Human Security and Non-Citizens: Law, Policy, and International Affairs* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010)

Ellis, Kate Ferguson, *The Contested Castle: Gothic Novels and the Subversion of Domestic Ideology* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989)

Esposito, Roberto, *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy*, trans. by Timothy Campbell (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2008)

———, *Communitas: The Origin and Destiny of Community*, trans. by Timothy Campbell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, [1998] 2010)

———, *Immunitas: The Protection and Negation of Life*, trans. by Zakiya Hanafi (Cambridge: Polity, [2002] 2011)

———, *Persons and Things: From the Body's Point of View*, trans. by Zakiya Hanafi (Cambridge: Polity, 2015)

———, *Terms of the Political: Community, Immunity, Biopolitics*, trans. by Rhiannon Noel Welch (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013)

- , *Third Person: Politics of Life and Philosophy of the Impersonal*, trans. by Zakiya Hanafi (Cambridge: Polity, 2012)
- , and Timothy Campbell, 'Interview', trans. by Anna Papparcone, *diacritics*, 36 (2006), 49-56
- Evans, Mary, *The Imagination of Evil: Detective Fiction and the Modern World* (London: Continuum, 2009)
- Fairclough, Mary, *The Romantic Crowd: Sympathy, Controversy and Print Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013)
- Fara, Patricia, *An Entertainment for Angels: Electricity in the Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Icon, 2002)
- Farley, Paul, and Michael Symmons Roberts, *Edgelands: Journeys into England's True Wilderness* (London: Vintage Books, 2011)
- Ferguson, Niall, *Empire: How Britain Made the Modern World* (London: Penguin, 2004)
- Finlayson, Geoffrey B. A. M., *Citizen, State, and Social Welfare in Britain 1830-1990* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994)
- Fletcher, John, 'The sins of the fathers: the persistence of Gothic', in *Romanticism and Postmodernism*, ed. by Edward Larrissy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp.113-40
- Flew, Terry, 'Michel Foucault's *The Birth of Biopolitics* and contemporary neo-liberalism debates', *Thesis Eleven*, 108 (2012), 44-65
- Foucault, Michel, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979*, ed. by Michel Senellart, trans. by Graham Burchell (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008)
- , *The History of Sexuality: Volume One, The Will to Knowledge*, trans. by Robert Hurley (London: Penguin, [1978] 1998)
- , *The Order of Things: An archaeology of the human sciences* (London and New York: Routledge, [1966] 2002)
- , 'The Politics of Health in the Eighteenth Century', in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. by Paul Rabinow (London: Penguin, 1984), pp.273-89
- , *Power: Essential Works of Foucault 1954 – 1984 Volume 3*, ed. by James D. Faubion, trans. by Robert Hurley and others (London: Penguin, [1994] 2000)
- , *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-1978*, ed. by Michael Senellart, trans. by Graham Burchell (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009)
- , *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76*, ed. by Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana, trans. by David Macey (London: Penguin, 2003)

Frank, Lawrence, *Victorian Detective Fiction and the Nature of Evidence: the Scientific Investigations of Poe, Dickens, and Doyle* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003)

Freud, Sigmund, 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle' [1920-22], in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XVIII*, ed. and trans. by James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press and The Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1955), pp.7-23

——, 'Civilisation and its Discontents' [1930], in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XXI*, ed. and trans. by James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press and The Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1955), pp.64-147

——, 'Dreams and Occultism', in *New Introductory Lectures to Psychoanalysis*, ed. and trans. by James Strachey (London and New York: W.W. Norton and Company, [1933] 1965), pp.38-70

——, 'Dreams and Telepathy' [1922], in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XVIII*, ed. and trans. by James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press and The Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1955), pp.197-220

——, 'Psycho-Analysis and Telepathy' [1921], in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XVIII*, ed. and trans. by James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press and The Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1955), pp.174-93

——, 'The Uncanny', in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XVII*, trans. by James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, 1955), pp.217-52

Friedman, Marilyn, ed., *Women and Citizenship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005)

Friese, Heidrun, 'Spaces of hospitality', trans. by James Keye, *Angelaki*, 9 (2004), 67-79

Fudge, Erica, *Animal* (London: Reaktion, 2002)

Fulford, Tim, Debbie Lee and Peter J. Kitson, eds, *Literature, Science and Exploration in the Romantic era: Bodies of Knowledge* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004)

Funk, Wolfgang, 'Ghosts of Postmodernity: Spectral Epistemology and Haunting in Hilary Mantel's *Fludd* and *Beyond Black*', in *Twenty-First Century Fiction: What Happens Now*, ed. by Sian Adiseshiah and Rupert Hildyard (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp.147-61

Gaiman, Neil, *Neverwhere* (London: Headline Review, [1996] 2005)

Gallagher, Catherine, *The Body Economic: Life, Death and Sensation in Political Economy and the Victorian Novel* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2006)

- Ganteau, Jean-Michel, *The Ethics and Aesthetics of Vulnerability in Contemporary British Fiction* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2015)
- Gearry, Conor and Costas Douzinas, eds, *The Cambridge Companion to Human Rights Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012)
- Gee, Sophie, *Making Waste: Leftovers and the Eighteenth-Century Imagination* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010)
- Germanà, Monica, 'The Death of the Lady: Haunted Garments and (Re-)Possession in *The Little Stranger*', in *Sarah Waters*, ed. by Kaye Mitchell (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp.114-28
- Gigante, Denise, *Life: Organic Form and Romanticism* (Connecticut and London: Yale University Press, 2009)
- Gilbert, Pamela K., *Disease, Desire, and the Body in Victorian Women's Popular Novels* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997)
- Gillham, Nicholas W., *A Life of Sir Francis Galton: From African Exploration to the Birth of Eugenics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001)
- Gilman, Charlotte Perkins, *The Yellow Wall-Paper and Other Stories*, ed. by Robert Shulman (Oxford: Oxford World Classics, [1892] 2009)
- Gilroy, Paul, *Postcolonial Melancholia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005)
- , *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack: The cultural politics of race and nation* (London and New York: Routledge, [1987] 2002)
- Ginsburg, Faye D. and Rayna Rapp, eds, *Conceiving the New World Order: The Global Politics of Reproduction* (London: University of California Press, 1995)
- Gladstone, David, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999)
- Glendinning, Simon and Robert Eaglestone, eds, *Derrida's Legacies: Literature and Philosophy* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008)
- Glennerster, Howard, *British Social Policy: 1945 to the Present*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007)
- Godwin, William, *Caleb Williams or Things as They Are*, ed. by Maurice Hindle (London: Penguin, [1794] 2005)
- Goh, Robbie B.H., 'Stevenson's Financial Gothic: Money, Commerce, Language, and the Horror of Modernity in "The Isle of Voices"', *Gothic Studies*, 10 (2008), 51-66
- Gooday, Graeme, 'Profit and prophecy: electricity in the late-Victorian periodical', in *Science in the Nineteenth-Century Periodical: Reading the Magazine of Nature*, ed. by Geoffrey Cantor, and others (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp.238-54

- Goode, Erich and D. Angus Vail, eds, *Extreme Deviance* (Los Angeles: Pine Forge Press, 2008)
- Goodrich, Peter, and others, eds, *Derrida and Legal Philosophy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008)
- Gordon, Avery, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1997)
- Gray, Alasdair, *Lanark: A Life in Four Books* (Edinburgh: Canongate Books, [1969] 2011)
- Grear, Anna, “‘Framing the project’ of international human rights law: reflections on the dysfunctional ‘family’ of the Universal Declaration’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Human Rights Law*, ed. by Costas Douzinas and Conor Gearty (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp.17-35
- Greenslade, William, *Degeneration, Culture and the Novel 1880-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994)
- Griffin, Gabriele, ‘Science and the cultural imaginary: the case of Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go*’, *Textual Practice*, 23 (2009), 645-63
- Gutleben, Christian, *Nostalgic Postmodernism: The Victorian Tradition and the Contemporary British Novel* (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2001)
- Hadley, Louisa, *Neo-Victorian Fiction and Historical Narrative: The Victorians and Us* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010)
- Haggard, H. Rider, *She*, ed. by Daniel Karlin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, [1887] 2008)
- Halberstam, Judith, *Skin Shows: Gothic Horror and the Technology of Monsters* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1995)
- Hale, David George, *The Body Politic: A Political Metaphor in Renaissance English Literature* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971)
- Haley, Bruce, *The Healthy Body and Victorian Culture* (Cambridge, Mass and London: Harvard University Press, 1978)
- Hall, Stuart, *The Hard Road to Renewal: Thatcherism and the Crisis of the Left* (London: Verso, 1988)
- Hanson, Clare, *Eugenics, Literature, and Culture in Post-war Britain* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013)
- Haraway, Donna J., *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (London: Free Association, 1991)
- Hardaway, Elizabeth, “‘Ourselves Expanded’: The Vampire’s Evolution from Bram Stoker to Kim Newman’, in *The Blood is the Life: Vampires in Literature*, ed. by Leonard G. Heldreth and Mary Pharr (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1999), pp.177-86

- Harris, Bernard, *The Origins of the British Welfare State: Society, State and Social Welfare in England and Wales, 1800-1945* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004)
- Harris, Jonathan Gil, *Foreign Bodies and the Body Politic: Discourses of Social Pathology in Early Modern England* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006)
- Hawley, John C., 'Bell, Book and Candle: *Poor Things* and the Exorcism of Victorian Sentiment', *Review of Contemporary Fiction*, 15 (1995), 175-77
- Hay, Simon, *A History of the Modern British Ghost Story* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011)
- Healy, Margaret, *Fictions of Disease in Early Modern England: Bodies, Plagues and Politics* (New York: Palgrave, 2001)
- Heater, Derek, *A Brief History of Citizenship* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004)
- Heidegger, Martin, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, trans. by William McNeill and Nicholas Walker (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995)
- Heilmann, Ann, 'Specters of the Victorian in the Neo-Forties Novel: Sarah Waters's *The Little Stranger* (2009) and its Intertexts', *Contemporary Women's Writing*, 6 (2012), 38-55
- , and Mark Llewellyn, *Neo-Victorianism: The Victorians in the Twenty-First Century, 1999-2009* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010)
- Heller, Tamara, *Dead Secrets: Wilkie Collins and the Female Gothic* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992)
- Henderson, Andrea K., *Romantic Identities: Varieties of Subjectivity 1774-1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996)
- Hennessy, Peter, *Never Again: Britain 1945-51* (London: Cape, 1992)
- Henson, Louise, and others, eds, *Culture and Science in the Nineteenth-Century Media* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004)
- Hicks, Alexander M., *Social Democracy & Welfare Capitalism: A Century of Income Security Politics* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1999)
- Hills, Matt, *The Pleasures of Horror* (London and New York: Continuum, 2005)
- Ho, Elizabeth, *Neo-Victorianism and the Memory of Empire* (London: Continuum, 2012)
- Hoffmann, E.T.A., 'The Sandman' [1816], in *Tales of Hoffmann*, trans. by R.J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin, 1982), pp.85-127
- Hoffmann, Stefan-Ludwig, *Human Rights in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011)

Hogg, James, *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, [1981] 2010)

Hoggett, Paul, ed., *Contested Communities: Experiences, Struggles, Policies* (Bristol: Policy Press, 1997)

Hogle, Jerrold E., 'The Gothic Ghost of the Counterfeit and the Progress of Abjection', in *A Companion to the Gothic*, ed. by David Punter (London: Blackwell, 2001), pp.293-304

——, 'Gothic Studies Past, Present and Future', *Gothic Studies*, 1 (1999), 1-9

——, 'Introduction: the Gothic in Western Culture', in *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction*, ed. by Jerrold E. Hogle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp.1-20

Horner, Avril and Sue Zlosnik, *Daphne du Maurier: Writing, Identity and the Gothic Imagination* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998)

Horton, Emily, 'A Voice Without a Name: Gothic Homelessness in Ali Smith's *Hotel World* and Trezza Azzopardi's *Remember Me*', in *Twenty-First Century Fiction: What Happens Now*, ed. by Sîan Adiseshiah and Rupert Hildyard (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp.132-46

Houston, Gail Turley, *From Dickens to Dracula: Gothic, Economics, and Victorian Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005)

Hughes, Gordon and Ross Fergusson, eds, *Ordering Lives: Family, Work and Welfare* (London: Routledge, 2000)

Hunt, Alastair, and Stephanie Youngblood, 'Introduction: Against Life', in *Against Life*, ed. by Alastair Hunt and Stephanie Youngblood (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2016), Amazon Kindle e-book (paras 9-10, locations 198-212)

Hunt, Lynn Avery, *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Co., 2007)

Hurley, Kelly, *The Gothic Body: Sexuality, Materialism, and Degeneration at the fin de siècle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996)

Hutchings, Peter J., *The Criminal Spectre in Law, Literature and Aesthetics: Incriminating Subjects* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001)

Hutton, Will, *The State We're In* (London: Vintage, [1995] 1996)

Huysmans, Jef, *The Politics of Insecurity: Fear, Migration and Asylum in the EU* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2006)

Hyam, Ronald, *Britain's Declining Empire: The Road to Decolonisation, 1918-1968* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006)

Ishay, Micheline R., *The History of Human Rights: From Ancient Times to the Globalization Era* (California and London: University of California Press, 2008)

Ishiguro, Kazuo, *The Remains of the Day* (London: Faber, [1989] 2005)



- Isin, Engin F. and Greg M. Nielson, eds, *Acts of Citizenship* (London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008)
- Jackson, Kevin, ed., *The Oxford Book of Money* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995)
- Jackson, Shirley, *The Haunting of Hill House* (London: Penguin, [1959] 2009)
- James, Henry, *The Aspern Papers and The Turn of the Screw* (London: Penguin, [1907-9] 1986)
- James, Simon J., *Unsettled Accounts: Money and Narrative in the Novels of George Gissing* (London: Anthem, 2003)
- Jameson, Fredric, 'Culture and Finance Capital', *Critical Inquiry*, 24 (1997), 246-65
- Jann, Rosemary, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes: Detecting Social Order* (New York and Oxford: Macmillan, 1995)
- Johnson, Barbara, 'The Frame of Reference: Poe, Lacan, Derrida', *Yale French Studies*, 55-56 (1977), 457-505
- , *Persons and Things* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2008)
- Jones, Colin and Roy Porter, eds, *Reassessing Foucault: Power, Medicine, and the Body* (London: Routledge, 1994)
- Jones, Donna V., *The Racial Discourses of Life Philosophy: Negritude, Vitalism, and Modernity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010)
- Jordan, Julia, 'Autonomous automata: opacity and the fugitive character in the modernist novel and after', in *The Legacies of Modernism: Historicising Postwar and Contemporary Fiction*, ed. by David James (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp.96-113
- Joseph, Keith, 'Speech at Edgbaston: "Our Human Stock is Threatened"', 19<sup>th</sup> October, 1974. Available from <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/101830> [Accessed 10<sup>th</sup> December 2013]
- Josephson, Matthew, *Edison: A Biography* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1961)
- Joyce, Simon, *The Victorians in the Rearview Mirror* (Athen: Ohio University Press, 2007)
- Judovitz, Dalia, *The Culture of the Body: Genealogies of Modernity* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001)
- Kamuf, Peggy, 'Accountability', *Textual Practice*, 21 (2007), 251-66
- Kaplan, Amy, 'In the Name of Security', *Review of International American Studies*, 3.3-4.1 (2008/2009), 15-25

Kaplan, Cora, *Victoriana: Histories, Fictions, Criticism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007)

Kayman, Martin A., *From Bow Street to Baker Street: Mystery, Detection and Narrative* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992)

Kennett, Patricia, 'Homelessness, citizenship, and social exclusion', in *Homelessness: Exploring the New Terrain* ed. by Patricia Kennet and Alex Marsh (Bristol: The Policy Press, 1999), pp.37-60

Khanna, Ranjana, 'Frames, Contexts, Community, Justice', *diacritics*, 33 (2003), 11-41

Khomami, Nadia, 'Museum billed as celebration of London women opens as Jack the Ripper exhibit', *The Guardian*, 29 July 2015 <<http://www.theguardian.com/culture/2015/jul/29/museum-billed-as-celebration-of-london-women-opens-as-jack-the-ripper-exhibit>> [Accessed 15<sup>th</sup> March 2016]

Kilgour, Maggie, *The Rise of the Gothic Novel* (London: Routledge, 1995)

King, Richard and Dan Stone, eds, *Hannah Arendt and the Uses of History: Imperialism, Nation, Race, and Genocide* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007)

Kinney, Arthur F., 'Introduction', in *Rogues, Vagabonds and Sturdy Beggars*, ed. by Arthur F. Kinney (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, [1973] 1990), pp.11-57

Kipp, Julie, *Romanticism, Maternity, and the Body Politic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003)

Klaver, Elizabeth, *Sites of Autopsy in Contemporary Culture* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005)

Knellwolf, Christa and Jane Goodall, eds, *Frankenstein's Science: Experimentation and Discovery in Romantic Culture, 1780-1830* (Aldershot and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008)

Knox, Sara L., 'Giving Flesh to the Wraiths of Violence: Super-realism in the Fiction of Hilary Mantel', *Australian Feminist Studies*, 25 (2010), 313-23

Kohlke, Marie-Luise, 'Editor's Note', *Journal of Neo-Victorian Studies*, 2:1 (2008/2009), i-vii

——, and Christian Gutleben, 'The (Mis)Shapes of Neo-Victorian Gothic: Continuations, Adaptations, Transformation', in *Neo-Victorian Gothic: Horror, Violence and Degeneration in the Re-Imagined Nineteenth Century*, ed. by Marie-Luise Kohlke and Christian Gutleben (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2012), pp.1-48

Kristeva, Julia, *The Kristeva Reader*, ed. by Toril Moi, trans. by Seán Hand and Léon S. Roudiez (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986)

- , *Strangers to Ourselves*, trans. by Léon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991)
- Kuchta, Todd, *Semi-Detached Empire: Suburbia and the Colonization of Britain, 1880 to the Present* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010)
- Kucich, John and Dianne F. Sadoff, eds, *Victorian Afterlife: Postmodern Culture Rewrites the Nineteenth Century* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000)
- La Berge, Leigh Claire, *Scandals and Abstraction: Financial Fiction of the Long 1980s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015)
- Lamb, Jonathan, *The Evolution of Sympathy in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, [2009] 2016)
- Landes, Joan B., 'The Anatomy of Artificial Life: An Eighteenth-Century Perspective', in *Genesis Redux: Essays in the History and Philosophy of Artificial Life*, ed. by Jessica Riskin (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2007), pp.96-117
- Lane, Richard J., Rod Mengham and Philip Tew, eds, *Contemporary British Fiction* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003)
- Lashley, Conrad and Alison Morrison, eds, *In Search of Hospitality: Theoretical Perspectives and Debates* (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2001)
- Lassner, Phyllis, *Colonial Strangers: Women Writing the End of the British Empire* Piscataway, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2004)
- Leech, Roger H., 'Lodges, garden houses and villas: the urban periphery in the early modern Atlantic world', in *Slavery and the British Country House*, ed. by Madge Dresser and Andrew Hann (Swindon: English Heritage, 2013), pp.54-8
- Le Fanu, *In a Glass Darkly* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, [1872] 1999)
- Leimgruber, Walter, *Between Global and Local: Marginality and Marginal Regions in the Context of Globalization and Deregulation* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004)
- Lemke, Thomas, *Biopolitics: An Advanced Introduction*, trans. by Eric Frederick Trump (New York and London: New York University Press, 2011)
- Letissier, Georges, 'Hauntology as Compromise between Traumatic Realism and Spooky Romance in Sarah Waters's *The Little Stranger*', in *Trauma and Romance in Contemporary British Literature*, ed. by Jean-Michel Ganteau and Susana Onega (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2013), pp.34-50
- Levy, Aaron and Eduardo Cadava, eds, *Cities Without Citizens* (Philadelphia: Slought Foundation, 2003)
- Lewis, Matthew, *The Monk*, ed. by Howard Anderson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, [1796] 2008)

Lewis, Michael, 'Of (Auto-)Immune Life: Derrida, Esposito, Agamben', in *Medicine and Society, New Perspectives in Continental Philosophy*, ed. by Darian Meacham (Dordrecht: Springer, 2015), pp.213-32

Lippit, Akira Mizuta, *Electric Animal: Toward a Rhetoric of Wildlife* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2000)

Lister, Ruth, *Citizenship: Feminist Perspectives*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (New York: New York University Press, 2003)

Litt, Toby and Ali Smith, 'Introduction' in *New Writing 13*, ed. by Toby Litt and Ali Smith (Basingstoke and Oxford: Picador, 2005), pp.ix-xi

Llewellyn, Mark, 'Spectrality, S(p)ecularity, and Textuality: Or, Some Reflections in the Glass', in *Haunting and Spectrality in Neo-Victorian Fiction: Possessing the Past*, ed. by Rosario Arias and Patricia Pulham (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp.23-42

Lochner, Liani, "'How dare you claim these children are anything less than fully human?': The Shared Precariousness of Life as a Foundation for Ethics in *Never Let Me Go*", in *Kazuo Ishiguro in a Global Context*, ed. by Cynthia F. Wong and Hülya Yildiz (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), pp.101-110

———, "'This is what we're supposed to be doing, isn't it?': scientific discourse in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*", in *Kazuo Ishiguro: New Critical Visions of the Novels*, ed. by Sebastien Groes and Barry Lewis (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp.225-35

Loh, Lucienne, 'Rural Heritage and Colonial Nostalgia in the Thatcher Years: V.S. Naipaul's *The Enigma of Arrival*', in *Thatcher and After: Margaret Thatcher and her Afterlife in Contemporary Culture*, ed. by Louisa Hadley and Elizabeth Ho (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp.96-115

Lowe, Rodney, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005)

Luckhurst, Roger, 'Biomedical Horror: The New Death and the New Undead', in *Technologies of the Gothic in Literature and Culture: Technogothics*, ed. by Justin D. Edwards (New York and London: Routledge, 2015), pp.84-98

———, 'The Contemporary London Gothic and the Limits of the "Spectral Turn"', *Textual Practice*, 16 (2002), 527-46.

———, *The Invention of Telepathy, 1870-1901* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2002)

MacArthur, Sian, *Crime and the Gothic: Identifying the Gothic Footprint in Modern Crime Fiction* (Faringdon: Libri Publishing, 2011)

McDonald, Keith, 'Days of Past Futures: Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* as "Speculative Memoir"', *Biography*, 30 (2007), 74-83

McGregor, Jon, *Even the Dogs* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010)

- MacKay, Marina, 'World War II, the welfare state, and postwar "humanism"', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Twentieth-Century British Novel*, ed. by Robert L. Caserio (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) pp.146-62
- McKeon, Michael, *The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private, and the Division of Knowledge* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005)
- McKibbin, Ross, *Classes and Cultures: England 1918-1951* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998)
- McLane, Maureen N., *Romanticism and the Human Sciences: Poetry, Population, and the Discourse of the Species* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000)
- McLaren, Angus, *Reproduction by Design: Sex, Robots, Trees, and Test-Tube Babies in interwar Britain* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2012)
- McLaughlin, Janice, Peter Phillimore and Diane Richardson, eds, *Contesting Recognition: Culture, Identity and Citizenship* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011)
- McNaughton, Carol, *Transitions through Homelessness: Lives on the Edge* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008)
- McNay, Lois, 'Self as Enterprise: Dilemmas of Control and Resistance in Foucault's *The Birth of Biopolitics*', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 26 (2009), 55-77
- Mahoney, John, *The Challenge of Human Rights: Origin, Development, and Significance* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007)
- Mangan, Michael, *Performing Dark Arts: A Cultural History of Conjuring* (Bristol: Intellect, 2007)
- Mantel, Hilary, 'Author, author', *Guardian*, 24 May 2008 <<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2008/may/24/1>> [accessed 12<sup>th</sup> August 2015]
- , *Eight Months on Ghazzah Street* (London: Fourth Estate, 1988)
- , *Every day is Mother's Day* (London and New York: Harper Perennial, [1985] 2006)
- , *The Giant O'Brien* (London: Fourth Estate, [1998] 2010)
- , *Giving Up the Ghost: A Memoir* (London: Fourth Estate, 2003)
- , 'Haunted by Shame', *Guardian*, 23 May 2009 <<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2009/may/23/little-stranger-sarah-waters>> [accessed 16 July 2014]
- Markman, Ellis, *The History of Gothic Fiction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000)
- Marks, John, 'Clone Stories: "Shallow are the souls that have forgotten how to shudder"', *Paragraph*, 33 (2010), 331-53

Marsh, Huw, 'Nicola Barker's *Darkmans* and "the vengeful tsunami of history"', *Literary London: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Representation of London*, 7 (2009), <<http://www.literarylondon.org/london-journal/september2009/marsh.html>> [accessed 12<sup>th</sup> August 2015]

Marsh, Nicky, 'Money's doubles: reading, fiction and finance capital', *Textual Practice*, 26 (2012), 115-33

——, 'Taking the Maggie: Money, Sovereignty, and Masculinity in British Fiction of the Eighties', *Modern Fiction Studies*, 53 (2004), 845-66

Marshall, Bridget M., *The Transatlantic Gothic Novel and the Law, 1790-1860* (London and New York: Routledge, [2011] 2016)

Marshall, Catherine, and Stéphane Guy, 'Introduction', in *The Victorian Legacy in Political Thought*, ed. by Catherine Marshall and Stéphane Guy (Bern: Peter Lang, 2014), pp.11-35

Marshall, David, *The Surprising Effects of Sympathy: Marivaux, Diderot, Rousseau, and Mary Shelley* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988)

Marshall, T. H., and Tom Bottomore, *Citizenship and Social Class* (London: Pluto, 1992)

Marshall, Tim, *Murdering to Dissect: Grave-robbing, Frankenstein, and the anatomy literature* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1995)

Mason, John Hope, *The Value of Creativity: the Origins and Emergence of a Modern Belief* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003)

Mayhew, Anne, 'Money as Electricity', *Journal of Cultural Economy*, 4 (2011), 245-53

Mbembe, Achille, 'Necropolitics', trans. by Libby Meintjes, *Public Culture*, 15 (2003), 11-40

Menand, Louis, 'Something about Kathy', *The New Yorker*, 28 March 2005 <<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2005/03/28/something-about-kathy>> [Accessed 16<sup>th</sup> February 2016]

Merivale, Patricia and Susan Elizabeth Sweeney, eds, *Detecting Texts: The Metaphysical Detective Story from Poe to Postmodernism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999)

Merritt, Rebecca, 'Public Perceptions of 1857: An Overview of the British Press Responses to the Indian Uprising', in *Mutiny at the Margins: New Perspectives on the Indian Uprising of 1857, Vol. 2: Britain and the Indian Uprising*, ed. by Andrea Major and Crispin Bates (New Delhi and London: SAGE, 2013), pp.1-24

Mezey, Jason, 'The Gospel of *Gandhi*: Whiteness and State Narcissism in Thatcherite England', in *Thatcher and After: Margaret Thatcher and her Afterlife in Contemporary Culture*, ed. by Louisa Hadley and Elizabeth Ho (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp.75-95

- Mighall, Robert, *A Geography of Victorian Gothic Fiction: Mapping History's Nightmares* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999)
- Miles, Robert, *Gothic Writing, 1750-1820: A Genealogy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002)
- Miller, Andrew, *Pure* (London: Sceptre, 2011)
- Miller, J. Hillis, 'Derrida Enisled', *Critical Inquiry*, 33 (2007), 248-76
- , *For Derrida* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009)
- , *The Medium is the Maker: Browning, Freud, Derrida and the New Telepathic Ecotechnologies* (Brighton and Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 2009)
- Millhauser, Steven, *The Barnum Museum* (Illinois: Dalkey Archive Press, 1997)
- Mills, Catherine, *The Philosophy of Agamben* (Stocksfield: Acumen, 2008)
- Minca, Claudio, 'Agamben's geographies of modernity', *Political Geography*, 26 (2007), 78-97
- Mingione, Enzo, ed., *Urban Poverty and the Underclass: A Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996)
- Mitchell, Kate, *History and Cultural Memory in Neo-Victorian Fiction: Victorian Afterimages* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010)
- Mitchell, Robert, *Experimental Life: Vitalism in Romantic Science and Literature* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2013)
- , *Sympathy and the State in the Romantic Era: Systems, State Finance, and the Shadows of Futurity* (New York and London: Routledge, 2007)
- Moers, Ellen, *Literary Women* (London: Women's Press, 1978)
- Montag, Warren, 'Necro-economics: Adam Smith and death in the life of the universal', *Radical Philosophy*, 134 (2005), 7-17
- Moody, Jane, 'The Drama of Capital: Risk, Belief, and Liability on the Victorian Stage', in *Victorian Literature and Finance*, ed. by Francis O'Gorman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp.91-109
- Moore, Alan, and Eddie Campbell, *From Hell* (Marietta, Georgia: Top shelf Productions, [1989-1996] 2012)
- Moretti, Franco, *Signs Taken for Wonders: Essays in the Sociology of Literary Form* (London and New York: Verso, [1983] 2005)
- Morrison, Toni, *Beloved* (London: Picador, 1987)
- Morse, Deborah Denenholz and Martin A. Danahay, eds, *Victorian Animal Dreams: Representations of Animals in Victorian Literature and Culture* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007)

Morsink, Johannes, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Origins, Drafting, and Intent* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999)

Morus, Iwan Rhys, *Frankenstein's Children: Electricity, Exhibition, and Experiment in Early-Nineteenth-Century London* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998)

Moseley, Merritt, 'Tidy and Untidy Novels: The Booker Prizes 2006-2007', *Sewanee Review*, 116 (2008), pp.289-303

Mullan, John, 'On First Reading Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*', in *Kazuo Ishiguro: Contemporary Critical Perspectives*, ed. by Sean Matthews and Sebastien Groes (London: Continuum, 2009), pp.104-113

———, *Sentiment and Sociability: The Language of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988)

Murray, Alex, *Giorgio Agamben* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010)

———, *Recalling London: History and Fiction in the Work of Peter Ackroyd and Iain Sinclair* (London: Continuum, 2007)

Naas, Michael, *Miracle and Machine: Jacques Derrida and the Two Sources of Religion, Science, and the Media* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012)

———, *Taking on the Tradition: Jacques Derrida and the Legacies of Deconstruction* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003)

Nancy, Jean-Luc, *The Inoperative Community*, ed. by Peter Connor, trans. by Peter Connor and others (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991)

National Library of Medicine, *Frankenstein: Penetrating the Secrets of Nature: An Exhibition by the National Library of Medicine* (New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press, 2002)

Navarette, Susan J., *The Shape of Fear: Horror and the Fin de Siècle Culture of Decadence* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1998)

Nayar, Pramod K., *Posthumanism* (Cambridge: Polity, 2014)

Neocleous, Mark, *The Monstrous and the Dead: Burke, Marx, Fascism* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2005)

Ness, Patrick, 'A roar, a titter, and a tee-hee-hee', *Guardian*, 5 May 2007 <<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/may/05/featuresreviews.guardianreview3>> [accessed 12<sup>th</sup> August 2015]

Newman, Kim, 'Afterword', in *Anno Dracula* (London: Titan, [1992] 2011), pp.449-456

———, 'Bloodlines', *Sight and Sound*, 3 (1993), 12-13

———, *The Bloody Red Baron* (New York: Avon Books, 1995)

———, 'Drac the Ripper', in *Anno Dracula* (London: Titan, [1992] 2011), pp.529-32



- , *Dracula Cha Cha Cha* (London: Pocket Books, 2001)
- , 'Slow News Day', in *Unforgiveable Stories* (London: Pocket Books, 2000), pp.167-75
- Newton, Michael, 'Introduction', in *The Penguin Book of Ghost Stories* (London: Penguin, 2010), pp.xv-xxxv
- Noakes, Richard, 'Spiritualism, science and the supernatural in mid-Victorian Britain', in *The Victorian Supernatural*, ed. by Nicola Brown, Carolyn Burdett and Pamela Thurschwell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp.23-43
- Nocks, Lisa, 'Frankenstein, In A Better Light', *Journal of Social and Evolutionary Systems*, 20 (1997), 137-55
- Norris, Andrew, 'Introduction: Giorgio Agamben and the Politics of the Living Dead', in *Politics, Metaphysics, Death: Essays on Giorgio Agamben's Homo Sacer*, ed. by Andrew Norris (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005), pp.1-30
- Ocobock, Paul, 'Introduction: Vagrancy and Homelessness in Global and Historical Perspective', in *Cast Out: Vagrancy and Homelessness in Global and Historical Perspective*, ed. by A.L. Beier and Paul Ocobock (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2008), pp.1-34
- O'Neill, Robert D., "'Frankenstein to futurism": representations of organ donation and transplantation in popular culture', *Transplantation Reviews*, 20 (2006), 222-30
- Owen, Alex, *The Darkened Room: Women, Power, and Spiritualism in Late Victorian England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, [1989] 2004)
- Packham, Catherine, *Eighteenth-Century Vitalism: Bodies, Culture, Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012)
- Page, Robert M., *Revisiting the Welfare State* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2007)
- Pakenham, Thomas, *The Boer War* (London: Abacus, 1991)
- Palmer, Clare, 'Madness and Animality in Michel Foucault's *Madness and Civilization*', in *Animal Philosophy: Ethics and Identity*, ed. by Peter Atterton and Matthew Calarco (London and New York: Continuum, 2004), pp.72-84
- Parker, Emma, 'The Country House Revisited: Sarah Waters' *The Little Stranger*', in *Sarah Waters*, ed. by Kaye Mitchell (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp.99-113
- Payne, Christopher, *The Consumer, Credit and Neoliberalism: Governing the Modern Economy* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2012)
- Peeren, Esther, 'Everyday Ghosts and the Ghostly Everyday in Amos Tutuola, Ben Okri, and Achille Mbembe', in *Popular Ghosts: The Haunted Spaces of Everyday Culture*, ed. by María del Pilar Blanco and Esther Peeren (New York and London: Continuum, 2010) pp.106-117

—, *The Spectral Metaphor: Living Ghosts and the Agency of Invisibility* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014)

Pick, Anat, *Creaturely Poetics: Animality and Vulnerability in Literature and Film* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011)

Pierson, Christopher and Francis G. Castles, eds, *The Welfare State Reader* (Cambridge: Polity, 2006)

Plummer, Kenneth, *Intimate Citizenship: Private Decisions and Public Dialogues* (Seattle Washington: University of Washington Press, 2003)

Poe, Edgar Allan, 'The Fall of the House of Usher' [1839], in *The Fall of the House of Usher and Other Writings*, ed. by David Galloway (London: Penguin, 2003), pp.90-109

—, 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue' [1841], in *The Fall of the House of Usher and Other Writings*, ed. by David Galloway (London: Penguin, 2003), pp.141-76

Pollock, Mary Sanders and Catherine Rainwater, eds, *Figuring Animals: Essays on Animal Images in Art, Literature, Philosophy, and Popular Culture* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005)

Pope, Ged, *Reading London's Suburbs: From Charles Dickens to Zadie Smith* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015)

Porter, Roy, *Bodies Politic: Disease, Death, and Doctors in Britain, 1650-1900* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001)

—, ed., *Eighteenth-Century Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003)

—, *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World* (London: Penguin, 2000)

—, *Flesh in the Age of Reason* (London: Allen Lane, 2003)

Porter, Russell A., 'Edward Schizohands: The Postmodern Gothic Body', *Postmodern Culture*, 2 (1992), para. 15 [http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/postmodern\\_culture/v002/2.3potter.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/postmodern_culture/v002/2.3potter.html) [Accessed 16<sup>th</sup> February 2016]

Pozzi, Dora C. and John M. Wickersham, eds, *Myth and the Polis* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991)

Pratt, Geraldine, 'Abandoned Women and Spaces of the Exception', *Antipode: Journal of Radical Geography*, 37 (2005), 1052-78

Priestman, Martin, *Crime Fiction: From Poe to the Present* (Plymouth: Northcote House, 1998)

—, *Detective Fiction and Literature: The Figure on the Carpet* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990)

Procacci, Giovanna, 'Social economy and the government of poverty', in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, ed. by G. Burchell, C. Gordon and P. Miller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp.151-68

Prozorov, Sergei, *Agamben and Politics: A Critical Introduction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014)

Puchner, Martin, 'When We Were Clones', *Raritan Review*, XXII (2008), 34-49

Pugh, Martin, *State and Society: A Social and Political History of Britain Since 1870* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012)

Punter, David, *Gothic Pathologies: The Text, the Body, and the Law* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998)

——, 'Introduction: The Ghost of a History', in *A Companion to the Gothic*, ed. by David Punter (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), pp.viii-xiv

——, 'Introduction: The Ghost of a History', in *A New Companion to the Gothic*, ed. by David Punter (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), pp.1-9

——, *The Literature of Terror: A History of Gothic Fictions from 1765 to the present day, Volume 1: The Gothic Tradition* (London and New York: Longman, [1978] 1996)

——, *The Literature of Terror, Volume 2: The Modern Gothic*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (London and New York: Longman, [1978] 1996)

Pykett, Lyn, *Reading Fin de Siècle Fictions* (London: Longman, 1996)

Rabinow, Paul, and Nikolas Rose, 'Biopower Today', *Biosocieties*, 1 (2006), 195-217

Radcliffe, Ann, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, ed. by Jacqueline Howard (London: Penguin, [1794] (2001)

Ratcliffe, Sophie, *On Sympathy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2008)

Read, Jason, 'A Genealogy of Homo Economicus: Neoliberalism and the Production of Subjectivity', *Foucault Studies*, 6 (2009), 25-36

Reeve, Clara, *The Old English Baron*, ed. by James Trainer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, [1778] 2003)

Reill, Peter Hanns, *Vitalizing Nature in the Enlightenment* (California and London: University of California Press, 2005)

Reitan, Earl A., *The Thatcher Revolution: Margaret Thatcher, John Major, Tony Blair, and the Transformation of Modern Britain* (Lanham and Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003)

Renk, Kathleen J., *Caribbean Shadows & Victorian Ghosts: Women's Writing and Decolonization* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999)

- Rhys, Jean, *Wide Sargasso Sea* (London: Penguin, [1966] 2000)
- Richardson, Ruth, *Death, Dissection, and the Destitute* (London: Phoenix Press, [1988] 2001)
- Riskin, Jessica, 'The Defecating Duck, or, the Ambiguous Origins of Artificial Life', *Critical Enquiry*, 29 (2003), 599-633
- , 'Eighteenth-Century Wetware', *Representations*, 83 (2003), 97-125
- Robbins, Bruce, 'Cruelty is Bad: Banality and Proximity in *Never Let Me Go*', *Novel*, 40 (2007), 289-302
- Robinson, Emily, *History, Heritage and Tradition in Contemporary British Politics* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2012)
- Rose, Nikolas, 'The value of life: somatic ethics & the spirit of biocapital', *Daedalus*, 137 (2008), 36-48
- Rowe, Stephanie, "'Listen to Me": *Frankenstein* as an Appeal to Mercy and Justice, on Behalf of the Persecuted Animals', in *Humans and Other Animals in Eighteenth-Century British Culture: Representation, Hybridity, Ethics*, ed. by Frank Palmeri (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp.137-52
- Rowlinson, Matthew Charles, *Real Money and Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010)
- Royle, Nicholas, *The Uncanny* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002)
- Ruddick, Nicholas, 'Reticence and Ostentation in Christopher Priest's Later Novels: *The Quiet Woman* and *The Prestige*', in *Christopher Priest: The Interaction*, ed. by Andrew M. Butler (London: The Science Fiction Foundation, 2005), pp.79-96
- Rumford, Chris, *The Globalization of Strangeness* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013)
- Ruston, Sharon, *Shelley and Vitality* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005)
- Ryan, Frances, 'Death has become a part of Britain's benefits system', *The Guardian*, 27 August 2015  
<<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/aug/27/death-britains-benefits-system-fit-for-work-safety-net>> [accessed 20<sup>th</sup> March 2016]
- Rzepka, Charles J., *Detective Fiction* (Cambridge: Polity, 2005)
- , and Lee Horsley, eds, *A Companion to Crime Fiction* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010)
- Sage, Victor, 'The Ambivalence of Laughter: the development of Nicola Barker's Grotesque Realism', *Review of Contemporary Fiction*, 32 (2012), 87-97
- Said, Edward W., *Culture & Imperialism* (London: Vintage, 1994)

- Samuel, Raphael, *Theatres of Memory: Past and Present in Contemporary Culture* (London and New York: Verso, 2012)
- Santner, Eric, *On Creaturely Life: Rilke, Benjamin, Sebald* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2006)
- Scaggs, John, *Crime Fiction* (London: Routledge, 2005)
- Scarry, Elaine, ed., *Literature and the Body: Essays on Populations and Persons* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988)
- Schaffer, Simon, 'Enlightened Automata', in *The Sciences in Enlightened Europe*, ed. by William Clark, Jan Golinski, and Simon Schaffer (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1999), pp.126-65
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, 'Commodity Fetishism in Organs Trafficking', in *Commodifying Bodies*, ed. by Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Loïc Wacquant (London: SAGE, 2002), pp.31-62
- Scoggin, Daniel P., 'A Speculative Resurrection: Death, Money, and the Vampiric Economy of *Our Mutual Friend*', 30 (2002), 99-125
- Seawright, David, *The British Conservative Party and One Nation Politics* (New York: Continuum, 2010)
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky, *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions* (New York and London: Methuen, 1986)
- Segal, Naomi, Lib Taylor and Roger Cook, eds, *Indeterminate Bodies* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003)
- Seidler, Victor, *Urban Fears and Global Terrors: Citizenship, multicultures and belongings after 7/7* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2007)
- Seltzer, Mark, *Bodies and Machines* (New York: Routledge, 1992)
- Sewell, Dennis, *The Political Gene: How Darwin's Ideas Changed Politics* (London: Picador, 2009)
- Shankland, Tom, dir. and Richard Warlow, writer, *Ripper Street*, Series 2, Episode 2, 'Am I Not Monstrous?' (BBC, 4 November, 2013)
- Sharma, Sarah, 'Baring Life and Lifestyle in the Non-Place', *Cultural Studies*, 23 (2009), 129-148
- Shelley, Mary, *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus*, ed. by Maurice Hindle (London: Penguin, [1818] 2003)
- , *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus*, ed. by M.K Joseph (Oxford: Oxford University Press, [1831] 1998)
- Shrimpton, Nicholas, "'Even these metallic problems have their melodramatic side": Money in Victorian Literature' in *Victorian Literature and Finance*, ed. by Francis O'Gorman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp.17-38

Shukin, Nicole, *Animal Capital: Rendering Life in Biopolitical Terms* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2009)

Sibley, David, *Geographies of Exclusion* (London: Routledge, 1995)

Silverstone, Roger, 'Introduction', in *Visions of Suburbia*, ed. by Roger Silverstone (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), pp.1-25

Sim Joe, and Philip A. Thomas, 'The Prevention of Terrorism Act: Normalising the Politics of Repression'. *Journal of Law and Society*, 10:1 (1983), 71-84

Sinclair, Iain, *White Chappell, Scarlet Tracings* (London: Penguin, [1987] 2004)

———, *London Orbital: A Walk around the M25* (London: Penguin, 2002)

Sinfield, Alan, *Literature, Politics and Culture in Postwar Britain* (London: Athlone Press, 1997)

Skultans, Vieda, *English Madness: Ideas on Insanity, 1580-1890* (London, Boston, and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979)

Sleight, Graham 'Introduction', in *The Prestige* (London: Gollancz, [1995] 2011) pp. vii-ix

Smith, Ali, *Hotel World* (London: Penguin, 2001)

Smith, Andrew and William Hughes, eds, *Empire and the Gothic: The Politics of Genre* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003)

———, and Jeff Wallace, eds, *Gothic Modernisms* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001)

Soloway, Richard A., *Demography and Degeneration: Eugenics and the Declining Birthrate in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1990)

Soper, Kate, *What is Nature?: Culture, Politics and the Non-Human*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995)

Spinner, Jeff, *The Boundaries of Citizenship: Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality in the Liberal State* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994)

Spooner, Catherine "[T]hat eventless realm": Hilary Mantel's *Beyond Black* and the Ghosts of the M25', in *London Gothic: Place, Space and the Gothic Imagination*, ed. by Lawrence Philips and Anne Witchard (London and New York: Continuum, 2010), pp.80-90

———, and Emma McEvoy, 'Introduction: Approaching Gothic', in *The Routledge Companion to the Gothic*, ed. by Catherine Spooner and Emma McEvoy (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), pp.1-3

Sprinker, Michael, ed., *Ghostly Demarcations: A Symposium on Jacques Derrida's Specters of Marx* (London and New York: Verso, 1999)

Stephanou, Aspasia, *Reading Vampire Gothic Through Blood: Bloodlines* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014)

Stern, Megan, “‘Yes: — no: — I have been sleeping — and now — now — I am dead’: undeath, the body and medicine”, *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences*, 39 (2008), 347-54

Stevenson, Robert Louis, *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* [1886], in *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde and Other Tales*, ed. by Roger Luckhurst (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp.5-66

Stewart, Graham, *Bang!: A History of Britain in the 1980s* (London: Atlantic Books, 2013)

Stiegler, Bernard, *Taking Care of Youth and the Generations*, trans. by Stephen Barker (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010)

———, *Technics and Time, 1: The Fault of Epimetheus*, trans. by Richard Beardsworth and George Collins (Stanford: Stanford University Press, [1994] 1998)

———, *What Makes Life Worth Living: On Pharmacology*, trans. by Daniel Ross (Cambridge: Polity Press, [2010] 2013)

Still, Judith, ‘Acceptable hospitality: from Rousseau’s Levite to the strangers in our midst today’, *Journal of Romance Studies*, 3 (2003), 1-14

———, ‘Derrida: Guest and Host’, *Paragraph*, 28 (2005), 85-101

Stoker, Bram, *Dracula*, ed. by Maurice Hindle (London: Penguin, [1897] 2003)

Stonebridge, Lyndsey, *The Judicial Imagination: Writing After Nuremberg* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011)

Swift, Simon, ‘Hannah Arendt, violence and vitality’, *European Journal of Social Theory*, 16 (2013), 357-76

Symons, Julian, *Bloody Murder: From the Detective Story to the Crime novel: a History* (London: Pan, 1994)

Tanner, Laura E., *Lost Bodies: Inhabiting the Borders of Life and Death* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006)

Tarizzo, Davide, ‘The Untamed Ontology’, trans. by Alvis Sforza Tarabochia, *Angelaki*, 16 (2011), 53-61

Taylor, Alan, ‘The dawning of the clones’, *Sunday Herald*, 20 February 2005 <[http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/12395890.The\\_dawning\\_of\\_the\\_clones/](http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/12395890.The_dawning_of_the_clones/)> [Accessed 16<sup>th</sup> February 2016]

Taylor, D. J., *After the War: The Novel and English Society Since 1945* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1993)

Tey, Josephine, *The Franchise Affair* (London: Arrow, [1949] 2003)

Thatcher, Margaret, 'Speech to Conservative Party Conference', 16<sup>th</sup> October, 1981. Available from <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/104717> [Accessed 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2013]

——, 'Speech to Conservative Party Conference', 9<sup>th</sup> October, 1987. Available from <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/106941> [Accessed 10<sup>th</sup> December 2013]

——, 'Speech to Conservative Party Conference', 13<sup>th</sup> October 1989. Available from <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/107789> [Accessed 18<sup>th</sup> November 2013]

——, 'Speech to the Conservative Political Centre Summer School: The Renewal of Britain', 6<sup>th</sup> July, 1979. Available from <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/104107> [Accessed 10<sup>th</sup> December 2013]

Thomas, Martin, Bob Moore and L.J. Butler, eds, *Crises of Empire: Decolonization and Europe's Imperial States, 1918-1975* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010)

Thomas, Ronald R., *Detective Fiction and the Rise of Forensic Science* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999)

Thomas, Scarlett, 'House Calls', *The New York Times*, 29 May 2009 <[http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/31/books/review/Thomas-t.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/31/books/review/Thomas-t.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0)> [accessed 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014]

Thompson, James, *Models of Value: Eighteenth-Century Political Economy and the Novel* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1996)

Thurschwell, Pamela, *Literature, Technology and Magical Thinking, 1880-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001)

Timmins, Nicholas, *The Five Giants: A Biography of the Welfare State* (London: HarperCollins, 2001)

Tomkinson, Fiona, 'Ishiguro and Heidegger: The Worlds of Art' in *Kazuo Ishiguro in a Global Context*, ed. by Cynthia F. Wong and Hülya Yildiz (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), pp.59-68

Tompkins, J. M. S., *The Popular Novel in England, 1770-1800* (London: Methuen, 1961)

Tosi, Antonio, 'The Excluded and the Homeless: the Social Construction of the Fight Against Poverty in Europe', in *Urban Poverty and the Underclass: A Reader*, ed. by Enzo Mingione (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), pp.83-104

Travis, Alan, 'Oliver Letwin blocked help for black youth after 1985 riots', *The Guardian*, 30 December 2015 <<http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/dec/30/oliver-letwin-blocked-help-for-black-youth-after-1985-riots>> [accessed 14 March 2016]

Tredennick, Bianca, ed., *Victorian Transformations: Genre, Nationalism and Desire in Nineteenth-Century Literature* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011)



- Tuite, Clara, 'Frankenstein's Monster and Malthus' "Jaundiced Eye": Population, Body Politics, and the Monstrous Sublime', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 22 (1998), 141-55
- Turda, Marius, *Modernism and Eugenics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010)
- Turner, Alwyn W., *A Classless Society: Britain in the 1990s* (London: Aurum, 2013)
- Vardoulakis, Dimitris, 'The "Poor Thing": Cosmopolitanism in Alasdair Gray's *Poor Things*', *SubStance*, 117 (2008), 137-51
- Vaughan, Alden T., and Virginia Mason Vaughan, *Shakespeare's Caliban: A Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991)
- Verdery, Katherine, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies: Reburial and Postsocialist Change* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999)
- Vermeulen, Pieter, *Contemporary Literature and the End of the Novel: Creature, Affect, Form* (Basingstoke and Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015)
- Vernon, John, *Money and Fiction: Literary Realism in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984)
- Vidler, Anthony, *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely* (Cambridge, MA and London: The MIT Press, 1992)
- Voskuhl, Adelheid, 'Motions and Passions: Music-Playing Women Automata and the Culture of Affect in Late Eighteenth-Century Germany', in *Genesis Redux: Essays in the History and Philosophy of Artificial Life*, ed. by Jessica Riskin (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2007), pp.293-320
- Vrettos, Athena, *Somatic Fictions: Imagining Illness in Victorian Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995)
- Waldau, Paul, *Animal Studies: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013)
- Walker, Ronald G. and June M. Frazer, eds, *The Cunning Craft: Original Essays on Detective Fiction and Contemporary Literary Theory* (Macomb, Ill., Western Illinois University, 1990)
- Wall, Thomas Carl, 'Au Hasard', in *Politics, Metaphysics, and Death: Essays on Giorgio Agamben's Homo Sacer*, ed. by Andrew Norris (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005), pp.31-48
- Wallace, Diana, *Female Gothic Histories: Gender, History and the Gothic* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013)
- , "The Haunting Idea": Female Gothic Metaphors and Feminist Theory', in *The Female Gothic: New Directions*, ed. by Diana Wallace and Andrew Smith (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp.26-41

——, and Andrew Smith, 'Introduction: Defining the Female Gothic', in *The Female Gothic: New Directions*, ed. by Diana Wallace and Andrew Smith (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp.1-12

Walpole, Horace, *The Castle of Otranto*, ed. by Nick Groom (Oxford: Oxford University Press, [1764] 2014)

Walters, William, 'Secure borders, safe haven, domopolitics', *Citizenship Studies*, 8 (2004), 237-60

Warwick, Alexandra, 'Feeling Gothicky?', *Gothic Studies*, 9 (2007), 5-15

Wasson, Sara, "'A Butcher's Shop where the Meat Still Moved": Gothic Doubles, Organ Harvesting, and Human Cloning', in *Gothic Science Fiction: 1980-2010*, ed. by Sara Wasson and Emily Alder (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011) pp.73-86

——, 'Scalpel and Metaphor: The Ceremony of Organ Harvest in Gothic Science Fiction', *Gothic Studies*, 17 (2015), 104-123

Waters, Sarah, *Affinity* (London: Virago, 2000)

——, "'I'd love to write an anti-Downton!": An Interview with Sarah Waters', in *Sarah Waters: Contemporary Critical Perspectives*, ed. by Kaye Mitchell (London: Bloomsbury, 2013) pp.130-141

——, 'The lost girl', *Guardian*, 30 May 2009 <<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2009/may/30/sarah-waters-books>> [accessed 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014]

——, *The Night Watch* (London: Virago, 2006)

Watkiss, Joanne, 'Welcome the Coming, Speed the Parting Guest: Hospitality and the Gothic', in *A New Companion to the Gothic*, ed. by David Punter (Oxford: Blackwell, 2012), pp.523-34

Watt, Nicholas, 'Howard Flight echoes Keith Joseph's 1974 warning that "our human stock is threatened"', *The Guardian*, 25 November 2010 <<http://www.theguardian.com/politics/wintour-and-watt/2010/nov/25/conservatives-davidcameron>> [accessed 18 November 2013]

Webster, Charles, *The National Health Service: A Political History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002)

Wells, H. G., *The Invisible Man* (London: Penguin, [1897] 2005)

——, *The Island of Doctor Moreau*, ed. by Patrick Parrinder (London: Penguin, [1896] 2005)

Welshman, John, *Underclass: A History of the Excluded Since 1880* (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2013)

Westall, Claire and Michael Gardiner, eds, *Literature of an Independent England: Revisions of England, Englishness and English Literature* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013)

Whelan, Lara Baker, *Class, Culture and Suburban Anxieties in the Victorian Era* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2010)

Whitehead, Anne, 'Writing with Care: Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*', *Contemporary Literature*, 52 (2011), 54-83

Whiting, R. C., *The Labour Party and Taxation: Party Identity and Political Purpose in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000)

Whyte, Jessica, *Catastrophe and Redemption: The Political Thought of Giorgio Agamben* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013)

Williams, Gilda, *The Gothic* (London and Cambridge Mass: MIT Press, 2007)

Wilt, Judith, *Ghosts of the Gothic: Austen, Eliot, and Lawrence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, [1980] 2014)

Wisnicki, Adrian, *Conspiracy, Revolution, and Terrorism from Victorian Fiction to the Modern Novel* (New York and London: Routledge, 2008)

Wolfe, Cary, *Before the Law: Humans and Other Animals in a Biopolitical Frame* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2013)

———, ed., *What is Posthumanism?* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2010)

———, ed., *Zoontologies The Question of the Animal* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003)

Wolff, Janet, 'The culture of separate spheres: the role of culture in nineteenth-century public and private life', in *The Culture of Capital: Art, Power and the Nineteenth-Century Middle Class*, ed. by Janet Wolff and John Seed (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), pp.117-34

Wood, Jane, *Passion and Pathology in Victorian Fiction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001)

Woodbridge, Linda, 'Jest Books, the Literature of Roguery, and the Vagrant Poor in Renaissance England', *English Literary Renaissance*, 33 (2003), 201-210

———, 'The Neglected Soldier as Vagrant, Revenger, Tyrant Slayer in Early Modern England', in *Cast Out: Vagrancy and Homelessness in Global and Historical Perspective*, ed. by A.L. Beier and Paul Ococock (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2008), pp.64-87

Wright, Angela, *Britain, France and the Gothic, 1764-1820: The Import of Terror* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013)

Yuval-Davis, Nira, *Gender & Nation* (London: SAGE, 1997)

Zemka, Sue, *Time and the Moment in Victorian Literature and Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012)

Ziarek, Ewa Płonowska, 'Bare Life on Strike: Notes on the Biopolitics of Race and Gender', *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 107 (2008), 89-105

Zlosnik, Sue, 'The Gothic: Danger, Discontent, and Desire', in *The History of British Women's Writing: 1970-Present, Volume 10*, ed. by Mary Eagleton and Emma Parker (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), pp.147-57