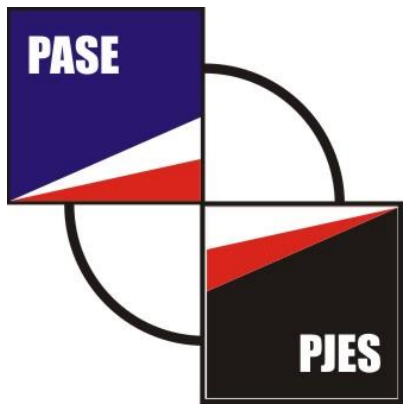

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From the Editor

The distinction between core and periphery in historical and cultural research can be compared to the military distinction between direct and indirect approach in strategy, as proposed by B. H. Liddel-Hart in the 1940s. This parallelism provides for a new and, arguably, useful interpretational perspective in reading war fiction. In the context of the First World War, the Western Front, where grand battles were fought in accordance with the 'direct approach,' can be compared to the cultural 'centre' of the war, whereas on various other fronts, on the fringes of Europe or on other continents, belligerents tried to win a strategic advantage in accordance with the strategy of indirect approach: these 'peripheral' campaigns included the Eastern Front, the Italian Front, the Balkan Theatre, the Battle of the Gallipoli, Russian campaigns against Turkey, the struggle between Britain and the Ottoman Empire in the Near East, the German U-Boat Campaign, and the campaigns or intelligence operations staged in Africa, and the Asian-Pacific theatre of the First World War. The parallel is valuable for literary criticism in that the Allied success in 'indirect approach' was most likely crucial to the final outcome of the war. Even if the 'indirect' struggles were as crucial for Allied victory as the 'direct' ones, their cultural and literary presence and remembrance is less marked in war literature, and it is marked in ways different from those known in English, French, and German fiction and poetry. It is, however, a firm underlying belief expressed in various articles in this issue that the events on 'peripheral' theatres of war were not historical curiosities, not 'other histories' that could be localized and marginalized from the European point of view, but crucial, decisive moments of the Great War, moments which determined the outcome of the war and the course of global history. This is the way they are understood here.

The first article, by the present editor, elaborates and exemplifies the genre distinctions in war fiction from countries that were secondary war theatres during the First World War. Examples include novels from Georgia and Azerbaijan. Konstantinos D. Karatzas's article on Greek war fiction identifies the stylistic features of the most important war novels written in that country during the First World War and discusses the poignant historical background of the country that was literally forced to enter the war, whose course turned out to be atrocious and tragic for Greece. John Dean's article on divided loyalties in Detroit covers the situation in the melting pot of the United States,

a country whose initial neutrality, ethnic diversity, and geographical detachment from the primary theatres of war made for interesting and surprising social phenomena related to the behaviour and treatment of the Americans of German origin. The article is based on a wealth of previously unpublished and undiscussed archival material. Martyna Kliks's article on Witold Hulewicz discusses an early example of Polish modernism as a response to the war, in which Poland was a primary theatre geographically, but not socially and nationally. For the Polish nation, the First World War was a paradoxical phenomenon, since the Poles fought for at least four major belligerents (Russia, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and France), without engaging on any side, and subsequently without considering the war as a major event in the national history. Even though the war was 'here,' for the Poles it was a distant place. Finally, Natalia Stachura's article on the tragic sinking of the Mendi, a South African troop transport that carried Black soldiers to Europe, discusses a haunting sequence of returning references to the war, first in an emergent nationalist tradition, then under racist repression, and eventually in a newly won national independence of Black South Africans.

The editor and the authors were interested in the marginal and little known corners of the First World War history, the places and traditions dismissed as secondary 'side shows,' and remembered only locally, or entirely forgotten today even by local populations, as in Poland, whose participation in the war is no longer part of the nation's collective memory. Cultural responses to the war in those 'side shows' could be markedly different from the well-known responses known in English, French, and German literatures. The diversity and intricateness of those 'secondary' war literatures transcend their local contexts, and make them surprisingly relevant for today's readers.

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The Strategy of Indirect Approach: Centre and Periphery in Fiction about the First World War

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Abstract: The article discusses a number of World War novels written in countries or areas described as secondary theatres of war. Operations in those theatres were often mentioned as examples of the 'strategy of indirect approach,' that is as attempts to disrupt the enemy's war effort by attacking in an unexpected, seemingly remote and unimportant place. During the First World War, the Gallipoli Campaign was the best-known example of this strategy, but indirect strategy propagated the war in many other countries, and affected a great variety of literary cultures. Therefore, the article is an attempt to compare the principles of indirect-approach strategy with the literary responses to war in those areas where the war was fought according to those principles. There seem to be some interesting parallels between military strategy and literary work created in the areas affected by it.

Keywords: First World War, indirect approach, core and periphery

Introduction

The distinction between core and periphery in historical and cultural research (Morton 2011) is similar to the military distinction between direct and indirect approach in strategy, as proposed by B. H. Liddell Hart in the 1940s (Liddell Hart 1942; Mearsheimer 1988). The present discussion assumes that the difference can also be seen in cultural and literary responses and subsequent modes of historical remembrance, and that the distinction consists mainly in genre selection, that is in compositional differences defined in terms of rhetorical features of genres, demarcations of suitable themes, rules of decorum, constructions of the implied authorship and readership, as well as genre-specific

practices of writing, reading, publishing, and literary distinction. Most generally and importantly, the indirect approach in war literature is characterized by absence, or limited use, of the realist epic novel as the principal genre of war literature, in the manner of Erich Maria Remarque, Henri Barbusse, or Arnold Zweig, who may be described as representatives of the literature of direct approach. Instead, peripheral fronts were either described in epic realist genre used by foreigners, such as Franz Werfel or T. E. Lawrence, or they were described in other non-epic and non-realist genres. There was, perhaps, a similar shift in poetry.

This distinction in terms of genre corresponds to McLoughlin's rhetorical study of war literature (2011). Her notion of 'spheres' and 'zones' in representation of space in war literature, derived from the classic tradition of epic and pastoral poetry, and continued in realist war fiction in the 20th century, is closely related to the notion of a war's 'centre' (or *Schwerpunkt*) in the strategy of direct approach:

> The idea of pastoral as a critical space gives a special timbre, or charge, to the rural setting. Similarly, the war zone can be seen as a specially charged space, a place apart, a demarcated area subject to its own laws where things are different. Geographically, it is hyper-defined, subject to intense surveillance (alongside the war machine, as Paul Virilio points out, there has always existed a 'watching machine'), imbued with strategic significance, its access restricted. (…) Indeed, pastoral can be understood not only as a flower-strewn retreat but as a psycho-physiologico-physical area for extended mental activity: concentration, contemplation, meditation, view formation, creativity. When, in contemporary parlance, sports psychologists speak of pre-race athletes entering or being in 'the zone', a phrase defined by the OED as 'a state of perfect concentration leading to optimum mental or physical performance', it is such a psycho-physiologico-physical space that is being described. As has already been shown, the soldier entering or in the war zone must acquire similar mental focus, blocking out distractions, focusing, visualising what lies ahead, preparing and motivating the self, achieving and maintaining a hyper-vigilant outlook, experiencing

> and managing extreme physical and emotional feelings. In this sense, the war zone is itself a version of pastoral (McLoughlin 2011, 99–100).

Thus, in literatures related to the strategy of direct approach, the sublime core of traumatic experience of the First World War (163) is strongly positioned in the front, as in the Western Front, whereas fiction and poetry about home front, much as it is affected by war, are positioned in a different zone. In other words, direct-approach literary war is staged in a heterogeneous space, organized by means of highly modified conventions of the pastoral. On the other hand, in literatures related to the strategy of indirect approach, the dark-pastoral front zone is rarely mentioned, and the organization of war space is more homogeneous; the war is everywhere and nowhere, and the pastoral war zone is rarely used. This is one of the several types of rhetorical genre distinctions that will be discussed in more detail, presently.

In general, the First World War in literatures of indirect-approach tends to be represented in modes other than the realistic epic novel. Examples, some of which are discussed below, include Stratis Myrivilis's *Life in the Tomb* (1924), Mikheil Javakhshvili's *Kvachi Kvachantiradze* (1924), Grigol Robakidze's *The Snake's Skin* (1926), Stefan Żeromski's *Seedtime* (1925), and Kurban Said's *Ali and Nino* (1937). Their shared features seem to be individual rather than national, point of view, preference for the picaresque plot structure with many episodes not related to the war, frequent use of tropes of irony, deception, and uncertainty in descriptions of history. Given the fact that most indirect-approach war theatres were also sites of atrocities and humanitarian disasters, cultures seem to have responded ironically and deceptively, but with constant awareness of almost universal hardship and suffering, not limited to the front zone.

1. Direct and Indirect Approach in Strategy

The Strategy of Indirect Approach was published in 1942 by Liddell Hart, an important war theorist and historian. Although Hart discussed many historical examples, his most useful, defining examples of indirect approach came from the First World War: for the Western Allies and Germans, the direct-approach strategy was to concentrate effort on the Western Front,

see-sawing along an imaginary line between Paris and Berlin, which led to a stalemate of a static front, and to horrors of trench warfare (Liddell Hart 1942, 219–234). That line Hart describes as the 'natural' and predictable direction of attack and defence, comparing the direct approach to a motionless balance of two fighters in wrestling:

> More and more clearly has the fact emerged to one's mental object, or physical objective, along the 'line of natural expectation' for the opponent, has ever tended to, and usually produced negative results. (…) To move along the line of natural expectation consolidates the opponents equilibrium, and, by stiffening it, augments the resisting power. In war, as in wrestling, the attempt to throw the opponent without loosening his foothold and balance can only result in self-exhaustion, increasing in disproportionate ratio to the effective strain put upon him (Liddell Hart 1942, 4–5).

Thus, during the First World War, when the Western Allies tried to attack in a theatre of war other than the Western Front, for example at Gallipoli, they followed the strategy of indirect approach: putting strain and effort far away from the line of natural expectation was supposed to put the enemy off balance, and gradually change the course of the war. However, already in this quotation can it be seen that Hart's idea is not only geographical: he writes about 'mental object,' 'equilibrium,' and 'expectation' rather than about theatres of war. Consequently, finishing his survey of war history, Hart presents a more general notion of indirect approach:

> Combining the strategical and the tactical examination, we find that most of the examples fall into one of the two categories. They were produced either as a strategy of elastic defence – calculated retirement – that was capped by a tactical offensive, or by a strategy of offence, aimed to place oneself in a position 'upsetting' the opponent, and capped by a tactical defensive: with a sting on the tail. Either compound forms an indirect approach, and the psychological basis of both can be expressed in the word 'lure' or 'trap'. (…) For the second compound, although superficially and logistically an offensive move, has for its underlying motive to draw the opponent into an 'unbalanced'

> advantage. The most effective indirect approach is one that lures and startles the opponent into a false move – so that, as in ju-jitsu, his own effort is turned into the lever of his overthrow (Liddell Hart 1941, 181).

Hart quickly adds a comment on the general quality of the notion of indirect approach, comparing the line of least expectation to the line of least resistance, known from natural science, and comparing surprise to physical dislocation and imbalance:

> In the psychological sphere, dislocation is the result of the impression on the commander's mind of the physical effects which we have listed. The impression is strongly accentuated if his realization of his being at a disadvantage is *sudden*, and if he feels that he is unable to counter the enemy's move. In fact, *psychological dislocation springs from this sense of being trapped*. (…) Thus, a move round the enemy's front against his rear has the aim not only of avoiding resistance on its way but in its issue. In the profoundest sense, it takes the *line of least resistance*. The equivalent in the physical sphere is the *line of least expectation*. They are two faces of the same coin, and to appreciate them is to widen our understanding of strategy. For if we merely take what obviously is the line of least resistance, its obviousness will appeal to the opponent also: and this line may no longer be that of least resistance (Liddell Hart 1942, 194).

This is the kind of reasoning that is sometimes quoted from Hart in strategy manuals for businessmen, because it is very general. For the same reasons, it is applicable in literary history: indirect approach in war literature is not simply referring to texts about theatres of war other than the Western Front, but rather to a mode of writing which 'lures' the reader by representing the war deviously, ironically, in a manner that upsets 'obvious' expectations and questions, defies the conventions of 'ordinary' war literature and throws the 'direct' reader off balance. This can be observed in unusual themes, subversiveness, irony, uncertainty about authorship and genre, unexpected twists, inconsequential plots, or incomprehensible messages: war literature

based on indirect approach is a separate mode of representation, rather than simply a set of novels about various 'secondary' theatres of war. The qualities of this mode of representation will be discussed below.

2. Centre, Periphery, Strategy

During the First World War, campaigns listed by Hart as examples of indirect-approach strategy were often staged in countries treated as peripheries by Western Europeans: Iraq, Gallipoli, the Caucasus, Greece and the Balkans, Poland, Ukraine, Belarus, and Lithuania, and then the German colonies in the Pacific and in Africa. The peripheral status of those countries is variously defined, geographically and economically, as exemplified in the compilatory list by Derek Aldcroft (2006, 3):

> As a working concept we have defined the impoverished peripherals as those countries which in the early twentieth century still had around one half or more of their population dependent on agriculture and with incomes per capita of less than 50 per cent of those of the advanced nations of Western Europe. On this basis, therefore, we would then encompass much of Eastern Europe (Poland, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria), Spain, Portugal, Greece and Turkey in Southern Europe, along with the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and ending up with little Albania. It so happens that most of these countries could also be classed as peripheral in a geographic sense and many of them were fairly small in terms of population.

As Aldcroft subsequently observes, the peripherals share a number of economic and political disadvantages, which described them in the aftermath of the First World War, and in most cases perhaps continue to do so today:

> 1. Concentration on the production of primary commodities, a large part of which are exported to the richer core in unprocessed form.
> 2. Dependence on imports of manufactured consumer goods and capital equipment.

3. Heavy reliance on foreign technology, know-how, skilled expertise and capital.
4. More generally the situation may give rise to 'a condition of cultural, psychological, social and political dependence' (Colman and Nixson 1994, 48), which in the European context is especially relevant given the political subordination of many peripheral regions to imperial masters (Aldcroft 2006, 19).

An important quality of those countries is that many of them during the First World War either were exploited colonially (or semi-colonially), or were areas of warfare based on the strategy of indirect approach. For many of them, the war years led to the beginning of independent statehood, which was in many cases quickly lost. The condition of 'cultural, psychological, social and political dependence' (Colman and Nixson 1994, 48) led to the development of a different type of war literature, whose defining qualities were akin to the elusive concepts of indirect-approach war: military and economic weakness led to an emphasis on deception and unconventional warfare, reliance on foreign technology and know-how led to dependence on sponsoring states and on supplies of weaponry, and the need to retain agency led to double-dealing and false loyalties to sponsoring states, or even to the adoption of 'decorative' forms of modernization as part of prestige-building in foreign policy (cf. Aldcroft 2006, 34–36). One of the key issues for peripheral countries was modernization, seen as something that would support a national military struggle for independence. Thus, on the one hand, peripheral countries tried to modernize, but the urgency of their military situation forced many countries to rely on direct foreign help, sometimes at the cost of concessions and limitations to their independence. The resulting forms of modernization were often superficial, 'decorative,' used as a ruse to attract more foreign help and gain credibility with sponsoring states, whereas the underlying motivations and economic decisions were not related to modernization. In other words, 'decorative' modernization was one of the strategies of indirect approach in contacts with enemies, with allies, and with sponsor states as well. In literature, similar strategies can be identified, assuming that Western (or 'central') literary forms were used superficially or deceptively, as camouflage for a different type of (peripheral) literature. These strategies, importantly, are definable in terms outlined in Liddell Hart's study of indirect

approach military strategy. The result was a war literature of indirect approach, defined by the following qualities:

1. Giving an 'unbalanced advantage' to a foreign literary influence: creative imitations of Western realist and modernist fiction, but modified according to indigenous requirements, fashions, and to specific purposes of local politics. This often meant writing in a manner that would be recognized and praised in a given sponsor state, e.g. imitating German or French forms of modernism in war fiction. This effectively means that a number of intended and unintended readers, such as foreigners from sponsor states, censors, or members of conflicted factions at home, are treated as opponents.
2. 'Upsetting' the expectations of opponents, to throw them 'off-balance': indigenous elements (such as interludes or secondary plots) are added, or Western elements are omitted, which leads to the development of localized forms of war literature. This limited compliance translates into ironic or parodic treatment of decorum and conventions of (Western) epic and novelistic war narratives.
3. 'Calculated retirement' as part of a flexible defence: In many cases, there seems to be a greater emphasis on individual survival, often through superior intelligence and deception. The theme of submission to military organization is either absent or played out comically, as through images of evasion and false compliance. Nevertheless, the narrative is still a potent statement about the war.
4. Emphasis on camouflage, false preparations, mimicry, and deceptive actions: this consists in a creative distortion of the author persona, effectively creating 'the author' unrelated to the agency and identity of the writing individual, along the lines discussed by Barthes and Foucault in their seminal essays. By extension, this can refer to self-referential conventions, such as the use of frame devices, lost-manuscript frames, and the epistolary novel.
5. Avoiding the 'lines of natural expectation': Instead of putting emphasis put on direct military struggle, the narratives often focus on secondary plots, distant locations, background characters, and themes unrelated to military action. This often leads to forms of picaresque, episodic plots, frame devices, and ironic distancing from representation of war.

6. Emphasis on diversion and demonstration: when, as in Western war novels, there is an emphasis on representation of fighting, it can be an element of an ironic or deceptive game with readers.

Perhaps the most important feature of literature based on indirect-approach strategy is the absence or radical modification of Western-style war novel in a national literature. This posits genre criticism at the centre of the present argument: war novels about strategic theatres of indirect warfare were often innovative, as ironic treatments of the conventional war novels from countries whose primary war experience was that of warfare based on strategy of direct approach. A number of texts discussed in the following articles seem to corroborate this statement. In the following section, two novels will be discussed as preliminary examples.

3. Examples

When England and Germany temporarily occupied Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia in 1918, their actions can be described as examples of the strategy of indirect approach: territories in a secondary (by then) theatre of war were easily captured, probably in order to seize vital supplies and to throw the enemy (Russia and Turkey, respectively) off balance. For Turkey, and for the newly formed Caucasian states, however, the contemporary military actions in the Caucasus would seem to be examples of direct strategy, of direct struggle for survival. However, their brief military struggles against Turkey, White Russians, and the Red Army, was characterized by many qualities of indirect-approach warfare: dependence on foreign military supplies and expertise, long lines of supply, small armies, and dynamic, small-scale engagements. Military leaders had to depend on improvisation, ruse, disinformation, and partisan tactics, rather than on mass warfare or prolonged war
of attrition. Consequently, the experience of warfare was different, and so were the literary responses to it. For most of the nations involved, the First World War was a crucial moment, either a beginning, or a major transformation of their statehood.

This was reflected in war literature, too, as the war seemed to demand a new type of literary response, usually identified as realism. Thus, Köroğlu observes on genre evolution in representation of war in Turkish literature,

in the work of Ömer Seyfettin, who initially adapted old epic poetry, transplanting old poetic heroes into patriotic short stories set during the First World War:

> As the war approached its inevitable end, Ömer Seyfettin's interest in the story, used both as a propaganda medium and as a way of increasing national consciousness, was substituted by a totally different approach. Having observed the penury suffered by the people in their daily life, Ömer Seyfettin started to satirize the policies of the government, which he had supported throughout the war. As the first news concerning an eventual peace began to appear, Ömer Seyfettin started his new series, *Zamane Yigitleri* (*Heroes of Our Time*), in which rough and tough types were described. In these stories, and in other stories describing the difficulties encountered during the war, the writer began to abandon his interest in history and started to struggle with the problems of the present time (Köroğlu 2007, 165).

For another example, the two important war novels about the Caucasus during the First World War are peculiar in a variety of ways, compared to Western war novels. Thus, Kurban Said's *Ali and Nino* (1937) combines genre elements of the war novel and melodramatic romance, with few descriptions of warfare and with most characters presenting a very distanced attitude to the war; the novel destabilizes genre-specific expectations, by being neither an epic war novel nor a melodrama. It also subverts the institution of the literary authorship, as testified by various controversies about its authorship and originality discussed below. Similarly, Mikheil Javakhishvili's *Kvachi* (1924) is a set of sketches reworked into a novel, which makes for a rich combination of comic episodes, erotic themes, epic historical narrative, and sensational military adventure.

Like many secondary theatres of war, Javakhishvili's novel is 'distant' from great battles in that the protagonist, for the most part, has adventures unrelated to fighting at the front: he tours Europe as a gentleman-thief, pretending to be an Afghan prince, when the war finds him, but his enthusiasm is clearly presented as another trick of a con-artist: 'Kvachi was immediately transformed: he changed fronts, invented new nets and traps, disguised his face to seem a different animal, put on the armor the times required, and girded

himself with new weapons' (292). He keeps touring Europe, as if there was no war, profiteering and dodging the draft in France, England, Germany, and Italy, representing a distanced attitude to a war which is not his war:

> Kvachi in the army? Kvachi at war? At Verdun or in the Ardennes? What for, what for? For the French? What harm had the Germans ever done him? In what way was Paris any better than Vienna or Berlin? What had it to do with Kvachi if either of them went under or soared up? Suppose a bomb fell right by Kvachi, or a bullet whizzed past and spilled his blood! Were they out of their minds? (295)

The novel has many half-ironic passages like these, simultaneously critical of the war and of the shirking protagonist, who is in Russia in most war chapters, involved with Rasputin and defrauding government money, conducting fake arms deals and setting up 'The Good Samaritan Society for Aid to War Wounded and War Dead'. As a picaresque protagonist, Kvachi accidentally becomes a diplomat, an army officer, a fraudulent humanitarian organizer, but does not treat these functions seriously, and only imitates them; for him, they are decorative forms of Western modernity at war, and he treats them as opportunities to make money. The description of the first battle he sees is presented in the same way, initially, as a set-piece staged by Rasputin: 'General Sukhomlinov will write to the commander-in-chief that you're to be looked after like the apple of his eye. Hang about not too close, not too far. Get a sniff of the front, fire a gun, and come back' (307). Then, against the expectations of the reader (and the protagonist) the description of the battle becomes naturalistic and dramatic (312–313), with short, broken sentences, a collage of drastic, dramatic, and loosely related images, very much in the tradition of the 'ordinary' war novel. Kvachi gets wounded and performs gallantly, experiencing a sudden transformation, about half way through the novel. Then, the tone of the description, again, is ironic:

> Kvachi suddenly had the wings of an eagle and the body of the archangels Michael and Gabriel, who had put their fiery swords in his hand. In his chest a lion's heart was beating, in his soul hell's chief devil was at work, with a thousand gremlins serving him. Kvachi, already a tall man, suddenly grew

> half a foot taller; he burned the flock of frightened sheep with his eyes and deafened them with his thunder: 'Stop! Join ranks!' (318)

In the following chapter, the novel suddenly reverts to the picaresque mode, with Kvachi taking part in the assassination of Rasputin, and subsequently converting to the revolutionary cause and returning to Georgia. The descriptions of the war in Georgia are notably scarce, and they are at the heart of the novel's indirect-approach strategy: the novel combines criticism of various pre-revolutionary characters and attitudes with a sensational plot and various un-critical literary conventions and themes, approximately similar to the American tall-tale about a folklore hero. As Donald Rayfield asserts, the indirect goal of the novel was, for the author, to save his life and literary reputation in Soviet Georgia, in the aftermath of the failed rebellion in 1924, when Javakhishvili was sentenced to death but somehow survived (Rayfield 2014, 9–10). The author, apart from addressing the general audience, also addressed people like Lavrenti Beria, the henchmen and engineers of mass terror. In a way, addressing the general audience could have been a ruse in time of terror and total control over publishing; Soviet officials were perhaps the real addressees of the novel. Hence, the text relies on unpredictability and indirect approach: diversified themes and conventions, a large variety of opinions and ironic representations, and a generally unclear tendency.

Another example of indirect-approach writing is the controversy over the authorship of *Ali and Nino* (1937). The novel, set mostly in Baku between 1918 and 1920, combines melodrama with war themes and vivid descriptions of exotic locations and social backgrounds. It was first published in 1937 in Vienna, in German, pseudonymously by a Kurban Said, by a publishing house that specialized in translations and works by authors unpublishable in Nazi Germany (Hall 2016), as a piece of easy-reading fiction about exotic countries, a genre that was apparently very popular and mass-produced in pre-war Germany. Since then, much has been written about the supposedly unique artistic merit of the book, which has become an international bestseller and something of a national novel in Azerbaijan. The identity of Kurban Said has been variously determined: according to the well-researched book by Tom Reiss (and another international bestseller), he was Lev Nussimbaum, a Russian-Jewish-Azerbaijani exile from Baku, who published popular-science

books about 'the Orient' in Germany between the wars, as Esad Bey, another pseudonym (Reiss 2005, 34–55). Reiss, however, mentions a variety of Azerbaijani critics (and even politicians) who claim other identities of Kurban Said, usually on grounds that the novel was an expression of Azerbaijani national spirit, and thus could not have been written by an exile Jew in Germany (189). More credible theories have been proposed, among others, by Betty Blair (2011), who proposed Yusif Vazir Chamanzaminli (an Azerbaijani statesman and author active in early 20th century), and by Injia Tamar (2009), who identified passages stolen from *Das Schlangenhemd* (1928), a symbolic novel by Grigol Robakidse, a Georgian exile in Germany. The uncertainty of and various strongly voiced claims about authorship are an important quality of indirect-approach writing: *Ali and Nino* can be flexibly adjusted to the role of a national novel, a German easy-reading text in the 1930s, an ambitious anti-Soviet work by an exiled author, and an international bestseller in the 21st century, and for each of these roles the author-function is fulfilled by a different historical character.

4. Conclusions: Genre in War Literature of Indirect-approach Strategy

In her recent study of African war novels, Eleni Coudouriotis (2014, 4–5) presented contemporary texts in terms of the opposition between sentimentalized images of war victims and the empowering texts in which naturalism was appropriated and transformed:

> The war novel in Africa, therefore, reveals a rift between naturalism and sentimentalism. The failures of reconciliation, its inability to deal adequately with the traumas of war, bring about a backlash, a renewed turn to naturalism, now focusing on the urban poor, made up of former fighters and the displaced rural population. (…) The war denounces through naturalism, but, as a second gesture, it also affirms by setting out to do a people's history, laying a claim on the nation for the people, grounded in their struggle and suffering.

What transpires from Coudouriotis's analysis is that European conventions of naturalist war novel were adapted to the needs of nation-making and historical remembrance in African literatures under discussion. The European convention of naturalist war novel, which often featured an innocent young protagonist confronted with brutality in a series of epic episodes, was modified into more brutal and fatalistic narratives about impossibility of reconciliation, and about cycles of harm and revenge (Coudouriotis 2014, 6). Genres, with their conventional characters and plot skeletons, are freely modified thematically, combined with elements of other genres, and intensified, in accordance with the contingent needs of a local situation. The reader, lured by recognizable markers of a genre (e.g. a naturalist novel), is caught unawares, and thrown off-balance, by a text which turns out to belong to a new, modified genre. The creative play with genre conventions is, thus, one of the strategies of indirect approach, used in literary works by representatives of nations and social groups whose experience (for cultural, strategical, or geographical reasons) did not match the dominant narratives written in more conventional genres.

McLoughlin (2011), among the conventional features of war fiction, lists the need for 'credentials' of a specially constructed character, who can provide reader-identification while asserting that (s)he has been through the most important, historic moments (21–25), the epic catalogues of 'details' and statistics, usually listed by a character, that show the magnitude of the war (51), the creation of 'zones' around the dark core experience of war (83–85), emplotment patterns that provide clear temporal boundaries of the war and define it as an exceptional state (107–111), the trope of adynaton (*impossibilia*), where the author claims that wartime experience defies description, or has left him/her speechless (135–138), and the profound seriousness of description with an undercurrent of an equally serious, ironic, or absurd sense of humour (164–166). Randall Fuller, in his study of the impact of the Civil War on the American literature in the 1860s, compares the development of these features with the emergence of American realist fiction:

> In many ways, the task of assimilating the war imaginatively—of constructing a coherent narrative about the conflict that would make sense of its bitter costs and enable Americans to adapt to a changed national landscape—would fall less upon Emerson and his contemporaries than upon the next generation of authors.

> Mark Twain, Stephen Crane, and Ambrose Bierce were just a few of the many writers who participated in an epic reimagining of the war in the last third of the nineteenth century. For them, the war was a tragic farce, a sick joke that belied the lofty rhetoric of writers and politicians from the previous generation. Avatars of a new literary realism that would dominate American letters through the end of the nineteenth century, their attitude toward the killing was also a minority view (221).

Thus, the development (rather than subversion) of realist conventions can be conceived as a response to the chaotic and destabilizing experience of war, a statement recently made by Denis Boak (2012, 217–228) in a theoretical article about war memoirs, with reference to the novel and romance. A similar need for literary innovation and development, this time from conventional realism into modernist fiction, is commonly mentioned in studies of literary responses to the First World War, for example in Hawkes's (2012, 99) discussion of war novels by Ford Madox Ford:

> As I have been arguing, Ford's are destabilising narratives: baffling and unsettling works which persistently defy the expectations of readers by stimulating whilst simultaneously undermining the desire and need for narrative coherence. At times, in works like *The Good Soldier*, the destabilising aspects of Ford's writing are those which most clearly signal his modernism. Other works, such as *The Inheritors*, *A Call*, *The Fifth Queen*, and *Ladies Whose Bright Eyes* are much less overtly experimental and many display affinities with popular fictional forms such as science fiction, fantasy, romance, political satire, and the detective story, forms which depend on traditional stabilities of character and plot. Indeed, Ford's Edwardian novels are founded on classic realist character-systems which, although rendered radically unstable by overjustification, continue to hold out the hope of an encounter with a rounded, knowable protagonist. Furthermore, they consistently activate readerly expectations for narratives structured and shaped by plots, whilst remaining disconcertingly resistant to interpretive finality and closure. The instabilities encountered in Ford's works have prompted

> us to reflect on how the same set of traits operate in other Edwardian novels by writers who, like Bennett and Wells, are usually considered to represent the antithesis of modernist experimentation, or who, like Conrad, hesitate between modernism and popular romance.

Thus, the advent of modernism is seen in terms of destabilizing and baffling the readers' expectations through the incoherent use of conventional 'stabilities' of character and plot. This, in Hawkes's view, was a response to the wartime experience of modernity: an attempt to provide a truthful rendering of an overwhelming experience. Larabee (2011, 19–25) has compared the development of modernist war fiction to the cartographic procedures of mapping, used on the Western Front. When, however, the attempt is not motivated by truthful rendering of a baffling experience, but by a desire to manipulate or persuade the reader, to create a personal or national self-image, or to avoid censorship or punishment, then war fiction often cannot be described as an aesthetic experiment, it defies this description. Instead, it can be described as a ruse, in terms of the strategy of indirect approach. On 'secondary' theatres of the First World War, this strategy necessitated the use of deception, secrecy, and luring the enemy into a false guess about one's intentions. Concurrently, and perhaps consequently, literary responses to such war are similarly deceptive, unpredictable, and elusive.

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The Participation of Greece (Hellas)[1] in the First World War: Literary Representation

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Abstract: The article presents Greek novels about the country's participation in the First World War, a particularly interesting case, since Greece was an important secondary theatre of war. The author presents the turbulent and ambiguous historical background of the novels: Greece's forced entry into the war, and the failed intervention in Asia Minor in the final year of the war. Most of the novels under discussion were important events in the history of Greek modernism.

Keywords: First World War, Greece, war novel

The article explores the participation of Greece in the First World War. The analysis focuses on multiple aspects but mostly sheds light upon the problems that the country's involvement caused for its people.

The participation of Greece in the Great War had major short-term benefits. Being under Turkish occupation for centuries, Greece had lost its Hellenic identity and its status as a regional power. The new era for the country began after the successful war against the Ottomans in 1821, its independence and the establishment of the First Hellenic Democracy (Gallant 2016, xvi). This was the starting point for the formation of a Western-oriented state, with modern infrastructures, political and social reforms, along with the reinvention of the Greek national identity, which had been lost or utterly transformed after almost four centuries of Turkish influence.

[1] The official name of Greece (originates from the Latin, Graeci) is Hellenic Republic. While its citizens are called Greeks by the foreigners, the natives call themselves Hellenes and their country Hellas or Hellada.

The Balkan Wars (1912–1913) (Hall 2000, 1) had been a major step forward for Greece. The country had massively expanded its borders, once again conquering areas that had been acknowledged as Greek territory even from the ancient years. A victor of the Balkan conflict, Greece had almost doubled its size and population with the least casualties possible. In detail, the Treaty of Bucharest (August 10, 1913) (Anderson and Hershey 1918, 439) had reshaped Balkans and Hellas had been on the victors' side; the country increased its territory from 64,790 to 108,610 km^2 and its population from almost 2.7 to about 4.4 million people (Anderson and Hershey 1918, 440). Thus, Hellas regained some of its lost prestige and advanced its status as a key regional power.

The Great War resulted in the rebalance of powers within the Balkans; along with the fragmentation and the enfeeblement of the Ottoman Empire, it offered Greece aspirations for more political and economic influence on the region.

Despite Greece being victorious in the Balkan Wars, its status was shattered; the Great War was the beginning of a new period of controversies in the area. The defeated neighbors were targeting the new territories of Greece, previously part of their countries and continuously challenging the Hellenic sovereignty and territorial integrity (Leontaritis 2005, 120–140).

A possible violation of the Treaty of Bucharest would be devastating for the area because it would lead to a new period of conflicts. This time, Greece was in a defensive position. Its new borders seemed too broad to protect the Hellenic state. In addition, the extensive battles during the Balkan Wars had deeply affected the already limited military personnel and the inadequate armory; it had also burdened the already crippled economy; a possible reshaping of powers would have a negative impact on the country's territorial gains. The aspirations of the other parties of the Treaty, i.e. Romania, Montenegro, Serbia and Bulgaria, to regain their power over the region had been of major importance for the strategic steps taken by Greece. One of the first actions of the Balkan states was to target the remaining Greek communities in an effort to push Greece to retreat and release its new territories.

Greece was in the middle of impending turmoil and it could not remain neutral. Nevertheless, agreement on a strategy would prove to be highly problematic and would divide the country for decades. The two bases

of the political life of Greece, King Constantine and Prime Minister Venizelos, had different views on the issue.

The King wanted the country to remain neutral or ally with Germany if forced to choose sides; Constantine and his wife Sophia of Prussia were of Dano-German and German origin (Dimitrakis 2009, 155), respectively, and loyal to their houses; their support to the Central powers seemed certain. However, such a choice meant that Greece would be an ally with Bulgaria and Turkey, supporters of the Germans as well, but former enemies that were defeated by Greece during the Balkan Wars. This alliance would only have been for the benefit of the Germans but would by no means guarantee the winnings of the Balkan Wars for Greece.

On the other hand, Prime Minister Venizelos, possibly the most influential politician in the history of modern Greece, believed that the country did not have the option to remain neutral. He believed that Greece should join with the Allied forces; according to his perspective, this would assure that the country would remain on the side of the most powerful naval powers of the era, Britain and France (Paddock and Lomonidou 2014, 273). Greece, a country of exceptional geographical position between two continents, should ensure its status as an important naval force in Southern Europe and the South-Eastern Mediterranean. If Greece had supported the Central Powers, it would have meant that the Allied forces would alienate Greece from the Mediterranean. Venizelos could foresee that such an action would have been devastating for the country's economy and future.

Although Greece was a key player in the area, the Allies did not agree on their collaboration easily, because such an action would provoke Bulgaria and Turkey, which had remained neutral until then. Nevertheless, in January 1915 Britain asked Greece to support Serbia and take several areas in Asia Minor as an exchange (Clogg 2013, 92). However, Venizelos foresaw a new confrontation with Bulgaria and Romania, both of which had already refused his proposal for joint assistance to Serbia; in such a hostile environment, Venizelos regarded the support of the Allied forces as crucial for his country's survival.

Another weak point was the inability of Greece to comply with Britain's request for military support to Serbia, which was under attack by Bulgarian, German and Austrian forces in October 1915. The British expected the Greeks to fulfill their obligations under the Serbian-Greek pact (May 1913) (Gibler 2009, 277) and offer military support to Serbia. Greece had no excuse to remain

passive anymore; its Balkan neighbors had entered the war on the side of the Central Powers and it was certain that Greece would be a future target in their effort to fulfill their imperialistic aspirations.

The world was moving but Greece could not follow the changes. Venizelos and Constantine began an endless dispute that would deeply affect the country for decades. Greece did not support the alliance because Venizelos had already resigned and the head of the country was King Constantine, who would never turn against the German alliance.

On the other hand, Britain was eager to transform Greece into an active player and thus offered important concessions. Under the exigencies of war, Winston Churchill offered Greece the opportunity to unite with Cyprus as an exchange for supporting Serbia. Unfortunately, Constantine did not value the importance of the proposal (Stavridis 1996, 291) and lost a unique opportunity. A unification of Greece and Cyprus would have offered them more power and influence over the Mediterranean; above all, it would probably have saved Cyprus from the forced invasion in 1974 and the forthcoming painful partition.

Venizelos's and Constantine's different views on the participation of Greece in the Great War led to a clash that affected the country's status and sociopolitical stability for decades. Venizelos was convinced that the alignment of his country with the Allies would guarantee its independence and offer more lands, especially in Asia Minor, which was a dream of his, as the Greeks had been living in this area since the ancient times. However, Constantine was not convinced; he rejected Venizelos' proposal for the participation of Greece to the Dardanelles Campaign on Britain's side; the latter thought that the Allied forces would win and Greece would have the opportunity for further expansion. However, Ioannis Metaxas, a future dictator of Greece (1936–1941) (Thomopoulos 2012, 112), but a highly skilled military man, analysed the plan on behalf of the King and concluded that there would be no victory for the Allies. Fortunately, Greece did not participate; the campaign was a disaster for Britain but a victory for the Ottomans, who operated under the com-mand of the future father of Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk (Del Testa 2013, 12).

In the spring of 1915, after the resignation of Venizelos, Constantine, as the head of the state, started negotiations with the Allied forces for the position of Hellas during the war. The allies demanded guarantees that, as long

as Greece did not support them, it would remain neutral and by no means support the Central powers.

However, Constantine's actions generated even more skepticism among the Allies. In May 1916, Greece unconditionally surrendered the border fortress of Rupel in Central Macedonia to the Bulgarians The Allied forces became suspicious that Greece was supporting the Central Powers and that it would allow the latter's forces to use the northern part of the country as their base for taking over the Balkans. Indeed, Constantine's actions in Rupel allowed the Bulgarians not only to seize cities north-east of Hellas but also to forcibly ghettoize the local Greek population (Koliopulos 2010, 81).

The Allies did not accept the neutrality of Greece and Venizelos, determined to oust Constantine from the country's political life, allowed them to occupy Thessaloniki (Salonika) in October 1915 (Mylonas 2012, 118). Venizelos and his foreign patrons had decided that Greece would definitely enter the war on the side of the Allied Forces; Constantine should be alienated, if not punished, for his disobedience.

The theater of war was transferred to Greece; de facto, the country became an active combatant in the Great War. In June 1916, the Allies, responding to the Rupel incident, demanded Constantine to demobilize the Greek Army. The conflict escalated with the clash between the Allied and Central forces in northern Greece but Constantine did not comply with the ultimatum. Three thousand marines arrived in Athens to force him to surrender his army (Abbott 2008, 159). King's soldiers clashed with the marines; in response, the Allied naval forces bombarded areas around the palace. The locals forced the foreign soldiers to flee; the casualties of both sides were extensive (Leon 1974, 436) but the most important development took place over the next days. Despite the different opinions on whether the Venizelists supported the Allied forces in this conflict or not, the Royal forces began a barrage of massive imprisonments, executions and atrocities that divided the country even further. The Noemvriana (November Events), as the conflict is called, was a small-scale civil clash that highlighted the extreme polarization among the Greeks.

By the end of 1916, Venizelos illegally established a government that was recognized by France and Britain. Greece was officially divided into two parts: the one of Venizelos and that of Constantine. The Allies enforced a naval blockade and embargo in Athens for more than one hundred days, forcing Constantine to pass his authority to his son Alexander. In the end, Venizelos

became the unquestionable leader of the country, with the Great powers on his side. In July 1917, Greece officially declared war on the Central Forces.

Greece was on the victors' side but it was not a winner. The National Schism, the civil unrest and the division of Greeks between the King and Venizelos continued and led the country into deeper political and social downfall (Gallant 2016, 214).

Participation in the Great War offered the Hellenic leadership the aspiration that the country could regain its ancient power and glory; the naïve ambitions and the dream of a Great Greece that would include all the regions historically inhabited by Greeks in the Balkans and the Ottoman Empire continued the turmoil. The idea of 'Greece of Two Continents (Europe and Asia) and Five Seas (the Ionian, Aegean, Marmara, Libyan and Black seas)' (Heraclides 2010, 58) forced the country to enter a conflict with the Ottomans that eventually not only created major losses in both the pride of the Greeks and in human lives but also created a deeper schism that affected the country for decades; one might say forever.

The dawn of Turkish nationalism and the exorbitant hopes of Greek officials led to major territory losses in Asia Minor. After the end of the Great War, Greeks sought the territorial gains the Allied Forces had promised them. Thus, the government began a march into Ottoman lands, an action that would turn to be the greatest disaster of Modern Greek history. The Hellenic Army landed in Smyrna on May 15, 1919, with the support of British, American and French fleets (Nafziger and Walton 2003, 131) and for almost two years led a successful campaign in the Ottoman inland, Anatolia. The unexpected death of King Alexander, the intentions of Venizelos to banish the monarchy and transform Greece into a republic and his plan to continue a never-ending war in Asia Minor led to his defeat in the elections. Dimitrios Gounaris established a new government and prepared for King Constantine's return. Most of the officers, experienced veterans of the Great War, were replaced by amateur non-military personnel; the catastrophe was imminent. The Great Powers had already warned Constantine to stop the campaign; the Hellenic Army was abandoned while it was marching deeper into Anatolia, on its way to Ankara. Greek authorities believed that the Hellenes were superior; obviously they overestimated or did not value reality. In addition to the Greek army's problems after years of battles, the supply chain was cut off and the men were abandoned in the vast Ottoman inlands. The massively outnumbered Ottomans

received the support of the Soviet forces and pushed the Greeks back to the shores of the Aegean Sea (Smith 2016, 162).

In 1922, Greece experienced the most painful defeat in its modern history, a tragedy that altered the country forever. Turkey counterattacked and retaliated; Kemal led a successful campaign that left millions of Greeks, Armenians and Assyrians deported and murdered (Smith 2016, 307–311). In Greek collective memory, the destruction of Smyrna, the metropolis of Greek civilization in the area, is considered a massive catastrophe and genocide of the local Greek population (Hobsbawm 2004, 51). The severe rupture of Greek presence in Asia Minor, the complete loss of Hellenic properties, the profound refugee crisis, the rise of nationalism in Europe and the geopolitical game of constant political and military influence by the Great Powers, which takes place until nowadays, led to an everlasting controversy between the two countries.

The refugee waves almost devastated Greece; neither its economy nor its infrastructure were able to handle the 1.5 million refugees. Greece had to reorganize, focus on its internal affairs and abandon the Great Idea for a Greek empire. The new reality challenged Greece's social structure and political stability and, most of all, it transformed its identity. The Treaty of Lausanne, along with the establishment of the Turkish Republic, enforced the relocation of Muslims and Christians to their motherlands, Turkey and Greece, respectively. This process homogenized the population of Greece under the same national identity, religion and language for the first time after centuries of Ottoman occupation. Despite the problems and the alienation of the refugees from the native Greek population, the people from Asia Minor eventually became an inconsistent part of Greece (Dertilis 2015, 675). The influence of the refugees was essential in the formation of Modern Greek identity. Living in a foreign state, the Greeks of Asia Minor had already acknowledged, promoted and defended their Hellenic identity for a long time. The Ottoman shores of the Aegean Sea had been multicultural, international trade centers and the Greeks had been a substantial part of their elite. The Asia Minor Greeks affected the local economy by promoting a more international perspective and introducing trades that were unknown or underdeveloped in Greece. Their influence was so deep that among other parts, it changed the food culture enriching the country's cuisine with an internationally acknowledged taste. Their contribution to the Arts was so extensive that one might say that they offered Greek music its distinctive character (Bloustien 1999, 68). Despite

the massive problems, the bloody conflicts and the extensive loss of human lives and property, Greece experienced an essential cultural, social, economic and political transformation that completely altered its identity.

The participation of Greece in the Balkan Wars, the Great War and the Asia Minor War shaped the identity of its economy, as well. Greece, devastated by decades of conflicts succeeding the centuries of Ottoman occupation, was not considered the modern state that it wished to be; lack of infrastructure and an overall devastated economy had created unsolved problems in its social, political and civil organization. The only solution was to receive financial support through loans with unfair terms; the Greeks had no alternative and the Great Powers had the opportunity to keep the country dependent forever. For example, for the years 1914–1918, Hellas signed for 1.2 trillion drachmas of loans; it received only 110 million drachmas in the form of short-term loans. Only for the aforementioned years, without counting the Campaign to Turkey and with a moderate approach, Greece's expenditure was almost 2 trillion drachmas (Leontaritis 2005, 293–295).

Hellas did not achieve its primary territorial goals through the participation in the series of wars. Its involvement in the conflicts also generated political controversies on a political and social level with the Greeks being separated forever; King or Venizelos, later Democracy or Junta, Left or Right, Allied or Central Powers, Americans or Soviets, Europeans or descendants of the Ancient Greeks. Hellenes have been separated for centuries and always dependent on the Great Powers of each era. The legacy of its involvement in the Great War shaped the identity of Greece to a dependant state and negatively affected its legacy, identity, past and future. Hellas was not on the side of the defeated; however, by no means was it a victor (Dertilis 2015, 967–968).

Hellenic Literature and the Provisional Interpretation of WW1

The Great War has not been represented in Hellenic literature adequately. A significant aspect that deserves further examination is the way the novelists and poets depicted the participation of Greece in the Great War. Greek authors did not seem to focus sufficiently on the role of their country in this massive and violent battlefront. Despite the fact that Greece was in turmoil

for a long time due to its participation in the Balkan Wars and the Great War respectively, the literature did not produce as much work as it did during and after the Second World War.

While the Great War itself did not prove to be inspirational for Greek writers, the loss of Minor Asia was the turning point for them to work on the topic and, in a way, present a part of the Great War's aftermath; the tragedy was conceived as a highly dramatic moment for Greece on multiple levels. The social, economic, ethical, religious and historical aspect of the catastrophe offered the authors an endless source of inspiration. The pain from the uprooting of the Greeks from an area that had been inhabited by them for centuries created some of the most distinguished pieces of literature and introduced some of the most important novelists in Greece. The Greek people rediscovered the Hellenic presence in Asia Minor, remembered the area's history and reconnected with their nation's past. One might say that the authors formed part of the collective memory of the modern Greek people on the Hellenic presence in Asia Minor through their extensive and detailed reference to the topic.

The significance of the specific theme lies in the fact that the authors became the connection between Greeks of the mainland and Greeks of Asia Minor. They belonged to the same nation but their numerous differences had been revealed after the forced migration; the two parties understood that their common nationality was not enough to unite them; the barriers that separated them were greater than the bridges that connected them.

Literature played a crucial role in redefining the Greek identity. The novels focused on multiple aspects and offered their readers the opportunity to acknowledge Asia Minor Greeks and their culture.

"Mikrasiates", as they are called in Greek,[2] were not accepted by the native Greeks when they first arrived in Greece. Mikrasiates were penniless, homeless and hopeless; often, the locals considered them as Turks or vagrants. The first problem was the language. The Greeks from Turkey had a distinguished way of expressing themselves through a mixture of Ancient Greek and Turkish languages but with many Arabic, Armenian, Hebrew, French

[2] The word "Mikrasiates" originates from the Greek words *μικρός* (*mikros*), that means small, minor, and the word *Ασιάτες* (*Asiates*), that means Asians; in other words "Greeks from Asia Minor".

and English influences. The novelists managed not only to exonerate their way of expression but also underline the strong roots with Ancient Greek and the ways these elements were preserved by the Mikrasiates. Through literature, modern Greek language adopted many Turkish words, which migrated with the Greeks from Turkey.

Furthermore, the authors explained to the native Greeks the different culture of the Mikrasiates. The latter were cosmopolitan in many ways because they were affected by the multicultural and financially prosperous environment of Asia Minor. In the long term, native Greeks adopted many of the habits that Mikrasiates had, but it was the novelists that in many cases highlighted their significance. For example, the food, the music and their excellent skills as internationally oriented entrepreneurs and merchants opened in Greece new ground for development. Religion had been a common ground but through the novels the Greeks learnt the difficulties of being a Christian in a Muslim country, the hardships of being a Greek in Turkey; thus, they valued Mikrasiates in a different way.

In many cases, the authors worked as historians and through their work they preserved the memory of a distinguished part of Hellenic history. They depicted life in Asia Minor, the fight to maintain the Greek identity, protect the language and safeguard the culture; this action had probably offered the most detailed description of any other group of people in Greece.

Elias Venezis (1904–1973), a native of Asia Minor, was an iconic author. He was one of the victims of the forced migration and his work, almost in its entirety, focused on the Greeks in the area. His most important accomplishment is that, in reality, his novels preserved the memory of the catastrophe and presented it to the Greek readers in the most vivid way. If it had not been for Venezis, many of the memories would probably not have passed to the next generations in such a detailed way.

Venezis presents many of the aspects of life such as the coexistence of the Greeks with the Turks, the difficulties during the Great War and the forced migration to Greece. In his book, *Aiolian Land* (1943), he refers to the pre-catastrophe era and his life as a boy. The novel is written in a simple but highly descriptive way; the readers mentally travel back to Aivali and experience the ideal, dreamy and free side of Asia Minor through the childhood memories of Venezis. In this book, the writer does not offer any political insight into the war. Although most Greeks have connected Asia

Minor to extreme violence and pain, Venezis dares to exclude politics and geopolitics and focus on the tranquility of life in Aivali.

On the other hand, his most famous and probably most powerful work is the book *Number 31328* (1931). This autobiographical work presents in the most vivid and descriptive way Venezis' experience as a captive of the Turkish Army after the catastrophe. In his iconic book, Venezis describes the life of people in Amele Taburu, the Turkish version of the labour battalions. Greek people were forced to conscript and marched into the vast mainland of Turkey. They were used as workers but in reality they were murdered, punished, tortured or left to die without food and water; the hardships were presented by Venezis in an engaging and breathtaking way. An important aspect is that apart from its value as a literary masterpiece, the book is actually a precious source of historical information; Venezis was one of the few out of thousands that survived Amale Taburu, as if he was meant to share the story of his life with the next generations.

Moreover, in his book *Tranquility* (1939), Elias Venezis describes the difficulties of the refugees from Fokaia area in Greece. Through his heroes, the writer presents the lack of support and the inadequacy of infrastructure along with the hunger and the thirst of the newcomers. The psychological, emotional and ethical breakdown of the people, along with the denial of the new conditions, is at the core of the book, as well. Venezis, a preserver of memory and history, offered Greek people in the best way a part of their national heritage and their collective memory through individual recollections. He said:

> My life was connected with these events and sealed my fate as a writer: my main books were time and dedication to the drama of Asia Minor […]. My intention was to deposit my testimony for our children, for whom this season is no longer mythical. (Venezis 1974, 2).

Another significant writer was Stratis Doukas (1895-1983). He did not write many novels but the excellent *A War Prisoner's Story* (1929) remains one of the best works on the aforementioned topic. The hero of the book is Nikolas Kozakoglou, a Greek prisoner of war from Anatolia, who escapes captivity and survives by pretending to be a Muslim. While the readers "watch" Nikolas's efforts to save his life, they understand that the novel is not about heroism, hatred or revenge but about survival and fear of moral and physical

humiliation. The novel is a powerful statement against war; it does not focus on nationalities, but it underlines the similarities between the Turks and the Greeks in order to present the destructive power of war: it can even dehumanize communities that have lived together for centuries.

On the other hand, Stratis Myrivilis (1890–1969) probably contributed the most relevant work to the Great War novel of the era in Greece: *Life in the Tomb* (1923). Myrivilis shares his own experience in the Macedonian battlefront through his hero's voice; the book refers to the life of Sergeant Kostoula, whose diary reveals life in the trenches. While his platoon proceeds ever deeper into trench warfare, Kostoulas writes letters to his girlfriend expressing his thoughts, his fears and his doubts about the meaning of life and death, war and peace. The writer argues about the real meaning of life, underlining the significance of everyday moments that people should value more and which in reality constitute life. The book also reveals the mistakes of the Greek authorities and blames them for not organizing the army properly in order to achieve their goals and for not saving the soldiers' lives. Myrivilis's analysis was so accurate that the publication of the book was banned during the two dictatorships in 1936 and in 1967, respectively.

Another significant writer was Dido Sotiriou (1909–2004). She was born in Asia Minor and almost all of her work focused on the aforementioned topic. Her iconic book, the novel *Farewell Anatolia*,[3] describes a lost paradise through the story of two friends, a Greek and a Turk. Through the development of the story, Sotiriou reveals the characters of Greek and Turkish people, their close and friendly relationship along with the political responsibility of both the Greek and the Turkish leaderships; the unwillingness of the Great Powers to help in connection to the extreme polarization that created a deadly combination. The author offered a masterpiece; she did not only contribute to the preservation of memory, but also managed to present the political and economic aspects of the catastrophe through her own experiences. Sotiriou, a native of Anatolia, devoted her work almost in its entirety to the representation of life in Asia Minor. However, her source of inspiration was the pain of the uprooting; the following quote from her book *The Dead Are Waiting* (Sotiriou 1979) is the quintessence of her work:

[3] The Greek title of the book is Bloody Earth. See: Dido Sotiriou. Bloody Earth, Athens: Kedros, 1962. Greek Version.

> There is a tragic time in the life of a man, when he thinks that he would be lucky to abandon his hometown and his past, and flee, run so fast that he would run out of breath only to find certainty somewhere else (Sotiriou 1979, 133).

The Great War was not as essential for Greek authors as it might have been in other countries. Hellenic intellectuals focused on the Greco-Turkish War due to its massive effect on the country's life. The literature probably focused on what Greeks considered as significant, namely their country; another example of the provisional interpretation of the Great War. Despite its magnitude all over Europe, the Greek writers along with the Greek population limited their view geographically to their immediate neighboring countries and to the implication for their relations. The Greek perspective seems to have limited the participation of the country in the Great War mostly to the Balkan and the Greco-Turkish Wars, even though WW1 took place between 1914 and 1918. The waves of violence in Asia Minor and the mayhem after the end of WW1 were so severe and extensive for the country that the Greek people and the authors focused on the specific events. Thus, it seems that the literature focused on what seems to be conceived as an extended version of the Great War, the outcome of which was the Asia Minor catastrophe—probably the most painful loss of the modern Hellenic Democracy.

However, one should mention that the majority of the authors did not focus on blaming the Turkish people for the catastrophe. While there are references to the apathy or the active role of many of them in the catastrophe, the authors, as well as the people who survived the attack, praised the friendly coexistence of the Turks and the Greeks. In most of the aforementioned books, there are references to Turkish people who even warned the Greeks of the imminent attack of the Turkish army and tried to protect them in any way possible; however, the attack was so brutal and bloody that there was no other option for them other than fleeing Asia Minor.

The political aspect is present in many novels, as well; there are references to the apathy of the Greek, Turkish and European political elite and to the incompetence and unwillingness to use diplomatic means to prevent the disaster. However, the Hellenic literature mostly worked on analyzing the Greek perception of the catastrophe through the presentation the survivors' personal accounts. In conclusion, the Greek war literature was essential in shaping

the modern Hellenic identity, connecting people with their past, teaching them a significant part of their history and most of all preserving the nation's individual and collective memory.

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Divided Loyalties: Cultural Conflicts in the Nation & Detroit in America's WW1 Era

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Abstract: The article presents the responses to the First World War in Detroit, a booming multicultural community at the time. Drawing on a variety of sources, including previously unpublished archival material, the author describes the various conflicted ethnic and social groups reluctantly entering the war. The article demonstrates how difficult it was to achieve and maintain social cohesion in a country that still was not directly related to the war.

Keywords: First World War, Detroit, melting pot, identity

Caught Short

America's World War One was a swift, nineteen-month interplay of actions, ideas, and emotions. It came as a shock to national and local systems. Quick as a train plunged into a tunnel. The war. Americans had no right to be surprised, but they were. For among all the great powers that fought in World War One, America was the most naïve and unprepared about what to do and how to do it. People and institutions had to react and improvise swiftly. Could they—did they—do a good job of it or not? Could they live up to Mark Twain's brag about Americans of a short generation before, voiced by his hero Hank Morgan in *A Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court* (Twain 1989, 8):

> I could make anything a body wanted—anything in the world, it didn't make any difference what; and if there wasn't any quick, new-fangled way to make a thing, I could invent one—and do it as easy as rolling off a log.

Before America plunged into the war, consensus reigned in the USA that it was Europe's problem, not theirs. As with Hank Morgan and his clattering cluster of cacophonous knights in *A Connecticut Yankee*, the First World War was seen as Europe's very own mess, inconceivable in American terms. America stayed out of it a lot longer than it went in. Thus the Cedar Rapids, Iowa, *Gazette* framed this Old World debacle for its Midwestern readers in the summer of 1914 with the headlines: "Blood-mad monarchs prepare dread sacrifice. Fifteen millions facing death. Royalty forces wreck and ruin on fated lands. Stubborn rulers play subjects as pawns" (Lord 1965, 315).

When the European war ended in 1917, consensus hadn't changed that much. US federal government and most Americans—except for Wilsonian idealists and a "lost generation"—turned their back on Europe, convinced after the slaughter of the Western Front that "Europe was an unregenerate decayed culture that threatened to suck the United States into a vortex of murderous chaos" (Green 1993, 142). We've seen something like this in our own lifetime. One wonders if there's an American pattern here? In a period of national peace and prosperity the United States suddenly goes to war against distant foreigners, for whom the nation has little or no direct experience of the enemy's home territory or culture. What's known best is America's domestic, home-based conflicts. These are the issues most worried about, known, feared and experienced. While the nation sends off a freshly organized military to fight in distant lands.

When the USA actually declared war against the Central Powers, the US navy alone was ready. In many ways the domestic war to marshal public opinion in favor of the effort was the fight the Wilson administration fought first and succeeded at almost too well. Conflicting issues of personal nationality for immigrants, aliens and ethnic residents, for Americans in the making or American citizens with pronounced ethnic identities were crucial targets and tools to accomplish the end of mustering the population which the state institutions demanded.

Reluctance

There's the pebble in the shoe, the thorn in the flesh, the *nation*. America is not a unified nation except in times of war. If the United States didn't have a remarkably flexible federalism, it'd hardly hold together. The Union Forever?

Only six percent of the Union's troops in the Civil War (1861–1865) came willingly from the draft (Kennedy 2004, 151). At the beginning of the 20th century, the United States still greatly and commonly grieved its own Civil War, which was then as close in time and feelings as the US–Vietnam War is today. Back then every Memorial Day, May 30th, also known as Decoration Day, the nation honored the memory of those fallen in the Civil War. Notable figures in President Wilson's administration were isolationists or pacifists, such as the "The Great Commoner" William Jennings Bryant, who served as Wilson's Secretary of States from 1913 to 1915, but resigned in protest against the administration's war footing.

In December of 1915, Detroit's own Henry Ford—traumatized as a child by family who had died in the Civil War—lead an eclectic delegation of hundreds of important figures in the US pacifist movement to Europe to try and stop the Great War. On his way, Henry Ford proclaimed at a peace rally in Washington, D.C., it'd be "out of the trenches Christmas, never to go back" (Gilderman 1981, 105). Henry Ford was sure this would happen. Why? Because, as he later told a rookie Brooklyn *Eagle* reporter soon before taking ship on his peace crusade, "I consider this expedition a people's affair" (Gilderman 1981, 118). He wasn't worried. He had "faith in the people. I have absolute confidence in the better side of human nature. People never disappoint you if you trust them." Well, his populist peace ruse didn't work. He was disappointed. Along with an estimated four thousand US conscientious objectors who resisted American military mobilization when it finally came; most of who belonged to Protestant denominations, many of who were German-Americans (Brock and Young 1990, 17–70).

How could the greatest immigrant nation then on earth force its immigrants to fight against their original homelands or take arms by the side of centuries-old foes? This, after all, was America "the Great Mediator" in President Wilson's own words. The nation of "never again" after it fought "The Brothers' War" to save the Union. And specially not the Great Melting Pot, the Statue of Liberty, "Give me your tired, your poor, / Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, / The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. / Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me..." America. The nation's institutions would eventually accomplish this end by offering dual identity to those committed to America. Not demanding melting pot merger. America's World War One was terribly terse. Unification, nationalism, nativism, nation building, Americanizing and mass mobilization hit fast and strong in a country undergoing

the turmoil of vast numbers of new settlers fresh off the boat, who hadn't yet acclimatized to this New World or been fully accepted as properly belonging. A single national identity was fading away for most of them, but a new national identity had yet to be established. War offered the opportunity of a sharp, deep binding force.

One can see this stated clearly at the beginning of King Vidor's movie *The Big Parade* (1925). A gigantic lunk of an immigrant Swede "Slim Jenssen… just one of labor's millions, building a nation" is laboring hard with muscle and sweat when he hears the call. Jennsen enlists and merges in the "Berlin or Bust" war parade. Soon after, the thin, refined, well-off and waspy James Apperson runs into the enlistment parade from his father's mansion up on the hill. They're joined by "Bull" the Irish bartender and together fight as three all-American musketeers. They fight the war united as three of a different kind, bound in their newly acquired skills at arms and warring for one nation (*The Big Parade* 1925). To the death. *The Big Parade* remains a bittersweet vision—and the biggest grossing of all silent films. It struck a deep, true chord for Americans (Halliwell 1996, 115).

Their enthusiasm was true to fact. Reluctance was overcome. Volunteerism for USA's First World War participation was higher and more successful than anyone expected (remembering and afraid of what had happened during the Civil War and its draft riots.) In WW1 more than a whooping 50 percent of US troops were draftees (Kennedy 2004, 151). The civic and military system worked a process of *privatization* in a time of identity drift and wobbly commitment. The interests of the nation, the tribe, became the deep personal concerns and psychological property of the individual tribal member. Most individual citizens and soldiers grew concerned that "his destiny, his truth, and his legitimacy are linked to political activity—even more, that he can fulfill himself only in and through the State" (Ellul 1973, 190). Were they victims or active agents? Probably some of both.

Swamped

What specially complicated matters in the USA's World War era was the presumptuous cultural diversity of the un-United States along with the relative ignorance and intolerance among Americans of the country's resident national and ethnic groups. An enormous number of new immigrants had been

swallowed which the country was still in the awkward process of digesting. "Herein lies the tragedy of the age," wrote DuBois in 1903, "not that men are poor—all men know something of poverty; not that men are wicked—who is good? Not that men are ignorant—what is truth? Nay, but that men know so little of men" (DuBois 1903).

Thus this story has been told before and it will be told again, but one needs to recall at the outset how, in the decades before the First World War, America experienced an unprecedented influx of immigrants from the previously unharvested areas of Southern, Central and Eastern Europe. From Russian Poland, the lands of Austria and Turkey, Hungary and Bulgaria, the vast and expanding empire of *Deutsches Kaiserreich* Germany and the western edge of Russia known as the Pale of Settlement filled with Jewish residents—an unparalleled wave of diverse people, of families young and old arrived. With minimal restrictions on the intake of immigrants compared to what would later develop in the United States.

The big picture is of a nation overwhelmed by the single largest immigrant wave ever recorded up until then in US history. How an estimated 23 million immigrants came to America from previously unusual sources in the years around WW1 (Jones 1992, 179). It's been calibrated that by 1910 15% of the US population of 91,972,266 were immigrants. In the years that immediately framed WW1, 1900-1920 the USA admitted over 14.5 million immigrants ("US Citizenship and Immigration Services" 2018). This phenomenon accumulated to such an extent that by 1914 one third of the US population was foreign born or had at least one parent who was born outside of America ("Historical Census Statistics" 2018).

Over a period before, during and after US participation in WW1 combat, from April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918, America and Americans had to deal with this almost unmanageable pressures in its daily life and institutions—a new unwieldy presence which many feared would fragment America along ethnic lines. Where were the ties that bind? Was America cursed by growing pressures that pulled it apart? When cultural, ethnic, racial tensions came into play, some towns and institutions exploded with conflicting loyalties and xenophobia, some didn't. When D. W. Griffith's racist and inflammatory *The Birth of a Nation* opened in Detroit in early 1916—a groundbreaking masterpiece of narrative film which nevertheless portrayed the American "Negro as stupid, shiftless, and single-mindedly determined to slake his lust with white women" and, by the way, did a "great public relations job…

for the Klan and the lynching industry" (Vanderhaeghe 2005, 162)—the civic authorities were worried that riots would break out or the theater blown up.

A squadron of police was posted in and around Detroit's Opera House movie theater where *Birth of a Nation* was shown. But there was no commotion. "Not even a hiss was raised as the crowd marched out of the theater." Among the audience were a few representatives of the city's African American population, "members of the Negro clergy, Negro preachers." The film may have ate at their guts like lime, but when interviewed they "protested that the scenes in the motion picture showing the reconstruction period in the south were prejudicial to their race" (Chalmers 1968, 194–197, 308–310).

For the most part in this period of American history, stern complaint or open debate was the best a member of an oppressed or stigmatized social group could hope for when minorities when offended. Identity was defined by difference. You belonged to a group; you had a place. These were Gentleman's Agreement times. Clergy and preacher were middle class blacks who represented their community to Detroit's middle order community at large. Fixed racial and class differences were the standard order of the day; nationality was defined racially and race was conceived hierarchically. Thus before and during the war Detroit balanced its mosaic of immigrants and aliens, minority groups and outsiders (Detroit Free Press 1916, 9).

Readers of the Problem

Among US politicians, historians and social scientists there exists three outstanding readings of the US immigrant experience, assimilation and identity at the time of World War One (and, by implication, since then). First, the firm, common, contemporary opinion of the early twentieth century era itself that there's no such thing as a hyphenated-American, only an American. What's to be integrated that's different? The newcomers were either *in* like us, or *out* like them. One cannot serve two masters. As Theodore Roosevelt declared in 1915:

> There is no room in this country for hyphenated Americans. When I refer to hyphenated Americans I do not refer to naturalized Americans. Some of the very best Americans that I have known were naturalized Americans, American born abroad.

> But a hyphenated American is not an American at all. This is just as true of the man who puts German, Irish, English or French before the hyphen. Americanism is a matter of the spirit and of the soul. Our allegiance must be purely to the United States ("Roosevelt Urges Aliens Be Forced Into Citizenship." *Detroit Free Press* 1915, 7).

Second, with time—and with the accumulated events of FDR's New Deal cultural pluralism (with theoretical groundwork laid by Horace Kallen); the contributions of minorities in the Second World War; the "Big One's" aftermath creation of the universal GI Bill of Rights; and specially with the combined, heated, three-fold wallop of civil rights denial, the integration achievements in the US 1960s era, along with the ongoing force of identity politics in the Carter administration and beyond—the First World war was interpreted for American immigrants as an era of "forced assimilation, ruthless xenophobia, and harsh Americanism" (Ford 2001, 11; Higham 1969; Kennedy 1989, 67). Ethnic Americans had the USA shoved down their throats until they stood up and excruciatingly produced the *foie gras* of proud, all-American nationalism.

Third, by the 1990s the readings of this issue became more nuanced. Fresh interpretations argued that immigrants "straddled the line between their ethnic community and the outside world"; were groups who both preserved certain old-world values native to their original, particular culture and managed to find a place on their own terms within the new world culture of the United States. Immigrants synthesized cultural differences, blended their divided loyalties. As the saying went among German-Americans in the early 20th century: "*Germania meine Mutter, Columbia meine Braut*" (Conzen et al. 1992; Greene 1987; Higham 1978; Ford 2001, 12).

Detroit

Enter Detroit into this mesh of issues. And why Detroit? Because the "city of the straits" is an embarrassment of riches, a relatively unmined source for questions of US social conflict and immigrant assimilation, nation building and cultural institutions, civic pride and leadership, ethnic identity, business progress and productivity in the first half of the American 20th century.

Detroit, Michigan, then captured and "encapsulated all the tensions and conflicts of industrial America" (Doody 2012, 5). By mid-20th century it embodied the spectacular gains of American labor and the full force of "American manufacturing prowess at a time when the U.S. led the world in industrial production" (Doody 2012, 5). It was mighty before its fall. And Detroit was equally remarkable for how its population and civic leaders confronted its problems head on. (Possibly too much so.) Thus, how the people of Detroit tried to meet its demographic challenges and strived for a solution is particularly relevant.

Consider its status *then*. From 1900–1950 Detroit ranked as America's fourth largest city (like Houston in 2017; while Detroit now ranks 21st). At the same time, it was then the USA's second largest immigrant destination and population; second only after New York City, and larger in immigrant numbers than Detroit's traditional rival the "windy city" of Chicago. When the Detroit Board of Commerce advertised for employment among the cities "foreign born" in December 1914, over one thousand three hundred candidates appeared the next day—speaking twenty-three different languages—ready to go to work ("Alien Job Hunters." *Detroit Free Press* 1914, 8). As the Detroit Free Press noted in May 1916: "In 1910 33 per cent of the population of Detroit was foreign-born, while 74 per cent was either foreign born or of alien parentage. Since then the approximate increase in the city's population has been 300,000, a large part of which includes aliens of little or no schooling" ("Trains Teachers." *Detroit Free Press* 1916, 13). Which made Detroit about triple the national average.

As Glazier and Helweg note in *Ethnicity in Michigan* (2001), World War One and the 1920s irritated underlying social tensions, yet brought new promises too for Michiganders (Glazier and Helweg 2001, 33). The war pressured foreigners, especially those from the nations of the Central Powers, to diminish their ethnic and cultural qualities. The Americanization movement of the time was a powerful and aggressive integrating force. Yet here in Detroit was shelter from the storm that raged in Europe. A way had to be found.

"Americanizing" Detroit

WW1 "Americanism" in Detroit stressed self-interest and allowed for some cultural leeway. Foreign-language newspapers and ethnic clubs associated with the Central Powers contracted in Detroit, but were not erased. Those

affiliated with the Allied Powers flourished. Popular news of the day in Detroit delved into the issue of why ethnic, cultural diversity should be desired or even exist in a context of American nationalism. Can there be commonality in diversity? Minorities that were relatively unheard of or invisible were seen and heard because of the war and the Progressive Era activity alive and well in Detroit.

A newspaper story from February 1914 highlights how a Detroit policeman was dismissed for cheating aliens. Detroit police patrolman Hubert A. Hart targeted newly arrived Rumanian families. Hart told the Rumanians he was an inspector from the city board of health and assessed each family for a two-dollar fee. Then threatened that if the Rumanians didn't pay quickly, they'd be dragged into court and have to pay ten dollars each. The Rumanians were defended in court by one Miss Hedwig Weiss of the housing reform committee of the city's Twentieth Century Club. Hart was convicted and stripped of his badge. His prosecution was secured by the fact that he gave the Rumanian families hand-written receipts, on the front of which were his name and designated patrol beats ("Policeman Guilty of Extortion." *Detroit Free Press* April 4, 1914, 5).

There are numerous cases like this in Detroit at the time, as well as Chicago, New York City, Cleveland, Memphis, Los Angeles and elsewhere in the Progressive Era. The law did not always look the other way when a non-American was wronged. Not like before. But the law needed the assistance of an independent benevolent association that would defend the immigrant, here be it the Twentieth Century Club. And a competent, intelligent, insider-outsider defending attorney, the remarkable Miss Hedwig Weiss, and the good luck of a dumb cop.

Or take the example of wandering through Detroit's ethnic enclaves, a full-page, illustrated feature presented to Detroiters in January 1915: "How Detroit Foreigners Get Their War News" ("How Detroit Foreigners." *Detroit Free Press* January 10, 1915, 4). For Detroit's foreign enclaves the war was a pertinent, intimate concern. As they gathered in their ethnic clubs of an evening to hear the news, they were *here*, in America, and *there*—in Italy, Greece, the Balkans, Germany, Austria-Hungary—at the same time. It's instructive. For whatever the bored or weary "attitude of the rest of the city, there is no indication of apathy in the foreign districts with which Detroit is so plentifully supplied." Their news came to them from both non-English language and English-language newspapers. Detroit's papers were considered especially valuable

since they were not censored. Read to the assembled gathering "far up on Russell street" to "Yetza and Uwan", "out in old Delray" to "Anton and Istwan", or down on "Franklin street" to "Gavril, Eirsto, Lyuba and Sigmund"—read by a native from the Old World would who'd first read in English, then translate to the assembled group. Men shouting in comment, protest, or emitting a "wail that if heard in the darkness would have been blood curdling."

What was created here for those who read and heard this article, and many other essays and articles like it at the time, was a give and take sense of Americanization. As an authoritative commentator noted later on in 1917, one needed skill, judgment and sympathy for the other person, other culture, before they, in turn, would be considerate with you. "Tact is the keynote of… Americanization work"; for "to get in touch with the alien population we must get their point of view before we try to make them 'get outs'." That is—to get out and support American efforts ("How to Convert." *Detroit Free Press* June 12, 1917, 6). The Americanization process was not integration by virtue of total removal of original, Old World identity.

Detroit's Hope

The war went through three stages of official, domestic restrictions, the legal system that bracketed everyone: the rules stipulated in Woodrow Wilson's April 6, 1917, Declaration of War ("Wilson Warns." *Detroit Free Press* April 7, 1917, 1); the Espionage Act installed on June 15, 1917; and the Sedition Act made law on May 16, 1918. They applied to everyone residing in America, but specially that wide range from the immigrant who had recently acquired citizenship or applied for papers on through the resident alien from a nation with whom the United States was at war—aka an "undesirable alien," a phrase also used at the time for insects like moths or ants (*Detroit Free Press* March 23, April 28, 1914).

Public hysteria and public vigilante actions were muted in Detroit in the WW1 years compared to the rest of the nation. Immigrant and alien needed to fit into a homogenous US legal structure and identity provided by schools, government, community, customs and laws. This did not exclude the participation of the immigrants' own ethnic clubs, language, religion, business and philanthropic organizations. More than any other nationality, the Germans in America were watched and controlled the most aggressively.

There was a lot of diversity around to deal with. By the time the US mix of races and religions got to Europe fitted snugly into their doughboy khaki uniforms—"these young, fresh, hustling, keen Americans, building up numerous works of all kinds"—noted a British war journalist—in order to deal with this rambunctious hodge podge of energy and cultures the "postal censors who read the letters of the American expeditionary force are required to know forty-seven languages" (Jerrold 1918, 416–417).

Detroit itself had some of everything in terms of languages and cultures. In greater Detroit by 1900 the dominant, largest foreign-born group were the Poles (66,113), followed by the Italians (21,711), the Russian-born (11,162), the Hungarian-born (9,014), the Yugoslavian-born (7,576), the Romanian-born (6,385), and the Greek-born (6,385). Along with significant groups of Finns and Middle Eastern cultures (Glazier and Helweg 2001, 32; "Detroit's Recovery" 2017, 35–36). This happened all amid a rapidly growing urban population that reached just short of a million by 1920, with, as noted, about 75 percent of the city's residents either foreign born or the children of immigrants ("Trains Teachers." *Detroit Free Press* May 26, 1916, 13; Doody 2012, 9).

Detroit at heart was an unpretentious, blue-collar, workers' town, like Pittsburg, Pa., or Cleveland, Ohio. It was a place of muscle, ingenuity and guts. This was a place where the *Iliad* met Henry Ford. Plus Detroit had been a dramatic example of the boom and bust American city, a lesson to be learned. Here was the nation's common hope in the first half of the twentieth century. This wasn't New York City calling to power, fame and Wall Street. Not Boston's elitist appeal of old Brahmin culture or Los Angeles' siren song of Hollywood and transcendent sex appeal. Detroit as Detroit has been an American urban and workers dream aspiration—get a good job, buy a house, settle down and have a family in a good neighborhood—that almost worked. One still sees strong echoes of this hope in films like Clint Eastwood's *Gran Torino* (2008) or *Flash of Genius* (2008). This is hard to imagine now when one thinks of the burnt-out husk that Detroit became by the 1970s, how it's the largest American city ever to have entered into bankruptcy—yet in many ways this vision of Detroit as it once was and could have been, a mirage shimmering in the desert, lingers.

In Brad Leithauser's docu-drama novel *The Art Student's War* (2009) about home front World War Two, the reader witnesses a city native contemplating Detroit in a Great Gatsby green-light-at-the-end-of-Daisy's-dock moment. He's driving on the city's edge when "perhaps it was only his imagination,

but [he] thought he saw a glow to the northwest", which carried him away to think and feel that here was "pure glory… breakthrough without precedent." He's proud of how the city "was bearing the burden of a dream born perhaps in ancient Greece: the governed shall govern," and of how the "authentic center" of what's best among mankind lay "not in London, or even in Washington, but here in the Midwest, in Michigan, in Detroit"— where "the French and the Dutch, the Poles and the Czechs, the Chinese and the Burmese, would be redeemed… Detroit as the world's true harbor" (Leithauser 2009, 267).

Some historians have made ironside judgments that affirm the WW1 era's Stateside treatment of immigrants and non-Americans in Detroit and elsewhere was almost as bad as the suffering of the Jews under Hitler's regime (Zinn 1980, 350–367). Treatment of ethnic minorities in the USA during WW1 wartime was inconsistent, but it wasn't a concentration camp, final solution phenomenon. People panicked. Some Americans were overzealous about "Americanizing" immigrants. And there was suffering. But the end result for the nation was far more positive than negative. The keel of a common good held steady. America and Detroit weathered the storm. (The aftermath of the 1920's "Age of Normalization" is another matter.) Striking too is what was absent. During World War 1 mob-related domestic disturbances targeted racial groups in East St. Louis, Illinois, Camp Logan, Houston, Texas, and elsewhere in America. But no major disturbances of this kind in Detroit. European immigrants did not foment this kind of violence. When it came, it was after the war and due to tensions between white and black Southerners recently arrived who competed for work and housing. Why was the hope there in Detroit? How did it work out?

Vox Populi

America's two fundamental strains of populism contended in Detroit probably more intensely than in any other US city of the time. The pressures of grassroots' expressions and popular will were certainly at work in World War One. This exertion of force was harnessed in business and factory response to teamwork and the efforts of philanthropic ethnic organizations such as the Jewish Welfare association, the Catholic Knights of Columbus, and the mainly

protestant Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and Salvation Army. But populism could also run amuck, taking the form of vigilantism, sabotage. (Later, in the 1920s, amuck even more so with the KKK and the Black Legion).

Populism is a supple force, cuts both ways, is ideologically adjustable. Populism can be politically left, right or mainstream. In the case of the USA or elsewhere it's fallacious to make the common claim that populism only begins in the US 1890s with the Midwestern farmers Populist Party. *Vox populi* is an essential force in Western civilization. It was there both in 1599 when Anthony spoke to the crowd of groundlings and commoners in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* and there when Marcus Antonius played up to Rome after Caesar's death in 44 B.C. One doesn't have to be literal minded about populism. It's big, strong and long-lived. As Susan Sontag wrote about culture and society in 1964 (when much was coming to light that hadn't been recognized before): "Many things in the world have not been named; and many things, even if they have been named, have never been described" (Sontag 1982, 105).

The American difference in populism arises not from a unique list of traits but from a unique pattern of relationships. Its leaders and followers have historically stressed the role of government to defend small, poor voices against the powerful and wealthy. It's power against power. America is an anti-state nation. "That government is best which governs least," as H. D. Thoreau once wrote, and has been endlessly repeated in the United States from the time of the Civil War through the current, unhappy US presidency. Populism calls out to disadvantaged people in need, asking for and promising a commonwealth either not yet realized or that's been taken away. ("Every Man a King", as Huey Long's campaign song and motto had it back in US Great Depression times.) Keeps coming back because traditional, party-based solutions never quite meet popular demands to address current problems. Because populist leaders of all persuasions keep springing up in America who promise to control, re-direct, or override outdated, traditional, political party leadership. And, not least because, as Michael Foucault wrote, there "are more ideas on earth than intellectuals imagine. And these 'ideas' are more active, stronger, more resistant than 'politicians' think" (Foucault 1978).

Populism has had two dominant strains in the United States, *Civic* and *Contrarian* Populism. First, *Civic Populism*, aka communitarian populism, has been a force visible in such national, 20th–21st century politicians as Frank-

lin Delano Roosevelt, Martin Luther King and ex-President Obama. In early 20th century Detroit, populism was exemplified by the early social policies of Henry Ford (1863–1947); by the life-long politics and policies of his son the businessman, art patron, philanthropist and automotive designer Edsel Ford (1893–1943); in the tumultuous career of Ford Motor Company treasurer, Detroit mayor, and US Senator James Couzens (1872–1936); and Detroit mayor and US Supreme Court Justice Frank Murphy (1890–1949)—all of whom optimistically yet imperfectly grasped for their city's and America's best common interests. When there's a problem, civic populism looks for a reason—not a scapegoat; which is why it's a more generous operating principle with the foreigner, the alien, and better at international relations.

The Fords older and younger are good examples of the city's civic populism. For Henry Ford this is specially visible in his early Model T years of the 'Teens and early Twenties. When he genuinely worked for the cooperative good of both his workers and his company. It was the same battle. He practiced a pragmatic Progressive reformism with the commitment to his Sociological Department. But then turned tail and ran away from his Progressive policies when he couldn't reconcile ever increasing productivity—specially at the new Rouge plant; built 1917–1928 and mainly supervised by the anti-Sociological Department, FMC executive Charles Sorensen (aka "Cast Iron Charlie"). A vision of Detroit as what can be best in a worker's America is startling visible in Diego Rivera's greatest work, his astonishing Detroit Industry Murals (1932–33)—the Sistine Chapel of US 20th century Industrialism which Diego Rivera rooted in Detroit and which existed because of Edsel Ford's direct and constant moral, financial and political support (Dean 2015, 194–203).

People exemplify principle. When, for example, Mayor James Couzens congratulated Detroit's World War One returning veterans, he "kissed'em and cursed'em" at the same time in a proclamation he personally sent to them. On the one hand this immigrant's son Couzens praised Detroit's soldier-citizens for the "devotion and unselfishness with which you carried on the work great and small that was entrusted to you". Then warned them: "Having helped to win one great war, you have come home to another not less momentous—the age-long, day-by-day struggle against corruption and greed and civic autocracy. In this fight there is no armistice. From this service there is no honorable discharge. The city welcomes you to the firing line" ("James Couzens's Letter." 2018).

Whether as police commissioner (1916–1918) or as mayor (1918–1922), Couzens worked in much the same conscientious, generous yet realistic fashion. He was there as the consistent, in-power, highest-ranking civic official overlooking and guiding the intense ethnic hodgepodge that was Detroit in the World War One years. With Couzens it was always the need, the issue, the man or woman themselves that counted—never a nationality, a religion, or playing for political favoritism. When he was Detroit's police commissioner, Couzens prowled the patchwork quilt of the city's streets and ethnic neighborhoods day and night incognito. He "talked to policeman, to saloonkeepers, to streetwalkers, and to ordinary citizens" to discover what their key problems were and what had to be done to address and redress them (Barnard 2002, 108). Forget about automobiles in Detroit, he improved cheap streetcar transportation. (The one most commonly used by Detroit's multi-ethnic labor force.) And when mayor in 1921—when anti-German sentiment lingered in Detroit and all of the cities doctors and medical societies refused to work with Dr. Adolf Lorenz of Vienna to use the Lorenz treatment on children with polio—Couzens opened the municipal hospitals to Lorenz and denounced the doctors for "un-American intolerance". Not until Fiorello LaGuardia became mayor in New York City (1934–1945) did America see the likes again of a city's chief executive who truly acted without bias for the good of all the people (Barnard 2002, 121). Couzens was a key reason that Detroit seemed a kind of workers' paradise to many in the 1920s, built up out of the crucible and struggles of the World War One era.

On the Contrary

Second dominant US strain has been *Contrarian Populism*, aka authoritarian populism. This has been visible in 20th–21st century America in a range from Louisiana's Huey Long (1893–1935) and Detroit's own anti-Semitic Father Coughlin (1891–1979), who strenuously denounced international bankers, declared "Democracy is over" and openly defended Hitler (Lewis 1993, 238), to the early Malcolm X (1925–1965) through Donald J. Trump (1946–). The contrarian strain has been specially powered with ego and crowd zealotry by figures who have worked sledgehammer ways of social persuasion that have bludgeoned people and institutions into desired channels, to follow or get out of the way while they alone—the leader—knows and shows the way.

On the whole, US contrarian populism has been politically right rather than left. This kind of populism needs the bugbear, the insidious target, the Other against which We The People can vent anger and a sense of injustice. It's *their* fault. It's White people or the Jews or the Elite or the Huns or the Media or whoever serves best to explain the aggrieved and unreconciled population's sense of loss for what they feel is properly theirs. But theirs no longer. In the USA's First World War home front contrarian populism specially declared itself in anger against German immigrants who didn't profess full-fledged, red-white-and-blue all-Americanism, who dared to defend things German. This included serious problems for German-American beer, such as the Anhauser-Busch company and their Budweiser brand. This problem was particularly intense in those recent and established areas where German settlement had a strong local flavor, the Upper and Central Midwest.

The machine speaks for populism, one way or the other. Not only do human individuals exemplify populism, but a good case can be made for *things*, the visible, aggressive, outspoken populism of material culture. The populism of machinery has been a two-edged sword. A medium such as Detroit's radio in the 'Teens and Twenties, or things such as its automobiles or trolleys could articulate populist values left, right or center. Thus British author J. G. Ballard consistently made the point about how popular aesthetics speak for mankind in the 20th century. They aren't just things, they are embodied spirits. Made objects have an attitude of their own, broadcasting a message to everyone. Whether one sees this populist message in a car for the masses or an automobile for the classes:

> I suspect that many of the great cultural shifts that prepare the way for political change are largely aesthetic. A Buick radiator grille is as much a political statement as a Rolls Royce radiator grille, one enshrining a machine aesthetic driven by a populist optimism, the other enshrining a hierarchical and exclusive social order. (Ballard 2004)

"Machinery is the new messiah," as Henry Ford declared to fellow Detroiters in his early Model T (1908–1927) years. In the World War One years, American machinery was all the rage as the war blazed on in Europe. "Ts" were the ambulances at the French Western Front, saviors of oak, petrol and steel. While Fordson tractors were saving the day for the laborless farms and farmers

in England. By 1916 American factories and farms were profiting considerably from the war. Was the next logical step armaments? Sometimes there's a Sorcerer's Apprentice fury to mass production and productivity. Wilson's fighting words to America, his rallying call to "help keep the world safe for democracy" was also a moral imperative for magnificent, monstrous machinery. Was this contrarian populism with a vengeance, out to get the Hun, the Heinie, the Kraut? Here were objects that spoke only through the will and direction of the men who gave the liberty of 30-06 Springfield cartridges to their M1917 Enfield rifles, their "American Enfield" long gun. And could these machine or others like them be used at home? In Woodrow Wilson's USA to defend America against foreigners?

Detroit's Ford Motor Company Example

The state of Michigan, and particularly the city of Detroit in the first half of the 20th century, "invited the immigrant" who was "led on by an entrancing vision" of an immense area rich in fertile fields, vast forests, farms and factories and specially by the boom town Detroit that couldn't stop growing and offering extraordinary opportunities for employment and good wages (Catton 1976, 156). You could get the foreigners there easy enough. But the next step was to secure their allegiance and reliability.

The best known and ring-on-the-carrousel deal here was the world-renowned Ford Motor Company's five-dollar-day policy that was cooked up by Treasurer Frank Couzens and President Henry Ford in fall-winter 1913–1914. When officially adopted on January 5, 1914, news of the Ford Motor Company (FMC) five-dollar-day spread rapidly, with this family company seen as having the "most advanced labor policy in the world… regarded by wage earners from Sydney to Bangkok, from New York to Copenhagen, as a source of hope and inspiration" (Nevins and Hill 1954, 541). Thus "Detroit became in 1914 what California had been in 1849, the end of the rainbow" for the world's workingmen (Lewis 1976, 72).

Ford Motor Company's five-dollar-day wasn't charity. The going wage for automotive factory work at that time in Detroit was about $2.00–$2.25 a day (equivalent to $48.64–$54.71 in 2016). But the assembly line work required of them was excruciating. Factories found it very hard to keep workers on. Here was the magnet, the glue. Not without strings. To qualify

for the $5 salary the FMC worker had to be vetted constantly by the company's Sociology Department. This was headed first by John R. Lee (1913–1919) and then the Reverend Samuel S. Marquis (1919–1921). The FMC Sociological Department was an early form of a Human Resources department; existed to maximize human capital and to promote employee welfare by organizing and instituting a secular program of self-improvement for the Ford employee and his family.

This business policy was the product of paternalistic Progressive Movement thinking, and to no small part the ego of Henry Ford himself (who immediately claimed full credit for the whole thing and tried to repeat the performance in 1919 and 1929) (Nevins and Hill 1954, 512–541). Under the leadership of Lee and Marquis and with the full, yet slowly wavering, cooperation of Henry Ford, FMC's five-dollar-day plan's complementary Sociological Department ran intense classes in the English language and American civics, tried to correct the social abuses and evils of industrialism, limit discrimination, gave Home Economics training to workers' wives, and tried generally to provide a higher quality of everyday American life for its workers.

The company promoted it vigorously as a patent-free formula that could be used by everyone. In September 1915 fifty important representatives of "employers of labor in Detroit" were invited to a free lunch at the Ford Motor Company's administration building to learn how the Sociological Department worked. These industry leaders were instructed how in sixteen months of work more than three thousand men "totally ignorant of English" had been successfully trained by volunteer teachers in the English language along with "drills in citizenship, instruction in the form of government in the United States, Michigan and Detroit, and other matters designed to give the man a grasp on the ideas and methods in vogue in this country." The profit was three-fold: created more efficient and better understanding in plants, improved living conditions for the men and their families, and led to the "betterment of...the citizenship of Detroit" ("English Education." *Detroit Free Press* September 1, 1915, 1). The word spread. Soon Detroit would be the national model—supported by federal aid from D.C. and philanthropic or patriotic groups from Boston to Los Angeles—for how to best educate and Americanize

the immigrant.[4] Whether it trained three thousand or three hundred thousand men into the realm of US citizenship and American English, FMC's notoriously well-advertized Sociological Department's end result was the same. It broke down difference. It smoothed away the sharp edges and distinguishing contours of different cultures and languages and shaped individuals from one of Detroit's thick, irregular clusters of almost fifty different civilizations into the neat, workaday fit needed for factory work or war effort mass mobilization.

God & the Devil in the Details

To look closer into the details of the thing—a typical, specific example of a problem which the FMC found their foreign-born workers' families suffered from was the ruthless employment of the very young. The city's immigrants and ethnic groups were easily cut off and ingrown. Self-isolated through lack of English, knowledge of or sympathy for ordinary American customs, they were set apart to fester by force of circumstances and a manic need to survive or do well. A judge in Detroit's Juvenile Court in 1912 singled out Polish immigrant families with "the father, the mother, and five, six, or seven children all working" to the detriment of health, home, lack of education and increase of illiteracy, social isolation and ghettoization, and ultimately the children's' descent into juvenile delinquency and a life of crime (Nevins and Hill 1954, 518–519).

How to mix and mingle the outsiders into the mainstream? At Ford Motor Company the workers were a notorious blend of nationalities, many of who spoke only a rudimentary English or none at all, and depended on the *padrone* system of their own cultural group and enclaved neighborhoods to establish themselves in greater Detroit. Previous to the Sociological Department's existence, company administrators saw how immigrant newcomers were regularly cheated regarding their living conditions and insertion into everyday American life. The exploitation of their good will, aspirations and wages

[4] When the city of Detroit used these methods thet were far less intrusive into the personal, home life of the immigrant, confined more to the adult education classroom, that was FMC's Sociological Department.

ricocheted into creating a slack labor force. Thus the five-dollar-plan stipulated that an employee "must show himself sober, saving, steady, industrious and must satisfy the superintendent and staff that his money will not be wasted in riotous living" ("Couzen's statement." *Everybody's Magazine* 30, April 1914, 463). More than language learning, this was the inculcation of American middle-class values. A Ford company team of about one hundred and sixty men fanned out and did the investigative and advisory work assuring this happened. Among the initial, high-principled team was Henry Ford's close colleague the controversial James Couzens and Ford's only son the conscientious Edsel Ford.

Policy was adamant in the Sociological Departments' early years that everything had to be done to *help* a worker, not harm him, not find an excuse to fire him. This was meant to be a profit sharing plan that nourished and maintained competent workers. It was founded on the time-honored, win-win principle of he who helps others helps himself. It was like a harnessed adage of Ben Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac*. The factory got more prosperous, happier workers. The immigrant or disadvantaged employees—at an American time when practically no government-run social services existed and industrial unions were illegal or functionally impractical—were introduced and taught to adapt to mainstream American social, economic and hygienic standards. From the era's standpoint the company offered a generous, gainful system. At a cost.

FMC's Sociology Department prefigured what the US military would do with its foreign recruits—within the confines of barracks and bases, companies and squadrons. Not that the Sociological Department had a one-on-one relation with the armed forces model. It was Detroit's prominent example. It was in the liberal air of US time that community responsibility, social welfare, scientific management and duty (which the rich had to the poor in the manner of Ruskin, Carlyle and Britain's Toynbee Hall) could together create forces and structures that would reorder, reform and regenerate an American society overflowing with cultural change. What Henry and Edsel Ford, Frank Couzens, Lee, Marquis and their team accomplished in the best days of the Sociological Department was more than matched by Jane Addams' accomplishments in her Chicago Hull-House settlement (estab. 1889, closed 2012). These were the day's two most conspicuous models of middle agents that mediated common civic goals for America's immigrants and lower socio-economic classes. Their fundamental principle was the elitism of social

stewardship—which would work very well for what the US military, would then function as social logic when dealing with Army's intake of aliens and immigrants in World War One.[5]

It was a big money, patriarchal time. An enormous concentration of wealth, economic productivity and political power was held by private hands in America. For example, the US Constitution's seventeenth amendment that made the direct election of US Senators law did not come into effect until April 8, 1913. Until then Senators were elected by their fellow politicians, by state legislatures, more often than not representing big-money local interests (Kennedy 2004, 11). Maybe the immigrants traded their *padrone* for the company boss.

It was no small order to assist Detroit's struggling workers. With FMC's Sociological Department a humanitarian matter was seen as sound business. The company's program was an outstanding, hands-on model upon which American armed forces would build in WW1 when the military needed to quickly integrate and assimilate a large body of fresh, male immigrant civilians, often illiterate, into its own martial factory. The FMC model was also bittersweet. The Sociological Department could not remove the injustices that made their help necessary. Child labor, prostitution and chronic alcoholism didn't disappear in Detroit because the Sociological Department saved some families. It got them out, provided an alternative. More, the Ford's Sociological Department itself, a glory of American reform, disappeared like a snowball before the blast furnaces of Ford's Rouge Factory and Mr. Ford's demand for more and better, and more, production soon after World War One. The Sociological Department wasn't efficient. How could it be? How could

[5] FMC's Sociology Department effectively broke up when Henry Ford changed it into an internal police force—"Ford Service"—then the world's largest private police force of 3,000 thugs and spies, under the leadership of the odious Harry Bennett (1892–1979). Couzens developed into a staunch Roosevelt liberal, literally got out of his deathbed to stump for FDR. Edsel Ford and his wife Eleanor led a stress-filled and strenuous life, privately opposing but publicly complementing Henry Ford to keep the business running successfully, giving great attention to endowing the arts as key civilizing agents, assisting philanthropies (particularly Jewish), with Edsel Ford personally creating the Ford Foundation which would become the world's largest NGO—stressing innovative education and cultural pluralism—until the late 20th century.

it have the assembly line efficiency that gladdened the heart of Henry Ford? The business of social work was bound to be clumsy, inefficient, slow and humane.

At the end of the day, didn't the Sociological Department method mean that the powerful took control of and instructed the weak in how to emulate the powerful? Learn loyalty to things American. Obey and serve. For if this reform work had been truly done for the good of all—then how did the weak, the powerless, contribute on their own terms, at the company, on company grounds? The answer would come with Detroit's industrial union movement that developed in the 1930s with US federal government support and an astonishing generation of young, innovative, persistent union leaders, specially the German-American Walter Reuther (1907–1970).

To Go to War

If America was to go to war successfully, the nation itself had to create ties that bind out of a country that did not. The government had to lasso cats, coral kangaroos for a walk in the park. In their neighborhoods and ethnic clubs, corner taverns and visitors-come-for-company front parlors, in their boarding houses, squalid rooms and rented beds (that men rented to sleep in for one of three, separate, 8-hour, no-clean-sheets shifts), or in their local churches and temples where services were weekly given in Latin, Greek, Italian, Serbo-Croatian, Albanian, Yiddish, Polish, Hungarian, German, Russian and a host of other tongues, and in their well-intentioned and underfunded philanthropic organizations that tried to help with the impossible numbers of their civic, social and hygienic needs—America's swelling immigrant ethnic groups had been let to develop pretty much on their own.

Now they had to be organized in a common cause, for the United States of America. Be organized. This was not to be an altogether Do It Yourself business. The United States was a boiling cauldron of strong, mixed opinions about the war, both among mainstream Americans and within the immigrant population itself. This division of attitudes is evident in the US popular culture of the time. One can hear it in the day's hit songs, played at home on living room pianos, like: "I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier" or "Mama, Where is Papa? Tell me why he don't come home", or in that haunting, funeral music song "Till We Meet Again" or maudlin "Take Care of Mother While Daddy's

Over There".[6] One saw it in the ambiguity of *The Big Parade*'s ending on that awful old battlefield in France. And in the opinion of the 1917 Hollywood movie *The Spirit of '76* about the American Revolution and the beastly Brits. This last film, like Roland Emmerich's *The Patriot* (2000), depicted British atrocities against their own colonists during the Revolutionary War, complete in *The Spirit of '76* with British rape and baby killing. Depending upon what region, social strata or language and culture group you came from or looked at, at least a quarter of the sympathies in the popular culture by 1917 were against America's involvement in the war.

America's anti-war sentiment was off set with the joyous sounds of pro-war topical songs. There was "Johnny Get Your Gun", "Over There" and George M. Cohan's "It's a Grand Old Flag". The war trumpet blown loudly and most effectively by the work of the federal government's Creel Committee that sponsored and produced its vast array of social persuasion pamphlets, posters, films, catchy music and jingoistic lyrics, along with the best-known visual representation of Uncle Sam to date (by James Montgomery Flagg), and over 75,000 "four-minute men" public speakers—the purpose of all to overwhelm the public with dedication to the war through the uncompromising grip of propaganda. By virtue of the June 1917 Espionage Act, this was all that was allowed.

Europeans

A sample of contrary opinions exposes the continent of differing opinions that lay beneath. A century ego in 1916 the so-called "special relationship" that's labeled the United States and Great Britain since World War Two

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[6] "Take Care of Mother" (1918) by Sym Winkel, words and music; "Till We Meet Again" (1918) by Raymond B. Egan, Richard A. Whitling; "I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier" (1915) or "Mama, Where is Papa?" (c. 1918); these WW1 songs found at: http://detroiths.pastperfect-online.com/. NB: Released 1915, "I Didn't Raise My Son to be a Soldier" was USA's first commercially successful anti-war record, featured in US anti-war movement that opposed WW1 entry. Teddy Roosevelt objected to the song's peace message (and feminism), saying: "Foolish people who applaud a song entitled 'I Didn't Raise My Boy To Be A Soldier' are just the people who would also in their hearts applaud a song entitled 'I Didn't Raise my Girl To Be A Mother." See at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-C2qOAgMCl4.

had for far longer been the "explosive relationship". During WW1 the British first appeared to be perpetuating an old US-British friction that extended back to the Revolutionary War and the Civil War. The ocean-commanding British interfered with US shipping on the high seas. The old Bulldog practiced seizures and diversions of US boats on the Atlantic and interfered with the mails. Most if not all of America's Irish population sympathized with the revolution being fomented by U. S. citizen Eamon De Valera, along with James Connolly and Michael Collins, against Great Britain; had no love loss for John Bull, would like to see the bully taken down. What was the sense of fighting along side your oldest enemy in a war? By 1916 many feared that a US breach with England was imminent (Cochran and Andrews 1962, 1025–1027). In 1916 the German U Boat *Deutschland* was the first submarine to cross the Atlantic from Europe, albeit on a "civic" visit to the USA, and jubilantly docked in Baltimore, Maryland. The feted *Deutschland*'s commander Paul Liebrecht König was even invited to the White House to celebrate the event (Koenig 2018).[7]

Detroit was a hot spot for British-American relations. Streets were lined with a dramatic poster from the British and Canadian Recruiting Mission that displayed an English soldier leaning over the Atlantic Ocean from Europe, shaking hands with an American gentleman in a blue suit, distinguished moustache and snappy fedora hat. The poster's caption proclaimed in bold, capital letters: "**BRITISHERS** YOU'RE NEEDED COME ACROSS **NOW**" (Myers 1917). Detroit was a border town with Windsor, Canada, where an enormous number of non-American citizens ferried in everyday to work in the city; with only an estimated 7% regularly turned back. (A few years later the dashing young Prince of Wales would even pop over for a surprise visit.) Rule Britannia was a constant refrain from this group. The English in America haughtily sympathized with the cause of Great Britain and its Entente Allies. Detroit's Americans had to be reassured that though "of course the English do not make us their ideal," still "America is more like Britain than

[7] See: "German Submarine Deutschland's Atlantic Crossing by Captain Paul Koenig," http://www.firstworldwar.com/source/deutschland1.htm; Koenig: "We trust that the old friendly relationship with the United States, going back to the days of Washington, when it was Prussia who was the first to help America in its fight for freedom from British rule, will awake afresh in your beautiful and powerful country".

we dreamed. We are, whether we like it or not, still something of the same strain" ("English Really Like." *Detroit Free Press*, June 25, 1917, 4).

The nationless and nation-seeking American Jews thought back on the terrible sufferings so many of them had undergone in Russia. Initially this group generally judged the Germans to be a more civilized people and deserving of their respect. Why fight alongside the nation of *pogroms* and *shtetls*? While America's Polish population was stuck between Scylla and Carbides; possessing a culture, a nation, but no nation-state yet. And so by late 1915 in the Detroit area three thousand Poles were training in US military camps. The stated purpose was "to prepare Poles in the U.S. to free Poland *or* to defend the U.S. in war," said sub-Lieutenant Waclaw Stzpiniski, one of the commanders of the Polish recruits. The Polish group was trained under the auspices of the US Military *and* the Polish Young Men's Military Association (PYMMA); the PYMMA having a large branch in Detroit as in a few other American cities. Striking here with the Detroit area Polish group is how the women were also involved, instructed "in red Cross activities" ("Polish Aliens", *Detroit Free Press*, December 17, 1915, 1). The Polish-American story and Detroit is outstanding. By the mid-1920s Polish monarchists in Europe asked Henry Ford to assume their country's throne (Lewis 1976, 185).

German-Americans were a specially conflicted and suffering group during the war. This is a story unto itself, splintered into a hundred thousand parts. Oily, genuine German sabotage from outside and pro-German attitude from inside spilled out to feed the flames of America's anti-German prejudice. This resentment was also encouraged by the relentless badgering of Germans in America by the Wilson's Committee on Public Information, more by the president's hard policies than by his high-minded, professorial, abstract pronouncements. During the war, German-American churches and school buildings were burned, German-language newspapers confiscated or destroyed, people tarred and feathered, Germans terrorized into buying US war bonds. Still, state-sponsored German espionage in America was real, although it concerned a very small number of Germans. Though tarred everyone of their kind with its brush (Tuchman 1984). To make matters worse, COs from

German-American Mennonite and Hutterite communities suffered atrocities.[8] About a thousand Hutterites and seven hundred Mennonites of draft age fled America illegally and immigrated to Canada, following the wartime death in Alcatraz and Fort Leavenworth prisons of the two young Hutterite Hofer brothers (Teichroew 1971; Brock and Young 1999, 56–57). People of these pacifist persuasions, along with the Amish, suffered less when they were more acculturated, as in the Detroit area or in parts of Pennsylvania.

It was a profoundly traumatic experience for the German-American community. This oppression latter backfired in the USA. By the mid-1930s the Detroit Branch of the Legion of German War Veterans were meeting in the *Deutsches Haus* at the corner of Mack and Maxwell Avenues to sing the Star Spangled Banner and the Nazi Party anthem *Horst-Wessel-Lied* ("Souvenir Program", Detroit Historical Society 2018). Pro-Nazi, German-American nationalism increased in the American 1920s and 30s with the flourishing Free Society of Teutonia, the Friends of New Germany, the German American Bund; along with such highly-vocal and media-savvy Nazi supporters and far right populist leaders as Detroit's Canadian-American, Catholic Priest Father Coughlin (1891–1979), the US presidential candidate Gerald K. Smith (1898–1976) and the national hero and aviator—aka "Slim", "The Lone Eagle", "Lucky Lindy"—Detroit's own Charles Augustus Lindbergh (1902–1974).

Curiously America's German-Americans are one group that has never produced their own story, their own witness, their own version in a great, immigrant-American novel. Unlike the Irish, Jews, Italians and many others. Even though Germans are the single largest national group that's ever immigrated to America. Perhaps because the damage to their national identity lies too deep to allow *Mutterland* expression to be released. The Austrians fared little better in popular opinion and reactions. The case of Dr. Adolf Lorenz of Vienna from Vienna in Detroit was already mentioned. While Hollywood's resident Viennese actor Erich von Stroheim had played so many evil Prussians during WW1 that it wasn't safe for him to go out on American streets for a long time afterward. "When he was recognized, stones were thrown at his automobile" (Vanderhaeghe 2005, 128).

[8] Originally from Friesland and the Tyrol, but associated in the USA with Germany.

Public Opinion

To understand how immigrants, foreigners, aliens communities and individuals fared in US secular, civic society and in the US military during the war time itself, it's necessary to display and digest a chronology of key events that effected the American and non-American sense of national and cultural identity in the USA. Soon after Wilson declared war on April 6, 1917, aware of the deep divide in national consensus about the war in general and the specific, contrary feelings among those Americans linked to the Central Power nations (Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire/Turkey)—as opposed to the Allies (England, France, Russia, Belgium, Serbia, Montenegro, Japan, Portugal)—Wilson created the Committee on Public Information (CPI, 1917–19). This was America's first official propaganda agency, headed by journalist and publicist George Creel (1876–1953). The CPI flooded the United States with a wave of over one hundred million propaganda pamphlets, posters, magazines and newspapers published in both English and foreign languages, along with seventy five thousand "four-minute men" public speakers who'd promoted the war cause at public gatherings (Creel 1920; Fleming 2003).

The political warfare waged by the CPI was widely criticized for attempting to force Americans to accept the war news and interpretation of events that the government chose to reveal as true. Media was not global at that time, thus censorship was generally effective. Action fed headlines and articles, rarely critical analysis (indeed, anti-war writing was soon against the law with the Espionage and Sedition Acts). News was another weapon as far as American authorities were concerned. It created popular, populist, mass mobilization consensus. Later, when Franklin Delano Roosevelt created his Works Progress Administration (WPA) to fight the domestic war against the Great Depression in 1935, Roosevelt made George Creel chairman of its WPA's National Advisory Board; same tool, invaluable expertise, different objective. World War One altered US liberal understanding of how the state could take a decisive, intrusive role in social, cultural and economic redistribution and control (Clarke 2017). All that came from CPI was not bad.

The CPI's long-term result was twofold. Like the Manhattan Project that produced the atomic bomb and led to the first earth-shattering firecracker string of nuclear weapons and atomic energy, the CPI was built and used without knowing the full consequences of what this new power created

and involved. Once made, there was no going back; not a force that could be un-invented. (Which its followers—WW1's British Ministry of Information or Joseph Goebbel's *Propagandaministerium*—surely recognized.) First, the CPI greatly fostered national consensus favorable to the war. But it wasn't the only factor. Before the CPI or even the Selective Service could really get under way, young immigrants flocked to recruiting stations. At the US Army tent on the city hall lawn in Detroit in early May 1917, foreign born and aliens with only first papers overwhelmed the recruiters. "Among the Army recruits the ratio of American to foreign born is ten to one, in favor of the later," the *Detroit Free Press* declared. The US Army was wracking its collective brain to gather and recruit "young Americans" ("Army Takes Lead", *Detroit Free Press* 1917, May 4, 12). (A problem solved on May 18th by the federal government.)

Another driving force was the inspiration of changed minds and commitments made by US public figures who had favored helping foreigners and had previously rejected the war or declared themselves to be pacifists to help European suffering. Such was Henry Ford, who had "never preached pacifism to the point of nonresistance" (Gelderman 1981, 139). So now Ford, Bryan and others put shoulder to the wheel for the war effort as well. Everyone got on board. Almost. If they didn't, like Will Crapo Durant, who originally created General Motors in 1908, the result was a disaster for their career.

But secondly, the CPI incited intolerance about criticism of the war effort, encouraged ethnic prejudice against Germans in particular, and created a lingering insecurity about dangerous foreigners in America. This contributed to the development of the Red Scare and Palmer Raids in the late 'Teens, early Twenties, encouraged nativism along the lines of the burgeoning Ku Klux Klan and Black Legion, provided inspiration for Henry Ford's own anti-Semitic, anti-alien, anti-immigrant *The International Jew: The World's Foremost Problem* (1920–1922). Henry Ford's monument to prejudice was firmly rejected by Henry Ford's wife Clara Bryant Ford, his son and daughter-in-law Edsel and Eleanor Ford, along with numerous colleagues in Detroit (Dean 2018).

Curiously reminiscent of the reception of *The Birth of a Nation* in 1916 Detroit, local protest against Henry Ford's calumny was fairly muted at the time.[9]

Get the Men

The US war had two huge conscription waves, three draft calls. The first initiated April 6, 1917 and secured by the Selective Service Act of May 18, 1917, was for all eligible men from age 21 to 30; the second draft of August 1918 stretched maximum age to 45 (US National Archives 2018; www.sss.gov; www.legisworks.gov). With approximately 24 million men registered, the total force mobilized by war's end by the United States was 4,355,00. Some two million US military served overseas, 200,000 of which were officers (Dupuy and Dupuy 1986, 976, 990).

In the composition of USA's WW1 military it's striking how social class played a prominent role multiplying acquired officer status. Thus in early May 1917 Detroit, in order to encourage more young Americans to sign up, "Captain Upton Shreve of the officers reserve corps of Harvard University will speak before the recruiting tent at 2 o'clock Friday afternoon" ("Army Takes Lead", Detroit Free Press 1917, May 4, 12). Follow the upper class leader.

The American Expeditionary Force (AEF) to Europe was *the* decisive factor in the final victory of the Allied Forces. It made a difference who won this war (although it's peace was one hell of a mess). "Comparisons are invidious," as Dupuy notes in his definitive *Encyclopedia of Military History*, concerning the nature and distinction of the war's leaders, battles and troops. The American role in 1917–18 added a "final increment of numbers and fresh initiative, permitting the much larger and more experienced Allied armies to achieve equally spectacular successes in the final weeks of the war" (Dupuy and Dupuy 1986, 985). The US Army formed itself slowly and with rough, raw material. By the Winter 1917-18, it was estimated that among initial draft of immigrants about 1% "knew the English language well enough

[9] *The International Jew* was originally published as a series in the Henry Ford owned and directed The Dearborn Independent newspaper-magazine; it was then published in series book form; ultimately distributed copyright free by Henry Ford.

to understand the instructions necessary to make them first-class fighting men" (Ford 2009, 68) At the same time in the winter of 1917-18: US General Staff officially estimated that 25% of all tested enlisted men were illiterate (Ford 2009, 67).

Then problems were classified and organized separately. In January 1918, N. D. Baker established the Foreign-speaking Soldier Subsection (FSS) under the Military Intelligence Section. Its brief was "improvement in the treatment of alien personnel within the army". Yet by September 1918 there were still about 100,000 ethnic soldiers in the US military who couldn't speak English. By the time the US Army did get to Europe with soldiers trained American and non-American, Europeans called the US Army the "American Foreign Legion" (Kennedy 2004, 157).

Military Matters

At the time of the First World War there wasn't even a good coast-to-coast highway that went across America (Weingroff 2018). Ordinary people communicated by postal letter and telegraph, pneumatic tubes in the big cities, occasionally a bicycle and messenger boy, carrier pigeon, carrier messenger boy, and pioneering Rural Free Delivery service via stagecoach, horse and buggy, horse rider or Model T. It is no wonder that the enforcement and regulation of the military in World War One was not seamlessly uniform. There were lots of local exceptions, as well as local favoritism and pull. Military conditions were reminiscent of the USA's Vietnam War years, only more so. The best studies of this subject are fine—especially Nancy Gentile Ford's *American All! Foreign-born Soldiers in World War 1* (2001) and David M. Kennedy's *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (1980). But they make the reality more coherent than it actually was. More to the point, neither Ford nor Kennedy wrote their history from the inside out. There's no reason to believe or proof to show that they worked with the actual foreign-language based archives and foreign language resources, books, letters, memoires and autobiographies themselves. Much information is second, third or fourth hand in *Over Here* and *Americans All!*. The roots, trunk and branches of analysis do not drink from the fountains of the original sources. When writing about the foreign, they are foreign themselves.

Remember that close to fifty cultures and languages were involved in this WW1 speedy and unprecedented US military induction and organization process. Which wound up producing alien soldiers that fought within standard US military divisions, which fought in their own-language and culture divisions that trained in the United States and then went abroad to fight for other countries in The Great War. There were even groups of American citizens of Euro-American origin who went to fight against Allied Forces, for the Central Powers. One can highlight the following groups (with good reason to believe there are numerous other untapped examples of individuals and groups)[10]: the US military's Foreign Speaking Soldier Subsection (FSS); the Foreign Legion band of the US military (FLB); Czechoslovak Legion (CL); Czechoslovak Legion in France (CLF), which included about 3,000 volunteers from USA's ethnic enclaves); the Polish Army in America (PAA); Polish Legion (PL); the Polish Falcons (aka: the Polish Falcon Alliance, PF); American Contingent of the Polish Army in France (ACPAF); the Jewish Legion (JL) (Totten 2018; Fosdick 1958; Ford 2009; Polish Falcons 2018). The national story as focused down on local example begins when the US War Department established the Foreign Speaking Soldier Subsection (FSSS) in January 1915. It was headed at first, as one would expect, by a New England scion of America, D. Chauncey Brewer, who had been head of the Boston Chamber of Commerce in 1912. Mr. Brewer ran the FSSS for five months, when he disagreed with army policies and was replaced by Lt. Herbert A. Horgan. At which point more attention was paid to ethnic identity and the FSS organized its "immigrants into ethnic specific companies commanded by immigrant and second-generation soldiers" (Ford 2009, 13).

What had happened? There's an old story told in the American army about how early one morning a gruff sergeant called his new recruits to attention in the initial year of the USA's participation in the First World War. As he bellowed out his rise and shine wake-up call his troops snapped upright and stiff as a line of fence posts. He then proceeded to bark out the roll call. None of the men answered. He roared out his soldiers' names again. Still no one

[10] Other examples of ethnic US soldiers who fought for England, France, Russia, Belgium, Serbia, Montenegro, Japan, or Portugal (Allied Powers); or Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire-Turkey (Central Powers).

budged. Flustered the sergeant exploded with an enormous sneeze—when suddenly ten recruits snapped forward and saluted him. Which illustrates on the one hand the linguistic and cultural confusion on the part of mainstream America regarding its huge new immigrant population. That sergeant expected what he'd previously known. He was used to *Adams*, *Jones*, *Franklin*, *Wilson*, *Stone* and *Ford*, not *Fuchs*, *Schwarz*, *Çelik*, *Apostolov*, *Schuster*, *Sapozhnik* and *Zelichenok*, *Chmielewski*, *Kapustka* and *Stachowski*. Beginning with the Horgan regime, the US military tried to adapt to its men, as well as the other way around.[11]

In Winter 1917–18, the US Army appointed Lt. Stanislaw A. Gutowski at Michigan's newly created Camp Custer to organize soldiers based on their individual nationality and language groups. This was FSSS work. Gutowski also worked as a kind of roving diplomat investigating and helping with this US Army issue elsewhere in America. Under his direction, qualified bilingual soldiers were then promoted to become officers in charge of these groups. This development was given the name Camp Gordon Plan, with US soldiers separated into language groups headed by officers who spoke the soldiers' own language. (But usually didn't graduate from Harvard.) With communications gap bridged, their military training then continued in their native language ("Latinos in World War" 2018). This wasn't Pollyanna do-goodism. But part of a two-pronged pattern by the US government to integrate and investigate.

In effect, foreign immigrant soldiers were being advanced and given rights analogous to how the US armed services were integrated black and white—before US civil society—in July, 1948, due to President Harry Truman's Executive Order 9981. Truman partly did that on principle, partly to help secure the black vote for the Democratic Party. But the US Army's development of the FSSS seemed systemic, less political and moral principled than Truman's 1948 action; essentially done to create a better functioning, more harmonious military. The Army's own version of Scientific Management and Taylorism.

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[11] I first heard this story at a VFW Post on Pączki Day in Hamtramck, Michigan—a city that had been mainly Polish, within the confines of Detroit. But it is also related by D. M. Kennedy in *Over Here* (1980).

To Harness and to Serve

Another important step for the immigrant soldier was the creation of the US Military Commission on Training Camp Activities (CTCA) under the direction of Harry Emerson Fosdick (1878–1969); one of his key sayings: "Preaching is personal counseling on a group basis". Relentlessly realistic and upbeat, a darling of the media, an apostle of positive-minded self-improvement, under Fosdick's direction the CTCA was responsible for addressing the kind of acute problems of sanitation (infantry: keep your feet clean) and morals (men: keep your **** clean) that had plagued the allies at war. Practical as well as moral, it was a well-known fact that large numbers of troops in European armies were incapacitated because of social diseases.

Fosdick, with the full assent and cooperation of the US Secretary of War Newton D. Baker, recruited the assistance of competent ethnic and religious associations—such as the Jewish Welfare association and the Catholic Knights of Columbus—that addressed their aid to recruits on base. Problems addressed included alcoholism, personal cleanliness, and venereal diseases (which had disabled an estimated sixty divisions of the Central Powers); addressed not by giving out prophylactics to US troops, but by educating the men in English or in their own native language about just what was happening. Most of them did not know. Their level of ignorance was phenomenal. Many functioned by rumor only (Boyer 1978).

Religion was then harnessed as an intelligent, psychological tactic that offered the immigrant soldier respect and dignity. Fosdick was not a Bible-thumping literalist. In complement ethnic holidays were respected, access to worship facilitated, special foods (kosher for Jewish soldiers, fish on Friday for Catholics) provided. Morale among troops who initially felt alienated improved. In addition, social activities were provided by these groups that matched the soldiers' own ethnic, cultural, religious identities. Group sing-alongs using and blending the likes of "Row Row Row Your Boat" with a song from their own culture or language were a big deal. This recognition and blending accepted and accentuated the soldier's ethnic pride and educated them in accord with the chief directions and trends of American values. "Row row row", for example, was all about teamwork. Teamwork, that American first line of defense. You're only as good as the people who work for you;

the weakest link in the chain. Or as Benjamin Franklin said when signing the *Declaration of Independence*: "We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately."

What's ironic here is how reasonable, tempered and procedural the US military's Americanization procedures were during World War One compared to the brutal methods of enforcement subsequently used in secular, civic, US society of the 1920s (the Klan, the Black Legion, among others). The actual grievances over which World War One was fought in Europe were hardly solved. WW1 didn't end war; it was a rehearsal for the next one. But on home ground the US military force grew more coherent, reasonable, and tolerant. Possibly a final flowering of the Progressive Era? What did Universal Military Training (UMT) achieve? UMT proponents argued it should have three positive effects. It would Americanize the immigrant, nurture US business values of service and efficiency, and help to overcome the class antagonisms that occasionally hobbled American society. Then it had a two-fold expectation ("Arguments for Universal Military Training" 1918; Kennedy 2004, 145 ff).

Its defenders imagined the young Massachusetts Apollos of the grand academies—the Episcopal Groton School and St. Marks Preparatory—partaking of the same pup tents with "boys from the slums of Philadelphia"; so would each gain by developing an enhanced and "different attitude toward the other class"—as if their US Army experience would be a grand, glorious, egalitarian Boy Scout jamboree (Kennedy 2004, 146).

But UMT opponents argued it'd make the state an "overlord" that compels "its citizens, instead of inducing them willingly to give" (Literary Digest 1917, April 21) The anti-establishment establishmentarian Amos Pinchot (1873–1944) when writing to American labor union leader Samuel Gompers in May 1917, argued that there was a deep, insidious purpose behind this newfangled UMT. For beneath:

> the cry that America must have compulsory service or perish, is a clearly thought-out and heavily backed project to mould the United States into an efficient, orderly nation, economically and politically controlled by those who know what is good for the people. In this country so ordered and so governed, there

> will be no strikes, no surly revolt against authority, and no popular discontent. In it, the lamb will lie down in peace with the lion, and he will lie down right where the lion tells him to (*New York Times* 1917, March 13, 4).

A third option was provided soon after the war by John Dos Passos in *Three Soldiers* (1921). John Andrews, one of the novels three protagonists, went to war to loose himself. War freed men to be nobodies. While his division watched a movie, Andrews watches them. He has the epiphany:

> Waves of laughter or of little exclamations passed over them. They were all so alike, they seemed at moments to be one organism. This is what he had sought when he had enlisted, he said to himself. It was in this that he would take refuge from the horror of the world that had fallen upon him. He was sick of revolt, of thought, of carrying his individuality like a banner above the turmoil. This was much better...to humble himself into the mud of common slavery (Dos Passos 1932, 22).

A vision strongly reminiscent of the very end of King Vidor's movie *The Crowd* (1928), when ordinary John Sims fades into nonentity status in the movie theater. Or of the oft attributed but never sourced Goethe quote: "Know thyself? If I knew myself, I'd run away." In a larger, philosophical sense, here's the Hegelian master-slave dialectic at work. One has to be one or the other. People choose.

To Americanize

To join the American military in the USA's World War One era was only one of many ways a man, a foreigner, a non-American, might try to Americanize. Marriage wouldn't work. Attorney General Grant Fellows (1865–1929, Republican), Michigan's fourth-ranking official and the state's chief law enforcement officer, declared in June 1915 that if a woman married an alien then she first "loses by that marriage any chances she may have to vote." And secondly, due to a recent act of congress, the newly married woman would "take the nationality of the husband, when he is an alien and she is an American" —

and thereby forfeit all her attendant duties, rights, and privileges as a US citizen. Nothing unusual here. This was common practice among Western states at the time ("Woman Cannot Vote", *Detroit Free Press* 1915, June 24, 18; Smiths 2006, 476–492). It followed a principle that stretched back to at least the European Middle Ages: *Cuius regio, eius religio*—"Whose realm, his religion"; the religion of the ruler (the husband in this case) was to dictate the religion of those he ruled (the wife in this case).

Then there were the US citizenship application procedures practiced back then. The law was hazy at first. Information was not evenly and clearly distributed; but Detroit's immigrants generally understood that it took a non-American about five years to get US citizenship papers. This was complicated by a procedure that demanded the applicant to produce at least two US citizen witnesses who had known the applicant for five years. But if the applicant had moved around because of employment, which was not uncommon, this was not a feasible demand. Which made it no less a requirement.

Soon employment itself became steadily more difficult. As the First World War approached more jobs were provided by way of US, state, county or city government. Then by late November 1915 the US Supreme Court upheld the New York anti-alien labor law of 1909 that made it compulsory to employ only US citizens in the construction of public works. Which set practices for a lot of what was done nation wide. Particularly in conflict here in the 1915 US Supreme Court case was the employment of Italian laborers in construction work. It made no difference that the Italians were on "our side" in the conflict, fighting against the forces of Austria-Hungary (as brilliantly detailed in, for example, Hemingway's 1929 semi-autobiographical *A Farewell To Arms*). But, of course, all non-US laborers were affected by this stern decision ("Alien Labor Law", *Detroit Free Press* 1915, November 30, 13).

Another method used by the foreigner was to adapt to America by custom, if not by law. To fit in by adopting native ways, to go native—yet try to maintain one's own culture or religion. Thus Detroit's Jewish community of Temple Beth El at that point in time, under the leadership of Henry Ford's friend Rabbi Leo M. Franklin, did not meet on the traditional Jewish Sabbath Saturday but held "Sunday school" and had Sunday services. Likewise Franklin was adamantly opposed to the creation of any Jewish, Zionist homeland in Palestine schemes. As far as Franklin was concerned, born in heartland America Indiana, America itself was homeland for the Jews. Who needed another? Meanwhile the hopes and plans for a Jewish home state in Palestine

were encouraged and expressly underwritten by Henry Ford's only son Edsel Ford; whose wife Eleanor and he also strongly supported all local Jewish charities for people settling in Detroit. They saw no contradiction in doing this. Detroit's Jewish community itself was divided? So support the whole community (Dean 2018b; Baldwin 2003).

Literature and Film

Turn to American literature and film of the era and they paint a disturbing picture of what happened to concepts like "loyalty", "service", "honor", "country" and "pride" when they became material realities used as formative tools for individual, cohort, and nation building. In creative public language note how the word "service"—The *Selective Service*—mingled the bitter and sweet. The phrase used to initiate and characterize conscription in WW1 United States a unit of: *chosen*, *singled out* and *slavery* plus *homage*, *devotion*.

A sharp, brief look at America's outstanding WW1 literature tells there is no escape from the First World War's trap of difference. Hemingway nihilism galore lies everywhere. And not only with "the Jew" Robert Cohn and the protagonist's own impotence in *The Sun Also Rises* (1926). The anguish of dissimulation, discord and conflict religious, racial, national or class based. This sort of agony pervades William March's WW1 storytelling pastiche *Company K* (1933). As when German-American Private Jakie Brauer tries to grab a belt buckle off a badly wounded German soldier, a fine belt buckle, a great souvenir to show his neighborhood pals back home, that proudly declares *Gott Mit Uns*. But "when Jakie reached forward to unbuckle the belt, the little German boy screamed and cut his throat from ear to ear with a knife, which he had hidden under his tunic!" (March 1989, 78–80).

Difference glares out with the German-American and Jewish-American soldiers in John Dos Passos' *Three Soldiers* (1921). As when one Jewish-American young private tells his fellow soldiers they are cannon fodder, "meat for the guns". And his company's reaction:

> "Everybody looked at him angrily.
> 'That goddam kike Einstein,' muttered someone.
> 'Say, tie that bull outside,' shouted Bill...

> 'Fools,' muttered Einstein, turning over and burying his face in his hands" (DosPassos 1932, 42).

Or one finds a downtrodden difference, and resilience. As in e. e. cummings' profoundly hard, delicate, humane portrait of a WW1 CO in his 1931 poem about a tough Swedish-American conscientious objector: "i sing of Olaf glad and big"—with the work's ringing lines: "there is some shit I will not eat" and "unless statistics lie he was / more brave than me: more blond than you" (cummings 2018).

Movies offer other possibilities. *The Big Parade* (1925) is neither anti-war nor pro-war. If anything, it's a tragi-comedy about American soldiers as helpless schmoes, three Norman Normals of the time caught up in their nation's war machinery and how the time shapes their character and hurts their souls. Clean-cut, upper-class American hero James "Jim" Apperson buddies with Slim the Swede and Bull the Irish Barman. This movie is a powerhouse of feasible typology, eugenics on parade. (It's a narrative of a kind that was also brilliantly served in the era by US World War One veteran Alden Brooks, 1882–1964, in his remarkable novel about World War One as experienced by six different nationalities *The Fighting Men* of 1917.) *The Big Parade*'s refrain "This ain't such a bad war" is given the lie when only Jim makes it home alive. He lives crippled, sure, but gets the loser's prize when re-united at movie's end with the delightful heroine, the sexy farm girl Melisande (*The Big Parade* 1925).

Is *The Big Parade* an ironic social comment or meant to be an expression of the way things are in WW1 America? Apperson lives. The lower classes die. "Let's go fishing," said the fisherman to the worm" (Brecht 1948). Opinion has been divided for 80 years. One thing is sure, like John Ford's *The Iron Horse* (1924), *The Big Parade* is close enough to the time and key event themselves to integrate the temper and meaning of the time. A precious, time capsule document about people caught up in a storm, in a story that could also be called *The Big Breaker* with the main characters helpless as chips on a wave.

Last film to note: Howard Hawks's *Sergeant York* (1941). Which is a remarkable and wholly successful revisionist piece of WW1 propaganda useful for the USA's WW2 effort. *York* is about a moral minority, not an ethnic one. Yet the story is implicitly a case study of one of the thousands who first refused to serve in WW1—mostly Protestant, mostly belonging to German denominations, and some who died for their cause—who for good reasons of their sincere articles of faith refused to serve. But Sergeant York comes around.

He takes control. This is not *The Big Parade*. His devotion to God becomes his devotion to the United States. What's the difference? The overlap is seamless. It's accomplished in the film with a slow, solid, black and white and one step at a time Gary Cooper at his best cinematic command and grace. *Sergeant York* remains muscular to this day because of Cooper's awkward, no-acting style. A film which is strikingly about an enlisted man who is both local and national, true to his indigenous peculiarity (subtext: German-American Hutterite pacifist?). And a damn good citizen-soldier. Since the real Alvin York (1887-1964) was one of the First World War's most decorated US Army soldier who killed 25 and captured 132 enemy soldiers in one go (Owens 2004).

Conclusion

Recall the burrs of race and class that were as normal for the discomfort of American life in the WW1 era as bad plumbing, dirt roads, horse apples, clouds of flies and shoddy electricity. Another thorn was the common anxiety among the indigenous white population who were worried about how the presence of large numbers of non-Anglo-Saxon peoples could lead to national degeneration. The home front of the Great War displayed how these "foreigners" in the military could earn their spurs and become America by serving the nation and their own self-interests *at the same time*. Not everyone was included in this process, such as Germans. But, in a xenophobic period, when ethnicity was considered immutable, culture was adaptable through group integrity. One groups conspicuously excluded was the Nation's African Americans. DuBois made the intriguing argument at the time that African-Americans were torn by "two warring ideals"—the unrealizable desire to be black versus to be American. They suffered a "double consciousness" and thus *lacked* the wholeness needed for identity. The African-American, argued DuBois, possessed the blessing and curse of a seventh-son:

> born with a veil, and gifted with second-sight in the American world—a world which yields him no true consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others,

> of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity (Du Bois 1986, 364).

Finally, World War One for America certainly created a break between generations with the earned sense of new possibilities by those who went away and made it back. The big hit song of the post-war era belted out in jazz time rhythm "How 'Ya Gonna Keep 'em Down on the Farm After They've Seen Paree?" (Donaldson, Young and Lewis 1919). Americans had cut the chord. They were no longer European immigrants. The nation and its boys had paid their dues. Even if they still belonged to the European family. As an anecdote of the time—headlined "Little Patriot" in the *Detroit Free Press*—related:

> A young boy born in America with an immigrant father was chastised for something he did wrong.
> "But," said his someone in his family, "your father has the right to whip you when you are bad!"
> The boy's eyes flashed. "I am a citizen of the United States!" he proudly declared. "Do you think I am going to let a foreigner lick me!" ("Little Patriot", *Detroit Free Press*, April 28, 1916)

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A Polish Voice from the Depths of an International Conflict: Wartime Writings by Witold Hulewicz

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Abstract: Although Poland was geographically not a secondary theatre of war, the position of the Poles bore a strong resemblance to the position of people's in secondary theatres of war. The nation was divided, with Polish nationals serving in German, Austrian, Russian, and French armies, which occasionally led to tragic instances of fratricidal combat. Consequently, Poles resorted to literary strategies of indirect approach, and Witold Hulewicz's early modernist poetry might be interpreted in these terms.

Key words: First World War, Witold Hulewicz, Poland, modernism

The inconceivable scale of the First World War, a conflict that was originally planned for six weeks in the Schlieffen Plan and ended only after four years, left its mark on millions of lives. The war engaged inhabitants of all continents, and the battlefields saw encounters not only between Germans, Frenchmen, and Britishers, but also between Afrikaners, Hindus, Maoris, and, among many other nationalities, Poles. Because Poland was not an independent country, Poles fought on both Western and Eastern Fronts in German, Austrian, and Russian armies.

To cope with traumatic experiences of the war, its main actors resorted to writing letters, poems, and prose. Wartime experience was a challenge for millions of writers, including the famous ones, such as Ernest Hemingway, Jaroslav Hašek or Erich Maria Remarque. Examples of literary struggle against the tragic images of the war can be found in Polish literature as well.

The Polish literature of the First World War poses a difficulty for historical research. Although the literary production between 1914 and 1918 has been thoroughly analyzed in numerous publications (e.g. Kielak 2001, Lalak 1998,

Łoch and Stępnik 1999, Olszewska 2004), it is still absent in a basic course of Polish literary history, and importantly absent from the memory of the general reading public in Poland. This is because Polish wartime literature has an ambiguous status in Polish literary history. Texts written by Polish authors during the conflict are allotted, on the one hand, to the transition period between the Young Poland and the interwar period, but on the other hand, they are described as modernist texts, as responses to the international experience of modernity. The confusing difference consists in applying the local Polish system of literary periods, and inscribing wartime texts to the international current of modernism at the same time.

Additionally, the literary record of the Polish experience in the First World War was overshadowed by the Polish literary responses to the trauma of the Second World War and the Holocaust. There is an incomparable disparity between research activities and critical outputs related to the two World Wars in Polish literary history. The Great War, and the poetry and prose related to it, was effectively eclipsed by the Second World War, the poetry written by the generation who fought in it, and the literary responses to captivity in German and Soviet camps. The Polish cult of the Second World War, marked by an extensive annual cycle of official celebrations, results in a dangerous erosion of interest in the First World War, which was the first total conflict in history, and which also involved the Polish nation.

This general ignorance is not only a result of contemporary politics of collective memory in Poland, but reflects the geopolitical situation of Poland in 1914. When the war broke out, Poland did not exist as a state, as it had been partitioned in 1795 between three adjacent powers, Russia, Austria, and Prussia. Obviously, regaining national independence was the most important political goal for Poles in 1914. The global conflict, engaging the most powerful countries of the world, gave hope for a redefinition of the power-balance in Europe, and thus for possible independence of Poland. This is why the First World War was perceived by Poles mainly as a chance for statehood. Consequently, the fighting on the distant Western Front was of secondary importance for Poles. As Tomasz Burek argues (1995, 463–467), "the Polish wartime experience was markedly different from that of European nations which had a stable political status and statehood".

However, the news of the Western Front were not entirely ignored in Poland. Especially in the Prussian Partition, the Polish territory controlled by Germany, many men were conscripted into the German army and sent

to Belgium and France, so the interest in the global conflict was strong there; inhabitants of Poznan or Torun were mentally closer to Berlin than to Warsaw.[12] Differences in political views, and cultural differences reinforced by long years of political dependence, were reflected in literary works written in the German-controlled Polish territory.

Even a brief thematic analysis of work by Polish prose writers and poets from the First World War demonstrates that Polish literature was highly heterogeneous then. Two main currents can be distinguished: the dominant one was related to fighting on the Eastern Front, and often referred to the Romantic tradition of heroic patriotism exemplified by descriptions in poetry by Adam Mickiewicz. For instance, Edward Slonski's poem written in 1915, "To My Son" (generally known in Poland as "The Dream of a Sabre"), was a traditional, Romantic poem with a patriotic theme:

> Oh, my son, on all fronts,
> From the gray Vistula to the Rhine,
> Standing by lighted fuses,
> We dream our dream of Poland.

The fragment presents a Polish patriot who, like many others, is fighting on one of European fronts, but only thinks about the dream of restoration of Polish independence. However, there was another current in Polish wartime literature, a current which had a more dynamic thematic dimension, and was directly inspired by experience of the Western Front. Fighting in the West was markedly different, and its literary representation quickly lost the patriotic element that could give meaning to mechanized carnage, as Poles had no independent homeland to defend. There were also instances of fratricidal battles between Poles conscripted into opposing armies. The tone of texts in the second current is dominated by bitterness and conviction that the long war was pointless. Often there was a strongly subjective reflection on dehu-

[12] This can be inferred even from a brief analysis of content in important local newspapers of the time, *Dziennik Poznański* and *Gazeta Toruńska*. Wartime issues focus on news from the Western Front, from Germany and from German-controlled Poland, and pay less attention to events in Galicia and later in Warsaw.

manization of fighting soldiers. In a poem by Jozef Wittlin, "To the Enemy", the conflict is represented by means of drastic imagery, and the poem expresses doubts whether a fighting man can retain his humanity in the war:

> (…) We hurl stones of abuse at each other
> And sputter venomous saliva—
> (…)
> In the mad fight – intoxicated
> By smell of meat and smell of blood:
> We do not even see the enemy,
> Because he has closed his face behind a visor.

In this kind of Polish wartime poetry, especially towards the end of the war, the cruelty of the conflict provokes strong protest, expressed through the pacifist voice of a lyrical I calling for the end of the war.

Pacifism became the key category for Katarzyna Szewczyk-Haake in her study (2014) of Polish literature of the First World War. The critic introduced a division, an opposition between Polish patriotism and pacifism, and divided wartime texts by Poles accordingly. Although Szewczyk-Haake focuses exclusively on texts published in Zdrój, a modernist journal published in Poznan, her division is applicable to all Polish literature written between 1914 and 1918, a literature torn between Western pacifism and Polish patriotism, associated with the Romantic longing for independence. The division proposed by Szewczyk-Haake, rather than a coherent categorization, should be treated as an indication of a problem. For many texts, the categorization is problematic, and further complicated by biographies of their authors. Such is the case of wartime writings by Witold Hulewicz, a writer, translator, and radio publicist, an important figure in Polish cultural life between the wars.

Witold Hulewicz was born in a patriotic Polish family: his parents, Leon and Helena, were landed gentry owning a manor in Koscianki, where they tried to preserve Polish traditions and historical memory. Koscianki became a regional center of Polish culture in Wielkopolska, a section of Poland under German control in the 19th century. The Hulewiczes organized poetry readings and lessons for Polish for local children. The patriotic activities of the family were recognized by famous Polish writers, including Władysław Reymont (Nobel laureate in 1924) and Józef Ignacy Kraszewski, who both visited

Koscianki (Karaś 2003, 9). The children of the family were patriotically educated by Helena Hulewicz, who also instilled the literary passion to her sons, as one of them mentioned in his journal: "all brothers were impassioned artists and writers, hovering in the clouds with the Pegasus" (Hulewicz 1917).

Witold was the youngest son, and he had the closest relationship with the mother, so at the age of 19, when he was conscripted into the German army and sent to the Western Front, he experienced strong feelings of anguish and longing. The mother and son maintained avid correspondence during his frontline service. Witold regularly wrote letters about his nostalgia for home and for the pre-war world, as well as about his fascination with the new circumstances of military life. Hulewicz's letters were printed, from 1915 to 1917, in Wielkopolska's local newspapers: *Kurier Poznański* and *Dziennik Poznański*, in cycles called "Letters from Belgium", "Letters from the Somme", and "Letters from the Battlefield".

Hulewicz's letters to his mother, when published in newspapers, were presented both as private correspondence and as short press reports, news from the war. Everyday life on the front is described in a highly detailed, objective mode by Hulewicz in his letters. The author uses short sentences and provides specific information: "Before 9 am we arrived in X, our destination. No civilians, of course. Many ruined houses, a lot of holes in the ground" . Lidia Głuchowska (2014, 291) points to the factual value of the letters, describing them as "Documents of service in trench warfare". The form and content of the letters were probably modified by newspaper editors before publication, but it was desirable, in terms of readers' expectations, to maintain an unquestionable credibility of the letters as direct and real testimony of the war. Some of the letters include, apart from objective descriptions, personal comments by the author, who divulges his feelings about the described events: "On our way we stopped in a village obliterated by artillery fire, where there was not a single human being, apart from a small detachment of soldiers living in primitive makeshift shanties. The village made a very sad impression on me" (Hulewicz 2015).

In the German army, Hulewicz served in a signals unit, and his duties included mending broken cables and radio transmitters. This work involved a lot of traveling along the front, which Hulewicz treated as a sort of tourism: "The small town of X is 3 kilometres away from the French trenches, and is daily bombarded by French light and heavy guns. For a long time I have

dreamed about going there, and many soldiers envied me this trip" (Hulewicz 1915).

The harsh realities of military life did not stifle Hulewicz's youthful curiosity of the world, which was a common sentiment among soldiers: for many of the young men, frontline deployment was their first foreign travel. This attitude is evident in descriptions of Belgian towns in German texts, e.g. Stefan Zweig, in his biography of Emile Verhaeren, described Ostend mainly as a seaside resort, and Bruges as a historical tourist attraction.[13] Sightseeing by German soldiers around battlefields is also mentioned by Ernst Stadler, a passionate connoisseur of European culture, who dies in the First Battle of Ypers in 1914: "It's a beautiful evening. Panoramic view of the French mountains. I greet France almost with the same trepidation as I did when I saw Paris for the first time seven years ago. I'm hardly remembering that we are still at war. I greet you, sweet soil of France".[14] Esthetic ruptures over war landscapes were described by civilians, too, e.g. by Carola Oman in "In the Ypress Sector". Oman was a British nurse in the Voluntary Aid Detachment, and she describes the beauty of the Belgian landscape, ruined by exchange of artillery fire:

"In the Ypres Sector"
You have left beauty here in everything,
And it is we that are both deaf and blind.
By coarse grass mounds here the small crosses rise
Sunk sideways in the ditch, or low inclined
Over some little stream where waters sing
By shell holes blue with beauty from the skies.
Even the railway cutting has kind shade

[13] Ostend was advertised as "Rialto van het Noorden" (Rialto of the North), and Ghent and Bruggen as places where tourists can experience a real Medieval atmosphere (Zweig 1910, 18).

[14] "It's a beautiful evening. Panoramic view of the French mountains. I greet France almost with the same trepidation as I did when I saw Paris for the first time seven years ago. I'm hardly remembering that we are still at war. I greet you, sweet soil of France". (Stadler, Ernst. 1995. *Diaries*, (first edition 1983, written 1914); in: Andrzej Lam (ed.), *Ernst Stadler. Marching off*. (Translated and edited by Andrzej Lam.). Warszawa: Unia Wydawnicza „Verum", Warszawa 1995].

And colour, where the rust wire is laid
Round the soft tracks. Because you knew them thus
The dark mouthed dug-outs hold a light for us.
And here each name rings rich upon our ears
Which first we learnt with sorrow and with tears

Although there are no direct expressions of delight in landscape in the poem, the reader has an impression that Oman, like the other authors, is trying to find positive aspects in their terrible situation. For Hulewicz, the persona of a nostalgic but sober observer might have been a consciously adopted method of representing reality in letters to his mother, to make her less worried. He described daily life in the trenches, the typical schedule, sleeping and eating. Helena received a historical record of her son's service on the front in Belgium and France, only occasionally augmented by his personal opinions. Many wartime correspondents wrote in the same way, which was perhaps a sort of survival strategy in a hostile and maddening environment. The intensive production of letters, journals, and memoirs during the war is probably related to the rise of non-fiction in twentieth-century literature.

However, it seems that Hulewicz's real feelings about the war were hidden in letters, and expressed only in his wartime poetry, collected in 1921 as *Fire in Hand*. The collection is divided into four sections, of which the first two directly refer to his war experience. The first section collects poems written by Hulewicz on the front, and published separately in *Zdrój*, a biweekly artistic magazine issued in Poznań.

The founder of the magazine was Witold Hulewicz's eldest brother, Jerzy, who invited a number of Polish authors to publish in the magazine, as part of the effort to protect Polish cultural life in German-occupied Wielkopolska. One of the initial contributors was Stanisław Przybyszewski, an important pioneer of modernism in Poland. *Zdrój* was designed as a contact platform for Polish artists from all sections of the country, and as an instrument for development of Polish national culture. Jerzy Hulewicz wrote about his plans in a letter to Emil Zegadłowicz: "I wish this work not to be limited to only one section, but to combine various kindred groups, who can complement one another's efforts" (Wójcik 2008, 33).

Przybyszewski remarked on the importance of Hulewicz's effort even before the first issue of *Zdrój* was published: "Now is the time when Poznań

can prove that its fifty years of slumber, its indifference to the matters of Polish spiritual life in its highest and noblest incarnation, in Art, that the indifference was not a downfall, only a rest after enormous spiritual exertions which Poznań made over twenty years. (…) Not is the time [for Poles in Wielkopolska—ed.] to think about another, greater and nobler mission: to sustain and strengthen the life of the Polish soul, as our fathers did of yore" (Przybyszewski 1916, 3). Witold Hulewicz was also involved in creation and editing of *Zdrój*, and strongly supported his brother's efforts. For Witold, the possibility of publishing his work in *Zdrój* was very important: regular writing helped him to cope with horrible images of the war, which he could not share with his wife in letters. Analyzing his poetic prose pieces, such as "Furioso", "Whispers", or "Behind a Violet Glass", the reader can have an impression that the writer was beset by feeling of helplessness, overwhelmed by the apocalyptic reality of the war. The imagery of these texts constitutes a terrible vision:

> An enormous abyss opened in the earth—through this wound, fire shot up from all hell, wide as the universe, high as the sky. The fire is bulging, sizzling, lurching, babbling, and spitting with blaze, rages and bristles with bloody manes (Olwid 1921, 14–17).

A church is showing:

> a scalped and naked apse and grins into the blue sky with badly chipped teeth of stained glass. Under the outline of the altar there is a carcass of a cradle, scattered on the dust. The blessed babes fed here, before the altar, guzzled on blood from tens of kindred hearts, and are lying now as skeletons, gripping their beloved guns with bony fingers. And the altar, wet with beer and blood, smeared with manure, cuddles away from the cold under the apse (Olwid 1918, 185).

Using terrifying epithets, Hulewicz introduces a disquieting personification of the church, and adds a demonic quality to the landscape. There are frequent descriptions of pangs of conscience, compared to physical pain, which Katarzyna Szewczyk-Haake interprets as expression of Hulewicz's protest against the war (2014, 326).

In subsequent sections of the collection, the pacifistic attitude is abandoned in favor of an open and direct manifestation of hope for Polish independence. This change is striking when the collection is read in its entirety, as the author seems to have been torn between contradicting ideological impulses. He was entangled between the ideological contradiction between the pacifism of German expressionism, which he valued as an artist, and the patriotism instilled in him in infancy. *Fire in Hand*, thus, is a record not only of wartime experience, but also of an aesthetic and ideological inner conflict provoked by the war.

As Mieczysław Szerer (1915, 74) observed in his contemporary sociological study of the First World War, "the war is an exceptional phenomenon, and as such it provokes exceptional social response". Witold Hulewicz was undoubtedly conscious of the exceptional quality of the war, and the experience strongly influenced his sensitivity, including the patriotic sentiment he received at home. Hulewicz's foreign travels to the front were, in his case, journeys to the outer limits of humanity. In many ways, the poet tried to cope with his traumatic experience. Writing the letters to his mother, he kept his descriptions in a very objective and neutral tone. In poetry, he expressed the strongest emotions directly: his chronic fear, feelings of despair and futility were described in the poetical prose, published pseudonymously as "Olwid". Hulewicz's wartime poetry is a good example of the incoherent attitude expressed in Polish literature during the First World War, but it is rather not deeply rooted in the nature and quality of that war.

The memory of wartime authors, and consequently the memory of wartime readers, was determined by images. As Eksteins observed (1989, 292), the reader of a poem or novel does not confront an image of the war, but a vision of the war created by the author. It is impossible to capture the full image of the Great War, not only because of the subjective point of view in most post-war works, but mainly because of the exceptional quality of the events. The First World War, and the associated emotions, belongs to the sphere of experience that cannot be expressed in words. The essence of the Great War could not be captured and understood, and the dimensions of sacrifice, consequence, waste and destruction could be expressed neither in simplest nor in most elaborate messages. Literary texts about the war are but a collection, for all its diversity, of doomed attempts to express the inexpressible. The events of the war could not be ignored, but neither could

they be expressed. There is no objective truth about the war; there is only a sum total of private histories of its participants, descriptions of their condition.

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The Specters of the *Mendi*: An Attempt at South African Hauntology

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Abstract: The article is an ambitious and complex study of Black response to war trauma, occasioned by the tragedy of the *Mendi*, a troop transport sunk with great loss of life in 1917. The majority of the victims were South African Blacks on their way to the Western Front. The tragedy inspired a very powerful poetic response, which the author analyses in terms of an indigenous African modernism, and which later on prepared the ground for contemporary nationalist mythopoeia in the Republic of South Africa. Although the country was part of the British Empire in 1917, the position of the Black community was reminiscent of the nations in secondary theatres of war. The recurring presence of the tragic event in South African culture has been analysed in terms of Derrida's hauntology.

Keywords: First World War, Mendi, South Africa, death, modernism, sinking

1. Introduction: Haunted History

The centenary of the First World War, in many countries, brought on a certain renewal of interest in the history of the conflict, in different forms of participation in the conflict between various, often very remote cultures entangled in the war by a complex network of political imperialism, global economy, and the idea of solidarity among European nations and their overseas dominions. Even if "in South Africa First World War centennial fever is extremely mild if not largely absent" (Grundlingh 2014, 1), mainly due to the relatively small importance of the global conflict for South African politics of the time, there is a constant flow of scholarly publications and events focussing not only on the nature of South African participation, located "on the periphery of the global conflict of 1914–1918, which played mainly

on the killing fields of Europe", but also on the "subsequent memory work", following the "South African black and coloured participation in the war, the experiences of the troops and the wider effects thereof, as well as the way in which their participation has been remembered" (Grundlingh 2014, 1–2).

The concept of the First World War as a catalyst of political and social changes, also in colonial countries, is widely circulating among scholars, who

> have tried to look beyond the smoke of the battle fire (…) focussing on war as an agent of social change and incorporating the socio-political repercussions of military service. The participation of groups other than whites in colonial warfare is a recurring theme in South African history (Grundlingh 2014, 2).

Even if the participation of Black South Africans was restricted to non-combatant service in South African Native Labour Contingent (SANLC), the Black elite firmly believed that "[d]espite the fact that Defence Force Act 13 of 1912 precluded Africans from armed military service (…) they should fight for the right to fight" (Grundligh 2014, 35).

The hopes were not fulfilled; the involvement of Black and Coloured troops in the backstage of the Western Front went into oblivion, and instead, the tragic sinking of a troop transport has become the most powerful symbol of Black participation in First World War. The sinking of the *Mendi* killed more than 600 Black recruits traveling to France. The disaster and its implications for South African history, politics and poetry will form the starting point for my essay. Without ignoring the political and social context of the poetry related to the disaster, this essay suggests a reading of the poem "Ukutshona kuka*Mendi*" (The Sinking of the *Mendi*) by S. E. K. Mqhayi within a broader context of wartime trench poetry and modernist poetry. Chris Dunton (2013) has already mentioned some analogies between Mqhayi's poem and T. S. Eliot's "The Journey of the Magi", whereas Gerhard Genis (2014) included Mqhayi's war poems, as well as poems by other indigenous poets, into the general context of South African English war poetry. This essay compares Christian motives and water images in Eliot and Mqhayi, and applies Jacques Derrida's concept of hauntology (Derrida 1994) to answer the question why specters of the *Mendi* have constantly reappeared in South African literature and art.

The application of French theory to reading of South African literature is a relatively popular practice (Crous 2013). For instance, Genis (2014), in his poststructuralist and postcolonial interpretation of war poetry, opted for Julia Kristeva's *abject*, and focussed on the hidden presence of the rotting corpse. The present essay adopts a similar approach, but with a different concept, applying Derridian hauntology as a key word for analysing different aspects of the vague but persistent presence of the historic past. "Hauntology supplants its near-homonym ontology, replacing the priority of being and presence with the figure of the ghost as that which is neither present, nor absent, neither dead nor alive" (Davis 2005, 373). In a sense, in South African culture, the First World War is, at the same time, all-present and absent; its iconic moments, such as the sinking of the *Mendi*, became through the years overcharged with recent politics and manipulated accordingly to the interests of the leading party. Therefore, the true, real core of the tragedy appears still to be overshadowed by the myth that arose around it. Moreover, the aspect of social justice, the *Mendi*-fallen were hoping for, appears still beyond reach in the new, democratic RSA. Another "rotting corpse" of South African official discourse is the troubled colonial past, "neither dead nor alive", haunting contemporary politics, social and cultural life.

> The specter is a paradoxical incorporation, the becoming-body, a certain phenomenal and carnal form of the spirit. It becomes, rather, some "thing" that remains difficult to name: neither soul nor body, and both one and the other. For it is flesh and phenomenality that give to the spirit its spectral apparition, but which disappear right away in the apparition, in the very coming of the revenant or the return of the specter (Derrida 1994, 5).

The Derridian text opens with the specter of Hamlet's father and Hamlet's contemplation of the skull of Yorick, followed by Paul Valery's reading of Hamlet, stressing the urgency to communicate with ancestral skulls to become and remain oneself (Derrida 1994, 4). Genis's analysis of South African First World War poetry opens with the same figure of Yorick's skull, which introduces the main claim of his analysis: "that it is the poetry that more fully reclaims the human story of war by flushing out and fleshing out, even though only partly, the 'bit-less' corpse or manqué" (Genis 2014, 14–15). Yorick's skull leads Genis to the skull of Adamastor, the monstrous giant

described in *Os Lusíadas* (1572) by Luís Vaz de Camões. In Genis's reading, Adamastor becomes the monstrous, haunting presence of the Other: he is black in poetry by white South Africans, and white for the indigenous poets. Poetry is for Genis an act of "remembering of body parts" (Christie 2007, quoted after Genis 2014, 17), a concept commonly used in post-colonial theory (Ghandi 1998; Wylie 2009). The analogy can be extended by recalling Antje Krog's *Country of my Skull* (1998), a non-fiction account of the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee. As if to make a full circle, Krog, an acclaimed South African academic and writer, translated Mqhayi's poem about the *Mendi* into English.

Motives and figures symptomizing the haunting presence of the dead but unexcavated and unburied victims of South African colonial history focus in the tragic memory of the *Mendi*. For a century, the spectres of the *Mendi* have been haunting South African literature, society and politics. The un-buried, officially forgotten bodies of sunken members of Labour Contingent became, through collective recollection, orature and poetry the incorporation of traumatic experience on both, the historical and the structural level (La Capra 2013, 82). Historical facts were dramatic enough to traumatize the survivors and the mourners alike. The steamship *Mendi*, which carried Black volunteers from South Africa to France, sank on the final leg of its voyage, between Southampton and Calais. The tragic event occurred on 21 February 1917, about 19 nautical miles from the Isle of Wight, when *Mendi* collided with a merchant ship the *Darro*. More than 600 volunteers of the South African Native Labour Contingent, recruited and trained to serve on the Western Front, lost their lives in the icy waters of the English Channel. The fallen of the *Mendi* became, as the entire war effort of Black and Coloured troops, a part of a political game between pro-British and Afrikaner forces in the South African parliament (Grundlingh 2014, 29–35) and as result became non-existent in the official history. The neglect of the tragedy transferred the historical event into the symbolic order. Historical trauma, which could not be worked through, as it officially was of no meaning, became a foundational trauma (La Capra 2013, 23) and called for symbolic expression in art, poetry and theatre.

The fallen from the *Mendi* became almost immediately an important poetic trope and a powerful political symbol, an incorporation of colonial fears, frustrations and lost hopes. Therefore, the annual *Mendi* Commemoration Day, an important social and political event, called into being by the Black

community in 1930s, was annexed in the course of history by various political interest groups, eager to play upon the spectral, haunting presence of the past for their recent political purposes. For that reason, in South African arts and poetry, the story of the tragic sinking appears to be coming back to life most intensely at times of political unrest, times "out of joint" (Derrida 1994). There exists therefore a complex relationship between poetry and politics, into which both the history and the myth of the *Mendi* are woven.

The haunting presence of the *Mendi*-fallen is one of poetical tropes recurring regularly in South African poetry, every recollection bearing the signs of political and social tensions of their own time. South African poems commemorating fallen members of the SANLC were written or performed under strong historical and political contexts, and must be read as testimonies and legacies of their time. Many of these poems, including the crucial one by S. E. K. Mqhayi, were originally performed and written in indigenous languages. Despite the attempts to bring the original poetry in native languages as close as possible to the English-speaking world, it is difficult to judge how much was lost in translation and transition from orature into literature. Hence, the commentary on the *Mendi* poetry must be tentative (Dunton 2013, 136).

The uneasy relationship of South African poets with English, the language of the imperial authority, opens the possibility to read these poems in a wider context of English literature and European culture. Therefore, this essay goes in a direction different from that chosen by Genis and Dunton, who read *Mendi* poetry as the continuation and cultivation of Xhosa and Sotho traditions of oral literature. The tentative corpus of poems related to the tragic sinking, mentioned by Genis and Dunton, includes the works by Mqhayi (1931), Nhlapo (1939), Sidyiyo (1948), Darlow (1951), Tyamashe (1952), Mopeli-Paulus (1953), Walter (1994), Somhlahlo (1994), Sole (1994), Mabuza (1997), and Rakoma (2004). The centenary of the sinking is very likely to bring another revival of memory of the *Mendi*, already introduced by the bestselling novel *Dancing the Death Drill* by Fred Khumalo (2017) The existing poems vary in their tone, imagery and purposes for which they were composed: some of them are critical voices against recent political events and social attitudes (Sole 1994), some are reflections of what was achieved throughout the years of struggle against racism (Mabuza 1997), some were written from European perspective (Darlow 1951), and many were performed during ceremonies commemorating

fallen members of the SANLC (Mqhayi 1931; Sidyio 1948; Mopeli-Paulus 1953; Rakoma 2004).

"Of the different genres, war poetry is most closely bound up with the politics of cultural memory" (Das 2013, 26). The politics of cultural memory were certainly responsible for the initial marginalizion of the *Mendi* Commemoration Days and occasional poetry, lasting from the 1930s until the 1980s. After international sanctions, the apartheid regime rediscovered the myth of the *Mendi* and its potential of warming up the image of the Republic of South Africa abroad. Throughout the decade, many symbolic gestures were made to honor and commemorate the drowned soldiers (Grundlingh 2011). The symbolic burial site was created first in 1986, 69 years after the actual disaster, when a bronze plaque commemorating the victims was inserted at the memorial site of Delville Wood in France (Wauchope 2010, 189). After the apartheid collapsed in 1994, the democratic RSA needed the *Mendi* myth even more than the former regime and the tragic disaster became a foundational myth of the African National Congress, which "could not point to a particularly heroic military past" (Grundlingh 2014, 130).

The democratic turn in the RSA meant also a rediscovery of the *Mendi* as a powerful symbol in African-British relations. In 1995 Queen Elisabeth unveiled the *Mendi* Memorial at Avalon Cemetery in Soweto (Wauchope 2010, 189). In 2004 "the SAS *Mendi* [called to honour the fallen] and the British Navy's HMS *Nottingham* met at the site where the SS *Mendi* sank" (delvillewood.com). In 2007 another commemorative ceremony was organized at the Hollybrook Memorial in Southampton, "followed by a wreath-laying ceremony at the site of the tragedy by the SAS *Mendi*" (delvillewood.com). In 2009 the shipwreck became an official war grave, after ten years of campaign by a retired British Army major Ned Middelton, who realized that according to African religious beliefs the Mendi soldiers "have been left in limbo. They believed they needed a grave to get to the afterlife" (Telegraph 2009).

In many aspects, the history and myth of the *Mendi* transgressed national boundaries and became present in European (mostly British) perception of the Great War. Still, its presence in English literature is marginal. The Scottish-born poet laureate Jackie Key, who broadcasted her "Lament on the SS *Mendi*" (2008) for the BBC, is a rare recent example of a British literary response to the event. Scientific publications about the phenomenon of the *Mendi* poetry and art are scarce and describe the poems in isolation from other literatures, European and colonial alike.

The sinking of the *Mendi* appears to be a continuing and strong South African concern. The unburied remains of victims of the tragic events are cyclically haunting South African literature, art and politics in "dual movement of return and inauguration" (Buse and Scott 1999, 11) of the "lost futures" (Fisher 2013) and broken political and social promises. "The *Mendi* is a symbol of loss, in both the spiritual and physical realms" (Genis 2014, 335), but it is still a marginal story within the official narratives of the Great War, even though the sinking of the *Mendi* was the subject of scientific (Grundlingh 1987, 2011, 2014) and more popular publications (Clothier 1987). The participation of Black and Coloured South African troops was researched and documented by historians (Grundlingh 1985; 2014; Killingray 2010; Nasson 2014; Samson 2012, 2014). Still, the rediscovery and revaluation of colonial effort during the global conflict is an ongoing process. Recently, David Olusoga (2014) claimed a vital change of perception of the global conflict and shifting of the focus onto the experience of colonial soldiers. Similarly, Olivier Compagnon and Pierre Purseigle (2016) suggested a general re-shifting of 'centrum' and 'periphery', of 'empire' and 'colony' within First World War studies.

Within British literary studies,

> The near-invisibility of archipelagic and colonial poetry within the First Word War canon points to a greater problem: the continuing absence of a critical and contextual framework to address and sometimes even being able to recognize poems that do not conform to the British constructions of war memory or the dominant model of the trench poetry (Das 2013: 26).

The marginalisation of South African war poetry appears thus to be a part of a more complex problem. The claim that in South African literature "[t]he First World War produced screeds of patriotic doggerel but nothing of lasting value. South African Troops who endured the horror and discomfort of the Western Front have left no published record of their feelings" (Hutchings 2005, 1631) seems to be an exaggeration in view of more recent research. However, a lot of First World War poetry in South Africa needs to be further researched, compared with British and Imperial war poetry, and popularized within South Africa and beyond its borders.

"Ironically, it is the black body that was politically and socially othered after the Great War, or even completely forgotten and buried, that has been more completely exhumed and 're-membered' in the South African literary history of war" (Genis 2014, 17). Black poetry appears to be better researched than the corpus of texts written by white volunteers, white female writers or white intellectuals, but the situation also changes recently (Genis 2014, 17–19). While, however, white South African poetry is read parallelly with its English contemporaries Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfried Owen, Ivor Gurney or Charles Sorley and described as tending towards Rupert Brooke's sentimentality rather than Isaac Rosenberg's directness in describing war horrors, black poetry is contextualized within indigenous tradition of Xhosa, Zulu and Sotho religious beliefs, tribal legends and traditions (Genis 2014; Dunton 2013).

This approach, noble in its premise of decolonisation of aboriginal literatures, appears to ignore the obvious fact that all native poets of that period were literate, educated in English-speaking missionary environments and embracing, not without criticism, European set of values, the aesthetic of British romanticism shaped by Keats and Wordsworth (Genis 2014). S. E. K. Mqhayi, the appraised Xhosa poet who shaped the myth of the *Mendi* within South African culture, is perfect example of cultural hybridity. His poems cannot be therefore read in separation from the English literature of his time.

2. S. E. K. Mqhayi: Christian Intellectual and Rural *Imbongi*

Samuel Edward Krune Mqhayi (1875–1945) was a trained teacher, celebrated intellectual and author of numerous poems and of the first Xhosa novel *U-Samson* (Opland 2007). According to Genis "Mqhayi was the most eminent and prolific Xhosa *literatus* and *imbongi* of the first half of the 20th century, publishing biography, poetry, fiction and history" (Opland 2007, 105; Opland 2009). He wrote in Xhosa within the *imbongi* tradition of poetry composition and oratorship, but was influenced by European texts as well, including the English Bible (Genis 2014, 270). Dunton, another critic who discussed Mqhagi, distanced himself from the laudatory opinions about the poet and from Opland's (2009, 27) judgement that "'[i]n time [Mqhayi] will come to be rightfully acknowledged as the greatest literary figure [South Africa] has ever produced'" (Dunton 2013, 137).

Probably the most paradoxical description of Mqhayi as poet, performer and anti-colonialist came from Nelson Mandela (1995, 38), who witnessed a performance of Mqhayi at Healdtown College in 1938. At that time Mqhayi had already become the poet of the *Mendi* and the *imbongi* (orator) of the ship's chaplain Isaac Wauchope Dyobha (Genis 2014, 295). To Mandela's astonishment, the poet entered the classroom by door reserved for white teachers and spoke very openly about the clash of cultures and the necessity to reclaim the land and rights by Black community. Mandela recalled being deeply moved by Mqhayi's words and his praise of the Xhosa tribe: "I felt such intense pride at that point, not as an African, but as a Xhosa; I felt like one of the chosen people" (Mandela 1995, 38). Still, even if won by his words, Mandela was slightly disappointed by his appearance: Mqhayi performed "dressed in a leopard-skin kaross and matching hat" and "was carrying a spear in either hand", but "except for his clothing, seemed entirely ordinary" and struggled searching for words in his native Xhosa.

The way Mqhayi performed displays his awareness of how important was the orature and the traditional way the *imbongi* presented it; at the same time it exposes a Westernized intellectual trying to re-enact the spontaneity of an oral performance. A question worth further research is, how far the acting as a *native* Mqhayi was affected by his education, and how the literary background enabled him to speak freely about very subversive topics. In Mandela's recollection (which cannot be, in my opinion, fully trusted, as nearly sixty years passed between the event and Mandela's quotations of Mqhayi's speech), the poet spoke about

> [T]he brutal clash between what is indigenous and good, and what is foreign and bad. We cannot allow these foreigners who do not care for our culture to take over our nation. I predict that one day, the forces of African society will achieve a momentous victory over the interloper. For too long, we have succumbed to the false gods of the white man. But we will emerge and cast off these foreign notions (Mandela 1995, 38).

Mqhayi, qualified in Frantz Fanon's terms as "a 'second phase' indigenous writer" whose "poetry has not fully evolved into a 'fighting literature'" (Genis 2014, 286), appears in Mandela's recollection as an opponent of the colonial system nevertheless. To Mandela's confusion, the poet "had moved from

a more nationalistic, all-encompassing theme of African unity to a more parochial one addressed to the Xhosa people, of whom he was one" (Mandela 1995, 38). Walter Nhlapo, who also authored a poem "The *Mendi*" (1939), described "the secret of the greatness of his [Mqhayi] works: it is Bantu in blood and soul. His literary works are to the Xhosa what the Strauss Waltzes were to Vienna, and what Napoleonic victories were to the French" (Genis 2014, 313).

The above quotations qualify Mqhayi as a Xhosa writer rather than as an apostle of emerging pan-Africanism. Still, in the 1930s, when the ANC was "completely disorganised and toothless" (Saunders & Southey 2001, 2, 195, quoted after Genis 201,. 312), "[i]t was the poetry that most audibly proclaimed an inclusive and racially exclusive black nationalism within a white dominated world: a pan-Africanist brotherhood" (Genis 2014, 299). The political meaning of Mqhayi's poetry and his public role as treasurer of the heroic past overshadow the fact that "Mqhayi, a keen observer of his time, must also have been aware of the fin de siècle crisis in the English literary consciousness, which unleashed a flood of doubt in what the future might hold, and the questioning of the previous generation's self-confidence" (Genis 2014, 294). This suggests that Mqhayi's lectures mentioned contemporary British literary works and that he did not write in isolation from the ideas and images present in European literature of his époque.

3. Death by Water by S. E. K. Mqhayi and T. S. Eliot

Mqhayi's poems provide excellent material for transfer studies: the poet tried throughout his writing career to achieve a new quality in Xhosa literature: he not only transferred the oral praise poetry and narratives into written language but also expressed the new mixed identity of indigenous intellectual embracing proudly history and traditions of his tribe who at the same time was also a pious Christian and an obedient servant of British Empire. A good example of such a mixture is Mqhayi's poem "The Late Frances Nonhi Mkencele" combining the traditional form of praise poem, *izibongo*, with the acclamation of religious faith and praise for Christian virtues impersonated by the poem's late heroine. The poem was published in 1908 in *Izwi Labantu*, an influential newspaper, supporting the SANNC, the forerunner of the ANC (Switser and Switser 1979, 275). The ties between traditional

African poetry, Christianity and political hopes for increasing participation of black intellectuals in public debate in South Africa are constant elements in Mqhayi's life and writing.

"Mqhayi committed to writing original poetry in style and purpose hardly distinguishable from the oral poetry in style and purpose hardly distinguishable from the oral poetry of the traditional imbongi" (Opland 1983, 94). The novelty of Mqhayi's poetry lies, in my opinion, in writing traditional poetry serving a relatively new set of values. While Mqhayi shared fears and hopes of his own tribe he also managed to express them in a poetic language, traditional but universal, transgressing the boundaries of his native Xhosa culture, exploring Christian and European heritage, accepting but also challenging political and racial circumstances. "His millenarian writing is fully immersed in the real politics of his time" (Genis 2014, 294).

The links with European literature appear most evidently in his two war poems, "The Black Army" and "The Sinking of the *Mendi*", which might be classified as "instances of the awakening of anti-colonial violence", still "the violence is directed outwards towards the German enemy, who, as in the 'white' poetry, is ascribed an uncanny and even diabolical nature" (Genis 2014, 293). In war poems Mqhayi millenarian imagery turned against the Germans, portrayed as an apocalyptic peril, attacking from the skies and hidden in the depths of the ocean (Genis 2014, 294). There might be a hidden, subversive anti-colonial layer, as Gens argues, still overtly these poems comply with the British patriotic poems, dehumanizing and monsterizing the enemy, apparent not only in Rudyard Kipling's "For all we have and are" (1914) but also in several stanzas by Rupert Brooke and more prominently by popular poets, e.g. Jessie Pope.

The main shared source of Mqhayi's poetry and European war poems was the Bible, as Mqhayi worked in the early 1900s on a revised edition of the Xhosa version of the Scriptures. Unlike in the case of white South African authors of war poetry, Genis did not search for probable influences of Mqhayi's poems, still if the English South African wartime poetry breathed the air of Keats, Wordsworth and Coleridge, it is to be assumed that the tendency towards Romanisation of death, suffering and fear and hiding the abject aspects of dying and decay was also consciously shared by the well-educated Xhosa poet.

"The Sinking of *Mendi*" goes beyond the historical event to address universal themes of necessity of death and suffering and their soteriological

meaning. The drowned soldiers are accepting freely their fate, giving their lives for the cause of freedom, understood as the highest value of human condition, rather than in political terms. Their death is not an accidental episode of war but a sacrifice of African people, comparable only to the sacrifice of Abel and the ultimate sacrifice of Christ. While "Abel was the sacrifice of the earth" and "Christ was the sacrifice of heaven", the fallen African warriors must be located somewhere in between these two realms. Their death by water reinforces the image of deep waters as highly dangerous and of a sea travel as metonymy of dying (Genis 2014, 299). Submerging into the ocean is at the same time a clear metaphor of baptism, of receiving a new, immortal life; therefore, the poem ends with acclamation:

> How I wish I could be with them,
> How I wish I could stand with them on resurrection day,
> How I wish I could sparkle with them like the morning star.
> Let it be so! (Tr. Krog et al. 2008)

The Black warriors in Mqhai's poem consider themselves as a sacrifice from Africa, "opening the road to freedom" and continuing the mission of Abel and Christ, the effort of building a new, free community. The martyrs of *Mendi* can face God, as they are continuers of Christ's redeeming death. By fulfilling their plight towards humanity, they died for the cause of the Good and proved that Africa is a part of the civilized world, ready to fight the Evil on the cost of the life of its own sons. Mqhai's warriors are immortal in a theological sense. They will be raised from death on the Resurrection Day to take their share in God's final triumph over the Evil and Death. By their sacrifice, they have shown the real meaning of life as struggle for freedom and a better world. Therefore, Mqhayi's poem belongs, in a sense, to the heroic tradition of First World War poetry. Like Rupert Brooke, Ivor Gurney, Julian Grenfell or Will Streets, Mqhayi sanctifies the ultimate sacrifice of life, given freely away for the sake of God, the Country and the fellow humans.

The translation made in 2008 by Antje Krog, Ncebakazi Saliwa and Koos Oosthuyzen tries to stay as close as possible to the Xhosa original but also to give justice to the aesthetic value of the poem. The earlier version of 1968, authored by Jack Cope and M. C. Mcanyangwa, was "one considerably 'worked up'" in comparison with the original, perhaps to satisfy conventional English notions of the 'poetic'" (Dunton 2013, 137). Genis, who based his ana-

lysis on Cope's translation, noted: "Mqhayi's translated poem is stylistically based on English Renaissance poetry, with eight-line stanzas, in rhyming couplets, and with alternating rhythm of iambic/anapestic tetrameter and pentameter. But it is essentially a traditional praise poem that lauds the *Mendi*-dead" (Genis 2014, 289).

Interestingly, Dunton noticed that this translation highlighted the similarities between Mqhayi's poem and the poetry of T. S. Eliot.

> The translation (…) adopts an intertextual approach, interpolating echoes of T. S. Eliot's "The Journey of the Magi," a poem published in 1927 and therefore approximately contemporaneous with that by Mqhayi. In the Eliot poem there are references to the crucifixion being immanent in the nativity, the idea of destiny—of an unbreakable link between past and present—being central as well to Mqhayi's poem (Dunton 2013, 137).

Dunton mentioned thus only marginally some motives appearing by both Eliot and Mqhayi, highlighted by the translators' choice (probably Jack Cope, a relatively famous South African English poet of 1950s and 1960s, decided to make Mqhayi's poem sound more familiar to English-speaking readers). Dunton used a literal translation made by Maleshoane Rapeane. However, all the translations, I will argue, show some parallels between motives used by Mqhayi and by Eliot, in "The Journey of the Magi" but also in the remaining parts of *Ariel Poems* and in *The Waste Land*. It appears to me quite unlikely that Mqhayi had read Eliot's poems but it cannot be excluded: even if the poem was composed directly after the sinking of the *Mendi*, the final version was written most probably in the early 1930s, after "The Waste Land" (1922), "The Journey of the Magi" (1927), "A Song for Simeon" (1928), "Animula" (1929), and "Marina" (1930) were published. It appears much more likely that both poets shared the same profound knowledge of the Bible and, in some aspect, the same *zeitgeist*, therefore the metaphors, images and figures they chose for show some resemblances.

While Dunton focused mainly on "The Journey of the Magi", the idea of destiny or "of an unbreakable link between past and present" (Dunton 2013, 137) appears to be characteristic also to other Eliot's poems written around that time. Such is, e.g. the idea of the necessity of death which opens the gates to a new, eternal existence and a more complex cognizance of God,

expressed in "A Song for Simeon" and in other Eliot's poems (Nowakowska 2016, 8–9). Such is the hopeful tone of "Marina", expressing belief in life after death (Llorens-Cubedo 2013, 95–96), a life experienced and described as a navigation through stormy seas, leading to "living to live in a world of time beyond me" (Eliot 1974, 106). The death appears as a painful and frightening moment, still, in a religious sense, the first touch of sanctity, the call of the Divine, implies the necessity of death, which is transition into a new quality of life rather than the final act of existence.

The motive of drowning, of "death by water", already present in "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (1915), becomes a crucial part of "The Waste Land" (even if the final versions is about nine tenth shorter than the initial text, Llorens-Cubedo 2013, 90) and reappears in "Marina" and "The Dry Salvages" (1941). The meaning of drowning changes and evolves constantly, expressing the poet's changing existential and spiritual experience;

> "[F]rom *Prufrock* to the *Quartets*: drowning as the result of paralysis and solipsism, as unresolved ritual and finally, untimely end that responds to the divine order of things; shipwreck as the consequence of vain ambition or as the critical crossing of the frontier between mortality and eternity; sailing as determined spiritual progress, the courage to accept and surrender (Llorens-Cubedo 2013, 97).

After Eliot's conversion to Anglo-Catholicism in 1927, the motives of sea journey and of drowning evolved accordingly to his religious beliefs and interests, reaching beyond Christianity: "Eliot's imagery of the soul's transition is coherent with Christian mysticism, but not exclusively: according to McNelly Kearns, "The Dry Salvages" evidences Eliot's familiarity with Indic philosophy and religion" (Llorens-Cubedo 2013, 96).

The persistence of the drowning motive, rooted by Eliot in works of Shakespeare, Dante, Tennyson, Coleridge and Byron (Llorens-Cubedo 2013, 88) and expressing a universal human yearning for a deeper sense of existence, suggests a similar search for philosophical and aesthetical values in Mqhayi's poem, operating similar motives and expressing similar religious convictions. Still Mqhay, one of the "elite African Christians", was also the one of the Xhosa who generally "assigned mystical qualities to the sea, the place from where the white oppressor emerged (Genis 2014, 280), and who believed "that a black

body could not return alive from beyond the great waters". The decision to embark the ships was, as Genis argued, a choice of the lesser of two evils: "Being consumed by the Leviathan of the deep was preferable to being torn apart by the white Adamastor of colonial tyranny". Water was associated with danger, death and uncanniness of the existence after death.

> However, water also served as a space of regeneration in a traditional South African cosmology (…) was the birthplace of people and cattle; the water metaphor also encompassed the birth of a Christ-like saviour Sifuba-sibanzi during the Xhosa cattle-killing". (…) Water also represented the baptismal font of the missionary schools, where so many Xhosa elite received a western education. Amathongo [ancestral spirits] and Christ, therefore, all emerged from a watery source (Genis 2014, 280–281).

Mhquay's poem combines the complex symbolic of the water motive by evoking the fatalistic dimension of the journey, which was expected to bring death upon the best warriors, carefully chosen by black communities to represent their honour in the war. The offering is presented as a perfect one, as African tribes are sending their best representatives overseas to fight and die generously for the sake of the liberation of the humankind. The political conflict becomes an ontological and religious one: it is in fact a part of the eternal struggle between forces of God and forces of Evil, and Africans taking part in that struggle become martyrs rejoicing in the presence of God.

> Somebody has to die, so that something can be built;
> Somebody has to serve, so that others can live;
> With these words we say: be consoled,
> This is how we build ourselves, as ourselves.
> (…)
> Their brave blood faced the King of Kings.
> Their deaths had a purpose for all of us" (Mqhayi 2008).

In such a reading the deep waters of the ocean become the baptismal font from which a new, eternal life emerges. The moral triumph of black warriors, following only their moral impulse and giving their life away for the greater good is obvious, their sacrifice purposeful.

> Our blood on that ship turned things around,
> It served to make us known through the world!

This is, of course, a reading influenced by the parallels with Eliot's poetry and focussing on Christian aspects of soteriology presented by Mqhayi. Genis proposed another complex reading based on soteriological hopes which emerged from the visions of Xhosa prophetess Nongqawuse. In 1856, the Xhosa girl had a vision of ancestral spirits who promised her the coming of the Golden Age and retreat of white settlers and required the Xhosa to destroy their crops and cattle herds. The massive cattle killings led to starvation and death of nearly three quarters of the population (Mda 2000). Genis mentioned several other similar prophecies which in the nineteenth century led to similar disasters, but on a lesser scale. In his reading Mqhayi's poem is echoing these futile sacrifices rather than Christian soteriology.

> Mqhayi was consciously under the sway of this sacred vision that never came to fruition but which only led to the death of many thousands through starvation. Ironically, both the Xhosa cattle-killing prophecy and Mqhayi's poetic vision are centred on the seemingly futile blood sacrifice in obtaining ancestral sanction. (…) In Mqhayi's poem, the young black recruits metaphorically become the cattle that are slaughtered and whose blood again seals the bond between the living and the dead (Genis 2014, 293).

Genis's reading highlights the influence of the Xhosa millenarian prophecies and Xhosa mythology on Mqhayi's vision, which, in my opinion, tries to integrate indigenous beliefs, Christianity, and vocalize emerging political aspirations of the black community. Mqhayi's poem goes beyond the fatalism of ongoing blood sacrifices, in a sense the voluntary sacrifice of the chosen sons of Africa resembles the ultimate sacrifice of Christ, the chosen Son of God, who "[n]either by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood (…) entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9, 12, KJV). Mqhayi becomes, through such reading, a prophet of the ultimate and final sacrifice and of resurrection day, understood in religious and political terms.

7. Conclusions

Why are then the spectres of the *Mendi* still haunting South African cultural debate? The haunting presence of the spectres of the *Mendi* can be observed on different levels. On the socio-political level, the drowned members of the SANLC continuously reappear because they are still needed and exploited as a powerful symbol by different political groups. In a more metaphoric, but strictly political sense, their recurrence seems to be an outcome, or a sign, of unfulfilled or broken political promises of the post-1994 democratically elected governments. The RSA, freed from the burden of the apartheid policy, is still struggling with inequality, tribalism and violence. This appears to be a betrayal of the legacy of the *Mendi*, represented in the apartheid era as a pledge to become a unified entity, a brotherhood of all Black tribes and nations populating the country. The haunting memory of abandoned ideals, compromising identities, and misused symbols, paradoxically keeps the spectres of the *Mendi* alive and enforces the re-examination of South African history and mythology.

There is still a quite material aspect of the haunting story of the troopship *Mendi*. Most of the 600 bodies were never found and buried properly. The official wreath laying ceremony took place first in 2007. This was a substitute burial, accompanied, predictably and appropriately, by a praise poem performed on board of the SAS *Mendi*, itself a material incarnation of the ghost ship hidden in the depths of the Ocean. The place where the *Mendi* sank was proclaimed an official war grave first in 2009. The "macabre puzzle" (Clothier 1987, 99) of unidentified bodies, decaying under the sea or drifting to distant shores, and souls thrown according to African religious beliefs into a kind of limbo cannot be ignored in any of *Mendi* literary or historical accounts.

Another question still haunting the *Mendi* researchers is to what extent the high number of deaths was caused by the racial prejudices held by captain Stump of the SS *Darro*, who could have saved many of the men but did nothing. While in 1987 Norman Clothier ignored any hints of racial issues behind the tragedy, in more recent publications there appear allegations of that kind. The most recent research questions and problematizes the role of South African Black intellectuals, such as Sol Plaatje, Rev. Wauchope Dyobha or Samuel Edward Krune Mqhayi in recruitment campaign for the SANLC. These who tried to build the bridges between the British authorities and Black

communities may be considered as indirectly responsible for the *Mendi* disaster and for the oblivion and negligence the White government paid its loyal Black servicemen with.

The persistent presence of the spectres of the *Mendi* appears productive and inspiring for South African art and social conscience. Numerous poems, official ceremonies, scholarly publications and congresses, a stage drama *Did We Dance: The Sinking of the Mendi* by Lara Foot (2012), a novel *Just a Dead Man* by Margaret von Klemperer (2012), a monumental triptych painting by Hilary Graham (1993), numerous monuments, including the shipwreck sculpture by Medi Phala (2006) and body art by Peter Emmanuel (2014; 2016), are trying to fill the lacunae in popular knowledge and awareness of Black participation in First World War. They are most recent links in the chain of voices that was heard throughout the last century, but they also very consciously handle both the history, the myth, and the ideology behind the *Mendi* narrative, elements which became inseparable.

Hauntology must be also noted as an ontological aspect of poetry and art, trying to express the *manqué*, the absence, the unspeakable: it tries to express the most intimate truth of human emotions, it touches the mystery, the core of human nature, its existential condition, its directedness towards the death, the great silence echoing the yearning for eternal life and final sense of existence. "Works of art are haunted, not only by the ideal forms of which they are imperfect instantiations, but also by what escapes representation" (Gallix 2011). "[T]o tell a story is always to invoke ghosts, to open a space through which something other returns" (Wolfreys 2002, 3). The reoccurrence of the spectres of the *Mendi* would hence not only express political and social injustice, existential fears and religious hope, but also profoundly reflect the nature of art in general.

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