Studies in Canadian Literature

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Volume 21, Number 2, Summer 1996

URI: https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/scl21_2art02

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Publisher(s)

ISSN

0380-6995 (print)
1718-7850 (digital)

Explore this journal

Cite this article

Ellis, S. (1996). Trade and Power, Money and War: Rethinking Masculinity in Michael Ondaatje's The English Patient. *Studies in Canadian Literature*, *21*(2), 22–36.

Article abstract

Michael Ondaatje's The English Patient attempts to depict the possibility of a truly differentiated self defined through particular relationships to others, rather than in isolation from them. Ondaatje links issues of ownership with the power of naming. Through the act of naming, creation of a sense of self can be a political act of empowerment. Ondaatje creates a sense of power by filling the novel with stories of the new man replacing the old.

TRADE AND POWER, MONEY AND WAR: RETHINKING MASCULINITY IN MICHAEL ONDAATJE'S *THE ENGLISH PATIENT*

Susan Ellis

As Almásy, the English patient, slowly reveals his story in the pages of Michael Ondaatje's *The English Patient*, he describes leaving his mortally injured lover hidden in a cave and walking out into the Libyan Desert to find help. In the course of his three-day trek he realizes that "There is God only in the desert . . . . Outside of this there was just trade and power, money and war. Financial and military despots shaped the world" (250). The novel depicts a world and four individual lives that are "in near ruins" from the effects of fire, war, torture, and colonialism. Within a landscape of destroyed chapels, burned libraries, drowned art, booby-trapped gardens, and literature that is a weapon of war, Ondaatje turns his focus as a writer away from the personal, internal struggles of the masculine artists of his earlier novels and poems toward an examination of the sociopolitical implications of colonialism, history, literature, and, to some extent, gender relationships. Ondaatje has further developed a trend that begins tentatively as an ambivalence in *Running in the Family*, and is already apparent in his earlier novel *In the Skin of a Lion*. Christian Bök refers to it as aphasia—manifested as either the silence of death or the silence of madness (112)—a refusal of individualism itself and the artistic retreat to privacy, in favour of an embracing of relationship. This trend arguably demonstrates a self-conscious rethinking of the volatile, individualistic masculinity so apparent in Ondaatje's earlier works.

As Bök notes, in *The Collected Works of Billy the Kid* and *Coming Through Slaughter* especially, but also in much of his poetry, Ondaatje valorizes the socially irresponsible hero and romanticizes the isolated male artist caught in the drama of the chaotic

intensity of his art (114). Billy the Kid as the outlaw artist-killer, Buddy Bolden as the extremist riding the cusp of the ultimate spontaneous creativity and self-annihilation, as well as numerous poet-narrators of Ondaatje's poems display these characteristics. All of them, in varying degrees, embody a form of masculinity described by Michael Kaufman as "a reaction against passivity and powerlessness" (11). Through these characters, Ondaatje's earlier writing tends to reproduce, in an unexamined manner, more general cultural notions, particularly the cultural bias noted by Nancy Chodorow in which the masculinist qualities of separateness, individualism, and distance from others are seen as both desirable and admirable (16). His work tends to support a masculinist insistence that separateness is essential to autonomy and human fulfilment. Not only does Ondaatje refuse to make explicit judgements about the underlying cultural values inherent in the individualism or the violence of these protagonists, but his work also avoids any implicit critique of it. In *Running in the Family*, Ondaatje's portrait of Mervyn Ondaatje as the tortured drunk sitting naked for three hours in the Kadugannawa train tunnel certainly contains strong elements of the irresponsible and agonized solitary artist figure, but for the first time the writer begins to express, as a son looking for a point of contact with his long-dead father, the beginnings of a dissatisfaction with the isolation of such figures.

A fascination with the individual that finds expression in Ondaatje's early writing reflects a cultural preoccupation with individuality which Chodorow analyzes and distinguishes from the psychoanalytic process of differentiation. Rather than a simple perception of the otherness of the other, the developing infant must recognize the other as a subject, as a self in his or her own right. This requires "a form of emotional growth" that moves the infant beyond a mere recognition of difference, and beyond an experience of the other as existing solely in terms of its own needs for gratification, toward a viewpoint that recognizes two interacting selves/ subjects (7). Mature differentiation is "a particular way of being connected to others" (10-11). Conversely, Chodorow's analysis suggests that a rigid, defensive insistence on separation, or individuation, is made necessary only by the presence of a fragile and insecure sense of self.

The distinction made by Chodorow between difference, which recognizes separation and individuation, and differentiation,

in which the relational self emerges, has implications for gender analysis, because the cultural preference for a model of defensive insistence on individuality reflects a cultural male bias. The male experience of separation and individuation becomes, in a culture that valorizes all things associated with maleness, the universal experience of human beings. Jessica Benjamin has also noted a cultural male bias in that "the male experience of differentiation is linked to a form of rationality which pervades our culture," a phenomenon she terms "rational violence" (42). Chodorow shows that a pysychoanalytic approach supports the view that we are not born with perceptions of gender difference, but rather that they emerge developmentally.[1] She argues that, because gender identity for males requires separating from the primary identification with the female parent in order to transfer identification to the male parent, maleness "is more conflictual and more problematic" than female gender identity (13). A boy must learn his gender identity as not-mother or not-female, and thus the male core identity must, by necessity, involve more of an insistence on a fixed separateness, a me/not-me distinction, and rigid boundaries between the masculine and the feminine. A patriarchal society that valorizes the male consequently comes to emphasize difference and individuality, not sameness or commonality or relatedness, as part of a general bias in favour of male values.

What Chodorow calls the "psychological investment in difference that women do not have" (14) is given literary voice by Ondaatje in the violent individualism of both Billy the Kid and Buddy Bolden. However, the development of a concept of the differentiated self as described by Chodorow, a self that emerges *relationally*, can be traced in Ondaatje's later works. *Running in the Family*, a semi-autobiographical account of Ondaatje's return to the homeland of his own childhood in Sri Lanka, can be read as an attempt by Ondaatje to come to terms with his own separation from his ancestral and cultural connections with the past. Daniel Coleman finds a profound ambivalence in Ondaatje's literary treatment of his estragement from his father, Mervyn, as well as from his cultural heritage, and in the writer's frustration at the impossibility of ever truly knowing who Mervyn was or in reconnecting with his past (73). Coleman identifies the model of severance of the self from the past as a masculinist practice (66,69), but finds evidence

in *Running in the Family* of the beginnings of Ondaatje's uneasiness with it, in the presence in the text of an "ambivalence which arises from his awareness of, and struggle with, the masculine exclusionary position that has severed him from intimate contact with every aspect of his place of origin" (74). Similarly, Bök finds an alteration in the quality of the male protagonist's violence and isolation in *Running in the Family.* He observes that, although Mervyn Ondaatje deliberately flouts the established social codes and follows his literary predecessors into silence (he dies a virtual madman), the writer's approach does not so much romanticize as pity him, with the implication that Mervyn's retreat from the world may arise from an unbearably painful sensitivity to it (117).

Ondaatje's next prose works, *In the Skin of a Lion* and *The English Patient,* begin to demonstrate models of individuality that emphasize the connectedness of central characters with, rather than their separation from, other people. This development represents an important shift in the world view of Ondaatje's work away from the culturally determined individualistic masculinity of the cowboy figure or the tortured, isolated artist. Bök notes that the shockingly violent antisocial behavior in the earlier works gives way to a subdued revolutionary and socially committed form of violence in *In the Skin of a Lion.* This violence works to reclaim, rather than refuse, a social order, as Patrick breaks the pattern of individualistic heroes to join with the Macedonian immigrants (119). In giving his protagonist a social context in which silence is imposed from the outside by an oppressive ideology, Ondaatje's work abandons his fascination with aphasia, the impulse to "implode into silence" ("White Dwarfs" 71). Patrick's initial individualism is simply inadequate in this social and political circumstance. Ondaatje's rejection of the "violence of silence" and the private artistic vision that "turns its back on generalized oppression" demonstrates a growing social and political awareness in his writing (112). Within Ondaatje's emerging postcolonial world view, individualistic silence can no longer be seen as "an act of sociopolitical rebellion, but an act of sociopolitical surrender" (120).

In *The English Patient,* Ondaatje takes the evolution toward relational values a step further, with the elimination of the hero, a single romanticized protagonist, in favour of a quartet of balanced and strongly interrelated characters. The four main characters'

"way of being connected" to each other forms the basis of the novel, demonstrating an emotional shift in Ondaatje's work that completely refuses the masculinist insistence on separateness. The figure closest to Ondaatje's early model of the romantic, socially irresponsible, isolated male artist in *The English Patient* is the English patient himself, Almásy, the desert wanderer, map-maker, secretive and unsocial. Almásy even performs the signature Ondaatje gesture of punching his hand through glass, a gesture that in previous works has been an image that captured the paradoxically creative and destructive, but self-involved, artistic impulse of the Ondaatje hero character. But for Almásy the gesture is one of desperation and of failure. He punches through the glass dome of his ruined airplane as the dried-out body of his beloved Katharine is sucked out of the plane, limb by limb, piece by piece. He succeeds in setting himself on fire, and he falls, burning, into the desert. Almásy is dying, and on his death-bed he comes to recognize not only the sociopolitical context of the "trade and power, money and war" in which he has lived, but also his own complicity in it: through his map-making, he has helped turn even the desert into a place of war (260). If the English patient represents the formerly valorized, insistently individualistic Ondaatje hero, then perhaps his charred and blackened body as he lies drugged and sinking into death, without identity, can be seen as Ondaatje's recognition of the failure of that particular form of literary hero and the version of masculinity that he embodies. Violent, individualistic masculinity based on isolation and separation has, quite literally, burned itself out for Ondaatje, to be replaced by a new masculinity that is hinted at in the novel's ending.

The dying English patient is not permitted to retreat into silence and isolation. The novel insists on relationship, even for Almásy as he lies semi-conscious in a morphine haze in his bed. Hana loves him as a father. He finds a friend in Kip through their mutual knowledge of weapons and bombs. He is pursued by Caravaggio who shares a morphine addiction with him. He sings, recites poetry, attends parties and dinners with the other three protagonists, shares his knowledge of literature and history, and tells stories from Herodotus's *The Histories* and from his life. Almásy exists literally because of his connections to others (he would die without their presence, especially Hana's) but as a literary

character he also has no identity except through his relationships with Kip, Hana and Caravaggio. Through them his story, his life, and his identity are developed. The English patient, and *The English Patient*, represent an attempt by Ondaatje to depict the possibility of the truly differentiated self defined through particular relationships to others, rather than in isolation from them.

The English Patient is pervaded by a peculiar quality of ambiguity about the fixing of identity that may reflect this rethinking. As Lorraine York has written about Ondaatje's later novels, "Gradually, there is more awareness of issues of gender, especially as they relate to ownership—the poet's ownership of the material, the patriarch's ownership of the female, and the imperialist's ownership of the colonized" (75). In the text of *The English Patient*, Ondaatje links issues of ownership, a concept which arguably lies at the root of trade and power, money and war, with the power of naming. Katharine accuses Almásy of being inhuman as she says, "You slide past everything with your fear and hate of ownership, of owning, of being owned, of being named" (238). If the power to name and be named invokes ownership (but also relationship) through the "claiming of the powers of the linguistic sword" (York 89), a power always exerted by the poet and writer, Ondaatje appears to have introduced a curious reluctance, a hesitation, to wield that sword in *The English Patient*, as if the recognition of that power for the first time has instilled a need for caution. There is a nameless, secret wind (16), a nameless desert tribe (5,95), a nameless songwriter (109), and a dog at the villa that is never named. The vanity of the power of naming disturbs Almásy, too, as one of a group of desert explorers who are tempted by that vanity. His colleagues, Fenelon-Barnes and Bauchan, enter a contest, naming fossil trees, tribes, and sand dunes after themselves, but Almásy wants only to "erase my name and the place I had come from" (139). When he is burned, Almásy does just that and more, erasing all features and means of identifying him. Without a name, he achieves his ambition to "not belong to anyone, to any nation" (139). His rejection of names links problematic ownership with the issues of nationalism and colonialism in the text. The novel allows Almásy his nameless, nationless state, as his identity is never conclusively determined but rather resolved as irrelevant. Hana, Kip, and Caravaggio ultimately decide within the

terms of each of their relationships with him, as orphaned child, postcolonial subject, and spy, respectively, that it doesn't matter who he is (166,251,287).

Hana, in her shell-shocked state from watching too many soldiers she has nursed die, abandons the intimacy of names as she begins to call everyone "Buddy," acknowledging the relational imperative created by names. As Stephen Scobie has already observed, Hana herself remains nameless, although a main protagonist, into Part II as the novel recognizes her name only when Caravaggio, who has a previous relationship with her from the past, appears to "fix" her identity (104). In her new life in the bombed-out Tuscany villa that is the setting of the novel, she has abandoned other aspects of her identity as well, by removing her nurse's uniform, leaving her nursing unit, cutting her hair, wearing the shoes of a dead soldier, removing all mirrors, and refusing to reply to letters from her stepmother in Canada. She lives like a nomad within the ruined rooms that she shares with the anonymous English patient, moving from room to room for sleeping. Caravaggio, too, is unnamed, referred to only as "the man with bandaged hands" (27) until he encounters Hana. Their connection to each other, Caravaggio as a friend of Hana's father, defines who they are, and names them. In a similar fashion, Kip and his fellow sapper, Hardy, appear anonymously in the villa as "two men" (63) who slip into the room, place their guns on the end of the piano as Hana plays it, and stand facing her. Within the relational logic of the novel, since he is not known to anyone, Kip is referred to as "the young sapper" (70,71,77,79) or "the Sikh" (71,72,78). His name is revealed only after Caravaggio has disclosed to Kip that he and Hana had known each other before the war, in Canada. Once again, for the novel, relationship is the key to identity through names.

However, the power of naming is complex: both Kip and the English patient have two identities, two names (Kip/Kirpal Singh, and "the English patient"/Almásy, respectively). Kip's true name may be known to the other three main protagonists, but it is used in the novel to address him only after Kip's violent rejection of all things English in reaction to the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Ondaatje thereby suggests that allowing oneself to be named, and the creation of a sense of self that goes with it, can be a political act of empowerment. "Words . . . They have power," as the

English patient tells Caravaggio (234). "Kiss me and call me by my name," Katharine says to Almásy in the Cave of Swimmers, invoking the power of naming to reclaim their love (173). The power of names is real and has consequences for the characters in the novel, as Almásy's failure to call Katharine by the "right name," that is, her husband's powerful name rather than his own anonymous one, results in his capture and incarceration, and her death alone in the cave when he does not return as promised (250).

The violence associated with masculinity that is a hallmark of Ondaatje's earlier work appears in *The English Patient*, too, but here Ondaatje's treatment of violence moves closer to refusing the romance associated with it. His earlier novels displayed violence as an aesthetic value in itself, a style that has earned him critical acclaim for both its "technical precision and its emotional detachment" (Bök 110). The lists of deaths and gory descriptions of brutalization and physical mutilation in *The Collected Works of Billy the Kid*, the depiction of the commodification of women's bodies (York 81) in the opening pages of *Coming Through Slaughter*, and the glorification of dynamic individualism climaxing in self-destruction in both, represent an aesthetic that is at least partially rejected in the later novels. The transition is not complete or unproblematic. In *The English Patient* there are extremely violent scenes, such as the bloody amputation of Caravaggio's thumbs, the burning alive of Almásy and the tending of his charred, blackened body first by Bedouins and later by Hana, the mutilation of Katharine's body, and the deaths of sappers by exploding bombs. There are also examples of violence involving bondage used against women: Katharine's dream of being choked by Almásy while they are "bent over like animals" (149), a description of "those terrible leashes" (161) sold in Cairo markets that tethered a woman by her finger to "you" (presumably a male), and the Arab girl, small as a dog, tied up in Fenelon-Barnes's bed (138). Nevertheless, Ondaatje's style in *The English Patient* suggests a rethinking of his earlier clinically detached approach to violence. His writing now implies an emotional empathy for the victims of that violence rather than a glorification of its practitioners, as well as an accounting of the sociopolitical implications of both the violence and the former detached attitude to it. This newer style reflects the beginnings of an appreciation for the importance of relation-

ship, both of individuals to each other and of individuals to the political events in their environment.

Other writers have noted a fading of the glory in Ondaatje's work ascribed to the charismatic, consumed artist who destroys as he creates. Lorraine York has noted that the masculinism of his earlier work is giving way, although not necessarily in a linear, progressive way, to a recognition of the politics of power, both in an analysis of colonialism and in gender relations. Ondaatje's treatment of "gender has become more complex and problematic" (80) than in his earlier works as he turns his attention to the survivors of a social destruction that is beyond their control, such as Clara and Patrick in *In the Skin of a Lion*, and Hana, Almásy, Kip, and Caravaggio in *The English Patient*. Unlike earlier works, Ondaatje's attention now includes female protagonists. An analysis of the relationships among the male and female characters in Ondaatje's work can be useful in providing a sensitive measure of the changing structures of power and meaning in his work. For example, as Bök has pointed out, the women in the earlier works, such as Angela D., Nora Bolden, Robin Brewitt, and the mattress whores, remain the passive objects of the male explosive creativity, and female artists do not appear at all (116).

York analyzes the waning of Ondaatje's "woman-object jokes," from a series of breast jokes in earlier works to more muted versions and finally the elimination of woman jokes altogether in *The English Patient* (79-80). She also acknowledges a development beyond Ondaatje's earliest visions of woman as "the unconscious, dreaming, art-object" witnessed by the "poet-speaker" who can take pleasure in looking at her beauty, and exclaim at it in his poem (78). Laura Mulvey analyses the determining male gaze as a sexually imbalanced ordering of the world through the split of woman as image/man as bearer of the look. Her study of visual pleasure suggests that, in "their traditional exhibitionistic role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote *to-be-looked-at-ness*" (19). York contends that later works rethink this fairly straightforward commodification of woman. In *The English Patient*, Hana, Katharine, and Anna, the German officer's mistress who has taken Caravaggio's photograph, all steadfastly direct some penetrating looks of their own in a

"complicated dance of gazes" (York 82) as they study the men in the novel. As York describes it, some of "the sleeping women of Ondaatje's early works have woken up to assume narrative and to direct the gaze" (82). York concludes that Ondaatje has begun the "painful process" (89) of applying the arguments of imperialism to gender relations.

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick has pointed out that the importance assigned to women within a continuum of male relationships with each other reflects a construction of gender relations that is socially determined (1). That is, while the pattern of social bonds between men (such as friendship, mentorship, and rivalry as well as hetero- and homosexual relationships) make up what she calls "the continuum of male homosocial desire," no part of this can be understood outside of its relation to women and the gender system as a whole. Sedgwick argues that the large-scale structures of patriarchal heterosexuality reflect the basic paradigm of what Lévi-Strauss has termed "the male traffic in women," which can be seen in male-male-female erotic triangles that feature the use of women as a commodity of exchange. That is, in patriarchy, the real purpose of the heterosexual triangular relationship is to forge the social bonds between men which establish their interdependence and their solidarity with each other, and that allow them to dominate women (3). A good example is the structure of marriage itself, which operates as an agreement between men regarding their property rights to the woman involved in the marriage. Analysis of the love triangle is, of course, heavily dependent on a schematization from Freud. The Oedipal triangle of the young (male) child trying to situate itself in respect to a powerful father and a beloved mother forms the basic pattern for the complicated play of desire and identification in the erotic triangle. The bonds that link the two rivals are at least as intense as the bonds of love between them and their beloved.

Sedgwick suggests that the dynamics of the relationship of women within the male homosocial continuum is historically volatile, evolving as individuals negotiate with their societies for empowerment within the play of the changing shapes of gender and class structures. An examination of both *The Collected Works of Billy the Kid* and *Coming Through Slaughter* reveals that the women in the novels exist only in their relationships to the men and the

primary homosocial relationships of the men to each other. As Luce Irigaray has observed about gender relations in "Women on the Market," "Men make commerce *of* [women], but they do not enter into any exchanges *with* them" (172). For example, Buddy Bolden's male-male-female triangle relationships with Nora, his wife, and Pickett, her former and suspected current lover, and with Jaelin, a fellow musician, and Robin, Jaelin's wife, can clearly be seen as power relationships between the men which feature the use of women as exchangeable, perhaps symbolic, property for the primary purpose of cementing the bonds of men with men. Bolden recognizes the pattern, when he says "Nora and Pickett and me. Robin and Jaelin and me. I saw an awful thing among us" (99). The women in these patterns may be seen as apt illustrations of Irigaray's words in "This Sex Which Is Not One" in which she argues that "Woman is never anything but the locus of a more or less competitive exchange between two men" (355). In particular, Buddy's wrestling match with Pickett, including the bloody shirts, a slashed nipple, broken bone, razor cuts, razor strop, smashed mirror, flying mirror shards, broken window, pouring rain, and the two men locked in a violent dance has more passion than any male-female encounter in the novel, and is the dazzling set piece of the book. In this exchange, it is the power relationship between Pickett and Bolden that is at stake, and Nora figures as the object of exchange between them, not as one of the participants. The scene exemplifies a masculinity described by David Savran as "a form of display that facilitates the exchange of women between men, a performance designed both to attract 'the opposite sex' and to establish masculine proprietary authority over it" (17).

It is useful to contrast the bloody Bolden/Pickett/Nora exchange with *The English Patient*'s triangular scene of Hana, Kip and Caravaggio stalking each other through the villa, culminating in a confrontation in the dark in the ruined library. Equally as physical as Bolden and Pickett's battle, the characters of *The English Patient* take delight in playfully outwitting each other through stealth and skill in the dark, the bounce of sapper lights all over the room. Unlike the Bolden/Pickett battle over Nora, Hana is neither a bystander or an object of exchange between the men. She outwits them both, using Caravaggio as the trick to outmanoeuvre Kip, and wins the contest. She crows her victory—"I got you. I got you.

I'm the Mohican of Danforth Avenue" (224)—while riding on Kip's back, and Caravaggio withdraws. It is not possible to fit this scene into the pattern of "male traffic in women."

Ondaatje has narratively linked erotic triangles in *The English Patient* to the story of Candaules, a king of ancient Lydia. The story, read by Katharine from Herodotus's *The Histories* to Geoffrey and Almásy, is told within Almásy's story of his affair with Katharine, as told to Hana, Kip, and Caravaggio. In this way, the story touches all of their relationships. Almásy's telling is prompted by his awareness of the affair between Hana and Kip, and acts as a cautionary tale about the possible consequences of male traffic in women. Candaules's boastful ownership of his beautiful wife leads him, through excess vanity about her beauty, to demand that one of his spearmen, Gyges, hide in their bedchamber and look at her naked. Candaules's enjoyment of his wife's beauty does not satisfy him, and his desire is to be envied by other men. When his wife, who remains nameless in the story, sees Gyges leave the bedchamber, she realizes what her husband has done. She gives Gyges two choices: either he must slay Candaules and take his place as king and as her husband, or he will be slain himself. Gyges kills Candaules and reigns as king for twenty-eight years. According to the story, a "New Age" (234) begins.

The story is read by Katharine to her husband Geoffrey in an effort to temper his boasting possession of her beauty ("Are you listening, Geoffrey?" 232), but the English patient claims that its telling sets in motion their affair. He tells Hana and Caravaggio that through the story, "a path suddenly revealed itself in real life" (234) as he fell in love with Katharine, seeking her out at social events that normally he would not be interested in. The novel thus comments on the interrelation of story and history with the events of "real life." "Words, Caravaggio. They have power," the English patient says (234). The Katharine/Almásy/Geoffrey erotic triangle thus created cannot as easily fit the Oedipal prototype, nor can it be seen as an example of the trade in women. Almásy is not the young interloper but the older father figure, inserting himself between two young lovers. The affair leads to tragedy and betrayal for them all. "What do you hate most?" Almásy asks Katharine (152). She hates most a lie, and he ownership, but their affair becomes for her a living lie, and for him a sense of both possession of Katharine—"This is my shoulder, he thinks, not her husband's,

this is my shoulder" (156)—and by her. Geoffrey's attempt to kill all three of them fails, killing only himself, and wounding Katharine. However, Almásy admits that he felt like a deceiver of his friend Madox, by lying about Katharine (240).

In a similar fashion, the love story of Hana and Kip is an erotic love triangle, in which the English patient is a father figure to Hana, but it confounds the pattern of commodification of women for the purpose of bonding between men. The triangular possibilities are severed from the beginning, as Kip cuts the English patient's hearing aid wire in order to cut off his ability to hear, as well as his corner of the erotic triangle. As lovers, Hana and Kip expand the usual notions of what counts as sexuality, spending a month of "formal celibacy" sleeping beside each other and rediscovering the comfort and pleasure of being scratched (225).

In terms of the novel's masculinity, it is noteworthy that the English patient recognizes Kip as his successor, as he says to Caravaggio when discussing a painting of David and Goliath, "I think when I see him at the foot of my bed that Kip is my David" (116). Ondaatje creates a rightful sense of power changing hands as a "New Age" (234) begins, by filling the novel with stories of the new man replacing the old: Gyges and Candaules, David and Goliath, Solomon son of King David, Maxentius son of Maximum and emperor of Rome, Poliziano and Savonarola, Herodotus "the father of history" supplemented by Almásy, Kip taking up the work of Lord Suffolk. Kip has his opportunity to Oedipally destroy the father figure of the English patient. Kip's explosion from his silent self-sufficiency on hearing of the dropping of atomic bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki is a political awakening. He turns his rifle on Almásy in his rage at the racism implicit in the act, which he attributes to all English, Europeans, and Americans. However, Kip does not embrace violence. He puts the gun down undischarged. Instead, he takes back his identity as an Indian and a Sikh, resumes his correct name, Singh, rather than the Anglicized "Kip," and leaves the service of the English army to take up service as a doctor in his own community in India.

Kip's response perhaps corresponds with a changing vision of masculinity as described by writers such as Andrew Kimbrell: from the rigid, defensive insistence on separation, or individualist masculinity, toward the notion of "husbandry" in which the mas-

culine is seen in terms of deep relationship, and as a form of stewardship, to family, community, and the limited resources of the earth (300). The final vision of Kip, or Kirpal as the novel now acknowledges him, is of a man involved in his community's welfare as a doctor, riding his bicycle for the four-mile journey home, in his garden and with his laughing wife and children for their evening meal. Magically, the novel's optimism allows the power of his newfound relational masculinity to transgress both time and space to include Hana. Though not unproblematic in its treatment of gender, *The English Patient* closes with an emphasis on masculinity achieved in relationship to others for Kirpal, the new man.

NOTE

[1] Chodorow's theoretical work revises the Freudian psychoanalytic emphasis on the *autonomous* quality of the ego and superego. She and other feminist writers such as Dorothy Dinnerstein address, with Freud, the same sequence of symbiotic union, separating and individuation, but they reinterpet the crucial distinction that the female child's emerging gender identity is reinforced by the original symbiotic union, while the male child's emerging masculinity is threatened by it. To support her approach, Chodorow relies on the work of D.W. Winnicott, Michael Balint, Margaret S. Mahler, W.R.D. Fairbairn, and Hans Loewald. Chodorow's attention within psychoanalysis to the power differential of gender differences contrasts sharply with Freud's approach to differentiation and the emergence of the self, but links her work with the psychoanalytic accounts of Juliet Mitchell, Jessica Benjamin, Alice Balint, and Julia Kristeva.

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