

A CRITICAL STUDY OF OLIVE SCHREINER'S FICTION
IN A HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

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THE THESIS IS MY OWN UNAIDED WORK, AND HAS
NOT BEEN SUBMITTED FOR A DEGREE IN ANY OTHER UNIVERSITY.

Abstract.

Olive Schreiner's fiction is best understood in the context of her colonial situation : she experienced central Victorian spiritual dilemmas and social constrictions, but refracted through a rural colonial culture. A complex position of power and powerlessness, superiority and inferiority, individual assertiveness and self-abnegation, is the crux of her fictional world. Her formative years were spent within a culturally deprived rural environment in a dependent position as servant/governess, yet her reading gave her access to leading Victorian intellectuals who were trying to create a new synthesis out of the conflict between Darwin's revolutionary theory and faith in a God-given and unquestionable order, between science and faith, between a new spirit of 'realistic' enquiry and Christian dogma. The problem for the colonial novelist is similar to that of the provincial novelist : the writer seeking intellectual stimulus and cultural enrichment at the metropolitan centre often has to forego a sense of community, and a youthful emotional bond with a nourishing, indigenous landscape, frequently the original source of a sense of spiritual harmony and an underlying order in the universe itself. The colonial novelist thus expresses a tragic breach between individual and community, and a sense of irreconcilable needs. This process is best exemplified in the careers of women, because the difficulty in finding a suitable partner, and a fulfilling marriage, exemplifies the radical problem of reconciling nature and nurture, instinct and social convention. Solitariness, and death, can become the conditions of integrity. Nevertheless, Schreiner's analysis of social problems becomes more detailed and incisive as she develops, and social reform offers a way out of a doomed conflict.

Schreiner's childhood reading of the Bible and her evangelical inheritance were crucial to her life and fiction. In both a spirit of charity and self-sacrifice was central, and contended with a popular Victorian view of Darwinism which saw nature as a struggle for survival, a competition between the 'fittest' in which power

would be decisive. Schreiner's visionary optimism about moral and social progress was checked by a sense of natural cruelty, historical repetition and decadence, and the early influence of the doctrine of 'original sin'.

Schreiner saw her fiction as having a social mission, but the mission could only be accomplished by a novelist true to her individual vision, and expressing her 'self' by aesthetic means. A novel should grow 'organically' from the artist's individual vision, and thus be analogous to a living and unfolding natural world, developing according to its own inherent laws. Schreiner understood Art and Nature as complementary orders. Her theory of art is thorough and internally consistent: writing should be simple, sensuous, and passionate, and should reconcile social function and artistic design. The power and directness of colonial art reunited her with the Victorian metropolitan centre, though she experienced Victorian social issues in a particular, intensified form in South Africa. Nevertheless, her response to South African landscapes, her sense of its 'will to live' at the same time stimulated her own power of creativity, which would counter the stultifying effects of rural isolation and the social restraints on, and exploitation of uneducated women.

Schreiner's spirit of militancy and a reliance on the individual conscience stemmed from her evangelical forebears, though she translated their religious non-conformism into social protest in the South African context. Her family was part of the missionary wing of Imperialism and at the same time part of the current of liberalism and enlightenment which clashed with a conservative slave-owning society in South Africa. Her own fiction expresses the plight of the 'slave' in a sequence of metaphorical transformations. The figures of the child, the young woman, the servant, the convict, the slave, the prostitute, the black man and the black woman interrelate and modify a simple portrait of victimization. Her fiction also draws on the homiletic tradition of evangelical literature, which used deathbed scenes as the carriers of a moral message.

Schreiner's writing displays a characteristically Victorian range of non-fiction and fiction, pamphlets, letters, diaries, satires, dream-visions, autobiographical fragments, and ambitious full-length novels. Her writing displays the Victorian concern with autobiographical and confessional literature as well as direct political and social intervention in a corrupt society. She shaped her life more and more consciously into a variety of narrative forms, from erotic fantasies and escapist day-dreams to more outwardly-directed satirical and reformist fiction. Her early experience of homelessness, economic and social dependence on strangers, as well as sexual vulnerability to men, was crucial in her formative experience. But here, too, she overcame a tendency toward masochism and narcissistic self-reflection to portray a woman whose survival and growth expressed the strong side of Schreiner's vigorous and mature feminism.

Schreiner's fictions, from the fragment "Diamond Fields" and the youthful Undine, to the early 'masterpiece' The Story of an African Farm, to the political satire Trooper Peter Halket and the encyclopedic though unfinished From Man to Man, display great narrative fertility, and an ability to modify and develop her own characteristic themes, images, and characters. An early multiplication of female victims gave way to the rich oppositions and multiple different-sex protagonists of African Farm, and the concentration yet divergence of the double-female protagonist situation of From Man to Man. All of her fictions move along a spectrum from protest to vision, realism to dream/allegory, and she inverts and adapts the proportions in accordance with the aims of each particular work. Her fiction shows variety, creative richness, yet a growing economy of means and artistic control of genre. Her development as a novelist was away from a narcissistic focus on the self as victim towards a commitment to suffering forms of life outside the self. She also displayed a growing commitment to the social analysis of human suffering, and to South Africa as the crucible in which she had been formed, as a landscape which offered her an image of harmony to set against social malfunction, and as the strongest source of her own creativity.

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Preface.

This thesis was first conceived as a research project aiming to return to the primary sources of Schreiner's life and writing. Though I had hoped to demonstrate the coherence of her fiction and non-fiction, the primary focus soon became the fiction, as it emerged that it was precisely as a novelist that she had been undervalued, neglected, or misunderstood. Many of Schreiner's critics had re-defined her fiction in other, inappropriate terms : Uys Krige claimed that she was a 'poet', not a novelist, and Richard Rive separated her fiction from her 'polemical' work, arguing that Trooper Peter Halket showed her "inability...to fuse content and form in her work" and her "inadequacy as a novelist".¹

Rive's view of Schreiner is that "she was not really adequate as a novelist because she was more of a polemicist" (p. 211).

The research field had been obscured by prematurely dogmatic assumptions about Schreiner's manuscripts, titles, dates of composition, and the value of her fiction. Many of these assumptions were made by S.C. Cronwright, her husband and first biographer, and were perpetuated by later biographers and critics. More recent biography and criticism have returned to scrutinize primary material and texts, but have been posited on Freudian and/or Marxist assumptions about the relationship of the writer with herself and her time, and have devalued the creative work, sometimes dismissing it out of hand. Trooper Peter Halket has been dismissed by almost all critics of Schreiner's work ; From Man to Man has been undervalued without proper analysis. Therefore the spirit of the project was to establish the developing coherence of Schreiner's fiction as an expression of an individual talent by returning her texts to their biographical and historical contexts, in order to reveal both the specific pressure of experience operating at the time each work was conceived and composed, and the nature of each specific literary response to those pressures. This project has, I think, been justified by the more than expected continuity of themes, narrative structures and imagery which progressive

analysis of the texts uncovered. Another aim of the project was to apply a more sophisticated critical analysis of narrative to Schreiner's fictions than has previously been the case (with a few notable recent exceptions). This method also proved to be rewarding, as the relationship between Schreiner's fictions and biblical narratives made exegesis of explicit techniques and implicit 'secrets' fruitful and appropriate.

What also emerged progressively during the writing of the thesis was the sense of an unfolding of an original colonial artist, deeply in touch with central Victorian issues, and yet modifying those issues under the pressure of colonial history. Each work revealed its own shape and characteristic mood and techniques, yet each seemed part of the same creative talent, springing from the same mind with its complex interaction of conflicting attitudes and beliefs.

The story of manuscript titles was itself interesting and rewarding, and only gradually became clearer as pieces of evidence fell into place. The nature of such discoveries made my conclusions tentative in many areas where they might have been more definite, but more evidence will possibly clarify the picture further.

The overall direction of Schreiner's fictional oeuvre which emerged was towards a greater commitment to South African experience and landscape, to the nourishing power of the country, but also towards a more and more incisive analysis of the 'slave-owning' society which her parents had entered in 1838. Generally her fiction moved towards a more complex view of the relationship between colony and metropolis, nature and nurture, landscape and social constraints, 'transcendental' experience and political analysis. She focussed more and more on the specific abuses of colonial history and Victorian social convention, and yet her depiction of the individual's ability to resist malformation and suffering grew stronger and more positive.

The essential pattern which analysis of her fictions revealed was one of strong conflicting pressures : one towards the assertion of the individual 'will to live', another towards the suppression of individual claims in the interests of a larger cause, and the

interests of the development of the species. It would be true to say that while Schreiner's fiction seems to endorse the Victorian vision of history as a meaningful progression towards greater social harmony and moral perfection, it deconstructs that vision at the same time. The deconstruction is achieved by balancing different characters' destinies against each other (so that a pessimistic view of human achievement remains a very strong component of the characters' fictional careers); by stressing the random cruelty, perverseness and sometimes gratuitous destructiveness of nature, and by questioning the emergence of a coherent pattern in the narrative (and thus in history itself, of which the narrative offers a simulacrum) through the disruption of chronological time and narrative continuity. "A putting in question of narrative form becomes also obliquely a putting in question of history..."²

This tension between an orderly development of narrative which mimics the orderly development of history as a providentially ordered progression towards a greater good, and an interruption of narrative to brood on the 'first and last things', to preach at the reader, or inform him, or present a variety of discursive material, is the most striking feature of Schreiner's fictions. Also characteristic is the psychological tension between narcissistic self-projection and a sympathetic identification with historical victims other than the self. Self-love and love of others are in tension with one another and mutually interdependent in her characters and her narrative patterns.

Schreiner's narratives make the basic novelistic displacement of narrative into history ("twenty-five years ago", or "the year of the great drought"). They endorse the view that art "co-operates in the world-process" (Miller, p.466) and that its organic forms are analogous to the organic unfolding of life itself. And yet her experience of history, of a specifically Victorian colonial female history, endorsed a deep sense of victimisation, oppression and exploitation. Thus the tension between an overall Victorian optimism and a personal sense of struggle against almost insuperable odds induces the complex effect her fictions have on the reader.

They at once "preserve and annul" (Miller, p.473) the past by their complex narrative interaction. They insist that a future Utopia is achievable, while showing extreme social dysfunction and human cruelty in action in the present. Perhaps in this way they do render a 'realistic' sense of what life in a 'colony' like South Africa is like : extreme forms of oppression and exploitation and a doomed sense of the repetition of historical error do elicit strong forms of protest and strong forms of idealism. Schreiner's hope of universal brotherhood and peace takes its validity from a context in which human community, the shared experience of the human race, is consistently denied.

Notes.

1. See Rive's discussion of Krige's argument, and his own assessment of Schreiner's novels in Olive Schreiner (1855-1920): A Biographical and Critical Study, Ph.D., University of Oxford, May 1974, p. 130 ff, p. 207 f, and elsewhere. Rive's discussion of the biographical context is, however, extremely full and valuable.
2. J. Hillis Miller, "Narrative and History", English Literary History Vol. 41 (1974), pp. 455-473, p. 462. Schreiner's Preface to the second edition of African Farm also stresses that a narrative should not aim at a coherent and meaningful development which is lacking in life itself.

Acknowledgements.

I am very grateful to all the friends, relatives, acquaintances, and strangers who offered me information about Olive Schreiner or were prepared to discuss her life and work with me. I owe a special word of thanks to all the librarians of the Schreiner collections I consulted both inside South Africa and in England and the U.S.A. They were all unfailingly helpful. Miss M.F. Cartwright, of the South African Library, made her valuable chronology of Olive Schreiner's life available to me. Mr. Robin Fryde, Dr. Ronnie Levine, Ms. Eve Horwitz, Adv. and Mrs. W.H.R. Schreiner and Mr. Harry Oppenheimer all made their private collections of Schreiner material available to me. The following copyright owners kindly gave me permission to use and quote material : Mr. Peter Cron Raine for S.C, Cronwright; Syfrets Trust for Olive Schreiner; Professor Francois Lafitte for Havelock Ellis, and Sarah Pearson for Karl Pearson. My thanks to all of them.

The HSRC provided a bursary which contributed towards the cost of travel and research. My supervisor, Professor Tony Voss, was enormously helpful in formulating ideas, reading draft chapters and correcting errors. Contributors to the Olive Schreiner casebook which I edited in 1982-1983 were also very helpful in modifying and extending ideas about Schreiner. My thanks also go to Mrs. Lynn Voordecker for her efficient typing of the thesis.

Index to Abbreviations.

The following abbreviations are used throughout the thesis :

A. Manuscript collections consulted

1. The Schreiner Collection, 1820 Settlers Memorial Museum, Albany Museum, Grahamstown. Albany
2. Grey Collection, Auckland Public Library, New Zealand. Auckland
3. Milner Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford, England. Bod
4. The Brenthurst Library (Oppenheimer Library) Parktown, Johannesburg. Brenthurst
5. Killie Campbell Africana Library, University of Natal, Durban Campbell
6. Carpenter collection, Sheffield Public Library, England. Carp
7. Schreiner collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, Grahamstown. Cory
8. Schreiner manuscripts and book collection, Cradock Public Library, Cradock. Cradock
9. The Findlay collection, Cullen Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg Findlay
10. Robin Fryde's Schreiner collection (private), Johannesburg. Fryde
11. Ethel Friedlander/S.C. Cronwright letters, Eve Horwitz collection (private), Johannesburg. Horwitz
12. Olive Schreiner manuscripts, Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin, Texas. HRC.
13. Schreiner manuscripts and books, Africana Library (Strange Library) Johannesburg Public Library, Johannesburg JPL

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|-----|---|-----------|
| 14. | Kimberley Public Library, Kimberley. | Kimberley |
| 15. | Ronnie Levine's Schreiner collection
(private), Johannesburg | Levine |
| 16. | Schreiner material, National English
Literary Museum, Grahamstown | NELM |
| 17. | Pearson collection, University college,
London | Pearson |
| 18. | Plomer collection, University of Durham
library, England. | Plomer |
| 19. | Schreiner/Rhodes correspondence, Rhodes
House Library, Oxford, England. | Rhodes |
| 20. | Schreiner collection, South African
Library, Cape Town. | SAL |
| 21. | The Olive Schreiner collection,
J.W. Jagger Library, University of
Cape Town. | UCT |
| 22. | W.H.R. Schreiner material (private),
Johannesburg | WHRS |

B. Primary Sources (the editions referred to in the thesis)

- | | | | |
|----|--|--------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. | Schreiner's Journals : | Klein Ganna Hoek, extracts in | |
| | | the <u>Life</u> , pp. 114-119. | KGH Journal |
| | | Ganna Hoek (Cradock) | GH Journal |
| | | Lelie Kloof Journal | |
| | | (Cradock) | LK Journal |
| | | Italian Journal (Cradock) | Ital. Journal |
| | | Ratel Hoek Journal (HRC) | RH Journal |
| 2. | Havelock Ellis's Notes on Schreiner, made in
1884 (HRC) | | Ellis, HRC |

3. Fiction.

Olive Schreiner, "Diamond Fields : Only a
Story of Course (fragment at Cradock), (ed.)
Richard Rive, English in Africa, Grahamstown,
Vol. 1, No. 1 (March 1974) pp. 3-29. DF

Olive Schreiner, Undine (ed.) Martin Tucker,
facsimile reprint (New York & London :
Johnson 1972) Undine

Olive Schreiner, The Story of an African Farm
(Johannesburg : Ad. Donker 1975).

Olive Schreiner, Trooper Peter Halket of
Mashonaland (Johannesburg : Ad. Donker , 1974). TPH

Olive Schreiner, From Man to Man (London :
Unwin, 1926). FMM

Olive Schreiner, Dreams (London : Unwin, 1890) Dreams

Olive Schreiner, Dream Life and Real Life (London :
Unwin, 1893). DLRL

Olive Schreiner, Stories, Dreams and Allegories
(London : Unwin, 1923) SDA

4. Non-fiction.

Olive Schreiner, Woman and Labour (London :
Unwin, 1911). WL

Olive Schreiner, Thoughts on South Africa,
reprint edition, (Johannesburg : Africana Book
Society, 1923). TSA

Olive Schreiner, The Political Situation (London :
Unwin, 1896). Pol. Sit.

Olive Schreiner, An English-South African's View of the situation. (London : Hodder & Stoughton, 1898)

ESA

Olive Schreiner, Closer Union (London : Fifield, 1909)

CU

C. Main secondary sources

C. Clayton, Olive Schreiner (Johannesburg, McGraw-Hill, 1983)

CB and
Casebook

Ruth First and Ann Scott, Olive Schreiner (London : Deutsch, 1980)

OS

S.C. Cronwright-Schreiner, The Life of Olive Schreiner (London : Unwin, 1924).

Life

S.C. Cronwright-Schreiner, The Letters of Olive Schreiner 1876-1920 (London : Unwin, 1924)

Letters

D. Main Recipients of letters (when not indicated by title of collection).

Edward Carpenter

EC

Havelock Ellis

Ellis

Betty Molteno

BM

S.C. Cronwright-Schreiner

SCCS

W.P. Schreiner

WPS

Recipients have not been specified when letters have been quoted from S.C. Cronwright-Schreiner's Letters.

CHAPTER 1

SCHREINER AND THE VICTORIANS

(i) Empire and colony

Presently she made a story that one of those clouds was a ship and she was sailing in it (she had never seen the sea or a ship, but she was always making stories about them), and as she sailed, she came at last to an island. The ship stopped there. And on the edge of the shore was a lady standing, dressed in beautiful clothes, all gold and silver. When she stepped on the shore, the lady came up to her, and bowed to her, and said, "I am Queen Victoria, who are you?"

And Rebekah answered her: "I am the little Queen Victoria of South Africa." And they bowed to each other. (The child under the tree moved her head very slightly, without opening her eyes).

The Queen asked her where she came from. She said, "From a country far away from here: not such a very nice country! Things are not always nice there - only sometimes they are."

The Queen said, "I have many islands that belong to me: but this island belongs to no one; why don't you come and live here? No one will ever scold you here, and you can do just what you like."

Rebekah said, "I should like it very much; but I must first go and fetch my books out of the ship." And when she had brought her books; she said to the Queen, "Here is a little box of presents I have got for all the people who live on the farm where I used to live; for my father and my mother and the servants and the little Kaffirs - and even old Ayah. Would you please give it to them as you go past?"

And the Queen said she would; and she said, "Good-bye, Little Queen Victoria!" And Rebekah said, "Good-bye Big Queen Victoria!" and they bowed to each other; and the old Queen went away in the ship in which she had come.

Then she was all alone on her island.

(FMM, pp.45-46)

This amicable exchange between two monarchs forms part of Olive Schreiner's Prelude to her long, unfinished work, From Man to Man. It reveals an interesting relationship between Great Britain, the home country, with its monarch, and the colony, with its childish spokesman, Rebekah. Rebekah, whose name is Schreiner's version of her mother's name, and who thus embodies a fictionalised aspect of the Schreiner family, goes on a sailing trip to the island where the old Queen lives. The old Queen is richly and beautifully dressed, apparently more fashionable and powerful than the little girl, but she greets her colonial visitor cordially. Rebekah, however, turns out to be a little Queen in her own right, and is equal to the occasion. Her country is distant from the centre of the big Queen's empire; it is not so very nice, though it can be pleasant sometimes, and the little Queen Rebekah is leaving it in some dissatisfaction. But she does not stay on the old Queen's island; taking advantage of the monarch's munificence, she accepts the gift of an island of her own, provided she can take her "books" with her, clearly an indispensable part of herself. The little Queen now has her own realm and, using the old Queen as her envoy, sends proof of her own generosity to those on the "farm" who seem to have been responsible for some of the scoldings Rebekah had to endure there.

This passage offers a fantasy model of the real relationship between the Victorian Empire and the South African colony as Schreiner experienced it. Great Britain, the old mother, was rich and powerful and fashionable compared with the colony; much of Schreiner's early writing expresses a sense of being outside a charmed circle of wealth, beauty, and fashion.¹ In the colony there are certain disadvantages, which eventually induce Rebekah to leave it, but she is not completely happy to adopt the old Queen's island either; in certain respects she feels herself to be

the Queen's equal and does not accept the position of an inferior subject. She is a queen who has books, suggesting a wealth of mind which is poised against the old Queen's material wealth. And she is superior to the colonials she leaves behind on the farm, both white and black, her parents and Ayah the tyrant; when she has her own realm she can be generous and forgiving towards them. This point suggests some of the traditional Christian teaching of Schreiner's childhood : forgiveness of enemies, a quality which is in opposition to the general thrust of the quoted passage towards individual assertiveness and power. Anyone who can send Queen Victoria on personal errands is clearly to be reckoned with. The island on which the little Queen settles is thus an intermediate place between the rejected colony and the rejected British home. It is a place where she can enjoy her "books", here a symbol for the intellectual and creative life, where she is immensely happy to have a place of her own, but where she might be "all alone" and pay certain penalties for not fully belonging either to the community of the farm left behind or the wealthy community of the Queen's island.

This complex position of power and powerlessness, of superiority and inferiority,² of individual assertiveness and self-abnegation, is the crux of Schreiner's fictional world and was shaped by different pressures and influences, some of which stemmed from the lived circumstances of her South African childhood, and some from her reading experience of central Victorian texts, both fictional and non-fictional. Schreiner's formative and most productive years reveal often startling juxtapositions in the texture of isolated farm life and intense adventures of the mind, both among Victorian 'classics' and her own compositions :

29 July, 1875. There is a smous [hawker] in the dining-room trying to sell jewelry. Mr. Fouche, Adriaan and Mr. Cawood were out to hunt the tiger yesterday. Mr. Erasmus is here working at the road and the other night he played his fiddle and we danced. Have got Undine to board ship.

(K G H Journal, Life, p.115)

18 October, 1880. I'm sitting at the box before my door. I'm reading Lecky's European Morals.

I'm having school in the spare room. The children are just awfully good. I'm well. I'm sure my fossil is a head. I cut a duck open on Thursday.

Mrs. B. sent me Sister Dora's Life. (L K Journal)

At other moments recorded in the journals, she is writing about Mrs. Snappercaps, a character in Undine, has good intentions, and is finishing Mill's Logic (19 September, 1875). She writes out a German exercise while hearing the washer-woman beating out the clothes at the dam; she finishes Huxley's Lay Sermons and Darwin's Plants and Animals a week before she resigns as governess at Klein Ganna Hoek because her pupil, Annie Fouche, strikes her. In July 1876 she is at the Martins, reading Macaulay's History despite pain under her shoulder from asthma, and thinking of escaping her problems by going 'home' (to England).

In these journal entries, one sees the juxtaposition of the colonial realities of a South African environment with intense responses to European thinkers and writers. A sense of wanting to belong to an affectionate person or group alternates with a determination to escape constriction and ignorance. These oppositions would form the substance and structure of Schreiner's fiction, and would determine her lifelong shuttling between Europe and Africa. Queen Victoria's island could offer intellectual stimulation and cultural enrichment, but at the price of a breach with the original community and with early emotional attachments to people and places.

The problem of the colonial novelist is similar to that of the provincial novelist. John Lucas has suggested that the provincial novel in the nineteenth century is

concerned with processes of separation: what it means for a person to find himself—or, more usually and significantly, herself — struggling to retain an undivided sense of selfhood. And failing. For a sense of self isn't finally separable from a sense of community or family, and yet change enforces separation from both. Which means that the sense of self changes, suffers, becomes fractured.³

In the novels of Olive Schreiner, as in the fiction of Hale White, Mrs. Gaskell, and Hardy (the novelists discussed by John Lucas in his study of the provincial novel), there is an attention to "pressures that the social process puts on the individual and to how all the pressures combine to defeat the possibility of unhampered continuity, of contentment, of an unproblematic, untaxed sense of selfhood" (Lucas, p.x). What happens in such provincial or colonial fictions is that "survival becomes scarred with tragic possibilities; it is fought for and secured at the expense of a breaking of the integral self" (Lucas, Ibid.) This could be put another way: - in the colonial novel, the traditional Bildungsroman pattern, in which the protagonist moves toward an ultimate maturity of self and a place in the community (Goethe's Wilhelm Meister was the classic Bildungsroman which Schreiner said summed up everything she felt before she left South Africa in 1881, Ellis, H R C) meshes with a tragic pattern.⁴ Possibilities are cut short; the original aspirations undergo a check; the self is mutilated in some way.

In the provincial novel Lucas sees this process as typically centred on women, because the difficulty in finding a partner or marriage intensifies the process of alienation from origins. Both Hardy and Schreiner focus on "the problematic sexual nature of their heroines and how their heroines regard themselves, and how this is bound to be expressed in terms of confusion, contradiction, separation" (Lucas, p.xii). These confusions are not only present in the heroines, but also in their creators (as is borne out by Schreiner's own experience, journals, and correspondence): there are "splits, anarchic tendencies that fight against conventionalities and out of which important literature comes" (Lucas, ibid).

The struggle to find a community to which to belong, a place which is neither the "farm" nor the big Queen's "island" issues in solitariness: "Then she was all alone on her island". Solitariness becomes the condition of integrity. Thus Schreiner's fiction sometimes intensifies a strand of European romanticism which glorified the solitary spirit when it opposed "the old ties of social morality and obligation".⁵ Goethe's The Sorrows of Werther was an influential nineteenth-century

text because it glorified the spirit seeking freedom from the old order and doomed to failure. Schreiner's solitary protagonists are similarly seeking freedom from traditional restraints and dogmatic systems, and their defeat or death is a guarantee of the authenticity of that search. The colonial novelist, inevitably driven by her divided loyalties and sense of isolation towards a portrayal of a conflicted sense of self, thus becomes the carrier of a tragic vision in which self and community are irreconcilable.⁶

(ii) Schreiner's reading

In the passage quoted from From Man to Man, it was very important for the little Rebekah to take her books with her to her new island home.

In Schreiner's formative reading experience as a young girl the chief connections between her view of things and the Victorian Zeitgeist are found. Her earliest reading was of the Bible, and she told Havelock Ellis in 1884 that "The Bible was her education; she can repeat a great deal now-not from having learnt it, but from reading it as a child" (Ellis, HRC). Although Schreiner went through the same religious crisis as many other Victorians, and adopted the Freethinkers' Bible, Herbert Spencer's First Principles, in 1871, a book which convinced her of the unity underlying all nature, the Bible itself influenced her emphasis on direct visionary writing in the allegories, on strong insistent rhetorical patterning, and on the voice of prophecy. The texture of much of her fiction is clearly in the Old Testament tradition outlined by Auerbach in his comparison of the classical tradition and the Biblical one. Old Testament characters are "fraught with their development", "humiliation and elevation go far deeper and far higher than in Homer, and they belong basically together", but "their greatness, rising out of humiliation, is almost superhuman and an image of God's greatness".⁷

Auerbach's comments are all applicable to Schreiner's protagonists: "precisely the most extreme circumstances, in which we are immeasurably forsaken and in despair, or immeasurably joyous and exalted, give us, if we survive them, a personal stamp which is recognised as the product of a rich existence, a rich development" (Mimesis, ibid). Although in Schreiner's work it is no longer the Christian God who is a single and hidden force guiding universal history, her writing retains an element of the traditional Christian view of reality, which Auerbach defines as an "antagonism between sensory appearance and meaning" (p. 49).

He also argues that a mixture of styles was potential in Christian thought, because the "simultaneous shamefulness and sublimity of Christ's passion shattered the classical conception of the sublime" (p. 76) and thus the separation of styles. Both Schreiner's use of allegory (an influential childhood book of Schreiner's was William Adams's Sacred Allegories)⁸ and the mixture of allegory and realism in her novels are potential in the biblical tradition Auerbach defines here.

Schreiner's different adaptations of biblical tones and incidents, and the permeation of her vision of reality by the Christian view of reality aligns her with many other Victorians: "All over the late nineteenth century, the Bible, supposedly permanently crippled by mid-nineteenth century science and rationalism, begins to reappear, as vigorous as ever. The major impulse behind Dostoevsky, as he himself said, was the Book of Job; for Tolstoy it was the New Testament: for Matthew Arnold the Bible as a whole; for Thomas Hardy the pessimistic parts of the Old Testament. Old Testament pessimism was likewise stamped into Melville's consciousness, and lies at the heart of Moby Dick".⁹ Schreiner's concern with death, and her pessimism may be traced as much to this inheritance — to what Ellis called the "charnel-house medieval ideas" of her "ancestral preaching Lyndalls" (HRC, 1884) — as to any psychological predisposition.

The thinkers Schreiner was reading as a governess in the Eastern Cape helped to shape her view of time, history, and progress, a view which opposed the Calvinist view of time as a linear movement toward a pre-determined salvation or damnation. The rigid doctrine of pre-election which outraged her sense of justice and made the ticking of the clock terrifying to Waldo in the African Farm, was exploded in a liberating way for many Victorians by thinkers such as Darwin and Spencer, who helped to establish a longer view of time as an evolutionary progression toward higher states of being, a view central to Schreiner's thought. She read Spencer's First Principles in 1871, Darwin's Descent of Man in April 1873, his Plants and Animals in January 1876, and Spencer's other works after her arrival in England (his Data of Ethics and Sociology). The new sciences were governed by temporal methodologies, by a method of historical comparison and a concern with origins, all of which are Schreiner's methods in her non-fiction, and influenced her fictional work in certain ways. Her fiction is concerned with a liberation from a dogmatic view of time, and an examination of the origins of adult life in childhood

Though Darwin's theory contained conflicting elements and could be used as a basis for conflicting views of man and morality,¹⁰

he did think of evolution as change to 'higher' more complex forms; he believed, according to the conclusion of The Origin of Species, that "as natural selection works solely by and for the good of each being, all corporeal and mental endowments will tend to progress toward perfection"; and he expected specifically, as he wrote to the geologist Lyell, the continued improvement of the human race: "I am content that man will probably advance, and care not much whether we are looked at as mere savages in a remotely distant future".¹¹

But it was Spencer, whom Schreiner encountered before Darwin, who had optimistically set out the synthesis of science and religion in a dialectical movement.

Spencer was far more Utopian than Darwin, and his theory of evolution, which appeared two years before Darwin's was published, was essentially moral, and saw physical and moral development as inextricably linked: "As surely as there is any efficacy in educational culture, or any meaning in such terms as habit, custom, practice... so surely must man become perfect" (Buckley, T T, p.49). This doctrine of ultimate perfectibility which Schreiner adhered to all her life, was in conflict with the concepts of original sin, divine punishment, and damnation, which had so coloured her childish view of things, and the conflict determines the content and the structure of her fiction in certain ways. The long-term view allowed for the Victorians' sense of being in an interesting transitional period, one in which much was promised but as yet not given. In Winwood Reade's popular Martyrdom of Man he argued that "in each generation the human race has been tortured that their children might profit by their woes" (Buckley, T T, p. 33). Thus long-term optimism was reconcilable with present martyrdom, a reconciliation which allowed Schreiner and other Victorians to focus on suffering and on the figure of the martyr, who resembled Christ but who was crucified in a secular cause.

It was not only Spencer's world-view that influenced Schreiner; his method of arguing in an essentially Hegelian dialectic was one which chimed with her own tendencies. Her own method is to see opposing forces as halves of a greater, unified truth; for instance: "Socialism is one half of the truth; individualism is the other half" (Ital. Journal).

Metaphors of a movement towards a higher reconciliation of opposite forces are central to the allegories, and play a part in the novels. Her thinking about the two sexes followed this model, too.

There was, however, an element in Darwin's thought, expressed in the phrase "survival of the fittest", which stressed the cruelty and harshness of nature's laws. The "Malthusian Spectre" of an increasing population and a decreasing food supply "overshadowed and darkened all English life" in the Victorian period (Young, p.14). Economic theorists like Adam Smith stressed individual enterprises "as the necessary free functioning of a 'natural' law, the law of supply and demand"¹². Darwinism has been seen as "an extension of

laissez-faire economic theory from social science to biology" (Young, p.15). To those who retained a belief in the law of charity and love (the lesson of the Sermon on the Mount which had transfigured Schreiner's awareness as a child and which she retained when the punitive aspects of her inherited dogma had been purged), the competitive system was a violation of a basic principle. The conflict tended to be resolved by a hopeful belief in individual goodness and example.

Edward Carpenter wrote in England's Ideal:

granting, I say, that competition has hitherto been the universal law, the last word of Nature, still if only one man should stand up and say "It shall be no more," if he should say, "It is not the last word of my nature, and my acts and life declare that it is not" - then that so-called law would be at an end.¹³

Carpenter goes on to affirm in rapturous prose the belief in the power of the individual to reform society: "Within himself, in quiet, he has beheld the secret, he has seen a fresh crown of petals, a golden circle of stamens, folded and slumbering in the bud. Man forms society, its laws and institutions and Man can reform them. Somewhere within yourself, be assured, the secret of that authority lies" (ibid.). In an African adaptation of this image, Schreiner wrote to Karl Pearson about cactus buds which

stop for months on the branch, and you think they'll never open, they do at last and they're full of stamens and yellow and white pollen! Of course there's nothing before if you press them open. They are still forming and the largest buds take the longest time. (Pearson, 19 August, 1886).

Everything is potentially contained within the individual, even his ability to curb his own individuality. The opposition between these two aspects of evolutionary thought, that there is a natural progression of mind and body toward perfection, and that there is a natural competitive struggle for survival which demands self-abnegation (and a subordination of 'lower' physical desires to the 'higher' centres of the mind) forms a crux of Schreiner's writing. The former was what she often said she believed, the latter became more evident in her thinking about sexual relationships, and coincided with her inherited Puritan ethic of the renunciation of the body for the joys of the spirit. The former law assumes a unity of mind and body, the latter that they are opposed.

The historians Schreiner was reading as a young girl tended to reinforce her belief in progress: Buckle's History of Civilization (read in 1873), Macaulay's History (read in 1876) and Gibbon's Decline and Fall (begun "with profit" in April 1877). Buckle approaches history in the spirit of Darwin, and it is his thesis that "movement in time was a supersession of the past and not a decline from it".¹⁴ The idea of progress is fundamental to Macaulay's view of history and "Even Gibbon, the lord of irony, was inclined to give the idea of progress his unequivocal endorsement, for in the Decline and Fall (which is hardly the chronicle of progress) he reached "the pleasing conclusion that every age of the world has increased, and still increases, the real wealth, the happiness, the knowledge, and perhaps the virtue, of the human race" (Buckley, T T, P.40).

Although Schreiner's non-fiction and statements in her letters tend to express an ultimate optimism about the future of man and society, her fiction records deprivation, suffering and disaster, as well as scenes of visionary optimism. Recent studies of the Victorian view of history have stressed a mingling of opposite strains, that the age had "a quite unprecedented awareness of time, and of itself in time, and a will to view the course of history with... either the exultation that accompanies the idea of progress or the terror that attends the assumption of decadence" (Buckley T T, p.viii). Archaeology could offer testimony to progress, but also evidence of total loss, for instance "pre-historic cave-painting, charged with rich creative energy" (T T, p.57) which had flourished and almost disappeared. In a scene

in African Farm Waldo contemplates Bushman rock-paintings with a mixture of admiration for their creativity and a sense of the losses of history:

"He used to kneel here naked, painting, painting, painting; and he wondered at the things he made himself," said the boy, rising and moving his hand in deep excitement. "Now the Boers have shot them all, so that we never see a yellow face peeping out among the stones." He paused, a dreamy look coming over his face. "And the wild bucks have gone, and those days, and we are here. But we will be gone soon, and only the stones will lie on here, looking at everything like they look now." (SAF, pp.42-43).

Similarly, Schreiner's non-fiction is always aware of the possibility of 'retrogression', of individuals and nations backsliding into an earlier evolutionary stage. Her introduction to An English-South African's View of the Situation, for example, expresses a desire to check politically 'retrogressive' legislation in South Africa.

Belief in progress was made difficult by the social realities of poverty, disease, and prostitution, both in England and at the Kimberley Diamond Fields. Social realities made the gap between the present and a future perfection glaring. Schreiner first encountered prostitution when she read W.H. Lecky's History of European Morals in 1880. He was also useful to her, she told Ellis, for his history of rationalism in Europe (July 1884, HRC). Writers like Lecky offered a morally patterned view of the history of society and civilisation.

Emerson was a thinker who comforted Schreiner when she was in a state of depression. She told Ellis in 1884:

It was at Cape Town [1874] that she bought Emerson (which Bertram had recommended to her long before).

At that time she was peculiarly miserable and thinking of suicide. She remembers sitting by the window and the delight it gave her, especially "Self-Reliance"...

It was the expression of her highest self. She always turns to him in depression and he seems to take her into a larger atmosphere.(Ellis, HRC)

Emerson had been a popular figure in advanced circles in the earlier nineteenth century, and had been read with enthusiasm by the Brays, free-thinking relations of Charles Hennell, who had published An Enquiry into the Origin of Christianity (1838) and by George Eliot. Eliot seems to have used him in the same way as Schreiner : "I have been reading for my spiritual good Emerson's Man the Reformer, which comes to me with fresh beauty and meaning."¹⁵ The Transcendentalists, the loose New England group of whom Emerson is the chief representative, "were earnestly seeking for a new system of theology which should give a deeper reality to their spiritual life. The conclusions at which they arrived differed widely, but they agreed in acknowledging the dignity and self-sufficiency of the individual" (Cruse, p.244). Schreiner would have felt herself in sympathy with this emphasis on the individual perception of unity and beauty behind the world of nature but analogous to it. Curtius has summed up the main quality of the Emersonian mind as having "its own laws not only of structure but even of perceptibility. The formula for this order is similia similibus."¹⁶ Schreiner perceives and argues by analogy; in her case African landscapes replaced Emerson's New England, but at certain intense moments both became not a veil over eternity but the pathway to a mystical union with it.

Thinkers like Spencer and Emerson were clearly valuable to her at certain stages of her life, and she stressed that though they could give intense consolation to an isolated colonial, as certain scenes in African Farm demonstrate, they may be discarded at later stages of life. Waldo, sitting on the roof of the African farm, panting for the knowledge which has been denied him, forgets about books completely when he looks up at the stars, and his passion is quietened. This transition from a frantic quest for book knowledge to a stillness and self-forgetfulness in nature is a characteristic movement in Schreiner's fiction. She grounds her view of the Boer, too, in the fortunate fact that he has the best book of all, the "open book" of nature, always before him (TSA, p.288). She often valued writers more for an independent spirit and the fearless quest for truth which she found in John Stuart Mill and Darwin, for example (Life, p.116), than for specific ideas. The position of the colonial is central here:

intellectual stimulus was lacking in the immediate environment and books and authors became valued companions. This is evident when the little girl in the Prelude takes along books, not people, on her journey to the Queen's island. And Schreiner's own experience with books helped to shape her view of art generally, that its purpose should be to offer help - consolation to people who needed to be reassured that they were not suffering alone. The position of the colonial here strengthens the Victorian emphasis on the social utility of art.

Schreiner had not read much fiction in the period when she was at work on her novels before she left South Africa in 1881, and she always insisted that she generally took little pleasure in reading novels. She writes to John X. Merriman :

No, I have never read Stevenson. Strange as it may seem, I have a most peculiar antipathy to novels. I love The Mill on the Floss and Turganyeff's [sic] Fathers and Sons and a dozen others, but I think I like them because they are science or poetry, not because they are novels!! I have often tried to analyse why it is that I have this intense horror of ordinary novels, while all folks of this age from Huxley to Darwin, to servant-girls, find pleasure in them and benefit too. They are so dry! (JPL 29 June 1896).

She was familiar with the popular melodramatic fiction of "Ouida", and cried over a novel of hers in 1875; she had read Dickens's Dombey and Son in 1872, a novel which uses the pathos of children to condemn unfeeling materialism and tyranny; she seems to have read The Mill on the Floss once in this period but "hadn't cared for it" (Ellis, HRC). Goethe impressed her most, and she used his Wilhelm Meister as the basis of a generalization in 1880:

I was struck in reading Wilhelm [Meister] by the marvellous unity between all thinking minds of a certain order. I am determined to be fearless: - let every man speak out from the depths of his heart, and take the result, coolly. However hard things are we can endure them in silence and take joy in enduring. Whatever joy life might take from us there will always be the joy of endurance left. Silent endurance, that seeks no friend, no helper. (LK Journal, 2 November 1880).

The comment demonstrates the way in which certain works of literature had taken the place of her parents' religion as a source of spiritual sustenance and moral courage.

(iii) Schreiner and Victorian fiction

Schreiner's fiction, and her view of the function and nature of fiction, demonstrate some close affinities with Victorian fiction and artistic theory generally, partly because her Anglo-German missionary parents had transported to Africa the same familial and social paradigms against which Schreiner's generation was reacting at the metropolitan centre. The religious conflict of the age involved a throwing off of parental authority as well as the religious dogma with which parental authority was associated, as Samuel Butler's The Way of All Flesh and Edmund Gosse's Father and Son demonstrate. African Farm presents the same generational conflict as a progression.

Victorian fiction retained, however, an earnest sense of social mission even when it was rebelling against the dogma which had formalised it. And it was felt that the novel was most fitted to be the vehicle of this social conscience: "the form in which much of the poetry of the coming time will be written".¹⁷ The Preface provided by the Goncourts for their novel Germinie Lacerteux (1864) expands on this point:

Today when the novel is broadening and growing, when it is beginning to be the great, serious, impassioned, living form of literary study and social investigation, when, through analysis and psychological research, it is becoming contemporary moral history ; today when the novel has imposed upon itself the studies and duties of science, it can demand the freedoms and immunities of science. And if it seek Art and Truth; if it disclose troubles which it were well the happy people of Paris should not forget; if it show people of fashion what district visitors have the courage to see, what Queens of old let their children's eyes rest on in hospitals; human suffering, present and alive, which teaches charity; if the Novel have that religion to which the past century gave

the broad name and vast name: Humanity; - that
consciousness suffices it: its right lies there.
(quoted by Auerbach, p. 495)

The Goncourts' Preface epitomises the spirit of Schreiner's fiction: the sense of what the novel could do to uncover the suffering of unfashionable beings in order to draw attention to their existence and their plight.¹⁸ This neglected group could be a rejected or oppressed class of Victorian society (workingmen and the labouring poor in Mrs. Gaskell and Hardy's fiction). It could focus especially on the sufferings of children, and by the pathos of their plight indict the age (see Dickens, especially).

"The sufferings of children at this time have social relevance" Kathleen Tillotson points out, and "many of his [Dickens's] readers had read the five reports on Child Labour which appeared between 1831 and 1843" (Watt, p.19). Schreiner, too, was acutely sensitive to the issue of child exploitation, and uses her children in African Farm to indict the exploitation of an uneducated young rural labourer like Waldo, whose experience was partly based on her own as a young governess with the Weakley family in Colesberg:

'The work became harder and harder. She had to teach the children, to be shop boy, to correct proofs for the newspaper (Weakley was lawyer, editor, and had a stationer's shop; he was about 33). She went there in 1874 when she was nineteen. (Ellis, HRC).

Or the social indictment could be focused on women, whose exploitation sexually and economically often went hand in hand, and thus the seduced woman (Hardy, Schreiner) the spinster (Gissing) the prostitute (Moore) could provide a special focus for the examination of social hypocrisy, greed and cruelty, and for criticism of the conventional Victorian family, of which the Royal Family provided the most prestigious model. Schreiner uses children and women in this way, but the colonial novel adds another dimension to the exposure of unfashionable suffering in that it is calling the attention of the metropolitan centre to the plight of the far-flung isolated subjects of Empire, including rural poor (Waldo) young women (Lyndall, Rebekah, Bertie) and indigenous black (Trooper Peter Halket's black victims). Reporting back to the big Queen about her neglected or oppressed subjects in the furthest

reach of her dominion an indictment of Empire itself

reaches of her realm becomes an indictment of Empire itself.

Pathos, then, became a central element in Victorian fiction, and Schreiner seems to have been aware that the novel was supposed to contain elements of humour and pathos: Thackeray referred to his novels "as comic books in which pathos should only be occasional" (G. Tillotson, p.117). Contemporary reviewers of African Farm were apt to praise it for its pathetic scenes, especially the deathbed scenes, as the words of Schreiner's future husband testify:

'The effect of this book on me was extraordinary; but the high estimate I then (in 1890) formed of it increases with age and more matured judgment. I have never been able to read the great allegory of "The Hunter" aloud and I never could face Lyndall's death again until I read it for the second time in 1921." (Life, p.231)

The Hunter allegory also contains a death-scene, an apotheosis of the other characters' death-scenes.

But though pathos was a technique in the handling of socially sensitive issues, Victorian writers did their research in the Parliamentary Reports, the "Blue Books", as Dickens did before writing A Christmas Carol, (G. Tillotson, p.46) and Schreiner was reading the Blue Books on prostitution while working on From Man to Man, or asking Ellis for statistics, or reading reports on prostitution at the diamond-fields (Letters, p.47, p.82). Schreiner shared in the age's spirit of energetic reform, and like many Victorian writers, often felt her loyalty divided between art and practical, social issues. Should the writer write or intervene more directly in the undesirable and unhappy conditions of existence he saw around him? The mixed shape Schreiner's writing career took is indicative of this issue; she often speaks of the desire to serve humanity more directly than as a writer:

The one thing that troubles is where I am to draw the line between the duty I owe to all the many people whom I feel I can help and influence... and my writing, which may influence people at large (Letters, p.86).

Her early desire to be a doctor was a result of this desire to serve the suffering:

The dream of my life was to be a doctor: I can't remember a time when I was so small that it was not there in my heart. I used to dissect ostriches, and sheep's hearts and livers, and almost the first book I ever bought myself was an elementary physiology.... It seems to me that a doctor's life is the most perfect of all lives; it satisfies the craving to know, and also the craving to serve. (Letters, p.17)

The reason she was despondent about not finishing From Man to Man was that it would not be of use to others (Letters, p.29). Her particular pride in having written Trooper Peter Halket (UCT, 10 May 1908) was based on the fact that it was speaking directly to an urgent social and political issue. This is in keeping with the "rich, many-sided, strenuous literature" of the Victorian period (G. Tillotson, p.23). Writers like Harriet Martineau might have written more, but "she wrote what the times seemed most in need of" (G. Tillotson, p.25). This factor played some part in determining not only what Schreiner produced as a writer, but also what she did not produce, or complete. Edith Simcox wrote in her Natural Law, An Essay in Ethics (1877):

We are called away from the peaceful life of intellectual perception, and many of us are fain to turn reformers in despair, not because we have the reformer's talent or the reformer's taste, but because the world needs so much reform. (G. Tillotson, p.26)

The desire for reform and social relevance often led Victorian novelists into a wide variety of writings other than the novel itself: pamphlets, letters to the Press, and satirical sketches, in order to intervene more directly in the controversies of the age (G. Tillotson, p. 45). Schreiner's oeuvre is a very clear illustration of this aspect of Victorian literature: pamphlets on political issues, public speeches at times of crisis, often direct appeals in the form of letters to statesmen, letters to the Press, satirical sketches, allegories, and non-fictional studies of contemporary social and political problems.

But even the novel was not intended to amuse; readers expected to have their "social conscience refined and quickened" (G. Tillotson, p.47).

Because of this emphasis on service to society as a whole, authors were not valued only in terms of their artistic output, but in terms of their entire person and perhaps exemplary life. Writers could be considered as larger than their work, as Schreiner comments on George Sand: "How much greater the wonderful woman than her work!" (Letters, p.93). The worship of the writer as a moral and even political lawgiver was at a peak. Associated with it was the worship of exceptional men and women, past and present, usually hailed as 'geniuses', a word often used of Schreiner by others, and lavishly applied by her to people like Rhodes, and even, with less obvious applicability, to her husband, S.C. Cronwright. Genius had a childlike aspect to its popular image, and could operate in different spheres. Carlyle was associated with some of the manifestations of genius-worship, and his work Heroes and Hero-Worship was advertised in 1846 as an examination of the doctrine -

That to our age of Religious Disorganisation nothing is left but a Worship of Genius; that is, a Reverence for those great Spirits who create Epochs in the Progress of the Human Race, and in whom, taken collectively, the Godlike manifests itself to us most fully.

(quoted by G. Tillotson, p.15)

Such worship could take the form of a quasi-ecclesiastical homage, as in the case of George Eliot, and could be extended to secular rulers. Schreiner's own attitude to such powerful figures was necessarily ambivalent, because one part of herself was anchored in the 'farm,' or colony, which was created, and at crucial times avidly exploited by powerful representatives of Empire. A letter at the time of the Boer War, written to Milner, illustrates this point:

I am like a man born in a log cabin, who afterwards goes to live in a palace, and all his affections and interest centre in the palace. But one day he finds the palace is beginning to oppress the cabin, and then he says, "I belong to the cabin" - but he loves the palace still.

(Bod. 30 May 1899)

The comment illustrates precisely how the position of the English-speaking colonial inevitably produced an ambivalence toward power, which was associated with the metropolitan centre of Empire (the palace) rather than the rural poverty of the colony (the log cabin). The secular genius was often seen as expressing his great soul in a parallel but different sphere to the writer. Schreiner wrote to Rhodes: "You have never felt the same sympathy with my work that I have with yours. It is just as creative, only you have to realise your imaginations in things, which are more permanent" (Rhodes, 15 November 1890?). When such military or Imperialist 'geniuses' actually became unlicensed proponents of power, Schreiner turned against them, as she turned against Rhodes:

I have always hated Bismarck -- I looked up on him as the one genius of Germany as Napoleon of France. From my standpoint Napoleon did more harm to France than to any other nation. (To WPS, UCT, September 1914?)

The worship of genius was related to a basic belief of the age in the unlimited potential within each individual, which could unfold organically in a multitude of directions. So Schreiner writes of Faust that "it alone embodies the cry of its age, the cry which no other age has heard, yet which is the moving power in Whitman and in all the deepest inspiration of our age: 'We will not only know all things, we will be all things'" (Letters, p.103). This view is expressed at length in a letter to Ellis in 1899:

I love Nature and I love Men; I love music and I love science; I love poetry and I love practical labour; I like to make a good pudding and see people eating it; and I like to write a book that makes their lives fuller. I can do very little and have never been so situated that I could do my best — but I can live all lives in my love and sympathy. (Letters, p.227)

The quotation illustrates the way in which enormous aspiration often existed alongside the sense of inadequate achievement; an age in which so full a self-realization, a bildung, was expected, was also one in which any falling short became more glaring. Havelock Ellis characterised the British of his time as "perpetually oscillating

between awkward timidity and an arrogance so unbounded that their own doctors regarded it as a disease, and dealt with it as morbid self-assurance."¹⁹ The situation which Schreiner refers to as limiting her own unfolding of her 'best' must mean the total situation in which she was placed as an individual, but would obviously include the physical and cultural situation of the colony, or farm. Both nineteenth century aspiration after high goals and unchecked development, and a sense of the 'situations' which limit or destroy that development are shaping factors in Schreiner's fiction.

If it was felt that the novel would have to be more complex and inclusive than before to express the self-consciousness and manifold aspirations of the age, it was also felt that such complexity could best be achieved by the study of one's individual self. Arnold wrote in 1853 that one of the highest things to be achieved in poetry was "a true allegory of the state of one's own mind in a representative history" (G. Tillotson, p.9). Continuing a Romantic emphasis created mainly by Wordsworth, "the autobiographical impulse flourished more variously than ever before" in diaries, letters, and memoirs (Buckley, TT, p.98). Schreiner's own intense self-communications in her journals, and often equally intense and detailed communications to close friends like Ellis about her state of body, mind, and heart in frequent and long letters are typical of the age. The Victorian novel itself often included letters and diaries as sections of its narrative, as will be illustrated in Schreiner's fiction. There was a great interest in autobiographies and biographies: Schreiner read biographies of Dickens, Goethe, and Emerson just after her arrival in England, and retained an interest in biography throughout her life (Letters, pp. 152-153).

Autobiography, which many writers protested could never give a perfect or full account of the inner life, often discussed past experience, especially childhood, in a spirit of self-examination. Ruskin, Mill, Wilde and Pater examined past experience in different literary forms. "And for the first time in English fiction it provided the novelist a major source of theme and content" (Buckley, TT, p.99) :

In the Bildungsroman the subjective element bulked large; David Copperfield, Arthur Pendennis, Richard Feverel, Ernest Pontifex, Pater's Marius, Jude Fawley — each of these reflected to a degree his creator's need to see a

meaning in the personal past, to find the true self in time" (Buckley, T T, p.100).

Buckley goes on to make an interesting comment on the aesthetically inconclusive nature of such re-writings of the personal experience of an earlier self, one with some relevance to Schreiner's fiction:

The fact that the ending of the typical Bildungsroman was aesthetically inconclusive was evidence simply that the novelist, whose own development was still in process, could not detach himself sufficiently from his protagonist to pass a disinterested final judgment on the success or failure of his orientation.

(Buckley, ibid.)

This is borne out by Schreiner's comments on the inconclusive progress of From Man to Man, but Waldo's death scene in African Farm is also a form of the open ending.

(iv) Schreiner's theory of art

Schreiner's own theory of art needs to be pieced together from different sources: letters, journals, or suggestions offered inside the fiction, or as prefaces to it. It is a coherent theory and reveals a great degree of artistic self-consciousness and reflection, even though there was no single manifesto of her theory. The main focus here is not on artistic intentions in the fiction, or on a necessary correlation between the theory and the practice, but on the nature and internal consistency of the theory: the degree to which it illuminates the fiction will be assessed in discussions of the individual works.

The colonial artist's experience of isolation and her divided allegiances between colony and 'motherland', are determining factors here, as they are in Schreiner's attitudes towards religion and society. Schreiner herself responded to Havelock Ellis's criticisms

of The Story of an African Farm by attributing its didacticism to her isolated life:

There is too much moralising in the story, but when one is leading an absolutely solitary life one is apt to use one's work as Gregory used his letters, as an outlet for all one's superfluous feelings, without asking too closely whether they can or cannot be artistically expressed there. (Letters, p.12)

This implies that for the solitary colonial artist art is necessary self-expression first and foremost.

The isolation of the colonial artist also shaped Schreiner's view of art as a communication which breaks down barriers between people, allowing a glimpse of the inner self of the writer, and convincing the reader that whatever he suffers is shared by others:

One of the great goods of writing is that it helps one a little to get out of that high walled enclosure in which each one of us is shut in, so that those we love may see and understand a little of that inner life we lead within it.

(To Lucy Molteno, UCT, 18 March 1910?)

Art is the little crack in the iron wall of life which shuts one in awful isolation through which the spirit can force itself out and show itself to its own like-minded fellow spirits outside; or rather can creep in through the cracks in their terrible walls that shut in the individual life and say, "You are not alone."

(Letters, p.323)

Such a view of art as communicating through empathy is based on a belief that there is a shared human nature, and certain shared experiences in the phases of human life which, if they are truly recorded by the writer, will elicit sympathy and understanding in the reader. Her comments on the response to The Story of an African Farm illustrate her belief in the power of art when it is 'true to nature', and make an interesting separation between the process of

creating a work 'for myself', implying pure self-expression, and a later stage of communication through publication, which enables the work to reach like-minded readers, or anyone to whom the recorded experience speaks. She also implies here a direct relationship between the age and its art:

Its vice and its virtue, its frivolity and its ideals, all the life of our age is incarnate in its fiction, and reacts on the people. Let me take my own tiny experience, if I may. An untaught girl, working ten hours a day, having no time for thought or writing but a few [hours] in the middle of the night writes a little story like An African Farm, a book wanting in many respects, and altogether young and crude, and full of faults; a book that was written altogether for myself, when there seemed no possible chance that I should ever come to England or publish it. Yet, I have got scores, almost hundreds of letters about it from all classes of people, from an Earl's son to a dressmaker in Bond St, from a coalheaver to a poet.... Now if a work of art so childish and full of faults, simply by right of a certain truth to nature that is in it can have so great a power, what of a great work of art? (Pearson, 23 October 1886)

An apparent contradiction between art as pure self-expression and art as useful to others is resolved by taking into account the stages of expression and communication as successive, with creation (sometimes) being followed by publication. Schreiner's sense of the usefulness of art has nothing to do with explicit didacticism, which she usually deplores as a flaw, and she distinguishes her art from that of George Eliot on these grounds:

No human creature's feelings could possibly be further removed with regard to artistic work...than mine from George Eliot's. Her great desire was to teach, mine to express myself, for myself and to myself alone...If God were to put me alone on a star and say I and the star should be burnt up at last and nothing be left, I should make stories all the time just the same.

(Letters, p.160)

But although the writer is here seen as expressing her 'self' instinctively and inevitably, the 'use' of her writing comes from its basis in shared experience and human nature:

...that makes the use of the writer: not that he expresses what no one else thinks and feels, but that he is the voice of what others feel and can't say. If only the powers that shape existence give me the strength to finish this book [From Man to Mar], I shall not have that agonised feeling over my life that I have [had] over the last ten years, that I have done nothing of good for any human creature. I am not sure of the book's artistic worth: to judge of that from the purely intellectual standpoint one must stand at a distance from one's own or anyone else's work. But I know it gives a voice to what exists in the hearts of many women and some men, I know I have only tried to give expression to what was absolutely forced on me, that I have not made up one line for the sake of making it up. (Letters, pp. 263-4)

The 'use' of the writer thus lies in her ability to be instinctively true to herself, and thus utter the thoughts and feelings of her contemporaries. A contemporary relevance to the issues of the time is implied (even for a colonial writer); so is a distinction between a writer who is close to the experience embodied in the fiction and one who stands back and judges; the writer can become a critic of her own fiction or that of others. Schreiner does both in her letters: there are criticisms of Hardy, Samuel Butler and Virginia Woolf; she often offers criticisms of her own fiction in response to the views of others.

The fullest discussion of the stages of artistic composition, and the nature of artistic work, is given in the discussion between Rebekah and Drummond in the last chapter of From Man to Man. The original impulse is defined as involuntary and unconscious; the artist may not choose or direct the impulse at first, though he may put himself "into the condition in which they [ideas for stories] may come" (FMM, p.468 ff). The material out of which art is made is "all that

a man has known and seen and felt, all that lies within him" and yet art is also prophetic, and the artist can depict the emotions of characters in complex conditions which he may never have experienced. This is ascribed by Rebekah to the fact that the individual artist is an expression of "the accumulated life of his race", but the concept of a collective unconscious is also suggested, a vaster life which is a "moving power" but which can only be partially glimpsed.

Rebekah then goes on to outline three distinct stages in the creative process. The first is the spontaneous, involuntary perception:

It is perfectly spontaneous, made of the man's substance, himself-of-himself; yet he feels in a way that it is something not himself but shown to him, while yet he feels also it belongs to him more than anything else in the world ever can (pp. 472-3).

In the second stage the will comes into play, and the artist seeks the conditions which make the inner vision realizable in the external world. While he works he must be faithful only to his inner vision, which is "his only guarantee of truth and right". There is also a pressure which appears to force him to incarnate his vision. At the third stage the work is completed though it never completely captures the ideal vision which it attempted to incarnate. Now the artist may decide what to do with it and his will is supreme. He may keep it, publish it, burn it or show it to friends. Critics often confuse the second and third stages and criticise an artist for 'flaws' which were not fully under conscious control. Different motives come into play in the third stage, and after a while the creator may become as objective a critic of his/her work as anyone else. But the main motive in a 'true artist' is that he wishes the work to live on in another soul "completely reflected in another mind as once it lived in his" (p.474). This realization of the work takes place to different degrees in different people, but because individuals are also more than individuals, there will always be some reception for 'true' art: "the artist is only an eye in the great human body, seeing for those who share his life..." (p. 476).

What, then, does Schreiner consider to be 'true' art? Clearly there is an element of service in the artist's function, and Schreiner sees writing as one expression of a 'duty' to others. Writing does influence people at large but it does so by being true to the artist's inner vision, not by moralising or deliberate teaching. Schreiner goes to some trouble to separate aesthetic experience from any conscious motive:

If I put chloroform in my mouth for the sake purely of the pleasant sensation, if a well fed cat catches a mouse simply for the pleasure of catching it, if I stretch out my hand and rock the swing slowly to and fro for the pleasure of the restful motion, then I call these actions aesthetic. If I write a book because I am starving and want money I may feel great pleasure in doing it to get the money but my pleasure is not aesthetic; if I write it simply for the joy I have in writing and the joy it may give to others, my work is aesthetic.

Furthermore, if a man strives to attain to intellectual truth or knowledge for the hope of any material gain to himself, or because he philanthropically **wants** to lessen the sufferings of mankind then his work is not aesthetic: if he strives after truth or knowledge simply for the infinite joy of holding it or that others may have the joy of holding it...then the strife is I think aesthetic. Shortly I would define the aesthetic to be that course of action which has for its aim simply joy, and not the removal or avoidance of pain.

(Pearson, 7 July 1886)

A true work of art will grow organically from the inner vision, and the extent to which it is embodied in a partly or largely instinctive process of artistic expression will determine its 'success' (leaving aside, for the moment, the critical problem here, that no-one except the artist would finally be able to judge of the success of ~~the~~ **the** work, a belief stated in the discussion of art in From Man to Man). Schreiner herself felt ~~that~~ **the** African Farm had failed to incorporate its seminal vision fully, that it was lacking in the aesthetic dimension of 'beauty':

One day, if I live, I will do work that satisfies me, but all I have done I hate. It is true, but there is perfect beauty and truth.

(Letters, p.97).

Schreiner's theory of art is one which incorporates social utility and aesthetic appropriateness, which allows for the stages of the creative process, and which sees the writer herself as capable of functioning as a critic at a later stage. Aesthetic pleasure without a basis of utility is seen as decadent, and Schreiner always dissociates herself from any art which adheres to 'art for art's sake':

I think in this relation (the sexual relation) as in art and all other things the aesthetic without firm basis laid on utility is of the nature of a disease and decay; it is not an undeveloped it is an effete condition - but I have not thought it out.

(Pearson, 7 July 1886)

Art should grow organically, and Schreiner's adherence to this principle, in line with Coleridge's theory of organicism, led to a disagreement with Havelock Ellis:

You seem to say "I will call 'art' only that artistic creation in which I can clearly see the artist manufacturing the parts and piecing them together; when I cannot see that, though the thing be organic, true, inevitable, like a work of God's I will not call it art; I must see the will shaping it (of course there always has been a will shaping it whether it is visible or not) or I will not call it art". This is of course not in justification of my method but touches what seems to me a weakness and shallowness in your mode of criticism. It is very valuable that the two kinds of art should be distinguished, but not that the one should be called art and the other not art. It would be

better to call the one artificial and the other real art. But that wouldn't be just. I should rather call the one organic and the other inorganic. (Letters, p.99)

This adherence to the 'life' of art, a view of art as organically analogous to God's creations, art for life's sake, sets Schreiner off sharply from spokesmen like Oscar Wilde and George Moore and even Arthur Symons, who praised Schreiner's dreams by the standards of the Symbolist movement. Wilde rejected Schreiner's attitude towards life and art in a pointed epigram:

Olive Schreiner... is staying in the East End because that is the only place where the people do not wear masks upon their faces, but I have told her that I live in the West End because nothing in life interests me but the mask.²⁰

George Moore's comments on Schreiner reveal how the new emphasis on 'intensity' and prose rhythm was separating art from any connection with 'morality':

It is strange that it should have come into anybody's head to think that our morality is dependent upon the books we read, and we begin to wonder how it is that Nature should have implanted so strange an idea into our minds rather than in the minds of some other race. But there it is, a perennial in the Anglo-Saxon mind, bursting into bloom at unexpected intervals.²¹

Moore associates Schreiner with moral earnestness:

I read with disapprobation The Story of an African Farm; descriptions of sandhills and ostriches sandwiched with doubts concerning a future state, and convictions regarding the moral and physical superiority of women in plenty, but of art nothing; that is to say, art as I understand it - rhythmical sequence of events described with rhythmical sequence of phrase. (Moore, pp. 135-136).

But Schreiner's view of art is more like Ruskin's than Moore's; she had read Ruskin's Crown of Wild Olive (Life, p.119). Graham Hough has distinguished between two types of response to art as represented by Ruskin and Roger Fry:

To both aesthetic experience was a necessity. Ruskin represents those to whom it is so necessary that it must be related to all his other deep experiences, religious and ethical: Roger Fry represents those to whom it is so necessary that it must be kept in isolation, pure and unspotted from the world."²²

Schreiner clearly stands with Ruskin. She insists on bringing art into the closest relationship with life, with her deepest perceptions of life in all its aspects, including harsh material concerning the position of women, or political injustice. Art which engages with life in this way must always be committed art with an element of protest. Schreiner's fiction does bear out this aspect of her theory: the 'first South African novel' is a protest novel.

Schreiner also agrees with Ruskin in seeing Nature and Art as complementary; though she rejects Christian dogma, the effect of this rejection was to replace an authoritarian father with an omnipresent force: "There is nothing but God" (Life, p.219). One way of contacting this mysterious hidden eternal force was by creating a formal order in art which would confirm, and be analogous to, the formal order of Nature:

The experience of this formal order is accompanied by an intense sense of the power that has given rise to it.

Like the natural theologians of the eighteenth century Ruskin finds that the study of the order of Nature leads to God; though he studies it under a different aspect, and it is revealed to him in beauty of design rather than in practical adaptation. (Hough, p.165)

This perception is echoed in a colonial context by Waldo's perception in the African Farm:

A gander drowns itself in our dam. We take it out, and open it on the bank, and kneel, looking at it. Above are the organs divided by delicate tissues; below are the intestines artistically curved in a spiral form, and each tier covered by a delicate network of blood-vessels standing out red against the faint blue background. Each branch of the blood-vessels is comprised of a trunk, bifurcating and rebifurcating into the most delicate, hairlike threads, symmetrically arranged. We are struck with its singular beauty. And, moreover, — and here we drop from our kneeling into a sitting posture — this also we remark: of that same exact shape and outline is our thorn-tree seen against the sky in mid-winter: of that shape also is delicate metallic tracery between our rocks; in that exact path does our water flow when without a furrow we lead it from the dam; so shaped are the antlers of the horned beetle. How are these things related that such a deep union should exist between them all? Is it chance? Or, are they not all the fine branches of one trunk, whose sap flows through us all? That would explain it.

(SAF, p.142)

Instinctively apprehended design is found in Nature and convinces Schreiner of an underlying unity and a mysterious invisible creative power. She discussed the formal aspect of prose, its 'structure', in the same terms:

Long ago I used to think that was quite a discovery of mine that there is as much structure in prose as in verse. The difference is that in verse... you are able to see clearly by looking at the work what the structure is, whereas in prose (of course I am not speaking of unstructural prose, but of prose which has an artistic structure) it is sometimes next to impossible to discover the law according to which it has been constructed. Take the last passage in Elle et Lui,

take the first three chapters in Revelations in our English translation, one feels the structure, but I have not yet been able to bring sufficient analysis to bear on them to discover their law. With regard to my own work, I feel what I must, and what I must not do; I know perfectly well when a line or a sentence breaks the law, and it causes me agony to let it go. But what law it breaks I don't know. I suppose that I could find out if I gave enough time to the analysis. (Letters, p.69-70)

Style, or prose texture, is discussed in the same terms by Schreiner, as two basic, contrasted styles which are used with instinctive appropriateness:

I will explain to you about my style when I see you. I never know why I write things in a certain way when I write them, but I can generally find out if I think afterwards. What you mean is what I call 'writing ribbed'. I don't know when I invented that term for a certain style of writing. I am changing a whole chapter of From Man to Man from what I call the plain into the 'ribbed' style. Sometimes the plain is right, sometimes the ribbed. I think I generally write descriptions in the plain and philosophise or paint thought in the ribbed. (You know in knitting there are two stitches, one makes a plain surface and the other makes ribs. Ribbed knitting goes up and down, up and down). (Letters, p.38)

It should be possible to analyse Schreiner's fiction in these terms: to determine how contrasted prose textures function in relation to the structure and meaning of different sections of her narrative.

Schreiner clearly used autobiographical incidents and people she knew to create her characters and plot, and she constantly mentions this: that certain characters are based on herself plus another, or a relative by marriage, or she recalls certain actual incidents, like the one in which an old woman is refused a place in a carriage in

African Farm (Ellis, HRC). She makes it clear that although she 'loves' her characters, this is because they are 'not myself', because they offer an escape from the self. She insists, too, that if autobiographical elements intrude at the wrong moment, they can spoil the work:

What you say is quite true. I put that in the last day I was at Southbourne. I was thinking of my sister Ettie and I knew it wasn't art and that I'd have to take it out. What, I think, you don't see is that just at that point a 'buffer' is necessary — if you know what a 'buffer' is; it's something that you put in to raise (or to lower) the tone to a certain level or to break a monotony of feeling. All through the book I have buffers that are only put in provisionally. I am taking out one because by raising the tone of the dialogue I can do without it. Sometimes a buffer comes in with grand effect (like the knocking scene in Macbeth). That buffer doesn't answer because it isn't related to the story, it's related to my sister Ettie. (Letters, pp. 97-98)

Autobiographical material has to be used with a mixture of sympathy and impersonality; it is also subordinated to the design of the work as a whole. This idea of 'buffers' and variations of tone can also be used to illuminate the fiction.

Another criterion Schreiner often refers to is 'interest'. Fiction, any writing, has to hold the interest; a narrative should also work up to a strong ending:

Have you been reading that story of Eden Philpotts in The Fortnightly? I miss out all his descriptions of scenery (which seem to me tall talk) and a great deal of the chat between the country folk....I've read it all but the last chapters, but I can see he's going to make it fail at the end. Only the great writer of genius can rise to the height of the great moment in tragedy. The secondrate writer may be quite as good in the beginning of his story, and almost

as good all through, but when he comes by the great moment, he stops — just like the secondrate horse who goes splendidly till he comes to the high hedge — and then stands stock still. He has worked up the material for a tremendous ending, if he knows how to manage it.

(To WPS, UCT, November 1906?)

The ability of any piece of writing to interest the reader will depend on the writer's own interest, and his ability to record that interest simply and vividly:

All—I mean good—travels must be a simple record of what a person liked, disliked, and was interested in. One mustn't think of the writing— just say what one feels. What I find is that people will not put things down simply enough. I saw this so strongly after the war. A squad of young uneducated Boers would sit in my room and recount to each other and me their doings and adventures. Anything more thrilling, more wonderful, if their words could just have been taken down by a [stenographer], has never been written. The scenes, the facts are imprinted on my mind for ever. One of them, General Malan, was so wonderful [that] I got him to go to Cape Town and got a shorthand-writer to take down what he said, word for word. I begged him to talk just as he had talked to me—but he tried to talk like a book, and the thing was less than worthless.

(Letters, p.318)

Although Schreiner is talking about travel-writing here, and vigour and simplicity characterise her own non-fiction, she seems to value these qualities in any prose. At the end of her life her objections to twentieth century fiction were partly based on its lack of simplicity:

I've been reading a new book (Night and Day, by Virginia Woolf) they say is like Jane Austen....All that glorious simplicity and directness of language and effect, which is in all great works of art, seem always wanting in twentieth century art. (Letters, p.363)

She discusses her response to the English Review in 1908:

Words have ceased for these debilitated men and women to be the external form in which deep thoughts and intense feelings or clear calm perceptions were forced to clothe themselves that they might become tangible to other minds. They are an end in themselves....The only thing they seem to like to write about much is madness. Now madness is easy to write about—because most people who read are sane, so they cannot prove what is written about madness is false. The verse is too loathsome for any words. There's one fine little story, full of nature and strength, though the subject is repulsive—"Second Best", by D.H. Lawrence. (Letters, p.320)

Schreiner's objections to obscurity of expression are related to a dislike of 'repulsive' subject matter or characters; she believes in an art that retains a belief in beauty as a human potentiality:

I have been reading The Way of All Flesh by Butler. I think the man Ernest is almost too weak and disgusting to be real, and all the characters in the book are so repulsive. God knows I have seen the shady side of life and looked it in the face; but, mixed with the evil, the base, the disloyal, there is so much of infinite beauty and greatness and loveliness in human nature; even in the wrong-doing of those you love there come in elements that make your heart more tender over them! But his characters repulse and disgust you all the time.

(Letters, p.356)

Although Schreiner insists on fidelity to 'life', to the haphazard and unexpected in life, most notably in her preface to African Farm, she objects here to a 'repulsiveness' which will alienate the reader, and she was not in sympathy with Zola and the 'naturalist' school of fiction (Letters, p.129). She insists that art should represent the ideal as well as the real :

The ideal in the sense in which I use the term is attainable. The ideal is the highest conception of the most completely beautiful and satisfactory condition which the imagination is able to produce.

(Pearson, 5 November 1886)

That vision of the human soul which I have seen slowly growing before me for years and years, forming ever since I was a little child, is the work of art! The perfect, the beautiful, which alone I desire....It only haunts me, as an ideal.

(Letters, p. 165)

Schreiner's theory of art thus sees fiction as not only a record of the way things are, and as a protest against the shortcomings and injustices of the way things are, but also as a vision of the way they could ideally be. This commitment to registering both the disasters and disappointments of reality and the ultimately ideal realm produces certain effects in her fiction, and is related to her discussion of her own style as composed of contrasting type of prose, 'plain' and 'ribbed'.

Schreiner's artistic theory is committed to a view of art which keeps it firmly rooted in social realities, but allows it a role in suggesting the universal harmony and underlying unity in which Schreiner, like many other Victorians who had rejected Christian dogma, still believed. Schreiner copied out on the back of her governess's Handbook of the English Tongue in 1876 the following lines from Pope's An Essay on Man :

All nature is but art unknown to thee
All chance direction that thou canst not see
All discord harmony not understood
All partial evil universal good. (Epistle 1. 11. 284-287)

This sense of partial 'evils' being resolved in a unity beyond human knowledge is important in all her writing. Art is understood as one expression of "a will to discover the universal harmony towards which (her) age aspired" (Buckley, VT p. 150). To the Victorians generally, art is an expression of a strong individuality, and its vigour and sensory directness are aimed at arousing a sympathetic emotional response in the reader:

...the individual manner of seeing and feeling, portrayed by a strong imagination in bold images that have struck the senses, which creates all the charms of poetry. A great reader is always quoting the description of another's emotions; a strong imagination delights to paint its own.

A writer of genius makes us feel; an inferior author reason.²³

Schreiner's conception of art rejects a sterile aestheticism, and rejects a 'repulsive' naturalism; it strives to bring social function and artistic design into a vital relationship; to relate the individual to a shared human nature; to put individual failures and social injustices inside the framework of a visionary idealism without losing sight of their immediate **causes**. **She acknowledges** the role of the instinctive and unconscious **elements** in **the** artistic process, but also describes the steps by **which** **creativity** moves from the private into the public sphere through the **stages of production**, and the degrees by which an author moves from creative empathy to critical detachment about her own work. **Paradoxically**, her 'truthful' rendering of her own experience in a colony **put her in touch** with a broader Victorian sensibility and experience, **because colonialism** was only one extreme feature of Victorian society as a whole.

(v) Schreiner as a colonial artist

I have been arguing that the colonial artist in many ways experiences the difficulties of the provincial artist in an intensified form. Schreiner, as a South African woman writer, experienced the lack of access to education and the isolation of a provincial artist, as well as the difficulties of establishing vital links with a community which could offer her an emotional as well as intellectual kinship. This led to a meshing of the traditional Bidungsroman pattern of growth with a tragic pattern of conflict and doom.

Schreiner's view of art shows many affinities with the mainstream of Victorian aesthetic theory, especially in its stress on the social utility of art. Once again the position of the colonial artist introduces certain central modifying and inverting factors: chiefly in the way in which the colonial artist extends the idea of protest against social conditions to the oppression or neglect of the colonial people themselves: protest becomes a report back to the metropolitan centre and an indictment of the oppressive and exploitative Empire. In Schreiner's fiction this process was at its most intense in Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland, but all of her fiction reveals a strong element of protest against social injustice in one form or another. Her writing moves along a spectrum from pure protest to pure vision, each work combining these elements in different ways and proportions.

Her theory of art also reveals the way in which intellectual and artistic activity could heal some of the breaches experienced by the colonial artist. A dissolving of self into invented identities could relieve the burden of selfhood :

Just now I do not exist; my book exists; that is all, as far as my daily life goes: Bertie sitting there that hot day in the bush, with John-Ferdinand. That is why writing makes me happy because then my own miserable little life is not.

(Letters, p.50)

Her theory points out that writing relies on the assumption of a shared humanity, and as communication it reaches out to shatter the walls around individuals: to someone who experienced a great deal of intellectual and emotional isolation this was obviously a consoling

aspect of artistic activity. Through the activity of protest Schreiner could feel that she was identifying herself with other oppressed groups: women, Jews, indigenous communities, the Boer in certain circumstances. By becoming the mouthpiece of these groups she creates a sense of solidarity and community with them, overriding self-pity and individual victimization.

Colonial art, a particular variant of provincial art, thus offers the artist certain strengths as well as difficulties. Distance from the centre encouraged self-reliance (the subject of Schreiner's favourite Emerson essay) and the confidence of one who has had to work things out for herself. In his essay on provincial art Kenneth Clark mentions that "Truth to nature and individual judgment...are the recurrent catchwords of provincial art in its struggle to free itself from the dominating style".²⁴ Schreiner's relationship with the aesthetic current of the 'decadence' in the English 'nineties reveals one of the strengths of provincial art:

At times when the artist of the centre has grown too intent on the abstract achievements of style, the provincial recalls him to the respectable theory that art is, after all, concerned with what we see, and what interests us in life.
(Clark, p.6)

Schreiner's manifesto/preface to African Farm claims that the artist must paint "what lies before him". Schreiner was enabled to speak to a whole generation of people at the metropolitan centre about the issues which they felt to be crucial in their own lives by the strength and directness of colonial art:

But on the whole it has been the strength of provincial artists to cut through the sophistries which protect a self-perpetuating art. This sudden application of common-sense to a situation which has become over-elaborate has been recognised since classical antiquity as the great provincial achievement, amounting at times to genius. (p.6)

Clark has other things to say about provincial art which are of relevance to Schreiner's work. One way in which the provincial artist

can escape the influence of the centre is through concreteness (Schreiner's attention to African landscapes, vegetation, ostriches, milkbushes, and local idiom); another is through having a story to tell; another is through lyricism: "Provincial painting is at its best when it is poetical painting" (p.7). The term 'lyrical' "can be applied to a work which expresses a single mood or emotion, complete in itself, lasting only as long as the emotion lasts" (Schreiner's allegories); "secondly it implies that the work, like a song, does not aspire to pure form, but is a blending of two elements: or in other words that the associations which give the work its poignancy are not hidden within the form, but openly confessed" (pp. 7-8). This second definition of lyricism suggests a quality in Schreiner's fiction: the blending of suggestive situations and images with other, more discursive ways of approaching the subject 'hidden' in the images. Clark cites Blake as a good example of the lyrical painter of this kind, one who "maintained that his visible ideas came to him, clear and complete, out of the inexhaustible reservoir of his imagination" (p.8). Schreiner also maintained that the original impulse for her writing often came to her in an unconscious "flash" in which the whole vision was complete:

...the whole of this little Prelude flashed on me. You know those folded up views of places that one buys; you take hold of one end and all the pictures unfold one after the other as quick as light. That was how it flashed on me....I just sat down and wrote it out. And do you know what I found out — after I'd written it? — that it's a picture in small, a kind of allegory, of the life of the woman in the book!!
(Letters, p.291)

Clark defines the "characteristics of a positive and independent provincial art; it tells a story; it takes pleasure in the facts; it is lyrical, and it achieves a visionary intensity" (p.9). That is a fine description of Schreiner's art. He summarises the provincial artist's dilemma: "On the one hand he cannot compete with metropolitan art; on the other he cannot ignore it" (p.12). The provincial artist is sometimes under the influence of the metropolitan style or mood

without being aware of it: this might be said of Schreiner's 'dreams', which were certainly in the pre-Raphaelite mood and style, were praised by Arthur Symons and published by Wilde, and have perhaps dated more than the longer fictions which include dream/allegorical elements.

Schreiner's work has a special relationship with the Victorian centre, which exerted a practical and political influence as well as an aesthetic one. Schreiner was defining herself against it, intensifying certain elements and rejecting or reacting against others. Being an isolated colonial woman writer caused certain problems and offered certain ways of resolving those problems. Expressing 'her self', her criterion for relevance to the lives of others and for 'true' art, seems to have meant expressing not one but many 'selves' which were felt as potentialities: the interaction between those fictional selves could set up a complex model of the possibilities of experience in a colony.

Schreiner's childhood and girlhood in an African colony stapled broad concepts of 'universal' human nature to a set of particulars. She gained access to the Victorian spirit of protest and social reform by living under the particular restraints of women in rural colonial society. And yet, paradoxically, the colonial frankness of her voice re-united her with the metropolitan centre.

Notes

1. See the reactions of Monica St. John in "Diamond Fields" to the wealthy, protected world of the fair lady (p. 18).
2. See an unpublished paper on Schreiner by Preben Kaarsholm, University of Roskilde, Denmark, called "Schreiner and Imperialism". Also his "Lutheranism and Imperialism in the Novels of Olive Schreiner", in Kultur og Samfund 1/83.
3. John Lucas, The Literature of Change, studies in the Nineteenth-Century Provincial Novel (Sussex: Harvester Press, 1977) p.ix.
4. Other ways in which the colonial female novelist modifies the European Bildungsroman pattern have been discussed by Margaret K. Butcher, "From Maurice Guest to Martha Quest : The female Bildungsroman in Commonwealth Literature", World Literature Written in English, Special Issue, guest editor Patrick Holland, Vol. 21, No.2 (Summer 1982) pp. 254-262.
5. John Bayley, The Uses of Division, Unity and Disharmony in Literature (London : Chatto and Windus, 1976) ,p.19. Bayley's argument is generally illuminating of Schreiner's position and fiction.
6. This pattern is modified by From Man to Man. See Chapter 7 below.
7. E. Auerbach, Mimesis, (Princeton : University Press, 1968), p.18.
8. William Adams, Sacred Allegories (London : Longmans, Green, 1914). The book is in the Cradock Public Library's collection of Schreiner's books. Schreiner had told S.C. Cronwright that it had influenced her allegories.
9. J.H. Raleigh, "Victorian Morals and the Modern Novel", in The Victorian Novel (ed.) Ian Watt (London : O.U.P., 1971), p. 481.
10. See Robert M. Young, "The Impact of Darwin on Conventional Thought", in The Victorian Crisis of Faith (London: S.P.C.K. 1970)(ed.)A. Symondson, pp. 13-35. Young says that Darwinism was used as a basis for the "Social Darwinism" which "provided the intellectual underpinnings for defences of imperialism in

England and the so-called robber barons in America". This movement, with which Karl Pearson, Schreiner's intimate friend in London, was later linked, has now been attacked for its tendency to justify racism and controlled breeding. But Darwin's Origin of Species, Young continues, was also seen by Marx as "The book which contains the basis in natural history for our view". This ideological divergence from a common source in Darwin's theory is relevant to Schreiner's fiction, which also contains both theories of a natural progressive dominance of a superior species and a defence of all human rights, especially those of the neglected and oppressed. See discussion in this chapter.

11. T.H. Buckley, The Triumph of Time, (Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard Univ. Press, 1966),p.48.
12. T.H. Buckley, The Victorian Temper (Cambridge : C.U.P., 1981), p.114.
13. Edward Carpenter, England's Ideal (London : Swan Sonnenschein, Lowrey & Co, 1887), p.54. This is underlined by Schreiner in her copy of the book in the Cradock Collection.
14. Raymond Chapman, The Victorian Debate (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1968),p.311.
15. Amy Cruse, The Victorians and Their Books (London : Allan & Urwin, 1935),p.246.
16. E.R. Curtius, Essays on European Literature, (transl.) M. Kowal (Princeton : University Press, 1973),p.214.
17. Geoffrey Tillotson, A view of Victorian Literature (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1978),p.4.
18. A key text here is Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin, which Schreiner gave as a prize to her pupil, Willie Martin, at Ratel Hoek, see Life, p.130.
19. Ellis, The nineteenth century : a Dialogue in Utopia, (London: Grant Richards, 1900), p.152; the book is in the Cradock Collection.

20. Quoted by W.B. Yeats, "Four Years : 1887-1891" in Yeats : Selected Prose (ed.) A. Norman Jeffares (London: MacMillan, 1964),p.64.
21. George Moore, Confessions of a Young Man (London: Heinemann, 1952),p.122.
22. Graham Hough, Image and Experience (London: Duckworth, 1960), pp.162-163.
23. Mary Wollstonecraft, Posthumous Works, Vol. II, pp.194-5, lines underlined by Schreiner, Cradock Collection.
24. Kenneth Clark, "Provincialism", English Association Presidential Address (London: Nov. 1962),p.5.

CHAPTER 2

WOMAN INTO WRITER: THE SHAPING OF A LIFE.

(i) Evangelical inheritance

The Reverend Samuel Lyndall, Schreiner's maternal grandfather, said in his leavetaking sermon at Moorfield Tabernacle, London, in 1796:

I love in preaching the Gospel, to begin where the Almighty himself began, and that is in eternity.¹

That statement breathes Schreiner's spirit of confidence in eternity as a first principle and she, as a writer, also begins "where the Almighty himself began." The artist, like the preacher, "must set out to be a god of some sort and impose the authority and organisation of his art upon the world."² Schreiner inherited, on both sides of her family, the most striking characteristics of the nineteenth-century evangelical movement, one of "enormous psychological power in the lives of individuals and of great physical energy in its capacity to spread and circulate through all parts of society."³ Like many Victorians who experienced painful early conflict with orthodox Christian dogma, Schreiner retained a strong sense of 'mission' as a thinker and writer: "A social militant and a religious militant have much in common."⁴

It is not only her militancy which links Schreiner with the Evangelical movement which first delivered her parents to Africa in 1838. Many features of her ideology, and hence her writing, derive from the character of Victorian Evangelicalism.⁵ In contrast to the Oxford Movement, which was elitist in character, Victorian Evangelicalism was a popular, proletarian movement. It could take into its ranks a shoemaker in Fellbach, Württemberg, Gottlob Schreiner, and a shoemaker in Lincolnshire, Samuel Lyndall. Those who denounced missionaries were apt to do so in terms of class, calling them "didactic artisans" or "delirious mechanics."⁶ Missionary work was not only an escape from industrial England, it was also an escape from "the submerged mass of the labouring poor" (Warren, p.63).

The egalitarian, democratic, individualistic nature of the movement was perpetuated in Schreiner's view of society and of the audience she hoped to reach in her fiction. To her, all men and women should have equal opportunities: her depiction of Lyndall and Waldo is a protest against the lack of such opportunities for both women and rural labourers. She said it was important to keep the price of African Farm low because it was meant to reach out to a similarly deprived audience:

I insisted on An African Farm being published at 1/- because the book was published by me for working men. I wanted to feel sure boys like Waldo could buy a copy, and feel they were not alone. (Letters, p.209)

A similar emphasis underlies all her writing on South African affairs: the need for a basic equality among men, ensured by an equal franchise:

I am a one adult one vote man. I believe that every adult inhabiting a land irrespective of race, sex, wealth or poverty, should have the vote; and that it is a power more needed by the poor, the weak, and feeble than the wealthy or strong. (To WPS, UCT, 12 June 1898)

Schreiner's continual reference to, and quotation from the Bible, despite her rejection of orthodox dogma, is a variation of the Evangelical emphasis on the Scriptures, "The Word," rather than "ecclesiastical authority as the source and test of religious truth" (Best, p.39). Individual reading and interpretation of the Bible provided the rationale for rebellion and dissent. Schreiner often quotes biblical texts in the context of her writing:

I'll be glad to get back to my novel. I love it more than I love anything in the world, more than any place or person. I've never loved any work so and I haven't cared for it all the years. I've only cared for people. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me."
(To Ellis, HRC, 1890).

This implies that the artist owes full and total allegiance to his art, just as the Christian must abjure all others to follow Christ. Schreiner sometimes makes this connection between art and religion

quite explicit:

I suppose no one understands just how one feels to one's work, that it's a kind of religion to me. That it lies in a region where neither praise nor blame nor money or no money can ever touch it, as far as one's own feelings are concerned. (To Betty Molteno, UCT, 10 November 1898).

Schreiner's chapter headings often express a satirical attitude towards received dogma by modifying biblical quotations, thus indicating that her fiction seeks a new, undogmatic basis for action and judgment. To Dissenters this basis was always found by reference to an 'inner light', and Schreiner speaks of her decision to publish Trooper Peter Halket in the same terms:

At last the matter decided itself within me. Don't think I mean anything supernatural takes place; though that decision which one's nature gives when one tries to silence the lower and purely personal interest and to allow the higher elements in it to adjudicate among themselves is what the ancients called the "Voice of God", and is so to a certain extent; because it [is] the highest and for each soul within itself, the most ultimate injunction it can ever receive. (To WPS, UCT, June 1898).

Schreiner retained the strong independence of view, the dislike of established authority, and the attention to an 'inner voice' which had characterised her Dissenting ancestors.

Schreiner's rebellion against her parents' religious authority was a later variant of a pattern of dissent and rebellion, a progressive movement away from inherited dogmas, which was built into the Victorian evangelical movement, and was demonstrated by her grandfather's religious career as well as that of her own parents. They all believed that the inner voice demanded a splintering off from an earlier group or allegiance. Samuel Lyndall, born into a Wesleyan family, "by the time he moved to London's East End at the end of the century ... had become bitter against the Wesleyans and called himself a dissenter, an independent and a Methodist Calvinist " (OS, p. 33). Lyndall's

mentor, George Whitfield, had himself broken with Wesley when the latter accepted Calvin's teaching of predestination. Predestination is the undigestible particle of old Otto's religion in the African Farm, and the crux of Waldo's rejection of his father's faith.

A similar pattern of sectional disaffection is revealed in Gottlob Schreiner's religious movements. Originally an evangelical Lutheran from Basel Mission House, he objected to certain aspects of the Islington College of the Church Missionary Society. Although he was sent out to Africa under the auspices of the London Missionary Society, he was independent enough to found a mission station which he called Basel, and in 1846 to turn to the Wesleyans, because "examining my view again in the sight of God, I found that I had all along been a Wesleyan in doctrine and principle as far as I know it" (OS, p.40).

Personal independence of religious traditions within the family characterised Rebecca Schreiner's later conversion to Roman Catholicism. She gave an American visitor an account of the reasons for her conversion. After her husband's death she had turned to a friend for help, but when this 'friend' proved 'unfaithful' to her, she had lost faith in man and in God. She then spent Christmas at the home of a kind Catholic friend, and her interest in Catholicism began at that point. Her affirmation of autonomy is clear in her statement that her children had their religion, but this was the true one for her. As in her daughter's case, matters of faith are affected by personal relationships, and Rebecca reveals a sensitivity to betrayal which would be echoed by Schreiner. Clearly, Schreiner was not the only one who needed to detach herself from family pressures by means of a shift of faith.⁷ Even Ettie, the orthodox elder sister and persecutor of Olive's young freethinking, could in later life confess that she had long felt herself in sympathy with the views expressed in the African Farm, and had become something of a free-thinker herself (Letters, p.179).

The evangelical insistence on individual freedom of conscience, its belief in "a world in which the Holy Spirit encouraged religious free enterprise" (Best, p.51), provided the background to Schreiner's own spiritual self-assurance. As someone complained of the evangelical

General Gordon in Egypt: "A man who habitually consults the prophet Isaiah when he is in a difficulty is not apt to obey the orders of anyone " (Best, p.55). Schreiner's earliest journal entry at the age of ten reveals a passionate admiration for the solitary conscience:

From the time when Moses wandered in the lonely wilderness of Sinea to the days when Martin Luther wept and praid in the convent cells and closters of Aubse down to this nineteenth centure all great trouths have ferst seen the light, founddees of all great works been laid in hours of soluted and silence- whether it were in the heart of great cities or the solitu of everlast mountains all the greates trouths and works the world has known have first been laid or had there power laid in hours of solude and quiet.⁸

This journal entry contains the most powerful tenet of Schreiner's thought as well as the first sweep of her mature syntax and rhetorical patterning.

Although the strong reaction against Imperialism in our time has tended to discredit missionary activity (First and Scott's biography of Schreiner provides evidence of this) because of its imposition of a Western culture on an indigenous one, the missionary spirit at its best did stand for human solidarity, for Schreiner's own belief in a universal human nature:

If in no other way, than as pioneers of the truth that this is one world and that humanity is one, missions have been in the vanguard of the best thinking of modern times (Warren, p.58).

This is borne out by the fact that non-racialism in a country like South Africa has often been connected with missionary foundations. Schreiner is in a missionary tradition when she affirms basic human rights, and protests against the erosion of the rights and possessions of indigenous Africans. As late as 1936 a black spokesman could write:

The sole agency which has been continuously and directly at work in the interest of the Abantu has been the missionary

Church.The history of modern civilization in its best sense has been the history of evangelization. It is the missionary who civilizes a country. He creates the conditions that make advancement possible....The missionaries are charged with entering the arena of politics when they happen to raise their voice of protest against any wrong to have been suffered by the under-dog - the inarticulate black community.⁹

The Evangelical movement, then, can be seen as a shaping force in Schreiner's life, encouraging an anti-authoritarian spirit and flowing into her own firmest principles, even though elements of Christian dogma such as predestination, which outraged her sense of freedom and justice, often made her childhood "bleak and dark" to her (Letters, p.266). Harsh parental discipline and an emphasis on self-suppression were also central tenets of Evangelical family life. Rebecca's letters emphasise the need to 'break' the individual will, both of the Christian to God and the child to the parent; the relationships are seen as analogous:

I am so lonely and sad in this dark place but I believe it is the will of God I should stay here a little longer and see if it may not do me good and therefore I ought to submit patiently should I not? Yes but our hearts are so self willed are they not? It is so hard sometimes for the child to break its own will and yield to the parent so hard for the parent to yield to God.¹⁰

It is not difficult to see that such power struggles could turn punitive both toward the self and toward the 'child' when God the Father's commands proved too demanding or difficult. Rebecca's words contain the germ of Schreiner's lifelong concern with the conflict between children and adults, the individual and authority, the need for self-expression and the duty to renounce the desires of the self—these are the essential conflicts of her fiction. Such a conflict is mentioned early in her life by her mother:

Willie is fat and sweet; Emily [Olive] still rather self-willed and needing much patient firmness. It is however very pleasing to see the effort the dear little thing makes to conquer herself. She often asks "Mama, have I been a little better today?" (Findlay, p.124).

Emily (Olive) was two years old at the time. It is not surprising that she named one of her favourite mærkats "In-bred-sin" in later life.¹¹ But she retained the definition of 'goodness' as 'unselfishness' and self-suppression, and this was the crux of her relationship and discussions with Havelock Ellis. Many letters between them focus on this issue, with Ellis sometimes agreeing with her view, but finding it impossible to extract from her a statement of her own needs, and whether they were satisfied. She writes:

I don't think you are good in the common way. When I say 'good' I mean good to me. And by 'good' generally I mean unselfish. (Letters, p.26)

Ellis pinpointed the nature of this conflict in Schreiner's thought, saying that self-denial is necessary for religious experience, but disillusioning in morality:

In religion, the mystical idea, Hinton's idea, is the only true one: the negation of the self, the individual.... The mistake that mystics tend to make, the more thorough-going and apparently logical they are, is to apply it to morals and society, when it only brings disillusion. But in religion we must attain to it. It's the only thing that satisfies, (HRC, 1884)

This Christian dualism of lower (physical) desire and higher (spiritual) self-renouncing spiritual love informs Schreiner's attitudes towards love in her own life and is an ideological element within her fiction. After a separation from an employer on whom she had a romantic crush, she writes in her journal at Ganna Hoek:

I have not yet had a letter, and I have a kind of quiet pleasure in the past that I did not expect to have. Those last [days] were as good as anything that I deserved to get; what was my love but selfishness, not quite selfish either, though I don't know if I shall find it easy here to get out of myself. (GH Journal, 16 April, 1879).

Much later, travelling in Italy in 1887, she writes in her journal:

I've got a beautiful letter from my little mother. Oh once and forever to crush one's own heart, to have no self left, yet that is death. (Ital. Journal).

That paradox, or double-bind, informs the fictional careers of her protagonists, sometimes within one character, sometimes illuminated by contrasting figures. The conflict is between the will and the imagination, a quest for power and self-denial, social reform and mystical resignation. Here is a journal entry which describes a moment very similar to Waldo's death-scene in African Farm:

I had such a delightful hour this evening sitting on the dam wall— the sunlight on the mimosas. Ah! it is sweetest when we drop earth from us. (LK Journal, 10 January 1880)

That seems to be a moment of mystical union with the spirit behind nature; the other, moral (for Ellis, mistaken) kind of denial of self is seen as an aim and a duty, and is connected with Christian ideas of charity and Schreiner's customary evolutionary idea of progress toward a 'higher' state:

What you say about jealousy is exactly what I feel. When we rise to the last highest, white-heat of love, all selfishness dies away. (Letters, p.21)

Another emphasis which reached Schreiner through her missionary ancestors was a stress on labour, the ceaseless activity in the field full of folk which the missionary saw as his task. A letter to young Kate Schreiner from her grandmother Catherine Lyndall tells her

...how infinitely preferable my dear child is your life of hallowed usefulness to the clumsy, listless half-awake manner in which so many young ladies drag through the best part of their earthly existence, or the frivolous (sic) and the giddy who are ever in the chase after pleasures and never finding it.... (Findlay, p.113)

One catches here the tone and principles of Schreiner's Woman and Labour, which contrasts a life of fashionable parasitism with rewarding work, and which sees the worst possible punishment for women as an exclusion from honourable toil. Schreiner always speaks of her own writing as her 'work': inspirational flashes are mentioned as origins, but her comments on her own writing refer most often to laborious revisions and condensations. She also distinguishes between different kinds of 'work': it may be reading, thinking, writing stories in the imagination (composing), or 'writing out', which includes the writing of an original draft and subsequent revisions. Specific kinds demand different energies at different times:

I am still dissatisfied with myself. I am really going to work and not to think. Even hard dry thinking does not help me in my work now. That is not my work at present. (LK Journal, 1 November 1880)

Her 'work', like that of the missionary, is a God-given task, the talent which it is death to hide, and she often discusses it in those terms. Her sense of waste at being too ill to work stems from this sense of a duty to alleviate the 'suffering' of others. But here too, in the area of artistic motive, there is a clash between the desire to serve others and the need for personal immortality, which is typically seen as having to be crushed, though it is the only way for a non-Christian to defeat death:

Horrible desire for immortality last night; hope I shall die suddenly. Anything else is easily given up for truth— but immortality. (LK Journal, 21 November, 1880)

At this time Schreiner was writing the chapter of African Farm called "Waldo's Stranger", which contains the Hunter Allegory.

The treatment of death in Schreiner's fiction is also partly shaped by her Evangelical inheritance. Pre-destination made death, and hence time itself, terrifying. Her fiction seeks ways of escaping such terror, and though the answers she finds might be 'new-tinted' the basic confidence that death was a conquerable fact was built into Evangelical thought and literature. "Death had no terrors for the Evangelical", for whom it was a great but conquerable fact of life (Best, p.55). Infant mortality being what it was, the Schreiner family letters are often concerned with family bereavements, and the need to overcome bitterness against God when children died young. Gottlob Schreiner writes to Kate on her 27th birthday:

My children one and all lie upon my heart—4 yrs they are in heaven where temptation—sin—sorrow and death cannot come. I converse with them—Gottlob—Oliver—Emile—Cameron my sweet ones, everything connected with their short lives is so full of pleasure and only pleasure I had almost said, and the prospect only joyful—when I think of some day dreams connected with them all they indeed are cut short and pleasant fancies entertained not realised but would I call them back?

(Findlay, 24 July 1865)

Apart from the way in which Gottlob's epistolary style displays the staple of old Otto's style in African Farm, his attitude toward his young children's deaths is not very different from Schreiner's own response to her young sister Ellie's death, which, though it 'made a free-thinker' of her, also persuaded her that death could have no terrors for her if it could take such a beautiful and perfect being (Life, pp. 218-221). Death is still viewed as a liberation from earthly life.

The Schreiner family letters refer to death constantly, but in different tones, ranging from the morbid delight of the young Theo Schreiner to pious consolations offered to bereaved parents. Theo's comments are the most entertaining:

I forgot to tell you that poor Mr. Daumas' mother died from joy at seeing him on his return to France. (Findlay, 7 July 1856)

and

I suppose there will be many deaths of drowning for all the rivers and spruits are very full.

(Findlay, 7 September 1857)

Similarly, Schreiner expects death at any moment, and writes at the age of 25:

I have such a longing for friendship, someone to talk really to. I wonder if it is all a delusion. Even any kind of love I want. Death is so near, and I have loved so little and been loved so little.

(LK Journal, 31 December 1880)

The prominence of death-bed scenes in her fiction (Lyndall's in African Farm and Bertie's projected death-scene in a brothel in From Man to Man) was in line with the homiletic tradition of Evangelical literature, and the cult of Victorian pathos which made Dickens's death-bed scenes so popular. "Evangelical literature and Evangelical diaries and biographies are full of death-bed scenes which may seem mawkish to our unaccustomed eyes" (Best, p.55), but they were recounted at length in order to be enjoyed. Such scenes were often used for didactic purposes, and Schreiner also uses her death-bed scenes to convey a deeply felt 'message': in African Farm Lyndall speaks the message of service and charity as she dies, and in From Man to Man Rebekah envisages the golden future of sexual equality at her sister's death-bed. In Trooper Peter Halket the death of Peter is a moral indictment of an inhuman political policy. Such messages gain their urgency and emotional impact by being connected with a death, as in Evangelical children's

literature, of which a childhood book of Schreiner's, given her by her father, is one example.¹² Schreiner discussed her own propensity for death-bed drama in a letter to Karl Pearson about the projected ending of From Man to Man:

Afterwards when she is lying with her arms around her sister, the sister dies. "Gravedigger again!" you will say. But to me, there is nothing sad, nothing depressing in that scene. It fills me with joy and exhilaration. What is death!

And yet we thank God ever,
That dead men rise up never;
And ever the weariest river,
Winds somewhere safe to sea.

It is not the death of the individual that is the sad thing in human life; but the death of the ideal. All one desires is that as long as one lives one should keep up faith in it, and the strife after it. One would like to think that after the change of death one's mind's work, like the material of one's body, might form a matrix from which a higher type of existence might spring. (Pearson, 10 July 1886)

That passage combines the spirit of Evangelical literature with the doctrines of Herbert Spencer.

Schreiner's characters, like those of Dickens, spring from the character types found within an Evangelical spectrum. Geoffrey Best speaks of Shaftesbury's lack of worldly wisdom, and mentions that "Evangelical saints were always being taken in by hypocritical rogues" (p. 53), which is precisely the situation between old Otto and Blenkins in African Farm. Blenkins, and Schreiner's other religious hypocrites (particularly in Undine), are natural outgrowths of an element within Evangelical Christianity:

Evangelicals did talk much more about piety, did more eagerly make profession of their faith, did flaunt their familiarity with sacred persons and symbols more than non-Evangelical Christians. There was a kind of fatal loquacity about them which turned too easily into cant. (Best, p.49)

When religion became so closely connected with verbal professions of faith and exhibitionism, it was hard to distinguish the saint from the charlatan, which is often part of Schreiner's point. She wishes to return faith to a lived experience, not an outward profession — Blenkins, like Dickens's Chadband, "stands on the hypocritical wing of an army of saints" (Best, p.49).

Many emphases and elements within Schreiner's fiction can thus be seen as potentialities within Evangelicalism; whether they were conscious or unconscious, they play a determining role in the way they shape character oppositions and thematic conflicts.

(ii) The civilising mission

Evangelical Christianity came to Africa as a missionary wing of British Imperialist expansion.¹³ Gottlob and Rebecca Schreiner wanted to proclaim the Christian gospel, but their attempt to follow Wesley's words "The whole world is my parish" (Warren, p.61) was inextricably linked with a broader colonising process which was felt to be spreading "the blessings of Christianity and civilisation" and reproducing a "copy of those laws and institutions, those habits and national characteristics, which have made England so famous as she is" (Warren, p.60). This sense of a civilising mission, frequently expressed by Rebecca Schreiner, and sometimes by Schreiner herself at different stages of her life, and taking different forms in her fiction and non-fiction, was endorsed by Livingstone with regard to the Africans they would meet on the Zambezi of 1858--1863:

We come among them as members of a superior race and servants of a Government that desires to elevate the more degraded portions of the human family.

(Warren, p.65)

That sense of elevating and civilising the backward races, and of Africans, whether Hottentot (Khoi) or Bushman (San), as inhabiting a lower stage of evolutionary progression, is a frequent element of Schreiner's thought, though it was diluted in later writings by her progressive adherence to African causes and to the Boer after the Anglo-Boer War, an event which modified her previously bi-partisan sympathies.

This position of simple evolutionary superiority towards the black African races was complicated by the link between the missionary movement and slave emancipation. The Schreiners travelled out to Africa under the aegis of the controversial Dr John Philip of the London Missionary Society, who would play a central role in slave emancipation. So the British sense of an evolutionary superiority to the indigenous black population was blended with a superior, sometimes moralising attitude towards the Boer, or any colonist, who did not treat his slaves, or blacks generally, as the equal souls which the Christian creed and English liberalism proclaimed them to be. This spirit is caught in a letter by Rebecca Schreiner to her daughter Kate :

You must not judge harshly respecting Mrs John Murray or other ladies who think servants should be treated as servants, not as they often are by missionaries, as beings of a superior order. Missionaries' children very often grow up with false notions on this and other matters referring to the natives. Everything they do or say is interesting, they are placed in quite a different light from a European, viewed with a kind of romance, throwing a halo even around their [?] and deformity. We are to desire their welfare, to regard them with benevolence, but not for their sakes to call good evil and evil good. (Findlay, 18 January 1857)

Rebecca's patronising tone towards the 'unenlightened' colonials is echoed by a journal entry of Schreiner's as a governess, comparing her attitude towards a 'coloured' woman with that of a Boer woman:

This afternoon I helped the poor coloured woman in the road when her baby was born. Mrs. Fouche wouldn't even give

bread or sugar. I sent her my shawl by Platje. I hope I cut the string quite right. (LK Journal, 3 January 1881)

This incident is fictionalised in African Farm, where old Otto's benevolence is balanced by his gullibility towards the blacks:

He stood out at the kraals in the blazing sun, explaining to two Kaffir boys the approaching end of the world. The boys, as they cut the cakes of dung, winked at each other, and worked as slowly as they possibly could; but the German never saw it. (SAF, p.32)

In this, as in other matters, Schreiner's development was a gradual overcoming of inherited attitudes and prejudices, which she describes and illustrates in her introduction to Thoughts on South Africa: "I started in life with as much insular prejudices and racial pride as it is given to any citizen who had never left the little Northern Island to possess". (p.15) She describes her dislike of the Boer as being only a little less than her dislike of Blacks as a child:

I remember it as often a subject of thought within myself at this time, why God had made us, the English, so superior to all other races, and, while feeling it was very nice to belong to the best people on earth, having yet a vague feeling that it was not quite just of God to have made us so much better than all the other nations. I have only to return to the experiences of my early infancy to know what the most fully developed Jingoism means. Later on, my feeling for the Boer changed, as did, later yet, my feeling towards the native races; but this was not the result of any training, but simply of an increased knowledge. (TSA, p.17)

Schreiner consciously sought to overcome childhood prejudice, and though there are traces of residual prejudice toward Boer and/or Black even in her latest novel,¹⁴ which contains a didactic section on the need to abolish racial prejudice, delivered by Rebekah to her children, these early ideological determinants stemming from the missionary's place in the colonial social formation are more

operative in the earlier diction than in the later work. In the same way, Schreiner's early fiction, especially Undine, reveals a literary allegiance to England ('home') which shifted as Schreiner came increasingly to identify herself with the cause of indigenous South Africans.

The 'Liberal' ideology was a shifting rather than a fixed element in Schreiner's writing.¹⁵ Her liberalism was essentially an expression of "the universal language of European and American political liberalism" in conflict with a "slave-owning society" (Davenport, p.26). Evolutionary theory gave liberalism a paternalist colouring, because 'primitive' races were considered to be on a lower step of the evolutionary ladder. Though she often speaks of the duties of a superior civilisation toward a 'lower' one, the discussion of evolution and race in From Man to Man is less simplistic. Schreiner's own early position as a self-appointed mediator between the noble British virtues and the unenlightened Boer underwent significant modifications and reversals because of the historical course of events, and because of her reactions to British Imperialism in the decade leading up to the Anglo-Boer War of 1899.

The Schreiners' first missionary posting was at the Kat River Settlement, which was established on the Eastern frontier of the Cape in 1829, "so that Coloured people who left their employment or the missions could establish themselves as smallholders" (Davenport, p.35). They were thus part of a 'civilising' buffer on a troubled frontier, and part of an 'enlightened' project to improve the circumstances of the 'Coloureds'. This position had certain ideological implications, being a physical analogue to the moral position of 'holding the line' between Boer and black which the elder Schreiners believed in, and with which the English Liberal position has traditionally been connected.¹⁶ Schreiner's views are often in line with this position. She wrote to John X. Merriman in 1896 :

We who hold that rank confers duties, that a course of stern unremitting justice is demanded from us toward the native, and that only in so far as we are able to raise and bind him to ourselves with indissoluble bonds of sympathy and gratitude,

can the future of South Africa be anything but an earthly Hell: — we who hold this have no right to let anything divide us. (JPL, 25 May 1896)

Schreiner's liberalism became more complex and subtle and geared to historical events, and appears in different contexts in each of her fictional works. In African Farm, for instance, there is a hardheaded recognition of the ways in which power corrupts black/white relationships, making an 'easy' liberalism problematic. This is illustrated, for instance, in the scene where Otto is rejected by Tant' Sannie as "the Kaffir's dog" and the Hottentot servant enjoys his humiliation:

She was his friend; she would tell him kindly the truth.

The woman answered by a loud, ringing laugh.

"Give it him, old missis! Give it him!"

It was so nice to see the white man who had been master hunted down. The coloured woman laughed, and threw a dozen mealie grains into her mouth to chew. (SAF, p.76)¹⁷

A similar complexity of views runs through the scene in Chapter 8, "The Kopje", in which Gregory Rose, the effete English colonial, is brought into explicit comparison with the 'Kaffir' herdsman. The herdsman is physically more beautiful, and his description carries overtones of the romantic concept of the noble savage, and yet the tone (Lyndall is speaking) is unpleasantly patronising:

"There is something of the master about him in spite of his blackness and his wool. See how he brandishes his stick and holds up his head'."

The masterfulness, admirable by contrast with Gregory's effeminacy, is nevertheless allied to brutality according to Lyndall, who comments that he will kick his wife when he gets home. The complexity of the picture includes the fact that his beaten dog and kicked wife adore him. Different strands of Victorian feminism and evolutionary theory, an admiration for uncomplicated mastery and a rejection of pure physical superiority, the romantic concept of the noble savage and the Darwinian concept of a lower order of being all flow

together here, producing an effect characteristic of African Farm, one which precludes easy judgment.

Abstract philanthropy mingles with psychological insight and practical realities in African Farm as it often did in day-to-day missionary life. There was a fear of backsliding, especially among missionary women, well exemplified by Rebecca Schreiner's rejection of John Findlay as a suitor for her daughter Kate because she felt he was uncouth:

You likely do not know how difficult it is, living as we do among gross sensual heathen, to preserve that delicacy of thought and feeling so indispensable to a right development of the female character. (Findlay, 15 March 1860)

This defence of refined female standards against male crudity was echoed by Kate herself many years later when her marriage was not very happy. A similar view of female refinement as inherently superior (though found among certain chosen male friends) persists in Schreiner's thought as well, alongside other more 'enlightened' feminist thinking on equality between the sexes.

The fear of 'going native' was paralleled by the fear of 'going Boer', and to people of Rebecca Schreiner's generation both the Boer and the black could threaten civilised standards. The Boer threatened both refined manners and the English language, which the children were meant to maintain in its purity. It is an index to the intensity of this feeling that Schreiner was beaten for using the expression "Ach" as a child. But the linguistic modification of English in South Africa was inevitable and irreversible, and Schreiner uses Afrikaansisms and other South Africanisms both in her letters and nicknames, and in her fiction.¹⁸ She forged her fiction as much out of a local language as a local landscape. Still, the pressure of her mother's attitudes is found in the tone of Schreiner's own comments on local 'culture' after her return to Africa in 1890, and in her description of colonials as 'lower-middle-class philistines', though she founds her description on greater knowledge (and she may of course have a valid point!):

These people (Basques and Welsh) were little complete nations shut up and compressed, as it were, but from the [Baron] and the King

downwards all parts of the nation were there when they were forced back into their valley and shut up among themselves — the Boers were a section of nations, not cut down vertically and having representatives among them of all classes, but cut out horizontally, and representing only the labouring and lower middle class! This I think accounts for most of their peculiarities. Something analogous gives its very peculiar tone to English colonial life. We are not a section of the English people cut 'straight down' and transported to South Africa : the highest and the lowest, the aristocracy if intellect and culture, and the working-class are not adequately represented here. The dissenting lower middle-class, with its peculiar virtues and vices, predominates and gives to South African English life its very peculiar [tone].
(To Merriman, JPL, 5 May 1896).

Such a passage indicates that though Schreiner might use low foreheads and physical grossness to indicate the physicality and stupidity of the Boer in African Farm (this seems to have been a literary convention in nineteenth century South African fiction),¹⁹ her views of local class and culture are often thoughtful, detailed, and based on historical realities.

The flavour of such historical realities is well caught in a convincing anecdote recounted by an old resident of Balfour who knew the Schreiner parents, one which indicates the surprising and often humiliating reversals which could take place between the patron and the pupil, between white and black. The incident occurred after the Schreiners had been reduced to penury by Gottlob's bankruptcy :

On the afternoon of his death, old Mr. Schreiner went to have tea with Mrs. Green and she saw he was very agitated. On enquiring the reason, Mr. Schreiner told her he'd been greatly insulted by a Coloured, who, when asked why he hadn't paid his bill, the Coloured man replied very haughtily "kyk wanneer jy met my praat, jy moet my kantoor toe roep". This upset the old man very much, and that night Mrs. van der Westhuizen heard a bell ringing non-stop at about midnight, and on going to investigate they found Mrs. Schreiner ringing the bell desperately to summons help as old Mr. Schreiner had died in his sleep.²⁰

(iii) Autobiography and fiction

Apart from the often unconscious continuance of her missionary family traditions, Schreiner also began early on consciously to shape the knowledge she had of her forebears into semi-fictional constructs, to make it usable in her fiction. Northrop Frye, in his discussion of forms of prose fiction, says that

Autobiography is a form which merges with the novel by a series of insensible gradations. Most autobiographies are inspired by a creative, and therefore fictional, impulse to select only those events and experiences in the writer's life that go to build up an integrated pattern.²¹

In Schreiner's scattered autobiographical writings, which include journals, letters, parts of the non-fiction and her "Remembrances" of her family, one sees the beginnings of a patterning of characters and events, an attempt to understand the forces which had made her: her genetic, moral, intellectual, and spiritual inheritance.

In her "Remembrances", written at Ellis's urging in 1884 but left incomplete (Ellis, with his own interest in origins and case-histories, always encouraged accurate documentation of his friends' lives), Schreiner views her ancestors as 'types' representing authority and submission, victors and victims. She sees her maternal ancestors as embodying a tradition of sternness and non-conformism, with corporal punishment prescribed for those who disobeyed parental rules:

Upon the scene appears the great-grandfather armed with a cane. "Samuel, my son, you have broken the Lord's Day; now you have wholly recovered I shall flog you for it", and he flogged him. So, cane in hand, stands the great-grandfather before us. (Life, p.9)

This tradition of flogging was continued by the schoolmaster of Schreiner's Uncle James, who became a martyr and hero in the eyes of "two little girls at the Cape. They throbbed with anger when they thought of him, and wove wild romances of which he was the hero" (Life, p.10). Thus Schreiner posits a relationship between punishment and a responsive 'story-telling', one which is basic to the way in which life and fiction would relate in her career.

She connects the Lyndall strain in her family with a certain physiognomy and colouring which she describes as both cerebral and 'Jewish', more a metaphor of the victim than as a family fact. The Lyndalls combine cerebration and non-confirmism (like the Lyndall of African Farm). Opposed to the maternal set of characteristics is the paternal combination of dreaminess, philosophising, hard work and a responsiveness to nature. The hard labour and dreaminess emerge in her picture of her German grandfather, called "Awl and Last":

I believe that as he sat there on that bench every time the awl went in a great thought flew out. I believe he was a poet. (Life, p.10)

Waldo is conceived as a character in this German line: "you Germans are born with an aptitude for burrowing; you can't help yourselves" (SAF, p.184).

Although Schreiner's view of her ancestors sets intellect against mysticism, will against imagination, activity against passivity—polarities reflected by her fictional protagonists—she sees both family lines as creative, and united in their worship of God. Samuel Lyndall wrote a notable hymn, "Ye angels who stand round the throne", the title of which, in its emphasis on direct vision, anticipates Schreiner's allegory: "I thought I stood before God's Throne": she uses the visionary setting for social protest rather than religious vision. She imagines her paternal grandfather not only as a poet, but also as a devout worshipper: "Of this I am sure, you sang German hymns with the voice of an angel as your son did after you" (Life, p.10).

Schreiner sees her parents' wedding as containing elements of a stern renunciation of pleasure: the "Rev. Dr. Campbell tore the wreath out of her [Rebecca's] bonnet and said these frivolities were not for a missionary's bride" (Life, p.12). Rebekah's life (Schreiner changes her mother's name in her "Remembrances" into the biblical form she would use in From Man to Man) is seen as a suffocation of talent and intellect, a waste of potentialities, when Schreiner describes her as a grand piano doomed never to be played and used as a common dining-table. The simile refers to her mother's

genteel aspirations in Africa, and prefigures later feminist protest. Gottlob is pictured as a labourer and mystic. These "Remembrances", not "Reminiscences", as Cronwright re-titled them, provide a gallery of figures with a spectrum of contrasted characteristics. Like the novels, they carry an epigraph, Wyclif's "I believe that in the end the truth will conquer". They also employ rudimentary fictional techniques: dialogue, setting, rhetorical patterns, and imagery.

Schreiner's letters echo this view of her family, and add other family traits-such as an interest in morbid medical conditions, and an idea that as a family, the Schreiners were apt to smother the people they loved best:

I wonder if the Lord has spoken a curse out over us Schreiners, that we should be evil for the things we love best and that just because we love with such an awful intensity the things we care most for, willing to pour out our lives for them, wishing that our flesh was meat for them and our blood drink that they might feed on it, we do them a deep moral injury. (To WPS, UCT, 1907)

This comment throws an interesting sidelight on her marriage, and the fear she expresses is connected with her preoccupation with non-possessive love in her fiction and feminist theory.

Schreiner had other beliefs about her parents' attitudes towards their own children: that her mother had loved them as infants but not as adults, that her father had been infinitely more tender to them than her mother, that her mother's disciplinary beatings had done her great harm as a child and awakened her passionate identification with all underdogs (Life, p.250). These views helped to shape her fictional use of physical punishment and childhood suffering. She had experienced corporal punishment at the hands of a good 'Christian' (her mother) and this might have influenced the connections Schreiner makes between cruelty and religious hypocrisy, both in Undine and in a figure like Blenkins in African Farm.

Schreiner's most important sibling relationship (in terms of her writing) was with Ellie, the little sister who died when Schreiner

was ten. This relationship, one she describes as perfectly loving, until death ended it, not only shaped Schreiner's beliefs concerning death and the nature of the universe, it also served as a model of 'ideal' love, love which has no traces of 'self' or sexuality. Sisterly love is used in this way as a thematic component of From Man to Man. Self-transcendent love is important in Schreiner's fiction and takes different forms. Modern critics, especially modern critics using Freudian hypotheses, see such an emphasis on self-transcendence as a treacherous and destructive model for relationships. Perhaps it is important to distinguish here between Schreiner's own relationships with men and the ways in which she discussed them with others, with the men themselves, and used them in her fiction. Selfless love is a component of the fiction, and is sometimes expressed in sibling relationships, sometimes in friendship or spiritual communion. But though Schreiner could mystify herself and her lovers by discussing their relationships in terms of selflessness and impersonality, it is equally possible to see the successive failures with Havelock Ellis (who could not satisfy her normal sexuality), with Karl Pearson (who rejected her virtual proposal) and with Cecil Rhodes (who seems not to have preferred women) in more ordinary terms.²² When she did meet a man who seemed to offer her sexual fulfilment and intellectual companionship, she married him.

First and Scott, in their biography of Schreiner, see her concern with selfless love as hopelessly deluded: "she had no way of accepting her needs as valid for her", they say, and add that "Ellis wrote shrewdly and forcefully to Olive about the mystifications inherent in the model of a selfless involvement. But the awareness was never integrated into the relationship" (First, OS, p.142). First and Scott sound censorious on issues like this, when in fact it is impossible to know the 'real' reasons for the 'failure' of the Ellis/Schreiner relationship, except by inference from their sexual case-histories, both of which have been documented, and from Schreiner's later railings against Ellis's decadence and lack of healthy instincts.²³ The important point to be made here is that selfless love is central to the tradition Schreiner inherited, and remains central to her fiction, but this does not mean that other needs and

desires are neglected or omitted. Self-denying love is often a component of her fictional world which adds poignancy and significance to those distressed relationships (distressed by a complex of social and individual factors which she tries to suggest) which are in the foreground of her fiction.

Because of the Freudian and Marxist basis of the First/Scott biography, they tend to value idealism, religious feeling, and sometimes art itself, less highly than critics not committed to an unmasking of a 'repressed' unconscious motivation, or a concealed materialist basis for idealism. For instance, they call Gottlob's expression of his "joy to labour in this part of God's vineyard" a "pietistic assertion" (p.37) whereas it might merely be called an evangelical cliché, and might also have been sincerely felt. The biographers are out of sympathy with religious feeling per se. Similarly, a generous reply by Schreiner to a cruel and rejecting letter from an earlier friend and admirer, Mrs. Cawood, is called "unnaturally restrained" (p.79). The letter itself says: "I do not blame you for not loving me any more. We cannot help love's going, any more than we can help its coming; and when it is gone, it is better to say so" (Life, p.137). First and Scott discuss this issue as though it would have been better and healthier if Schreiner had answered anger and resentment with anger and resentment. In their terms retaliation is healthy, generosity is suspect. Art itself, it is sometimes suggested, has suspicious overtones of self-transcendence and mystification: of Schreiner's allegories First and Scott say "dreaming was a way of transcending pain and fictionalising her experience" (p.183), here endorsing a view of Schreiner's writing as mere self-therapy, an attitude which Marion Friedman's study expresses more fully.²⁴ Such dogmatic positions lead to a lack of historical understanding and sympathy. First and Scott dismiss Schreiner's typically rhetorical and full-bodied vision of London society redeemed by love and sympathy as "almost unbearable sentimentality" (p. 129). It is sentimental by modern standards, but is also representative of "the notion, so widespread in Victorian fiction, that society is generated and sustained by individual acts of self-denying, self-creating love".²⁵ To dismiss such attitudes as mere sentimentality is to ignore the ways in which Schreiner is sometimes representative of a strenuous Victorian

optimism (which also makes it difficult to see the ways in which she is not representative).

The First/Scott model of the relationship between life and fiction is a great deal cruder than either Schreiner's practice or her theory. They call the Prelude to From Man to Man "wholly autobiographical", and say its aim is to disclose "the psychological abuse which she has suffered" (p. 182). This view of the Prelude, begun by Cronwright in some vindictiveness, it seems (see discussion in Chapter 7), and repeated by Marion Friedman, ignores Schreiner's statement of its artistic function, and ignores the skilful blend of memory and fictionality which it demonstrates. Schreiner admitted that it contained "the whole of her childhood" but also described it as "a picture in small, a kind of allegory, of the life of the woman in the book", which of course it is (Letters, p.291). The mixture of autobiography and fiction, the way in which these are subordinated to the total conception of the novel — these factors are ignored for a reductive separation of autobiography and fiction as if they were two wholly separate kinds of discourse.

First/Scott's reading of the Prelude is similar to that of Marion Friedman, whose interpretation of Schreiner's fiction is based on Edmund Wilson's theory of 'the wound and the bow', that the artist's maladjustment is the source of his/her creative power. Her thesis is that Schreiner "wrote in an unconscious attempt to set at rest conflicting impulses in her own personality, to keep them — to use her own phrase — from rending her" (p. 57). The psycho-analytical explanation offered by Friedman for Schreiner's so-called obsession with victims and harsh adult figures is that the young girl punished by a harsh mother 'introjects' the punitive figure, and then self-punishment (masochism) becomes a way of punishing the offending parent. Her argument is that Schreiner's rejection of God is a transference of her desire to reject her mother, God's deputy on earth. Suggestive as this view may be, it is a partial distortion of both Schreiner's life and her art. An analysis of Schreiner's short story "The Wax-doll and the Stepmother" might illuminate the way in which fiction can explore those situations by which psycho-analysis suggests the

'victim' is unconsciously trapped. Apart from objections to the Freudian analysis of the artist, somewhat rigidly applied by Friedman, such an approach assigns to a purely psychological cause a breach which was a widespread Victorian phenomenon, a major breach with traditional belief which Schreiner was well aware she was exploring in African Farm. To see her fiction as purely therapeutic, and neurotically obsessed or distorted by repressed childhood experience, is to ignore the conscious artistic shaping of the works, and the literary contexts in which they exist.

Schreiner's own view of her family was a complex and changing one. She wrote to a friend in 1887:

Yes, if one could live life over again with enlarged sympathies, how different many things would be. When one looks back one understands the people one knew long ago so much better. I always feel that about my parents and brothers and sisters. One loves them more and more as time passes.

(Letters, p.123)

Discussing the possibility of anyone writing a 'true' biography, she said "Only after long years looking back does one really understand oneself sometimes" (Letters, p. 274).

The development of gradual understanding by Schreiner herself does not, of course, answer the charge that her fiction displays unconscious desires to punish the 'harsh' parent or awaken her love; the extent of one's sympathy with such readings will depend on the degree of acceptance of Freudian assumptions and their relationship to criticism. A scene allegedly described by Schreiner to Arthur Symons does suggest that she believed her writing could awaken her mother's 'understanding' and perhaps her guilt:

And only one of her great desires had been realised, but that was such intense bliss as she never experienced:

"It was that my mother might understand me".

She was, I think, about twelve, and her great wish seemed as if it would never be realised. Then she had written a tale, her mother read it. In the middle of the night she awoke, and felt something at the foot of her bed. It was her mother lying there sobbing, with her arms around her. (Life, p. 186)

It is difficult to know if one is dealing with fact or fiction here, and if the story is exaggerated, whether Schreiner or Symons (whose account of Schreiner is rhapsodic) was doing the exaggerating. The scene is cast in the same terms as many pathetic reconciliation scenes in Victorian fiction between children and parents, such as Dickens's climactic scene between Gradgrind and his daughter in Hard Times. Schreiner does not often deal directly with parent/child relationships in the fiction: African Farm and the earlier works do deal with child victims to a certain degree, but the issue is meshed with other concerns.

Edmund Gosse's Father and Son (1907) the classic reference point for Victorian generational conflict, reveals how 'normal' Schreiner's family situation, and her reactions to it, were. Gosse offers his autobiography rather as Schreiner offered African Farm, as "the diagnosis of a dying Puritanism",²⁶ as "a study of the development of moral and intellectual ideas during the progress of infancy", and as "the narration of a spiritual struggle" (p. 6). He describes the curious mixture of humility and arrogance in the Gosse household; his early confusion of his father with God; his parents' equation of story-telling with lies (see Tant' Sannie and Blenkins); his young response to his first caning ("I cannot account for the flame of anger which it awakened in my bosom", p. 37); his 'testing' of God by idolatrously praying to a chair (see Waldo and mutton chop), and his rejection of God for not sending down his visible anger at "this ridiculous act" (p. 38); the conflict between himself and his father about Lyell and Darwin's discoveries; the glory of discovering imaginative literature, like "giving a glass of brandy neat to some one who had never been weaned from a milk diet" (p. 143), and the Puritan mistrust of books which led to his stepmother burning his copy of Hero and Leander (p. 201). Gosse protested, like Schreiner,

against the untruth...that evangelical religion, or any religion in a violent form, is a wholesome or valuable or desirable adjunct to human life. It divides heart from heart. It sets up a vain chimerical ideal, in the barren pursuit of which all the tender, indulgent affections, all

the genial play of life, all the exquisite pleasures and soft resignations of the body, all that enlarges and calms the soul are exchanged for what is harsh and void and negative. It encourages a stern and ignorant spirit of condemnation; it throws altogether out of gear the healthy movement of the conscience; it invents virtues which are sterile and cruel; it invents sins which are no sins at all, but which darken the heaven of innocent joy with futile clouds of remorse. There is something horrible, if we will bring ourselves to face it, in the fanaticism that can do nothing with this pathetic and fugitive existence of ours but treat it as if it were the uncomfortable antechamber to a palace which no one has explored and of the plan of which we know absolutely nothing." (pp. 220-221)

Schreiner perhaps did not escape these distorting influences as completely as Gosse did, and she is still apt to see life as an evolutionary antechamber to a perfect future, rather than a perfect heaven, but her rejection of orthodox Christianity is couched very much in Gosse's terms and spirit, and based on a similar desire for health and peace. Alan Paton's autobiography, Towards the Mountain records a similar situation, and a similar protest,²⁷ one which, like Schreiner's, would be channelled into social and political protest rather than the more hedonistic pleasures suggested by Gosse's "soft resignations of the body". But whatever the exact outcome of the rebellion, Schreiner, like Gosse, and like her later countryman, Paton, "took a human being's privilege to fashion [her] inner life for [herself]" (Gosse, p.223).

(iv) Fantasy and fiction

In fashioning her inner life for herself, Schreiner made early use of storytelling. An imaginative shaping process took place in relation to her ancestors and immediate family, and in relation to the men with whom she formed any close relationship (this process could also occur with people whom she hardly knew at all; some people she claimed, were immediate 'affinities').²⁸ This shaping process is evident in her more casual utterances in the letters as well as in the more highly wrought fictional works. One of her first steps was to shape herself, by changing her first name from Emily to Olive; she had always been called Emily by her family, but obviously found 'Olive' more poetic and suitable; 'Emily' had dull domestic connotations which she would draw on in African Farm. Her decision was announced in a letter to her sister Kate in 1871:

By the way I wish you would call me Olive. I like it so much better than Emily and it is my first name you know so I don't see why I should not be called by it.

(Findlay, 11 April 1871)

That this decision was a declaration of independence is clear in her mother's reaction to it: "I heard yesterday from dear Emily or rather Olive (oh that name) she was just leaving them [Theo and Ettie]" (Findlay, August 1871). The name-choosing was a way of moving out from under maternal control, choosing between various potential selves, and assuming an authorial identity.

Schreiner told stories to herself and real or imaginary friends from a very early age. Such stories could have the function of wish-fulfilment, simple day-dreaming, fantasizing about other people, allegories, and memories which sometimes seem to have been partly fantasies. She gave specific types of stories her own names, such as the "self-to-self" story Rebekah tells herself before sleep in From Man to Man (p. 226). Past, present or future could be fancifully reshaped and altered. Her early habits of composition are well reflected in the Prelude to From Man to Man, where the little girl day-dreams, tells herself stories and tells stories to an imaginary baby.

Stories were thus usually orally composed: even those which would later be written down could reach an almost complete oral form before reaching the stage of a written form. Like Wordsworth, Schreiner was a perambulatory composer, usually choosing a place out of doors and in natural surroundings. Her flat Karoo rocks or 'walking-up-and-down places' are the South African equivalents of Wordsworth's terrace walks.²⁹ Such habits of composition affected her fiction, determining its simplicity of diction, its strong rhythms and syntactical vigour.³⁰ Of the shorter works, whole dreams and allegories could be composed in this way. The main scenes of the novels were often composed orally; sometimes she speaks of 'painting' these scenes, and then the revisions and inter-connecting parts were done once the first version was down on paper:

I generally write things off best at first; the passionate parts and leading scenes I never need to touch; but the little bits between, where there is not such intense feeling to guide me, have to be thought over.

(Letters, p.46)

Her comment here is borne out by the strength and flow of the shorter fictions, including the dreams, the Prelude, and even Trooper Peter Halket, which was relatively short, written quickly and only lightly revised.

Schreiner's fantasies, or day-dreams, often revolved around men, possible romantic partners, as well as her ancestors. This is an important area, as sexual conflict would be at the centre of three of her novels. Day-dreaming, Trollope acknowledged, was "the origin of his art as a novelist" (Miller, p.59). Schreiner's case seems to have been similar. Ellis mentions this aspect in his case history of her in The Psychology of Sex :

She has from her girlhood experienced erotic day-dreams, imagining love-stories of which she herself was the heroine; the climax of these stories has developed with her own developing knowledge of sexual matters.... She regards herself as very passionate, but her sexual emotions appear

to have developed very slowly and have been somewhat intellectualised. (Ellis, Psychology of Sex, op. cit.)

One has to look at crucial events in Schreiner's adolescence to understand her relationships with men, particularly as causal links have been posited between her alleged suppression or non-recognition of her own sexuality and her lifelong asthma, or other physical ailments. First and Scott have argued for this view of Schreiner's case as representative of Victorian female repression and hysteria:

Cronwright was expected, whether Olive was conscious of it or not, to settle her own moral turmoil, to assuage her sense of sin in her sexual responses. But precisely because recognition of her own sexuality was so problematic, marriage had to be idealised as an eternal and blissful union of two like souls. Was this, as Jane Graves has suggested in an imaginative interpretation of Olive's asthma, because her awareness of her sexuality and its passion appalled her? Intellectual companionship had to come before sexual desire—for Olive the second was out of the question without the first. (OS, p.218, my underlining)

The rigidity of the assumptions here, and their smugness, lead to several fallacies and distortions. The sexual case-history Olive gave to Ellis shows no evidence of her "being appalled" by her own sexuality: she discusses masturbation, her menstrual cycle and its relationship to sexual desire, and the unsatisfying nature of some of her sexual encounters, with practical frankness. She also told Ellis about a relationship with a man just after she had arrived in England, in which she had experienced physical pleasure related to masochistic emotions. She insists on a distinction between sexual pleasure and reproductive function, and speaks of sexual union as the highest sacrament of a loving relationship:

I would base all my sex teaching to children and young people on the beauty and sacredness and importance of sex. Sex intercourse is the great sacrament of life -

he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to himself; but it may be the most beautiful sacrament between two souls without any thought of children. (Letters, p.303)

If Schreiner began marriage expecting a lifelong blissful union and this was wildly abnormal, then most people who marry are similarly abnormal. Nor is it true that "intellectual companionship had to come before sexual desire": she describes experiences of her own in which this was not the case. She does distinguish between physical and spiritual love in a way traditional in Christian thought, and this dualism is one of the determinants of her fictional situations, but she sees them as, ideally, united in a future in which society has moved towards Spencer's perfect state and when, more practically, women have been educated properly so that they could be rational companions as well as sexual partners and breeders.

I think marriage is much the highest condition physically and mentally, though it is not attainable by many of us in the present condition of society. (Letters, p. 151)

That letter was written in 1889, and it is possible that Schreiner's postponement of monogamous bliss to an ideal future was later confirmed by her own, neither unconventional nor unusual disappointment in marriage.³¹ But to say that is not the same as saying that she was appalled by her own sexuality. It is true, though, that the postponement of the perfect man/woman relationship to the future, an ideological conviction, suited her own inherited view of self-renunciation as the noblest possible act. In the fiction, however, such self-renunciation is set against a passionate desire for present fulfilment.

Schreiner's views of monogamy fit into her broader Spencerian view of inevitable progress:

The one and only ideal is the perfect mental and physical lifelong union of one man with one woman. That is the only thing which for highly developed intellectual natures can constitute marriage. (Letters, p.151)

This is clearly based on the belief that the further man removes from the mere brute, the more highly evolved he is as a creature. This belief is not idiosyncratic, nor is it restricted to Christian ideology; a modern critic echoes it as if it were a general human assumption. Discussing Mrs. Gaskell's fiction, Geoffrey Tillotson says :

A further distinction of hers is that, like Emily and Charlotte Bronte, she can show us what human love is when at what most of us honour as its best, however unattainable inferior human beings find it - the love that has no obvious sex in it, and sexual love that has no lust in it.³²

Such distinctions are based on an ethical preference for that which is relatively controlled and chosen over that which is instinctive. Some of Schreiner's finest passages also concern such relationships, whether between the sisters near the opening of From Man to Man, or between Waldo and Lyndall in African Farm. That does not mean that she cannot portray aspects of heterosexual attraction and love, but she seems to explore in her fiction the element of fear or mistrust which is perhaps always present in sexual relationships, and which she certainly experienced and often discussed with Ellis. In their chapter on Woman and Labour First and Scott argue that Schreiner could not grasp that "sexuality is inherently conflicted" (p. 294), but her fiction does present such conflict as inherent. She simply could not, or did not want to believe that it would always be that way.

Not all of the Victorians celebrated spiritual over physical love. Tillotson says of Browning:

Much as he admired the intellect and the social aspirations of man, he admired equally the animal in him. He saw that intellect had usually, perhaps always, to wait on the body and the body's attainment of satisfaction. (G. Tillotson, p. 346)

Schreiner is apt to think in terms of higher and lower, spiritual and physical, but she recognised that a life without sexual

fulfilment could be sterile and render her unproductive in other spheres, and she discusses the Brownings themselves in these terms:

I wrote to Ellis some time ago suggesting he should write a book or one or two books on sex in its normal, beautiful manifestations. Show for instance the wonderful effect of sex love in stimulating and raising the intellectual faculties, as in the case of the Brownings who both produced nearly all their best and greatest work during their intensely happy married life, and Mill's case and a great many others. (To SCCS, Albany, 24 November 1906)

She goes on to argue that Ellis is a true decadent because he is more interested in "the fact that a certain unhappy man is only in love with the digestive organs of dogs" rather than the study of sex "where it becomes in men and women the stimulus to noblest self-sacrifice, and the highest intellectual activity" (Albany, ibid.). That transition from physical fulfilment and productivity to sex as a stimulus to self-sacrifice, which is 'higher' than Ellis's bestial concerns, is very characteristic. In the first part the healthy Schreiner speaks; in the second we catch the tone of her mother and Kate's rejection of the male animal, the Christian Victorian middle-class conventional view.

(v) Bankruptcy and homelessness

Schreiner's most fertile years as a writer of fiction were those she spent as a governess before her departure to England, 1870 to 1880. What is important for an understanding of her situation and the fiction she produced then is probably that confluence of events which bankrupted her father, rendered her virtually homeless and turned her into little more than a servant, produced a seduction of sorts and a broken 'engagement', saw the start of the serious writing and the asthmatic attacks which would jeopardise the writing, and initiated a life of rather unhappy wanderings from one

temporary habitation to another, one country to another.

Gottlob's financial disaster was the economic trigger for many of these events, and no doubt influenced Schreiner in her lifelong insistence that women should be economically independent of their husbands. It was a belief based on fear as well as principle. Gottlob's bankruptcy was caused by a combination of natural ineptitude and bad luck. His trading on the side and land speculation had caused his dismissal from the London Missionary Society in 1842, though he claimed it was the result of a plot. He tended to speculate with a little real capital and a lot of anticipated unreal capital, chiefly money which he tried to borrow from his son-in-law, John Findlay. A typical letter from Gottlob to Kate, recounting his visit to the Diamond Fields, says it all:

You know I went up to the Diamond Fields to see the children [Theo, Ettie, and Olive]. Of course not in the passenger cart as I had no means for that but on horseback and as I found friends on the road and was active along the road among the farmers it did not cost me much except I am sorry to say for horseflesh....Mr Shaw purchased a horse for me but that met an accident on the way and I had to make an exchange for another one which was a poor and much more worthless animal which after my return I returned to Mr. Shaw who was not pleased with the exchange but that was comparatively speaking of not so much moment but I had written to Theo about his wagon and oxen whether he would sell it and he wrote me word that he would and with that letter I went to Mr. Shaw who advanced me two promissory notes to pay for the same. It was to help me. When I came up to the Fields—as my letter to Theo did not come in the time specified he had sold the wagon and I thought of doing well in getting another wagon and oxen instead but had the misfortune to [lose] all my span of oxen with being deceived by the man who sold them as trained oxen and when I wanted to fasten them in the evening found them wild. I got those oxen at last with great trouble and nearly £ 10

of expenses. I exchanged them for a well trained span but which were not in such good condition. Another delay caused by a rogue who denied his name kept me instead of being only one week in the Fields for a whole month when just then the cold weather set in and I lost the oxen on the road had to leave my wagon and remaining oxen on the farm of Cootje van Aardt near Aliwal not being able to procure sufficient oxen to come home. With great expense I hired oxen to bring the wagon as far as this at last and since then I delivered the same with the remaining oxen to Mr. Shaw. Thus I have instead of as I thought a benefit a fearful loss of time and everything else and what more may follow I can't say yet. Disaster and trouble upon trouble. However I will try to look up. (Findlay, 11 November 1872)

There, in its amazing awfulness, is Gottlob's financial career in little. It is not surprising that when he did, very briefly, own a farm, it was called "Jammerbergdrift".

What Gottlob's financial collapse meant for Schreiner was literal homelessness. In September 1866 Gottlob surrendered his estate in Grahamstown, leaving "Mamma very poorly and Emily [Olive] ill" (Findlay, 6 September 1866). At this point Olive's boarding-out with relatives and friends began. The first period (1867-1870) was spent with Theo and Ettie Schreiner in Cradock, and was a period when their religious persecution of Schreiner was most intense and bitter. This phase of her life, staying briefly with one family after another, is summed up in a letter written in April 1872:

I am still in Dordrecht with the Robinsons but I don't think I shall be here much longer kind as the Rs are to me and glad as they are to have me with them. I feel that now poor Aggie is gone I am not needed here and would give anything to be able to leave but where to go to I don't see just at present. I hope something will turn up in time but I feel so anxious, miserable and distracted

just now that I don't feel fit for letter writing or anything else.

It's wonderful how quietly one gets to take the ups and downs of life after a time but I am thoroughly sick of this life always having to move on and never knowing where to move on to. (Findlay, 6 April 1872)

This "moving on" without any sense of achievement created a sense of alienation from sources of rest and consolation, and probably helped to shape her fictional explorations of characters who are restless or restful, able to come to rest. The motto "A striving and a striving and an ending in nothing..." is very much in the mood of this time in Schreiner's life.

Schreiner's early homelessness and sense of being wholly reliant on the goodwill and charity of others probably conditioned her response to the man who appears to have been her first lover, though the actual events are shrouded in obscurity. Whether or not Schreiner was in fact seduced and thought she was pregnant,³³ whether there was a genuine engagement which was later broken, or whether she felt obliged to invent one, her relationship with Julius Gau set the pattern for her later relationships, a strange mixture of passionate approach and an insistence that there was only an impersonal intellectual interest, of desire and flight. The social disapproval, especially in a small colonial society, of any deviation from the approved norms figured strongly in the Gau affair. The episode was bitter and disillusioning, especially as she had had little experience of men: she told Ellis in 1884 that she had grown up among her kind and unselfish father and brothers, and was always shocked to discover male selfishness (Ellis, HRC). Her experience with Gau — the turmoil it created suggests that it probably was a sexual experience and perhaps she did think she was pregnant, though there is no other evidence that this — seems to have established a conviction that sexual relationships would always cause distress, and could not be combined with friendship. Later comments often refer back to this time in her life:

I will never make a friend of a man again unless I love him better than anyone else in the world....Through what bitter agony we learn all life's lessons, and our dreams fall from us one by one. I am in a state of despair such as I have not known since I was fifteen. My ideal has been friendship between men and women as between men and men, but it can't be. (Letters, p. 106)

Schreiner wrote a letter to her sister about her 'engagement' to Gau which expresses the mixture of vulnerability and pride, and the fear of malice, which recurred in later situations and which she explored in the fictional career of Baby-Bertie in From Man to Man (except that Bertie is without the pride):

I am engaged to be married to a Mr. Julius Gau of Dordrecht. I can't say just yet when we shall be married. It may be very soon, that is in four or five months or it may not be for at least a year to come. I will be able to tell you more definitely next week. We shall not stay long in the Colony after we are married under any circumstances and Mr. G. told me last week that it was quite likely he might leave for Europe in January...I do wish it were possible to see you all before I go as I will likely never see any of you again. The only way would be for you to come here, and I suppose with your large family of little ones that is quite out of the question if we go home in January....

I hope dear Katie you will not mention my engagement to anyone in writing; as a rule I think it great nonsense to wish such a thing not to be spoken of but circumstances alter cases you know and it would be very unpleasant for us to have it talked about just yet and people do take such an interest in other people's affairs that what one person knows the whole country knows in a few weeks and you may think yourself fortunate if they content themselves with saying that which is true about you. (Findlay, 18 August 1872)

Julius Gau and the other men with whom Schreiner later had intimate relationships figure in her letters and journals as lost or renounced, or in some way fantasised figures around whom scenes of noble love or loss, or both, are spun. It is very possible that real-life rejections became deliberate renunciations in their fantasy or fictional forms. Schreiner wanted to go down to the docks in 1885 to catch a glimpse of Julius Gau when she heard he was coming to England, just as she made an attempt to construct a last-minute romantic glimpse of another 'lost' love, Karl Pearson:

I made a great mistake in not seeing Mr. Pearson even in the distance before I left. I spent all the last days in the rain before University College hoping to catch a glimpse of him as he passed. I felt so when my father died. (HRC, November 1888)

It is almost as though scenes of parting are the most intensely felt aspects of a relationship. Such last-minute glimpses of a forever departing lover recur frequently in the short stories and especially in the projected ending of From Man to Man. Other moments are described in a more positive, romantic light, and sometimes used to support one of Schreiner's generalisations about the nature of love between men and women (such generalisations make up an element in the fiction as well). Schreiner told Ellis the following story to support the view that the love of young men lasts longer than that of old men (which perhaps has some bearing on the relationship between the old Jew and Bertie in From Man to Man):

When I was fifteen a young man of almost 21 was very much in love with me and asked me to marry him. I wasn't the smallest bit attracted to him and didn't treat him very sympathetically; yet thirty years after when I was married and he was married we were travelling on the same train on a journey. My husband and he often met and talked but he and I never spoke till the train was delayed somewhere in the veld and the passengers to pass the time got out and walked about. On the railway

track there were some tiny little flowers growing. He picked three and came to the window at which I was sitting and put them in: he said: "You used to like wild flowers once!" and turned away without a word or look. (HRC, 4 September 1915)

Such reworked incidents, memories, or fantasies, are the basis of the fictional work: this 'gift' story reappears in the symbolism of "A Woman's Rose", "The Wax-doll and the Stepmother", and elsewhere.

These semi-fantasies could involve Schreiner's own ambivalence toward power and cruelty, which has often been pointed out. Whether it was an expression of childhood experience, or the Imperialist ideology which has sometimes been seen as causing such ambivalence towards power, or whether it was a perpetration of a literary stereotype (such as Jane Eyre's Rochester), she does discuss certain male figures in these terms:

Tall, dark powerfully built, rather reserved and sarcastic— fonder of asking questions than of giving answers—the man who might make a revolution but would never talk of one.... I think what attracted me to him was the sense of deep unrestrained passion. When I say his eyes were wicked — I mean that they were the eyes of a man who if he wanted anything very much would be driven by passion to strike down everything that stood in his way; and who could yet be very tender . (To Carpenter, Albany, 4 July 1911)

This was a man she had met briefly at the Cape. But the wording, or similar wording, occurs at certain moments in her relationships with Karl Pearson, Cecil Rhodes, and her husband, S.C. Cronwright. When her relationship with Karl Pearson was at its most painful and confused, she had fled England and was at the same time writing and yet insisting that he need not reply to her. She says:

I shall not require your help again likely, for many years. I shall expect you to strike me firmly and unsparingly if I should require it. (Pearson, 5 February 1888, her underlining).

Dream and fantasy were thus avenues of approach to people, encompassing them in a patterned vision which made them representatives of certain qualities she admired, disliked or found in herself. Dreams often figure in her letters, some exaggerated and some comic. She wrote to Karl Pearson about a vivid dream she'd had about him, one recalling Tant' Sannie's dream about her suitor (not to mention the Wife of Bath):

I thought I had a little red-haired servant boy. I was looking at him, and suddenly something flashed upon me, and I asked him if he had killed you. He denied it at first and then he said yes he had drowned you in a large dark pond of water. The horror of the dream was the walking round and round this pond and thinking that you were down in the middle of it. (Pearson, 16 February 1886)

Similarly, she had a dream about Rhodes 'covered in blood' which became something of a joke between them:

Rhodes and Sivewright were thrown out of a cart the other day. Rhodes seems determined to realize my dream of him covered with blood. (To WPS, UCT, 13 September 1892)

Dreams, of various degrees of sophistication, and of different moods and textures, make up an important part of the fiction.

(vi) The asthmatic governess

At roughly the same time as Schreiner's first 'romance', two elements of her situation changed: she developed 'asthma' and she became a self-supporting governess. The physical and mental distress the asthma caused deepened her sympathy for other forms of suffering; her experience as a governess would teach her the realities of economic dependence and independence, initiate her into hard labour and exploitation of different kinds, and teach her the value of workers' rights and representation.

Although it has been suggested by First and Scott that the asthma was causally related to sexual repression and conflict or guilt, the asthma itself seems to have begun later than the Gau episode, and to have been more closely connected with her feelings of being rejected or received with hostility by her family. When she was unhappy and ill after the Gau episode, the only symptoms mentioned are the conventional ones of adolescent misery: weeping, loss of appetite, headaches and listlessness (Findlay, 6 October & 28 November, 1872). Schreiner herself always connected the onset of her asthma with a coach journey in the rain, and a hostile reception at home. Cronwright repeats the following story (which Schreiner told Ellis in 1884) but dogmatically refuses to accept it.

She left Kimberley with insufficient money. Her brother Will somehow got £5 and gave it to her.... The journey lasted four days. She had nothing to eat nearly the whole of that time.

Once a lady handed round biscuits; she took one but was unable to swallow it. It was on this occasion that the coach incident in An African Farm happened just as narrated. At an hotel once she saw a piece of cheese on the table and had an intense desire to snatch it up and run away; she did not. When she got home she was received very coldly. When she began eating, the agony was intense. She rushed outside and lay on the ground. Then they were kinder to her. (Ellis, HRC, Life p. 94, and Letters, pp. 25-26)

Cronwright dismisses this account (though Ellis's notes are generally reliable in other areas) and opts very firmly for a later version given him verbally by Mrs. W.P. Schreiner which dates the journey as one from Queenstown, between 1870 and 1872. Ellis wrote to Cronwright in some surprise that he had so "decisively adopted the later story" (Albany, 21 May 1924) and added that "We simply don't know. It is absolutely impossible, so far as present knowledge goes, to demonstrate the truth of either story". Cronwright is however, bent on proving Schreiner's unreliability as a witness, particularly on matters connected with her health, as

other letters to and from doctors testify (Albany). Nevertheless, there is evidence (in the Findlay letters) of such a journey as Schreiner described, one which accounts for her distress and poverty, because she had lost her portmanteau on the way, and which was connected with a cold reception at home, implicit and explicit in her mother's letters. The journey took place when Schreiner was in transition from Theo and Ettie at the Diamond Fields to her new career as governess (whether or not there was any thought at any time of Schreiner going home to stay with her parents at this stage is not clear; Rebecca often expresses a desire to have her at home). There are three relevant letters here, all of which belong to March 1874, written from Hertzog, where Olive had arrived after a trip from the diamond fields to Cape Town, returning by boat to Port Elizabeth and then by coach to Hertzog. Schreiner writes to her sister Kate on March 7th:

I arrived here about ten o'clock having been about eight days on the way. I would have enjoyed the journey very much had it not been that I lost my portmanteau in Algoa Bay with almost everything I have in the world, letters, likenesses, clothes. Of course they were not worth so very much but the poor man's all is as much to him as the rich man's. (Findlay)

She mentions her parents' great poverty, and says "Of course I must get something to do at once and am writing this afternoon to a lady who I know wants a governess". (Findlay)

Rebecca recorded her own distress when she heard of Schreiner's loss:

I must thank you for your kindness to Olive. I admire the brooch and ear rings so much also the waterproof and silk dress. Fortunately she has not lost these articles but everything else had gone with her portmanteau. I cannot tell you how I felt when I first heard that it was gone. I could not help crying it seemed so hard, as neither I nor Papa have any possible means of replacing her clothes. Unluckily also part of her travelling money was in it—

the poor child came to Grahamstown without a penny. I don't know what she would have done had Willie not been able to lend her the passage money. [This confirms the story to Ellis about borrowing money from her brother]. I suppose you have now got my [letter] telling you of my wish that she should spend some time with you before coming to Hertzog. It is a great pity she left the Cape before hearing from me as I know you would have been only too glad to have your sister for a time with you. She might have been a companion and a help to you and it does seem a great pity to go such a long journey and at so great an expense merely for a few weeks stay and then to leave without having stayed at all with you. But it is done and can't be helped. Olive is hoping soon to get a situation. Both Theo and ourselves are hard up and besides I am sure an idle life is the worst possible for a young person or indeed for anyone and here there is nothing at all for her to do. (To Kate, Findlay, March ? 1874)

That letter is eloquent with Rebecca's various fairly understandable reproaches and resentments towards Schreiner as a further burden on their poverty. Another letter, dated March 24th, also mentions that Olive has been ill since her arrival, and that the illness began when she caught cold in the passenger cart:

You will be sorry to hear that Olive has been very poorly since she came here. She took cold in the passenger cart and our damp climate made it worse, but she's getting better. (Findlay, 24 March 1874)

The next day Rebecca says Olive is much better, but reproaches her for wanting to leave them and Hertzog:

I wish her to stay with me at least some months but she dislikes this place so much and says she is determined to do something for herself. She talks of going to Colesberg

to a Mrs Weakley who has long wished her to come and live with her; but I don't at all like her to go so far; but she is not one who yields to advice. I am now very poorly and would be so glad to have her with me for a time and then she might perhaps be able to do something together but it is no use urging it.

At the end of the letter she adds:

Poor Olly has not heard anything of her portmanteau and I fear never will. The loss of it greatly troubled her as neither she nor I have any means of replacing her lost clothes. I only wish I could relieve her mind of the anxiety which I am sure makes her worse. (Findlay, March 1874)

This sequence of letters does tally with the facts of Schreiner's account of the origins of the asthma, as well as the view that there were physical causes associated with emotional distress and a sense of hostility or rejection. It is difficult, even at this distance, to read those letters without being affected by their subtle and suffocating 'double-bind', the idea developed by R.D. Laing of the impossibly self-contradictory demands made by members of a family on one another. Schreiner seems to have recognised these factors but did not wish to discuss them because of the idea that she might be blaming her parents for her illness:

I don't like to tell them [the doctors] how it [the asthma] began. You can't go back into the past without blaming those that are dearest to you and it's better to let the past dead bury its dead, eh? (To Ellis, HRC, 1884)

It seems worthwhile to establish Schreiner's credibility regarding the asthma story, if only because Cronwright's account suggests that she deliberately invented a strange and unlikely sequence of events. It is possible that she exaggerated her mother's hostility, and yet a later letter by Ettie confirms that Rebecca was capable of punitive and unkind behaviour towards her children (Findlay, 15 October 1876). The point may be that Rebecca was not unusually unkind, but Schreiner was perhaps abnormally sensitive to such

behaviour. If one accepts Schreiner's own version, and the Findlay letters which corroborate it, then the tendency of some biographers to connect physical ailments with repressed or distorted sexuality becomes less convincing, as this journey and visit occurred more than a year after the Julius Gau episode, though that might have been a strong contributing factor. Jung's emphasis on the symbolic nature of conditions like asthma is interesting here:

Before the beginning of this century, Freud and Josef Breuer had recognised that neurotic symptoms—hysteria, certain types of pain, and abnormal behaviour—are in fact symbolically meaningful. They are one way in which the unconscious mind expresses itself, just as it may in dreams; and they are equally symbolic. A patient, for instance, who is confronted with an intolerable situation may develop a spasm whenever he tries to swallow: He "can't swallow it". Under similar conditions of psychological stress, another patient has an attack of asthma: "He can't breathe the atmosphere at home". A third suffers from a peculiar paralysis of the legs: he can't walk, ie. "he can't go on any more". A fourth, who vomits when he eats, "cannot digest" some unpleasant fact. I could cite many examples of this kind, but such physical reactions are only one form in which the problems that trouble us unconsciously may express themselves. They more often find expression in our dreams.³⁴

They also find expression in art, by saying which one is not necessarily denigrating the value of the art or the reality of the asthma. Creative work seems to have relieved the asthma; the asthma often hampered the creative work.³⁵ Walter Benjamin has an interesting comment on Proust and asthma. He speaks of Proust's "psychogenic asthma" and of Proust as the "stage director of his sickness " :

The asthma became part of his art— if indeed his art did not create it. Proust's syntax rhythmically, step by step, reproduces his fear of suffocating. And his ironic, philosophical, didactic reflections invariably are the deep breath with which he shakes off the weight of memories. On a larger scale, however, the threatening suffocating crisis was death, which he was constantly aware of, most of all while he was writing.³⁶

One thinks here of Schreiner's own concern with death, the wish that "nothing should lose its individuality" in death, and her consciousness that writing was related to a desire to vanquish death by achieving "immortality". The hunter in African Farm travels higher and higher into more rarefied air until it is impossible to breathe: the implication is that though the high ideal realm is one to which mortals should aspire, the rarefied air is unbreathable. Her fiction rests on that paradoxical relationship between the real and the ideal.

(vii) Labour

Schreiner's experience as a governess taught her the realities of hard labour and the economic exploitation of the relatively unskilled worker, lessons Waldo learns in African Farm, but Schreiner had the added complication of the sexual issue between master and servant/governess. Ellis describes what life was like at the Weakleys, Schreiner's first official post in Colesberg.

The work became harder and harder. She had to teach the children, to be shop boy, to correct proofs for the newspaper (Weakley was lawyer, editor, & had a stationer's shop: he was about 33). She went there in 1874 when she

was 19.... Here she partly gained the experience which enabled her to describe Waldo's experience in his letter to the dead Lyndall. (But Waldo=herself and Dugmore). This man tyrannised over her & at the same time wanted to kiss her. At last he did something which made her leave. When she was in this man's presence he had a great fascination for her which she couldn't help. She was so hardworked that she used to sleep in her clothes from weariness & to save the trouble of dressing. After this brute had insulted her she was unable to get anything else to do, so stayed a month longer. At the end this man said: "You stayed for your own pleasure" and paid her nothing.

(Ellis, HRC)

This experience taught her the value of economic independence and bargaining power, and made her sympathetic to the labour union movement.³⁷ Her experience, that of an unskilled rural worker/servant, anticipates the later experience of the black unskilled worker in domestic employment, or the black labourer who goes to 'town', like Waldo, and finds only bewilderment and backbreaking work.³⁸

Schreiner was very unhappy at Colesberg, but her life improved when she moved to the Cradock area and started at the Fouchés of Klein Ganna Hoek, "this wild and beautiful place" where she was "like another human being & a very different one from the miserable misanthropic lifesick old creature I was when I left that most unblest of spots [Colesberg]" (To Miss McNaughton, Cradock, 24 September 1875). At Klein Ganna Hoek Schreiner discovered forms of female tyranny which she would explore in Undine's Mrs. Snappercaps and African Farm's Tant' Sannie. When she worked for the Fouchés again in 1880, at Lelie Kloof, she recorded in her Journal:

Mother Fouché is in a very good temper, but she'll blaze when she hears the Rennies want me. (18 October 1880).

Mother F is very nasty today, because someone else teaches for less and teaches for more hours. How glorious to be in the power of no woman. (LK Journal, 1 November 1880)

This kind of experience gave Schreiner an early understanding of the miseries of servitude, intensified her early idea of the need for female economic independence, provided a basis for her characteristic fictional movement from human misery with people to a delight in nature, and produced an early confidence in generalisations of the following kind:

"I shall not stay here when he is master", Waldo answered, not able to connect any kind of beauty with Gregory Rose.
"I should imagine not. The rule of a woman is tyranny; but the rule of a man-woman grinds fine". (SAF, p. 184)

Surprise is often expressed that Schreiner could produce African Farm at a relatively early age. What is forgotten is that her experience of the 'real world' began a good deal earlier than usual, and there were fewer buffers between herself and that world than is customary for young women, or young men, now.

(viii) The outcast as author

By the time Schreiner left South Africa for England in 1881, the influential and formative experiences of her life were over, and she had completed, in one form or another, three of the four novels she was to write. Her family inheritance and her reactions to it, and the early events of her life, peculiarly fitted her to write such a representative Victorian colonial work as The Story of an African Farm. It might be argued that, far from crippling her and rendering her increasingly unproductive, her early experience of being 'cast out' and isolated in various contexts enabled her to produce fiction which cut through to the heart of private and public

Victorian issues: loss of religious faith, the emergence of feminist self-assertion, the questioning of the Victorian family, the confrontation of Victorian public morality with its dark side of oppression and exploitation, the growing mistrust of Imperial expansion and capitalism.

J. Hillis Miller sees a degree of isolation from the society the Victorian novelist writes about as "a generative force behind the fiction" (p. 54). Thackeray's lonely and unhappy childhood, Dickens's "sense of being abandoned, cast away by his parents" (p. 57), Trollope's awareness of being an impoverished intruder in the English public school system, Hardy and George Eliot's sense of their class difference from fashionable society: "some experience of detachment from the community, whether chosen or imposed, constitutes an originating moment which determines the writer's sense of himself and his stance in relation to the world" (p.62). Miller sees "the writing of fiction as an indirect way for them to re-enter the social world from which they had been excluded or which they were afraid to re-enter directly. If they had been excluded from it in reality they could at least belong to it in imagination" (p. 63). Certainly, writing afforded Schreiner a form of the knowledge and power which Lyndall craves in African Farm: not only did it allow her to speak to an intellectual and cultured public in England from which she had been isolated as a colonial, the success of African Farm actually introduced her into their company, and made her an intimate of some of the people in the forefront of European cultural life.

Schreiner's experience certainly fits Miller's model of the Victorian writer's alienation from his society: in the situation of the colonial writer the issue is complicated by a dual allegiance, to the colony and the 'parent' country, and in Schreiner's case the difficulties of her situation, particularly the very distance from a civilised centre and the struggle to acquire an education, added an extra strain. This strain is evident both in her limited fictional output, and in those features of her fiction—didacticism and the emphasis on martyrdom—which have been most commonly

indicated as 'flaws' in her fiction. As a colonial writer, she was cut off from England (which she calls 'home' especially in her early life); as a child she felt rejected and punished by her mother; as an adolescent she lost the literal paternal 'home' after Gottlob's impoverishment and bankruptcy. The ultimate form this alienation took was perhaps the sense of being cut off from God, the transcendental 'home', the experience which Miller calls "the determining ontological transformation" underpinning Victorian fiction:

The development of Victorian fiction is a movement from the assumption that society and the self are founded on some superhuman power outside them, to a putting in question of this assumption, to the discovery that society now appears to be self-creating and self-supporting, resting on nothing outside itself. (p.30)

In African Farm, Schreiner dramatises this large movement, and her fiction explores a system of values derived from inter-personal conflict. In her fictional world the traditional verities have been lost. Her novels can be seen, with certain key differences, as Miller sees Victorian fiction in general, its form determined by a new metaphysical situation, becoming "an incomplete self-generating structure, a structure in which the temporal dimension is constitutive in a new way" (p. 34). In Schreiner's self-generating fictional structures, this temporal dimension, and the generating of analogues of the self and the artistic process are central, and will be studied in more detail below.

Another consequence of the new ontological premise of Victorian fiction is the new relationship established between self and community:

By focusing on the lives of people whose identities are in question, Victorian fiction also puts in question the community. (p. 94)

Schreiner focuses on those lives which seek to forge an identity beyond the narrow parameters of the 'farm' (colony) and its norms, and thus throws into relief the standards which prevail inside the colonial community and those which prevail in the wider world beyond

it. Neither set of standards is fully satisfactory; any possible community has dangerous gaps and flaws.

In Schreiner's fiction, as in Victorian fiction generally, the self "can only fulfil itself by way of relations to others" (p. 96), and her characters at first seek, as perhaps she herself sought, to find the ground of their Being in another human being:

Victorian fiction may be said to have as its fundamental theme an exploration of the various ways in which a man may seek to make a god of another person in a world without God, or at any rate in a world where the traditional ways in which the self may be related to God no longer seem open. Often this search for a valid foundation for the self is dramatised in a woman rather than a man. (p. 96)

Miller cites Vanity Fair, Henry Esmond, Our Mutual Friend, Middlemarch, and The Egoist. Schreiner also explores the quest for meaning and identity in her protagonists' quest for love, for a fulfilling and equal partnership, but this quest is modified by her belief that contemporary conditions did not allow the conditions for ideal partnerships between men and women to exist. While she dramatised the female quest for fulfilment in another human being, she was very aware of its dangers:

I think you can trust me, only don't rest too much on any human being. "Nor unto man who hath loved the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forevermore". I have heard these words beating in my ears for months. We take the human being and we make it stand for everything to us.

"It were better for that man that he had not been born".

(To Ellis, HRC, 24 October 1884)

Marriage is never allowed to operate as a metaphor for self-accommodation in Schreiner's fiction, and she is committed to a search for a more impersonal fulfilment than marriage could satisfy. As such truths can only be glimpsed at moments, her method is to move towards 'epiphanies', moments when reality and vision meet.

It is possible to see the opposing stresses in Schreiner's fiction as another continuation of her Evangelical inheritance: "Historians of doctrine may fasten on to the Evangelical's inter-necine debates on predestination and free will, and their undeniable tendency to slip toward antinomianism" (Best, p.40). "Antinomy" is a logical contradiction; in Evangelical thought it implies that the Christian escapes the moral law through grace. Schreiner's fiction, too, is based on certain logical contradictions: her characters want to realise themselves fully, but such self-realisation is both selfish and doomed; independence is the desirable condition, but nobody can stand alone; the talented individual should be related to his community, but the community punishes him for seeking to move beyond it; it is necessary to move outside the colony for nurture, but then the bond with nature has to be broken. These contradictions are the stuff of her fiction: her strength lies in the way she tries to honour opposing claims, to be faithful to the self-jeopardy which such unacceptable alternatives enforce. To look for a coherent 'answer' to these paradoxes is to ignore the fact that they make up Schreiner's life and her fiction: "disunity and division may themselves become aspects — indispensable and irremovable ones— of the artistic whole" (Bayley, p.12).

The pivotal role of the Victorian period in determining the nature of modern art has recently been stressed and explored.³⁹ Schreiner's position within it exacerbated certain tensions, and the desperation with which she sought to portray them, as well as the artistic resolutions she sought for them, have aligned her with modern fiction and a modern audience in certain ways. She "sniffed the solitude of the future...understood deep down the alienation of geist" (Bayley, p.22) and her fiction reveals "the tension between the growing claims of the individual and those of society" (Bayley, ibid.). This tension is intensified when the individuals are women, and thus more conventionally confined, when they are colonials, and thus more culturally deprived, and when the 'society' offered is the stifling, naturally beautiful but intellectually void one of African rural life. One element in Schreiner's response

to African nature was that it offered her an image of harmony and receptivity, a state in which things can remain themselves, retain their separate identities, and yet form part of a larger whole:

Do you know the effect of this scenery is to make me so silent and self-contained. And it is so bare — the rocks and the bushes, each bush standing separate from the others alone by itself. I went [on] a long walk this morning away out into the Karoo and found some such large bent old trees in the dry river-course. I will make that my walking up and down place. I like very much being so free — it is like having a house of your own without the trouble of taking care of it. (HRC, 5 April 1890)

What the Karoo landscape offered Schreiner was "a house of her own" which she could make into the 'home' of her fiction, a place offering her both freedom and belonging. She would imaginatively possess the territory which was also the site of her conflicts. "The transformation which makes a [wo]man into a novelist is [her] decision to adopt the role of the narrator who tells the story" (Miller, p.62). She would tell the story of the Karoo landscape and the people in it, the 'story' of an African Farm.

Notes

1. Samuel Lyndall's leave-taking sermon, British Museum.
2. John Bayley, The Uses of Division (London: Chatto & Windus 1976), p. 16.
3. Geoffrey Best, "Evangelicalism and the Victorians", in The Victorian Crisis of Faith (London: S.P.C.K., 1970) (ed.) A. Symondson, p.37.
4. Max Warren, "The Church Militant Abroad, Victorian Missionaries" in The Victorian Crisis of Faith, p.63.
5. Evangelicalism has been defined by Geoffrey Best as "a movement within the Protestant Christian world, beginning in the early eighteenth century and suffering no perceptible check in its development and diffusion until the middle or later years of the nineteenth century", The Victorian Crisis of Faith, p. 37.
6. Sydney Smith, quoted by Warren in "The Church Militant Abroad", p. 61.
7. See Julia A. Ackermann, The World Through a Woman's Eyes, (Chicago: William E. Curtis, 1896, JPL)
8. See Cronwright's Life, p.69, though I have tried to reconstruct the unimproved version from Cronwright's reproduction of Schreiner's holograph.
9. Joseph Maphumulo, "Missionaries and Politics", in Outlook on a Century, (eds) Francis Wilson and Dominique Perrot, (Lovedale: Lovedale Press and Spro-caş, 1972), p.573.
10. Joan Findlay, The Findlay Letters (Pretoria: Van Schaik, 1954), p. 95. The letters themselves are in the Cullen Library, University of the Witwatersrand.

11. See a letter to Alice Greene, 14 October 1904, UCT. Reproduced in the Casebook, p. 124.
12. Unterredungen mit Kindern über Sünde und Erlösung, Cradock Collection.
13. See T.R.H. Davenport, South Africa : A Modern History, second edition, (Johannesburg : Macmillan, 1978) for a clear outline of the "onslaught by the values of the enlightenment on white colonials whose presuppositions were explicitly Calvinist, and already moulded by a defensive desire to keep the caste structure of their small-scale society in being" (p. 27). Davenport also defines the ideological revolution of the late eighteenth century as "essentially a movement of the human spirit which embraced in its area of concern a variety of under-dogs" (p. 27). This context prevailed at the point of entry of the Schreiner family into South Africa.
14. See Phyllis Lewsen, "Olive Schreiner's Political Theories and Pamphlets", in the Casebook, pp. 219-220.
15. See Isabel Hofmeyr, extract from "South African Liberalism and the Novel" in the Casebook, pp. 154-157. Also Marie Dyer, "Olive Schreiner's Liberalism", Reality, Vol. 2, No. 5 (November 1970) pp. 18-22.
16. See Mike Kirkwood, "The Colonizer: a critique of the English South African culture theory" in Poetry South Africa (eds) Peter Wilhelm and James Polley (Johannesburg: Ad. Donkér, 1976) pp. 102-133.
17. Jean Marquard also discusses this point in "Hagar's Child: A Reading of The Story of an African Farm" in the Casebook, p. 152.
18. See A.E. Voss for a full discussion of the language of African Farm in "Not a Word or a sound in the World about Him that is not modifying Him" ; Learning, Lore and Language in The story of an African Farm" in the Casebook, pp. 170-180.

19. See Sarah Gertrude Millin, "The South Africa of Fiction", in the Casebook, p.31.
20. M.L. Theron, "Olive Schreiner and her Family in the Kat River Valley", Looking Back, Vol. 16(1976) p.78.
21. Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957),p. 307.
22. Schreiner's relationship with Ellis is best illustrated in their correspondence, most of which is in the HRC Collection, Texas. Her relationship with Karl Pearson emerges in the Pearson letters, University College, London; see also Betty Fradkin, "Olive Schreiner and Karl Pearson", Quarterly Bulletin of the South African Library Vol. 31, No. 4 (June 1977) pp. 83-93. For a discussion of Schreiner and Rhodes, see below, Chapter 6.
23. See Ellis's Studies in the Psychology of Sex (Philadelphia: Davis, 1929) Vol. 3, Appendix B, History 9, for Schreiner's case-history, and Ellis's My Life (London: Heinemann, 1940) Schreiner later suggested in a letter to S.C. Cronwright that Ellis was a "true decadent" (Albany, 24 November 1906).
24. See Marion V. Friedmann, Olive Schreiner: A study in Latent Meanings (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1955).
25. J. Hillis Miller, The Form of Victorian Fiction (Notre Dame & London : University of Notre Dame Press, 1970), p.123.
26. Edmund Gosse, Father and Son (Hamondsworth: Penguin Modern Classics, 1949),p. 5.
27. Alan Paton, Towards the Mountain (Cape Town: David Philip, 1980),p. 14.
28. Schreiner has Gregory Rose use this word "affinity" for Em, mocking his version of such a relationship.
29. I am indebted to David Wright for this point concerning Wordsworth's preferred environment for composing aloud.

30. C.K. Elout, in an undated Dutch pamphlet on Schreiner's work, speaks of her sentences in this way: "Haar sinnen staanden en stappen" (Elout & Rompel, Olive Schreiner, Gubbins Library, University of the Witwatersrand).
31. The separation of Schreiner and her husband, physically when she went to England in 1913, and emotionally probably much earlier, round about 1898-99 (see letters to Betty Molteno, UCT collection) seems to have been caused by actual or suspected infidelity on his part (see the Philpot letters, Albany Collection) rather than by Schreiner's tortured relationship with her own sexuality. In the early years of the marriage she expressed a sense of fulfilment and delight : "Marriage has been a very rich and beautiful development of my life". (To Cross, Cory, 1896-7).
32. Geoffrey Tillotson, A View of Victorian Literature (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), p. 247.
33. See J. Meintjies, Olive Schreiner: Portrait of a South African Woman (Johannesburg: Keartland, 1965), p. 21.
34. Carl G. Jung, Man and his Symbols (London: Aldus Books, 1964), p. 26.
35. A confirmatory story here is that of Elizabeth Bishop, who suffered from asthma when she was teaching in Seattle (she lived in Brazil). Her asthma seems to have been related to her 'teaching' (for the first time) rather than writing. Source: Tony Voss.
36. Walter Benjamin, "The Image of Proust", Illuminations (ed.) Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken, 1969), pp. 213-214.
37. See First and Scott, OS, p. 110 and a letter to Carpenter: "Our 'labour' members here (some labour members!) have only one idea, to crush and keep down the native" (Albany, 7 January 1911).

38. See A.E. Voss on this point, "A Generic Approach to the South African Novel in English", UCT Studies in English, No. 7 (September 1977), p. 117.
39. See, for instance, J.H. Raleigh, "Victorian Morals and the Modern Novel" in Ian Watt, (ed.) The Victorian Novel (London:O.U.P.) 1971), pp. 462-485, and, more specifically, Christopher Heywood's "Olive Schreiner's influence on George Moore and D.H. Lawrence", Aspects of South African Literature (ed.) C. Heywood, (London : Heinemann Educational, 1976).

CHAPTER 3

THE ART OF STORY-TELLING: "DIAMOND-FIELDS" AND UNDINE

(i) History, biography, and fiction

The argument of the previous two chapters has been that Schreiner's historical situation as a Victorian colonial woman writer produced certain characteristic contradictions and tensions in her life. The tension between a local, culturally deprived but in some ways emotionally nutritive 'home' and a distant, powerful, culturally rich metropolitan centre seems to have produced the distinctive meshing in her fiction of an optimistic pattern of growth (the Bildungsroman) with a pessimistic pattern of destruction (tragedy).

The meshing of the two genres embodies two contrasted ideologies: the doctrine of original sin and predestined doom and the Spencerian doctrine of a 'natural' social and moral perfectibility. Social protest is poised against mystical vision; an aspiration after high goals is checked by a deep sense of inadequacy and despair. A glimpsed ideal is presented alongside harsh and distressing realities.

Schreiner's own theory of art has also been seen to work in terms of apparently opposed aims: pure self-expression versus a consolatory communication to others; lyricism and didacticism; organic form and direct philosophising or moralising; fantasy and social realism.

Analysis of Schreiner's early experience has revealed the characteristic tensions of her position, and how they were exacerbated by early poverty, the break-up of the Schreiner family, and painful emotional experiences with men. Very early on she began a responsive story-telling, telling stories to herself, to imaginary listeners, or friends, as a means of countering and shaping the stresses of experience. The view of fiction taken in the following analysis of Schreiner's imaginative works is that they are "answers to questions posed by the situation in which they arose. They are not merely answers, they are strategic answers, stylised answers".¹ Fiction is seen as a form of symbolic action in which the opposed demands of

Schreiner's experience could be acted out. This is evident in her duplication, or multiplication, of protagonists who are partial representatives of her own potential 'selves', in the contrasted styles and textures of her fiction, and in the contrasted fates of her characters' fictional careers. The discussion of her fiction will focus on the "structural powers" (Burke, p.116) by which she encompassed the problematic tensions of her situation.

The main focus of the following analysis is on the narrative art of Schreiner's fiction, and the ways in which narrative art transforms the raw data of her historical, social and personal context in characteristic ways, though with a different emphasis in each particular work. The critical terms provided by Gerard Genette in his Narrative Discourse² will be used where they seem to illuminate the handling of narrative voice, 'focalising' through different perspectives, and temporal devices. Contrasted styles and textures in her fiction will be examined. The multiplication of protagonists, and the narrative transformations of victims into story-tellers in a story within the story device (what Todorov has called "embedding")³ are central to Schreiner's fiction. The symbolic action of Schreiner's fiction seems to transform the raw material of experience in certain key ways, through changes of identity (names, clothing, and social roles), through symbolic oppositions between dominance and submission, pastoral and urban worlds, night and day, dream and reality, tradition and innovation, colony and metropolis, the sublime and the ridiculous. There is a rich internal commentary on the relationship between life and art, and on her own artistic procedures.

Contradictions within Schreiner's experience, and between her inherited ideology and an emergent one, thus become constitutive of her fiction. Kenneth Burke has used the myth of Perseus and Medusa to underwrite this conception of fiction (Burke, p.53). Perseus would be turned to stone if he confronted directly the serpent-headed monster, but becomes immune and triumphant if he observes its reflection in a mirror. The novelist's "style, his form, is Perseus' mirror, enabling him to confront the risk but by protection of an

indirect reflection" (Burke, pp. 53-54). This view of Schreiner's fiction will not ignore the historical realities within which it was produced, but will examine the particular social and personal circumstances of each work, and look at overlapping areas between the work and other contemporaneous sources provided by different types of discourse (travel-writing, historical accounts, Schreiner's own diaries, letters and non-fiction). In the analysis of individual fictional works, the characteristic narrative transformation of such historical data will be examined.

The following chapters will deal successively with "Diamond-Fields" and Undine (the former a fragment, the latter the first completed novel, both drawing on Schreiner's experience at New Rush diamond fields); The Story of an African Farm (the first published novel); the dreams, allegories and short stories, written mainly while Schreiner was travelling in Europe in the late 1880s; Trooper Peter Halket (the short novel/allegory written after Schreiner's return to Africa), and the incomplete and posthumously published From Man to Man. In each work there is a different balance or proportion of 'realism' and 'allegory'. It is useful for the purposes of the following discussion to conceive the relationship between "a novel and the lives we all lead and to which the novel seems to have some relevance...under the figure of metaphor".⁴ This assumption enables critical discussion to focus on both context and text, and to study each work as a unique metaphor, instead of bringing hidden assumptions about 'realism' to bear on Schreiner's work, or preferences for the 'realistic' elements in her fiction as being somehow more mimetic, more directly and logically in touch with reality than others. In 'realistic' fiction the metaphor is simply closer: realistic novels "appear to require no interpretation" (Hewitt, p.6) but in fact do. Criticism of Schreiner's fiction has suffered from unquestioned assumptions about realism and allegory, and the place of didacticism in fiction.⁵ If one accepts that each of Schreiner's fictions, whether short or long, is a particular metaphor composed, in different proportions and tensions in each case, of both realistic and non-realistic sections, then certain unquestioned assumptions about formal unity and

structural coherence fall away⁶. Also, though novels may contain documentary elements, and in Schreiner's case always do, "the relevance of novels cannot be at all easily discussed in terms of the closeness of the created life in the novel to our own particular experience nor their convincingness in terms of their historical accuracy" (Hewitt, p.7). One of the critical problems in any discussion of Schreiner's fiction is that within the narrative metaphor of each work there are different degrees of distance between 'vehicle' and 'tenor', because of the characteristic way in which her narratives move along a spectrum of realistic and allegorical, or more discursive components. Two apparently opposed conventions are often operative within the same work, though arguably subdued and contained by certain narrative techniques.

Schreiner's novels embody her way of dealing with a general problem for the novelist: how to reconcile an "apparent contradiction between plausibility and form" (Hewitt, p. 55 ff.) Many Victorian novelists stretch plausibility in certain ways, often in terms of plot. Schreiner, too, stretches plausibility in terms of plot coincidence (though mainly in Undine, before she had re-defined the nature of plot in her Preface to the second edition of African Farm), but she also does so in terms of fictional conventions and texture. It is useful to see her as a novelist writing in a transitional period⁷ between the Victorian novel and the modern novel, often combining the older narrative convention of an omniscient author speaking to an audience with shared assumptions, with newer modes that emerged in the fiction of Conrad, Joyce, Woolf and Lawrence. Modern novelists extended the individualisation of characters' speech to their processes of thought and feeling (the 'stream-of-consciousness' method of which Schreiner provides instances in "Times and Seasons" in African Farm, for instance, or Trooper Peter's reverie), and sought to approximate fiction to the newly stressed subjectivity of experience, its random disorderliness. Schreiner criticism has suffered from the elevation of the 'impersonal' or 'dramatic' novel—the novel which shows, not tells—as the central critical criterion for fiction. (See Rive's assumptions concerning "digressions" and "interpolations", op. cit.)

The following discussion of Schreiner's fiction will concentrate on the specific metaphor operating in each work: "Each novel is a unique metaphor which arouses, controls, and directs a multitude of responses which are often potentially conflicting. Each novel is a resolution of clashes, an accommodation between different kinds of interest" (Hewitt, p.7). Fiction thus, by definition, contains a clash of energies and interests. "Some conflicting forces are inherent in any artistic endeavour - between diversity and unity, for example - and some come from the extreme impurity of novelists' (and most readers') impulses" (Hewitt, p. 184). Novelists do not always have it in mind "only to create a unified work of art; they have wanted...to persuade us of political or social truths, or... to document a way of life" (Hewitt, ibid.). This is especially true of Schreiner's fiction, with its strong impulse toward social relevance and reform. She herself pointed out that her isolation had intensified her tendency toward 'preachiness'. The strength of the novel form often comes from a "recognition that the conflict is there"... and the energy of the work derives from "a sense of intellectual effort" in holding disparate interests and conflicting impulses together (Hewitt, p.185).⁸

Another basic conflict within fiction which is relevant in a critical discussion of Schreiner is that "between the novel as object and the novel as process" (Hewitt, p.189). The critic has to do justice to "both created object and the experience we undergo when we read it" (ibid.). Critical discussion of Schreiner's fiction has often overlooked the particular sequence of experience which makes up each work. "Variations of tempo, of degrees of attention, of memorability, are all elements of the novel, and so are surprise, suspense and frustration" (ibid.). Schreiner was very aware of the need to hold the attention and interest. She often asks friends whether they find her writing interesting, even if they disagree with it:

I wonder if you would some day perhaps have time, on a Sunday afternoon or morning, say, to do something for me; to read over my little chapter "Fireflies in the dark"

[in From Man to Man], and tell me quite truthfully, without fear of hurting me, if you find it interesting. I am so afraid I have become so subtle in my modes of thought, I have thought so much about some impersonal things and care so much for them, that others may find them very uninteresting.... (Letters, p.279)

This quality of holding interest is vital, as it is the only one which will ensure that we proceed through the sequence of narrative events arranged for us by the novelist. The discussion of Schreiner's fiction will try to bear in mind the reading experience as well as the aesthetic patterning which emerges when fiction is treated as a static artefact.

(ii) Early story-telling

The preceding chapter has suggested some of the ways in which Schreiner 'fantasised' or 'fictionalised' her experience. Daydream and fantasy always remained elements within her fiction, although she distinguished clearly between actual dreams she had and the use of dreams in literature (Life, pp. 164-5). Her early story-telling seems to have included both oral and written composition, both private reverie and communication to imaginary or real listeners. 11 ?
In From Man to Man the little girl in the Prelude provides a fictional model of the kind of story-telling Schreiner herself did as a little girl, in which there were often slight gradations between daydream, sleeping dream, fantasy and reality. In the fiction these gradations are carefully controlled.

The story-telling impulse seems to have been there from a very early age, and to have been strong and involuntary:

If God were to put me alone on a star and say I and the star should be burnt up at last and nothing be left, I should make stories all the time just the same. (Letters, p. 160)

Story-telling could contain an element of wish-fulfilment, or didacticism, or both, as in the allegories. A simple model of story-telling as a means of escape from an unpleasant environment occurs in the fragment "Diamond-Fields", in Monica's story to the little crippled girl, Ally:

"Go on", said the cripple, "it's so different from here. I like to hear". (DF, p. 25)

But even fantasies often have a strong didactic kernel, as we hear of Undine's stories to Diogenes, which all have "a little bit of ethical teaching which was sure to lift up its head in the wildest of Undine's fairy stories" (Undine, p. 340).

Oral composition to others, usually children, was a feature of Schreiner's position as companion/governess in different households from 1870 to 1880 (though the governess position was only formalised in 1874 at the Weakleys). Many accounts of her during this period mention her nervousness, restlessness, and wonderful stories, which were often exciting adventures, sometimes in serial form. When Schreiner was with the Orpens at Avoca in 1870, at the age of 15,

the idea was that she should help us with our lessons, but she was in a very highly nervous state, slept badly and went for long walks and rides, and the plan fell through. We were all fascinated by her beauty and her gift for improvising the most thrilling stories, which went on from day to day. I remember mamma asking her not to go on with one very exciting story as we were very excitable little people ourselves, and after that the fount dried up, to our undying regret. It was about robbers and wild rocky islands and

caves and a huge river and hairbreadth escapes, and we often begged her to tell us how it ended. (Life, p.78)

Schreiner's early stories thus sometimes featured the sensational adventure element she was explicitly to reject in her Preface to African Farm in favour of a more sober view of colonial reality (not "a history of wild adventure" or "encounters with ravening lions, and hair-breadth escapes").⁹ Sensationalism was a strong element in Undine, however, and Schreiner sometimes enjoyed writing in this mode. She comments to Ellis on her work New Rush (of which "Diamond Fields" is presumably a fragment)¹⁰ which was written in England in 1882:

Olive Schreiner can't write a sensational story, can't she! I've written a devil of a fine sensational story. Whether when it's quite done I'll think so well of it remains to be seen. I want you to read it, and tell me which you think is best, it is New Rush. (HRC, 16 August 1886)

The serial form of these stories indicates a concern with plot manipulation in the traditional manner, with dramatic climax, surprise and coincidence. Of the novels, Undine relies heavily on such traditional plot devices. Some of her later 'written' stories, like the early oral compositions, were also especially aimed at children, such as "The Adventures of Master Towser" and "The Wax-doll and the Stepmother", the former appearing in the magazine of her elder brother Fred's school, New College, Eastbourne. The situation of an impoverished older woman of lowly social status (Schreiner as governess) telling stories to a younger listener recurs in the fiction, particularly clearly in "Diamond-Fields" and Undine, with a washerwoman/ironing woman telling stories to a young crippled girl (Ally, Diogenes).

There were other forms of early literary or semi-literary activity. Some were very casual, such as jottings in exercise books. Letters could be more or less shaped at different times, sometimes expressing ideas with great clarity and precision, at other times more disjointed and personal. The letters, like the fiction, reveal

a tension between two kinds of need: the emotional need for release and reassurance, and the intellectual need for precise formulation of principles and ideas. The same is true of the journals. Letters, which are intended for someone other than oneself, always involve another reader/listener, and Schreiner's often develop into little anecdotes, snatches of dialogue, satirical sketches or brief allegories. The journals, although essentially a form of self-communion, could be sent to close friends and thus also acquired a more public element. Schreiner and Ellis exchanged their journals as part of the development of their intimacy in England in 1884 (HRC). Ellis had been teaching in Australia during the same period that Schreiner was a governess near Cradock and wrote to Schreiner asking if she found his journal as irritating as he did in retrospect, because it was "both me and not me" (a phrase Schreiner uses of her relationship with her fictional characters) (HRC, 1884, Letters, p.50).

The journals reveal an early pressure toward the formulation of general rules or first principles, as in the journal entry about Moses learning truths in solitude, which is then formulated as a general rule: "all great works" and "all the great truths" have had their foundations laid in solitude and quiet. Another instance occurs in the Lelie Kloof Journal when, after reading Wilhelm Meister, Schreiner draws a general conclusion which includes an element of moral encouragement:

I was struck in reading Wilhelm Meister by the marvellous unity between all thinking minds of a certain order. I am determined to be fearless: let every man speak out from the depths of his heart, and take the result, coolly. However hard things are we can endure them in silence and take joy in enduring. (LK Journal, 2 November 1880)

Such generalisations form the basis of the 'authorial wisdom' which plays a role within Schreiner's fictional narratives. She valued independence of mind because of the pressure toward self-education felt by herself and others in her position :

I have never been to school you know, or had one sixpence expended on my education. When I think of all the advantages that other people have I sometimes feel bitter, at least I used to. I don't now. When people say it is unnatural for people placed as Lyndall and Waldo were to have such thoughts and feelings I laugh to myself.... It isn't that one can't teach oneself everything, one can, but it's at such a fearful cost of strength. That makes me sorry that I never had any help. (HRC, 1884)

- Ellis wrote back:

It would doubtless have been good in many ways if you had had a thorough education of a regular kind. Still, you might have lost something that you cannot afford to lose. Lyndall hadn't a very high opinion of schools. I never learnt much at school that was of any use to me. (HRC, 1884)

Ellis's perceptive comment points to one of the advantages Schreiner gained as a writer under the pressure of self-education: the need for independent thought, and the resultant firmness of general formulation which finds an original expression. Both letters and journals were outlets for formulating thought, for a form of semi-literary activity which was partly self-expression, partly communication with others.

Schreiner's more formal early literary activity sometimes took the form of poems which were very much under the influence of poets like Shelley and Tennyson, who were her favourites at the time (Life, p.71). At the age of 14 she was writing verses in a conventional style of English landscape description:

Oh, merrily the sun shines
Upon the gleaming hills;
Oh, merrily the water leaps
With all its sun-lit rills. (Life, p.73)

Undine retains many traces of such attempts to render an unseen English landscape which had been mediated to Schreiner only through literary experience. The direction her fiction took was away from these literary imitations of an English tradition toward a commitment to

the realities of colonial experience (dipping her pen in "the grey pigments" around her, as she wrote in her Preface to African Farm). Other early poems dwell on the melancholy of disappointed love:

After I had washed up I walked up and down, made some horrid verses,

He has married a lady fair
And Oh, in her soft golden hair
Are glittering diamonds bright
In the dazzling evening light
He has married a lady grand
And oh, on her soft white hand
Lies that which... (Life, p.89)

These "horrid verses" were composed after Schreiner had returned to Hertzog from Dordrecht in 1872, after the Julius Gau affair, and the poem expresses a sense of emotional rejection and social exclusion. The "lady grand" with fair hair and diamonds reappears in "Diamond Fields" and Undine, where she is further characterised as cold, exploiting and hypocritical. She is the prototype of Schreiner's socially conventional but manipulative and destructive women, such as Veronica Grey in From Man to Man. Schreiner had been influenced by Tennyson's melancholy and pathos: she had copied "Break, Break, Break" into her journal of 1867, and Shelley remained a favourite poet until much later; she was at one time intending to write a critical article on his poetry. Shelley represented to her the type of the ethereal poet, and she was attracted by the romantic and daring aspects of his life. He figures as an influence and an explicit allusion in Undine, as prototype of a daring lover and a figure connected with martyrdom and drowning, both strong themes in Undine (OS, p. 87). Later Schreiner was to place Tennyson's merits in a characteristic 'diamond' metaphor:

Yes, I think Tennyson was a poet and a true poet; but not a very great one. A one carat diamond is a diamond and a true diamond, but not a large one, and doesn't equal one of the same water which is 50 carats.

(Letters, p. 258)

In the fiction drawing on Schreiner's diamond-field experience, certain currents of English literary experience flow together with themes of disappointed love and other, emergent concerns with colonial society and intellectual conflict.

(iii) "Diamond Fields": a fragment

"Diamond Fields: Only a Story of Course" is a manuscript fragment which seems to be part of the same work referred to by Schreiner as "New Rush", which she began in England in March 1882 and finished on Dec. 9th 1882. This is confirmed by her reference in 1891 to "New Rush, a Diamond Field Story" (To Mary Sauer, SAL, 26 February 1891). However, as has been pointed out, the fragment bears little relation to the chapters and incidents mentioned by Ellis when he corresponded with Schreiner about the manuscript.¹⁰ There are many parallels with the New Rush scenes in Undine; this is not surprising as Schreiner had early on decided not to publish Undine. The main recapitulation is of a relationship between an older, poor but independent woman and a young crippled girl. The relationship is based on sympathy and story-telling. The crippled children are both deformed as a result of parental brutality, in Ally's case by her drunken father's assault on her pregnant mother, in Diogenes's case by a beating from her mother. The child victim and the story-teller thus appear in simplified form in both works, though the children respond differently to their situation.

Both "Diamond Fields" and Undine appear to have been culminations of Schreiner's experience at New Rush, where she arrived to join her brother Theo and sister Ettie in November 1872, and of her attempts to fictionalise that experience. The romance of diamonds had caught her imagination before she left for the fields; she wrote a story called "The Story of a Diamond" which she calls "very poor" on the 6th November, and was busy on a rough sketch of "A Diamond" on the day she left for New Rush (Life, p.10). Towards the end of 1872 she was also working on a story called "The Ghost" : this supernatural thread runs through sections of Undine, especially

the mad scenes with Aunt Margaret.

Schreiner clearly thought of "New Rush" as 'sensational' fiction, and yet the "Diamond Fields" fragment is very sober and anchored in contemporary realities. She did not think highly of it as literature, and told Philip Kent, to whom she sent the MS, that it was rather empty, but had a charm and interest because it dealt with the diamond fields (Fryde, July 1883). She later told him that she would not publish it because "it was forced work, which can never be good" (Fryde, 2 November 1883). But she would not burn it, as he had taken the trouble to make pencil corrections and suggestions. She did in fact destroy the beginning of another story based on the Fields, called "Two Merry Diggers", which she was also working on in 1882. The title suggests that this story would have picked up the humour and conviviality of life at the Fields, whereas both "Diamond Fields" and the last section of Undine explore its romantic and pathetic aspects, and its moral drama.

Havelock Ellis confirmed Schreiner's own view that "New Rush" was somehow lacking in her characteristic inspiration:

I have only read New Rush once so I must not speak very positively. It struck me as being well constructed and I do not perceive at all the absence of the chief figure. But it seems for the most part to be written too easily somehow. I miss you in it — except in a few sentences, etc., here and there. The characters, almost without exception, seem to me to be weak, very weak.

(HRC, 1884)

Ellis goes on to say that the characters are not alive, but that Schreiner excels in the rendering of intense emotional attitudes. He liked the background, but felt it was too short to be published separately. Later he recommended that she revise it for publication.

(iv) Life at New Rush

The Cradock fragment of "Diamond Fields" provides a useful illustration of Schreiner's characteristic narrative transformations of historical realities, and of her personal situation, because of its brevity, and its unity of setting at the Fields. Schreiner is at pains to locate her fictional character, Monica St. John, at a historical point of time and place:

It was at this corner, where Main Street turns into Bowling Alley, that on a summer afternoon, the third of November one thousand eight hundred and seventy-two, a woman might have been seen plying her way through the red sand.... (DF, p.16)

Monica St. John, the older woman of the story, appears magically at a historical and geographical juncture, materialising just as Schreiner herself did at New Rush at almost the same date.

The fragment is faithful to historical realities in many details, and finds parallels in the records of contemporary visitors to New Rush. The excitement of restless activity, the racial mixture, the tent-town and debris heaps, the 'low fever', gambling, drinking, sexual licence, the contrasts of wealth and abject poverty, the amazing sight of Colesberg Kopje itself (later the Kimberley Big Hole) - these are the recurring features of contemporary descriptions, and make up the realistic background to Schreiner's narrative.

The early 1870s saw the transformation of a rural economy into an industrialised one in South Africa:

The social consequences of the mineral discoveries were momentous. The immediate outcome was large-scale depopulation of the countryside and of the smaller townships, where professional men and even tradesmen could find few clients or customers. Agricultural production declined, imported tinned milk and butter largely replacing local dairy produce. In up-country Natal and the Free State, professional services might not be

available. Attorneys had migrated to the fields and juries could not be impanelled. There was a parallel exodus of Bantu from the reserves, owing to the demand for labour. Migrations of natives to white areas brought some aspects of the age-long frontier problem to the doorsteps of European towns. There was now to be a detribalised urban proletariat. At the same time the previous chronic shortage of skilled mechanics was remedied by the immigration from Europe of technicians. In the larger towns the mercantile element, hitherto supreme, found themselves challenged by a new class of highly-paid artisans. The Industrial Revolution had arrived.¹¹

The discovery of minerals brought an allied revolution in transport, though the railway did not reach Kimberley till 1885. Waldo's experience as a transport-rider reflects the transport difficulties of the period, as does Undine's journey to the fields in the Snappercaps' wagon.

Although the class structure was changing, the social infrastructure of New Rush reflected that of England and the Cape Colony. Merriman, also at the fields in 1872, described it as "a sort of canvas London, for no-one seems to know their next-door neighbour."¹² There were also social divisions within the tent town, as indicated in Monica's visit to the West End where she sees the vision of the bejewelled fair lady in her ornate tent.

The same period saw the establishment by Rhodes of the fortune which would be the basis of his later Imperial dream of Africa for England. Not only was he acquiring wealth, he was already establishing the links which would take him into Matabeleland and Mashonaland in the next decades and thus precipitate Schreiner's Trooper Peter Halket :

During this period Cecil Rhodes also came to know Carl Behrens, a general agent in Durban, who, about 1870, was acting on behalf of the South African Goldfields Exploration Company, whose chief officer, Thomas Baines,

was in Lobengula's country, and had already obtained the concession which Rhodes was later to take over for his Chartered Company.¹³

Although small diggers would soon become an anachronism at the fields, Rhodes's case emphasizes the fact that

the diggers by no means represented downtrodden labour in its struggle with predatory capital. They themselves were petty monopolists, harshly restricting black enterprise and repressing the black labourers, who were truly the diggers. (Lewsen, p. 41)

Within Griqualand West "about a thousand impoverished Griqua pastoralists" were swamped by the 57,000 new arrivals (37,000 of them white) of 1871 (Lewsen, p.34). Thus Undine, after leaving her African farm and living in England, returns to a country she scarcely recognizes when she arrives in Port Elizabeth:

Africa, as it appeared in that desolate and sand-smitten seaport, was not the Africa of her memory. The old Africa with its great grass and Karoo flats and rough rock-crowned mountains, unriden and un-man-defiled old Africa, was little like the sand-smothered town in which she stood, which might have been in any country in Europe but for the ragged niggers slouching about the streets and the dark, dirty, half-clothed fish-boys who dragged their wares along with tails dragging in the sand. (Undine, pp. 243-244)

She has come back to an Africa of industrialism and a depressed proletariat. In both "Diamond Fields" and Undine the chief female character becomes a member of a white proletariat as washerwoman and ironing woman. Washerwomen at the fields were renowned for their thieving, like the Coloured washerwoman encountered by Undine.¹⁴ The economic facts of a large population of male migrant workers made such employment readily available. (The same circumstances led to the phenomenon of Zulu washermen in Johannesburg).¹⁵ Both Monica and Undine are respectable and independent

working women at the fields; the work, like Schreiner's own governessing, was a way out of poverty and economic dependence.

Contemporary descriptions of Colesberg Kopje stress, as Schreiner does, the scale of man to landscape, and the oddity of a place which is creating a new landscape, neither quite natural nor man-made, neither town nor country. This is Rhodes's description to his mother:

Try and imagine a small hill, at highest fifty feet above the surrounding countryside, and about one hundred and fifty yards broad by two hundred long. In every direction spreading from this hill great masses of no longer white tents are pitched in sprawling confusion, and close by are the outspanned wagons of the Dutch diggers, the liquor canteens, and the galvanised structures of the diamond buyers and traders. Then beyond that lies the boundless veld again, running for hundreds of miles in every direction.

This hillock shelters the hundreds of claims in which men seek diamonds, and all around it are numberless heaps of discarded debris from the claims. Moving among the tents, the claims, and the debris heaps, are men resembling swarming ants. Just think of six hundred claims all closely grouped, each claim generally split into four sections and in each section some six black and white men, all together, making a total of about ten thousand men at work every day on a piece of ground such as I have described. This is Colesberg Kopje. It resembles a gigantic house of five hundred rooms, none of them being on the same level. Truly one of the most remarkable spots on earth.

(McNish, G&G, p.186)

Anthony Trollope, who wrote about New Rush in 1878, was equally impressed: the sight inevitably brought home the force of greed:

You immediately feel it is the largest and most complete hole ever made by human agency.¹⁶

The auditory effects are also registered by Trollope, especially the sound of the travelling buckets:

They drop down and creep up not altogether noiselessly but with a gentle trembling sound which mixes itself pleasantly with the murmur from the voices below. (p. 176)

Schreiner's opening description in "Diamond Fields" transforms this data with characteristic vigour and stress, moving between detail and summarising statement, within a repetitive rhetorical pattern:

Up and down upon the thousand shining wires run the iron buckets; some descending empty with a sharp whizzing sound, some gliding up slowly, heavily laden with the dark blue soil.... Standing on the edge, and looking down, the mine is a large, oval basin with precipitous rocky sides, so deep that the men at work seem mere moving specks, as they peck at the hard blue soil.

Around the edge of the whole mine is the whirl and rush and tumult of many thousand shouts and voices. An eager, hungry, struggling passionate life animates the whole scene. Every man, every wheel, every implement is in motion. (DF, p.15)

New Rush lent itself to theological and moral vision: some contemporary pictures presented it as a form of 'Hell'. There were obvious contrasts between an avid quest for wealth and the saintly service of nurses and priests. Trollope called diamond-digging "a demoralising quest" (p. 166) and contrasted it with the humble service and "comparative nobility of a shoemaker". He also remarked on the contrast between diggers and a woman he met at the hospital, "one of the sweet ones of the earth", commenting on the wide difference between binding up a man's wounds and "searching for diamonds in the dirt" (p. 205). J.W. Matthews describes an incident in which a Catholic priest, Father Hidien, himself succumbed to fever by devotedly nursing "a perfect fever wreck, covered with frightful sores and merely a living skeleton".¹⁷ The angelic figure of the nurse, so widespread in Victorian literature, had

a special place in the context of the Diamond fields: both heroines in "Diamond Fields" and Undine become nurses for a while, Undine sacrificing herself heroically in the task. Rebecca Schreiner, in a letter after Gottlob's death, wrote:

...now I have no-one to care for my days are weary...dreary.
If I were living in a town or at the fields I might find
some wretched and needy one whom I might try to comfort
and help but here there is no such work to fall back on.

(Findlay, 1 November 1876)

Ideas of nursing and service thus arose as a response to the human misery caused by new social circumstances at the Fields. The opposition between material greed and loving self-sacrifice which occurs in both "Diamond Fields" and Undine was an integral part of the environment. Nursing as service runs through Schreiner's fiction in different ways, reaching its odd apotheosis in Gregory Rose's nursing of Lyndall in African Farm.¹⁸

The contrast between the Kopje at night and during the day, between a melancholy romantic night-time and the lively bustle of day-time, which forms an element of Schreiner's technical presentation of the fields in both "Diamond Fields" and Undine, was evident to Trollope as well, who described the view of the mine by moonlight as a "weird and wonderful sight...sublime in its peculiar strangeness" (p. 184). Schreiner's alternation of day and night-time views of New Rush in these works is a more simplified version of the alternations of view at the opening of African Farm, which sets the hot prosaic world of daytime conflict and struggle against the realm of moonlight, reverie and imagination; real life alternates with dream life. A similar alternation of view characterises her description of Bowling Alley in "Diamond Fields":

Bowling Alley was very quiet that afternoon. It was too hot for anyone to be out who could remain under shelter, even of canvas. In the night-time, when the great Kop had poured forth its workers and lay dead and still under the starlight, then Bowling Alley was alive and noisy. Floods of yellow lamp-light streamed out of the open

restaurants and crowded gaming houses in which the merry diggers drank and caroused till morning; but now, in this hot time of the afternoon it was very quiet.

(DF, p. 17)

Here the present stillness of the Alley is poised against its night-time activity; the social conviviality in the Alley is in turn poised against the still and deserted mine; noise is recollected in tranquillity. The "merry" side of life at New Rush would presumably have been depicted in the discarded "Two Merry Diggers".

"Merry diggers", the "gentlemen digger" and the "lush" were all diamond field types, commemorated in history, songs and rhymes.¹⁹ Gentleman diggers were well-born and educated Englishmen who joined the new rush, like Charles Rudd, Harrow and Cambridge scholar, cricketer and runner, who was at first unlucky, poor and ill with typhoid fever, living in a ragged tent with one Coloured youth as cook and assistant. He is described by a contemporary as tall, erect like a soldier, slender in build, having fine dark eyes, a wispy moustache, and thick fair hair, with a well-trimmed black beard. He was usually to be seen wearing moleskin trousers, flannel shirt, an untidy hat, and was like everybody else, always covered in dust.²⁰

Undine draws on this type in the gentleman digger fallen on bad days, nursed by the heroine :

He had bonny light curls like some one she had cared for long ago, and he had broken boots and stockings so old that the red flesh showed through. She hardly knew which drew her to him most, the curls or the boots, for there is something achingly pitiable in broken boots.

When a man who has called himself a gentleman falls to that, he can fall no lower. (Undine, p.334)

Pathos is associated with a pitiable social descent in Rudd and Undine's digger. Both conform to a romantic stereotype. Opposed to the gentleman digger was the "lush" or "swell" who pretended to

find many diamonds, and "pranced around for hours each day upon well-groomed horses, showing off and getting credit without intention of paying the accounts when presented" (El Dorado, p.256). He preyed upon newcomers and simpler, kinder diggers. This exploitative type appears as a black "swell" in Undine (p. 350).²¹

The moral and theological values which were often used to 'redeem' the inglorious digging for material wealth, as well as the humour and superstition attached to the search, are best illustrated in the Schreiner family's own responses to their experiences at the Fields, which culminated in their finding of the "Faith Diamond" in 1874. The Schreiner family experience was in turn framed by the somewhat sceptical narrative of S.C. Cronwright, who left his own version of events.²² Cronwright determined to get at "the hard facts" and discount the "superstition" of Ettie Schreiner, who claimed that God had sent the diamond in answer to her prayer for aid in their temperance work, and who declared that Theo Schreiner should henceforth dedicate his life to the temperance movement. Wealth could thus be redeemed by being consecrated to God's work. Undine rests on a version of this God/Mammon theme.

Cronwright's description of the mine mentions the huge "Kameel Doorn" or Camel Thorn tree (Acacia giraffae) under which the first diamonds were found at New Rush (officially proclaimed Kimberley in 1873). This camel-thorn, which appears in early paintings and photographs of New Rush, was a feature of the landscape which must have caught Schreiner's imagination, for it features as the manuscript title of From Man to Man ("The Camel Thorn") which she possibly began during or shortly after her stay at New Rush. Trees under which great wealth is hidden feature as part of a literary tradition which includes Chaucer's Pardoner's Tale, and the allegorical possibilities of such an association of tree, wealth, sacrifice and crucifixion come alive again in Schreiner's Trooper Peter Halket.

The members of the Schreiner family responded differently to the finding of the Faith Diamond:

Will told the story with the sceptical look and tone of the barrister who is not accepting such a relation without hard proof; and Olive told it with amusement at the childishness of it and the absurdity of the non-sequitur of the deduction, even if the alleged facts were indeed as represented. But Ettie who, like Theo, was a literal believer in Christian theology and dogma and to whom the argument post hoc ergo propter hoc was absolute proof in such matters, told me the story personally, under her usual stress of violent and almost uncontrolled emotion.

Ettie's story was that she had often asked Theo to devote his life to the temperance cause, which was interwoven with the welfare of the Coloured and Native races (and thus an offshoot of liberal paternalism as well as missionary fervour). Eventually Theo had said that if he found an enormous diamond by knocking-off time, he would do so. Ettie and a friend began earnest prayer. Just before knocking-off time she saw John Pursglove, Will's partner, approaching her, "looking funny" and with his fist closed. He handed her a 230 carat diamond.

Cronwright then retells this story in a more 'factual' way. One of the facts appears to have been that, as often happened, it was the black worker who found the diamond while Theo was having tea. The diamond, which they believed to be worth about £ 5,000, eventually fetched only about £ 1,800 because of numerous flaws. Cronwright argues that if God had wanted to underwrite the temperance cause he would have sent a better stone. He concludes (with a superstition equal to Ettie Schreiner's) that the stone was 'delivered' almost worthless in order to show the moral offence of bargaining with God. Characteristically, he misses the truly strange aspects of the story: that the diamond was found in De Beers mine, which was flooded that night, and that without the money which flowed into the family from the Faith Diamond, Will Schreiner might not have had the Cambridge education he in fact

had, and the Cape Colony would have lost a Prime Minister. Schreiner's own hopes of an education had been pinned onto a large find:

I have just been out in the town to see a large diamond of 159 carats which was found yesterday by a Mr. Hubby. He hopes to get at least £4,000 for it as it is a beautiful stone. I wonder when our turn will come—soon I hope. If Theo gets a very large one he has promised to send me to America to study at one of the large Colleges that they have there for ladies. It is the great wish of my life and I hope that it is to be realised one of these days and not like so many of our hopes to come to nothing. (To Kate, Findlay, 30 April 1873)

As it was, this great wish was not to be realised. But Schreiner would use her experience at New Rush as a component of her fiction, thus illustrating how disappointed expectations in the 'real' world could feed her creative imagination.

(v) "Diamond Fields": narrative structure 23

The fairly complex and characteristic narrative pattern of the "Diamond Fields" fragment interweaves historical reality, fiction and dream/fantasy. The first narrative opens in medias res at the lip of the mine itself. The temporal setting is indicated by a generalised narrative voice ("the days we speak of") and a historic present tense ("the path for the tramway is not yet set"). The period is established as just before full industrialisation (before steam and the tramway) and the following description of the seething crowd emphasises the idea of a mixed crowd in individualistic free enterprise, though the individuals are seen as representatives of all racial and national groups (a "babel" with "representatives of every humanity under heaven") and the jealous exclusion of blacks by whites in certain activities is noted: "the master does not like to see his nigger at the sorting table". Both emerging industrial and political patterns are thus

registered, and at the same time a moral or religious backdrop to the activity is present in allusion ("babel" and "heaven"). Divisions within both black and white groups are briefly described, the "whiteman" being seen as another category capable of further division into "all his many shaded varieties". A further ironic complexity of the colour situation is the "red and blue dust that almost obliterates all peculiarities of complexion". The peripheral role of women in this picture (a few poor women sorters) also emerges, the economic reason being given: "the women find it better to work for men, women being rare and men plentiful". The narrative voice in the opening section is of one familiar with the fields and with the complexities of New Rush, and there is a suggestion of an implied listener/ companion being guided around the sights and sounds of a familiar landscape ("Standing on the edge and looking down", "Hindu coolies ... may be seen" "each variety readily distinguishable to the experienced eye"). The "focalisation"²⁴ of this first narrative is thus through the eyes of a contemporary visitor, though the narrative is retrospective (the narrator speaks from a post-steam and post-tramway vantage point).

The narrative then moves out from the centre of the camp, the mine which "like a huge heart throbs in the centre of that great white camp"²⁵ to the surrounding streets. It moves through the comparatively quiet streets from the untidy west End to the more orderly East End, to a specific corner, Main Street and Bowling Alley, registering the social differentiation of the areas, and keeping to the historic present tense.

The generalised and typifying narration then narrows down to a specific day and historical date (3 November 1872) within a certain season (a summer afternoon) and the first character/ actant²⁶ emerges within the possibilities of the scene: "a woman might have been seen". The tense becomes definite and historical: "she turned up Bowling Alley". The description of the woman registers her experience of hardship, her strength (her large features almost "masculine") and her profession, which the

narrator deduces (not being omniscient but basing conclusions on visual evidence) from her tray of clothes as that of washing and ironing woman, "probably" carrying her work home.

The next paragraph is still recounted by the same narrative voice (that of the first narrative) but it is now focalised through the woman as she progresses up Bowling Alley. After the little street scenes are passed (a lazy billiard-marker, two French diamond buyers, a child playing, two children fighting, a digger) she delivers her washing, receiving her five shillings in exchange. The limited buying power of this amount at the current inflation rate is noted in a rhetorical question. This is the woman's first transaction, one of commercial exchange, clean laundry for pay. It registers her economic independence. At the same time the question is raised : what will she do with the money? The more general question behind the narrative is "where is she going?" She now reaches the richer part of the camp, the little tent houses of the "diamond merchants, rich diggers and professional men". Now the narrative is strongly focalised through the woman, everything she sees being registered in tones of desire, admiration, yearning and delight. She sees a "gem" of a house and a fair lady inside it, the "gem" of it all. Wealth, beauty and protection surround the lady and her trappings. She has a baby, a Malay servant, a book, a diamond ring and a wedding ring: emotional security and material prosperity. Though the poor woman is enraptured by the vision, the narrative voice gives us details which indicate that the lady is, despite her appearance, trapped and parasitic: near her an English canary sits in a cage, and her hair is "of the same tint as the canary's wing".

Scene now passes into dialogue, when the poor woman asks the fair lady for work. The dialogue, concerning the rate of pay for the sewing job, is interrupted by a narrative generalisation which is a variant of Schreiner's characteristic "authorial wisdom" : the young eyes had never "looked upon sin or suffering which leave always their shadow in the eyes that have seen them". The dialogue is based upon self-sacrifice on the poor woman's part and gross exploitation on the part of the rich lady. At

the same time the "superiority" of the washerwoman is indicated in terms of experience and charity. The rich woman's speech is chilly and careful ("Is not that rather high?") and the poor woman's sturdy and localised: "The people in the next house will give you my character; I have worked for them long". The poor woman is now for the first time named to her employer and the reader as Monica St. John, an English gentlewoman's name which belies her speech and poverty, thus raising expectations within the reader of hidden identities and mysteries to be cleared up. This transaction, between two women socially and materially contrasted, indicates that women are harsh taskmasters, and hints at the theme of parasitism in women of a certain class. It also suggests the current relationship between labour and capital: the lowest possible price is paid for available labour.

Monica, now a named actant in the narrative, proceeds toward the market square, buys a few supplies with her money, then exchanges bread for an expensive orange. Now she is hurrying and purposeful. The two people she passes are both examples of past good deeds on Monica's part: a drunk woman whose ironing she had done for nothing, and a rough digger whom she had nursed through an infectious fever. Both are recalled in brief narrative analepses: external ¹analepses filling in details of Monica's past prior to the beginning of the first narrative and further reinforcing the idea of her saintliness and charity (Genette, p. 48 ff). The actant, Monica, and the first narrative now come to rest when Monica arrives in the "little open space" behind the poor tent where Ally, the crippled girl, lives. The gift of the orange recalls the "Colony", a distant and wonderful place in Ally's references. The orange acts as a mnemonic object, like Proust's madeleine, which triggers the involuntary memory of Monica's next narrative, though not yet.

Monica's question to Ally, why she is at the back of the tent, now releases a flood of angry and self-pitying narration from the crippled girl (an internal analepsis, this time, presumably parallel to Monica's walk along Bowling Alley)²⁷ explaining that when she was sitting in front of the tent she had grown angry and vindictive towards those riding past, whom she sees as proud and cruel. The tirade dwells on the distinction between inherited ("born

so") deformities and those acquired by accident. At the end, another external analepsis (temporally prior to those concerning Monica) gives us the circumstances which caused Ally's deformity: her father had "always" kicked her mother, and had "flogged her the day I was born" which had caused her mother's death and her own deformity.

Monica's next question, concerning the new neighbouring tent, triggers another narrative from Ally, this time about the beautiful canvas house ("just like the Colony") and the kind Dr. Herder who lives in it. This is also an analepsis, temporally subsequent to Ally's foregoing one: in it Dr. Herder emerges as a male figure parallel to Monica in kindness and service ("What pleasure have we big ones if it isn't to help the weak ones") and opposed to the cruel, brutal father described in Ally's previous narrative.

After a brief narrative pause, Ally creeps closer to Monica, and the mood alters to one of tranquil expectancy: Monica will now have to tell something. In a typical folktale structure, she offers three stories, but Ally accepts only the third. The first is about the pretty lady (but Ally hates pretty people); the second is about the French boy who had the low fever (this is too depressing for Ally). Ally's response to the second offer: "There must be some place in the world that isn't full of dust and noise and sick people like these Fields" leads into Monica's narrative (the second narrative in "Diamond Fields"), thus transforming the actant of the first narrative into the narrator of the second (Genette, p. 227f). This narrative will be about the Colony, which has been present in Ally's yearning references. This setting is in every way opposite to that of the first narrative, the 'real' circumstances at the Fields, which contain illness, exploitation, cruelty, poverty, and hard labour. The setting is lush and fertile in this bush world; "I wish I was there" interjects Ally, identifying the wish-fulfilment nature of this narrative. The little house is integrated into a natural landscape: the bush grows right down to the walls; there are protective vegetation and open spaces where you can catch glimpses of the sea, both

security and freedom. Ally's role as listener in this second narrative is to encourage and prompt the narrator when she pauses ("Um-m' "and "Well?" and "Go on... It's so different from here. I like to hear".) Inside this second narrative, the older woman (Monica) and young girl (Ally) are transformed into the grandmother and little girl who live in this wonderful bush world, in which house and bush are equally hospitable: "the bush was like her home". The environment is not as specifically an African landscape as that of African Farm or From Man to Man; it is a generically described paradise: green, with moss, dog-bushes, and redberry bushes, though January, the grandmother's black boy who sleeps under the hedge, and the cock-o-veets are African. In this idyllic world organic life is an integrated spectrum of dog, monkey, crow, goat, January, little girl and grandmother. In this idyllic world there are no parents, or only a travelling father who comes for a few days in the year, mainly to bring presents. There is no scolding or anger. The Colony is thus an idealised "home" which is closer to an English "home" than the raw, rough Diamond fields, and yet has the unspoilt nature of the African bushworld.

In this second narrative the actant is the little girl, and the narrative is focalised through her, registering her delight and enjoyment. Like Monica in the first narrative, she travels a little through the bush world towards two favourite "places" on the other side of the hill. In the first place, a small "open space" which is a fantasy parallel to the sordid 'real' space behind the tent where Monica and Ally are sitting, there is a convict's grave. Here there is a brief third narrative, narrated by Monica about the convict instead of the little girl (he replaces her as actant/victim) but supposedly a story told to the little girl by January (which links both of them with the pursued figure):

They came to hunt for him at last, with dogs and guns;
and found him just on that spot, running through the
trees. They called to him to stand and he would not;
so they shot him, and made his grave where he fell down.

The little girl in the second narrative comforts the convict (as Monica comforts Ally) by bringing company and gifts: her animals, flowers, and her teeth when they fall out, so that he could have "some part of a living thing in there with him". Close to the grave there was "another delightful place", equally delightful but different: here there was a ridge of sand and a view of the sea; it was a wonderful place to play and "the sea breeze blew into your face till it made your heart grow bigger and bigger". Here animals and child play together in harmony: the dog digs walls for the dam, the monkey would jump on her back, make faces at the goat, then run around them all until "everybody fell over in the sand, snapping, chattering, laughing, the goat underneath, Bonch on the top, pinching every ear or tail he could get hold of. They made the bush ring with their merry noise many a day". This part of the narrative is "iterative": it tells once what happened often ("many a day"). 28

This high-water mark of harmony and delight is followed by a specific narrated social visit ("once for a birthday") made by the little girl to the large house of the farmer. The demands of a social world intrude and the tone becomes ominous: the little girl has to go, and to be clean. Here the second narrative seems to be taken over by the little girl herself or to be very strongly focalised through her and in her idiom ("They had a strange play"). This is just before the "Diamond Fields" manuscript breaks off. In this section of the narrative there is a sense of the 'real' world breaking in on the fantasy wish-fulfilment of the preceding part of the second narrative. Here there is a return of cruelty and aggression towards the monkey (parallel to the little girl's monkey, Bonch) by the children at the party. They feed him, dig the food out of his cheeks, pinch him, and when he responds by biting, a big boy flogs him "till it seemed as though the

monkey's little backbone would be broken" (as Ally's almost was). The other children do not intervene but encourage the brutality. The narrative breaks off at the moment when the little girl herself is trying to intervene and the other children are rounding on her.

The narrative structure of "Diamond Fields" is thus a complex, layered one, constructed according to principles of repetition, alternation, and transformation. Each narrative seems to be at a further degree of removal from the 'real' world, and yet elements from the real world may re-enter at the heart of the narrative structure. An author, Olive Schreiner, constructs a narrative called "Diamond Fields" in which an impersonal narrator is replaced by a story-teller called Monica who tells a young crippled girl about another older woman and a young girl who listen to cock-o-veets in the bush near their house (exactly as the young Schreiner herself did), who has a pet monkey (like Undine), and who visits a bigger house and farm where another monkey is cruelly beaten (like Ally, and like Schreiner)... This multi-layered structure of narratives within narratives embodies what has been defined as a characteristically Victorian novelistic "relation of imaginary and real", a relationship which reflected a new view of society:

The traditional concept of realism assumes that a novel is a verbal representation mirroring the society it reflects... In fact, however, the mirror image may be a way of bringing into the open the imaginary quality of reality. A multiplication of narrators is especially liable to have this effect. When a novel presents a fiction within a fiction, the reality at the beginning and ending of this series tends to be assimilated into it and to appear as itself a fiction. This might be called the Quaker Oats box effect. A real Quaker Oats box is fictionalised when it bears a picture of a Quaker Oats box which bears in turn another picture of a Quaker Oats box, and so on indefinitely, in an endless play of imagination and reality. (Miller, p.35)

Schreiner's narratives display this effect of an endless play of imagination and reality, constituting an internal dialectic of opposite states and qualities, rather than referring outward to a single absolute standard of reality or morality. The effect of her characteristic narrative structures is to question the value of a single absolute standard: her narratives are thus in keeping with a sensibility which had rejected a single outside and absolute authority in religious matters: God the Father. Her narratives image the individual potentiality to spin numerous selves and states out of a single protean self, in an endless display of narrative fertility.

(iv) "Diamond Fields" : interpretation of narrative

When we interpret a text, we inescapably occupy "a position in history which is not the position of the text we cultivate".²⁹ We may reconstruct, as best we can, the contemporary response to and interpretation of the text, and we may pay attention to the author's own interpretation of the text, but we also avail ourselves of the endless hermeneutical potentialities of the text, and the privileged insight we feel ourselves to have at a later date, within changing current methodologies of reading and interpretation. Frank Kermode has set out the 'rules' for this kind of narrative interpretation: we feel that the work has value, though it might not have been canonised by criticism; an interpretation calls for "divination" and "cunning" to reveal the latent meaning of the text; we choose to focus on an "impression-point" in the work which seems to yield significance; we should seek to reconcile our interpretation with the larger whole of the narrative; we are allowed to assume the interpretative inadequacy of our forebears, including the author; genre should be taken into account as a constraint on interpretation. (p. 16f)

As Schreiner's fictions reveal such a rich internal narrative layering, and one of her recurrent narrative forms is that of

dream or allegory, both of which are open to interpretation by various commentators inside and outside the text, it is possible to treat her fictional narratives in the way Kermode and others have treated parables or biblical texts, and adopt their technique of exegesis.

Not only do narratives call for interpretation, they seem simultaneously to proclaim their meaning and to hide it away. Parables and allegories are often enigmatic, and Schreiner's narratives seem to share in this quality of simultaneously proclaiming a truth like a herald, and concealing it like an oracle (Kermode, p.47). This double function is confirmed when Schreiner says of her stories that revealing them to others was extremely painful:

The thought that hundreds of thousands will read my work does affect me and kindle me, not because I wish to teach them, but because, terrible as it is to show them my work at all, the thought of showing it to them to be trodden underfoot is double desecration of it....It's not that I want my story to be worthy of the people, but that I can't bear to desecrate the thing I love by showing it to others in a form they can't understand.

(Letters, p.160)

Her narratives were thus only for herself (hiding their secrets) and also, when published, bound to be read by others (giving their secrets away).

Narratives are interpolations into the chronological narration of life itself, reshaping and transforming chronology and experience into their own "radiant obscurity" (Kermode, p.47). In Schreiner's case, her narratives can be clearly seen in relation—a varying, sometimes parodic relation—to the sacred narrative of the Bible. Her own sacred/secular narratives are inscribed as if on the flyleaf of her own Bible. The overlap between life and literature is particularly relevant here. Schreiner wrote onto the flyleaf of

her own favourite childhood Bible,³⁰ in a mnemonic device to herself, and in wording which is intimately related to the 'message' of some of her narratives:

And if a stranger dwells? with you in the [?] ye shall not [?] but the stranger dwelleth with you... approves you. Love him as [yourself?] for ye were [once a stranger?]

This broken fragment of narrative is thus literally inscribed into her Bible as a summarizing narrative of the 'wisdom' she finds relevant and central.³¹ (The relevance of "strangers" in her narratives, and the varying responses accorded them, varying from assimilation to rejection, scarcely needs to be pointed out). Similarly, her own life crises were marked off in the biblical narrative, as she wrote to Karl Pearson when she sent him her childhood Bible as a gift:

This book was given me before I could read, & it was the companion all through my childhood that used to sleep with me at night & that I used to carry about. It got wet once in the bush where I used to hide it. Do you think you could find a place for it somewhere behind your brown books for it [sic]. I've a fancy I should like it there. You know it's alive! It gets hurt if you touch it roughly. All those marks mean some particular crisis in my life. I never marked, but when it was very important. That writing "And if the stranger..." - that is on the 1st page, was written when I was thirteen, to remind me when I got rich & strong to be tender to everything that was weak and lonely as I was then.

Will you have it? (Pearson, November 1886)

The role of narratives inside other narratives, the identification of books with people (one thinks of the lively presence books have in Schreiner's fiction), gift-giving, the intimate meshing of her

'library' with Pearson's (her sleeping companion will nestle behind his books!) as a love gesture--this is all evident in the gift and the letter. The value books had for her as an isolated colonial girl was often surprising and perhaps a little embarrassing to those who had been able to take them for granted.³²

When one is interpreting Schreiner's narratives, then, though in this case the narrative is a fragment (but so is the much longer From Man to Man), their distinctive relationship with the original sacred narrative, the Bible, needs to be borne in mind. They are her own 'secular' narratives, but commenting always on those messages from the Bible which had made such a deep childhood impression. Her narratives participate in the oracular and didactic nature of Biblical narrative.

One of the "impression points" of "Diamond Fields" is the flogging scene, or the injured damaged creature, as it occurs in both the first and second narrative: first as the injury to Ally inflicted by her father on her mother before her own birth, and secondly as the wanton brutality to the monkey in the second narrative. In both cases the injured creature is wholly innocent (child in the womb and a friendly monkey; in Undine there is another linking of child and monkey) and the attack is unprovoked. The innocent creature is a 'sacrifice' to human corruption (not necessarily adult, for in the second case the torturers are themselves children). This seems to suggest the view that human beings are inherently sinful and brutal, and need 'redeeming' sacrifices from pure sources, scapegoats. This is a Christian paradigm. Yet the pathos of the suffering creature, and the sense of injustice which both floggings provoke, suggest that the victims are innocent. One 'secret' of the narrative, then, is that children are the innocent victims of a corrupt world, and of parental brutality, and as a result parents are banished from the second narrative.

And yet the little girl in the second narrative identifies with a convict, a figure hounded by society, but perhaps also an innocent victim. This convict is one of Schreiner's victim figures, but also a 'victim' of society, and thus draws

attention to the flaws of a social system and away from concepts of original sin. The little girl is too innocent to 'know' that the convict is guilty of any crime. The convict thus stands as an indictment of society's malformations of the human being (as he does in Great Expectations) and becomes a significant image in "Diamond Fields", which is about inherited deformities ("Born So") and environmental deformities. In Ally the sins of the father are visited on the daughter; in the convict we are given an image of society's deformity. The convict is also a figure allied to Schreiner's servant/slave figures: Davenport discusses the ideological clash between the enlightenment and a slave-owning society in South Africa (Davenport, p.27). In Uncle Tom's Cabin, which Schreiner had read, servant and slave co-incide. The runaway 'slave' recurs in Schreiner's fiction in the black man freed by Trooper Peter, and in Jannita in "Dream Life and Real Life".

The narrative proliferates into scenes with different victims, either of 'natural' evil or social dysfunction. Another feature of the narrative is that sympathetic bonds are set up between these various figures: Monica comforts Ally with story-telling: the victim of one narrative (there are distinct suggestions in the first narrative that Monica is the victim of economic exploitation and cruelty from the fair lady, representative of capitalist luxury) becomes the story-teller of the next. Victims endlessly mutate into story-tellers. This suggests a healing power in the ability to express one's 'story': it also suggests that different parts of the 'self' can be put into fruitful relationship through the activity of story-telling. Another sympathetic bond is between the little girl and the convict, which is also a bond between the living and the dead: the living girl gives parts of herself (her teeth!) to the dead man. This is a ritualistic action, placating the forces which caused his death. The action suggests the need to take account of death and acknowledge its power, also to avoid the convict's fate as a social outcast.

The two 'open spaces' of the second narrative are also interesting, and could be considered significant impression points in the narrative: they too are recurrences of the "open space",

which is no space at all, in the first narrative. The two open spaces are the same but different: equally delightful but offering different things. The first offers an occasion to sympathise with a guilty figure and propitiate death; the second, in view of the sea, where your heart "grows bigger" suggests a place of liberation and full self-development, in view of the sea itself, a landscape of endless possibility and infinite self-expansion. These two open spaces correspond to guilt and innocence respectively, to confining and deathlike experience and to infinite self-realization. The little girl is responsive to both. These two spaces are a good example of Schreiner's tendency to move in a dialectical way between opposed qualities or conclusions.

One could say that the narrative encodes in its structures alternative views of experience and of the self: both the Calvinist view of original sin and the Spencerian ethic of social and moral progress toward a higher fulfilment. But the secrets encoded in the narrative structure are not simply personal. Different responses toward historical circumstances are also present in an equally interwoven pattern. Current harsh realities at the Fields are established in the first narrative: the ugly physical setting of dust, gravel-heaps, shabby tents, poverty, and a general lack of beauty. Both Monica and Ally hunger for beauty: Monica feasts her eyes on the fair lady and her tent house, Ally on Dr. Herder and his ornate possessions. The real world contains economic exploitation, physical brutality, and deformity of various kinds. It also contains service and active kindness: both Monica's nursing and Dr. Herder's services to Ally are part of the first narrative. Inside the first narrative we are also given different responses to open exploitation and cruelty: Monica's 'turning the other cheek' and almost masochistic submission to the fair lady's humiliation; Ally's rage and lust for revenge.³³

The second narrative provides an apparent escape from the real conditions of existence into an idyllic and harmonious world in which "Body is not bruised to pleasure soul/Nor beauty born out of its own despair".³⁴ It is a dream narrative, an escapist daydream

at first. In it man and nature live in harmony. It is also a pastoral fantasy, one in which the peculiarly African components are not stressed, so that the landscape could almost be English (an interesting feature when one compares the treatment of landscape in Undine and African Farm). And in fact the landscape of the 'Colony' is that part of Africa which is historically and geographically closest to England. This narrative is not only idealising, it expresses a yearning for a pastoral world displaced by current industrialisation, displaced by the new rush itself. Its "little girl" is possibly the little girl of Monica's own childhood (as she was of Schreiner's) and the tone is of recollection and memory, of a past childhood and a displaced paradisaical environment. The pastoral dream thus occurs as a second narrative within a more clearly mimetic first narrative. But just before the manuscript breaks off, the 'real' world of social interaction and torment has again broken into the ideal world of the dream. This suggests the impossibility of escape from the real conditions of life, and that the narrative would probably have proceeded as Schreiner's other narratives do, in a complex interweaving of dream life and real life.

"Diamond Fields" thus weaves a narrative which both proclaims and conceals the secrets of personal and social life: the desire to be a martyr as well as an independent survivor; the need to escape ugliness and confinement and at the same time acknowledge their reality in order to survive amidst them and perhaps reform them. The narrative encodes the possibility of various potential 'selves' and various responses to nature and society, and emphasises the role of story-telling, the narrative act, as a way of mediating between self and world, reality and ideal.

(vii) Undine : sequence of composition

Undine and a first draft of "Thorn Kloof" were both almost complete in July 1876 : 35

I have not yet made up my mind whether I shall first finish Undine or Thorn Kloof, and whether, if I finish Undine, I shall send it. I mean to think tonight....
I have just finished reading Undine over as far as I have written her out (A very wicked woman) and am not disgusted. (24 July 1876)

This indicates a fairly detached and critical attitude toward Undine, one which Schreiner tended to maintain. The next day she decided to leave Undine and write "Thorn Kloof". Still in July, she is writing about "the shabby woman" (whom Undine meets on board ship to South Africa). On the 3rd of August 1876 she writes:

I've made up my mind not to publish Undine yet but when I have finished writing it out, to write A small bit of Mimosa and Wrecked in one.

Later in August she is still working on Undine and getting a clearer idea of "Saints and Sinners", which "will be my next work" (21 August 1876). On the 2nd of September comes the news of her father's death:

My mind seems numb. I have done nothing at Undine.
Saints and Sinners is growing clearer.

On the 8th of September she is resolving to finish Undine and take it with her to her mother at Christmas. On the 23rd September she compares Undine with "the new work" :

I think I shall finish and read over Undine tomorrow. Then, to the new work. I got some good thought this evening, but it will be years before it is finished.

It will be much better than poor little Undine.

She is reading over Undine at the end of September, before writing out the first chapter of "Saints and Sinners" (1 October, 1876). On the 11th November 1876 she writes:

I feel so disgusted with myself and all I do. I am sure Undine is one tissue of faults and Thorn Kloof is bald, but I am going to get it out and set to when I've finished this.

The closing stages of the actual 'writing out' and revising of Undine seem to have co-incided with the first conception of From Man to Man and the final stages of (probably) the first draft of African Farm. Both Undine and African Farm seem to have been conceived at Klein Ganna Hoek, but Schreiner had decided as early as April 1876 that Undine was a sort of rehearsal of her craft and she would not publish it (Life, p.119). She wrote Undine in a critical and fairly aloof mood.

Undine can be seen as a kind of source book for the other works, and there are strong parallels between sections of Undine and the other novels. Schreiner felt free to use the material of Undine in different forms and combinations because the book was never going to be published. The parallels between "Diamond Fields" and the final section of Undine are very strong and have already been pointed out.³⁶ Those between Undine's childish religious conflict and Waldo's were first pointed out by S.C. Cronwright (Life, p. 148) and the situational parallels between Undine and Baby-Bertie in From Man to Man have also been traced.³⁷

(viii) Undine : contemporary response

Schreiner sent the manuscript of Undine to Havelock Ellis to read in 1884, which produced certain responses from him and seemed to remind her of her own reservations about the book. She wrote in response to a query of his about the relationships between the characters:

I quite forget the part about Aunt Margaret. I don't know what her relationship to Frank was. I know that Ettie was in my mind when I drew her and Ettie's love to Theo. [This is interesting as it indicates the transference of a sibling affection to a romantic/sexual one]. Not the woman of talent, the eloquent lecturer, but my soft-hearted sister Ettie who used to stroke my hair. I had quite forgotten there was such a character in the book. I've never looked at it, you know, since I wrote it. It's not finished either; I left off in the middle of the last chapter and tore up the half I had written. I ought to have burnt it long ago, but the biographical element in it made me soft to it. (Letters, pp.45-46)

Despite Schreiner's comment on its unfinished state, the novel does read as though it was completed. Her comments illustrate the closeness with which she was working from 'life', from her own family situation, in Undine.

Ellis commented on the version of the sacrifice scene which occurs in Undine :

I've been reading tonight a little more of Undine. The account of the sacrifice of the mutton chop is very interesting compared to the wonderfully more artistic version in SAF, but I liked the sequel about smearing the dung, because it seems to belong to it.

Ellis was responding to the psychological insight which has a

young child switch from intense spiritual suffering to an infantile form of play, one of enjoyable defilement after an attempt at spiritual purity. The sequence is interesting as an early version of the many ludicrous overturnings of elevated metaphysical speculation in African Farm, or alternations of reverie and physical action. Ellis also enjoyed the sensationalism of the mad scene with Aunt Margaret, a scene which the modern reader might find ludicrously melodramatic:

I haven't got very far yet, but I've come to one strong passage, when Aunt Margaret goes mad. The description of her crouching on the floor is wonderful somehow. Do you remember when you wrote that? (HRC, 1884)

Ellis was reading the novel more as a source of information about Schreiner than as an artistic work, and he is interested in details that reflect his own childhood experience:

In Undine you make someone read The Wide Wide World over & over again as a child. Did you do that? I used to read it when I was very small.

He also recognised Schreiner's experience at the Weakley's as the source of the "shabby woman's" story on board the boat to South Africa:

Undine is beautiful to me. Any line seems to tell me something about you, quite apart from its being autobiographical. I haven't finished it yet. Yes, the feather is there, bobbing up and down.³⁸ Do you remember when the nurse with the big grey eyes tells Undine her story about loving a married man. Is that you and Weakley ... ? It isn't artistic as a whole but a little scene like Undine reading the letter by the post is perfectly artistic, however true it may also be. And so is Undine on the sofa, and Cousin Jonathan.

(HRC, 1884)

This comment suggests that it is not the autobiographical nature of the novel which renders it unsatisfying artistically, but rather a lack of characteristic intensity. Ellis expanded on this later:

Artistically there is a greater advance towards simplicity of style towards the end. There is scarcely a single instance of that concentrated energy of expression which I regard as characteristic of you, except in the passage "Intellectual power is not by any means visible..." There is scarcely any of that bitterness which is so strong in SAF. I was surprised at this. Why is that? There was no reason for your feeling more bitter afterwards. I suppose it was simply a power of artistic expression. The magnitude of the step to SAF is quite wonderful. Do you know how it was? I suppose it was really only slow growth. I want to know more some day about how you felt and what you did those years at Ratel Hoek.

(HRC, 1884)

Schreiner replied:

Yes, Undine, the last part isn't bitter, because I wrote it not at Ratel Hoek, but at Ganna Hoek when I was so peaceful and hopeless and spiritual. It was the feeling I had in that year that I paint in Waldo when he goes to sit out in the sunshine, that placid calm, and I say that it is well to die because I know that if one lived the eager, striving, passionate heart would rise again. I may have copied it at Ratel Hoek. I didn't write it there, but in my little mud-floored room with the holes in the roof at Ganna Hoek.

(Letters, p. 49)

Cronwright, like Ellis, was very moved by the ending of the novel (Life, p. 125). These two contemporaries, then, seem to have

responded to the sensational and pathetic elements in the novel, and for Ellis the autobiographical light it shed on Schreiner was of personal value.

(ix) Plot, characterisation and style

In Undine Schreiner was still hovering between conventional novelistic techniques and her own emergent characteristic techniques, which she would announce in her preface to African Farm in June 1883. This accounts for the unevenness of the novel's texture, the somewhat mystifying plot details, the occasional crudity of attitude towards the Boer children, the often flowery and ornate style, and the hesitation between an English setting and affiliation and an African one.

Undine is described as the "stepdaughter" of an "English Africander" farmer in the opening chapter of the novel; her brother Frank is referred to as his son, but possibly is his stepson, as he later appears in England with Undine. The two other little girls at the farm, the exemplary "pudding-faced" Dutch girls Sannie and Annie, are presented as grossly inferior to Undine. The paradigm is a cruder form of the two girls' relationship in African Farm. Undine and Frank reappear in England as orphans, but her brother is now having a love affair with Aunt Margaret, the relationship which puzzled Ellis. Frank is drowned and Aunt Margaret goes mad, blaming herself for having loved someone who was not an orthodox Christian believer (though it is Undine who has been the unorthodox rebel against church-going and dogma). Aunt Margaret is discovered naked and gibbering in her room; she accuses Undine of being the devil and bites her until she faints (one of the many references to biting, mouths, chewing and ingestion).³⁹ Nor is the rest of the plot very credible: Undine is loved secretly or explicitly, or at least proposed to, by every man in the book. She is secretly loved by her cousin Jonathan (another mingling of blood-ties and love-bonds), and by all three

members of the Blair family: the youngest, effeminate son Henry Blair, the elder son Albert, who loves her briefly then rejects her, and the father George, a toadlike figure who 'buys' her mainly to compete sexually with his sons and display the power of his money. The sexual competition between father and sons for a very young girl strikes another incestuous note. Rejected by Albert Blair at the instigation of her frustrated cousin Jonathan (he slanders Undine as Blenkins slanders Otto in African Farm), Undine contemplates suicide, but stays alive in order to 'serve' Albert Blair, the man she loves. She does this by marrying his father so that she can dispense money to Albert, only to discover on the wedding day that he has married a rich woman and has no need of her sacrifice. Her baby and her husband die, and she returns to Africa where she finds Albert Blair only after he has died, pours out her love for him in a speech to his dead body, and crawls out into the starlight to die herself.

The coincidences and sensationalism of the plot have parallels in other Victorian novels. Plot coincidences play a great role in Dickens' and Eliot's fiction; Bertha Mason's madness in Jane Eyre has interesting parallels with Aunt Margaret's; even Grandcourt's drowning in Daniel Deronda makes use of a similar sensationalism of plot and style. Undine's nursing of the gentleman digger is similar to the device in Mrs. Gaskell's Ruth, where a woman goes to nurse her seducer, because she is still in love with him. (Schreiner's own later version of this scene is in Gregory Rose's nursing of Lyndall). George Eliot uses a wedding-night jewellery scene in Deronda to symbolize an empty marriage based on a commercial transaction, as Schreiner does (Undine, p. 183). Eliot, like Schreiner, uses a scene in which men are alone with each other and their dogs in order to reveal their coldness towards possessions, including women (Undine, p.115). These parallels indicate that Schreiner was still working within certain familiar Victorian novelistic conventions, though the integration of such devices is obviously much less sophisticated in Undine than in Dickens' or Eliot's fiction.

Melodrama is as much a matter of style as plot incident, chiefly in the earlier sections concerning Aunt Margaret and Frank:

There were withered flowers lying among the grass-stalks; there were heavy shadows growing in the valleys; the fairy ship was growing darker every moment and would come with the storm wind and the hellish grin of the lightning, to plough up the smooth face of the sunny sea before morning, but they saw none of these things and sat there smiling in the sunlight. (p. 72)

There is often a similarly ornate style in the authorial generalisations:

"Nothing", answered Undine, the golden light fading as quickly from her face as it was from her heart. Heaven on earth is only found in perfect solitude, whether by saint or by poet; and 'tis only a step from the heights of the celestial mountains to the depths of the valleys below. (p. 63)

Though this sentiment is also found in African Farm, it is less elaborately expressed. Compare the economy and force of "The barb in the arrow of childhood's suffering is this—its intense loneliness, its intense ignorance". (SAF, p. 29)

The style is sometimes capable of the brevity and economy found in African Farm, as in the following simile:

Of course she could not refuse to go; and Cousin Jonathan went, for he followed her steps as smoke follows a train. (p. 101)

(x) Undine: fantasy and reality

In Undine Schreiner seems to have been rehearsing her fictional skills, and experimenting with different approaches to the realities of her own experience, both as a girl/woman (the novel seems to be partly about that transition) and as an Englishwoman/African: the novel is set briefly on an African farm, then in England (an England which Schreiner had not yet visited), and then in Africa again, at the New Rush of which Schreiner had fresh experience. The novel is an attempt to work out the problem of dual allegiance, one which deeply affected Schreiner as a woman and a writer.

In order to approach this problem, Schreiner makes use of a ready-made fairytale, the tale of Undine the water nymph, one which had already been used by Friedrich, Baron de la Motte Fouqué, in his fairy romance Undine (1811). The parallels with the story of Schreiner's Undine are striking:

Undine is a sylph, the personification of the watery element. A humble fisherman and his wife have lost their child by drowning, and Undine, a capricious roguish maiden, has come mysteriously to them and been brought up in her stead. A knight, Huldbrand von Ringstetten, takes shelter in their cottage and falls in love with Undine. They are married, and the sylph in consequence receives a soul. But her relations, and particularly Uncle Kuhleborn, the wicked water goblin, are a source of trouble. Huldbrand begins to neglect his wife and becomes attached to the haughty Bertalda, who is humbled by the discovery that she is the fisherman's lost child. One day, in a boat in the Danube, Huldbrand, tormented by Undine's kindred, angrily rebukes his wife, and she is snatched away by them into the water and seen no more. Presently Huldbrand proposes to Bertalda, and they are about to be married, when Undine, rising from a well, goes to the knight's room and kisses him, and he dies.⁴⁰

Schreiner's fairly arbitrary handling of Undine's family background and of plot coincidence is in keeping with the fairytale (though there is no proof that she had read this version). Undine is also a 'changeling' child, one who is only partly human, and who cannot find satisfaction away from her watery element, and yet is in love with a human being. The subtitle of Undine, "A Queer little child", underlines this. Undine is not at home in the orthodoxy of her family, and yet her attempts to find happiness outside it are also disastrous. Undine's Cousin Jonathan is a version of the wicked water goblin, Uncle Kuhleborn. The faithless lover Albert is a parallel to Huldbrand, and Schreiner's final love and death scene is also in the original fairytale. The central elements of the story: a girl torn between conflicting worlds and claims, and a tussle between love and the family, are both put to significant use by Schreiner.

The water imagery of the fairytale is also carried through the novel. The opening African scenes show a parched environment, where even the ducks have only a small muddy pool (p. 1). In England water imagery runs through scenes next to the sea, pools, melted snow, and either real or contemplated drownings. Frank, Undine's brother, drowns at sea; Alice Brown, Albert Blair's mistress, drowns herself, and Undine contemplates drowning. The last scenes back in Africa show Undine dying of thirst: it seems that the choice is death by drought or drowning. The scenes on the boat are a 'bridge' between England and Africa. In Diogenes' dream there is a fantasy of escape to the sea from the diamond diggings (p. 329). In Africa there is not enough water; in England there is enough to drown in. The water imagery of the Undine story provides one way of dramatising unacceptable alternatives.

Undine is the only novel Schreiner called by a girl's name, although African Farm was called "Lyndall" at one stage. It is also the only novel in which a fairytale name is used rather than a family name or an Emersonian one. The Undine story has some parallels with the Hans Christian Andersen tale of the romance between the

mermaid and the prince, a tale which is explicitly mentioned by Undine:

There were delicious fairytales—Arabian Nights whose old torn pages seemed to emit an odour of myrrh and roses caught from the gardens of Bagdad—Hans Andersen's beautiful song in prose about the mermaid and the young prince—but these and others were of course not to be looked at. It would have hurt the child's conscience as much to have read a fairy tale on Sunday as to have told a lie; one of the crimes which always came to haunt her in the dark watchful hours of the night was her having read, on one never-to-be-forgotten Sunday afternoon, a part of that story of "The Mermaid and the Prince". (pp. 20-21)

The fairytale which the young Undine is not allowed to read is one of the vehicles used by her older creator. Fantasy is given its revenge against the harsh Sunday regime which denied it any place.

Schreiner was thus approaching her subject through fantasy and fairytale, using them to encompass painful realities which could not be approached directly, and for which the consolation of Christian faith had been rejected. At the same time the fairytale expresses the hidden truth of her situation in another way. This becomes clearer when one examines the structure and the meaning of the narrative in Undine.

(xi) Undine : narrative method and structure

Many of the narrative devices which Schreiner was to use so skillfully in African Farm appear in Undine. She was still experimenting with shifts of narrative voice, the use of internal narrators,

the story within the story, alternate use of didactic narrative and daydream; the proliferation of internal female figures who echo or contrast with the situation of the main character, the internal use of books, songs, sermons, letters, and allegories. All of these narrative techniques allowed her to provide a complex and sophisticated commentary on her subjects.

Undine opens on an African farm and focuses on Undine the 'queer little child' just as African Farm would focus on Lyndall, Waldo and Em. The first narrative gives us the split day and night-time view of the farm which would recur in African Farm, but here the emphasis is appropriate to the Undine motif in being on the lack of water and the difficulty of sustaining a rich existence:

goats, whose delight it is daily to regale themselves on the deformed peach trees and leafless cabbage stalks which the enclosure contains... an ancient willow tree, which stands vainly trying to reflect itself in a small pond of thick red fluid, and under which may at all times be seen a couple of dirty and benighted ducks, who there disport themselves under the happy delusion of its being water.

(p. 1)

The little girl of about ten, Undine, the actant of the main narrative, has a monkey companion, Socrates (a variant of the monkeys in "Diamond Fields", and a philosopher-companion who finds his parallel in the second African sequence of the novel in the girl Diogenes). Undine, like the later Lyndall, expresses a desire for wisdom and knowledge: "I wish we knew"⁴¹ (p. 3). Her childish religious doubt and torment are registered in terms of the passage of time towards damnation, marked off by the ticking clock. "Come to prayers, come to prayers" is the call of the house; the monkey and the moonlight offer another kind of wisdom. Orthodox knowledge is poised against an individual quest. The narrative voice sketches the house and inhabitants in superior tones: the father an "English Africander" and the mother delicate and refined. The split household would be repeated in African Farm, but here Schreiner gives no truly indigenous inhabitant, like Tant' Sannie, and the dismissal of the "sheep-souled Boer" is much stronger. The narrative is partially focalised through Undine's spirit of victimisation,

rebellion, and dislike. The first governess of the narrative appears here, a Dickensian martinet, and is in league with Undine's mother, equally cold and unsympathetic, to chastise Undine for religious unorthodoxy. During the night-time scene which opens the first chapter (the whole chapter is a kind of Prelude to the novel, anticipating the structure of African Farm and From Man to Man) Undine seeks comfort for her spiritual distress and isolation. She first lies on the ground, but, though solid, it is dead and cold; she next touches the warm and living foot of one of the little girls (an attempt at human contact repeated at the end of the novel); she then seeks comfort in a book, the New Testament, opening it twice at random, but neither of the texts offers comfort; the second reinforces the doctrine of predestination which has been troubling her, the pre-ordained and exclusive nature of heaven: "Strive to enter in at the straight gate..." (p. 11). She throws the book against the wall, the first of many abuses suffered by books inside this book. But while she cries at the window, the outside world makes its presence felt:

How calm and still the outside world was; so far removed from all passion and strife, damnation, fire and brimstone; so strong, so self-contained. How peacefully the great round stones lay resting on each other. Through that subtle sympathy which binds together all things, and to stumps and rocks gives a speech which even we can understand, the night spoke to the little child the sweet words of comfort which she had looked for in vain in the brown Testament.

(p. 11)

The consolation which is not found either on the earth itself, nor in individual contact nor the message of books, is found in an infusion of the deeply apprehended harmony and strength of the natural landscape. The sequence is significant and announces the pattern of Undine's quest in the novel. The paradox lies in a landscape which is deprived and undernourishing in some ways and

yet mystically consoling in others.

The next day is a sweltering Sunday: the role of Sunday lessons on the correct interpretation of the Bible will be repeated more farcically in the Sunday Services of African Fam. The chapter taken for discussion is Matthew Chapter 25, which contains two parables (the one of the wise and foolish virgins, and the one of the talents), and which ends with the final judgment and separation of the sheep from the goats. The two little Dutch girls (the foolish virgins) ask the governess only literal questions about the text: they are not concerned with its spiritual meaning. Undine understands the text but rejects its hidden meaning: "that God has prepared a heaven for the people he means to save and a hell for the people he means to burn" (p. 18). The spiritual meaning of parables and allegories has to be probed, but the spiritual meaning of this official Bible is threatening and punitive. A God who makes people on purpose to send them to hell must be a monster. Undine understands predestination as a determined cruelty, one which makes good behaviour rest on fear instead of free choice. For uttering these thoughts she is locked up. Inside her prison she contemplates the available reading matter: either the forbidden Arabian Nights or A Careful and strict Enquiry into the Modern Prevailing Notions of the Freedom of Will, which is supposed to be essential to Moral Agency, Virtue and Vice, Reward and Punishment, Praise and Blame by Jonathan Edwards, A.B. The options of escape through fairytale or a confrontation with the theological issues which have led to her imprisonment are significant for Schreiner's characteristic structuring of narrative. Here a little girl, the 'real' little girl of the first narrative, is locked up inside a room for her defence of the doctrine of free will, and finds in her prison a large tome which debates the issue, an issue which caused her father's defection from "truth and Arminianism, to the ways of Calvinism and error" (p. 22). Our attention is drawn to the contrast between the girl's warm life and the fossilised knowledge of books:

There was a strange contrast between the little reader and her great brown book as she sat there on the floor on that Sunday afternoon. The child so warm, with the wild blood dancing in every vein, looking out so eagerly into the world, so ready to give and take—the book so old, so dead, with the life thoughts of another generation petrified in its old yellow leaves, now probably being read for the last time. (p. 22)

The first narrative of Undine thus leads Undine and the reader into a complex place where reading experience and lived experience, generational differences and repetitions, books and life intertwine. Undine is told by her brother that there are wicked people who don't believe the Bible is true, "and they write books also", as Schreiner did (p. 26). Books can be used to refute other books, even the Bible: Schreiner's texts are written in this refuting relationship with Holy texts, and yet draw on its methods of allegorical and symbolic narrative.

In the last section of the long opening chapter, childhood asserts its lively primacy over adult meditations and disputes, and the chapter ends with Undine's exciting chase of the monkey over the roofs of the farm (a scene which anticipates Waldo's night-time rooftop scrambling). Inside the first narrative, life ousts books, and Undine remembers that she is a child. This again leads to a scolding and punishment: she is a "wicked" child. Her sense of her own "wickedness" and the struggle with that sense of guilt are established as primary in this narrative prelude to the rest of the novel.

The second chapter marks the most significant narrative break with the first narrative in terms of setting (a very vague England instead of Africa) and in terms of voice: this chapter is narrated by Undine, but the chapter heading is "Undine's jottings", indicating the convention that the narrative is based on a journal of sorts (very like the sporadic journals Schreiner herself kept at different stages of her life) and a primitive form of Rebekah's journal in

From Man to Man). Although Undine's voice is like the narrative voice of the main narrative in many ways, in tone and moral attitudes toward religious dogma, this second narrative is a retrospective account by Undine herself of the first period of her stay in England. The encounter with England is presented in terms of the Christian myth of the Fall: "in those days", says Undine (the first few weeks) I had not eaten of the tree of knowledge" (p. 34). This suggests that early life on an African farm was a 'paradise' of sorts. The actual 'fall' occurs when she overhears two Christian women discussing the adultery of some acquaintances:

From my lonely African home I had brought an ignorance of evil...that might have been thought strange in a child of six years. Much that had been cause of vague speculation and wonder was made clear to me that night, and I was wretched; for, alas! is it not the old, old story — that the tree of knowledge is the tree of pain, and that "In the day wherein thou eatest thou shalt surely die" stand written on every fruit of the wonderful tree?" (p. 48)

The revelation of sexuality and the viciousness of the gossip lead her to a rejection of women and thus of herself (p. 49). Her conflicts regarding religion and sex are centred on Cousin Jonathan, whose mouth fascinates and repels her, "forever hungering and seeking after something" (p. 37), and who is seen in terms of Christian dualism as an angel above (he preaches beautifully) and a devil "from the lip downward". The discovery of religious hypocrisy, of sexuality and 'sin' as the reality beneath a virtuous appearance, and of the divided nature of man, are given by Undine as the beginnings of a phase of darkness and despair.

The next sequence of chapters returns to the narrative voice of the first chapter, develops the relationship between Undine and Cousin Jonathan ("The Man with the Mouth") as one of victim and predator, and explores the growing religious conflict between Undine and her strict Methodist grandfather. At this point the narrative

is partially focalised through Undine's own sense of being martyred and misunderstood, but the wiser, impersonal narrative voice often withdraws from her to comment on her representativeness, that she is learning "as we all must sooner or later...that each man's life and struggle is a mystery, incomprehensible and forever hid from every heart but his own" (p. 70). Undine, like Lyndall, is soon familiar with the condition of spiritual and intellectual isolation, but Schreiner's later novels move away from any suggestion that "life and struggle" are mysterious rather than man-made.

Various internal narratives are 'embedded' in the first narrative. The first is "Undine's jottings" (Chapter 2). Another internal narrative by Undine herself is her recollected scene of the chop sacrifice to God⁴² (which features in the primary narrative of African Farm). Thirdly, she responds to a painting in the Blair household of a battlefield scene, showing a beautiful knight and a delicate woman lying in mingled joy and agony at his feet (p. 102) with her own verbal interpretation of the visual allegory (anticipating what Waldo's stranger does for his carving). Her 'reading' of the picture prophesies her own fate: a poor serf finds her knightly lover when he is dead and lies at his feet, torn between agony that he is gone and joy that he now belongs to her alone. The interpretation is thus a symbolic anticipation of the ending of the whole novel. Its melodrama and medievalism are also clues to the mood and style of the novel itself.

A prototype of the Hunter allegory briefly occurs as an 'authorial' (first narrative voice) generalisation (p. 109) on the phases of life as a journey. Other brief and sometimes heavily didactic interpolations by this narrative voice concern the contrast between "gold and love" (p. 121). The servant Nancy's narration (pp. 170-172) is a narrative from 'below' in a marked dialect, and it serves to indicate Undine's martyrdom for love:

[Undine] walks out of the room with her arms a-hanging down at each side of her— like this— and her head a-lying sort of loose like on her chest, as though she'd gone and got her neck broken; and, Lor'! her back was bent as double as an old woman's. (p. 171)

Undine's Christ-like martyrdom for love is thus registered by another internal narrator to drain some of its sentimentality. We learn too, that Undine, the actant of the main narrative, is herself a writer: " Sometimes she got out the little wooden box where she kept her papers - little songs and allegories, fairy tales and half-written essays " (p. 172).⁴³

Nancy's second narration (pp. 199-203) is used to tell the story of Alice Brown's child's death and Alice Brown's links with Undine.

Three more internal narratives occur: when Undine is travelling on board ship to South Africa,⁴⁴ in the form of the shabby lady's confessional story to Undine (pp. 226-240); at New Rush, in Undine's allegory told to Diogenes, and in Diogenes' own brief dream/fantasy (p. 329). Each is in a different form and a different relationship with reality. The shabby lady's story (she has been both governess/companion and nurse) is of illicit love for another woman's husband, of economic exploitation and hard labour, and of self-sacrifice; her story is confessional, and points to the confessional elements in Undine itself. "I would like to tell" she begins, thus admitting that story-telling is a form of release. Undine, herself sometimes actant and sometimes narrator, here plays the role of sympathetic listener. The woman opens a locket (the physical action is an image for the opening of another internal narrative) one which contains two photographs, the younger actants in the shabby woman's retrospective narrative (a 'paralepsis', presumably temporally parallel to Undine's own adolescence, and thus an option which might have been hers, but she had rejected the possibility of adultery offered by Cousin Jonathan). A locket contains the heart's secrets, like this narrative. The woman's response to her situation had been to go away and serve others by nursing,

which is what Undine will do at New Rush; she is going to join her dead lover, which is what Undine is also going to do, though she is unaware of it. She was an exploited labour unit, subject to a woman's harsh tyranny, an experience Undine is about to endure at the hands of Mrs. Snappercaps. This narrative is thus both retrospective (for the shabby lady) and prospective (for Undine). Undine, travelling back to Africa, meets a possible younger self travelling for the first time from England, one whose hopes are behind her, as some of Undine's are, and who has responded to the suffering of lost love, and the sense of sin attached to love in these circumstances, by sacrificing herself for others. Undine, however, will at least establish an economic independence at New Rush as an ironing woman. The shabby woman as narrator is thus one of the parallel and contrasting female figures used in the novel to highlight aspects of Undine's own career, but the parallels are stronger than the differences.

At New Rush the two internal narratives, told by Undine and Diogenes respectively, are in contrasted modes. The former is a highly wrought, formal allegory, the first recorded example of the allegories Schreiner would write later as a separate genre, and one which is didactic and open to a fairly clear interpretation. The allegory concerns a dying mother and her possible 'gift' to her child: either Life or Death. The allegory approaches the theme of life's quest which has been dramatised in the narrative concerning Undine, who has twice contemplated killing herself, and twice decided against it: the first time after Albert Blair's rejection, when she decided to live on in order to serve him (pp. 172-175), a sacrifice which proves vain, and the second time simply because the beauty of the earth around her restores a sense of value (p. 301). Twice the narrative has presented us with a mother contemplating the possible death of her child: Alice Brown and Undine herself. Thus the choice between life and death has been dramatised by scenes within the novel before the allegory pulls together the significance of such moments in its own way. The allegory also draws together the implications of the wealth and

love themes: is money any use when people are unhappy? Undine's marriage to George Blair has proved in a more 'realistic' mode in the main narrative what is now allegorically presented by Undine to Diogenes. The conclusion of the allegory: that life's best is bitter-sweet, but nevertheless sweet, presents in another form the divided feelings at Undine's moments of existential choice, and the divided feelings she will experience in the final scenes of the novel.

Diogenes responds to Undine's allegory with her own 'dream', one of total escape from the harsh realities of her situation: in her dream her rosebush sprouts a flower, there is companionship and liberation, though it is Undine who goes over the sea in the dream. The allegory is didactic and thematic, focussing the concerns of the 'realistic' narrative; the dream is an escape from them. Both exist as internal narratives in Undine, as they do in "Diamond Fields".

(xii) Narrative interpretation

Undine is a narrative which both conceals and reveals critical choices which Schreiner was confronted with as a girl/woman and as an English/African writer. The impression points of the narrative seem to yield a sense of her own ambivalence at this stage towards men and sexuality, towards her family and religion, and towards African experience and its feasibility as the material of art.

All of the love affairs in the different layers of the narrative have elements of guilt or sinfulness. The most taboo element is that of incest: Aunt Margaret's love affair with Frank has an incestuous element, though their blood relationship is not clear, and Cousin Jonathan's passion for Undine is also incestuous, though again the precise relationship is not indicated: he is simply a 'relation'. Undine marries a man old enough to be her father. All of them suffer in some way: Frank dies; Undine's relationship with Albert Blair is destroyed by Cousin Jonathan, and the child of Undine's union with George Blair also dies. This incestuous

network of relationships indicates a concern with sex and guilt, and the difficulty of making the transition from family love to sexual love outside the family.⁴⁵ The problem of guilt and the family is exacerbated by the fact that while Undine is attempting to make a sexual transition, she is also in rebellion against religious orthodoxy, so that the sense of guilt is compounded. One of the 'secrets' of the narrative is then that it is difficult, if not impossible, to make the transition from family love to sexual love, because sexuality brings mistrust and distress. It is significant here that the sexual transgressor and hypocrite (Cousin Jonathan) is, unlike Bonaparte Blenkins in African Farm, both a member of the family and a lover of the heroine's. Lyndall's stranger in African Farm, is, as his label suggests, an outsider, as lover.

The other love affairs, though equally disastrous, are merely breaking social and moral codes, not the ultimate taboo of incest. Alice Brown is Albert Blair's mistress and bears him an illegitimate child; the shabby lady on board ship loved a married man and allowed him to seduce her; both love affairs are followed by expiation or 'punishment'. The malicious story overheard by the young Undine is also of adultery. Cousin Jonathan's passion for Undine breaks both the incest taboo and the marriage bond. Another 'secret' of the narrative, then, one which seems to have had an autobiographical source, is that loving a married man causes guilt and unhappiness.⁴⁶ Seduction and illegitimacy, the other cause of grief and disaster, embodied by Alice Brown, who is linked with Undine through Albert Blair and through Undine's visits to her cottage, seem also to have had autobiographical sources in Schreiner's experience with Julius Gau, which caused great unhappiness and probably guilt.⁴⁷ All of the case-histories in the different narratives thus show how perilous and fraught the transition to adult sexuality is. The conclusion to Undine's story is thus one which guarantees sexlessness (the lover is dead) and expiation (she loses him). In another sense, however, he is now only fully hers, in the only way which could guarantee her

immunity from passion and at the same time allow her to express it. Thus Undine's career as a woman follows a folktale pattern of three lovers from the same family (excluding the cousin/lover who is barred by his blood relationship) who all propose to her. Henry Blair is effeminate, like Gregory Rose, and not a sexual threat; George Blair she marries knowing that she cannot love him and thus will never be in his power; Albert Blair is sexually fascinating and cruel and she seems to love him for those reasons, but the affair cannot be consummated because he undeservedly rejects her and at their next meeting he is dead. She becomes his victim, and at the same time is saved from lifelong subservience to him. This is a consummation which Schreiner seems devoutly to have wished. Undine is a martyr to unrequited love (as Nancy's crucifixion symbolism suggests) which is never in any danger of being physically consummated. Thus she can spend a lifetime of expiation for an invisible crime: she is not guilty of any crime, unlike the other characters involved in various illicit relationships. The only possible 'crime' is the apparently mercenary motive of the marriage to George Blair, but we know that this is the extreme of self-sacrifice for the sake of the worthless Albert. Thus Undine remains morally spotless.

In the religious conflict with her family's traditions, on the farm, in England, and working for Mrs. Snappercaps back in Africa, Undine is similarly a martyr to the cause of an independent conscience. She is bullied by her family, has to confront and dominate her grandfather by the force of her will, and is the object of Mrs. Snappercaps' literal-minded use of Holy Scripture. Here too, a doctrine of intellectual liberty and freethought (embodied in Spencer and Mill's texts inside the novel) conflicts with the Christian myth of the Fall and the doctrine of guilt and expiation. Mrs. Snappercaps speaks of "vicarious atonement" (p. 254); the phrase seems to point to Undine's role in the novel: like Christ, she is there to atone for the sins of others.

A similar ambiguity pervades Undine's experience with labour and money. Money is opposed throughout the novel to spiritual wealth, and is thus associated with the rich and hypocritical, or with a possessive attitude towards others. The Christian teaching is that money is of no importance (as Undine's stories to Diogenes teach, p.340) but at New Rush Undine learns that money is of some use in freeing her from a humiliating dependence on others, and it is only by earning her own money as "Little Irons" (her title is nevertheless pathetic) that she can have the dignity of independent labour. Her independent status (a mark of true feminist assertion) is undercut by her self-sacrificing nursing of the digger to the point of total exhaustion. Independent labour is not enough; there has to be female martyrdom. The feminist protest in Undine thus takes on a token form, and is undercut by extreme feminine self-sacrifice. Although Undine expresses contempt for conventional male expectations of women in her relationships with her suitors, the satire is undercut by her total subservience to the most conventional, and the coldest, of them all. In the same way, when Undine arrives at New Rush, she is at first rebellious when she thinks of the conventional restraints that bind women:

Why should a woman not break though conventional restraints that enervate her mind and dwarf her body, and enjoy a wild, free, true life, as a man may? — wander the green world over by the help of hands and feet, and lead a free rough life in bondage to no man?—forget the old morbid loves and longings? — live and enjoy and learn as much as may before the silence comes? (pp. 244-245)

Undine answers her own question; she was "free to feel that a woman is a poor thing carrying in herself the bands that bind her". This makes a valid point, that social conventions are internalised, but these internalised limitations are not linked with Undine's own tendency toward noble and self-sacrificing

service. At this point in the novel Undine thinks thoughts which were to form the substance of Woman and Labour (1911) but the insight is not integrated into the pattern of the novel, which glorifies self-sacrifice and martyrdom :

As it was, being only a woman and a fine little lady with the scent not yet out of her hair nor the softness rubbed from her hands, she stood there in the street, feeling very weak, bodily, after her illness, and mentally, after her long life of servitude and dependence—very weak and heartsick. (pp. 245-6)

The hesitation which affects Undine's treatment of sexuality, religion, and feminism is at its most significant (significant for Schreiner's career as a writer) in the hesitation between England and Africa as her setting and source of inspiration. This hesitation is made clear in the brief prelude in Africa, the anglicising of the names of people and places, the nebulous setting of "Greenwood", which is the backdrop for the central sections of the narrative, and the slow approach toward a 'real' Africa, that of Port Elizabeth and New Rush, both of which are rendered with a strong sense of place, and local detail:

She was walking through the streets of Port Elizabeth, her head bent down to preserve her eyes from the rain of sand and fine stones that fell on the flat roofs with a sound as dismal and disheartening as the fall of sand on a coffin lid. (p. 243)

The new urban desolation of Africa in that "desolate and sand-smitten seaport" is instantly recognisable. This greater realism in fact begins earlier, on the boat to Africa, when the categories of immigrants and returning colonials are briefly and vividly sketched in, with all the details of upward and downward social movement (pp. 217-219). In the wagon of Mrs. Snappercaps (despite her English name a recognisable forerunner of Tant' Sannie) the details are all locally accurate, down to the local heretic of Delagoa Bay, Bishop "Colso" (Colenso),⁴⁸ the use of the Grahamstown

Journal to light the fire (p. 264), the threat of "Roben Island" for lunatics,⁴⁹ and the verbal sketch of the outspanned wagon:

It looked picturesque enough, the great red waggon with its little white tent and rows of iron buckets that glittered in the forelight. A little further on the tired oxen were dimly visible, lying down just where the yokes had been taken off their necks, too weary to look for food. Even Mrs. Snappercaps, as she sat in her spotted print and white kappie hushing the baby, added to the scene; and her husband also, lying close to the fire with his hat drawn down and his head resting on his crossed shirt-sleeved arms. Among the bushes, a little to the right, the driver and leader had made their fire. The driver, a great heavy Basuto, lay in his master's fashion on the ground; the leader, a sprightly little Hottentot, sat watching the meat on the roaster with his wicked little black eyes. He had a more than usually apish appearance as he sat there with his knees drawn up to his chin. (pp. 258-9)

This verbal sketch, an exact equivalent to many visual sketches of the period, indicates the harmony of landscape and inhabitants, provided they are silent. When Mrs. Snappercaps' jealous violence breaks the peace, Undine retires to the river, and here the African landscape itself offers her peace, in a scene which anticipates Schreiner's finest and most characteristic rendering of the mysterious power which inhabits African landscapes.

She walked on till, just as the sun set, she reached the little kloof and, forcing her way through the rocks and trees, came to the bed of the mountain torrent. She clambered down its steep bank and leaped on to the smooth white sand that lined its bottom. Then she paused to take breath and leaned against one of the great dark boulders that lay about on every hand. Long years ago the rushing torrent had torn them down from their home on the mountain side, but they lay very quiet and unmovable now on their bed of white sand. Over one of them, a little higher up in the bed of the torrent, a tiny stream of water trickled. The drops as they fell

down slowly on the face of the flat stones below had the soft silver sound of far-away evening bells, and everything else was very silent. The silver band of water as it crept through the sand made no sound. High on the western bank of the stream against the white dreamy evening sky, the branches of the oliven trees were visible, with pale, quivering, up-pointed leaves. All the dark trees around lay glittering and motionless, but the air stirred those pale green upward-pointing leaves till they shook against the still white night sky; and on Undine, as she stood looking up at it, a great hush came and a great joy; for heaven is not a long way off, nor the beautiful for which we thirst.

(pp. 278-9)

Undine's most intense response is, as it was in the childhood prelude, to that African landscape, and the direct apprehension of a unity beyond nature and inner peace which it offers. A scene like this answers the doubt raised in her mind when in England:

She wondered if the dew lying on the English grass were really as lovely as the great drops that used to stand trembling on the bushes and silvery ice-plants among the stones of the koppie. (p. 97)

The doubt was one in Schreiner's own mind about her own best territory as a writer, and the writing of Undine, with its double setting, and its central section on a boat in transition between two continents, was one way of finding an answer. Though the novel Undine and the fairytale which it uses dramatise the enormous difficulties of a 'double-bind' in terms of family, sexuality, religion, and cultural roots, and show that any option involves loss, any choice involves threat, the writing of the book was a technical apprenticeship for Schreiner as a novelist. In it she was beginning to discover the sources of her own strongest identity as a writer, but she would move away from the heavy emphasis on female martyrdom into a more complex depiction of the relationship between individual and society.

Notes.

1. Kenneth Burke, The Philosophy of Literary Form (New York, Vintage Books, 1957) p.3.
2. Gerard Genette, Narrative Discourse, (transl.) Jane E. Lewis (Oxford: Blackwell, 1980).
3. See Genette p. 49 and Tzvetan Todorov, The Poetics of Prose, (transl.) Richard Howard (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1977), p. 70 ff.
4. Douglas Hewitt, The Approach to Fiction: good and bad readings of novels (London: Layman, 1972) p.5.
5. See, for instance, R. Rive, "An Infinite Compassion", Contrast 29, Vol. 8 (1 October 1972), p.31, p.33.
6. Some critics have already questioned and rebutted these simplistic criteria for structural unity. See Jean Marquard, "Hagar's child: a reading of The Story of an African Farm" and Robert Green, "Stability and Flux: The Allotropic Narrative of An African Farm", both in the Casebook.
7. See Christopher Heywood, "Olive Schreiner's Influence on George Moore and D.H. Lawrence", Aspects of South African Literature, (ed.) C. Heywood, (London : Heinemann, 1976). and Graham Hough, "George Moore and the Nineties", Image and Experience (London : Duckworth, 1960) for a discussion of the 'nineties as a transitional period for fiction .
8. See also John Bayley's argument in The Uses of Division (London : Chatto & Windus, 1976).
9. See, for instance, Lyndall Gregg, Memories of Olive Schreiner (London : W.R. Chambers, 1957), pp. 18-19.

10. See Richard Rive, "Introduction to 'Diamond Fields'" English in Africa, Vol. 1, No. 1 (March 1974) for a full discussion of the manuscript and circumstances of composition.
11. A.F. Hattersley, An illustrated social history of South Africa (Cape Town, A.A. Balkema, 1973), p.207.
12. Phyllis Lewsen, John X. Merriman: Paradoxical South African Statesman (Johannesburg: Ad. Donker, 1982), p.33.
13. J.T. McNish, The Road to El Dorado, Kimberley 1867-1870, (Cape Town: C. Struik, 1968), p. 279.
14. J.T. McNish, Graves and Guineas (Cape Town: C. Struck, 1969), p.28.
15. See Charles van Onselen, Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand 1886 - 1914, Vol. 2, New Nineveh, (Johannesburg: Ravan, 1982), p. 77 : "These miners, single or separated from their families in Cornwall and elsewhere, were thus without recourse to that female labour which normally undertook the washing and ironing of their clothes".
16. Anthony Trollope, South Africa, Vol. II (London: Chapman & Hall, 1878), p. 173.
17. J.W. Matthews, Incwadi Yami (Johannesburg: African Book Society, 1976), p.102.
18. The nursing at New Rush is a modification of the Victorian metropolitan pattern followed by Florence Nightingale, who served Empire and Queen by nursing British soldiers from the Crimea. Nursing embodied an ideal of human service to Schreiner, hence her own attempts at training in her first few weeks in England. But the nursing at New Rush is a particular charitable response to a rapidly industrialized colonial environment where there was much poverty, illness, and human shipwreck. This is the first form of Schreiner's fictional exploration of a necessary charity in the face of the human misery caused by destructive social circumstances and conventions. The digger later makes way for the labourer (Waldo), the exploited black in Africa (in Trooper Peter) and the prostitute (Bertie).

19. See C.I. Hofmeyr, "Mining, Social Change and Literature. An analysis of South African Literature with particular reference to the Mining Novel 1870-1920" M.A. Dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 1980.
20. J.T. McNish, The Glittering Road, Kimberley 1874-1876 (Cape Town : C. Struik, 1970), pp. 28-29.
21. In this black "swell" mining and racial stereotypes are fused. The black man who imitated the white was often particularly mocked by Victorian authors like Mary Kingsley : "...most of her criticism was reserved for the partially westernised African, whom she detested as a travesty of civilised man. (Sarah L. Milbury-Steen, European and African Stereotypes in Nineteenth Century Fiction, London : Macmillan, 1980, p.11. This study discusses other Victorian representations of racial groups which have affinities with Schreiner's).
22. See S.C. Cronwright's "Notes on the Faith Diamond" in the Albany Museum, Grahamstown. He also wrote his own "Diamond Romance" (Albany). The following extracts are taken from his "Notes on the Faith Diamond".
23. I have not cited page references because of the brevity of the text.
24. See Genette, p. 185 ff. Genette distinguishes between "who speaks" and "who sees".
25. Such metaphors, spanning inner and outer space, are characteristic of Schreiner's style and thought. See "The Great Heart of England" allegory. Her strongest effects are obtained by a rhythmical approximation to bodily action : "and they heard the truth beat" ("The Two Paths").

26. See Genette, p.252 and elsewhere. The term is useful for Schreiner's fiction, as her "actants" often become story-tellers of the next narrative.
27. Genette calls such analepses, which deal with a story line different from the content of the first narrative "heterodiegetic" (p. 50).
28. The word "always" is an instance of iterative narrative: we are told once of something which happened many times. The narrative form underlines the constancy of parental cruelty. See Genette, Chapter 3.
29. Frank Kermode, The Genesis of Secrecy: On the Interpretation of Narrative, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979) p.4. This section of the thesis, and succeeding sections of narrative interpretation, draw on Kermode's assumptions and suggestions.
30. Schreiner's own bibles can be seen in the Cradock Public Library Collection, except this childhood favourite which was given to Karl Pearson, and is in the Pearson collection.
31. Compare the writing of Catherine Earnshaw's journal into an old Bible in Wuthering Heights, another novel with a proliferation of narrators, narrative devices, and stories within the story.
32. See the Life (p. 220) : "...when I got home to Europe and found men and women whose views exactly coincided [with] mine indifferent to his [Mill's] works or regarding them as old-fashioned, it was keenly painful to me, because they had been the channels through which most of the spirit of ancient and modern science reached me".
33. See the parallel use of Christian versus angry responses to injustice and suffering in the children and women of Jane Eyre; these have been discussed elsewhere by myself ("Victors and Victims: female roles in Jane Eyre and The Story of an African Farm", Quarry, '80-'82, Johannesburg: Ad. Donker, 1983, pp. 71-82) and by Laurence Lerner ("Olive Schreiner and the Feminists" in the Casebook, pp. 181-191).

34. W.B. Yeats, "Among School Children". The poem's debate on physical and spiritual integrity or disjunction is relevant.
35. See Introduction to the Casebook for a further discussion of manuscript problems, and in Chapter 7, below. The dated quotations in this section are all from the Ratel Hoek Journal.
36. See above and also R. Rive, Introduction to the "Diamond Fields" fragment.
37. See Martin Tucker's introduction to the reprint of Undine (New York : Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1972).
38. The "feather" in Undine is used to indicate the fragility of life; in African Farm it becomes the one reward given to the Hunter after his quest. Browning's poem "Memorabilia" suggests that the feather might have been a stock Victorian property:

For there I picked up on the heather
And there I put inside my breast
A moulted feather, an eagle-feather!
Well, I forget the rest.

39. These "biting" references seem to have had one source in Schreiner's own habits. Cronwright describes in the Life how she often absentmindedly chewed tickets or pieces of paper (p. 166). In Undine Cousin Jonathan is "the man with the mouth", Aunt Margaret bites Undine; early on we hear of a "savage king of Timbuctoo who makes his meals off little girls" (p. 6); Undine eats her lover Albert's letter of rejection : "chewed it fine between her grinding teeth" (p. 157). Eating here has an obvious sexual component, but also seems to refer to a law of competition which runs counter to the desire for martyrdom: the law seems to be "eat or be eaten". Chapter headings in African Farm indicate that Blenkins is a predator who 'eats up' gullible old Otto.

Schreiner often uses 'cannibalism' as an image for a destructively competitive spirit between human beings. The proliferation of her own 'image' in her internal narratives seems to be a way of asserting her own identity in the face of such threats of 'consumption' and obliteration. Her narratives 'eat up' silence and space before they can devour her.

40. The Oxford Companion to English Literature (ed.) Sir Paul Harvey (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1967), pp. 845-6.
41. See the Life, p. 71 : Balfour, 1867 : What the Children Most Wished for.

Theo	-	Something to do.
Ettie	-	To be at rest
Olive	-	To be clever, to be wise.
Will	-	To be a soldier.

Schreiner also copied into this journal :

Theo	-	To win the race of learning.
Olive	-	To know.

42. This is an 'analepsis' by Undine herself, recollecting a part of her African childhood not recounted in the first narrative. These recollections of her African childhood indicate the primacy of early experience, and anticipate her eventual return to Africa.
43. See Rebekah and Drummond's boxes of manuscripts in From Man to Man.
44. The setting on board ship is a significant image for Schreiner's hesitation between England and Africa at this time of her life (see the letter to her sister re Julius Gau and going 'home' to England, quoted in Chapter 2). The travelling would also be a feature of her own life, and a shipboard setting has been used as scene and metaphor in a play about Schreiner by Stephen Gray, Schreiner: A One Woman Play (Cape Town : David Philip, 1983).

45. Exogamy as a structural principle is also central to Wuthering Heights, see, for instance, Wade Thompson's "Infanticide and Sadism in Wuthering Heights" in Critics on Charlotte and Emily Brontë (ed.) Judith O'Neill (London: Allen & Unwin, 1968). A relevant statement was made by Schreiner to Ellis in 1884 :

Having lived as a child only with her father and brothers (knowing nothing of other men) she thought all men as noble and unselfish as they. She thinks all men are selfish now. And yet even now it sometimes gives her a kind of shock to discover that a man is selfish. (Ellis, HRC)

46. Ellis's notes refer to Schreiner's own ambivalent feelings towards Weakley as a married employer; he registered her sense of being 'overpowered' by the presence of a cold tyrannical man. She also seems to have had something of a crush on the Rev. Martin (see the Ganna Hoek Journal, April 1879, also in Casebook p. 105).

47. In Schreiner's Bible, the July 1872 life crisis concerning Julius Gau was marked in at Revelations, Chapter 2 and 3, which are concerned with rebuke and repentance, especially marked are Chapter II, verses 18-20 :

I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten : be zealous therefore, and repent.

See the discussion of the Gau episode in Chapter 2, above.

48. Bishop Colenso's heresies were current in the Cape Colony after his return from England in 1865. He had published a work on the Pentateuch which had horrified the orthodox, who had excluded him from preaching in England. The allusion here is to a brave heretic (like Undine) "who never swam

48. with the stream, who bravely strove to stem the current" (cf. J.W. Matthews, Incwadi Yami, p.325). He would have appealed to Schreiner as an independent and maligned voice of conscience, like the 'little clergyman' in Trooper Peter Halket. See discussion in Chapter 6.
49. "Rob^ben Island" : The island "only became a lunatic asylum after the 1850s when, on the Montagu plan, lepers were moved onto and convicts off it". (A.E. Voss in the Casebook, p. 174).

CHAPTER 4

THE STORY OF AN AFRICAN FARM

(i) Period of composition

The story of the composition of African Farm is not very clear, though S.C. Cronwright has presented dogmatic conclusions about its early titles, date, and place of composition. Cronwright insisted that African Farm's early title was "Thorn Kloof," though that is the name of the farm in From Man to Man, and it is not mentioned in African Farm (where the farm has no name) except once in a song title, the "Thorn Kloof Schottische" (p. 209). Cronwright also insisted that Schreiner wrote African farm mainly at Klein Ganna Hoek, at the Fouchés, although the evidence indicates a much longer process of composition and revision. Most of the journal references to scenes from African Farm occur in the years 1879 and 1880, when Schreiner was at Ganna Hoek with the Cawoods, and at Lelie Kloof (to which the Fouchés had moved from Klein Ganna Hoek). One unmistakable reference to African Farm occurs on the 21st November 1880 when Waldo's stranger is mentioned, and where she clearly had the Hunter allegory idea in mind:

Delightful chapter "Waldo's Stranger" & tomorrow I'll want to burn it. Horrible desire for immortality last night; hope I shall die suddenly: Anything else is easily given up for truth—but immortality.

(LK Journal, 21 November 1880)

In an earlier reference (2 December 1878) at Kat Kop, near Ratel Hoek, the Martins' farm, she mentions Waldo's letter (SAF, Part 2, Chapter 11):

Oh for a large, true, strong soul! Why should not mine be such! Had a very happy time tonight writing Waldo's letter. (Life, p.133)

The manuscript of African Farm was sent to the Browns in England in 1880, but seems not yet to have had that title. Schreiner referred to it as "Lyndall", indicating the centrality of that character in the novel, and that it did not yet have its later title:

I have begun to revise "Lyndall". Must leave out much — feel a little heartsore. No one will ever like the book, but I have had the comfort. (LK Journal, 12 December 1880)

Schreiner had not yet finished revising the novel when she left South Africa in early 1881:

I had hoped to get my book written out, but I can't....
I expect I shall have to finish it at Fred's if I ever do.
(LK Journal, 7 February 1881)

The view of African Farm as a miraculous work which sprang fully formed from the head of a twenty-one year old girl is thus far from the truth. The work was begun very early, considerably revised and condensed, and only completed in 1881, when Schreiner was 26 years old. She herself said:

I came to England for the first time seven years ago and then published the African Farm which I had written in Africa. The first English edition was published in 1882 (actually early 1883). I have made stories ever since I could remember; long before I could write I used to scribble on sheets of paper imagining that I was writing them. I began An African Farm when I was almost a child, but left it for some years before I finished it.¹

Schreiner made a similar point in her first letter to Ellis:

It was just one of the many stories I had been writing ever since I was five years old, and its kind reception at the hands of the critics here surprised me much....

(Letters, p.12)

The popular success of African Farm has obscured the fact that it was only one of at least three more or less complete novels that she had with her when she left for England, though she had already decided that Undine was not publishable. Although African Farm was "only one of the many stories" she had written, it was the only one with which she seems to have been satisfied at the time and which was accepted for publication.² She said, despite moments of disgust with the book (she once almost threw it into the stream at Lelie Kloof, Letters, p.97), that it said everything "I wanted to say then" (Letters, p.199). Her later dissatisfaction with it, like the stranger's with Waldo's carving, was because it lacked beauty of form, though it was 'true':

It is true, but there is perfect beauty and truth.

(Letters, p.97)

This suggests that the novel's message is stronger than its form, or that it has a rough-hewn quality, like Waldo's carving.

(ii) Governess in the Karoo.

Schreiner spent four years (1876-1880) as governess at four Karoo farms (Klein Ganna Hoek, Ratel Hoek, Ganna Hoek and Lelie Kloof) and the journals she kept during that time (1876-1880) provide some insight into her emotional and intellectual experience, the existential matrix of both The Story of an African Farm and the unfinished From Man to Man. In those years she absorbed the evolutionary theory of Darwin, the social evolution of Herbert Spencer, Mill's ideas on political economy, Emerson's belief in self-reliance and the path to universal peace through nature, and Lecky's ideas on Victorian woman and prostitution. She encountered

Goethe's belief in self-development in Wilhelm Meister, and his presentation of demonic over-reaching in Faust. She read the popular sensationalist fiction of 'Ouida' and encountered the social conscience of Dickens.

While she was intensely engaged in intellectual experience, she felt at first hand the tyranny and exploitation of male and female employers; the soul-destroying effects of exhausting bodily labour; the humiliating effects of social and financial dependence; the penalties of free-thought. She experienced Boer customs and rituals, the conservative and superstitious side of religious belief, the courtship rituals, the social occasions, and the 'Boer' language. She was proposed to by Mrs. Fouchés' stepson (the farm she lost by refusing him was called "Olive's Loss"),³ and when she left for England the daughter of the household, Annie, was about to be married:

...they wanted me to wait for the wedding, but be it to me death or what, I can't wait, I am driven on.

(LK Journal, February 1881)

Like Otto in African Farm, she helped a "poor Coloured woman in the road" when the Boer woman "wouldn't even give bread or sugar" and sent her a shawl after delivering her baby. (LK Journal, 3 January 1881). She sometimes felt the peace of sitting on the dam wall in the sunshine, when 'self' fell away, moments of complete peace in African nature, so that Lelie Kloof farm became afterwards a hallowed place in her memory. These years, in their hard work and creativity, the alternation of trivia and "crushing imaginations" the intense experience of African landscape, of books and of people, mainly the Afrikaner family (the Fouchés) of Klein Ganna Hoek and her English friends, the Cawoods, at the neighbouring cottage, produced The Story of an African Farm.

What these years embodied for Schreiner was a tension between rural peace and intellectual challenge, between a desire for marriage and stability and a need for change and adventure, between the beauty of the landscape and the suffocating conservatism of the

inhabitants, between a desire to stay and a need to go. African Farm is made out of these conflicts. The years covered by the novel are 1862-1867 (though the opening chapter is earlier), the years before the transformation of South Africa from a rural economy into an industrialised one. The ending of the novel, with its rejection by Tant' Sannie of the newfangled railway, coincides with the beginning of a period of social change and upheaval. Lyndall dies in a hotel where people are passing through to the diamond fields; Waldo works as a transport rider but never reaches the fields himself. The novel asks: what possibilities are there for young, talented people born and reared in this rural stillness, at a distance from the centres of power, education and wealth? Will they gain things from the 'strangers' who come to the farm from the outside world? Will they need to put the farm behind them? And if they do, what opportunities will they be offered? The 'answers' the novel provides to these questions are not simple, and they rest on the treatment of the farm in relation to its native inhabitants and various strangers, on a movement to and from the farm, on patterns of invasion, departure, and return. There is a constant restless quest and movement, and yet at times enormous stillness and rest. African Farm explores the potentiality for growth and for death; the farm changes and yet remains the same; the same windows, gables and low stone walls see people come and go, and play out their small human dramas. Time itself sometimes leaps, sometimes seems to stop. Day follows night, summer follows winter, rain follows drought. What, the novel seems to ask, are the stable and continuing elements in this process of flux and decay? The story of the farm is the story of the landscape, the animals, the indigenous inhabitants, the Boer farmer, the English colonist or exploiter, and the three children whose lives play out the possibilities and curtailments inherent in their character and fate. Waldo says:

We are only the wood, the knife that carves on us is the circumstance. (p. 240)

Farm

In these varying careers from childhood to the brink of adulthood, the primacy of childhood experience is stressed. The children themselves remain what we at first see them to be, despite superficial changes. What they expect from life, and what they actually get, are shown in constant interaction, containing elements of both surprise and predictability. Their lives explore the range of possibilities open to such children at such a time; they themselves occur in a wider context of historical experience and geographical reality, both of which are always present in the novel. They inherit or do not inherit certain properties and qualities; they accept or challenge the status quo at the farm, itself constantly being moulded by pressures from without. The novel's fidelity to opposed modes of being, and opposed possibilities, gives it its complexity and its almost inexhaustible openness to interpretation.

(iii) Schreiner's reading of African Farm

The fullest statement Schreiner ever made about African Farm was in response to the suggestion that it should be filmed, and her comments indicate her view of the novel as well as prophetically indicating the problems encountered by the recent television version of the novel:

I don't quite see either what there is to put on a bioscope. The common place parts, by being shamefully exaggerated i.e. the parts about Bonaparte and Tant' Sannie could be made humorously perhaps—but of course they were just put in to counter-poise the tragedy & sorrows of Lyndall & Waldo—& that tragedy cannot be put into a picture because it is purely intellectual & spiritual. The tragedy was not at all vulgar tragedy that Lyndall had a baby got a disease & died suddenly. That is a common vulgar tragedy enough. The tragedy of [the] whole book [is] the eternal tragedy of youth & genius & beauty struggling against the adverse material conditions of life & being beaten by them. It is a cry out against

"fate". How any of this could get into a picture I don't see. It must be absolutely vulgarised. I hardly see how without altering it, it could be made dramatic to the eye. For instance, Waldo when he hears of Lyndall's death would be simply a young man howling, & the last scene where he sits in the sun & the chickens sit on him might seem simply comic ...?

Of course the whole point of an African Farm turns on Lyndall being a child of seventeen when she dies, with a tiny body with dark brown hair & large intellectual brown eyes. If she had been a full grown woman of twenty or twenty-two the book couldn't have been written. Because Lyndall at 20 would have been much too wise to act as she did & a fair-haired blue-eyed Lyndall would have been impossible, because then her character would have been different: If I were in London I should like to see the lady [the representative of African Film Productions] & have a talk with her: but I doubt whether without altering the story they could make it telling.

She then makes a comment on her own state, in 1918, which has some bearing on her view of African Farm:

I'm always so afraid of breaking down absolutely & needing doctors and nurses, the horror of my life has always [been] to become a burden on others. It must be the crowning tragedy of life to feel others must say, "Why doesn't she die?" It's sad to die young; but there are much more tragic things in life though they are seldom spoken of. (To WPS, UCT, October 1918)

What emerges from this letter is the conception of humour and tragedy as balancing components in the structure of the novel; the idea that the novel is essentially exploring the problem of youthful aspirations clashing with external circumstances (whereas in From Man to Man, for instance, Rebekah would have to endure adult situations, and encounter the challenges of maturity); the point that Lyndall's tragedy is determined by her intellectual

nature and her youthful folly, and the idea that the essential tragedy lies in spiritual, inner areas of experience. Schreiner seems to see the novel as a kind of Romeo and Juliet: a tragic story turning on clashes and frustrations partly determined by the youthfulness of the protagonists and the absoluteness of their claims and ideals. This point is explicitly made by Lyndall in the novel:

When the old die it is well; they have had their time.
It is when the young die that the bells weep drops of blood. (p. 264)

The young are "cut down, cruelly, when they have not seen, when they have not known,—when they have not found..." (SAF, ibid.). On the other hand, they avoid the more complex tragedies of maturity and do not need to survive in a compromised universe, as do Gregory Rose and Em. Death preserves Lyndall and Waldo as well as destroying them. It is this aspect of the novel which makes complaints about Schreiner's 'inability' to provide a future for Waldo and Lyndall irrelevant.⁴ The nature of their deaths and the stages at which they occur make a statement about the way in which ideal strivings and real circumstances interact, and about the conflicting claims experienced in adolescence: to endure the destruction of ideal aspirations, or to withdraw from reality.

The five-year gap between Lyndall as a 'foolish' 17-year-old and a 'wiser' woman of 21 was exactly the time gap between the fictional Lyndall and her actual creator, at least in 1876, when Schreiner was beginning to work on the novel. By pushing the time setting away from the time of creation, terminating it in the previous decade, in 1867, and terminating Lyndall's life at 17, Schreiner was able to distance herself from her characters and events, however close they might have been to autobiographical sources, and she was able to 'write off' a younger self by an older self who had endured beyond that stage of absolute claims and romantic gloom.⁵ That she was aware of the difficulties in writing about current life experience is evident in what we are told about Waldo's autobiographical outpouring to his stranger:

change

A confused, disordered story—the little made large and the large small, and nothing showing its inward meaning. It is not till the past has receded many steps that before the clearest eyes it falls into co-ordinate pictures. It is not till the 'I' we tell of has ceased to exist that it takes its place among other objective realities, and finds its true niche in the picture. The present and the near past is a confusion, whose meaning flashes on us as it recedes into the distance. (pp. 158-159)

Lyndall, the fictional little girl, was 12 in 1862 (when Schreiner was 7) and died in 1867, some years before Schreiner began the novel. When Schreiner was 26, in 1882, her younger self had receded enough to be 'placed' objectively within a fictional structure. Criticism has often ignored this critical gap between Lyndall and her creator, evident in the narrative method, structure, and the tone of the main narrator toward Lyndall and her fate. This critical distance should become clearer in an analysis of the narrative structure of African Farm.

(iv) African Farm: narrative structure

African Farm provides its own clues and signposts to its structure and significance, by incorporating and subduing a very complex series of narrative devices, including internal artistic analogues for Schreiner's procedures as novelist, and a variety of internal narratives, each type in a slightly different relationship with the primary, or framing narrative. This artistic control of a complex narrative structure is what gives the novel the "impersonality" for which it has been praised.⁶ The other device which allows African Farm to make a fuller statement about existential possibilities than Undine is the multiplication of protagonists: Waldo, Lyndall and Em provide a threefold focus on the development of life on the farm, and give the novel its variety of interest, and constant possibilities for contrast and comparison of character and fate.

Gregory Rose, another character who belongs to the same age group and settles on the farm, further modifies the pattern of male/female groupings. Schreiner would use a doubling of female protagonists in From Man to Man, which suits her purposes in that novel, but in African Farm the grouping and contrasting of protagonists covers a wider range of interest and potentiality. Complexity and subtlety of narrative form, and a shifting focus of character interest, characterise African Farm.

(a) Internal artistic analogues

The clearest internal analogue for Schreiner the novelist is Waldo the carver:⁷ both the carvings he creates and the interpretative commentary they elicit from himself and others illuminate the difficulties of the colonial artist and the relationship between artist and audience. The first carving is the decorated wooden post which Waldo makes for his father's grave: like Schreiner's novel, it has a limited function (African Farm is partly a tribute to Schreiner's father and lays his ghost to rest) as well as infinitely extendable significance. Like the novel, the post is part of a death ritual (it carries the motto "He sleeps forever") which adds to the novel's treatment of the death theme and its possible transcendence. Both Gottlob Schreiner and Otto Farber (Otto's name is contained within 'Gottlob') would have written "He lives for ever in eternal life". But Waldo's text is an index to a younger generation's answer to death: it points us toward the fact that Schreiner's novel, too, is an artistic production which modifies the traditional Christian response to death.

Waldo's carving is that of an isolated, self-taught artist: "The men were almost grotesque in their laboured resemblance to nature, and bore signs of patient thought" (p. 144). Waldo the carver is a cruder form of Schreiner the colonial novelist. The carver cannot interpret his own production in any thoroughgoing, articulate way; when asked for its meaning he says it is "only things". He is too moved by it, by his own involvement with it, to translate its 'thinginess' into verbal terms: "At the end he spoke with broken breath—like one who utters things of great import" (p.145).

Waldo and his stranger provide a model of the relationship between the colonial artist and the civilised interpreter. The interpreter must be a stranger to the work; he must have access to a mode of discourse which can articulate its 'meaning' (or a meaning) in other terms. He does not himself need to believe in the meaning he elucidates (Waldo's stranger is disillusioned by the quest for 'truth' and is himself cynical and epicurean), but he needs to be stirred by it, as the stranger is by Waldo's ungainly figure: "it attracted him and it hurt him. It was something between pity and sympathy" (p. 144). Waldo has something the stranger envies, yet there is an enormous gap between them, as their second encounter at the Botanic Gardens reveals: Schreiner is committed to showing the unresolvable gap between the world of the inspired primitive and that of the educated and cultivated European critic. Not only is the stranger an interpreter; he is also a would-be buyer; he demonstrates the possessive and acquisitive response to art, a European, commercialised response alien to Waldo, its creator. For Waldo the carving is not translatable into commercial terms; it is priceless, ritualistic and consecrated to a local place and function. This aspect of the encounter exhibits the difficulties inherent in translating an indigenous work into a foreign milieu, problems Schreiner herself was about to encounter when attempting to publish African Farm in England.

At the end of the stranger/interpreter's narrative version of the sculpted figures (the novel is a narrative containing a carving which is again translated into narrative terms) he provides a further commentary on the nature of art: "the whole of the story is not written there, but it is suggested" and "all true art says more than it says, and takes you away from itself". This is because truth is universally intelligible: "It has a thousand meanings and suggests a thousand more". Waldo's carving, like the novel in which it features, is an economical, specific series of figures which is nevertheless infinitely suggestive. This view of the artistic object, that it has a universal intelligibility, relies on a first premise which the stranger points out, and which Waldo himself realises in the course of the novel, that: "All true facts of nature or the mind are related". So that although colonial art translated into the metropolitan context loses some of its local significance, it is still capable of yielding up a meaning.

There is a deep harmony in the universe of which art expresses a simulacrum.

There is another aspect to this first encounter between Waldo and his stranger: Waldo is filled with passionate joy that someone responds to, and appears to understand the inner meaning of his carving. The artist needs a confirmatory response to his work, needs listeners and interpreters, even if he feels he is creating entirely for himself. The isolation of the colonial artist from a sympathetic audience is suggested: he craves recognition, and yet the only people who can respond in a cultured way to his product are in other ways deeply alien to it and to him.

Waldo produces another carving later, also as a gift for someone else, this time for the living, for Lyndall, and we are told that "The workmanship was better than that of the gravestone. The flowers that covered it were delicate, and here and there small conical protuberances were let in among them" (p. 184). Waldo explains that an instinct made him put in the conical protuberances, "and then it was right", announcing the principle of the artist's instinctive sense of structure which Schreiner discussed in relation to prose structure (CB, p. 109). The conical protuberances are not "beautiful in themselves", suggesting that beauty is not a matter of individual components, but of the overall relationship of the parts to one another. Lyndall and Waldo discuss the nature of beauty, whether it is a matter of monotony or variety. The textural and structural contrasts in the carved box are a clue to the texture and structure of the novel as a whole, supported by Schreiner's own comment on her two contrasted styles: plain for writing description, and ribbed for abstraction, poetry or philosophy. So, in African Farm, there is a 'realistic' narrative, but also abstract, generalising sections which could be described as the "conical protuberances" of the narrative, pyramids or raised sections (as the kopje of the farm protrudes from "the flat") which are poetic, allegorical or abstract, and yet part of the overall design and meaning.

Another clue to rightness of design is found not in an artistic object or process, but in a natural scene, the farm pigsty, which Waldo contemplates. Observing the mud, the pig, and the piglets,

Waldo thinks that because of a "certain harmony" they are beautiful when taken together:

The old sow was suited to the little pigs, and the little pigs to their mother; the old boar to the rotten pumpkin, and all to the mud. They suggested the thought of nothing that should be added, of nothing that should be taken away...and was not that the secret of all beauty....(p. 103)

Then, in one of the constant dialectical movements of the novel between reverie and reality, Bonaparte overturns Waldo into the subject of his meditation. Colonial crassness overturns aesthetic contemplation. Nothing in the novel stands for long. The little scene suggests that beauty is based on an organic relationship between the components; they must have grown together naturally and be complete in themselves. The same point is made by Schreiner in her discussion of the organic unity of Wilhelm Meister as an instance of the highest kind of art.

There is another brief artistic analogue in the novel, one similar to the figure of Mirah in George Eliot's Daniel Deronda, that of the actress. Lyndall tells Waldo (p. 202) of a young woman (really herself) who has beauty of face and voice, and "a rare power of entering into other lives unlike her own, and intuitively reading them aright". This latter gift is like that of the novelist, who must enter into her characters' lives. This little speech is ironically modified by events; Lyndall believes that "she must succeed at last. Men and things are plastic; they part to the right and left when one comes among them moving in a straight line to one end". Lyndall is soon to find out that life is less plastic than art. The relationship between Lyndall and her creator, akin to that between George Eliot and Gwendolen Harleth (another aspiring actress thwarted by the gap between illusory expectations and reality), is more ironical and distanced than some criticism has assumed.⁸ Schreiner, the artist who persists with her novel, includes in it a figure she might have been, a failure who provides an index to the external conditions and inner

factors which might have aborted her own efforts.

(b) Internal narratives

There is a striking proliferation in The Story of an African Farm of almost every kind of internal narrative device. Barbara Hardy, in her analysis of narrative imagination, mentions "the major modes of fantasy, memory, narrative exchange", but also "lies, truths, boasts, gossip, confessions, confidences, secrets, jokes, not to mention romances and novels."⁹ "From this storehouse of narrative", she says, "each narrative artist makes his biased choice". One might add, to do justice to the richness of narrative in African Farm, letters, songs, allegories, dreams and visions. The narratives are structured in such a way that truth and falsehood, reality and dream, are in a constant dialectical exchange. Some narratives are proleptic, prophetic; others are retrospective and recapitulating. The chronological time sequence is interwoven with a cyclical, phasal view of time. There are large narrative arcs moving away from and back to the farm; there are small local secrets. The narrative structure spans heavenly visions and earthy realities, angels and a pigsty. The voice of the main narrative maintains a distance from the characters, though that distance varies.

The first chapter establishes the first narrative voice of the novel, one that can survey the farm by night and by day, and can travel from that setting to the inhabitants, Tant' Sannie and the two little girls, slightly but sufficiently distinguished from each other, to the German overseer and his son. This first chapter, a childhood prelude as in Undine, is divided into three sections: "The Watch", "The Sacrifice", and "The Confession". The oblique relationship between the novel and religious ritual is made evident, as is the centrality of Waldo's spiritual struggle. Though the narrative is at times focalised through Waldo, the narrative voice comments from a distance, sometimes coldly: "He grovelled on the floor", sometimes in a mixture of compassion and scorn: "If one might have gone up to him and touched him kindly; poor, ugly little thing!

Genre
Narrative
Style

Perhaps his heart was almost broken" (p. 36).

The title of the chapter, "Shadows from Childlife" carries through the idea of the epigraph to Part 1: "The entire man is, so to speak, to be found in the cradle of the child". This maxim is the opposite of the one enunciated later by Waldo: that people are merely the "wood" and the "knife" that carves upon them is circumstance. We are shown that the children are potentially what they will be as adults, but circumstances will mould their fates in certain ways. The first chapter also establishes a characteristic movement from the farm setting to the people: the farm environment is primary, and the vision of it by night and then by day suggests that it is capable of being transformed by reverie and imagination (moonlight) and yet capable of the crushing oppressiveness of the day (the sun which scorches the children and melts Waldo's chop).

The opening chapter suggests the dogmatic Calvinist view of time as a linear progression to doom or salvation which Waldo has inherited from his father: the broad or narrow ways of the quoted biblical texts (p. 31). The sequence of three scenes encapsulates Waldo's movement away from dogmatic belief towards an individual statement: "I love Jesus Christ, but I hate God" (p. 36). The relationship of Waldo's confession to a conventional Christian one is parodic: he confesses not sin but disbelief. At the same time the inhospitality of the environment to spiritual struggle is conveyed: the heat, the red earth, the solitary prickly pear on the kopje. The chapter ends with the generalised reflections of the older narrative voice:

There are some of us who in after years say to Fate, 'Now deal us your hardest blow, give us what you will; but let us never again suffer as we suffered when we were children'. The barb in the arrow of childhood's suffering is this—its intense loneliness, its intense ignorance. (p. 36)

The narrative voice thus surveys the scene, indicating the primacy of the farm and of childhood and of suffering; they are suggested as constants, as the central and determining facts of experience. The narrative is revealed as an oblique and sometimes ironical

commentary on the "big Bible" on old Otto's table; it will deal with spiritual struggle but in its own terms. Waldo's prayers and sacrifices are unanswered and his conception of time is horrifying. If Waldo is ever to find peace he is going to need different rituals and a different relationship to time itself.

time

Chapter 2, "Plans and Bushman Paintings" begins in a specific time setting, the year of the great drought, the year of 1862. The drought-stricken farm landscape provides the specific time and place for the two twelve-year old girls and the fourteen year-old Waldo, yet they are still children: "somewhat grown since the days when they played hide-and-seek there, but they were mere children still" (p. 37). The setting of the kopje is the constant backdrop for their earlier games and now their plans. As the title indicates, the chapter looks backward, into pre-history (the Bushman Paintings) and forward into the future of their 'plans'. The Bushmen provide the earliest example of an indigenous inspired artist who literally dipped his brush "into the grey pigments around him".

History, life, art, and imagination interact in a complex way in this chapter. Behind the children, and over them, are the ancient Bushman paintings (the indigenous people annihilated by the Dutch, as Waldo points out). The paintings are distortions of African reality (like Waldo's carved figures) and they depict animals both natural and visionary (a "one-horned beast, such as no man ever has seen or ever shall").¹⁰ The paintings, like African Farm itself, are both realistic and idealistic, paying tribute to the visible world and an invisible realm beyond it. The children, breathing, alive, and young (though created by narrative art) sit facing away from ancient history, and art, looking at the living greenery in their laps "a few fern and ice-plant leaves" (a line of indigenous greenery runs through the novel, keeping the promise of Nature alive, even in the drought). The girls sit dreaming of their futures. Em will inherit the farm, but Lyndall will have to leave the farm to acquire wisdom, knowledge, and wealth. Waldo brings Lyndall some "tender grass", his token as a nature-lover, which replaces the white silks and rosebuds, the social world she dreams

of conquering. Past, present, and future are intertwined in this chapter, the natural landscape beneath the drought, the pre-historic art on the stone, fantasies of the future.

The announcement of Bonaparte's name triggers a little song from Em, an indigenous folksong, and a narrative from Lyndall, her version of the European conqueror, Napoleon Bonaparte. He figures as the type Lyndall has just been aspiring to be: "master of the world at last" (p. 40), someone who planned, and waited, and got what he wanted, which is "better than being happy". People feared him, but eventually the "many" destroyed the "one". Lyndall's narrative, (pp. 40-41), a subjective animation of history, tells both the outer and the inner history of Napoleon (what he thought and felt alone on his island). History can only give events ("What he did") but an imaginative fiction can supply an inner perspective lacking in "the brown history". "Books do not tell everything" says Lyndall. This is one of the many points in the novel where book knowledge, however eagerly craved, is found lacking in relation to the needs of life. Lyndall's narrative (the first instance of narrative 'embedding' in the novel, where one of the small actants of the first narrative turns story-teller) uses imagery ("the sea all around him was a cold chain about his body, pressing him to death"), is told with sympathy and intensity, and it has a sad ending, like all true stories: "He died there in that island; he never got away".¹¹ The island is an internal metaphor for the isolation of the farm/colony, which will also enclose and suffocate Lyndall: neither she nor Waldo will "get away". Yet though the story is prophetic of the novel's pattern, it is also simpler than the novel's own ending, in which two different and contrasted death-scenes complicate the question of sad or happy endings. The novel contains many internal models of itself, but each is simpler than the total effect of the compound narrative.

'History' (real life) and fiction are in a layered narrative pattern here (Miller's "Quaker Oats Box effect") : Schreiner writes

a story about a little girl called Lyndall who tells a story about a 'real' historical figure, Bonaparte, behind whom lurks the religious type of the martyr, after which story they will go to meet the 'real'/fictional local Napoleon, Bonaparte Blenkins, whose invasion and tyranny will re-enact the oppression of a group of indigenous inhabitants by an interloper (like the Bushman/Dutch encounter about to be excitedly recounted by Waldo).

Lyndall's imaginative response to history is followed by Waldo's response to geography, to the landscape of rocky configurations around the farm, including the kopje, and to history—the Bushmen and their paintings. He tells of his early superstitious response: there was a "giant buried under the kopje"; then the scientific knowledge given by the "Physical Geography" book, then of his own probings, which science cannot answer. The three responses indicate his representativeness as a nineteenth-century man, and encapsulate his overall movement in the novel. Em, who shifts least in terms of the farm and its traditions, accepts the religious view that God's fiat should go unquestioned: "God put the kopje there". Waldo has learnt to think in terms of slow evolution, but as an artist he responds to the wonder of it. Waldo is the growing point of Schreiner's attempt to show the need for a fusion of science and art, of fact and imagination. Waldo is clearly also more closely bonded to the landscape than either of the girls: Em is uncurious about it, and Lyndall wants to escape it. Waldo tells the 'story' of the stones (he communes instinctively with inanimate matter) and of the ancient inhabitants of the territory, the Bushmen. He tells, too, of the emergence of the individual from the tribe, the solitary artist, "because he wanted to make something". It is clear here that the co-existence of the three children allows different responses to be compared and weighed.

Finally, the children turn and confront the silent backdrop to their conversation. Waldo responds most intensely as he tells the 'inner story' of the paintings, imaginatively participating in the activity of that earlier artist. Now the Bushmen have gone, and

the wild buck, and they too, the children dreaming of their future, will be gone—only the stones remain. Levels of transience and continuity are suggested, a long view of historical cycles intersects with this specific moment. Lyndall rejects this view: she is interested only in the European model of the will-to-power. Her story is very like Schreiner's own earlier fiction, Undine, a story of martyrdom ending in death. At the end of the chapter the girls go to meet the first 'stranger': a new cycle of intrusion, oppression, and cruelty is about to begin, but the means by which victims can partially evade the worst effects of such oppression have already been suggested. It is also clear that though Schreiner is sometimes accused of not focussing sufficiently on the issue of racial oppression, a very powerful critique of unlicensed invasion and exploitation is built into the novel.¹²

The following sequence of chapters (Chapters 3-13) chronicles the rise and fall of Bonaparte Blenkins at the farm. Though the first narrative voice remains primary, Blenkins features as a constant internal narrator, almost threatening to take over the novel with his loquacity, his lies, tall stories, sermons and slanders. Yet the sequence is structured in such a way that events constantly modify and mock Blenkins's pretensions and hypocrisies. Blenkins is himself a perverted form of the preacher and the novelist. He demonstrates the wrong relationship between didacticism and story-telling. The novelist uses his imagination to transform reality in a benign and truthful way; Blenkins is equally inventive, but his inventions are fantasies (the story about his noble lineage),¹³ tall stories (the story about hunting bears is a traditional boastful hunter's tale in a novel which sees the real hunter as the quester after truth),¹⁴ slanders (he perverts Otto's statements to banish him from favour and supplant him), lies (he is a liar who preaches against his own vice, like Chaucer's Pardoner) and false sermons. He is also a corrupt and ignorant schoolmaster (p. 68) when he tries to 'teach' Em and Lyndall.¹⁵ Blenkins's stories are always in bad faith, malign in intention, used to crush,

destroy, gain power, to banish the innocent and creative forms of life from the farm. All his 'narratives' have great energy and inventiveness, and are in a bombastic, ornate style which parodies the style of the novelist. He is farcical but also a real threat; his lies, like real lies, are often "successful manipulations of the human spirit, knowing, thorough, well-formed and eloquent" (Hardy, pp. 103-4). . They are not failures in communication, but perverted forms of it, powerful and successful, at least for a while. Old Otto is bewildered by them: truth and innocence cannot respond to the successful lie. Children and ostriches are less easily taken in: they instinctively recognise falsehood.¹⁶

Blenkins is the first 'stranger' to arrive at the farm, and he demonstrates the dangers of welcoming everyone as if they were brothers in Christ. The Biblical texts which herald Blenkins's arrival and stay ("I was a stranger and ye took me in"),¹⁷ underline his exploitation of Christian sympathy and doctrine. His parasitic role, feeding on others, on true doctrine, on sympathy, on language, is underlined in the metaphors of biting, eating, and feeding associated with him: "He shows his teeth", "He snaps", "He bites". He is also a "bird", one of the many birds in the novel, ranging from farm chickens and ostriches to the allegorical eagle in the Hunter allegory, but he is a human bird of prey. The fairly simple contest between evil in disguise and undisguised naive Christian faith which takes place in the relationship of Otto and Blenkins, indicates the dangers of simple traditional faith. It cannot cope with evil and is annihilated.

Bonaparte's narratives are thus perverted forms of the novelist's imagination and the Christian's faith: they encounter both gullible responses (Otto) and scepticism (Lyndall). Lyndall's scepticism is reprimanded by Otto, because it would undercut his own faith, but it would also uncover Blenkins's hypocrisy. Taking things on trust is what preserves Otto but also allows people like Blenkins to thrive. What the novel shows us is that the reign of falsehood does not last, thus demonstrating a belief of Schreiner's that

absolute truth is always the best in the long run:
in the short it generally seems the worse...
something much more than not telling a direct "lie",
but keeping up a false relation or supposition.

(Letters, pp. 355-356)

But though Lyndall sees through Bonaparte, she does not see through his historical counterpart, or that Blenkins's power-seeking is simply a smaller version of the activities of the historical Napoleon whom she idolises as hero and martyr. The novel suggests, by showing that Lydnall is Blenkins's only true, strong-willed adversary, and that both have a connection with the historical Napoleon, that in matters of the will superior cunning often triumphs. Only the saint is exempt and untouched, like Otto, though Blenkins secures his outward downfall. That Schreiner had thought about the man of power and the saint is evident in a comment about the Memoirs of Madame de Remusat:

It makes me love Napoleon more than ever. If he had had a mother like St. Augustine's the world would have found its noblest hero and saint in him. It was only a case of bad education....(Letters, pp.123-4)

Though that letter demonstrates Schreiner's attraction to power as well as saintliness, African Farm explores the nature of 'power': what does having 'the power' (p. 117) mean? In Part 1 we see the crude abuse of power in interloper versus farm inhabitants, and in adults versus children.

Blenkins has three internal narratives: the first is his invented 'history' of his birth and noble connections (pp. 51-52; the freedom of newly arrived European 'colonists' to invent and aggrandise their lineage is repeated by Gregory Rose in his family crest); the second is his hunting story of the Duke of Wellington's nephew and the ten bears (pp. 52-54; the story demonstrates the unlicensed imagination of the wild adventure story which Schreiner was explicitly to reject in her Preface to the second edition of African Farm); the third is his Sunday Morning Service. The first two are relatively

harmless, and the comic mode is maintained through all three. The comedy reassures us that Blenkins's reign cannot last forever. Blenkins's third narrative, the Sermon, is in juxtaposition with Waldo's solitary religious experience on the kopje. The contrast demonstrates the extent to which religious experience has drawn away from official dogma and received rituals. Waldo's Sunday service is all solitary emotion and intense vision; Blenkins's sermon is all outer lip-service and absurdity.

Blenkins's sermon is an internal narrative parody of a didactic fiction: it distances and ridicules an extreme 'preachiness', a tendency which is evident in Schreiner's own fictions. The sermon is pompous and over-emphatic, moving from would-be sublimity to ridiculous detail (thus parodying the novel's own transitions from the sublime to the ridiculous). The little boy is "guilty" of theft and greed, Blenkins's own crime, and retribution is instantaneous: "it stuck in his throat and he died, and was buried" (p. 64). Like many another criminal, Blenkins does not see that retribution might follow in his own case, almost equally spectacularly. The story is one of trivial crime and disproportionate punishment (anticipating Blenkins's whipping of Waldo for supposedly stealing peaches); the novel which encloses this model of crime and punishment itself withdraws from such final moral judgments. Blenkins's second 'sermon' embodies his own tendency toward miraculous self-preservation, telling of a suicide plunging into Etna while Bonaparte himself is miraculously preserved by the providence of the Lord. The two little parables preach against what are in Blenkins's terms major errors: being found out and not protecting one's own interests. The morals he draws are as absurd as the proportions of the stories: never commit suicide, because of the comforts of the body; never love too much; the third moral is to care for the soul. The sermon is Chaucerian in spirit in its energy, absurdity, and unconscious self-revelation. Schreiner contrasts it with Waldo's service in which God's love, tiny insects, the outdoor

farm setting, and the solitary vision are opposed to a false community ritual in which appearance is everything (Blenkins's black suit), truth and relevance nothing. Once again valuable experience seems only to be found in a solitary state when the rituals of the community are stifling or corrupt. Blenkins's sermon is everything a true narrative is not: it proceeds from evil intentions, it lacks proportion and harmony, its details are too trivial and its rhetoric too high-flown, and its listeners, equally hypocritical, snivel but do not understand. The "Kaffir servants" are excluded from Tant Sannie's service; in Waldo's even insects have a part. The service inside the farmhouse is ceremony without feeling, talk without communication, moralizing without value. The juxtaposition of the two services, (a constant structural principle in the design of individual chapters) makes a subtle commentary on public ritual and private experience, suggesting that fulfilment will have to be found alone and outside the farmhouse and the community. Both services, and the relationship between them, are controlled by irony, humour, and formal perspective. Apart from delivering internal narratives, Blenkins also stages little tableaux, plays within the novel. The first (apart from the sermon, which is also play-acting) is the play of the bereaved husband, a drama of grief and loss for the death of his wife in which he beats his head against the wall and has to be comforted by brandy and Tant' Sannie. The drama is one more device in his rise to power from unwelcome traveller to received guest to schoolmaster to overseer of the farm and almost to owner of Sannie and the farm. The second tableau is the lovemaking scene, even more like a stage play with the uncomprehending Trana opposite him and Tant' Sannie as silent and outraged listener in the loft above, becoming a deus ex machina and retributive force with her barrel of pickled pork. Both of these little 'plays' within the novel anticipate in a farcical mode the real crises of the second part: the death of Lyndall and Waldo's real grief for her, and the more painful love triangles of the second part: Em-Greg-Lyndall, Greg-Lyndall-Waldo, Waldo-Lyndall-Lyndall's stranger.

The expulsion of Blenkins from the farm ends Part 1, though it is Otto's death scene which forms an earlier emotional climax for the section (Chapter 8), and indicates the serious narrative mood which will predominate in Part 2. Here the narrative voice traverses again the night-time scene inside the farm and without (p. 87), echoing scenes and phrases from the opening chapter: "An intense quiet reigned everywhere. Only in her room the Boer-woman tossed her great arms in her sleep". The buried note of suffering and solitary doomed struggle which threads itself through the farce of Part 1, and which reaches a climax in Blenkins's destruction of Waldo's shearing machine, is elevated into the mood and epigraph of Part 2, indicating that the previously submerged mood will now be dominant:

"And it was all play, and no one could tell what it had lived and worked for. A striving and a striving, and an ending in nothing". (p. 99)

The comedy in Part 2 is restricted to Tant' Sannie's upsitting, and Gregory Rose's courtship of Em and attempted courtship of Lyndall, though Gregory's self-dramatising and Tant Sannie's visit near the end of the novel maintain something of the comic mood.

It is part of the diversification of interest and narrative method in Part 2 that there should be several long internal narratives, each by a different narrator (apart from "Times and Seasons" and "Dreams," which are both by the first narrative voice). Each is also different in terms of length, mood, level of abstraction and didactic intention. The variety of narrative method and speaker indicates a diversification of narrative 'embedding' rather than the type of 'embedding' which occurs in "Diamond Fields", where it is the actant of one narrative who becomes the narrator of the next (the Quaker Oats Box effect). Here the diversification is in keeping with the diversification of plot (we follow Waldo, Em and Lyndall's fates in turn, though they are also intertwined in certain ways), and of action (different 'strangers' come and go, each having a special relation to one

of the inhabitants of the farm: Waldo's stranger to Waldo, Gregory Rose, the 'new man', to Em, Lyndall's stranger to Lyndall and the 'strange horseman, Piet Vander Walt, to Tant' Sannie).

Each relationship between stranger and farm inhabitant is different and played in a different key: Waldo's encounter is fleeting and characterised by a cultivated European's formal allegory; Gregory Rose and Em's courtship is described in terms of a popular romantic novel; Lyndall and her stranger meet as modern people caught in a subtle sexual conflict, and in shifting social mores; Tant Sannie and Piet hold their upsitting in traditional style, and are described in terms of comic realism, with overtones of farce.

"Times and Seasons", the first internal narrative and raised abstract section of the novel, is also its structural hinge: the book is divided into 13 chapters on either side of it. It is in the form of a meditative, generalising 'dream' inside Waldo's head, though narrated by a first person plural form of the first narrative voice, and is in the historic present tense. In Chapter 2 we meet Waldo's stranger, announced shortly after Em has mentioned the new man who has hired half the farm, and just as abruptly.¹⁸ This chapter contains the Hunter allegory. Chapter 3 contains the brief internal narrative of Gregory's letter to his sister. Chapter 4 contains the fairly long internal speech by Lyndall to Waldo on woman's situation, disadvantages, and rights. Chapter 5 juxtaposes the upsitting, Boer realism, with Gregory's long letter to his sister, his romantic self-regard being satirically presented; his letter conveys to us (though not to him) that he is infatuated with Lyndall. Chapter 7, "A Boer-Wedding", the only scene set away from the farm or not tied to it by narrative situation, is described in a typifying, iterative narrative (pp. 197-199) which stresses the customary procedures of the ritual. The only long internal 'story' is that of Lyndall describing her dream of being an actress and lecturing Waldo on his future; the movements of the younger people convey growing disharmony and tension in their partnerships: Greg seeks out Lyndall and is jealous of Waldo; Em begins to understand Gregory's desertion; Lyndall makes a bitter

speech about babies, hinting at her own situation. Chapter 7 is brief: Em gives Gregory his freedom, and Waldo leaves the farm; the title "Waldo goes out to taste life, and Em stays at home and tastes it" indicates that their experiences might be equally disappointing, though one stays and one goes. Chapter 8, "The Kopje", shows a scene of human disharmony against the same backdrop which saw Waldo's childish spiritual conflict; here we see that Lyndall despises Gregory but will marry him on certain terms, her own. The chapter contains mini-sermons by Lyndall, but they are delivered in a mocking tone to this listener, who is not Waldo. Chapter 9, "Lyndall's Stranger" extends the theme of interpersonal disharmony and distress in the conversation between Lyndall and her lover, and follows it with a brief internal narrative in the form of her prayer to the dead Otto at his grave: the prayer looks back to Waldo's prayers and pleas and forward to the scenes at her child's grave. The dialogue which precedes her prayer (for the ability to love someone or something) indicates the conflict of her needs: to be in control and to lose control, to love someone and to stay alone and strong. Chapter 10, marking a time shift and a structural pause in the breaking of the drought of six months, shows Gregory leaving the farm to look for Lyndall. Em is thus briefly the only one of the four young people left on the farm, and her growing attunement to it and to herself is made clear in her songs. Chapters 11 and 12 are both long internal narratives, the first in the form of Waldo's letter to Lyndall, giving us the history of his time away from the farm, and thus an analepsis covering the past year and a half; it is framed by the suggestion to the reader at the opening of the chapter that Lyndall is dead, and the actual announcement of her death by Em at the end. Em is the listener. In Chapter 12 Greg returns and tells both Em and Waldo of his time away from the farm (a narrative analepsis of more than seven months), his search for Lyndall, his nursing of her in disguise, and her death. This narrative is in indirect speech and the third person, though focalised through Gregory. Chapter 13, "Dreams", is the third 'dream'/abstract narrative; it describes

Waldo's final spiritual crisis, the need to accept death without returning to the orthodox creed he has rejected. The final chapter is narrated by the first narrative voice again, and returns to the daily round of farm life and reconciliation with himself and his life but also his death.

The various forms of internal narrative can be categorised as (i) informative character 'histories' (narrative analepses which are genuine versions of the false 'history' offered by Blenkins in Part 1), though not necessarily narrated by the actant: Waldo's letter tells his own story; Gregory's narration tells Lyndall's; (ii) letters, a form which is intertwined with (i) but also occurs at many other points in the narrative; (iii) books, both as allusions, objects and fictional styles; (iv) songs, as dance tunes, worksongs, and popular songs; (v) dreams/allegories, of which the Hunter allegory is only the most formal and extended. Some of these narrative forms have already been used in a casual way in Part 1.

(i) Informative character histories.

These occur in Chapters 11 and 12, one after the other; they are absorbing and informative, filling in for both the listeners at the farm and the reader the events which have occurred away from the farm, involving both Waldo and Lyndall. Waldo's story is brought up to date, and serves as an explanation of his emptyhanded arrival, like that of Blenkins, with hardly any possessions and having lost his horse (a genuine version of Blenkins's lie). Lyndall's story is both brought up to date and ended. Her story is intertwined with Gregory's : his narration concerns both his doings while away (about seven months) and the things that have been happening to Lyndall, predating Gregory's departure and his discovery of her. The sequence of two narratives shows us a gradual gathering of the 'survivors' at the farm: Em, then Waldo, then Gregory, who listen to stories in the front room of the farmhouse, which culminate in the announcement of Lyndall's death. The sequence opens with the breaking of the drought (in Chapter 10) and the downpour which floods the farm for the first time, an image of release and broken tension heralding the verbal release of the two long stories ("Perhaps it was a relief to him to speak", p. 247) and suggesting that the movement

towards Lyndall's death, hinted at in the dirge at the opening of Chapter 11 (p. 233) is also a kind of release or fruition.

So that though both Waldo and Lyndall's stories are exempla of the motto to Part 2 (a striving ending in nothing) and both exemplify a downward movement of disillusionment and defeat, the dismal end of the fine hopes and plans which have been discussed between them at earlier points in the narrative, they are framed by the quiet listeners back at the farm, the constancy of the farm setting, and the tranquillity of Em.

Waldo's narrative is a stronger version of Undine's trip with the Snappercaps family towards the Diamond Fields. It confronts the same problems of labour and exploitation, lack of opportunity for an unskilled worker, brutal employers and brutalising company, but without the added complication of sexual harassment because the sex of the worker has been transposed (compare Mrs. Snappercaps' insults to and jealousy of Undine). Waldo's account of his experience as a clerk, transport-driver, and packer underlines the soul-destroying effects of mechanical labour. His story of the tortured dying ox is a transposition of his own story:

From the black ox's nostrils foam and blood were streaming on to the ground. It turned its head in its anguish and looked at me with its great staring eyes. It was praying for help in its agony and weakness, and they took their whips again. The creature bellowed out aloud. If there is a God, it was calling to its Maker for help.

(pp. 240-241)

Waldo's intervention between sadistic master and dying animal is an inversion of a folktale motif: the boy helps the ox.¹⁹ The action is one of identification and sympathy for the labouring masses, of which the black ox is a representative.²⁰

Waldo's narrative diverges into different 'spaces', like the narratives of "Diamond Fields". One such place is the negative and suffering image of a tortured animal, but there are three 'good' places towards which his narrative also moves, in a sequence

after the death of the ox. The first place is the sea. The real sea is not as beautiful as the ideal one, but he learns to love it; its restlessness and ceaseless questioning link with it with humanity, with Waldo's own nature. The second place is the Botanic Gardens in Grahamstown; there the music is liberating and delightful: "It takes you up and carries you away...You have got out into a large, free, open, place" (p. 242). But the escape is followed by the humiliating encounter with Waldo's stranger, now truly a stranger in an elevated social sphere which makes Waldo invisible. The third 'place', and the finest, the one which truly offers a merging of the self with something other than the self, is the little kloof Waldo goes down into on his "delightful" journey home. This passage carries the same vibration of a mysterious union with a yet separate natural landscape which was found in Undine's experience in the riverbed:

The evening before last, when it was just sunset, I was a little footsore and thirsty, and went out of the road to look for water. I went down into a deep little "kloof". Some trees ran along the bottom, and I thought I should find water there. The sun had quite set when I got to the bottom of it. It was very still—not a leaf was stirring anywhere. In the bed of the mountain torrent I thought I might find water. I came to the bank, and leaped down into the dry bed. The floor on which I stood was of fine white sand, and the banks rose on every side like the walls of a room. Above, there was a precipice of rocks, and a tiny stream of water oozed from them and fell slowly on to the flat stone below. Each drop you could hear fall like a little silver bell. There was one among the trees on the bank that stood out against the white sky. All the other trees were silent; but this one shook and trembled against the sky. Everything else was still; but those leaves were quivering, quivering. I stood on the sand; I could not go away. When it was quite dark, and the stars had come, I crept out. (p. 244)

The intensity of this experience, and the delight of Waldo's homecoming to the farm, are ironically commented on, but not annihilated by the announcement of Lyndall's death which follows.

Gregory's narrative, though not a letter addressed to Lyndall, nevertheless focusses on her and on her death, and is expressive of Gregory's love and service to her. Both long retrospective narratives thus have Lyndall as a centre of interest. Gregory's narrative is of a quest (parallel to the hunter's quest for truth and Waldo's quest for worthwhile work in the outside world), in this case a quest which is also a search for a missing person, a quest closer to a detective story plot than a sublime allegory or a realistic search for employment. Gregory has to trace clues, interrogate people, search hotels. Like the other quests in the novel, his search is difficult, subject to mockery and hardship, and the object, when found, is a replacement of the ideal by the real, a curtailment or disappointment of expectations. Just as Waldo writes a letter to a woman who is beyond hearing, Gregory finds a woman who is beyond saving, though he can and does nurse her. When Gregory does find Lyndall, his narrative is briefly interrupted by the landlady's story of events prior to Gregory's arrival: Lyndall's arrival alone, the death of her baby and her own illness after sitting out in the rain at the baby's grave. Gregory's narrative moves towards its own place of liberation; like Waldo, he jumps down into a gully, but instead of the freedom of the natural landscape, he takes the freedom of a new sexual identity:

Gregory sprang down into its red bed. It was a safe place, and quiet. When he had looked about him he sat down under the shade of an overhanging bank and fanned himself with his hat, for the afternoon was hot, and he had walked fast. At his feet the dusty ants ran about, and the high red bank before him was covered by a network of roots and fibres washed bare by the rains.

(p. 251)

In this African gully Gregory, like Waldo, discovers the bedrock of his own identity.

The narrative of Lyndall's decline and death moves toward three points of realisation or confession; the first is contained in her letter to her 'stranger', in which she confesses that she is selfish and erring, and that she has sought something nobler and stronger than herself, "before which I can kneel down" (p. 260). The second is her moment of vision, in the form of a deathbed 'message' in which she declares that "happiness is a great love and much serving" and that the lessons learnt by a soul striving after good is "that holiness is an infinite compassion for others; that greatness is to take the common things of life and walk truly among them" (p. 261). This is presented as a vision of what a soul might learn if it endured, and is placed by a rhetorical question: "Was that all she saw in the corner?" and by Gregory's comment that her mind has been wandering. The third point is the death itself, again incorporated into a little journey, the trip in the waggon toward the 'blue mountain; like the ideal vision of the Hunter allegory. But when they reach it the vision becomes an African reality:

Only at evening they reached it; not blue now, but low and brown, covered with long waving grasses and rough stones, They drew the waggon up close to its foot for the night. It was a sheltered warm spot. (p. 264)

The distant landscape has crystallised into the actual landscape of a kopje, rather like that on the farm. In its warm shelter Lyndall dies. The biblical rhythms and allusions stress her sacrificial role:

Like Hagar, when she laid her treasure down in the wilderness, he sat afar off:-

'For Hagar said, Let me not see the death of the child'.

(p. 263)

A biblical text, earlier used in mockery and ridicule, is here used to deepen the feeling of the scene, and links Lyndall with other sacrificed children in the Bible: she is a child martyr. But the scene also stresses her strength and her egotism, as she gazes for the last time into the looking-glass. The narrative voice, which takes over from Gregory's focalisation more strongly at the end of the chapter, withdraws from judgment by posing rhetorical questions:

Had she found what she sought for—something to worship?
Had she ceased from being? Who shall tell us? There is
a veil of terrible mist over the face of the Hereafter.

(p. 265)

(ii) Letters

Letters occur within the main narrative and sometimes within a secondary narrative, as above, when the exchange of letters between Lyndall and her stranger occurs within Gregory's narration. They are of different lengths and are used for different purposes. Otto's letter to the children (p. 85) is a touching farewell which underlines the pathos of his death, cut off even from the children who are his only supporters at the farm. Its style, biblical, simple, and naive, is in keeping with his speeches and behaviour. Gregory's letter to his sister is satirised as the product of a milksop who lives inside a popular romance, though it also informs us of his self-pity, his scorn of Waldo and his fantasy version of Em. Its style, like Blenkins's, is a parody, but of poor romantic poetry rather than rhetorical bluster:

Without her, life would be a howling wilderness, a long
tribulation. She is my affinity; the one love of my
youth, of my manhood; my sunshine, my God-given blossom.

(p. 165)

Gregory's much longer letter in Part 2, Chapter 5, is a thorough piece of psychological self-revelation and of plot information (pp. 192-4).

The exchange of letters between Lyndall's stranger and herself is there to clarify the conflict between them, to show that Lyndall herself has sent him away from her, and to reveal the object of her love quest: for something like a saviour, despite her talk of equality.

Each letter is in keeping with its sender, written in his or her own dialect and echoing their voices as we hear them in the novel. They range from the informative to the farcical or pathetic.

They are addressed to friends, relatives, lovers, the absent and even the dead (like Waldo's, see above). They are partly self-communicating and release, partly communicative. They are self-revealing in conscious and unconscious ways. They are subordinated to plot, character and thematic functions.

(iii) Books

Books have an important presence in the novel, as allusions, gifts, inheritance, and missiles; they are intertwined with different models of the treatment of books, ranging from hungry consumption to censorship and book-burning. Their treatment is an index to the relative functions of experience and book-learning in the colony, revealing the ways in which books can be over-rated or rejected in a colony where reading and culture do not have a natural place in society. The characters read for different reasons, some for pleasure, some for information, some for enrichment. There is a constant dialectic between 'life' experience and reading experience: they constantly modify each other.

The first major book is the Bible, which lies on the deal table in old Otto's room and from which he reads before they go to bed. Biblical texts and quotations are used overwhelmingly in the early parts of the novel, either in naive faith by Otto, or hypocritical manipulation by Blenkins. Between them Waldo wrestles with the Bible and its meaning; in his Sunday service insects crawl over its pages, whose leaves "had once dropped blood for him" (p. 60). His relationship to the Bible changes; the presence of the insect indicates the way in which his old biblical learning will have to be integrated with the natural world he inhabits. The Bible is used by Blenkins in an exploitative and punitive way; Tant' Sannie uses it superstitiously as the only book to be read and trusted.

The childrens' other books are their schoolbooks: the 'brown history' which gave them some facts about Napoleon, and the "Physical Geography" (p. 41) which told Waldo about the phases of

the earth's development. Both books are informative but inadequate to their needs: the children exercise their imaginations to grasp historical and geographical facts more fully. On the other hand, scientific explanation can banish a more primitive superstitious response: Waldo once believed the kopje was a giant's grave; now he knows the water must have caused it. The dangers (and safeguards) inherent in ignorant superstitious attitudes are evident in Tant' Sannie's attitude of unquestioning conservatism.

Blenkins says he wrote a travel book (though the publisher cheated him), containing fabulous adventures, of which his bear story is one example. Schreiner contains in her narrative an instance of the kind of book about a 'foreign' country that she was not wanting to write. Similarly, old Otto before he dies is reading a "little story-book" (p. 86) obviously of a popular melodramatic nature, perhaps a Gothic romance:

He could not go away without knowing whether that wicked Earl relented, and whether the Baron married Emilina.

(pp. 86-87)

Old Otto is an instance of the naive and sympathetic reader, to whom life and literature are not distinct ("Its events were as real and important to himself as the matters of his own life") and who reads for the plot outcome. Such an attitude to reading is not rejected, but exists as a simpler component in a narrative which demands other responses as well, intellectual and emotional. We also wait to see whether Lyndall and Waldo will succeed, whether Waldo will ever marry Lyndall, whether Gregory will return to Em. The irony, though very gently deployed, focuses on old Otto's ability to detect the villain in his story book while being duped out of his position at the farm by the 'real' villain, Blenkins. His ability to be absorbed in his book is also a real gift; it makes him forget his sorrow. Otto's reading is naive and escapist, but it is also genuine, and is related to his real-life concern for people. Reading and living experience are a continuum for him.

The inheritance of books in the loft (left by Em's English father)

indicates the value of an intellectual heritage to one isolated among literal-minded Christians; the books, non-fictional analytical studies represented by the name of Mill and his Political Economy, are valuable more for the evidence they provide of intellectual questioning than for their actual ideas:

There were men to whom not only kopjes and stones were calling out imperatively, 'What are we, and how came we here? Understand us, and know us'; but to whom even the old, old relations between man and man, and the customs of the age called, and could not be made still and forgotten. (p. 101)

The books demonstrate Waldo's intellectual starvation, and provide evidence that he is "not alone"; others have thought his thoughts. The treatment the books receive at the hands of Blenkins and Sannie is also part of the colonial experience, though it is suspicious, ignorant and destructive. Blenkins mistrusts what he does not understand, quite apart from his malicious instinct for anything that might give Waldo pleasure or release from his tyranny. The 'rule' offered by the narrative voice is the principle of colonial censorship, still active and significant in cutting off South Africa from intellectual currents abroad:

Whenever you come into contact with any book, person, or opinion of which you absolutely comprehend nothing, declare that book, person, or opinion to be immoral....Carefully abstain from studying it. Do all that in you lies to annihilate that book, person, or opinion. (p. 104)

This position of crude censorship is related to a Christian position in Tant' Sannie's case,²² she will read nothing except her Bible and hymn-book; everything else is associated with the Devil. The book is accordingly flung at Waldo's head (after he has been tipped out into the mud), cursed, and finally burnt. They, like Otto, confuse literature and life: the book is a heretic which has to be burnt, but their confusion is more malign and destructive. (Schreiner told Pearson that her Bible was 'alive', too).

Waldo's attempt to get his hands on the other books is deflected, not by human agency this time, but by the beauty of the night and the stars as he clammers over the roof. They seem to comment on his anger and effort. This scene, like the one in which Undine throws her Bible away and finds comfort in the beauty outside her window, allows a response to nature, to the farm landscape, and to a sense of the frailty and puniness of human dramas to comment on the kind of wisdom available from books. Different reactions to books are again summarised in "Times and Seasons", which puts the reactions and events of the realistic narrative in a clearer sequence of phases: the phase of poring over the Bible, that of throwing it away in fury (p. 232), the buying of Latin Grammars and Algebra to analyse the anatomy of things, and the coming to rest in the 'open book' of Nature, which reconstitutes the universe into a living, harmonious unity (pp. 142-143).

Another key text of Schreiner's own experience is worked into the narrative: Spencer's First Principles is not explicitly identified as the book Waldo's stranger gives to him, though perhaps suggested by his comment "it may give you a centre around which to hang your ideas, instead of letting them lie about in a confusion that makes the head ache" (p. 161). The book given to Schreiner by her stranger, Willie Bertram, was Spencer's First Principles, which is one of the two books noted on Waldo's shelf by his visitor the fellow-clerk (the other is Elementary Physiology). The clerk himself likes different reading matter, like the "Black-Eyed Creole":

"That is the style for me", he said; "there where the fellow takes the nigger-girl by the arm, and the other fellow cuts off! That's what I like". (p. 236)

This style of fiction, a popular thriller with crude attitudes to sexual competition and miscegenation, is another internal model of a kind of colonial novel Schreiner did not write. The clerk's crude style anticipates that of Peter Halket, as does his story of stealing "nigger-girls". Waldo's rustic purity and earnestness are shocked by the encounter, by both the man's style and his substance.

Those in the outside world who have access to books do not necessarily use them well: Waldo's stranger, too, has a bright French novel in his saddle-bag, next to the brown volume he gives Waldo. He is equally careless about both. Such scenes make the point that those to whom the world of culture and book-knowledge are open are not necessarily those by whom they are most valued. The hunger exists in one world, the culture to appease it in another, one which easily turns decadent and bored.

Gregory's reading is childish: he remembers scraps of schoolboy poetry at inappropriate moments (p. 215). Lyndall educated herself with books when at her finishing-school (p. 174) but the events of her life and her illness reveal the uselessness of book-knowledge when the life itself is a disaster (p. 257). In keeping with her desire to be an actress, she is reading a play when sitting on the kopje, and trying to read Shakespeare during her illness. Her reaction to the books she tries to read when she is ill is the same as Tant Sannie's to Mill and Waldo's to the Bible: she orders them thrown out of the window:

It is so utterly foolish. I thought it was a valuable book; but the words are merely strung together, they make no sense. (p. 257)

Books need to feed into life in a reciprocal and valuable way, but this is one of the many moments in the narrative where such reciprocity is made impossible by one or another internal or external factor.

(iv) Songs

Songs make up a minor but significant and locally specific thread of the narrative. They are most often associated with Em, herself likened to "the accompaniment of a song" by Lyndall (p. 217).²³ Like Em, they form a part of the background to the more frenetic movements of the other characters, and towards the close of the novel we often hear of Em and the song "The Blue water", a restful

childish song (p. 232) together. This is a tranquil version of Waldo's glimpse of the real sea. Em is the first character in the novel to mention and quote from a song, the "reel Hottentot Hans plays on the violin": "Bonaparte, Bonaparte, my wife is sick" (p. 40). Her association shows that she is rooted in the farm and in popular culture in a way Lyndall is not: Lyndall immediately thinks of the Bonaparte of European history. Hymns are part of the novel, generally used satirically in connection with Blenkins (p. 65 , p.76); though, like a Shakespearian villain, he makes up his own secret rhymes on the progress of his villainy (p. 92). Old Otto's song, appropriate to his allegiance to a heavenly city, is "Ach Jerusalem du schöne" (p. 80). "Wesley's hymn" is misquoted in "Times and Seasons"²⁴ to express a sense of alienation from the Christian heaven. Songs become dance accompaniments at Tant' Sannie's wedding ("here and there a musical man sings vigorously as he drags his partner through the Blue Water or John Speriwig", p. 198). Gregory, pleased that Em has broken their engagement, and to express the sense of freedom which he cannot express to her, "as he rode whistled John Speriwig, and the Thorn Kloof Schottische", the names blending local names and European elements.

The song "Blue Water" occurs more often after the breaking of the drought in Chapter 10, to emphasise Em's increasing contentment at the farm, and to herald Lyndall's death:

Where the reeds shake by the river,
Where the moonlight's sheen is shed,
On the face of the sleeping water,
Two leaves of a white flower float dead.
Dead, Dead, Dead. (p. 233)

In the final chapter, the song recurs, again emphasising its role as a work accompaniment, when Em sings it to herself as she washes the butter. The song is part of the final chapter's return to the farm's everyday activities, its normal life. Lyndall, significantly, never sings; her strenuous speeches of protest about a woman's lot mark her separation from the life of the farm community, just

as Em's singing suggests that she is always fairly close to it, despite personal disappointments. The songs keep the narrative specific and local, and at the same time differentiate the characters' relationships with the farm and popular culture.

(v) Dreams and allegories

Dreams and allegories are major constituents of the narrative in African Farm, because from its opening pages it is concerned with the intertwining of 'reality' and 'dream', fact and fantasy, the daytime and night-time views of the farm. Some of the most vivid moments in the narrative are moments of visionary apprehension, and yet the farm never loses its daily, continuing reality. The novel offers us a dialectic between dream life and real life, and its narrative is made up of a realistic level, offering us the related, developing biographies of the three children on the farm, as well as a level of 'dream', allegory, metaphysical speculation. It is this interweaving of dream life and real life, commenting on the realities of the farm and at the same time showing us the attempts the imagination makes to transform them, which makes a final definition of the mode of the novel difficult. If it is mainly a didactic fiction, then it is one which often modulates into fantasy, wish, fulfilment and escapism. If it is a 'romance', then it is one which contains sociological observation and some crude naturalism. It contains an allegory but is itself more complex than the allegory. It contains melodrama and pathos but is not reducible to sensationalist Victorian fiction.

The opening chapter establishes the farm as an underlying 'reality' which is capable of taking different forms in the night and the day; capable of ugliness and harshness as well as beauty when transformed by the moonlight. The opening description shows us "The full African moon (pouring) down its light from the blue sky into the wide, lonely plain". There is natural benevolence and beauty, but little human companionship: in the "wide and lonely plain" there is a lot of space to be lonely in. Though it is night, the "blue sky" is conventionally a daytime element. Though the

plants are "stunted" and the hills are "low", the milk-bushes reach out their "long finger-like leaves", an image picked up in the supplicating gesture of the clump of prickly pears lifting "their thorny arms" which reflect the moonlight "as from mirrors" on "their broad fleshy leaves". The description is both inhuman and human (we soon see Waldo supplicating the heavens just as the plants do); there is reciprocity of a kind between earth and sky; the plants reflect the light of the heavens (one of the early mirror images in the novel), but there is also a sense of harshness, thorns and sand, plants adapted to survival in a desolate environment. There is an expressive poetic as well as a mimetic one: the plants merely reflect light, but the full African moon is an image of creative fullness.

At the opening of the second view of the farm, the daytime view, we see reality unleavened by imagination: a weary flat of loose red sand where the sunlight is so fierce that "the eye ached and blenched". But even here there is a natural aspiration: "Here and there a milk-bush lifted its pale-coloured rods". In the daytime human aspirations are crushed down toward the earth, as the characters are at so many moments in the novel, like the sunflowers who "drop their brazen faces to the sand". This opening split view of the farm suggests the polarised terms which have to be reconciled in some way: imagination and reality, aspiration and daily circumstance, the subjective and objective realms. The progression of the narrative from the opening scenes to the closing one is from a separate polarised view to one in which these polarities are temporarily (only on "one princely day") reconciled.

Throughout the narrative, there are shorter and longer 'dreams': daydreams, night-time dreams, prophetic dreams, dreams which intensify suffering or provide an escape from it, visions of damnation or those which are "waking dreams bringing heaven near" (p. 50). Tant' Sannie's first dream (p. 30) is as gross and material as her sheeps' trotters, but it is also used for narrative information; in a form of occupatio, what she did not dream about informs us of her two dead husbands; it also tells us that in the day devils and ghosts haunt her superstitious mind, while at night she dreams

of daytime food. In her case the literal and the visionary are comically inverted. Her dream and Waldo's vision are juxtaposed in an antithesis of the too comic and the too earnest (extreme moods which will also have to be blended as the story progresses; when we are young we suffer from "extreme gravity" : "It is not till twenty that we learn to be in deadly earnest and to laugh", p. 159). Tant' Sannie's dream is too gross; Waldo lives too entirely in the spiritual world; the structural juxtaposition and the tone warn us that we should not identify fully with either. Waldo's vision might be nobler than Sannie's dream, but still "He grovelled on the floor" (p. 31). Similarly, in the sacrifice scene, there are elements of humour as well as pathos, the melting chop followed by the children's game of hide and seek, a playful version of the game Waldo has been playing with God, who 'hides' himself more successfully than Waldo does on the kopje.

Dreams and visions are thus at once established as significant internal narratives inside the main narrative, stressing that the novel is concerned with changing ways of perceiving the relationship between man and the infinite, between physical and metaphysical realms. Matters of faith, superstition and belief are central to the novel, which seeks to establish a healthier relationship between man and nature, man and the supernatural, and man and time, than has been offered to Waldo in the name of Christian dogma. The opening comparison of Tant' Sannie's fleshly dream and Waldo's waking vision begins a series of structural juxtapositions which question rigid traditional views of man's relationship to 'heaven': the very opening sentence suggests that the "full African moon" has a natural power very different from Waldo's tortured perceptions of the Christian afterlife. Although Waldo and Sannie's dreams are different, their juxtaposition enables us to see that both have elements of crude superstition: Waldo's vision of predetermined damnation and doom is not unlike Sannie's daytime expectations of retribution for wrongdoing, the only check on her natural malice.

Otto's dreams are radiant visions, the benevolent side of Waldo's tortured apprehensions. His dream of Blenkins as Christ is mistaken, but it makes his nights radiant. While Waldo's night-time visions are loosening his grip on orthodox belief, Otto's waking dreams bring "heaven near". These direct 'visions' of God's realm are comically parodied in the two scenes where Blenkins is plagued by the ostrich: in the first he thinks he is being bodily dragged away to the devil (like Waldo's sinners) and in the second he thinks he is experiencing divine retribution when the ostrich pecks him on the head for stealing Otto's things. These scenes are skilful replays of Waldo's earnest view of divine retribution.

Em's dream of Lyndall and a dead baby (p. 219) is a piece of plot information, one of the hints that she is pregnant ("There are some wiser in their sleeping than in their waking", p.219), and is also prophetic of the child's death. The dream shows how unconscious motives can directly influence real action: the dream triggers Em's old childhood love for Lyndall, overcoming the jealousy caused by Gregory's switching of attention. Dreams are suggested as an access to generous emotions which affect daylight behaviour, and as access to a realm beyond time (their prophetic element) which is different from the Christian heaven.

Less eerie, and more comical, is Tant Sannie's dream of her suitor, Piet Var ler Walt, a dream supposedly sent by "the dear Lord" but in fact allied to more natural machinations and expressive of Tant Sannie's real relationship with her husbands: "I dreamed of a great beast like a sheep, with red eyes, and I killed it" (p. 188).²⁵ She then interprets her own dream in allegorical fashion, in a lowlife parody of other more civilised interpreters of allegory in the novel: "Wasn't the white wool his hair, and the red eyes his weak eyes, and my killing him meant marriage?" Apart from the unflattering but accurate representation of Piet as a sheep, and Tant Sannie's dominant and aggressive intentions, the dream itself is a comic version of Schreiner's own dreams in relation to Karl Pearson and Cecil Rhodes²⁶ and is similar to the Wife of Bath's sexual manipulation of dreams in courtship. There is

another comic use of dream manipulation in this chapter, in this case of the living by the dying, in the wonderful apparition of Piet's dead wife's child, used by her to direct Piet's attention towards Tant' Sannie and away from a pretty rival. The motives behind these 'dreams', some of which are fabrications and folklore, are petty and manipulative. Dreams, religion, and sexual manoeuvres exist in a parodic inversion of Waldo's later tussling with dreams, religious faith, and the loss of Lyndall (Chapter 13).

Gregory Rose's 'dreams' are daytime fantasies expressed in terms of popular fiction. He sees himself first as the brave pioneer in Africa at 'Kopje Alone,' as the fantasised descendant of a noble lineage, as the romantic courtier of a local beauty, and finally in a fantasy of femaleness which expresses a real part of his nature, but is acted out in the stereotype of the lover as nurse at the bedside of the beloved. His final fantasy involves real service of another, and not mere self-dramatisation. The suggestion is that his femaleness is the best part of himself.²⁷ As a conventional male he exhibited the worst features of the conventional social conditioning of men toward possessiveness, an innate sense of superiority based on sex, and an arrogant bullying.

The three chief dream/allegory sections of the narrative are the "Times and Seasons" chapter, the Hunter allegory which immediately follows it, and the penultimate chapter of the novel, "Dreams," which is a bridging, summarising chapter carrying Waldo over from the struggle and suffering caused by Lyndall's death to the final scene of the novel. Each of the three has a different structural function, and each straddles the particular lives of the characters, and the abstract significance which those lives subtend, in a different way. "Times and Seasons" answers to Schreiner's definition of a 'buffer' in a fictional structure which is used to raise the tone, in this case from the predominant farce and melodrama of Part 1 to the serious struggle and more diffuse conflicts of Part 2. It is a kind of 'dream' or thought bubble inside Waldo's head ("He lay on his stomach on the [red] sand"; p. 127 and p. 141 mark the beginning and the termination of the dream). In the dream, autobiographical detail, Waldo's memories, details of the farm landscape

and generalisations about the phases of life are skilfully dissolved and blended. The farm detail becomes more insistent towards the end of the narrative as the general description narrows its focus a little, until the reader is ready for the realistic narrative to be picked up again. The Hunter allegory repeats the soul's search for truth in a different mood and key: it is a more deliberate narrative, and a formal allegory with the two distinct levels of allegory, and a series of abstractions capitalised and concretised. It exists in a different narrative context, a further "Quaker Oats box" into the narrative scheme, as it is told by an actant from the first narrative, whereas the "Times and Seasons" section is told by the first narrative voice but focalised through Waldo. The Hunter allegory is told by a refined aesthete who is implicitly contrasted with Waldo's authentic earnestness; the narration expresses a gap between teller and listener, whereas "Times and Seasons" closes the gap between narrator, Waldo and reader, in its use of the first person plural: "our experience". "Times and Seasons" straddles the world of the narrative, the actants in the narrative, and the world of the impersonal narrative voice, mediating between actants and audience, and the world of the audience, who are related to the phases of life, though not necessarily to its individual manifestations, which relate to Waldo and the farm. The "poor nodding head" is both Waldo's and any child's; we all know "evil men walking sleek and fat" though the "red sand flying about them" is relevant to specific evil men found on an African farm. The details are general and inclusive as well as specific and limiting; time is handled in the same way: times are specific, seasons are recurrent and general.

The Hunter allegory, though Schreiner saw it as the 'core' of her text, is only one more narrative approach to the problem of the quest for truth, and it is cast in the form of the distinct allegories Schreiner would be writing more frequently in the late 1880s when she was travelling in Europe. It is fitting that it should be told by the slightly decadent cultured European stranger; as a formal constituent it is a European literary component which makes up one element in a larger indigenous narrative. It also has

certain links with older myths and folklore in the East as well as in Africa, and thus, like "Times and Seasons", it universalises the base of the narrative without losing the specificity of its context. The ironical relationship between teller, tale, listener and setting is a parody of the desirable relationship between artist and audience: in the case of the Hunter allegory a cynical stranger interprets a primitive carving in an eloquent European literary vocabulary, in a setting of parched Karoo and red sand, to a boy who will never make it into the only circles which might appreciate the meaning of his work. This inverts the relationship between African Farm and a foreign audience: the novel as a whole will have to translate colonial realities to an audience which inhabits Piccadilly and hansom cabs.

By having these two major abstract narratives at the centre of her novel Schreiner consistently carries through the principle of structural divergence into opposed directions, just as she does with the outcome of the realistic plot narrative, issuing in two opposed death scenes, though in that case the harsher death scene is followed by the mellower one. In the middle of the narrative the movement towards a healing and reconciliation of opposed impulses in "Times and Seasons" is followed by the harsh, ill-rewarded effort of the Hunter allegory. At the end of "Times and Seasons" there is a new perception of harmony, of a "deep union" between living creatures, thorn-trees, microcosm and macrocosm. Chaos eventually becomes a "living thing, a One" (p. 139); all is related, analogical, meaningful and part of a whole. The natural universe reconstitutes itself around Waldo and "us" in "Times and Seasons". This vision is followed by its antithesis, the self-sacrificing labour of the truth-seeker who has to give up all joy and work alone for the sake of the future generations, but who receives only a tiny fragment of the truth he desired. Thus a sequence of two answers is offered in the two major abstract sections of the novel; the first moves toward a natural healing and harmony; the second toward an ever more difficult and strained sacrifice of self. One answer does not cancel the other; it is

significant that the sequence of two death-scenes at the end of the novel inverts the movement from consolation to harshness into one from a martyred death to a peaceful one. By such narrative divergence the issues of suffering and consolation, martyrdom and peace, are balanced against each other.

Chapter 3 pulls together all the dream suggestions and significances earlier in the novel. "Tell me what a man dreams, and I will tell you what he loves. That also has its truth" (p. 272).²⁸ This statement suggests that 'truth' is not a hidden absolute to be found at the top of the mountain, but is always partial and subjective. The narrative voice highlights the equivalent, contributory nature of separate partial 'truths'. It also tells us that "the busy waking life is followed and reflected by the life of dreams—waking dreams, sleeping dreams. Weird, misty, and distorted as the inverted image of a mirage, or a figure seen through a mountain mist, they are still the reflections of a reality" (p. 266, my underlining). Here the flat surface of a reflecting mirror is replaced by the expressive, distorting image of the dream, or the imagination, which reflects reality by distorting it, as literature does.

In this chapter Waldo has a wish-fulfilment dream of being with Lyndall: the dream heightens the pain of losing her. This 'real' night-time dream is followed by his search for another 'dream' to comfort him against mortality, the death of which his sleep was the image. And he asks, in phrasing which suggest that life itself is a dream: "Ah, is there no truth of which this dream is shadow?" (p. 277) Waldo's nature as dreamer allows him space to "glide between the bars into the great unknown beyond" (p. 271). His dreams are explicitly compared with his father's "choirs of angels" and found to be peculiar to a new generation. Peace comes "in that deep world of contemplation" itself (p. 271). The gift of 'dream' or imagination is what liberates Waldo partially from suffocating fact. But the final phrase modifies the status of his perception: "Without dreams and phantoms man cannot exist". And the 'dream-life' answer to Waldo's problem is followed by a 'real-life' scene (again the sequence is significant) which reconciles the same elements in a specific moment in time (one sunny day) and place. The final chapter of the novel returns us to the

opening chapter, but the return also underlines the difference: this is not the farm split between night and day, with people at odds with each other and their surroundings, and Waldo in deep metaphysical conflict. Here "The long morning had melted slowly into a rich afternoon. Rains had covered the karroo with a heavy coat of green that hid the red earth everywhere. In the very chinks of the stone walls dark green leaves hung out, and beauty and growth had crept even into the beds of the sandy furrows and lined them with weeds. On the broken sod-walls of the old pigsty chick-weeds flourished, and ice-plants lifted their transparent leaves" (p. 273). This mantle of fertility and greenery covers the bare contours of the farm landscape for the first time, and provides the setting for Waldo's death. He is shown at work; around him are images of people in harmony with their environment: Doss and the "small naked nigger" roll around in the sawdust; the mother of the little boy is at work, "murmuring to herself a sleepy chant such as her people love; it sounded like the humming of far-off bees" (p. 273).

Tant' Sannie's visit also reminds us of earlier days on the farm, and reintroduces a note of comedy in her "pudding-faced weak-eyed child", unlike the healthy little "animal" who is rolling in the sawdust. Even Tant' Sannie is at peace: "You can't love a man till you've had a baby by him" (p. 274) and she no longer finds it necessary to beat her husband. Blenkins, too, pops up in Tant' Sannie's outraged narrative, as a survivor, with a rich wife in tow. The crude survivors are contrasted with Em and Waldo, who have both realised that survival brings disillusionment and compromise: the point is made in Em's little analogy of the work-box full of coloured reels, which, when eventually obtained, is found to be empty. Nevertheless, Waldo's last moments are depicted as a gradual merging with the organic life of the farm, on a day of "balmy peacefulness", when he is so happy that he sits "gloating in the sunlight". In this state of peaceful contemplation, the "Divine compensation of Nature is made manifest" (p. 279), the narrative voice comments. Waldo's vision of the future is not, like Lyndall's, a moral imperative but a vision of an organic and beautiful unfolding of human life;"the world of men too opens

beautifully, leaf after leaf" (p. 280). His vision is of "The day when soul shall not thrust back soul that would come to it; when men shall not be driven to seek solitude, because of the crying out of their hearts for love and sympathy" (p. 280). He dies at a point of temporary harmony, between humans and the farm, animal life and children, at a meeting-point of time and eternity, liberated from the anxiety associated with the ticking clock of Calvinism. His final return to the specifics of the farm, and his ability to be at rest within the present, holding "a little dancing-shoe of his friend who was sleeping" (suggesting that he accepts Lyndall's death, and that she is reconciled to the farm through this surrogate presence) are evidence of a new peace and acceptance in him. In his final moments there is no fear or barrier between him and the basic life of the farm, represented by the chickens, his "Strange little brother spirits". The process of the narrative has replaced disharmony and discontinuities, the fear and distress caused by a superhuman world at odds with daily human life, with images of very basic continuance and harmony in which spirit and body seem temporarily reconciled, man with nature, Waldo with the farm. It is also a death scene, though, a ceasing to exist imaged as a rich kind of existence.

(v) Narrative interpretation

In Undine, the repetition of the female love martyr and young victim at different levels of the narrative structure indicates a simpler view of self and world than is found in African Farm. In "Diamond Fields", though the narrative method is more skilful and complex, the crippled girl features again, and is parallel to the beaten animal in the internal narrative. In African Farm the narrative is characterised by a multiplicity of protagonists, narratives, and narrative methods. There is often narrative divergence into opposite outcomes, which further complicates the pattern set up by a number of protagonists. Another feature of the narrative is sexual transposition, enabling the narrative to

comment in a subtle way on sexual identity and social roles. These techniques counteract what could be seen as the "dogmatic form" of the novel,²⁹ ie. that its pattern consistently demonstrates an a priori thesis: that life is a series of "abortions"³⁰, failures to achieve noble goals and aspirations. This pessimistic 'thesis' is modified by the narrative techniques of the novel, and by the complex internal commentary set up by the contrasted lives of the young protagonists.

Dreams and parables always need interpreting, and the controlling narrative 'dream' or 'parable' of African Farm (it has elements of both) is also open to interpretation. The narrative has various features which are guides to interpretation, repetition, divergence, transposition and silence (or occlusion).

An element of the narrative which is constantly repeated is that of defeat or disillusionment: the ideal being replaced by the real. This is stressed as a constant element in both parts of the narrative: whether the farm is subject to invasion and tyranny from the outside (Part 1) or whether the characters leave it in search of something better, they are frustrated and disappointed by events and people. The 'secret' of this narrative repetition is that if the farm/colony is oppressed by European invaders, then they cannot develop freely and fully, but if they leave the farm and go in search of the enlightenment and opportunities the outside/metropolitan world seems to offer, then they are liable to be checked by inadequate social systems (the 'education' Lyndall is offered) or by a lack of training for anything other than unskilled labour (Waldo). They also lose something that has been of value for them: their early childhood ties to each other and the farm landscape itself. The repetition of disillusionment in both halves of the narrative, despite differences of movement and the removal of gross oppression, suggests a double bind. If you stay, you cannot develop fully and might be subject to an alien cultural hegemony: to the English South African Lyndall Tant' Sannie's rule is alien and brutal; to all of the children as South Africans Blenkins is an imperial interloper and would-be capitalist:

'Yes', said Bonaparte, 'I had money, I had lands, I said to my wife, "There is Africa, a struggling country; they want capital; they want men of talent; they want men of ability to open up that land. Let us go". ' (p. 54)

On the other hand, if the children leave the farm, they lose something valuable, emotional ties and their original community. Neither community nor exile is enough; neither can fully satisfy the talented individual in the colony.

The bi-partite structure of the narrative also has the effect of laying bare what is essential by showing that when crude tyranny is removed, problems are not necessarily solved. Suffering, isolation and death still have to be contended with: the natural difficulties inherent in existence are suggestively revealed by showing first a crude oppression, then removing that oppression and apparently allowing an unchecked growth: the characters are 'free' to leave the farm and choose their mates, but their lives still involve disappointment and defeat. One meaning of the epigraph to the first section (that the whole man is found in the child) is that what the children have to endure as children they also have to endure as adults: suffering, loss, the crushing of their dearest hopes. Waldo's 'master' in the outside world is as cruel and exploitative as Blenkins at the farm; the 'prison' Lyndall and Em are shut inside literally by Blenkins is repeated in the 'prison' of adult sexual conflict and social constriction. This is the existential application of the 'convict' figure in "Diamond Fields". Em is eventually inside a marriage that has lost its true reason for existence, mutual love, and Lyndall, choosing to stay outside the 'prison' of marriage to a man with whom she feels no intellectual kinship, is nevertheless trapped by the 'prison' of childbirth, grief, and death. In Part 1 Waldo is physically flogged; in Part 2 he is spiritually 'beaten' by the brutalising effects of hard labour: in both circumstances he becomes an animal, less than human (p. 115). The pattern of repetition here suggests a movement

from the literal to the metaphorical, or from the vehicle of the metaphor to its tenor in Part 2. The pattern also suggests that these metaphors are not merely metaphors: they express the deep conditions of existence. It is not whips alone that can beat people; the fuel-house is not the only prison. There is a further suggestion evident in this pattern of repetition: even when people are free to choose, they often choose things to their own detriment. You cannot escape a prison if someone else chooses to turn the key, but in Part 2 a series of decisions made by Lyndall herself leads to her eventual constriction in the hotel sickroom; she does not choose her illness, but she chooses sexuality outside marriage, and she chooses to send her lover away, who might have shared her grief for her child and protected her from the excesses of self-exposure which it caused. What the outside world does not inflict, the folly of human beings arranges.

The pattern of repetition also shows us not only that suffering remains a constant, but that the separate children suffer in their own individual ways, always in the same way. In Part 1 Em suffers from Lyndall's excesses, because she is less rebellious. When Lyndall walks out of Blenkins' class, Em is punished. Similarly, when Lyndall falls pregnant and needs a man to provide a marriage, she encourages Gregory and it is Em who suffers the consequences. Lyndall worships power as a child, in the story of Napoleon; as an adult she is also attracted to power; her stranger is the first man she is frightened of, and she yields to him sexually. But the ambivalence toward power which caused her to say, as a child, that she would always "hate everything that has power, and help everything that is weak" (p. 85) is repeated in her later experience. She is drawn to power, sensing that it is the only way to self-development, but she is also frightened of it, because she has seen crude power as cruelty in operation as a child. Thus she bargains with her stranger, not because she loves something 'higher', but because she fears submission to his power (pp.221-222). Waldo suffers as a child because he confronts the implications of every spiritual crisis nakedly; the crisis of his religious faith as a child is followed by his spiritual crisis at Lyndall's death: the fact of

mortality has to be confronted and overcome in some way.

The element of divergence in the narrative structure is a way of suggesting alternative outcomes to the same problem or circumstances. Divergence is evident in the behaviour of the different protagonists, but also in the different 'places' towards which the narrative moves. Narrative divergence counteracts the effects of narrative repetition. For instance, the same circumstances can produce different responses; submission or rebellion. This is evident in some of the contrasted responses of Lyndall and Em; Em tends to be passive where Lyndall is defiant. Sometimes this produces a different outcome (Lyndall gets the key to the fuelhouse); sometimes it does not (she cannot free herself and Em when they are shut up). This contrast of passivity and defiance is further commented on by the case of Waldro, who is not unquestioning, like Em, but is equally not defiant, like Lyndall. He is treated more cruelly than they are; he responds by giving Blenkins a bed when he is in trouble (like his father before him) but he refuses to sleep in the same room. He is scarred by experience in some ways; in others he appears to be unscathed. He has an ability to return to sources of recuperation within himself and in the landscape. His responses to nature also diverge from those of Lyndall: she never wants to know what the 'stones' are speaking. He is the only one of the three children to leave the farm and return to it with a more positive response. Em never leaves it: her disappointments are endured on the spot, they have to do not with the farm itself, but with the fickleness of human nature. Lyndall leaves for her school and returns even more dissatisfied; after her second departure she never returns except symbolically, in her shoe; Waldo leaves, is disillusioned, and returns with a sense of homecoming and joy.

The children's responses to people and things also differ. Em loves the people and things she is familiar with; Lyndall wants excitement and challenge. Waldo is never happy in the company of people ("they draw me so strongly and then press me away", p. 244) but he can be happy alone. He also learns that he loves one person fully: Lyndall. She is divided between physical love and spiritual love ("I never know that I am a woman and you are

a man", she tells Waldo, p. 197), between a desire for total dominance and total submission to a being she can worship. Waldo does not see human relationships in terms of power; and Em's definition of love is "only service" (p. 168).

The characters' fates are also divergent in that each offers a variation on the theme of "Adapt or die". Em adapts to the real conditions of life, which entail compromise. Lyndall's absolute demands for perfection bring disaster: she dies. Waldo both adapts and dies: he learns what the things are that he values and he dies holding them. Perfection has not arrived, but at his death he envisages a perfect time; he sees it in imagination. The two death scenes are also contrasted in some ways: Lyndall is still gazing into her mirror; Waldo's death enacts the new relationship with death which his liberation from the doctrines of predestination and damnation has brought: his death, unlike those he envisages in the opening chapter, is without terror, unlike childhood.

The narrative thus moves toward contrasted 'places': martyrdom or escape, reality or dream, didacticism or fantasy. Some of these have been analysed above. Instead of a repeated pattern of female martyrdom, as in Undine, Lyndall's death as a sacrificial figure is contrasted both with Em's more mundane survival, and with Waldo's more positive death-scene. Martyrdom in the name of the crucifying conditions of nature and society is no longer the only option. It is possible to live, or to die differently. The contrasts of reality and dream have also been discussed: reality can be escaped by fantasy or daydreams, or its full implications, in unlicensed cruelty and unmotivated malice, can be confronted. The narrative does both, at different moments. Another response to painful realities is to transform them into new narratives, songs, dreams, a process constantly at work in the novel.

A number of transpositions of sexual identity take place in the narrative. This happens on the level of traditional roles being reversed as well as on the level of an actual cross-dressing by Gregory. Tant' Sannie is a woman who adopts what is traditionally a man's role: she will always be aggressive and dominating; her

masculinity is underlined by the fact that although she is deeply conservative and would be expected to breed for the volk, she produces only one sickly child. Em is traditionally feminine and housewifely: her last gesture is to bring Waldo a glass of milk. Waldo is dreamy and sexually undemanding; his gentleness and his ability to listen to Lyndall suggest a new kind of man, one who can honour his own gentleness. Gregory behaves like a conventional man at first, but his effeminacy is treated with scorn: his male and female qualities are unattractively combined; neither Lyndall nor Waldo likes him. He learns that the deepest kind of love can be service: the change of attitude demonstrates the principle enunciated in Lyndall's dying speech. In that sense he is closer to Em when he does eventually marry her. These transpositions provide a rich commentary on sexual identity and social role, suggesting ways in which they are maladjusted and ways in which they can be aligned. Yet there is no successful marriage in the novel, except Waldo's marriage with the African landscape in death. This suggests, as Schreiner herself often argued, that the time was not yet ripe for more developed individuals to find happiness in marriage; this is thus another aspect of a pre-determined tendency, the 'dogmatic form' of the novel.

Another aspect of the narrative which is in fact a form of transposition, could be called narrative silence.³¹ The narrative is apparently silent about the original 'owners' of the African territory, apart from the Bushmen in Chapter 2. It is also apparently silent about the exploitation of those previous indigenous owners by the current farmers. Both of these historical situations occur, however, in a 'transposed' form, when the narrative is apparently focussing on something else. These two 'pressure points' in the narrative are the very powerful scene which describes the beating of the black ox (pp. 240-241) and the protracted martyrdom and death of Lyndall. Waldo's rage at the beating of the animal springs from deep sources, one of which is his own memory of being similarly beaten by Blenkins, but the murderous rage the scene arouses in him makes him spring to the animal's assistance, and he has to be prevented from killing its owner. Like his father, Waldo intervenes between a cruel master (Tant' Sannie, who drove the Hottentot woman

off her farm, is replaced by the transport driver) and a helpless beast of burden.³² The emotions aroused by the scene are excessive to its conscious meaning, suggesting a deeper historical cause about which the text is silent. The same might be said of Lyndall's death and martyrdom. Is she simply a martyred version of the author, expressive of a kind of self-pity when there are women subject to a much deeper dispossession in Africa? Here again, the dwelling on Lyndall's death seems to suggest the assimilation of a deeper cause, and a deeper level of meaning. Once again, the connection which is apparently silent in the text is revealed by a connection with the "Kaffir woman", wife of the absconding herdsman, who was cruelly thrust off the farm by Tant' Sannie and on whom old Otto took pity "like Hagar, he thought, thrust out by her mistress in the wilderness to die" (p. 80). Hagar is the Biblical figure through whom the subterranean connection between Lyndall and an originally dispossessed people is kept alive; Lyndall's death also recalls the story of Hagar in the text: "Let me not see the death of the child" (p.263). The congruence of black, woman, and child as victim and martyr in what is apparently only Lyndall's death is responsible for the scene's emotional centrality in the novel, and perhaps for the fact that it is a genuinely moving chapter despite the obvious pathos with which it is handled.

Interpretation of the narrative of African Farm reveals the intransigence with which the novel confronts the colonial dilemma: the dilemma of the colonial artist, of the colonial woman, and of any colonial human being who can only take power by dispossession. The 'double bind' of nature and nurture as irreconcilable values, of a community which demands exile and yet makes it impossible, is also fully explored by the narrative. At the same time that the narrative explores this impossible set of conflicting demands it also suggests the paradoxical way in which it can be transformed by the narrative imagination. The only way in which the 'farm' can be rendered tractable is by turning it into a 'story', and yet the story again celebrates that the only enduring reality is the

farm itself, not the individuals on its surface who cannot remain. The strength of the narrative lies in the way in which it pays homage both to the unyielding reality of the farm : "It is the highest task of every art to employ appearance to create the illusion of a higher reality",³³ and to the 'dream' of the novelist who nevertheless transforms it: "The imagination may be compared to Adam's dream - he awoke and found it truth".³⁴

Notes.

1. "The Author of 'An African Farm'", The Bookbuyer, Vol. VI (Feb., 1889), p. 17. This comment suggests that the novel might have lain fallow while Schreiner was working mainly on Undine and an early version of From Man to Man. It also explains why many journal entries convey the impression that she was working on only two novels, Undine and "Saints and Sinners".
2. See B.W. Matz, "George Meredith as Publisher's Reader", Fortnightly Review Vol. 86 (July - Dec. 1909), pp. 282-283, and C.P. Ravilious, "Saints and Sinners" : An Unidentified Olive Schreiner Manuscript," Journal of Commonwealth Literature, Vol. XII, 1 (August 1977), pp. 1-11.
3. The phrase suggests a 'loss' of a real farm by refusing marriage, but a 'gaining' of another farm (African Farm) by the imaginative annexation of the novelist. Certainly African Farm is concerned to contrast marriage and property in the colony (Em) with intellectual independence (Lyndall).
4. See Uys Krige, "Olive Schreiner : A New Assessment", The Cape Argus (19 March 1955), reprinted in the Casebook, p. 77. See also Jean Marquard, in "Hagar's Child: : A reading of The Story of an African Farm", Standpunte, Vol. 27, 1 (February 1976), reprinted in Casebook, pp. 143-153. Marquard argues that Schreiner "is not equipped with an artistic power of resolution equal to the courage of her insights", p. 150.
5. Compare the relationship between George Eliot and Dorothea Brooke in Middlemarch; Dorothea never escapes from provincial life into fully liberated, enlightened circles, as Eliot herself did.

6. See Dan Jacobson, Introduction to The Story of an African Farm Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971), pp. 20-21.
7. See the Life (p. 112) for at least one real-life counterpart to Waldo, Oswald Cawood, an untaught but talented painter.
8. See A.O.J. Cockshut, Man and Woman : A study of Love and the Novel (London : Collins, 1977), who says that "Lyndall seems to be entirely free of any authorial criticism", p. 151.
9. Barbara Hardy, Tellers and Listeners (London : Athlone Press, 1975), p. 7.
10. The combination of realistic and visionary elements in Bushman rock art has recently been re-interpreted by Johannesburg anthropologist David Lewis-Williams: "many of the paintings show visions seen by Bushmen in a trance induced by dancing" (See Jaap Boekkooi, "Bushman 'code' broken"; The Star, Johannesburg, 1 June 1983, p.3.) In this sense Bushman rock paintings provide another analogy for African Farm itself, in which both Lyndall (p. 261) and Waldo (p. 280) see 'visions' of a realm beyond the earthly present in a kind of visionary trance-like state.
11. The 'island' image is related to the island imagery of the Prelude to From Man to Man (quoted at the opening of Chapter 2, above). Lyndall's story suggests that if you seek the path of power, you will never escape your 'island' (the colony). Only when the gifts of the imagination are used, can bridges be built and some form of escape from the island be found.

12. See Marquard, op. cit., p.151, and a counter-argument from Pierre Macherey, A Theory of Literary Production (London : Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978) : "The writer is not there to articulate the total structure of an epoch; he gives us, rather, an image, a unique and privileged glimpse.... The role of the writer, you might say, is to dramatise (faire vivre) the historical structure by narrating it (p. 113).
13. Blenkins's account of his birth and lineage ("I, sir ...was born at this hour, on an April afternoon, three-and-fifty years ago..." p.51) is a parody of the customary analepsis which occurs when a new character is introduced into a narrative.
14. See Stephen Gray, "Schreiner and the Novel Tradition" in Southern African Literature An introduction (Cape Town : David Philip, 1979), pp. 133-159.
15. Compare Pauline Smith's use of the schoolmaster figure in the Karoo in the story "The Schoolmaster", and in The Beadle; also Schreiner's own use of a tutor as a seducer in From Man to Man.
16. The ostrich, comic-pastoral adversary of the hypocritical Christian, is a forerunner of Griet, the little Bushman girl in From Man to Man who is instinctively hostile to John-Ferdinand and Veronica Grey.
17. See Matthew, Chapter 25, which is also the chapter Undine is given by her governess to study : "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink : I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick and ye visited me: I was in prison and ye came unto me." (Verses 35-36)

18. See Robert Green, "Stability and Flux : The Allotropic Narrative of An African Farm" in the Casebook for a comprehensive discussion of this point and others related to the arrivals and departures at the farm. I am also indebted to this article for its suggestive application of Genette's narrative analysis to Schreiner's fiction.
19. See A.E. Voss, "'Not a Word or a Sound in the World about Him that is not modifying Him.' : Learning, Lore and Language in The Story of an African Farm" in the Casebook. p. 178. Voss cites one of the core images of H. Scheub's collection of Xhosa folk-tales, The Xhosa Ntsomi (Oxford : O.U.P. 1975) as "A child is aided by an Ox". See also, below, the discussion of "silence" in the text.
20. This scene, of a beast of burden beaten beyond endurance, is a recurrent and central one in South African fiction. See Pauline Smith's "The Schoolmaster", Nadine Gordimer's Burger's Daughter (London: Jonathan Cape, 1979), pp. 208-209, and Peter Wilhelm's "Homecoming" in LM and other Stories (Johannesburg : Ravan, 1975).
The black ox is a mature version of the beaten pet monkeys in "Diamond Fields" and Undine.
21. See A.E. Voss, op. cit. for further identifications of the books mentioned in the text.
22. South African censorship is still strict where books are concerned and bookshops still burn books which have been banned by the Publications Control Board. The censorship of books is one manifestation of the Christian view of the universe which censors reality itself; see the discussion of this point in Chapter 7.
23. See also p. 167 : "Gregory had said to her, I will love you as long as I live . She said the word over and over to herself like a song". In this respect Em resembles Pauline Smith's Andrina of The Beadle, whose religious faith and love are constantly compared to music.

24. See Voss, op. cit.
25. Compare the use of dream as popular folklore in Pauline Smith's story about little Ludovitje's visions in the story by that name in The Little Karoo.
26. See Chapter 2, Section (v).
27. The same point is well made in a recent film using transvestism to explore attitudes to love, Tootsie.
28. Compare King Lear's "And that's true too", Act. V, Sc. 2, 1.-12.
29. See Barbara Hardy, The Appropriate Form (London : Athlone Press, 1964), Chapter 3.
30. At one time a projected epigraph to the novel (see Ellis, HRC, and discussion in Chapter 7).
31. See the discussion of Macherey's theory, "in the significant silences of a text ...the presence of ideology can be most positively felt", in Terry Eagleton's Marxism and Literary Criticism (London : Methuen, 1976), pp. 34-36. My argument would be that though African Farm is apparently 'silent' on a literal level about historical dispossession, it does show it in microcosm, (in the casting out of the herdsman's wife by Tant' Sannie); in the metaphorical transference of victim figures, and in scenes such as Waldo's discussion of the disappearance of the 'bushman'.
32. Otto's assistance, given to the herdsman's wife, is, again, a fictional version of the young Schreiner's helping "the Coloured woman in the road" to give birth to a child (LK Journal, quoted above).
33. Goethe, Wisdom and Experience (London : Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1949) p. 224.
34. Letters of John Keats (ed.) Frederick Page (London : O.U.P., 1954), p.31.

CHAPTER 5

THE DREAMER AS REFORMER :
STORIES, DREAMS AND ALLEGORIES

"In Dreams begins responsibility".

W.B. Yeats, Epigraph to Responsibilities, 1914

(i) Period of composition

Schreiner had always seen allegory as an essential component of her writing. In her introduction to Woman and Labour she wrote of her longer book about women (destroyed in Johannesburg during the war of 1899-1902):

In addition to the prose argument I had in each chapter one or more allegories; because while it is easy clearly to express abstract thoughts in argumentative prose, whatever emotion those thoughts awaken I have not felt myself able adequately to express except in the other form.

(WL, p.16)

Allegories were thus associated with the expression of emotion. They also seem to have been associated with what Schreiner called "poetry", or "the living reality" which a work becomes when "there is the form and the spirit, the passion and the thought" (Letters, p. 145). So her Preface to Mary Wollstonecraft had six or seven allegories which made it "real" for her, and "only poetry is truth":

It's so easy for a mind like mine to produce long logical arguments or strings of assertions, but when I have done it I feel such a 'valch'¹ against it: that is only the material; it has to be combined and made alive.

(Letters, ibid.)

Thus the non-fiction and the letters, for instance, often crystallise into little stories or 'allegories' (her actual writing practice

Schreiner's Vision
distinguishes clearly between the short story and the allegory, which may or may not be cast in the form of a dream vision, but within her letters or non-fictional works she sometimes uses the terms "little story" and "allegory" interchangeably). These little 'allegories' are sometimes simply concrete illustrations of an abstract point, of the kind a governess might use to teach young children; sometimes they are didactic; sometimes they have a cryptic or visionary element. She speaks of parables as her "language":

This is a poor answer to send you to your beautiful letter. But except in my own language of parables I cannot express myself. If I say that in a stone in the road, in the thoughts in my brain, in the corpuscles in a drop of blood under my microscope, in a railway engine rushing past me in the veldt, I see God, shall I not only be darkening counsel with words? If I say that when I nurse a man with smallpox I am touching something far other than what simply seems to be lying there; if I say that when I go to the prison to see a prisoner I simply go to see myself; if I say that when I go out among the rocks alone I am not alone, have I made it any clearer. Words are very poor things. It almost pains me to write as I have been this afternoon, because what one wants to say one cannot.

(To J.T. Lloyd, SAL, 29 October 1892)

Schreiner's discursive writing tends to become concrete and emblematic at crucial emotional stages of any piece of argumentative prose. Writing of 'The South African Question' in 1899, when war between England and South Africa was threatening, she argues that South Africa has been partly to blame because of its lack of response when financial speculators were robbing the country of its wealth:

He who sits supine and intellectually inert, while great evils are being accomplished, sins wholly as much as he whose positive action produces them, and must pay

the same price. The man at the helm who goes to sleep cannot blame the rock when the ship is thrown upon it, though it be torn asunder. He should have known the rock was there, and steered clear of it.

(ESA, p. 58)

The didactic element in such little 'parables' is quite clear. A similar analogy is used more simply to evoke sympathy for a small nation:

This is the problem, the main weight of which has fallen on the little South African Republic. It was that little ship which received the main blow when eighty thousand souls of all nationalities leaped aboard at once, and gallantly the taut little craft, if for a moment she shivered from stem to stern, has held on her course to shore, with all souls on board. (ESA, p. 61)

When Schreiner uses African landscape and animals in these illustrative analogies, they resemble Aesop's fables, rather than biblical parables.² A good example occurs when she is both predicting and warning of the possible effects of an English campaign against Africa:

It may be said, "But what has England to fear in campaign with a country like Africa? Can she not send out a hundred thousand or a hundred and fifty thousand men and walk over the land? She can sweep it by mere numbers". We answer yes — she might do it. Might generally conquers; not always. (I have seen a little meer-kat attacked by a mastiff, the first joint of whose leg it did not reach. I have seen it taken in the dog's mouth, so that hardly any part of it was visible, and thought the creature was dead. But it fastened its tiny teeth inside the dog's throat, and the mastiff dropped it, and, mauled and wounded and covered with gore and saliva, I saw it creep back into its hole in the red African Earth).

(ESA, pp. 83-84)

In the same article the positive 'dream' of Empire is likened to a banyan tree, offering shade and refuge to all, whereas the new attitude of England toward Africa makes it resemble a upas tree, bringing poison and death (pp. 88-89). A favourite way of presenting the exploitative relationship between Empire and colony is in an image of wounding, or a sword:

And they use the gold they gain out of us to enslave us; they strike at our hearts with a sword gilded with South African gold! (p. 57.)

This image often takes on an added horror when the wounder and wounded belong to the same family, and the family paradigm is often Schreiner's way of reducing the scale, and concretising the abstraction of the nation:

WHO GAINS BY WAR?

Not Africa! The great young nation, quickening today to its first consciousness of life, to be torn and rent, and bear upon its limbs into its fully ripened manhood, the marks of the wounds—wounds from a mother's hands!

Not the great woman whose eighty years tonight, [sic] who would carry with her to the grave the remembrance of the longest reign and the purest; who would have that when the nations gather round her bier, the whisper would go round, "That was a mother's hand; it struck no child".

(pp. 79-80)

Here the child-beating situation which figures in African Fam and the earlier fiction becomes an element within an illustrative 'allegory' of two nations, and the 'mother' nation itself is identified with its female queen. As usual, the mother-beating-child situation takes on a characteristic urgency and intensity. Schreiner's discursive and polemical prose thus makes constant use of more or less developed analogies, fables and allegories. The allegories also have a more or less strong didactic element; they aim to teach, warn, prophesy, or dramatise a philosophical or moral point.

Stories and allegories, as we have seen, make up smaller elements within the longer narratives of the fictional works: "Diamond Fields" has internal stories and dreams, both wish-fulfilling and didactic in nature; Undine contains the Life and Death allegory which allegorises the theme of the novel; it also contains the painted allegory of the picture Undine sees at the Blairs' house, an allegory of medieval figures with the woman dying at the cruel knight's feet, interpreted by Undine as a noble lord and a serf. African Farm contains the Hunter allegory which Schreiner told Arthur Symons was the 'essence' of the novel, and which she printed separately in her volume of Dreams (1890).

T/P
11/12 { Trooper Peter Halket contains the parables and sermon of the little preacher, as well as Christ's parables; Schreiner called the whole novel "a sort of allegory story" (To BM, UCT, September 1896). From Man to Man was described by Schreiner as an objective form of the allegory "The Sunlight Lay" with its vision of three successive 'heavens' (Letters, p. 199). The term "objective" suggests that the longer narratives were impersonalised forms of a 'vision' which could be presented separately, in a brief 'subjective' dream-vision. Woman and Labour (1911) has a similar relationship with an allegory, "Three Dreams in a Desert", originally part of the book on women destroyed in Schreiner's Johannesburg house at the outbreak of war (WL, pp. 16-18). Schreiner wrote "I have felt that perhaps being taken from its context it was not quite clear to everyone" (WL, ibid.).

Both "The Hunter" and "Three Dreams in a Desert" can thus be viewed either in the context of their original position inside a longer work, or separately, as both were published as separate allegories in Schreiner's Dreams. "The Hunter" had probably been read as part of African Farm by many people before they encountered it separately in Schreiner's Dreams. And those who read Woman and Labour in 1911 and after might have found "Three Dreams in a Desert" enriched by the fuller context of Schreiner's arguments concerning the sex-parasitism of women and their need to attain independence without male assistance. But both were separately published and have a right to be regarded as separate works within a group of dreams/allegories.

It is useful to distinguish here between Schreiner's short stories and her dreams/allegories. She wrote eight short stories, three of which were published by her in Dream life and Real life (1893) and five of which were published after her death in Stories, Dreams and Allegories (1923). The former group comprises "Dream Life and Real Life", "The Woman's Rose" and "The Policy in favour of Protection—". The latter comprises "Eighteen-Ninety-Nine", "The Buddhist Priest's Wife", "On the Banks of a Full River" (from an incomplete manuscript), "The Wax Doll and the Stepmother" and "The Adventures of Master Towser". The last two were written for children, and "Master Towser" had been published in Fred Schreiner's New College Magazine (at Eastbourne on 22 March 1882), in which "Dream Life and Real Life" had also first appeared in November 1881. Of the stories in the second collection, probably only "Eighteen-Ninety-Nine" and "The Buddhist Priest's Wife" would have had Schreiner's approval. There are gaps in the manuscript of "On the Banks of a Full River", and Schreiner always considered "Master Towser" a very childish work (To WPS, UCT, 1890). The manuscript of "The Wax Doll and the Stepmother" was in good condition, according to S.C. Cronwright, but Schreiner seems to have made no attempt to publish it. The short stories were either written before Schreiner left Africa in 1881, or after she returned in 1889. In the later period she was reflecting on her experience of the past decade and responding to current African realities, especially the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902. These later African experiences also gave rise to a few of the allegories collected in Stories, Dreams and Allegories ("The Cry of South Africa", "Seeds A-Growing", "The Great Heart of England," and "Who Knocks at the Door").

Schreiner produced most of her dreams/allegories when travelling on the Italian Riviera and in France in the years 1887 to 1889, a period characterised by emotional distress and restlessness (Life, p.177). Alassio provided a kind of base during this period, and its landscape reminded her of Africa :

I like this place. I like this room. I like this sea.
I like this sky. I like these olive trees, they are
like the "bush" at Ganna Hoek. (Life, ibid.)

At Alassio she also had "relief from her relentless asthma and seclusion" (Life, p.169). It was at Alassio that she wrote many of the allegories published in Dreams and in Stories, Dreams and Allegories. "In a Ruined Chapel", "I thought I stood" "God's Gifts to Men", "The Flower and the Spirit", and "Workers" are officially attributed to Alassio, but others were partially written there or in Gersau ("A Dream of Prayer"), or Mentone ("They Heard"). Other unpublished allegories were sent to friends during this period; "A Dream of Wild Bees" was sent to Karl Pearson from Alassio, enclosed in a letter (Pearson, 23 October, 1886), though it is marked as written in England (Schreiner noted the place in which the allegories were begun, even if they were finished elsewhere, see Preface to Dreams). Many of them were sent to Havelock Ellis:

['Enclosing "In a Far-Off World"] Excuse first draft. I made two new allegories last night after I was in bed. This I made about two o'clock. I've been for a walk to that lovely ruined church at Santa Croce, so lonely there. Now I've come back and just writing these out before I forget them....I've got the climbing allegory right now. It's lovely, but I've not written it out. (This probably refers to "A Soul's Journey—Two Visions" in SDA).

(Letters, p.114)

She was thus very prolifically producing 'dreams' in this period of her life. They seem to have arisen spontaneously, and she often describes them as almost involuntary creations:

I'm writing a long dream on Socialism, called "Dreams of a City". With all these dreams coming I never get to any other work. (Letters, p. 122. See also Letters, p.113)

This involuntary origin remained a feature of the brief allegories:

I've just made a little allegory, in bed this morning.
It came to me the minute I opened my eyes. I suppose
because I was full of certain matters when I went to
sleep last night. (To WPS, UCT, 8 April 1909)

Allegories were written when there was not enough energy for more sustained creative work.³ The association of allegories with pleasure seems to have been an extension of very early pleasant associations of dreaming and fantasy:

My brain feels tired tonight so I'm not going to write
or read, but just go to bed and dream as deliciously
as I can. I don't dream much nowadays.

(RH Journal, 16 July 1876)

This "delicious" sensation was repeated in the rhythmical activity of writing verse or prose-poetry which gave her "such a delicious sensation of going all through your body as if the whole of it was keeping time" (Letters, p.162). However, this letter indicates that such relaxation into a too easy prose-poetry is to be avoided, and that her own prose-writing in the dreams is a more braced and intellectual activity. Similarly, she made it clear in an interview that she never used real dreams in her literary dreams (Life, p.165).

The writing of 'dreams' thus seems to have had a double root: on the one hand pure vision, arising spontaneously just before or after sleep, on the other an intellectual statement of certain essential truths relating to her beliefs about male/female relationships, feminism, socialism, the new morality, or philosophical principles. The same co-existence of fantasy and didacticism as was noted in the longer fictions is found in the short pieces of writing, though separated out to a varying degree, with one element being strongly predominant in some allegories or stories, and with some intense allegories combining dream vision and didacticism in a way peculiar to the genre.

The dreams and stories also illustrate the combination of self-expression and writing for others which was noted in the novels, with a stronger emphasis here on writing for the self or, at most, a few intimate friends. Dreams were often sent to friends or to the men with whom Schreiner was intimate (Ellis, Pearson, Edward Carpenter) or, if they were feminist dreams, were shown to close women friends (Mary Brown, Mary Sauer). She often asks these friends whether they consider them worth publishing, indicating that her confidence was at a lower ebb than usual during this period of travel in Europe.⁴ She insists that they are primarily self-expression:

A little allegory is coming out in next month's Woman's World.⁵ It's not a good one, yet I love it almost best of all....They seem to me things that are for one self, and one self only, like one's deepest personal feelings. (Letters, p.140)

It was during this period, too, that Schreiner made the comparison between herself and George Eliot which is sometimes taken as stating a general principle of her writing:

Her great desire was to teach, mine to express myself, for myself and to myself alone. (Letters, p.160)

This comes as a culminating statement after a period in which she had written only allegories in short bursts of relatively involuntary creative activity (when she was working, sporadically on From Man to Man, her characteristic statement about her work was that it would help others). But though she speaks of the allegories as for herself alone, her sense of herself as a spokeswoman for certain deep and underlying truths of human behaviour and as a visionary with access to past and future gives the allegories a sense of conviction and relevance to other lives. And when she had carefully arranged and published her book of Dreams she spoke of a specific audience she had in mind for the book, one different from the poor Waldos who were meant to read African Farm:

Dreams is not published by me with the special intention of reaching the poor. I would prefer the rich to have it. If I dedicated it to the public I should dedicate it "To all Capitalists, Millionaires and Middlemen in England and America and all high and mighty persons". It is a book which will always have its own public of cultured persons who will have it at any price.

(Letters, p.209)

She also wrote to her publisher, Fisher Unwin, that publication of the Dreams should not be delayed, as they touched on matters of immediate interest (Fryde). She seems to have had a strong sense of who her audience was for Dreams, a sense which later disappeared when she was back in Africa in later years. Not only did she feel that an African audience did not understand what her Dreams were about ("I am so curious to know whether ordinary folk will see what it's ["The Sunlight Lay"] about at all. John Pursglove thought it was about "drinking", and my mother says she doesn't know what it's about" Letters, p. 185), but that there was no audience in Africa for anything she wanted to write after her return in 1889; later she felt she had alienated her English audience by her pro-Boer stance during the war:

I am writing at my little war story still but I only manage a few lines a day and not always that. I've been house-cleaning the last two days, and haven't written anything. It's called "Elandsplaagte." It's not much. But it relieves my mind to write. Heaps of little stories come to me in the night when I lie awake; but you know in a way it's not worth writing them out. English people don't want my stories any more, and South Africans don't need or care for anything that is like art. (To BM, UCT, 24 November 1904)

Thus, although she said her 'dreams' were written for herself, she retained a strong sense of the audience for whom the published book was intended; back in Africa when she was writing allegories

or stories during the Anglo-Boer war period, her divided allegiance undermined that sense of audience. But the response to Dreams, and even to the much slighter volume Dream Life and Real Life which followed, confirmed her expectations.

(ii) Contemporary response to Dreams and
Dream Life and Real Life

The response to Dreams was overwhelming, as borne out by the figures of the publisher, T. Fisher Unwin, 1924:

This book has been reprinted at least twenty times in England and 80,000 copies have been sold. I cannot say how many editions have been published in the United States, but they have been numerous, and, in some cases, costly editions de luxe; and translations have appeared in Austria, Germany, France, Italy, Finland, Sweden, Norway and Holland. I have many [sic] who have looked upon this book as her greatest literary work.

My next venture was the publication of her smallest book, "Dream Life and Real Life" which was issued in 1893. At that time I was issuing the Pseudonym Library and it gave me the opportunity of publishing this little work in that series under her Pseudonym, "Ralph Iron". This has been reprinted continually and, though only 8,000 words in length, 30,000 copies have been sold. The author's readers did not measure her literary work by the number of words in any particular book.

The two books, "Dreams" and "Dream Life and Real Life" have also been published together in one volume.⁶

Unwin also commented that Stories, Dreams, and Allegories had already (in 1924) been twice reprinted since its appearance in 1923. Schreiner's 'dreams' were thus received by an interested public in Europe, and many people responded by writing to her:

You don't know how many more letters I've got about my allegories than about SAF even if [sic] that is any sign of the way things are read. (To HE, Fryde, 30 August 1890)

In a letter to her brother she said that she had had a letter from Lady Lock about her "dream book" and that the whole of the first edition had sold in the first four days. Her royalty was 1d on the 1/6 volume

but he (Unwin) has paid Ellis £50 on my account and thinks in a couple of months it will amount to £150 or £200. This is good, as no reviews have already appeared on the book, & it is not a book [which] can ever have such a large circulation as my novels. (To WPS, UCT, undated)

When the reviews did appear, they were almost unanimous in their commendations of the ethical value, noble mood, and wonderful prose-poetry of Dreams. The Bookbuyer commended their "deep ethical significance"; Vanity Fair spoke of their "spiritual beauty" which was "made apparent by their technical excellence". W.T. Stead considered "The Sunlight Lay" to be "an audacious and original allegory" by someone who was "emphatically a seer" and Overland spoke of its "wonderful truth and insight".⁷ The chief reviewer was the influential critic Arthur Symons, who had interviewed Schreiner at length, and who had been instrumental in having the book published by Fisher Unwin.⁸ He saw the collection in terms of the Symbolist movement he had himself been influential in promoting in England :

But the allegories of Miss Schreiner are something entirely new; they can be compared only with the painted allegories of Mr. Watts. Written in exquisite prose—somewhat less spontaneously simple than the prose of the "African Farm" but with more colour and harmony—they have the essential

qualities of poetry and are, indeed, poems in prose. The book is like nothing else in English. Probably it will have no successors, as it has had no forerunners. Into these allegories Miss Schreiner seems to have put the soul of her soul; they express, in the only form possible, that passion for abstract ideas which in her lies deeper than any other. They are profoundly human, yet in no limited sense. Apprehended thus, the allegory may be considered the essence of art, all art being symbol, and allegories themselves pure symbols.⁹

Here Symons turns Schreiner into an English Verlaine or Mallarmé, and the features of the allegories which he stresses: colour and harmony, purity, abstraction, and uniqueness, were favourite terms of praise for symbolist art.

The fashionable appeal of the Dreams is evidenced by the separate publication of individual dreams in contemporary journals. "The Lost Joy" was published as "The Lost" in Oscar Wilde's The Woman's World (February 1888). "Three Dreams in a Desert" was published in The Fortnightly Review (August 1887) edited by Frank Harris. "A Dream of Wild Bees" brought in £2.2s from Wilde's Woman's World in September 1888. "The Sunlight Lay" was intended for the Fortnightly Review in November 1889 but was rejected as being too strong and eventually appeared in The New Review in April 1890. The "little African story" called "Dream Life and Real Life", first published in Fred Schreiner's New College Magazine in November 1881, was re-published as "African Moonshine" in In a Good Cause in 1885,¹⁰ before it was collected in Dream Life and Real Life (1893). Even the tiny story called "The Woman's Rose" appeared in The New Review with an epigraph from Dreams "And I saw that the women held each other's hands" in May 1891. "The Policy in favour of Protection--Was it right?--Was it Wrong?" appeared under its sub-title in The New Review (October 1892) and in Harper's Weekly (1 October 1892).

The centrality of the allegories in their time appears in the contemporary use of quotations from them; Karl Pearson, Schreiner's

close associate at one stage, and a leading Victorian spokesman for socialism, feminism, and the new spirit of humanistic science, borrowed a piece of "The Lost Joy" by Ralph Iron as an epigraph to his paper on "Socialism and Sex".¹¹ Herbert Spencer had a representative Victorian text, "The Hunter" allegory, read to him on his representative Victorian death-bed (Life, p. 298). And when Vera Brittain wanted to illustrate how a conscious feminine point of view began to emerge from late nineteenth century writing, she quoted Schreiner's "Three Dreams in a Desert".¹² The impact of Dreams on feminists lasted for some time, and Emmeline Pankhurst could write of its influence still being felt at the time of the first world war:

It was widely read and much talked of and created a deep impression, particularly among women, during the war, expressing as it did the aspirations of the woman's movement of the time.¹³

Since public demand for Schreiner's 'dreams' exceeded her output, a forgery appeared in the Westminster Gazette (February 1891) which employed some of Schreiner's techniques (such as a refrain "And God's Light lay still upon the mountains"), but which reads like a sentimental parody. The editor added the hopeful note:

This poetical allegory is sent to us by a correspondent having originally appeared in an old number of an African missionary magazine, now extinct. It was there unsigned, but no one who reads it (says our correspondent) can doubt that it is correctly attributed above. If not by Miss Schreiner, it is certainly a very happy attempt in the same style. (UCT)

The allegories that Schreiner was writing in the 1880s and which were collected at the end of the decade seemed to speak to the mood of the times, and to express current issues in a form which, while it suited her own writing habits at the time, also tied in with a

fashionable literary movement. In the allegories, Schreiner seems to have found a way of speaking to a sophisticated urban audience in 'dreams' that were also intensely personal self-expression.

(iii) Schreiner in London: 1881-1889

Schreiner's experience in London in the 1880s, her contact with emergent feminist and socialist groups, her personal loves and disappointments, her sense of being an alien colonial and a strangely uninhibited woman in a more polished environment,¹⁴ her contact with stimulating minds and her failure to launch herself on a medical career— all of this was the crucible of the 'dreams'. The Story of an African Farm had made her an interesting celebrity, and when the decade ended for her in humiliating personal rejections and reversals, she needed to transmute that painful experience into art, to take on the impersonal mask of seer and 'dreamer' (the term she used for herself when writing to Karl Pearson after she had fled England for France and Italy). Her years in England, which opened with such high hopes for personal and professional fulfilment, ended in a resurgence of old difficulties. The hopes which were raised by optimistic social movements were crushed by personal complications and jealousies, and the process confirmed an earlier belief that the artist had to live alone, and renounce personal love and fulfilment. She also began to understand that while she had gained a more congenial and lively intellectual environment in England, she had lost the nourishment of her childhood African landscape (Carp, 19 April 1890). In these years she was living out the dilemma of the English South African in exile, in a country she had once thought was 'home'.

Schreiner's first experience of London, of life in a crowded impersonal city (in itself alien to someone raised in isolated rural areas), was coloured by her sense of disappointment when it

became apparent that she could not undertake the medical training she had hoped for, nor stay the course at the Women's hospital in Endell Street where she had hoped to train as a nurse. (OS, pp. 111-115). The gaps in her early education must have become particularly glaring, and she was plagued by illness and depression. These failures were complicated by a love affair with a 'sadistic' man, which revealed to her that she was passionately drawn to someone who was simply strong and forceful, if not actually cruel, and thus very far from her intellectual ideal.¹⁵ This experience seems to have created a sense of degradation, and her sympathy with the prostitutes of London which became an element in the allegories and in From Man to Man was partly forged by a sense that she was herself capable of intense sexual response without respect or intellectual sympathy, an insight which ran counter to Victorian orthodoxy about women and which must have conflicted with her own earlier beliefs.¹⁶ London itself became a sordid backdrop for a degraded sensual life:

All night I thought I was going mad and lay on the floor and walked up and down; at dawn about half past four I went to the chemists in that street that runs down just at the bottom of Palace Road. There is a shop just near the corner. I stood there knocking for half an hour, but no one heard. I wanted bromide or something to make me sleep. I can see that scene just as it looked to me printed like one of Hogarth's pictures; while I stood there waiting a dirty milkman came with his pails, & he stopped at the house opposite & some dirty wicked looking women, a woman and a girl in curl papers and finery came to the door, and talked low talk with him & laughed low laughs. (To Ellis, Fryde)

Here one has a glimpse of London (the 'unreal city') as it was beginning to be seen by artists like Symons, whose poetry imitated the French symbolist vision of Paris.¹⁷ A dreary vision of the streets of London forms the departure point of Schreiner's 'Socialist'

dream, "The Sunlight Lay". This was the city that needed to be redeemed by a new order of love and human sympathy, which Schreiner would create in her dream visions.¹⁸ The more distressing these urban realities were, the more intense and visionary Schreiner's writing became. The framing 'realistic' settings of the allegories are very brief, and sometimes not sketched in at all.

Schreiner's realisation that her old dream of becoming a doctor was not to be fulfilled, and that she did not have the stamina for nursing, was a bitter disappointment.¹⁹ For a while she lived vicariously through men friends who were professional doctors or scientists, like Havelock Ellis and Karl Pearson, sending them information which would assist them in their researches, and encouraging them to develop their full potential. With both of them the possibility of a physical relationship, perhaps marriage, arose. But Ellis was not capable of ordinary sexual satisfaction, and Pearson, who seems to have had a prior relationship with Elisabeth Cobb (Ellis once suggested to Schreiner that it was perhaps a physical one, though Elisabeth Cobb was married) was horrified at Schreiner's increasingly emotional claims on him and rebuffed her fairly directly. Both of these intense relationships raised the vexed questions of passionate love versus friendship, whether friendship was possible between men and women, and on what basis a new, more promising basis for male/female relationships could be established.²⁰ These issues had in fact been the substance of debates carried out by the "Men and Women's Club" of which Pearson, Elisabeth Cobb (née Sharpe), Maria Sharpe (who later married Pearson), and Olive Schreiner were members. But the human drama of sexual competition and possessiveness which was being played out as accompaniment to highminded debates on sexual and social issues might have served to remind everyone concerned that personal needs could not be ignored. Schreiner's response to any sexual triangle (there seems to have been one in Ellis's case as well, but it was less painful)²¹ was to renounce all claims²² (though in Pearson's case she seems to have renounced him only when it

became apparent that he was eager to renounce her), or to exalt the principle of renunciation, which forms the substance of many stories and allegories. An old conflict between self-fulfilment and the Christian exaltation of self-denial made itself felt in a particularly acute form. In the same way any woman involved, even one who had inflicted emotional pain, had to be drawn into a relationship of forgiveness and charity.²³ The need to forgive and the exaltation of sisterhood also flow into the allegories. At the same time personal disappointments encouraged the long-term evolutionary view that there could be no happy unions between highly developed men and women: they would have to suffer, but future generations would see a new order. A visionary idealism became essential in order to endure present disasters.

Because of these intense personal experiences with both men and women, which led to a new perception of difficulty, the allegories Schreiner wrote in Europe in the 1880s advocated a feminism which pinned its hopes on the future of the race but emphasised present martyrdom, and which focussed with renewed vigour on the solitary suffering of the artist and the woman. Renunciation was enshrined as a present need for all women, as well as being an apotheosis of Schreiner's early perception of charity and forgiveness as the noblest lessons the Bible had to teach. The feminism of the allegories is thus intertwined with personal needs and old Christian precepts.

In the same way, Schreiner's 'socialism' was not a materialist creed ("I haven't faith in anything that promises to raise us by purely material means", Letters, p. 18) nor was it pinned to the movement of classes or the labour movement (though she was always sympathetic to the latter). Her 'socialism' was very much in the mood of the 'eighties, which sought a moral awakening as a basis for political and social reform.²⁴ Early British socialism still had a broad spectrum of beliefs, though soon groups would splinter off according to their more or less radical persuasions. Schreiner was always part of a more moderate wing which saw political change as tied up with a whole lifestyle, with moral and spiritual development being dependent on necessary but long-term evolution. Schreiner

attended meetings of the Progressive Association and joined the Fellowship of the New Life (the title indicated the strong overtones of religious conversion in such socialist movements). In December 1885 she was inviting Pearson to attend a New Life meeting at Gower Street to meet Carpenter (Pearson, December 1885). Schreiner encountered British socialism through Ellis and Carpenter, both strongly concerned with the need for a sexual revolution, and both members of the Fellowship:

Ellis was interested in developing an understanding of sexual psychology while Carpenter was more of a populariser of sexual theory, preoccupied with the relationship of personal questions with the socialist movement, but both saw themselves as conscious pathmakers. (Rowbotham & Weeks, pp. 15-16)

Their attitudes influenced Schreiner's thinking on social change and sexual relationships, and her increasing tendency to see a fundamental change in the relationship between men and women as a precondition for other changes. She was sending Elisabeth Cobb Carpenter's Towards Democracy in 1884, and reading England's Ideal in early 1891. Carpenter's prose-poetry, and his vision of the evils of industrialism and capitalism as redeemed by a miraculous inner change had their impact on Schreiner :

As I walked restless and despondent through the gloomy city,
And saw the eager unresting to and fro—as of ghosts in
some sulphurous Hades;
And saw the crowds of tall chimneys going up, and the
pall of smoke covering the sun, covering the earth,
lying heavy against the very ground....

Then out of the crowd descending towards me came a
little ragged boy:
Came—from the background of dirt disengaging itself—
an innocent wistful childface, begrimed like the rest
but strangely pale, and pensive before its time.

And in an instant (it was as if a trumpet had been blown in the place) I saw it all clearly, the lie I saw and the truth, the false dream and the awakening....

Stronger than all combinations of Capital, wiser than all the Committees representative of Labor, the simple need and hunger of the human heart.

Nothing more is needed.²⁵

Though Schreiner later remembered with pride that the Socialists looked upon her as "one of their folk", she did not believe that it was her "function" to join one particular movement:

Why, 28 years ago I was one of the eight women with Helen Taylor in the chair [and] John Stuart Mill's men who started in a small underground room near the Houses of Parliament the Woman's branch of the Democratic Federation—the largest Socialist organisation in England. I was also one of the original drawers-up of the constitution of the "Fellowship" (Fellowship of the New Life) an organisation which afterwards numbered twenty thousand members. I have never been able to bind myself to any section of any great world movement, like socialism or the woman [movement], it seems to fetter me. It's not my function. The different sections working to a common end, seem to me all good in their own way, and there must be different sections... just as in a great army there must be foot, horse and artillery.

[She then mentions her practical work among prostitutes]... and the wisdom I learnt was that all sapping at prostitution from below, all 'rescue work' and homes etc, were useless. That we must alter the whole relation of woman to man, to life, and the society she lives in if we want to stop the disease. That is why I fight so for the vote. It is one of the first little steps towards that reorganisation, which the coming generations will see slowly fulfilling itself.

(To WPS, UCT, 12 May 1912)

Schreiner's 'function' as a writer in these years was to contribute towards "that reorganisation" by creating the allegories as intense visions of the qualities of an ideal state, while exposing contemporary abuses and social malformations. She made it clear that Dreams was intended to advance this cause, by dedicating it to Mrs. Cobb's daughter: "To a small girl-child, who may live to grasp somewhat of that which for us is yet sight, not touch" (Letters, p.201). The dreams would set out the principles by which the ideal state would eventually be brought about. The form which her vision took in the allegories was conditioned by the influence of Schreiner's early reading and the contemporary literary forms used by English writers responding to the artistic atmosphere of Symbolism.

(iv) Sacred and secular allegory: the literary form

Schreiner's childhood experience of allegory was chiefly of Christian didactic allegory. We see from Undine that little girls like Schreiner (and Undine) were taught their Sunday Bible lessons in terms of textual exegesis and the understanding of Biblical allegory. Undine and the other little girls have to 'construe' Matthew Chapter 25, concerning the wise and foolish virgins and the final judgment of the world; it is a critical comment on the two Dutch girls and the governess that they concern themselves only with the literal details of the story, and not its 'inner' meaning, which Undine understands, though she does not like it. (Undine, pp. 16-18). The chief source of Schreiner's interest in allegory was William Adams's Sacred Allegories, which she told Ellis and Symons had a profound effect on her own allegories.²⁶ She specifically mentioned Adams's allegory called "The Three Messengers" an interesting error for "The King's Messengers", given Schreiner's own frequent use of the triple structure or series in her own allegories. Adams's allegories were intended for the Christian instruction of children, and often use personified virtues and vices (personified as children), a contest between the

forces of light and dark, a garden, a search or quest, and crossings of a river. One chapter of the first allegory, "The Shadow of the Cross" is called "Pursuit of the Butterfly" (see Schreiner's "The Winged Butterfly"); in "The Distant Hills" one section is titled "The stranger points out the Distant Hills" (see "The Hunter" and perhaps the use of the 'distant mountain' as a recurrent image in African Farm). The influence of Adams's figures and allegorical situations is chiefly noticeable in Schreiner's earliest allegories, "The Lost Joy"²⁷ and "The Hunter" (1880). Adams was concerned to teach Christian doctrine, and there was a strong emphasis on purity and charity; each chapter was followed by a series of testing questions cast in the form of a conversation, with the correct interpretation being given. Schreiner was thus very familiar with the double level of allegory, with the idea of a detailed interpretation which may or may not be penetrated by the reader, depending on his access to the secrets of the doctrine known by initiates. That she realised that her allegories might not be understood by "ordinary folk" is apparent in her comment on the reaction in South Africa to "The Sunlight Lay", and her interest in reading the reviews to find out exactly how much of their 'inner meaning' had been understood (Letters, p. 185). Her allegories had a hidden meaning which was intended for a cultured audience familiar with the form, though that hidden meaning was at the same time often intended to challenge the behaviour or principles of the cultured circle. Those who could penetrate to the core of the allegory were also those who were intended to see its application to their own practice, and to bring about reform.

Schreiner's fondness for allegory, though intensified in the 1880s, was partly determined by her adherence to a belief in the structure of reality as dualistic: a world of appearances concealing and revealing the eternal truth beyond it, though that eternal realm is monistically conceived, a spiritual unity.²⁸ This belief is essentially Platonic, and Schreiner specifically mentioned her reading of Plato to Symons in connection with her allegories: "how she reads books until she knows

them by heart--that one priceless volume of Plato's (Jowett's Plato)" (Life, p. 189). Plato has been seen as

the effective founder of many aspects of the allegorical tradition. For a philosopher he was uncharacteristically aware of the limitations of human reason and knowledge. As a consequence, many of his dialogues include 'myths', allegorical narratives or developed metaphors, which serve to image truths beyond the reach of the discursive intellect. Many deal with the human soul. The Phaedrus provides an uncomplicated instance, when the soul is compared to a charioteer driving two steeds, one representing the spiritual, the other the sensual element in man, which the charioteer (reason) has to restrain. The Symposium contains a whole series of allegories, in different styles, on the subject of love. (Allegory, p.7)

Schreiner, too, had reservations about the ability of discursive intellect to reach 'truth' and gives this as her reason for going over to allegories in Woman and Labour, for instance. Her allegories are characteristically concerned with the soul, and the soul's journey, and with the higher and lower faculties of man, particularly in terms of kinds of love. In his treatise on myths, Sallustius (4th century, A.D.) categorises myths and remarks that physical and psychic myths suit poets; physical myths "express the activities of the Gods in the world" and "The psychic way is to regard the activities of the Soul itself" (Allegory, pp. 15-16). In the Middle Ages, when allegorical ways of writing were dominant, "the emphasis tended to move from the external to the internal world" (p. 59) and in extended narratives "the dominant narrative device came to be the pilgrimage or quest—the Pilgrim's Progress from this world to that which is to come" (p. 62). The "otherworld journey" which features in many of Schreiner's dreams is found in both classical and medieval allegory. Allegory and satire, which are sometimes linked in Schreiner's work ("I thought I stood" is an allegorical satire on undesirable feminism and Trooper Peter Halket

may be read as an allegorical satire), were first brought "creatively together in the morality play" (p. 71). Satire and humour, in Schreiner's allegories, as in "The Salvation of a Ministry" (Life, pp.202-205), belong to this tradition. Schreiner's strongly moralised allegories are, like the morality play

a weapon for anyone who felt able to identify himself or his own cause with the side of God and the virtues, that of his enemies with the world, the flesh and the devil. Nor was it limited to Christian values; the form might be adapted to any ethical scheme which involved the possibility of conflict, and to secular as well as to spiritual affairs. (p. 72)

In writing her allegories, Schreiner was thus drawing on a Christian tradition which had already been secularised, and which contained most of the elements she would put to her own use. She seems to have written allegories concentratedly in this period in response to both personal needs and the current literary focus on 'Symbolism' or the 'Decadent movement' as interpreted chiefly by Arthur Symons. Her personal experience had thrown her back on her own resources: she needed to re-affirm her own first principles, and allegory was a form of narrative which lent itself to this purpose, because of its relationship with explanatory myth:

a narrative.... which serves to explain those universal facts which most intimately affect the believer, facts such as time, seasons, crops, tribes, cities, nations, birth, marriage, death, moral laws, the sense of inadequacy and failure and the sense of potential, both of which characterise the greater part of mankind. (Allegory, p.1)

Allegory is a narrative form which withdraws itself from the contingencies of history in order to deal with "the first and last things of history" (p. 44). In this form Schreiner could deal with principles and prophecies, and adopt a literary manner which drew on her favourite Biblical book of Revelations. In Europe she had less of a hold on social realities than she had in Africa,

perhaps one reason why her European experience produced only allegories (apart from the spasmodic revisions of From Man to Man, which involved no original creation), whereas when she returned to Africa she could produce a short story of considerable realism and historical accuracy, such as the story "Eighteen-Ninety-Nine".

Schreiner's use of dreams/allegories was not without contemporary parallels, and in many ways answered to the mood of the times, without embracing the extremes of the Decadent Movement. She read William Morris's News from Nowhere (first published serially in the Commonwealth, 1890) and took it back to Africa to give to her friends to read (Carp, Xmas Day, 1892). The period saw a new emphasis on 'dreams' as an access to 'reality' and as the true province of the artist. Symons was the herald of a new movement which, "after the world had starved its soul long enough", brought "a literature in which the visible world is no longer a reality, and the unseen world no longer a dream". (Symons, p. 83) Yeats described Watts's portrait of Morris as that of "some dreaming beast"²⁹ and wrote in his autobiographical account of these years ("Four Years : 1887-1891") that he had felt the artist should make the visible world vanish and "the world summoned by symbol take its place" (p. 76). At the tail-end of this period, in 1916, James Joyce could still define the literary artist as "the mediator between the world of reality and the world of dreams".³⁰ Travelling around Europe in 1887-1888 Schreiner self-consciously referred to herself as "The Dreamer", indicating the extent to which she had taken on this literary role (Pearson, 5 February 1888).

Schreiner had encountered Symons's poem "Stella Maris" in 1885, and gave Pearson an enthusiastic but rather idealistic account of it; it was about soul and body love, she said:

Nothing I have read by a man has made me feel so near to man as man as reading the Stella Maris. It is a series of sonnets in which is told the story of a man of high intellect who loves a woman merely for physical beauty, with strong passion, & of the bitterness that

follows. It is the old old story of the immortal soul trying to feed itself with earth, but it is told here in a way that comes nearer to me than anywhere else.

(Pearson, October 1885)

This reads like a summary of a Schreiner story, not as a faithful account of Symons' poem, which is the memory of one particular "Juliet of a night" and the "delicious shame" they shared.

But if Schreiner misread Symons, he in turn transformed her and her 'dreams' into the acme of Symbolist art. He describes her creed in terms of his own Symbolist manifesto: "all art is symbol and these (allegories) are pure symbol themselves".³¹

He sees her as the ardent votary of art as a sacred ritual, the agonised and inspired creator of the allegories; he stresses that the allegories are "music, and a picture" and emphasises their rhythmical qualities, as he stresses these qualities in Symbolist literature and the figure of the dancer.³²

Though Symons was probably emphasising those aspects of Schreiner's art which appealed to him, she herself said things about her writing and herself at this time which aligned her with the Symbolist movement. She saw the artist as a solitary figure, and a martyr ("The Artist's Secret") who could not experience normal fulfilments.³³ Symons said he had "always lived as a solitary soul lives in the midst of the world" (p. 20) and he made frequent trips abroad. Schreiner, too, was restlessly travelling through Europe, constantly moving on.³⁴

During this period she often compared her writing with other art forms, such as music and painting. She stressed the rhythmical qualities of the allegories, and sometimes speaks as though she is 'painting' the allegories:

I am, as soon as I've finished this, going to write out a Dream I made at the East End. I've tried to begin twice, but I've never been able to get the colour on to my pen.

(Letters, p. 157)

She speaks also of a feeling of kinship with certain forms of architecture and sculpture, though it is interesting that she preferred the paintings of Dürer to those of Watts:

I love Dürer best of all painters in the world. Oh, I wish you could see his pictures at Munich! So I would paint if I were a painter. It is not any one picture I love especially, it's all his pictures, the spirit of them, whatever they are about. He and Watts, but I love him more than Watts. You know, when I say I love those gates at Florence (of the Baptistery), and Michael Angelo's four figures (in the Medici chapel) and Notre Dame (of Paris) best of all works of art in the world, I mean that I feel one with them. (Letters, pp. 197-198)³⁵

This kind of emphasis on writing as a form of painting, and on the inner 'spirit' of art is very much in the manner of Symons writing about the French Symbolists:

It is the poetry of sensation, of evocation; poetry which paints as well as sings. (Symons, p.21)

Schreiner's feeling for certain forms of architecture is related to the medievalism of the pre-Raphaelite period and its preference for sacred architecture:

What is it that is so wonderful about that chapel /King's College Chapel, Cambridge/. The only other things in architecture which touch me as much are Notre Dame & the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris. Notre Dame must be looked [at] on a dark quiet night just as the darkness is gathering over it. If you have not yet seen the Sainte-Chapelle you must go & see it when you are in Paris, but on a bright spring day when the light is shining through all the windows & you feel just like a little insect buried in the heart of a beautiful transparent flower. It is on the Palais de Justice you know. It dates from

the 13th century. That always seems a century with which I have so much sympathy. (To BM, UCT, 26 December 1904)

At Alassio Schreiner's favourite spot was the Santa Croce chapel, which figures in the allegory "In a Ruined Chapel". In the 'eighties and 'nineties there was an emphasis on aesthetic responses to the sacred; sacred buildings and paintings were admired by a new self-styled elect group of aesthetes. At the same time religion was "humanised", as in many pre-Raphaelite paintings of religious figures and scenes. Schreiner went to see Holman Hunt's portrait of Christ, and told Pearson that it had been the dream of her life to write a life of Jesus in verse. (12 April 1886). Jesus was seen as a socialist of genius, and Schreiner often discusses him in those terms.³⁶

The other art-form central to the period was that of the dance. The dance unified different art-forms and tended to aestheticise the human body, making it a form of symbol in itself, both fluid and reified. The use Schreiner puts the figure of the dancer to in "The Great Heart of England" is characteristic of her relationship to the period and to the Symbolist movement: she imagines herself in a dream as a kind of Isadora Duncan or Loie Fuller wrapped in the "four colours" of the South African flag, but the allegory is at the same time an appeal to the mercy of England; she dances "Because my heart, my heart, is broken" (SDA, p 145).

Despite these obvious affiliations with the Symbolist movement, in Schreiner's allegories, as in the English response to Symbolism generally, "realist and symbolist-aesthetic [impulses]... show a curious tendency to fuse together" (Hough, p.184). Schreiner's missionary background and her concern with the need for social reform keep her from the purist extremes of the 'art-for art's sake' creed, and her allegories retain strong social sympathies and the didacticism of her childhood's religious allegories. In this respect she was strongly expressing an element within the response of certain English artists to the new direction of French

literature and the creed promoted by Symons:

The movement may be towards fantasy and dream, or it may be towards the recognition of the most sordid social actualities; but these do not feel themselves to be vitally opposed, for they are both expressions of the same need. Moral and psychological adventurousness and the pursuit of an exquisite and refined form go hand in hand in England, and even tend to be seen as much the same thing. (Hough, p.184)

Schreiner's allegories, though they mark a retreat from the detail of historical actualities in keeping with the genre, are nevertheless concerned with what she saw as pressing social and moral problems, especially those concerning the position of women and the labouring poor (and later in Africa with the 'oppressed' Boers). These concerns were taken up in the English fiction of the period, chiefly by George Moore, who has been seen as a representative figure who, after "oscillating between aesthetic reverie and naturalism" finally managed in his best work "to present in all their uncompromising contingency the actualities of common experience, and yet to preserve the inevitability of impression, the delicate rightness of diction and rhythm that he had learnt from the high priests of a scrupulous art" (Hough, p.197). Schreiner had read and liked Moore's "The Mummer's Wife", telling Pearson that it was "science, not poetry", and comparing it with Darwin's "Variations of Plants and Animals" (Pearson, 14 June 1885). In her allegories she wanted to express social concern with the poor, the prostitute and the outcast, with whom she felt a great sense of identification and sympathy, but during this period of her life she would do it through 'poetry', the rhythmical evocation of a dream vision.

(iv) Analysis of the 'dreams'

Schreiner's allegories were published in Dreams (1890), a selection chosen by herself, and in Stories, Dreams, and Allegories (1923), a posthumous collection made by S.C. Cronwright with the help of

Havelock Ellis. Apart from the poem "The Cry of South Africa" and three South African allegories, the allegories collected in the latter volume were probably those discarded by Schreiner when she compiled Dreams, which was carefully arranged and selected by her.³⁷ As might be expected, many of the discarded allegories are briefer versions of ideas more fully presented in the Dreams collection. "The Brown Flower" is a weaker and shorter version of "The Lost Joy"; "A Dream of Prayer" is a briefer presentation of the difficulty of forgiveness, which was explored by "In a Ruined Chapel"; "The River of Life" presents one element of the longer allegory "Three Dreams in a Desert" (the idea of a solitary 'crossing' of a river), so does "Life's Gifts" (freedom comes before love). Many of the brief philosophical allegories in the second volume, such as "They Heard", "The Two Paths", and "Workers" present a single idea which was more fully explored in Dreams as part of a longer allegory such as "The Hunter" and "The Sunlight Lay". The allegories in the second volume are thus more elementary in terms of thematic content and artistic complexity. "The Winged Butterfly", for instance, is a presentation of the idea of the solitariness of a highly evolved being, who dies of a broken heart; the same idea is more fully and more specifically explored in "The Hunter", in relation to the artist ("A Dream of Wild Bees"), and in relation to woman ("In a Far-off World") in the earlier volume.

The allegories collected in Dreams can be grouped according to theme. Many of the allegories concern the nature of love, or the relationship between love and other needs or duties: "The Lost Joy" involves a progression from passionate love and joy to a sadder but more permanent companionship, sympathy. "The Gardens of Pleasure" presents the conflict between pleasure and duty in terms of a 'stripping' process which is a recurrent allegorical motif for renunciation. "In a Far-off World" suggests that the best gift a woman can give her lover is freedom from her love (the complementary version of "Life's Gifts"). "In a Ruined Chapel" carries the

epigraph "I cannot forgive—I love" and in it the triangular situation briefly suggested by the third figure in the boat in "In a Far-Off World" is related to the problem of overcoming hatred and achieving forgiveness and charity: here the protagonist who needs to forgive a rival is male, whereas in most of the short stories concerning the triangular love situation there are two women and one man. Sexual transposition is a feature of the allegories as it is of The Story of an African Farm. "The Flower and the Spirit" (in SDA) might also be considered as an allegory on the love theme, dealing with the idea of love at first scorned and then too late desired.

These allegories might be termed philosophical or moral, in that they either state a 'first principle' of male/female relationships or explore a moral conflict within those relationships. There is another group of 3 allegories in Dreams which is related to the 'love' allegories in that it also deals with male/female relationships, but these are more specifically 'feminist' allegories in that they are concerned with woman's struggle to free herself, and they have a historical or prophetic dimension. "Life's Gifts" prophesies that the woman who chooses freedom above love will later be able to enjoy both love and freedom. "I thought I stood" is also a feminist allegory, but it attacks 'selfish' and 'aggressive' feminism as compared with a feminism based on mutual charity between women, especially between the Victorian lady and the prostitute. Thus it is partly satirical, though it also defines what it sees as the 'correct' type of feminism on the basis of which the wrong form is satirised (it takes place in the slightly humorously conceived 'heaven' in which Schreiner locates her satirical allegories: see "The Salvation of a Ministry"). The fullest allegorical statement of feminism, both historical and prophetic, is given in "Three Dreams in a Desert". Woman's history is allegorically presented: the stages of her subjection are outlined; the way in which she will achieve liberation is defined in terms of the allegory, and her future is prophesied. This is 'social' allegory, in that it presents a fuller programme for social

reform in an extended narrative.

"The Sunlight Lay" is another 'social' allegory in that it is a critique of capitalism, though again it presents a basic philosophical premise, the unity of all human beings, and a moral premise, the value of charitable love, in terms of which the social critique is made. The journey through the three heavens condenses a great deal of Schreiner's thought into a concrete form.

A third group could be termed 'existential' allegory in that the theme is the basic quest of life, and sometimes presents 'a soul' as the protagonist (the 'psychic' allegory mentioned by Sallustius as appropriate to poets, see above). "The Hunter" allegory belongs in this group, (as do "They Heard", "The Two Paths", "A Soul's Journey" and "Workers" in Stories, Dreams and Allegories). They all stress the need for solitary struggle, for suffering in order to progress, and they see different human struggles as unified at a higher level. They are generally 'climbing' allegories, and often dialectical, in that they move to a higher level at which opposites are synthesised. They are also cast in an evolutionary framework, in that progress is slow but inevitable, and involves the need for present martyrdom for the sake of the future of the race. The pathfinder is always solitary and a martyr to the future.

A fourth group consists of 'personal' allegories in that they focus on the predicament of the artist, another version of the highly evolved pathfinder because he is gifted with a vision of the ideal ("A Dream of Wild Bees"); another version of the martyr, in that he achieves lasting art only if he paints with his own blood ("The Artist's Secret"), and another version of the solitary figure in that he must renounce personal fulfilment for art and the good of the race ("The Winged Butterfly").³⁸

Allegory is a mode "in which the exploitation of two layers of meaning becomes a formal constituent of the work".³⁹ It has a dynamic narrative structure, within which symbols are often used as static visual components. Schreiner's 'inner' level of meaning, the conceptual framework of which the allegorical narrative offers a concrete embodiment, is more or less available to different interpreters. She sometimes offered brief statements to friends on the

conceptual meaning of an allegory, and on one occasion discussed in detail the conceptual application of many details within "The Sunlight Lay".⁴⁰ Her allegories use recurrent actions and symbols as signifiers of moral, psychological and philosophical meaning, and her best allegories open out into a rich significance.

She often uses the traditional personified abstractions of allegory: in "The Lost Joy" Life meets Love, but the presentation gains in density because Life is a woman, and the Joy they later give up is a child. The reader is constantly moving between the suggestions evoked by the concrete figures and the abstractions they represent;⁴¹ in this allegory, for instance, the emotion aroused by a couple losing a child is part of the effect, and enriches the allegorical 'idea' of the phase of joy being superseded by the phase of sympathy.

The quest situation is basic to the allegories. In the narrative process, there is often a climbing (of a mountain or other steep terrain) to embody Schreiner's basic concepts of difficult progress and ascent to higher levels of being and experience. There are frequent 'crossings' either of bridges or rivers, to suggest a transition from one realm to another, or the fording of an evolutionary hiatus ("Three Dreams"). Sometimes there is a descent into the underworld of classical or Christian myth, with the descent being a stage of suffering or instruction ("The Hunter", "The Sunlight Lay").

Although the terrain is sometimes explicitly African ("Three Dreams" is subtitled "Under a Mimosa Tree"),⁴² the landscape is more frequently the dream landscape of allegory featuring desert, mountain, forest, river and sea. On the dream shore there are either arrivals ("The Lost Joy") or more frequently departures and receding figures in boats leaving the shore ("In a Far-off World"). Sometimes the landscape is historical (the Roman Road in "In a Ruined Chapel") but then the landscape is that of the 'framing' narrative before the transition into dream. Sometimes the setting is more explicitly religious (the chapel) but usually transformed in a significant way by Schreiner: the chapel has no roof and "overhead is the blue, blue Italian sky".⁴³

Within the narrative certain symbolic situations are recurrent. The giving of gifts (most frequently flowers) is usually a benevolent allegorical situation, but the gift is sometimes associated with a stripping process, suggesting loss or renunciation, and is sometimes double-edged, as in "In a Far-off World". Many situations involve difficult moments of choice and allow the allegorist to suggest which choices are beneficial in the long term. Blood and woundings are frequent; they are favourite images of Schreiner's and in the allegories blood takes on a rich significance as a substance capable of miraculous transformation: in "The Artist's Secret" into wonderful paint, and in "The Sunlight Lay" into the wine enjoyed by the rich feasters. Blood at an altar can suggest personal, often female sacrifice, as in "In a Far-off World". There are guides or messengers between realms, for instance God in "The Sunlight Lay" or individual guides who appear at crucial moments in the quest: the figure of Wisdom in "The Hunter". Bondage is another allegorical situation, used to suggest the historical restraints on women in "Three Dreams"; it is connected with the suffering beast of burden image so powerfully used in the beating of the ox in African Farm: the allegorical beast/woman here also blows up the sand with her nostrils.⁴⁴ The numerical sequence of three recurs ("Three Dreams" and in the three heavens of "The Sunlight Lay"), associated with progression. The traditional clusters of light and dark as opposed symbols of good and evil are also central features.

Schreiner's allegories involve a distinctive narrative method. Whereas in the fiction allegory appears as one among many internal narratives, here it is seen as a narrative form in itself. The realistic 'frame' is often very brief, sometimes non-existent, and rises steeply and more or less abruptly into dream-vision. The narrative method involves the transformation of the 'I' or the 'she' or 'he' of the framing narrative into the dreamer or the actor within a dream, depending on the complexity of the structure in each case. If there is a framing narrative or sometimes simply a brief setting, it is always affected by the dream sequence into which it is transformed: the dream again acts in a transforming way

on 'reality' or the setting of the framing narrative, generally in a beneficial way. The dreamer wakes refreshed, with new energy for the struggle. Dream life re-energises real life.

The time sequence of Schreiner's allegories is different from the fiction, in that the major section of the narrative takes place in a timeless dream landscape, though there is progression within that landscape. The framing narrative may be tied to history and geography in certain ways, but the 'dream' occurs in the land beyond time. The allegorist is like the figure of Reflection in "The Lost Joy": "that strange old woman who has always one elbow on her knee, and her chin on her hand, and who steals light out of the past to shed it on the future" (pp. 18-19). The dreamer, having access to a realm beyond time, is thus both prophet and visionary. The narrative time of the longer fiction is telescoped.

An analysis of the narrative structure of "In a Ruined Chapel" will illustrate Schreiner's characteristic techniques in the allegories. The title announces the setting in this case, and the epigraph "I cannot forgive—I love" announces the moral conflict with which the allegory will deal. The framing narrative is more detailed than usual. The interior of the chapel is sketched:

There are four bare walls; there is a Christ upon the walls, in red, carrying his cross, there is a blessed Bambino with the face rubbed out; there is Madonna in blue and red; there are Roman soldiers and a Christ with tied hands.

In these details religious typology and historical fact are intertwined and the final detail stresses Christ in bondage. The further details of the ruin also fuse historical fact and the symbolism of a lost faith. The "blue, blue sky" suggests the replacement of dogma by a 'natural' heaven. The chapel is neglected and solitary, and has the sea at its feet. Its past is suggested by popular legends: it was once a refuge or a place of prayer. Then the historical past is recalled in the old Roman road and is reanimated within the present: "you may almost hear... the sound of that older time, as you sit there in the sun, when Hannibal and his men broke

through the brushwood, and no road was" (p. 100). Now it is quiet except for the occasional passer-by.

Then the first-person actant is introduced into the framing narrative and into the setting "I came here one winter's day"; the actant is apparently the same person as the speaker of the description of the chapel, but this second section is a recollection, a narrative analepsis in relation to the first descriptive narrative. The mood of the protagonist "was weary", the narrator recollects:

The mountains seemed calling to me, but I knew there
would never be a bridge built from them to me; never, never,
never!

There is no 'bridge' to those mountains (to the ideal) in this narrative. The protagonist then 'looked' at the same details of the chapel which were described by the narrator of the opening section, but the details are repeated with variations of detail and wording. The natural 'view' from the chapel is then sketched in more detail, and the protagonist of the first narrative falls asleep. The words "I had a dream" announce the transition from 'reality' to dream. The protagonist of the dream is a man (though the 'I' of the first narrative is not identified as either male or female) who prayed to God for forgiveness, and the conversation about him between an angel and God is reported. The angel has offered the man traditional Christian lessons and advice, but nothing has availed. God then offers the angel further whispered advice so that the man's soul may be saved. The protagonist of the first narrative/the dreamer then partly awakes, and the details of the 'real' setting are mentioned, broken stone and wind in the olive trees. Such partial awakenings are frequent in the allegories; they return us to the setting of the realistic frame, and mark off sections and progressions in the narrative. In the next section of the dream narrative the angel takes the man to a spot and unclothes a human soul before him. When the first stripping is done, of all those outward individual characteristics which distinguish a man from his fellow-man, the man recognises himself, and moves to embrace the soul. Then a further 'stripping' takes place, and

the soul is stripped of those characteristics which separate the individual from God; the man recognises God. Then the angel re-clothes the soul in the form of the man's enemy, and he responds: "How beautiful my brother is". Within the dream narrative the angel returns to God and the two men are together on earth.

The last section returns us to the framing narrative with the words "I awoke". Now the setting is opened by "The blue blue sky" overhead, and the description of the icons moves from the madonna, now "in blue and red" to "The Christ carrying his cross" to "the Roman soldiers with the rod", and finally to "the Blessed Bambino with his broken face". The landscape is positively irradiated, and takes on the characteristic vibration of an (African) landscape informed with fertility and significance:

The olivetrees stood up on either side of the road, their black berries and pale-green leaves stood out against the sky; and the little ice plants hung from the crevices in the wall. It seemed to me as if it must have rained while I was asleep. I thought I had never seen the earth look so beautiful before. I walked down the road. The old, old tiredness was gone..

In the last paragraph a peasant boy passes with his ass and the protagonist feels an impulse to walk by him and hold his hand: the brotherly love of the dream narrative is carried over into the situation of the framing narrative.

If one interprets this allegory in terms of Schreiner's own situation at the time it becomes clear how allegorical narratives could fulfil a particular need during this period of her life. She herself was struggling with feelings of anger and hatred toward Elisabeth Cobb,⁴⁵ and needed to reclaim her as a friend. She was lonely and depressed (like the deserted chapel) and unable to seek solace in her discarded religion (the chapel is ruined). Though the Italian landscape was beautiful (blue sky and sea) she saw no way of contacting spiritual sources of strength (no bridge to the mountain). So she constructs an allegory in which she transforms herself into a narrator in the future, looking back on a suffering

self (the I of the past tense in the framing narrative) whom she then transforms into a dreamer. Within the dream a male protagonist (a male version of herself, like Waldo) is enabled to forgive his enemy by seeing first his enemy's essential identity with himself (love your brother as yourself) and then his essential identity with 'God' (here God as the wholeness and beauty of the universe, not as Christ on the cross). The restored brotherhood between the two men in the dream narrative is then fed back to the first protagonist, who feels happier in herself, and has a renewed appreciation of the chapel (the passive Christ with tied hands is superseded by the active Christ carrying his cross), of the natural landscape, which is slightly Africanised, and of her/his fellow-man, in the impulse towards the peasant boy. The dream-narrative serves as therapy for the protagonist, perhaps for the narrator, who is telling the story at a calmer point in the future, and perhaps for the author, who, by dramatising the enemy at another level, and seeing her essential kinship with herself and the spirit of the universe, might find a way of ceasing to hate her.⁴⁶ The allegory then becomes a positive moral action, not simply a didactic allegory insisting on the old 'law' that you should love your neighbour as yourself, but a moral and artistic use of the allegorical form to effect a release from a trapped and isolated position. Schreiner's allegories could then be seen as a way of transforming experience rather than simply escaping it by transcendence.⁴⁷ The allegories are not retreats into a childhood landscape either,⁴⁸ but make creative use of local European landscape and the literary landscape of allegory. At the same time Schreiner does not retreat into a discarded faith but seeks to re-animate the valuable parts of a dead dogma and synthesise them with her own faith in free-thought and in the unity and vitality of the universe. It is significant that the crucifixion which forms part of the background to the dream is not re-activated in the form of a martyrdom within the dream narrative; instead the moral imagination is put to benevolent use to restore relationships.

Other allegories are perhaps less personal and less therapeutic than this particular instance; "Three Dreams" is concerned with the history and problematic situation of women, and "The Sunlight Lay" is concerned with harmful exploitations of a labouring mass for profit, but all of the allegories seek ways of re-uniting the real and the ideal, history with morality, a damaged self with the self's sources of strength and growth. So that though the allegories are superficially aligned with a fashionable literary movement, they in fact re-state Schreiner's fundamental belief in possibilities of growth, in a striving toward health and wholeness, in the basic kinship of man with man, and in the ability of narrative transformations to effect such a progression.

(v) Analysis of the short stories

Chronologically Schreiner's short stories belong to three different periods: the period before she left Africa for England, the period just after her arrival there, (when her brother Fred probably encouraged her writing ambitions by suggesting she write a few stories for his New College Magazine), or the third period after her return to Africa in 1889. She seems not to have written short stories in the years on the Riviera (1886, 1887) when she was prolifically producing the allegories. "Dream Life and Real Life", the title story of the little volume which appeared in 1893, is the only story which can firmly be dated as belonging to Schreiner's earlier years in Africa. She wrote it at Lily Kloof, which suggests that she was writing it at the same time as, or just before she was revising African Farm, and that it might have certain affinities with that novel. It is possible that she wrote the story even earlier, which her friend G.W. Cross said was the case, presumably on Schreiner's information:

There, too (in the Karoo) was written, even earlier than the African Farm, the little story of a Danish orphan called "Dream Life and Real Life".⁴⁹

"The Adventures of Master Towser" also belongs to the early period, having been written in March 1882 specifically for Fred Schreiner's school magazine. The story was run under the name "Palinsky Smith", under which pseudonym Schreiner published two articles in the same magazine, supposedly by a Jew, called "First Adventures at the Cape", in 1882. "The Wax Doll and the Stepmother : a story for little children", which was only posthumously published by S.C. Cronwright, probably also belongs to this early period, when Schreiner was writing stories both about and for children. Writing stories for children was a natural way of continuing her storytelling as a governess to her young pupils, and a way of bridging the gap between her African experience and the new English environment. The New College Magazine also bridged the gap between isolated fictional activity in Africa and the more professional world of London literary publishing, in which Schreiner only gained a foothold after the success of African Farm.

All three of the stories about children deal with neglected, abused, or exploited children. "Master Towser" and "The Wax Doll" are not set in any specific environment, though the "Nurse Bromage" of the latter suggests an English household. Only "Dream Life" is specifically African, and is subtitled "A little African Story". "Master Towser" and "The Wax-Doll" are both exercises in the pathetic mood, but told with a good deal of charm and with one eye on a young audience. The narrator in both cases adopts a wise and avuncular tone:

No one had ever taught her that it was not money and fine houses and fine clothes that could make a person happy; and so her heart felt all over as though it were pricked by little pins. So the hearts of all people feel, when they want more than they have got and are not full of love. (SDA, p. 101)

Here the basic contrast of Schreiner's early novel Undine is again suggested, between material and emotional wealth. The two stories move in opposite directions: one towards greater and greater

rejection and humiliation, the other toward the establishment of love and harmony. Though both are very simply told, they are not without psychological insight and complexity.

"Master Towser" is a three-part narrative (echoing the recurrent structural division of the allegories) of the adventures of a little dog.⁵⁰ In the first section we hear that he is a miserable dog, for which he gives three reasons: "I'm not any good" and "I want someone to love me" and "I want to help somebody". All of these echo Schreiner's own childhood situation: the sense of guilt, the need to be loved and the desire to serve. Towser's search (Part 2) meets rejection after rejection: he meets a little boy and does an affectionate dance: the boy kicks his nose. Then he is adopted for a while by a pretty lady, but when her pretty lap-dog returns Towser is gradually ousted from her favour and is returned to his former miserable state: "I fancy he had a pain in his heart" the narrator comments. Part 3 is called "His Reward" and reveals the irony of the tale: understanding that it's no good wanting to be loved, he now desires only to be good (and thus stop being a 'wicked' dog). Acting on this principle, he intervenes in a fight between a gipsy and a boy, and his 'reward' for this is to be beaten by the boy whom he rescues. The story, like *Undine*, focuses on the martyr: all Towser wants is to be loved and to be good, but people prefer soulless flatterers and pets to those genuinely seeking affection and virtue. The beating at the end of the story intensifies the martyrdom and the masochism, as it is given after a noble action. The story does suggest the psychology of the outcast: desiring too much affection, he ends up with none, and the ending suggests that when young creatures experience rejection and cruelty, they might not end up as "comfortable respectable dogs" (Waldo, too, will never end up as "a respectable member of society", *SAF*, p.216) The story also suggests that the role of mediator in an argument, and of saviour of a weaker party, might be a rather luckless position to be in.⁵¹

"The Wax Doll and the Stepmother", on the other hand, transforms neglect and misery into a fruitful relationship. It is a 'realistic' version of the gift-giving situation used symbolically in the allegories, and in "The Woman's Rose". It also draws on the traditional image of the 'wicked stepmother' of fairytale and reverses the stereotype. Though both "Master Towser" and "The Wax Doll" are realistically presented, the vagueness of their setting, and the nature of their material relate them to childhood fantasy: in one form the fantasy of total rejection and martyrdom; in the other the fantasy of total reconciliation and love. The latter fantasy was an important part of Schreiner's life, as her story to Symons about her weeping and repentant mother visiting her after reading one of her stories indicates (Life, p.186). The role of such consoling 'daydreaming' is apparent in her account to Symons of

the little stories she makes up just to amuse herself, and tell herself over and over again in just the same words—all happy and many of them about the love of a step-mother and step-daughter!— the most beautiful of affections, because the rarest (her own mother loves a step-daughter better than any of her own daughters, "except me"). (Life, p.188)

Tant' Sannie is a wicked stepmother to Em in the early stages of African Farm, but in "The Wax Doll" the children, Rolly and Nina, are finally accepted and loved by their new mother. The story turns cleverly on the parallels and differences between the doll and the stepmother who are linked in the title. The doll Nina has been given is fairly 'real' in having real hair and eyelashes, and teeth. The nurse is harsh to Nina, and beats her when she does not know her lessons, and takes the doll away from her. When the stepmother arrives, she is colder and more wooden than the wax doll (p. 102): she does not speak to them or kiss Nina. Nina then 'sacrifices' her doll to the stepmother doll, hoping to bring the 'mother' in her to life by the gift. Rolly, who loves Nina and is loyal to her, is the go-between, and the wax doll is the gift and the sacrifice. The plan works: the mother 'doll' is melted by the gift and comes to kiss them and put them to bed. Nina's

relationship with a lifelike doll is replaced by an actual loving relationship between stepmother and daughter. By giving her stepmother the gift, Nina presents her with an image of herself as little girl (a doll who cannot come to life until it is loved) and of her stepmother (the mother who has been behaving as artificially as a doll). The situation is a microcosm of Rebekah's story in the Prelude to From Man to Man, where a ritualistic gift-giving also creates family affection.

"Dream Life and Real Life" is interesting because of its relationship with African Farm, and because of its skilful narrative interweaving of reality and dream in the shorter scope of a story. It has affinities with the allegories: the little girl at once lies down and dreams, but is not obviously allegorical and is firmly tied to an African setting and vocabulary.⁵² There are two dreams which feature as separate internal narratives. The story thus illustrates Schreiner's characteristic narrative method in little. The opening depicts the same desolate setting as the daytime farm in African Farm: red sand, thorny bushes, heat and desolation. The narrative voice of the framing story alternates narration and moral generalisations as in African Farm; on the suffering of children:

If an angel should gather up in his cup all the tears that have been shed, I think the bitterest would be those of children (p. 14);

on the bitterness of servitude:

When good food is thrown at you by other people, strange to say, it is very bitter; but whatever you find yourself is sweet (p. 30);

and on solitude:

When you have no one to love you, you love the dumb things very much (p. 33-34).

Such generalisations are as pithy and economical as those of African Farm, and cover similar topics.

Instead of a night-time description to convey the beauty of the farm, we are given Jannita's dream of the farm and its inhabitants benevolently transformed by food, kindness and gifts (the rose again), and the daily punitive ritual of counting the sheep which will soon feature in the main narrative is transformed by a biblical image: the stick becomes a lily rod with seven blossoms at the end. The dream is both fantasy fulfilment and reconciliation (her dead father appears and comforts her) and it serves to provide information: that Jannita is the orphaned child of a Danish father and has been indentured as a servant to a harsh family of Boers. Schreiner's own situation is here more nakedly presented than in African Farm, in which Waldo is a male rural labourer and son of a German missionary; Jannita's situation as a female 'slave' with a dead father answers more closely to Schreiner's sense of her own place in the Boer households of the Karoo and to her sense of the historical victims in a 'slave-owning' society. As in the other two stories, the little girl is lonely, victimised, beaten for losing a sheep (a parallel to Otto's situation in African Farm) and suffers afterwards in the out-house (Waldo in the fuelhouse). The skill of the narrative technique is apparent in the way the first dream expresses Jannita's feelings about her situation, conveys information necessary to the plot, and parallels the 'real-life' intrusion of the evil-looking Hottentot (his yellow trousers allow us to identify him later in the story) who steals the Angora goat. The use of symbolic foreshadowings of later situations is equally skilful: the 'kid' whose throat is slit by the three men is an omen of what will follow later; the wild buck leaping over the veld persuades Jannita to follow suit and run away from the farm (compare the description of the black prisoner's escape in Trooper Peter). The narrative opens out into good and bad places, like Schreiner's more extended narratives: the freedom of the river, the security of the domesticated cave, the frightening place where the trees are too close together. The two 'paths' back to the farmhouse provide images of the alternative responses to Boer cruelty: either the revenge preached by the Bushman whose mother the Dutch burnt alive in her hut, or the charity and forgiveness of little Jannita who runs back to

warn the farmer of the impending attack. Jannita's situation is that of mediator and martyr (like Towser) whose attempts to save someone end in pain for the saviour. The paradigm of the story is both Christian (the redeemer is sacrificed) and political: the 'liberal' who intervenes between the abused indigenous African (the English navy is just there for the money, like Trooper Peter and Blenkins, and has no emotional grudge) and the Dutch master is crushed in a vice. His/her warning is successful, but the warning is also her death-cry. The story seems to understand the liberal position better than Schreiner herself knew. The story handles realistic narrative, the two dreams, the interweaving of moral maxims, information and suspenseful murder story with great skill, showing what Schreiner could do with the short story form while not forsaking her own narrative technique of interweaving dream life and real life.

Of the remaining five published stories, four were written in the years 1890 to 1892, shortly after Schreiner's return to Africa; the last ("Eighteen-Ninety-Nine") was written in 1904, apparently the only successfully completed story of a whole group Schreiner planned to write on the Anglo-Boer war.⁵³ The first four deal with aspects of love and sexual competition, the subject that was still engrossing Schreiner's mind after her painful emotional experiences in England. "The Woman's Rose" is an autobiographical version⁵⁴ of the allegory "I Thought I stood" and a realistic version of the allegorical gift-giving as reconciliation. It is presented as a brief anecdote or memory, and Schreiner said she wrote it for a woman's paper, but a friend she sent it to had sent it to The New Review (To Mary Sauer, SAL, 1891). It was clearly intended to express Schreiner's belief in female solidarity as the basis of the woman's movement, and in The New Review it carried an epigraph from "I Thought I stood" : "And I saw that the women also held each other's hands". As in the allegories, the little story of two women rising above jealousy and sexual competition caused by the behaviour of the men in a small African village is one which ends on a note of optimism and renewed strength: "spring cannot fail us". Its narrative structure is circular (beginning and ending with the flower in the box of mementoes) and its narrative voice is that of nostalgia

and memory. But the autobiographical recollection is intended as a statement of a feminist principle (women need to be united) and a moral preference (charity above competition).

The other three stories of this period deal more closely with male/female relationships: "On the Banks of a Full River" has two women stranded at a coach stop exchanging stories of their relationships with men (the manuscript is incomplete); "The Policy in Favour of Protection" has an older woman renouncing her claim on a man in favour of a younger woman who does not marry him either; "The Buddhist Priest's Wife" presents a conversation between an intellectual woman and a prosperous politician on the eve of her departure to foreign lands. All three deal with the ironies set up between head and heart, motive and result, appearance and reality, in love relationships. "On the Banks of a Full River" is interesting from the point of view of narrative exchange: the young girl tells of a boy she cared for who had come to prefer a flattering woman whom she describes as a 'snake' and a 'toad'; her response is angry and full of hatred (like Ally's response to cruelty and injustice in "Diamond Fields"). The older woman then responds with a story which she presents as not her own, but of a younger and older woman both in love with the same man (a situation whose details recall the Schreiner-Cobb-Pearson triangle quite closely). The younger woman fled to Africa and married a man dying of consumption. The older woman stayed close to the man until her husband died. The ending is cryptic, with the older woman saying "Pity her, she married him" and saying that the two women met again in Africa, once. The manuscript seems to have needed further revision, but it was clearly intended to have a surprise identification of the narrator of the second story as the older woman of the story, thus indicating that in both cases (the young girl who loses in the first story, and the older woman who triumphs in the second), nobody wins. The older and younger narrators in the story would then coincide in situation with the two women in the second story. Schreiner seems to have been trying to vary the narrative manipulation of autobiographical material in order to create maximum

distance and control. But the fragmented state of the story makes a final assessment difficult.

"The Policy in Favour of Protection—Was it Right—Was it Wrong?" is another approach to the same topic of female sexual competition, presenting it as a moral problem (indicated by the sub-title) and using, interestingly, the situation of free trade versus protectionism as an economic analogy for open sexual competition versus the protection of the 'weaker' woman by the stronger. The story situation is close to Schreiner's own situation in London, and there is more than one possible autobiographical source.⁵⁵ There is some irony in the needless female sacrifice, and in the fact that the younger woman who declares undying love for the male writer is more easily consoled for his loss than the 'strong' woman writer who nobly renounces him. The martyrdom of the older woman is perhaps too uncritically presented:

the elder knelt down by the chair, and wailed like a little child when you have struck it and it does not dare to cry loud. (p. 89)⁵⁶

Of "The Buddhist Priest's Wife" Schreiner thought very highly. She told Mary Sauer it was "the only thing in which I've spoken from all sides" (SAL, January 1892). She said it dealt with "the whole subject of sex as far as my 10 years work on the subject have brought me" and that it posed the issue "Is it right for 'higher' beings to force their sexual ideal onto a lower"? (Letters, p.193) She also told her brother it was the best thing she'd written (UCT, 13 September 1892). This evaluation seems surprisingly high for a story so taken up with a conversation which at many points almost becomes a lecture. Schreiner's opinion clearly rests on the statement of principles which were very important to her: the story was in fact an aspect of her thinking on sexual relationships which she had chosen to "throw into the form of" a story in this case (Letters, p.193). The story sets out her views on marriage, sensuality versus intellectual friendship, the need women feel to trap men by indirect means whereas men can openly

court women, and other related themes. The views are those exchanged in her letters with Pearson, and the man in the story bears some resemblance to Pearson (a man who might have fallen in love with her except that she criticised his ideas too frankly!).⁵⁷ In this story, as in "On the Banks of a Full River" the story situations are very close to Schreiner's real-life entanglements, but the stories transform an unavoidable rejection into a voluntary renunciation.

"Eighteen-Ninety-Nine" was written after a decade (the eighteen-nineties) of severe social and political tension in South Africa, a period which had produced Trooper Peter Halket in 1897. The story is deeply rooted in a specific time and place, though its 'gem' is contained in the war allegory "Seeds A-Growing". It covers the early history of the Great Trek, and then uses the sequence of deaths within one family to mark off the phases of Afrikaner history and Anglo-Afrikaner conflict: the pioneering days and early settlement in the Transvaal (death by hunting); the wars with African tribes which claim lives in the conflict over territory; the fight for independence from English control (death in the war of 1881) and finally the build-up to the Anglo-Boer War of 1899 which claims the life of the grandchild. Each death is seen as anchoring the family more firmly in the land, and the young grandchild is linked with Christ and a young fertility god. Here history again intersects with religious typology, and the chronological progression suggested by the dates inside the story is set over against an inevitable sense of recurrence generated by the pattern of the repeated deaths. The mood is elegiac, and is conditioned by the constant presence of the two women, and the endurance and watchfulness of the older woman. The story is a triumph of realistic method (all the detailed manuscript changes add concreteness of detail and emphasize the bonding with the land),⁵⁸ and yet the central symbolic sacrifice scene, and the symbolic transformation of blood into harvest is never lost sight of. The story also has remarkable continuity and unity of mood and tone, only the sequel sections being allowed to express any bitterness or irony.

"Eighteen-Ninety-Nine" represents an unusual fusion of the Afrikaner side of South African history with the victim figures which Schreiner usually situates versus Afrikaner power. The protagonists are both women (thus enduring the 'natural' sorrow of women who lose husbands and sons) and war 'victims': these two victim-situations seem to override the associations of the Afrikaner with power, control of the land, and ill-treatment of indigenous black and English 'social' inferiors. The whole story serves as a narrative analepsis of sorts, one which explains the Afrikaner's rootedness in, and love of the land in terms of the blood shed at various stages of his conflicted history in South Africa. At the same time the women are impersonally viewed and never sentimentalised. The story thus indicates the extent to which Schreiner's sympathies (like those of many other English-speaking South Africans) shifted under the pressure of a direct attack by England on South Africa. It is significant, too, that in a story which deals so directly and realistically with the history of South Africa, the protagonists should be Afrikaners and the sacrificial figure a male Afrikaner crucified repeatedly (3 bullet wounds and 4 bayonet stabs) by the English (SDA, p.51). At the same time the crazy pride of the old woman at the manner of her grandson's death is firmly placed by the narrator (p. 51). Though the view of South African history which is presented is one-sided and dwells on the emotive points of Afrikaner history (the trek, the dangers of life in the wild which kill two of the menfolk, wars with African tribes, and the wars of independence, Slachter's Nek, the struggle against greedy land-grabbing English), it is clearly indicated that this view is a subjective one, and much of it is drawn from the old woman's patriotic memory in the form of internal narratives to the little grandson. The whole story is thus focalised through the consciousness of the old woman, apart from the brief sequels. The sequels indicate the looting and appropriation of the emblems of Afrikaner life and resistance by the British, and stress that foreign capitalists who buy land for economic exploitation never own it as those do who have

suffered and fought for it. This is in keeping with Schreiner's view that battles against the English were fought on a wider front, against foreign capitalism.

(vi) Conclusion

Schreiner's short works, whether allegories or stories, seem to have been written when she felt incapable of sustaining longer projects. They demonstrate a wide range of allegorical to realistic narrative forms, some of them blending the two in different ways. The allegories provide useful links with some of the basic concepts and conflicts underlying the longer fictions, and they demonstrate Schreiner's feeling for a literary fashion without abandoning her own beliefs and characteristic techniques. Nevertheless, the allegories have dated more than the novels, including Trooper Peter Halket, which has the strongest and most extended allegorical section of the three. Trooper Peter Halket demonstrates that the dream/allegory form can remain viable if connected with strong historical and social insight. Schreiner's individual allegories are probably disappointing now because their themes are sometimes universalised to the point of triteness, and their vision, being abstracted from the contemporary texture of society, is at the same time paradoxically locked into a Victorian evolutionary view of what a Utopian future would be like. The short stories, apart from "Dream Life and Real Life" and "Eighteen-Ninety-Nine", are rather slight and demonstrate a tendency to turn emotional disappointment into noble attitudinising. However, these are generally stories she chose not to publish in her own lifetime. The short story is not a form generally suited to her talents, and not one she cared to practise frequently (though "Eighteen-Ninety-Nine" shows what she could do at her best when her historical and local sympathies were deeply touched). They were written in the difficult years when Schreiner was wanting to complete her long novel, From Man to Man, and only the profound urgency and partisanship aroused by Rhodes's activities in Mashonaland could move her to create another fiction of any length.

Notes.

1. 'Valch' seems to be a personal usage expressing disgust or dislike.
2. "Some Platonic myths....reveal a kinship with the fables attributed to the sixth century B.C. Greek, Aesop.... Aesop's fables were generally animal stories with a moralizing application to human life". John MacQueen, Allegory, Critical Idiom Series (London : Methuen, 1970), p.9. Schreiner's fondness for African animals and landscape made the use of such little fables a natural device in her prose arguments.
3. See Life, p.152 : Jan. 5, 1882 "I wrote "The Lost Joy" for my Dadda [Fred Schreiner] today. Short allegories are all I feel a wish to write. Also Life, p.172 : Sept. 12th, Harrow [1886] - "Writing out little story, too much smashed up to do big work". And in a letter to Pearson, Sept. 1886 she says she has "made little stories of the kind you hate. One can't do big work unless one feels strong or 'vital!'" (Pearson).
4. See for instance, Letters, p.113. And she enclosed allegories to Pearson, 30 January 1887; on the 5th February 1888 she sends him another manuscript, saying "You will not allow me to publish it if it is unsuitable. You will judge it as if it were your own?"
5. This was "A Dream of Wild Bees", published in Oscar Wilde's The Woman's World, September 1888.
6. See "Olive Schreiner. A Publisher's Memories", UCT.
7. The Bookbuyer, Vol. 8 (February 1891); Vanity Fair, Vol. 44 (7 February 1891); W.T. Stead, "A Vision of Hell", Review of Reviews, Vol. 8 (April 1890); Overland (February, 1892).

8. She wrote to W.P. Schreiner (UCT, 1890), that Ellis and Symons had taken the MS of Dreams from Blackwoods (where she had originally sent it) to Fisher Unwin.
9. The Athenaeum, No. 3298 (10 January 1891). This was the most substantial and favourable review given to Dreams.
10. "African Moonshine", In a Good Cause (London : Wells & Gardner, Darton & Co., 1885).
11. Pearson pamphlet in University College, Pearson collection (London: Wm. Reeves, n.d.). The epigraph uses the lines concerning the wise woman, Reflection, who takes light from the past and sheds it on the future.
12. Vera Brittain, Lady into Woman, quoted by H. Lily Guinsberg, Centenary paper, SAL.
13. Letter to The Listener by E. Sylvia Pankhurst, 5 May 1955.
14. See Elisabeth Cobb's rather spiteful comments on Schreiner in letters to Pearson: "I think perhaps she is wanting in culture" (16 February, 1885); "Miss Schreiner throws herself into every type of character" (3 June, 1885). She also commented on Schreiner's vigorous use of her hands as unladylike. See Henry Salt on her "frank, almost immodest utterances" (OS, p.145).
15. This "sadist" story has a fuller life in popular biography than in ascertainable fact, except for Ellis's probably reliable report that she became involved with this man shortly after her arrival in England and for years expected him to come back into her life. She told Ellis, with a melodramatic flourish, that she wanted him to "tread on her and stamp her fine into powder".

16. She seems to have had some contact with prostitutes in the East End, and wrote to Pearson after reading W.T. Stead's revelations of procuration in "The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon" in July 1885 that she felt a "sense of agonised oneness" with old prostitutes; "she was myself under different circumstances". In her first years in England she told Ellis that she felt "just like a prostitute" (HRC). See also OS, p.157.
17. "Symons's attention to the sensual underworld of the city, to prostitutes and their clients, 'Juliets of a night', the chance romances of the streets, this too was a new departure". (Roger Holdsworth, Introduction to Arthur Symons Poetry & Prose (London: Carcanet Press, 1974), p.12. See also Bertie's experiences in London in From Man to Man.
18. See the letter about London being only redeemable by "more love, and more sympathy" (Letters, p.18).
19. She later wrote to Mary Brown's daughter that "one of the two great mistakes" which had made her life useless was not sticking it out at the Edinburgh Infirmary and finishing the training as a nurse (SAL, 31 December 1909). The 'other' mistake is left as a cryptic hint.
20. At the end of her relationship with Pearson Schreiner was returned to the same state of despair she had felt at 15, at the time of the Gau affair. See Letters, p.106.
21. See the letters concerning a Miss Agnes Jones exchanged by Schreiner and Ellis, HRC, 1884.
22. She told Ellis it had always been her way to renounce anyone rather than compete for love. She repeated this to Carpenter, that she would "never care for a man whom another woman thought she had any claim to" (Carp. 21 December 1884).

23. See Letters, p.75: "I must live to write that story I've had in my head so many years, about the woman who marries a man who's loved another woman as a mistress before and how she gets the other woman so beautifully to live with them". Her own determination to love and forgive Mrs. Cobb for whatever emotional injury she felt had been done to her is apparent in her letters to Ellis about "making up" with her (5 December 1888, Albany) and to Carpenter expressing her joy when a letter she had been waiting for for two years from Mrs. Cobb arrived (Carp, 1 December 1888).
24. See Sheila Rowbotham & Jeffrey Weeks, Socialism and the New Life : The Personal and Sexual Politics of Edward Carpenter and Havelock Ellis (London, Pluto Press, 1977).
25. Edward Carpenter, Towards Democracy (London: Allen & Unwin : 1917), pp. 144-145.
26. See Ellis, HRC and Life, p. 189. The book is in the Cradock Library Collection, No. 21.
27. "The Lost Joy" was begun at Hertzog in 1871, when Schreiner was suffering after the Gau affair; but finished in England (Letters, p.177).
28. For a fuller discussion see my own "Olive Schreiner, Child of Queen Victoria: Stories, Dreams and Allegories" in the Casebook.
29. See W.B. Yeats "Four Years 1887-1891" in W.B. Yeats, Selected Prose(ed.)Norman Jeffares (London : Macmillan, 1976),
30. Quoted by Graham Hough, "George Moore and the Nineties", Image and Experience (London : Duckworth, 1960), p.177.
31. Compare Symons's review of Dreams (quoted above) and his own description of Villiers' Axël as "pure symbol, of sheer poetry" (Symons in Holdsworth, p.76)

32. See Symons's poem "Nora on the Pavement", "keeping time along with Life's capricious rhythm", and his belief that the dancer "in her rhythm reveals to you the soul of her imagined being" (Symons in Holdsworth, p.82). For a full critical discussion of the relationship between dancer and the poetic image, see Frank Kermode's Romantic Image (London : Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957) and "Poet and Dancer before Diaghilev" in Modern Essays (London : Fontana 1971).
33. See Kermode: "These two beliefs - in the Image as a radiant truth out of space and time and in the necessary isolation or estrangement of men who can perceive it - are inextricably associated" (Romantic Image, p.2). See also Symons: "The man of genius is fundamentally abnormal" (p. 98),
34. "There is nothing helps one like travelling when one is in pain" (Carp, 23 April 1887) and "such a terrible melancholy comes over me when I've been a few days in a place that I have to move on. It's like having brain fever". Schreiner had an almost total emotional "breakdown" before she fled England in 1886; Symons suffered a complete mental breakdown in the autumn of 1908.
35. In her preference for Dürer (1471-1528), Schreiner was aligning herself with a German allegorical tradition of visual art, Dürer's engravings being on subjects like "Knight, Death and the Devil". Kermode writes that the "view of melancholy-in-genius probably goes back, through Burton, to an older opinion of the necessity of melancholy in artists: we have a sudden perspective, back to Dürer and Ficino" (R.I., p.8).
36. See her comments to Croubie-Brown on the interpretation of "The Sunlight Lay" (footnote 40, below) and Letters, p.145.

37. She was definite about their being rejects: "No, I haven't any more allegories to give. All the others are too personal (Letters, p.196).

38. See Schreiner's brief unpublished allegory, Harpenden from the train to London, 1881 :

The poet's soul lay in its agony struggling before God,
& it cried "Why must I suffer thus?" God said, "That one of my sparks may fall on thee, & that in thy struggle it may chance to take light, & blaze up & give a little light to the world - therefore."
(SAL)

39. Graham Hough, An Essay on Criticism (London : Duckworth, 1966), p. 121.

40. See the text of "The Sunlight Lay" with annotations by V.Croumie-Brown after a discussion with Schreiner, UCT. This is a source of illumination for From Man to Man as well, since Schreiner said the novel was an objective form of the three heavens of "The Sunlight Lay" (Letters, p.199).

41. This rather odd "shifting" the reader constantly makes has been commented on by a Dutch critic, C.K. Elout (Elout and Rompel, Olive Schreiner, n.d. Gubbins collection). He says of "The Hunter":

Wetend dat dit all s maar gefabel is, kan men zich van de gedachte aan werkelijkheid niet losmaken. En telkens weer, bij het steeds stijgen van de fantasie, krijgt men een uitkyk op werkelijkheid, zoals bij het rondklimmen in een hoogen toren van tijd tot tijd een uitkyk doer een venster. (p. 7)

42. An interesting allegorical transposition of the "Mimosas" (thorn trees) found in African Farm and From Man to Man.

43. See Schreiner's letter to Carpenter about having always wanted a room in which to worship her dead:
...it would be like a little chapel--the only chapel I can think of--God, the whole life doesn't need a chapel--the sky is his roof. (Albany, March 1908)
44. The realistic version of bondage occurs in African Farm when Waldo is tied up and flogged; Schreiner's own account of being beaten stressed the restraint of being held down and beaten.
45. She wrote to Carpenter that she would never get together with Pearson again, but was "trying to love and forgive his friends" (Carp, 28th January 1881).
46. A similar moral problem is experienced by Andrina in Pauline Smith's The Beadle, when she prays to stop hating the woman who has taken away her lover; her problem is solved by the discovery that she is carrying his child.
47. See First and Scott, Olive Schreiner, p. 183 : "'Dreaming' was a way of transcending pain and fictionalizing her experience".
48. First and Scott argue that "Most of the allegories, in fact, were set in the desert of Olive's childhood, and they gave her a way of freeing herself, of letting her consciousness drift over her own past". This account suggests a very passive and escapist process, and ignores the varied use to which Schreiner puts African landscapes. (The Karoo is not "a desert", either in her fiction or in reality).
49. G.W. Cross, "Olive Schreiner", S.A. Literary Portraits No. VI, S.A. Bookman No. 2 (January 1911), p. 69.
50. "Master Towser" is a realistic version of Schreiner's animal fables, here used for self-expression rather than didactic purposes.

51. Schreiner said regarding the angry response which the Dutch (Boers) gave her own championship of them : "I feel just like a man who goes to help another man whom he feels is being unjustly treated and the man he is helping jumps up and gives him a blow between the eyes" (To Mary Sauer, SAL, No. 101).
52. "Kopje" and "sloot" carry English glosses within the text, somewhat awkwardly interrupting the flow of the story. The story, like African Farm, carries the penalty of being anchored in a local milieu and language but published by an English publisher for an English audience. The gloss (presumably provided by Schreiner) on "kopje" is interesting : " 'Kopjes', in the Karroo, are hillocks of stones, that rise up singly or in clusters, here and there; presenting sometimes the fantastic appearance of old ruined castles or giant graves, the work of human hands" (p. 24 DL & RL). This gloss includes an imaginative response to 'kopjes.' shared by Waldo in African Farm, who also thought the kopje was a giant's grave.
53. In a letter to Isie Smuts (SAL, 11 July 1902), Schreiner said she had 3 stories written in her head, one called "The Last of the Van Der Spuys", with the motto "Thou fool that which thou sowest is not quickened unless it die". (This was the first title of "Eighteen-Ninety-Nine", the second was "Elandslaagte"). "The scene of that, is in the Northern Transvaal, about two years ago. The second is called 'Where is the lad?' and the scene is laid in the Prieska district, about a year and a half ago. The third is called 'Gerbrech, or the Queen's Cannister'. The cannister is one of those little, common, tin tea cannisters, with Queen Victoria's picture on it which little Boer girls used often to prize so on out of the way farms. Imagine the scene to be somewhere in the Colesberg district, about a year ago". It is clear here that these war stories all had a specific time and place setting, and

the idea was to allow a war memento or relic to feature as a trigger for memory (see the "rose" memento in a keepsake box for "the Woman's Rose" and the rifle and "stoof" prized by the British at the end of "Eighteen-Ninety-Nine").

54. See the letter to Mrs. Brown (1904?) in which Schreiner speaks of visiting the wife of a Railway Engineer and her mother, and discovering that they were the sister and mother of the girl she last saw at 16 who was the origin of the girl in "The Woman's Rose". She had kept the rose till it was destroyed in her Johannesburg house. "She married, went to South America, had 7 children, & died there from taking poison by mistake, they say" (SAL),
55. Vera Buchanan Gould, in an interview with Lily Guinsberg (SAL, 11 November 1948) said that the Mary Sauer letters "revealed the quixotic drama of Olive's association with Havelock Ellis ...a revelation of Olive's generous and self-sacrificing nature". If Schreiner thought she had voluntarily renounced Ellis for another woman, there seems to be little evidence to support this. Their relationship settled down into a friendship, and though there was 'another woman', Miss Jones, Schreiner and Ellis both seem to have disliked her, though Miss Jones clearly felt she had some claim (see HRC correspondence). Ellis met Edith Lees in 1887 but only became a close friend of hers in 1890, by which time Schreiner was back in South Africa. And Schreiner certainly never 'renounced' Pearson in favour of another, but fled from his rejection of her intensely emotional and (he claimed) passionate advances. In Schreiner's case renunciation seems to have been a rationalisation of the breakdown of a relationship, though she might well have made some noble (and meaningless?) gesture toward a man of the kind recorded in this story.

56. The "vulnerable child" inside "the strong woman" was something of a Victorian commonplace in fiction: see George Eliot's description of Dorothea Brooke when emotionally wounded by witnessing the scene between Will Ladislaw and Rosamond Vincy : "her grand woman's frame was shaken by sobs as if she had been a despairing child", Middlemarch (Hammondsworth : Penguin, 1965), p.844.
57. Schreiner attacked Pearson's paper on "The Woman Question" because it failed to treat "the Man Question" (Pearson coll.) and other letters frankly express disagreement with some of his ideas.
58. The manuscript is in the SAL collection.

CHAPTER 6

TROOPER PETER HALKET

(i) Schreiner's return to Africa

Schreiner's restless and unhappy European wanderings in the late eighteen-eighties, sprang from emotional distress, and had been characterised by bursts of intense but shortlived creative activity, usually on a high level of abstraction. Her return to Africa in 1889 and the increasingly tense political pressures of the next decade, focused her talents sharply on contemporary issues : the territorial struggle between Rhodes and Kruger, the attempts by foreign capitalists to annex and exploit the 'hinterland', the ensuing conflicts and rebellions in Matabeleland and Mashonaland, the Jameson Raid and the Anglo-Boer War. Trooper Peter Halket is best understood in the context of her partisan devotion of her writer's talent to political intervention in Southern African affairs; she wanted to de-mythologise Rhodes and check his power over the Afrikaner Bond and over the minds of South Africans generally; she hoped to avert the dangers of capitalist exploitation and of war with England, which she saw as flowing inevitably from Rhodes's monopolistic practice and his territorial ambitions. Trooper Peter Halket was one more blow designed to break the "nightmare power" which Rhodes exerted over South Africa,¹ and it belongs in a sequence of writings all of which had the same aim: letters to politicians, including W.P. Schreiner, Smuts, Milner and Hofmeyr; the anti-Rhodes speech delivered by S.C. Cronwright in the Kimberley Town Hall ("The Political Situation") in 1895, her early skit on Rhodes when he voted for the 'Strop Bill' in Parliament, her later speeches and writings immediately before and during the Anglo-Boer War at the end of the decade. Her writing during the decade was intended to discredit Rhodes and his policies in the eyes of the South Africans and the English, to turn the course of history with the power of rhetorical eloquence and so avert the catastrophic

outcome which she realised early on, once she understood Rhodes's aims and policies, was threatening the country.

Even before her return to South Africa, she had become aware of Rhodes, connecting him with magnificent philanthropical designs for the African continent (Life, p. 211, p.279), with a power of genius, parallel to her own, but destined to be realised in the real world of things rather than the fictional world of the writer (Rhodes, 15 November 1890). It was important to her, therefore, that his general view of things should be like her own, designed to benefit the land and its native inhabitants, to conserve and develop life rather than exploit and destroy it. Her earliest view of Matabeleland and Mashonaland had been coloured by romantic dreams of a magical African interior; it was a geographical equivalent to the harmonious natural Utopia she often depicts in her fiction:

It is the land of Livingstone. Some of us remember on hot Sunday afternoons, as little children, when no more worldly book than missionary travels was allowed us, how we sat on our stools and looked out into the sunshine and dreamed of that land. Of the Garden Island, where the smoke of the mighty falls goes up, whose roar is heard twenty-five miles off; of hippopotami playing in the water, and of elephants and lions, and white rhinoceroses. We had heard of a man on the north of the Limpopo, who once saw three lions lying under the trees on the grass like calves, and he walked straight past them, and they looked at him and did nothing. We had heard of great ruins — ruins which lay there overgrown with weeds and trees. From there we believed the Queen of Sheba brought the peacocks and the gold for King Solomon. We meditated over it deeply. Yes, we should go and see it. Up a valley, a great white rhinoceros would wade with its feet in the water; on each side under the trees zebra and antelopes would stand quietly feeding on the green grassThe very names Zambesi and Limpopo drew us, with the lure of the unknown.²

In this Utopian vision, reminiscent of Joseph Conrad's childhood poring over the map of Central Africa,³ an idyll of peaceful interrelationships among man, animal and natural landscape, there are elements of legend, fantasy, and childish longing. It was this Utopian landscape which Rhodes would enter and seek to destroy, thus violating Schreiner's deepest affinities with Africa and its creatures. One of her plans, formulated in the early eighteen-nineties when she was writing the essays which would be assembled as Thoughts on South Africa, was to realise her childhood fantasy in practical terms by making Mashonaland into a game reserve. She formulated this project in 1891 in "Our Wasteland in Mashonaland".⁴ But even by then, the seeds of the Matabele and Mashona rebellions had been planted, and Schreiner recognised this when she wrote of "the land of Livingstone" :

Even today there is still much to be learnt with regard to these lands. To the west it is inhabited by the Bamangwato, under their chief Kame; in the centre by the brave warlike Matabele, under the chief Lobengula; in the east by the mild, industrious Mashonas, on whom the Matabele raid; and there are today the men of the British South Africa Company looking for gold.

(Thoughts on SA, p.47)

Schreiner's return to Africa thus brought a renewed commitment to the country, but it was a commitment primarily conceived in terms of the land itself, and the native inhabitants, rather than in terms of the white colonial population, from whom she felt herself estranged after her contacts with European intellectuals. She felt alienated from a "whole nation of lower middle-class Philistines",⁵ but her renewed contact with African landscapes brought peace and invigoration:

I can't describe to anyone the love I have to this African scenery; it is to all others as the face of the woman he loves best is to a man as compared to all other faces.
(Letters, p.183)

The plants here are so beautiful to me and the red sand. The plants seem to me like living things and I love them; I like to touch them. When I wake up in the night I think I

shall see them next day. They are the only things I feel near to in Africa, and the sky and the stars and the mountains. I like the ants too, and the little mierkats.

(Letters, p.186)

Here Schreiner is cataloguing the basics of the African landscapes from whose red sand The Story of an African Farm had originally grown. It was this landscape, and her sense of its vitality and enduring power, which would be threatened by Rhodes and his territorial expansion. Those South Africans who worshipped Rhodes would be collaborators in the destruction of the natural and mineral wealth of the country. Rhodes would thus drive a wedge between conservatives and liberals in the population, and in individual families, like the Schreiners themselves, who exhibited in microcosm the tensions within the nation as a whole caused by Rhodes's plans in Africa.⁶ Schreiner felt that there were self-destructive elements within South African life which had nourished Rhodes, such as an unthinking materialism and hero-worship, and an unthinking allegiance to the British Empire.⁷ Though it was her affinity with the African landscape, and a desire to conserve the riches of the country for the country which fuelled her rejection of Rhodes, her appeal would have to be made to the liberal element within South Africa, and at 'home' in England. She believed that once Rhodes was unmasked, he would be rejected by all thinking civilised people, and his power would be broken.

Trooper Peter Halket is Schreiner's solitary work of fiction in a decade in which her writing was increasingly focused on urgent social and political issues, and in which she wrote mainly pamphlets, speeches and non-fiction. The book exploits the links between allegory and social commitment which had always been there, though sometimes in abeyance in the 'eighties. At the same time, the urgency of the issues, and the felt danger of war, aroused her childhood sense of missionary zeal in the interests of political freethought, her faith in the non-conformist conscience, and her sense of herself as a voice crying in the wilderness. Her belief in the power of

the written word as a stirrer of action, and in the social utility of art, is embodied in Trooper Peter.

(ii) Schreiner and Rhodes

The opposition between Schreiner and Rhodes which precipitated Trooper Peter was a representative late nineteenth century opposition, turning on radically contrasting interpretations of the role of the British Empire in Africa, opposed interpretations of Darwin and the relationship between civilised and 'lower' primitive races, and different attitudes to material wealth versus the spiritual realm. Rhodes's vision of the African hinterland derived from Ruskin's influential speech delivered at Oxford two years before Rhodes's arrival there in 1873. Ruskin had outlined the highest destiny for the nation:

Will you youths of England make your country again a royal throne of kings, a sceptred isle, for all the world a source of light, a centre of peace ...? This is what England must do or perish. She must found colonies as fast and as far as she is able, formed of the most energetic and worthiest of men; seizing any piece of fruitful waste ground she can set her foot on, and there teaching her colonists that their chief virtue is to be fidelity to their country, and that their first aim is to be to advance the power of England by land and sea.⁸

This annexation of any 'waste' land for Britain is the opposite of Schreiner's visionary paradise of 'our waste land' in Mashonaland, preserving the fauna and flora of Africa for Africa.

Ruskin's Imperial dream was connected with a Darwinian emphasis on racial evolution, the Anglo-Saxon race having reached, through natural selection, a pinnacle of civilisation:

We are still undegenerate in race; a race mingled of the best northern blood...We are rich in inheritance of honour, bequeathed to us throughout a thousand years of

noble history, which it should be our daily thirst to increase with splendid avarice.... (Baker, p.11)

Rhodes proclaimed similar views in a letter to W.T. Stead when he was back in Kimberley after a return visit to Oxford, in 1877:

I contend that we are the first race in the world, and that the more of the world we inhabit, the better it is for the human race. I contend that every acre added to our territory provides for the birth of more of the English race, who otherwise would not be brought into existence. Added to which the absorption of the greater portion of the world under our rule simply means the end of all wars. (Millin, p.32)

The annexation of Matabeleland and Mashonaland, and the dream of the North which had been fired by a northward journey Rhodes made with his brother Herbert in 1872, were simply part of the grand design to bring the whole civilised world under British rule, and create out of the Anglo-Saxon race one Empire. It is not surprising, then, that Schreiner, with her divided allegiance to England and Africa, her emphasis on British traditions of justice and the protection of the weak and downtrodden, and her loyalty to specifically African forms of life and landscape, would soon find Rhodes's dream of a monolithic and invasive Empire threatening.

Though Rhodes and Schreiner were nourished by the same civilised sources in English thought, particularly Ruskin's strenuous and expansionary vision of Britain's role in the wider world, they diverged in their interpretation of Ruskin, Rhodes emphasising the colonising of inferior races and the annexation of territory, Schreiner taking over his emphasis on the moral and social utility of art, and later drawing on his thinking on the role of architecture in a national culture in her pamphlet, Closer Union (pp. 11-12). Ruskin could thus be accepted by Schreiner as a basis for the establishment of a national domestic style of art and architecture, but not for the dominance of a jingoistic Imperialism.

Darwin was another thinker of whom Rhodes and Schreiner held divergent views, connected with their divergent attitudes towards 'primitive races' as children. Though both seem to have accepted the premise that blacks were the 'children' of the race, they could either be punished or uplifted by education and training, depending on your general attitude and aims. One of Rhodes's statements, used in Trooper Peter Halket, was that he preferred "land to niggers",⁹ thus proving that the native population was less important than the mineral-bearing territory, or simply the territorial expansion itself. Though compared with more conservative opinions within South Africa Rhodes was practically what he himself called disparagingly a 'negrophilist',

Olive Schreiner and the missionaries saw him in a less favourable light. The best that could be said of him on this matter—and he often said it himself—was that he regarded the natives as children, who might one day attain the adult level of the white man but were still far from it. Even that was only true of him in theory. In practice it would be truer to say that he regarded them as domestic animals: which is not to imply cruelty, for Englishmen are usually kind to domestic animals. But unlike children, dogs are not expected to grow up into human adults; and unlike children, dogs may be shot when they get out of hand. That was certainly Rhodes's attitude to the Matabele in the early weeks of the rebellion.¹⁰

In her attitudes toward the native races, Schreiner was in the liberal missionary tradition, though missionaries themselves played a somewhat ambivalent role in the signing of land and mineral concessions within Matabeleland and Mashonaland. The missionary Helm, witness to the vital Rudd concession on which the administration and annexation of 'Rhodesia' was built, was both Lobengula's trusted interpreter and, it has been suggested, in Rhodes's pay.¹¹

Though missionaries could thus perform a vital linking role between illiterate chiefs and Rhodes, and formed part of the exploitation of misunderstanding which often took place, Schreiner herself was in the liberal missionary line reaching back to Dr. Philip, her parents' mentor and guide at their first landing in Africa. It is this tradition she is drawing on in Trooper Peter Halket, using a Cape liberal preacher as its representative. It has been accurately pointed out, by William Plomer, that :

The relationship between Rhodes and Olive Schreiner boils itself down like most South African matters, to a difference of opinion on the native question. These two individuals, had they been in a position to decide it, would have done so in fundamentally different ways.¹²

For Schreiner the 'native question' was central; as she wrote to Merriman:

There are two and only two questions in South Africa; the native question and the question:-Shall the whole land fall into the hands of a knot of Capitalists. The Dutch and English question as you have said is nothing-in fifty years it will not be. But the native question and the Capitalist question, in their infancy now, will loom right over the land in fifty years time and unless some mighty changes set in, will deluge the land with blood. We who hold that rank confers duties, that a course of stern unremitting justice is demanded from us towards the native, and that only in as far as we are able to raise him and bind him to ourselves with indissoluble bonds of sympathy and gratitude, can the future of South Africa be anything but an earthly Hell;- we who hold this have no right to let anything divide us.

(To Merriman, JPL, 25 May 1896)

John X. Merriman was at the centre of the liberal opposition to Rhodes, and one of the few people in South Africa to write to her supportively after the publication of Trooper Peter Halket :

For myself personally, I always remember with a curious depth of feeling, the letter you wrote me when you first read Peter Halket. It was the one word of sympathy I ever got from any South African about the book, and it had a greater value for me than any sympathy that has ever been expressed for anything I wrote.

(Lewsen, Correspondence of JXM,
pp. 454-5)

Merriman's opposition to Rhodes provided Schreiner with a further illustration of the isolated truth-teller in a corrupted society, a figure bound up in the design of Trooper Peter in the figure of the little preacher:

Yes, I realize how nobly you have stood and how fearlessly you have spoken; my fear is that you may get weary of it....It is such a terrible thing to stand alone that the bravest soul may be forgiven if the thought flashes in [on?] it at moments-'if I am in the right path why am I walking on it alone, why have I no fellow-travellers?'

(Lewsen, p.264)

The idea of the solitary conscience is central to Trooper Peter and to the life of its author during and after its composition. The isolation of the non-conformist conscience was revalidated in the position of the liberal opposition during the Rhodes era.

It took Schreiner a while to see what Rhodes's aims were: he had been presented to her as

a millionaire who was going to devote his life to the freeing of the Irish peasant from the landlord, to the education and development of the Native races of South Africa, and to the benefit of all poor and down-trodden people generally! As painted to me, he seemed the ideal of human greatness and one of my great wishes was to meet him. Living quietly

at Matjesfontein, I had been in Africa nearly a year before I met him. It was the beginning of the disappointment. As long as he and I talked of books and scenery we were very happy, but, when he began on politics and social questions, I found out to my astonishment that he had been misrepresented to me; especially when we got on the Native Question, we ended by having a big fight, and Rhodes getting very angry. All our subsequent meetings were of the same kind. I think Rhodes liked me for the same reasons that I liked him, because of his life and energy, but we never once met without a royal fight. I have copies of all the letters I ever wrote him, and they are one long passionate endeavour to save him from what seemed to me the downward course. (Life, pp.279-280)

Trooper Peter Halket was another attempt to save Rhodes's soul from damnation on the 'Native Question'. But this representation of her response to Rhodes is coloured by hindsight. There is no doubt that she had at first been attracted to Rhodes and the 'genius' of his projects in Africa. Their scope and size appealed to her imagination. Soon after her arrival she was writing to a friend linking Rhodes and her own desire to travel into the African hinterland:

My great plan in coming to this country is to go up to Matabele and Mashona Land, and it may be if possible visiting the Zambezi Falls.... Will Cronwright be up in Matabeleland then?Cecil Rhodes must be a splendid man, the one man of genius we have in this Colony. (To Mrs. Cawood, Albany, February 1890)

Schreiner was ready for marriage when she returned to South Africa, as she wrote to Havelock Ellis, whose own recent marriage had cut the most intimate relationship she had known with a man. Her feelings for Karl Pearson were also a thing of the past, as she told Ellis in an excited letter about Rhodes:

I am going to meet Cecil Rhodes, the only great man and man of genius South Africa possesses, the owner of most of the Kimberley diamond mines and head of this African exploration company. If he backs me up at all I shall be able to carry out my plan. He will likely, as Will tells me he has been for years a great lover of The Story of an African Farm...Have you heard anything of Karl Pearson lately? fancy, it's all dead.

(To Ellis, HRC, 28 April 1890)

Schreiner's first meetings with Rhodes repeated her ambivalent behaviour toward Karl Pearson: she compared Rhodes with Waldo, finding in him the qualities of a childlike genius, both a "hardheaded man of the world" and yet a dreamer with Waldo's "touching far-off look" (To Ellis, HRC, November 1890). Before leaving England she had developed a theory of a secret affinity she had with Rhodes, a sense that he belonged to her in a special way.¹³ Her early letters to Rhodes invited him to come and see her in order to discuss impersonal matters, just as she had always insisted that her interest in Pearson was merely impersonal:

Will you, if ever you have an hour to spare, come and see me? I tell you frankly, it will be a favour to me in my work; but you must not allow this to influence you, if you are not inclined to come, or feel the conventionalities of Cape Town life make it difficult for a man to visit a woman as he would another man. I have lived for so long in another atmosphere that they have almost lost their hold on me....You are the only man in South Africa I would ask to come and see me, because I think you are large enough to take me impersonally. If you don't want to come, simply don't write. It will be all right. (Rhodes, 1890)

Despite these protestations of impersonality, some intimate confrontation must have occurred, possibly along the same lines

as that with Pearson, with Schreiner offering herself to Rhodes, writing to him indiscreetly, and then immediately retracting after a cool response:

I am afraid to speak to you so I must write this line to tell you how very sorry I was I troubled you with that letter. The train had not left for minutes when I wanted it back, and I have suffered the agony of a lost spirit about it ever since. Please forgive me, and don't mention it to me.

I am very grateful to you, though I have not shown it, for the sympathy you expressed with my work the other night. No one has ever done so in just the same way. I am very thankful to you for having told me—it helps me.

(Rhodes, 15 November 1890?)

The way in which Rhodes set about realising his plans in Africa soon repelled Schreiner, especially over the crucial issue of the Strop Bill, which inflamed Schreiner's lifelong opposition to corporal punishment, and became the basis of her alliance with Cronwright:

....in the Midland News I saw a splendid leader attacking Rhodes for voting for the Strop Bill and for his throwing the native as a sop to the Boer....Cron is the only Englishman I know of in South Africa who has consistently and persistently fought Rhodes for six years and stood true to the Native. I did not fall in love with him; what bound us together was our absolute union on public matters, above all on the Native question and Rhodes.

(Life, p.283)

Schreiner was thus drawn to Cronwright because he was using his strong will to combat Rhodes, and yet she was attracted by qualities

which Cronwright shared with Rhodes:

She used to say that Napoleon was the outstanding example of what will could do in material things; and once, when I was insisting that she should be my wife (it was the only way to win her), she said with tears: "You and Cecil Rhodes are just alike: you both decide on a thing and then nothing can turn you." (Life, p.212)

The reference to Napoleon recalls Schreiner's own views on power as used in the material or spiritual realm, on her distinction between the warrior and the martyr, and on Napoleon as a contrasted type to St. Augustine. Rhodes's friend W.T. Stead had also recognised the polarities underlying Schreiner's opposition to the Capitalists in South Africa :

There are probably not two persons in the whole wide world more diverse in their character, their point of view, than Barney Barnato and Olive Schreiner. One is a very high priest of Mammon, the other a high priest of Idealism. Morally and spiritually they are at the Antipodes of each other. At the present moment one of them supports and the other is in vehement opposition to, Mr. Rhodes, but whether they support or oppose, they agree in recognising the magnitude of the man.¹⁴

And Stead goes on to draw parallels between Rhodes and Napoleon, comparing the magnitude of their plans with the crimes they committed against humanity.

The Strop (or 'lasher') Bill focused the opposition between Rhodes and Schreiner with regard to the 'Native Question'. S.C. Cronwright's notes indicate which offences by Coloured and Native servants would henceforth, if the bill became law, be punishable with the "cat" in the case of adults, and the rod or cane in the case of apprentices under 14, instead of fines or imprisonment. The offences for which corporal punishment would

become law included absence without leave, intoxication, disobedience, disturbance, any loss to the master's property and, another offence with which Schreiner was very familiar from her experience on farms, and which she had used imaginatively in African Farm and "Dream Life and Real Life" :

If, as a herdsman, he should fail to report the death or loss of any animal in his charge, and if ordered, to preserve parts of the animal in order to show cause of death. ¹⁵

Cronwright comments that the size of the herds and the difficulty in keeping track of all the animals made corporal punishment almost unavoidable: his note confirms Schreiner's repeated fictional use of such incidents, indicating that such practices were already customary on farms. Corporal punishment for an almost inevitable offence, one tied up with the job, aroused her deepest feelings of sympathy for vulnerability to physical cruelty, and she reflects such practices with intensity in the case of little Jannita in the story "Dream Life and Real Life". The bill arose because farmers had objected to their servants being locked up, as this deprived them of their labour. The bill was essentially a farmers' measure originating with The Afrikaner Bond, and was voted for by Rhodes, then Prime Minister of the Cape, and Sir James Sivewright, in order to gain favour with the Bond. It was defeated at the second reading in June 1890.

Rhodes's vote for the Strop Bill hardened her opposition to the direction of his Native Policy, and produced her first piece of writing about him, the satirical skit "The Salvation of a Ministry", which is a lighthearted prefiguration of the satirical fable Trooper Peter Halket (Life, pp. 202-205). Here, too, divine judgment is directly presented in God's verdict on politicians at the last Judgment. Rhodes is too big for Hell and is admitted to heaven "on grace not merit". Schreiner's sardonic treatment of theology and of Rhodes is lighthearted here, but the same principle characterises her treatment of religion and Rhodes in Trooper Peter Halket, except that by then the issues had become graver, and her responses more intense. The shift of attitude would come soon,

as her marginal note on the manuscript of "Salvation of a Ministry," dated New Year's Day, (presumably 1891) runs : "I'll write another version next [union?],⁷ of how a Cape Ministry got damned." She clearly felt that she had let Rhodes off too lightly; but Trooper Peter would provide a fuller indictment.

(iii) The 1890s

Though Trooper Peter was set in Mashonaland, it is intended as a judgment on the Imperial policy of the time, a policy which could nurture Rhodes in Mashonaland and Matabeleland, the Jameson Raid into the Transvaal, by Rhodes's 'right arm', and a war at the end of the decade. The sequence of events was intimately connected, and it is to Schreiner's credit that she realised earlier than many others exactly how they were connected. The Jameson Raid was a more openly aggressive step against Kruger and the Transvaal, but it built on the 'success' Jameson had achieved in Matabeleland in 1893. Jameson's rashness, and the support he received in some quarters, derived from the legendary status he had built up by 'conquering' the Matabele:

Wilfrid Blunt called the Matabele War 'slaughter for trade' and believed that as a result of that slaughter there set in the 'gangrene of Colonial rowdyism' that was the Jameson Raid.¹⁶

Schreiner's attack on Rhodes turns as much on the Jameson Raid as it does on the means he used to establish 'Rhodesia.' The Jameson Raid is mentioned at two key points in the narrative, in the first section in the form of the Blue Book Report of the Select Committee of the Cape Parliament on the Jameson Raid,¹⁷ and in the second to illustrate how Rhodes had made Jameson his scapegoat, and had withdrawn troops from Rhodesia to support the Raid :

' ... fine administration of a country, this, to invite people to come in and live here, and then take every fighting man out of the country on a gold hunting marauding expedition to the Transvaal, and leave us to face the bitter end. I look upon every man and woman who was killed here as murdered by the Chartered Company.'

'Well, Jameson only did what he was told. He had to obey orders, like the rest of us. He didn't make the plan, and he's got the punishment.' (p. 99)

Schreiner realised what a turning point for Imperial policy in Africa the Raid was, and saw how closely it was related to Rhodes's activities in Matabeleland and Mashonaland, sharing as it did troops and protagonists with the Matabele war of 1893. Winston Churchill has been quoted as saying "I date the beginning of these violent times in our country from the Jameson Raid."¹⁸ With the Jameson Raid Chamberlain's policy of non-intervention in the affairs of Empire-builders was replaced by naked aggression, even though Chamberlain would repudiate the action of the Raid itself. The Raid made it clear that Rhodes's aim was not simply the road to the north but the wealth of the Transvaal as well, and it had momentous repercussions:

Abroad, the Raid had much to do with the outbreak of the Boer War, made its small but poisonous contribution to World War I and bedevilled the development of a multi-racial society in Africa. People felt that the Raid had lowered British standards, this in turn poisoned the climate of morality all over the world.

(Longford, p. 5)

The Jameson Raid was thus a link between a less openly aggressive Imperialism and a crude snatching of rich territory belonging to a friendly neighbouring state (which is how Schreiner represents it in her Naboth's Vineyard parable in Trooper Peter). The Raid occurred at a particular historical juncture which is also the

historical moment of Trooper Peter Halket. In December 1895 Cronwright and Schreiner heard of the Raid while at 'the Kowie', Port Alfred; in September 1896 Schreiner was writing Trooper Peter Halket, also at the Kowie. When Schreiner sent the manuscript to a publisher she stressed its immediacy and relevance:

I have just finished a story, the scene of which is laid in South Africa at the present day. It deals with political and social troubles of S. Africa during the last year.

(Kimberley, 14 December 1896)

She had realised that the events of that year had been crucial for the future of South Africa, and for the relationship of colony to 'home'. She was attacking the 'dream of Empire' which, by the end of the nineteenth century, was "a fashionable philosophy poised between old-fashioned unacquisitive liberalism and socialism's coming international challenge " (Longford, p. 19). These implications are clear in two letters Schreiner wrote about the Raid. A letter written in May 1898 reveals the extent to which she saw the Raid as a historical watershed:

I should like to write an article, if I had time, showing how completely the raid has altered the political face of matters at the Cape and broken up all parties which must be formed again entirely anew, in the face of absolutely changed social and political conditions. If Noah and his sons when they came out of the ark after the deluge, had resolved to go and sit again at the old spot at which their house used to be situated, they would have been fools! It could not have been the old spot at all, but quite a new one, with a brand new coating of mud and slime and all the old landmarks gone! The Raid and all it brought into being, has entirely altered the entire body of South African problems. The question of Bond or not Bond, Progressive farmer or non-progressive, etc., have all been swept away. They were all-important — they are nothing now. We want new men and a new party based on the new conditions. (To WPS, UCT, 26 May 1898)

Not only did the Raid alter the face of South African politics, the defence which it elicited from the Transvalers at Doornkop was also seen, by Schreiner, to have a wider historical significance in the anti-capitalist struggle. In a letter to Smuts, in which Schreiner repudiates the story spread in England that she had been paid £4,000 by the Transvaal government for writing Trooper Peter, she goes on to say:

I feel that in the history of the world no nobler or more gallant fight has been fought than that of the little Republic with the powers which seek on every side to engulf it. But the freedom and independence of the Transvaal has for me a much more serious meaning. I look upon the Free State and the Transvaal as the two last little sluice-gates we have left keeping out the flood of capitalism which would otherwise sweep in and overwhelm South Africa. The little fight at Doornkop is to me the most memorable, not only in the history of South Africa, but of this century: there for the first time in the history of the world, troops armed, fed, paid, and led (or rather misled!) by the capitalist horde met the simple citizens of a state and were defeated. The average Boer fighting at Doornkop no doubt only thought he was fighting for his little state, just as the Dutch of Holland when in the 16th century they fought Philip no doubt believed they were fighting merely to free their country from the tyrant, and had no idea they were leading in humanity's great fight for freedom of thought and enlightenment! God's soldiers sometimes fight on larger battlefields than they dream of. To me the Transvaal is now engaged in leading in a very small way in that vast battle which will during the [twentieth century] be fought out — probably most bitterly and successfully in America and Germany — between engorged capitalists and the citizens of different races. (To Smuts, SAL, 23 January 1899)

The Jameson Raid, and the defeat of Jameson at Doornkop, are here placed on that wider historical and moral battlefield which is the fictional terrain of Trooper Peter. Trooper Peter focuses not only on the Raid and its significance, but also on the inter-related events in Mashonaland and Matabeleland in 1896, another historic crucible for the future course of rebellion and protest in Southern Africa. The 1896 risings provided for later nationalistic movements in Southern Rhodesia the motive force for "a spectacular Shona renaissance."¹⁹ The Shona name for the 1896-7 risings, ChiMurenga, was used again in the last phase of the Zimbabwean struggle for independence:

And in July 1962, Joshua Nkomo, leader of the National Democratic Party's successor movement, the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union, was met at the airport by a ninety year old survivor of the 1896-7 risings who presented him with a spirit axe as a symbol of the apostolic succession of resistance and so that he might 'fight to the bitter end.' (Ranger, p.385)

Schreiner saw that the events in Mashonaland were central to Rhodes's 'Native Policy,' a policy which provoked extreme African resistance :

But all that happens in the Colony seems to me such a small thing compared to what has gone on in Mashona and Matabeleland. Did I tell you of the educated Christian Kaffir who came to see us the other day? I fancy I did. He had been up in Matabeleland talking to the chiefs and indunas there. I asked him what they gave as their reason for fighting. He said, "They say they fought for death." I asked him what he meant; and he said that they had never any hope of conquering the white man or driving him out, but their treatment was such that death was the one thing they desired.

The Chartered Company are trying to drive them down into the fever swamps to live where they must all die by inches. Ah my dear friend, it is these things that are so terrible to me. I sometimes feel ashamed to look at a black man.

But we can but each live out our little life, doing the best we can with the little fragment of strength that is given us.

Yes, I am sorry for Rhodes. I would rather be the most crushed and miserable Mashona than he, and he perhaps does not see the path of justice and mercy as we see it. It is those who do see, but who are so fearful to speak and act that it is hard not to blame.

Two days ago Cron got a letter from a leading man at Bulawayo in the employ of the Chartered Company on some business. At the end of his letter he sent his kind regards to me and said "Tell Mrs. Schreiner Peter Halket is quite true, but she would find it very hard to get any one here to stand to it." He is a hard man of the world and not at all a friend of the native. (To BM, UCT, 17 December 1897?)

After the Jameson Raid, which effectively broke the back of Rhodes's power, Schreiner was still aware of his ability to bring harm to South Africa, and possibly bring about war:

I am exceedingly depressed about political and public affairs in this country. To you who are behind the scenes it may seem ridiculous, but I am continually haunted by the dread that Rhodes and his backers in high circles at home will yet plunge South Africa in war. It seems to me his last card. If he fails in that he is done for.²⁰

(To Smuts, SAL, 23 January 1899)

Trooper Peter Halket was written with a directly political aim: to influence British opinion of Rhodes and the increasingly tense situation in Johannesburg after the Raid. Schreiner saw that Rhodes and Jameson's tactic was to build up sympathy for the British in the Transvaal, casting them in the role of Kruger's victims. It was this view that needed to be dispelled, because it could ultimately bring on war :

I had a letter from one of the Jingoës in London, a man deeply in with the Chartered Company, an intimate friend [of] Jameson's and Rhodes but a very old friend of mine. He says to me "You don't see that we must bring on the war now, and wipe the Dutchmen out of South Africa once and forever." It will not be so easy as they think, but if once Rhodes and his party can get only two English women, nay only one, shot say in the bombardment of Johannesburg, the whole English nation will stand up. The evil half simply to smash the cursed Dutchmen, the best half of the nation simply because they have been made to believe that the English are being cruelly oppressed by the Boers, and that in wiping out the Dutch they are taking the side of the weak and the oppressed. Now it is to this public, which is really the great British public apart from the speculators and military men on the one hand, and apart from the ignorant Jingoës of the street on the other, that my little book is addressed. If that public lifts its thumb there is war, if it turns it down there is peace; if, as in the present case, they are indifferent and just letting things drift, there is no knowing what they may be surprised into at the last moment. It is for them and not at all for the South African public (who would not understand it) that the book is written. They must know where the injustice and oppression really lies, and turn down their thumbs at the right moment.

(To WPS, UCT, 1896)

Trooper Peter was thus intended as a literary intervention at a crucial historical juncture in the relationship between Empire and Colony, when long-term exploitation disguised as protectionism became the open aggression of war. The choice of Rhodes's Mashonaland as the fictional arena was appropriate, because there the traditional policies of Imperial governors and troops would give way to precisely the kind of lust for gold and

territory, the freebooting licence, which Schreiner wanted to inform the great British public was the new, ugly face of Imperialism in Africa.

Trooper Peter would offer an accurate pinpointing of historical conflict, and an implicit understanding of a historical watershed for Anglo-Boer relationships, and for the development of African resistance to white invasion and oppression:

The Southern Rhodesian risings are distinguished from the great majority of attempts at resistance because of their effectiveness. However much it may have appeared that they were doomed to be defeated, and whatever their internal weaknesses, they cannot be evaluated adequately without a realisation that the challenge they presented to the whites was the most formidable, and the scale of their organisation the greatest, of any of the east, central, and southern African resistances. From this point of view what is important about them is not their eventual failure but the degree of success they were able to achieve.²¹

(Ranger, p.348)

Trooper Peter was conceived as part of a resistance campaign against Rhodes and the Imperialists, and is evidence of Schreiner's faith in the social relevance and utility of fiction, its power to speak to the burning issues of the period. Although this campaign was the result of early conviction and developing insight, the story came to her in an inspirational flash, like many of her shorter allegories. As with the Prelude to From Man to Man, she was to use the genesis of Trooper Peter as an illustration of the deep unconscious sources of art.²²

The first four days we were here we did nothing but bathe and walk about barefoot in the sand, but the other morning I woke, and as I opened my eyes there was an allegory full fledged in my mind, a sort of allegory story about Matabele Land. So I've been writing hard ever since. I shall get it copied out and sent off to England, by Saturday I hope,

and then I shall bathe all day again.

(To BM, UCT, September 1896)

Trooper Peter Halket is thus a good illustration of Schreiner's artistic theory, that though the initial conception may be an unconscious flash, the work will speak to others with force and relevance if the writer is true to that initial impulse. The work also demonstrates the distinct separation between the writing of a work and the decision whether or not to publish it, a separation clearly marked in this case by Schreiner's sense of its explosive contents, and its ability to excite controversy and conflict. Her discussion of her decision to publish is marked by her sense of the artist's moral function, and his social conscience:

After I had finished Peter Halket I spent three days and nights almost entirely without sleep pacing up and down my verandah trying to decide whether I should publish it or not. I believed that Rhodes and the Chartered Company would proceed against me; and I felt sure that the matter would kill me, as it did to a very large extent. There was all the other possible future work I might do; my box of manuscripts lying unrevised, and on the other hand, the great doubt whether, whatever the book meant to me, it might have any effect in increasing justice at all commensurate with the price I was paying. At last the matter decided itself within me. Don't think I mean anything supernatural takes place; though that decision which one's nature gives when one tries to silence the lower and purely personal interest and to allow the higher elements in it to adjudicate among themselves is what the ancients called the "Voice of God," and is so to a certain extent; because it is the highest and for each soul within itself, the most ultimate injunction it can ever receive. It was Socrates' little demon, and is undoubtedly in every one who lays himself open to be guided by it. And this one thing is certain, that

when one acts in obedience to it, one never regrets even though absolute failure in the eyes of the world follow on it. A man may be mistaken, but when he has acted under such guidance he knows he has followed the highest course open to him: and he never looks back.

(To WPS, UCT, June 1898)

The writer, in this case, has a God-given task as unpopular truth-teller, like the little preacher in Trooper Peter. It was perhaps because of its high degree of social and political relevance, and because it embodied the best of the non-conformist political conscience in South Africa, that Schreiner was so proud of having written it:

Peter Halket killed me, as the Raid did old Robinson, only I haven't 'kicked out' in the same way. It isn't artistic; it failed in doing anything; yet if I were dead I would like them to write on my grave: "She wrote Peter Halket" - nothing else. Its funny but when I think of dying the only thing that comforts me is that I wrote that book.²³ (To WPS, UCT, 10 May 1908)

(iv) Sources and contemporary accounts of
Matabeleland and Mashonaland

Rhodes's penetration into the hinterland in the 'nineties built on his financial successes during the 'seventies and 'eighties. The fortune he amassed at the diamond-fields, setting of part of Schreiner's Undine and of her fragment "Diamond Fields", provided the economic leverage he needed to annex and exploit his 'North':

The trust deed of the De Beers Company is the marriage contract of Rhodes's dream and his business, and the legitimising of their offspring: Rhodes's North. The trust deed of his Goldfields Company similarly provides for his Imperial plans. (Millin, p.90)

Thus the antithesis Schreiner had built up in her youthful work Undine, between the material realm and the spiritual, which was latent in the South African social landscape of the 'seventies, with its feverish quest for wealth, became even more sharply relevant in the 'nineties, where the quest for mineral wealth would be combined with rapacity and destructiveness toward indigenous peoples. The double-edged nature of Imperial expansion, often viewed by contemporaries as a morality struggle between an acquisitive materialism and a spiritual annexation of 'souls', was sharply exposed in Mashonaland. Bishop Knight-Bruce, whose journal of 1888 chronicled his journey through Mashonaland to investigate the opportunities for an Anglican mission, has been described as having "affinities with both types of maker, the transient hunter, and the settler missionary. He was at first, on this 1888 journey, a passing traveller, like the hunters; but he hunted souls, like the missionaries: and he 'settled' in the country himself in 1891".²⁴ The missionary hunting of souls ran parallel to the quests of concession-hunters like Rudd, who obtained the famous Rudd concession from Lobengula at the same time as Bishop Knight-Bruce was exploring the country for spiritual colonisation:

by the time he [Knight-Bruce] returned to Lobengula's kraal, the granting of the Rudd concession had already started the chain of events which led to the granting of the Charter to the British South Africa Company, the downfall of the Matabele and the founding of what has become the colony of Southern Rhodesia. (Gold & Gospel, p. 6)

The publication of Knight-Bruce's journal side by side with Rudd's description of his concession journey underlines the contrasted nature of the two quests, as does the title of the volume, Gold and the Gospel in Mashonaland, and the quotation from which the title is taken :

Gold and the gospel are fighting for the mastery,
and I fear gold will win.

(David Carnegie of Hope Fountain to the London
Missionary Society, 15 January 1889.)

This antithesis, which would be the structural antithesis of Trooper Peter (the Chartered Company versus Christ's company) was thus built into the contemporary landscape of opinion.

Liberal missionaries had traditionally been Rhodes's opponents in Africa. The Rev. Mackenzie had sent a long memorandum denouncing monopolies and chartered companies to the Colonial Office when he grasped Rhodes's plans in the North, and Rhodes regarded missionaries like Mackenzie as a hindrance to his plans (Millin, pp. 57-60, p.222). Dr. Moffat had been one of the first white men in Matabeleland, and had interceded with Moselikatze on behalf of the Batlapin (Millin, p.94). Missionaries had played a protective and interceding role in cases of brutality and exploitation, though some missionaries, like Helm, could play the opposite role of interpreters and assistants at the signing of the actual concessions. The ambivalence of the missionary group as a wing of Imperialism becomes clear in their double role in Mashonaland.

But it is the tradition of the liberal missionary that Schreiner is drawing on in Trooper Peter, and there were many real-life instances of the behaviour presented as noble non-conformism in the person of the little Cape preacher. An early example was provided by Bishop Colenso in Natal, whose trial in the 1870s had caused a popular scandal, one which had obviously reached Schreiner's ears, for she uses him as the Bishop 'Colso' repudiated as a corrupt heretic by Mrs. Snappercaps in Undine. Colenso provided a good example of an independent religious leader as liberal mediator in African affairs. In 900 pages of close analysis of the Blue Books covering the Anglo-Zulu war, Colenso had tried to influence public opinion in favour of the Zulu people.²⁵ He also preached sermons directly alluding to public affairs in Natal, and questioning the consciences of his congregation:

Have we then been 'doing justly' in the past? What colonist doubts that what has led directly to this Zulu war, and thus to the late great disaster, has been the annexation of the Transvaal, by which, as the Boers complain, we came by stealth, 'as a thief in the night',

and deprived them of their rights, and took possession of their land. (Guy, p.279)

Here the tone of moral denunciation and the direct address to the colonial conscience are very close to the utterance of Schreiner's little preacher. Colenso is a forerunner not only of Schreiner's preacher, but also of her own attempts to stir the finer impulses of the British and promote justice towards the indigenous people in a colony. Like Schreiner, Colenso believed in his function as a witness to 'the Truth':

His missionary writings, his preaching, and his political work were all undertaken in the belief that the indisputable facts which his work revealed would touch the good in the 'English people' and turn them towards 'their old principles of truth and justice.'

Yet Colenso's lived experience — as a missionary, biblical critic, and as a critic of colonial and imperial policy — demonstrated time and again that the presentation of the facts, the exposure of false doctrine, and the publication of detailed accounts of cruelty and oppression, were not sufficient to bring about reform and remedy injustice.

(Guy, p.354)

That summing up of Colenso would do equally well for Schreiner, more especially the Schreiner of the 'nineties and Trooper Peter. The similarity indicates the extent to which Trooper Peter stemmed from a strong colonial tradition of missionary liberalism, or a free-thinker's nonconformism transferred to the arena of political struggle in South Africa. In this liberal tradition, the act of moral conversion to the 'side of the angels' becomes all-important, and re-enacts the traditional religious conversion of Saul to Paul on the road to Tarsus. In nineteenth century Cape politics such conversions were not unknown: Schreiner's own brother, W.P. Schreiner, at first more conservative than Rhodes on the native franchise, 'converted' to the liberal position after the Jameson Raid, and would later carry on the tradition of the liberal struggle for African rights by defending Dinizulu

against 'land-hungry whites', a defence instigated by Colenso's eldest daughter, Harriet (OS, p.259).

There were examples of missionary liberalism closer to Schreiner's fictional territory in Trooper Peter. Some of these have been explored by Terence Ranger in an analysis of the historical base of a Rhodesian novel by the radical missionary Arthur Shearly Cripps, Bay Tree Country (1911).²⁶ The novel deals in the same moral extremes as Trooper Peter, with villainous villains opposed by a heroic grain-trader who develops the idea of the 'Black Christ' and believes in martyrdom rather than aggression. Cripps based his preacher, also a 'little man', on Edgar Lloyd of St. Faith's Anglican mission, "a prophetic spokesman for justice" (Ranger, p.13). Lloyd was sometimes described in Schreiner's favourite phrase as "the voice crying in the wilderness". Cripps's melodramatic novel can be seen (Ranger argues) as revealing "an instinctive and mythopoeic truth about the essentials of the political economy which gave rise to the labour crisis", with the characters personifying the shifting economic forces of the period. Schreiner's novel can be said to do the same for the political and economic cross-currents of the late 1890s.

Trooper Peter was not only a political critique, it was also a literary critique of the romantic adventure novel in Africa and the hunting story, thus continuing her earlier puncturing of romantic nineteenth century myths, here about Mashonaland and Matabeleland as a colonial playground and an exotic terrain offering the gold of Monomotapa and hairsbreadth hunter's escapes. In Trooper Peter Schreiner was replacing her own childhood fantasies with the political struggles of her adulthood, and contesting Jingoistic contemporary attitudes towards the terrain. Her awareness of Rider Haggard, who had thought African Farm too gloomy and suggested that 'romance' had a more permanent appeal to human nature than 'reality',²⁷ is central to an understanding of Trooper Peter. The attitudes of one of the original volunteers for Rhodes's pioneer column into Mashonaland illustrate the point :

Tales of this Eldorado (Mashonaland) had long ago been disseminated by a German explorer, Mauch, who had called it Ophir and King Solomon's Mines.²⁸

Darter, the pioneer, describes the hunter Selous, and leader of the pioneering column, in the following terms:

So I had spoken to Alan Quartermain [sic] on a kopje in his hunting ground, and the magnetism of the man lay in his mild serene speech and action. (Darter, p.79)

Darter goes on to speak of Selous's "great hunter's eyes", "the beauty of those steady orbs", and calls him a "lion-slayer and an elephant-hunter with the polish of Sir Philip Sydney, the dash of Sir Walter Raleigh, the intrepidity of Sir Francis Drake" (p. 80). In contemporary accounts of Mashonaland, narrow escapes from animals bulk large, as do stereotypes about the Mashonas, those in which Trooper Peter delights before his conversion. C.E. Finlayson, whose A Nobody in Mashonaland or the Trials and Adventures of a Tenderfoot appeared in 1893, describes escapes from crocodiles and lions with the intentions and tone of a humourist, and takes the behaviour of 'Jan Sixpence' as characteristic of all Mashona males :

After a prolonged and careful inspection, I came to the conclusion that the Kaffir male never does anything in the way of work when he is in his native wilds.²⁹

It was against these black and white stereotypes that Schreiner's characters would have to make their impact, carving out alternative ways of responding to the people and the landscape. The landscape of Mashonaland was transfigured in the contemporary reports of Baden-Powell, into an apotheosis of the Imperial schoolboy's dream. He acknowledges the dreamlike quality of the landscape :

is it the cooing of doves that wakes me from dreamland to the stern reality of a scrubby blanket and the cold night air of the upland veldt ...?³⁰

but his nostalgic visions of the veldt are a schoolboy parody of Emersonian transcendentalism:

...somebody in the next room has mentioned the word saddle, or rifle, or billy, or some other attribute of camp life, and off goes my mind at a tangent to play with its toys....I can't help it if my toys take the form of all that has to do with veldt life, and if they remain my toys till I drop....May it not be that our toys are the various media adapted to individual tastes through which men may know their God? (p. 285)

Well, perhaps.

Schreiner's Trooper Peter can thus be seen as a skilful extrapolation of historical realities. Even her characters are a blend of the actual and the imaginary. The name 'Halket' was familiar to her as a sturdy British colonial name (the Halket family were friends of her elder sister Kate's suitor, John Findlay).³¹ There was a real Alick Halket in the original pioneering column in Mashonaland, an ex-sporting hero and Jingoistic practical joker.³² Her captain, who shoots Halket when he has become too soft on the 'niggers', and who is his antitype, was based on what she knew of a military leader in Mashonaland, Captain Spreckley's³³ behaviour in the territory :

Some of the things told me about Spreckley are worked into the little captain who shoots Peter Halket and now he is gone too. (To WPS, UCT, December 1896?)

The phrase 'worked into' suggests her technique of generalizing individuals into composite representatives of characteristics and tendencies. The 'hanging tree' which formed such a strong visual complement to the text was an extension of the traditional hanging tree used by chiefs to punish disobedient subjects, and/or their wives, in Matabeleland. Such a hanging tree was noted and sketched in the travel journal of Marie Lippert.³⁴

Not only the personages and objects of the narrative were available for selective transformation: so was the brutal dialect of Imperial exploiters, epitomised in Rhodes's own callous style of expression:

I may tell you that Khama is all right ...but he is coming down with the missionary Rev. Willoughby, and the rascal, who detests me, may change Khama again on the road. Is it not awful to think that the whole future of the British Empire out here may turn on a wretched Kaffer and a Secretary of State who listens to some fanatic in the house of Commons?

(Longford, p. xii)

The schoolboy version of Rhodes's style is found in Baden-Powell, and in Jameson:

We can't lose this year, or our show is bust for some time to come. So I am buying horses hand over fist — drafting them up as rapidly as possible and must do the rest with the people and equipment we have here. Naturally I must go with the crowd myself, and it will be no panic. Still, there will be some excitement and it will be a fine coup if we succeed, which we will. Then I really think you will see our show go ahead.

(Samkange, p.253)

The schoolboyishness of upperclass Jingoism becomes more explicitly violent in the mouths of the lower classes: a Rhodesian farmer's foreman says (in Cripps's Bay Tree Country) :

Now we'll get 'em. Boys by the score. If they won't come out, bash 'em over their heads, seize their women, collar their passes! Our N.C.'s just the boss for the job.

(Ranger quoting Cripps, p.3)

This dialect could take more or less Cockney forms, as in the mouth of a prospector quoted by Darter on Rhodes:

"Lord Salisbury," said he, "ain't got no use fur gawgraphy, bein' a Furrain Minister. Rhodes looks upon this here country as a blank cheque that wants fillin' in, and he don't want it crossed to any other party. He wants to get his signature to it, and it must be made out to the Charter Company. Sir 'Enerly, he lays a map afore Lord Salisbury and says he, 'There are hintricacies.'

" 'Dear me, dear me,' says Lord Salisbury, 'define the boundaries.'

" 'There ain't no boundaries to the Hinterland,' says Rhodes.

" 'I concur, says Sir 'Enerly.'" (Darter, pp.144-5)

These are the staple styles out of which Schreiner created the dialect of Trooper Peter and his fellow-troopers.³⁵

Schreiner understood the mechanics of flotation in the territory, and uses them; the share system underlined the fragile nature of all operations in the area:

It (the charter) depended on the existence of concessions as a paper currency depends on bullion somewhere. And its principal backing was the Rudd concession which said nothing about making laws or colonising a country with white men, but spoke only of mining — and all that was necessary of mining.

(Samkange quoting Mason, p. 149)

The scope of the activities of the Chartered Company was almost as infinite as Rhodes's dream of the North, and it was the unusual degree of licence and brutality which gave the Imperial adventure a new twist in Mashonaland and Matabeleland. The instructions given by Chamberlain to Colonel Martin "relative to the control of the armed forces in the territories of the British South Africa Company" on April 25th 1896³⁶ mention that no officers or men were allowed to have shares or interests in any South African venture, and they

were required to sign a declaration to that effect. Chamberlain goes on to say that many men had already acquired such shares, and they should be sold "when fair opportunities offer" (Despatches, 1896). Instructions from Chamberlain to Major-General Carrington, relative to military operations against the Matabele, stressed that

...in so extended a theatre of war, and with such miscellaneous forces engaged, much latitude must be allowed to men commanding temporary levies of settlers, and working from isolated centres for the common causeBut this remark is not intended to imply that any greater latitude is to be sanctioned in the matter of retaliation or looting, in their case, than in the case of regulars. (Despatch, 25 April 1896)

The violent methods employed in the territory were reported in many accounts of the Chartered Company's behaviour.³⁷ Sjambocking, the extension of Rhodes's Strop Bill in the Cape Parliament outside the democratic system, was common (Ranger, p.75), so much so that the phrase 'Charter Ro' (Charter Law), meaning rough and brutal treatment, became part of the Mashona oral tradition (Samkange, p.241). Such brutality was seen by conservatives as a logical extension of the treatment of disobedient children :

A Kaffir is a man and a brother, in theory, but when dealing with him you cannot treat him as your peer, but must use the best and most effective method to make him so....There is as little inconsistency in loving through thrashing your nigger as there is in birching a child of your own flesh and blood. Only practical colonial experience can adequately prove the correctness of this. (Ranger, p.343)

The identification (Africans are children) which had fuelled Schreiner's rage against the Strop Bill, was used to justify brutality and violence in Rhodesia : blacks were treated in Rhodesia as 'wicked' children were treated in the Victorian family. And the extension of violence, in the form of rape

against Black women, became, with the related issue of miscegenation in the territory, a central focus in Trooper Peter, because the treatment of Black women fused Schreiner's hatred of colonial oppression generally with her hatred of male sexual opportunism. The more or less forcible taking of Black women, whether or not they were the wives of other men, features in historical accounts of the territory. A letter supporting Schreiner's view of white attitudes to Rhodesian blacks informed her that Selous had three illegitimate children living in the country, and had lived with a black woman for several years "or, as the woman said, until she lost her youth and attractiveness, when Selous, like his equals, turned her adrift to become the prey of others " (Albany, 16 November 1896). Darter seems to suggest that rape was only committed by Black policemen:

The women we see are ugly and old, and perhaps the younger are hiding, due to the kaffir version of a white filibuster (p. 77).

He adds, evasively :

Well, we have been called that by our own people, but in justice to the Pioneers, whose expedition I am recording,, you will perceive that this was not a man-killing episode (p.77).

Weale, a Native Commissioner in 1894, reported that the native women were very timid "on account of some of the police formerly stationed there making a practice of assaulting and raping any woman they found in the veld alone " (Ranger, p.67)

Vere Stent, the only white journalist at the Matopos indaba, recounts how one of Somabulane's grievances against the whites was the behaviour of a white Native Commissioner, who interrupted a wedding party, raped the bride, a chief's daughter, and then sent her back to the groom. Baden-Powell describes, in the humorous style of a hunter's anecdote, chasing a young black girl on horseback :

She was getting away at a great pace, her body bent double to the ground, taking advantage of every bit of cover, more like an animal than a human being. Away I went after her as hard as I could go, and I had a grand gallop.

(p. 201)

There was thus more than enough historical evidence of rape committed by Chartered Company forces in the area. The strictness of the penalties is in itself an index to the occurrence: on the day of the disbandment of the Pioneer Column a proclamation was read by Jameson that the country was under the administration of the Chartered Company and that any man found guilty of murder or rape would be shot (Darter, p.108).

Events in Mashonaland would thus drive home the truth of Schreiner's statement that "the cause of women workers and the Negro is the same,"³⁸ and the treatment of black women weaves its way forcibly through the more general narrative of colonial oppression in Trooper Peter.

(v) Structure : allegory and realism

Because of the vehemence with which Trooper Peter attacked Rhodes and the Chartered Company, contemporary reviews were divided along political rather than literary lines, judging the book in terms of whether it was telling the actual truth about events in Mashonaland,³⁹ whether or not it was fair to Rhodes, and whether or not the direct presentation of Christ was morally justifiable. Some reviewers complained that it was not at all like The Story of an African Farm; others saw it as libellous : even at the time of its re-printing in 1974, conservatives in Rhodesia felt there might be a political motive behind its reappearance.⁴⁰ Only a few reviewers bothered to assess its literary merits, one of the few being an American and outside the strongly opposed conservative and liberal factions of British opinion. This reviewer noticed that the form of the novel was singular :

It is as rugged as a mountain boulder, as devoid of ornament as a lump of undressed granite. Its execution is as strong as its conception is original, and its arraignment of British methods in South Africa as terrible as the form of its indictment is novel and striking. (The Literary World, Boston, 20 March 1897)

The form of the novel, the odd proportions of the two sections, and the predominance of the long dream/allegory section over the short realistic section give the novel its peculiar shape and force, for the form is related to Schreiner's particular aims in this work. The urgency of the contemporary issues produced a new kind of literary blend of allegory and realism : she called it "a sort of allegory story", thus acknowledging its hybrid nature. Instead of longer realistic sections encapsulating brief but central allegories, which is the method of her other three novels, here the proportions are reversed, and the long night-time dream/allegory of Part One (176 pages in the original version) is followed by the brief realistic sequel of Part 2 (71 pages).

These proportions are related to the peculiar blending of allegory and satire in the work. Schreiner was working in the established mode of satire in which contemporary shortcomings and political injustice and hypocrisy are exposed by the searing presence of a figure from whom they claimed to take their ultimate sanction.⁴¹ The gap between an ideal moral basis for action and the actualities of life in a colonial war thus become strikingly highlighted. W.T. Stead had used the model in his "If Christ came to Chicago"; Schreiner herself had used a version of it in her skit on Rhodes, which could be subtitled "If the Cape Parliament were before St. Peter at the Judgment day", and more recently the idea has surfaced in a Johannesburg play "Woza Albert" which has Christ returning to modern South Africa. The didacticism of Trooper Peter is part of its satirical intention : to proclaim the ideal on which England should base her conduct in Africa (Mashonaland is representative of the continent) and then describe an attempt to realise that moral ideal in the real world. The method is designed to attack corruption and brutality and to reveal hypocrisy in a so-called Christian country, England. The gap between Christ's nature and principles and actual events in Mashonaland is revealed in Part 1 through the ironies, misunderstandings and errors of the dialogue between Christ and Peter before his conversion;

in Part II the same gap is revealed between the brutality and racism of the ordinary troops and the behaviour of the aberrant Peter whose actions amuse and alarm them when he genuinely imitates the principles of charity, brotherly love and humility preached by Christ. The origin of this structure lies deep in Schreiner's childhood, when she went running into the house to tell her family that the Sermon on the Mount was a wonderful guide to all future conduct, and found her news coldly received (Life, p.67). The difference between correct and morally admirable principle and actual 'grown-up' behaviour by adult Christian individuals and nations had recently been driven home by her insight into Rhodes, whose action she saw from early on were "policy all policy," and who never called "his diplomacy principle" (To WPS, UCT, 13 September 1892). Her view of the nature of English colonisation rested on a perception of moral hypocrisy :

She pointed out that the Frenchman, in taking another people's country, believes and declares it to be for the honour and glory of his own. The Boer, wishing to annex a native territory, says : 'The damned Kaffir! I'll take his land from him and divide it among my children.' But the Englishman, having allowed a handful of adventurers to penetrate a new country, declares that they must be protected, decides that the natives are benighted and must be reformed ...murmurs a few phrases about 'right being on our side,' obtains meanwhile most valuable concessions, quotes from the Bible, opens fire with machine-guns and is soon in possession, with his ubiquitous flag breezily proclaiming the fact overhead. The Englishman, in fact, deceives himself, and deserves to be called a hypocrite. (Quoted by Plomer, p. 80)

If hypocrisy, or double standards, prevailed in English Imperialism, then the satirical fiction aimed at that hypocrisy must use techniques which drive a wedge between those double standards. Schreiner's two

sections, the direct presentation of Christ, the skilful blending of historical facts and figures with dream landscapes and night-time visions, the dwelling on the ideal basis for inter-human and international relations – all of these techniques serve that satirical aim.

Although Schreiner is using Christ as a personage in the novel, and a Christian preacher, the ideal basis for behaviour which they preach is not that of dogmatic Christianity, which she had rejected, but a broad humanitarianism, charity, and help for the oppressed. Nevertheless Christ serves as the typological basis for all the wounded and oppressed figures in the novel : the wounded blacks in caves, hanging from trees, tied to their 'cross'. He also serves as another version (and was the original source of the other fictional versions) of Schreiner's 'stranger' figure, who arrives, like all her other strangers, out of nowhere on a desolate colonial terrain :

From the darkness at the edge of the kopje a figure stepped out into the full blaze of the firelight....
Peter looked intently at the stranger; then he put his gun down at his side. (pp. 38-39)

This stranger is related to the one written into the flyleaf of Schreiner's childhood Bible, to whom one should be kind, she reminded herself, being herself often a 'stranger'. Christ is also the angel entertained unawares, and that Biblical parable underlies Part I of the novel. Trooper Peter, like Waldo in African Farm, will listen enraptured to the voice of this stranger and be converted to his 'company.' But Christ was to Schreiner and other Freethinkers only an example of a great and good man, a useful figure to oppose to a great but bad man, Cecil Rhodes. This presumably is what Schreiner meant when she wrote to a friend :

I'll send you my story Peter Halket to read when I've done copying it out. I know you will call it a Christian story, but it's not, it's only human!!!!!! (To BM, UCT, 21 October 1896)

If Christ was human, however, he was also the supreme late nineteenth century figure of the martyr and scapegoat, as pre-Raphaelite art reveals. Schreiner had admired Holman Hunt's paintings of Christ in London in April 1886, and wrote to Karl Pearson:

They give me a peculiar kind of joy, a deep restful kind of feeling. In the Christ's face in the 'Shadow of Death' there is a look that it seems to me no picture has embodied yet, something which expresses the aspiration of our modern world. It is all that the old Christs are not.⁴² (Pearson, 12 April 1886)

The Christ figure in Trooper Peter is thus both representative of the highest kind of human morality, and the origin of Schreiner's martyr and scapegoat figures. She had considered writing a life of Christ, as she wrote two months after seeing Hunt's exhibition :

The dream of my life has been to create a life of Jesus (in verse I used to think, because that comes easiest to me). (Pearson, 12 June 1886)

This dream would surface in Trooper Peter, if not in verse, then in the rhythmical eloquence of Schreiner's visionary allegorical style.

(vi) Narrative analysis

Trooper Peter is built on Schreiner's contrasted types of the 'genius' (TPH, p.72), St. Augustine or Napoleon, saint or tyrant, depending on the use to which 'genius' (in the sense of original intellectual force) is put in the world. The novel is based on the view that history is made by the choices of great individuals : it thus became of vital importance to 'save Rhodes from the downward course' of brutal powermongering and licence. And in this decade

the actions of Rhodes did loom very large: though he might have been typical of a certain kind of Imperialism, and might have been implicitly supported by the British Government, his individual actions, and those he performed through stooges like Jameson, were crucial in the events of the decade, and he played a determining role in the new aggressive, freebooting phase of capitalism and Imperialism in Africa and thus in the sequence of events leading to war. His historical antitype in African politics was Sir George Grey, the "great good man" to whom Schreiner dedicates the book, representative of "an incorruptible justice and a broad humanity" and "the noblest attributes of an imperial rule". The two sides of genius correspond to the two faces of Imperial rule in Africa in the political sphere, and to the two faces of God and Mammon suggested in the Biblical parable about the Roman coin which is rendered to Caesar, the spiritual tribute being rendered to God.⁴³ The political tribute to Grey in the epigraph is thus an index to the method of the novel, which is holding up models in a corrupt contemporary situation, and will work in terms of diverging types at moments of choice.

The two sections are contrasted in terms of length, style, settings of time and place, and characters. The split night and daytime scenes which open African Farm are here used for the overall structure: "It was a dark night"; "It was a hot day". Part I is all one long night, but characteristically a 'watch night,' like the young Waldo's, in which an intense spiritual self-confrontation takes place, a wrestling with conscience and belief, ending in a decisive moment of spiritual choice.⁴⁴ In Part 2, the spiritual decision has to be acted on in the daytime world of reality: Peter eventually frees the black man rather than shoot him, and takes his place when he, Peter, is shot by the captain. In both sections there are confrontations between self-interest and principle: in Part 1 between the minister and his wife (pp. 65-74), in Part 2 between the colonial and the new arrival from England (pp. 110-111). Part 2 describes the hot day, the night-time shooting, and the next morning's departure from camp. It is brief, economical, and rests on realistic trooper dialogue and chat about superiors, current events, and gossip. Peter is seen totally from the outside, whereas in Part I he is presented directly and in stream-of-consciousness before Christ's arrival, and then through his interaction and conversation with Christ. The two parts are related as cause and result.

The opening mood is sombre and solitary; the omniscient authorial voice sketches the darkness, the fire, the kopje. The terrain is marked by the burnt and destroyed kraals, and there is constant reference to the dark night sky of Mashonaland. We are alerted to the fact that the danger Peter will face might come from unexpected sources, not from the lions "cowering in the long grasses and brushwood at the kopje's foot" but from "he hardly knew what" (p. 27). Peter is characterised as the anti-hero he is, not with Selous's radiant hunter's orbs but with a "sloping forehead and pale blue eyes", a mouth which indicates his strong desire for "the material good of life" and the soft white hairs which indicate his youth, and which, together with his mother's two-pointed cap, mark him out as an impressionable mother's boy (p. 28). Schreiner has to show self-confrontation in a man who is not used to thinking, a boy unlike Waldo, but one who remembers his mother's rectitude, affection, hard labour, and kindness. His mother stands for his conscience in him until that role is taken over by Christ, whose eyes remind him of his mother's (pp. 48-49).

The first fireside reverie is a memory flashback to scenes from his childhood, the ducklings of innocence, and two prints of Jesus: one blessing the children, the other "with his arms stretched out and the blood dropping from his feet" (p. 30). The cross is not mentioned, simply the posture, which will be repeated at later points in the narrative, and the wounds, which also recur in other contexts. He remembers his mother's tender use of his own second name, "Simon", the gentle disciple who is latent within the crude-talking trooper. The next portion of the reverie is realistic and forward-looking, since it is based on the facts of money-making and the flotation of companies in the territory, but it is also a vision of future wealth, a materialist's dream. Then the less connected second reverie begins (p. 35), in which a process of

unconscious free-association throws up images of the war he is involved in, the killing he has done, the real destruction underlying his dream of wealth. The Maxim gun and the reaping machine, death and harvest, are mixed and associated with all the freedom of dream events, but with the moral atmosphere of Biblical parable : "they lay behind him in rows, like the corn in sheaves." (p. 36). The killing of black men is bad enough; at a deeper layer of repressed memory (the "burning core" of the fire as the logs split) is the rape of a black woman "her baby on her back but young and pretty" (p. 36). The combination of rape/stealing of a woman, a child (the child his black woman takes from him), and guilt will recur in Peter's anecdotes to Christ about his successes with women. Even in this opening sequence, then, corresponding to the realistic framing section of Schreiner's shorter allegories, the black victims are identified as women and children, against a background of Peter's nostalgia for childhood sanctities and innocent mother/child love. At the end of this reverie—the unconscious revelations of his psyche which are also the grounds of his possible regeneration—the transition is managed into the Christ/Peter meeting. Instead of the formal announcement that the narrator or protagonist falls asleep and dreams a dream, the first narrator/authorial voice describes the moment at which Peter could have fallen asleep: "His eyes were still open, but the lids drooped over them" (p. 37); then he starts up when he hears a footstep. Christ is thus a "divine" figure firmly circumscribed by the real world; this atmosphere, of realism and irony, counteracts the possible sentimentality and loftiness of Christ's presence and speech. The tone of the first part of the conversation is humorous, resting on ambivalent dialogue where the humour arises from Peter's ignorance of the context and identity of the visitor, as he invites Christ's assent to his racist theories and juvenile boasts about sexual conquests. Peter is the main speaker and Christ responds briefly. Peter tells the story of how he gained the older black woman, and how she defected with her husband to Lo Magundis, an important connection for the plot sequence, and for the thematic connections of political and sexual crime.

The style in this section is marked by Peter's boyish brashness, colloquialism and racist terminology :

"I'm all for the nigger gals", "a devil of a row", "you know what these niggers are" "a vatje of Old Dop",
"They've no hearts", "But I tell you what",
"By gad", "The spree they had up Bulawayo way", etc.⁴⁵

This style is counterpointed by Christ's measured and firm utterances.

Christ breaks into Peter's schoolboyish anecdotes (p. 54) by announcing Peter's full name, and interrogates him in a sequence of questions designed to raise the moral issues connected with the presence of the Chartered Company in Mashonaland : the tone is still fairly light, but Christ has become the aggressive spokesman, questioning Peter's definitions of 'profit', 'rebels', and Christians'. His definition of his Company is deliberately broad and humanitarian rather than Christian (p. 61). Now Christ begins to grow eloquent, and his narratives longer. He tells the

story of the two women in the cave exploded by Peter and his men (the incident in Peter's second reverie seen from the point of view of the victims, and repeating the mother and child motif which figures in Peter's anecdote about his black woman). The story illustrates self-sacrifice: the older woman sacrifices her rations to the younger. Christ's second example of members of his Company concerns a white prospector and his black servant : the servant carries his master down into the riverbed (a repeated movement in the narrative, and one already used in African Farm as an image of self-discovery). The black servant is killed for his action, and his white master dies beside him at the door of a hut. This black-for-white substitution and the two figures lying together in death look forward to the ending of the novel, where the roles will be racially reversed. The nobility of these narratives, naturally interrupted by didactic generalisations in Christ's Biblical style ("because the innocent man suffers oftentimes for the guilty, and the merciful falls while the oppressor flourishes") is counter-pointed by Peter's sceptical responses, just as Peter's long anecdotes had been punctuated by Christ's silences or brief, lofty replies. The proportions of the two styles have been reversed, and Christ's eloquence now overrides Peter's doubting

comments into a third internal narrative (Peter's and Christ's. being two successive narratives, but parallel in terms of their status in the framing narrative). Now the little preacher becomes the internal narrator, though an actant in Christ's narrative, and at a further remove from the first narrative voice. The little preacher is an even more insistent and eloquent narrator/preacher than Christ, and his narrative is important because in it a Biblical parable (Naboth's vineyard) and the political events of the period are juxtaposed. The preacher offers, instead of the traditional sermon, a history lesson : "In place that I should speak to you, I will read you a history" (p. 64). His "history" lesson takes the form of a juxtaposition of the Bible and the Blue Book Report of the Select Committee of the Cape Parliament on the Jameson Raid (p. 65). This offers a precise internal analogy for Schreiner's own fictional technique in the novel, combining Biblical parable and the names and facts of 'history' in Mashonaland.⁴⁶ The little preacher's denunciation is offered in Schreiner's own characteristic terms : the land is "rotten and honeycombed with the tyranny of gold", the whole land is being "grasped by the golden claw", British Justice and Mercy have been eclipsed; the man or woman who is a single and unpopular truth-teller walks alone (pp. 70-73)-all these are Schreiner's own maxims, but the preacher is subordinated to the fictional design in being involved in a dialogue with his wife on the same issues which contrasted Trooper Peter and Christ. The little preacher also serves as a artistic "buffer zone" to heighten the tone and the passion of the narrative so that after it Christ can launch into his final appeal to Peter's conscience. He does this in a recurrent structural device, by looking first backward and then forward in a truly apocalyptic version of Peter's earlier forward-looking 'materialist' vision of treasures on earth. The backward-looking view of man's evolution is Darwinian in the sense that it argues for the evolution of the race by mutation, but it runs counter to the "survival of the fittest" slogan which Rhodes had made the basis of both his economic and territorial policies. In Christ's

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UNIT 2



'lecture' the race grows through the actions of an individually greater mind and morality, exemplified by the woman who rejects cannibalism and is killed for it, but teaches the tribe to grow. (p. 77). This is an instance of Schreiner's belief in pathfinders and forerunners generally, but it is tied to the context of the novel by its emphasis on cannibalism, a mutual devouring which is imaged in the vultures that circle overhead at key moments of the narrative, and who represent Rhodes and his greedy monopolists. The retrospective vision reaches back to an ideal kingdom before man, and then forward to a time of peace and brotherhood, specifically focused on racial brotherhood:

Man shall not gather in it to worship that which divides;
but they shall stand in it shoulder to shoulder, white man
with black, and the stranger with the inhabitant of the
land; and the place shall be holy; for men shall say,
"Are we not brethren and the sons of one father?" (p. 79)

The process by which the ideal arrives, by which "the ideal becomes real" (the gift given to the artist in Schreiner's allegory "A Dream of Wild Bees") is then enacted in the brief story of men sleeping on a plain, who believe the dawn will not come, "Nevertheless, day broke" (p. 80). This visionary dawn is held in the mind after the arrival of the real dawn in Part II.

After Peter's decision to join Christ's company (the function of visionary optimism, and the status of an act of faith are stressed by its position in the narrative) Christ offers him three tasks : the first to take a message to the people of England, the second to take a message to the people of South Africa, and the third to deliver one to Rhodes. Each one narrows the scope of the task. Peter refuses all three, the triple denial echoing the biblical denial of Christ. But the fourth instruction, to bring the kingdom into being in his own individual sphere of action, to love his enemies, succour the oppressed, and deliver the captive, he does not refuse. This section of the narrative is marked by a rapid sequence of 'parables' modifying and adapting the style of Biblical parable to Schreiner's purposes. In the message to

the British a key metaphor is that of mother-country and child-colony, adapting the mother / child images of the novel to the allegorical mode. In the message to South Africa there is a political allegory of the two beasts in a field (the English and the Dutch) who are urged into conflict by the vultures so that they can feed on both. In the message to Rhodes there are two key allegories, the first of a false lighthouse (a man of stature who leads people astray), and the second of a stream high on a mountain which could follow two paths, one leading to the sea, the other into a chasm and stagnant marsh. The course chosen might turn on the position of a single rock "had but one hand been there to move but one stone from its path" (p. 88). Here the crucial position of the Rhodes era in African history, and the determining role played by individual choices in forcing South Africa into the historical course of the Jameson Raid, the Anglo-Boer War, Union, the Republic and permanent racial conflict (recent events in South Africa, and the simmering of permanent racial discontent do seem to recall Schreiner's defeated marshland) are taken up in a powerfully worked out but simple allegory. **The sea** image, which in the earlier fiction is used as an open place in the narrative imaging self-fulfilment and freedom, and **an extension** of Schreiner's riverbed image for self-discovery, is **here** put to didactic use by being contrasted with a **swamp**, the **personal** alternatives being transformed into alternative endings for the course of national history.

Part II serves as sequel to Part I and recapitulates many of the elements in a realistic setting and mode. The heat is opposed to the dark night sky of Mashonaland at first, but now real vultures circle overhead. The stunted tree with "two misshapen branches, like arms, stretched out on either side" (p. 96) is a realistic version of the cross image from Part I, now the 'real' Mashonaland cross which unites features of the Biblical cross and the hanging-tree mentioned in Part I. Rape is mentioned in the conjectured past of one of the troopers, **who was** rumoured to have done three years labour for "attempted rape in Australia" (p. 97).

Rhodes features again in the troopers' talk, but as a "brazen statue" (p. 101), the false idol opposed to the true 'god' of Christ in Part I. The talk of the big colonial repeats many of Halket's earlier racist generalities.

The story of Peter's conversion is told in an indirect, reported narrative (from p.104) by the crudest and most unsympathetic of the troopers. Thus a sense of unchanged attitudes persists alongside the story of Peter's change of heart. The black man they have caught is one of the figures providing narrative linkage; he is the man wounded in the thigh and hiding in a cave whom Christ helped in Part I (pp. 49-50). Thus Peter's saving of the black man not only repeats Christ's action, but does it for the same man. The Colonial narrator reports a further detail, that Peter had spoken of knowing the man, from "Lo Magundis: way", thus identifying the man with his stolen black woman's husband; in making reparation to him, Peter thus makes reparation for both racist and sexist crimes; the anti-Imperialism and the feminism of the narrative fuse in his double identity as victim of the white troops and the husband of Peter's 'raped' black woman. The conflict of opportunism and integrity, between minister and wife in Part I is repeated in the discussion between the big Colonial and the small Englishman, but here the expected roles are reversed, in that the Colonial is more racist and conservative than the Englishman. The Englishman is there to illustrate that there were liberals in England opposing Rhodes, invoking the traditional moral norms of English history. The Colonial's narrative moves further back in time after his recounting of that morning's events, to the moment when they found Peter after his night alone on the kopje (thus the narrative time jumps right back to the moment at which the narrative of Part I ended) and he interprets the night's events as insanity induced by loneliness, "bush-madness" (p. 113). Everything is interpreted in the narrator's crude terms.

The brief night-time scene then recapitulates the night-setting of Part I, thus stressing Peter's deliberate enactment of Christ's

teaching: he goes down into the riverbed ("He walked in it for a while"), a moment of gathering up the will in the solitude of the African riverbed landscape, and then makes his way up to the tree/cross. The small flow of blood at the man's feet recalls the novel's opening image of Christ's feet, and Peter's earliest memory. When the man is set free he takes one "long smooth spring", "as the tiger leaps when the wild dogs are on it" (p. 118). The free animal is opposed to the 'aardvark' in a hole, the image used for the man when he was trapped in his cave. At the end of the scene Peter is depicted at the foot of the tree "with the red sand trodden down over him, in which a black man and a white man's blood were mingled" (p. 120). The last brief scene occurs the next morning as the men are leaving, with the Englishman telling the big Colonial that he no longer believes that justice rules: "There is no God in Mashonaland" (p. 121). As they leave he looks back and then forward, literally repeating the 'mental' movement of other characters at key moments in the narrative. He looks back at the grave under the tree at the dead man who might be better off than they are, and then at the living men who ride on. "Then they rode on after the troop" (p. 122), the movement suggesting the uninterrupted chronology of history. The march of history triumphs over the spiritual insight of 'timeless' allegory.

(vii) Narrative analysis

The recurrent motifs in the different sections of the narrative are those suggesting predatory nature as opposed to self-sacrifice: the wheeling vultures versus the good Samaritans, the martyrs. Peter proves his adherence to Christ's company by recognising the moral value of self-sacrifice, loving his enemy and treating him as his brother. That was Christ's instruction. But in doing so he is himself killed, and does no good to anyone except to create moral scepticism in the Englishman. The course of history is not deflected by Peter's heroic act. And yet the only suggested basis for reform is within the individual heart, as Schreiner sees it.

Peter is there to serve as a model for the act of conversion, a political changing of sides which Rhodes and others were intended to follow. They could not claim that they had not been shown the way. Christ's message, and Peter's enactment of it, are the suggested ways of resolving the historical dilemma, the crucial moment of choice which features so strongly in the narrative, and which embodies the historical moment in the country at large. Like Colenso, Schreiner had perhaps hoped that when the 'truth' was presented about Imperialist tactics in Africa, people would change their attitudes and behaviour accordingly. And yet the hard-headedness of the novel's conclusion, the vultures which still circle in the sky, and the scepticism of the Englishman build into the novel the knowledge that one man's sacrifice does not change the course of history. In this respect Peter's act has the same status and value as the writing of Schreiner's novel: they are both symbolic actions, and his solitary stand, like the writer's work, is intended to bear witness, even if "it changed nothing."

The novel, like the story "Dream Life and Real Life", seems to recognise the practical ineffectiveness of the liberal point-of-view even as it affirms its necessity and inevitability for those whites seeking justice in Southern Africa. The liberal position, while based on sound humanitarian principles and a concern with justice, involves a transference of allegiance to the black cause, to the victims of racial oppression, and thus involves becoming oneself a victim. This is seen as both inevitable and practically self-defeating. It suggests an intractable moral dilemma. Just as African Farm was a work of fiction built on the unacceptable existential alternatives of staying in the colony and stultifying, or leaving and forsaking nourishing roots, so Trooper Peter is built on the unacceptable political alternatives of joining the bullies or dying with the victims. Schreiner makes it clear whose side she is on, but she is equally clear about the hopelessness of having to make such a choice in a corrupt situation. The final statement by the liberal Englishman is very forceful; events in Mashonaland have forced him to a conclusion which seems close to Schreiner's

- not an intransitive verb.

own at this stage:

I do not believe in your God; but I believed in something greater than I could understand, which moved in this earth, as your soul moves in your body. And I thought this worked in such wise, that the law of cause and effect, which holds in the physical world, held also in the moral: so, that the thing we call justice, ruled. I do not believe it any more. There is no God in Mashonaland.

The final scepticism of this statement, so closely allied to what Schreiner had herself once believed about the nature of the moral sphere, and so vehemently opposed to the visionary optimism of the more eloquent sections of Part I, is often overlooked. It states quite firmly that moral actions do not alter the outer course of events and it divorces redemption from the public good. It seems to run totally counter to the view of the parables in Part I, that one man's willed choice could divert the course of history. Part II is thus opposed in direction to Part I: it moves toward scepticism and defeat instead of a visionary optimism, seeking to render faithfully both short-term atrocities and long-term ideals. If there is moral beauty, then it must be an end in itself; moral action is performed in accord with the conscience of the doer.

Schreiner seems to be enunciating not only a moral insight here but an artistic one: that the value of literary action is that of symbolic action: it suggests opposed ways of responding to events and might even didactically indicate, by the process of conversion, which response is on the side of the angels, but it is powerless to intervene directly in history. Schreiner's own later insight into the practical ineffectuality of her own novel was already built into the novel. And yet she remained proud of the fact that she had written it; the action retained its value for the individual. There is a further paradox here, in that a writer's individual symbolic actions are communicated to others. Unlike Trooper Peter, whose

symbolic action is seen by few, those few remaining mostly unaffected by it, the symbolic action of fiction reaches out to a wider audience. The intensity with which issues are raised, choices are rehearsed, and historical figures judged, suggests to us the ways in which history and morality intertwine, and are finally inseparable. The novel's own dwelling on the moment of choice makes those choices seem vital and alive; moreover, its refusal to resolve the predicament, its open-endedness (despite the didactic nature of the novel, its ending is 'open' in the sense that the ending of Part II is irreconcilable with that of Part I) throws the onus of response and choice back onto the reader, keeping the issues alive.

The value of Schreiner's fictional dramatisation of moral and political choices lies not in the view of a later era that only a grasp of economic determinants and class struggle could analyse the historical events of the decade, but in the symbolic process of evaluating which goes on inside the fictional structure:

It is pointless to complain that the bourgeoisie have not been communitarians, or that the Levellers did not introduce an anarch-syndicalist society. . . What we may do rather, is identify with certain values which past actors upheld, and reject others....Our vote will ~~cha~~ change nothing. And yet in another sense, it may change everything. For we are saying that these values, and not those other values, are the ones which make this history meaningful to us, and these are the values which we intend to enlarge and sustain in our own present. (Guy, quoting Thompson, p.355)

Schreiner's novel is not 'history' in that sense, but in juxtaposing the Bible and the Blue Book, in trying to read the lessons of history in terms of moral sanctions and individual acts of faith, she keeps alive in Trooper Peter Halket the human process by which history is made valuable and instructive to the present.

Notes

1. Letter to Rev. G.W. Cross, Cory, 1897?. The letter reads :
"I hope your sympathies are on the side of the Chartered Company as opposed to the Chartered Company. The one good which may grow out of it all is that it may break the nightmare power which Rhodes has exercised over the country." The tongue-in-cheek reference to the two "Companies" in a letter to a Christian preacher indicates the structural opposition Schreiner intended to create in Trooper Peter Halket between Christ's company and that of Rhodes.
2. Olive Schreiner, Thoughts on South Africa (Johannesburg: Africana Reprint Library, 1976) pp. 46-47.
3. See Jocelyn Baines, Joseph Conrad, (Hammondsworth : Penguin, 1960), pp. 135-136. Schreiner, too, would substitute for such childhood romanticism and the traveller's myths the realities of political and economic exploitation in Africa.
4. Note D to Thoughts on South Africa, (pp. 393-398).
5. Letters, p. 183. In the same breath she expresses a desire to travel to the centre of Africa :

Fancy a whole nation of lower middle-class Philistines, without an aristocracy of blood or intellect or of muscular labourers to save them! In a few months I want to go up to the centre of Africa. If I can't I guess I'll return to Europe or go to America.
(To Ellis, 15 April 1890).
6. This conflict is outlined in The Life, pp. 277-786, and in letters to Rhodes from Theo Schreiner and Mrs. Rebecca Schreiner, Rhodes House Library collection.

7. We fight Rhodes because he means so much of oppression, injustice, and moral degradation in South Africa; — but if he passed away tomorrow there still remains the terrible fact that something in our society has formed the matrix which has fed, nourished, and built up such a man! It is the far future of Africa during the next twenty-five or fifty years which depresses me. I believe we are standing on the top of a long downward slope. We shall reach the bottom at last probably amid the upheaval of a war with our Native races (then not the poor, savage, but generous races whom we might have bound to ourselves by a little generosity and sympathy, but a fierce and half-educated, much brutalized race who will have come into their own). I see always that day fifty or sixty years hence, and it is with reference to it that I judge of many things in the present. The men to come after us will reap the fruits of our 'Native Policy', as we today in a smaller fashion are reaping the fruits of the 'Dutch policies' of sixty years ago.

(Letter to John X. Merriman, 3 April 1897,
P. Lewsen, (ed.) Selections from the Correspondence
of John X. Merriman, Cape Town : The Van Riebeeck
Society, 1960), Vol. 1, p.265.

This letter, responding to Merriman's favourable reaction to Trooper Peter Halket, provides the fullest statement of the long-term historical view within which Schreiner understood Rhodes.

8. Quoted by S.G. Millin, Rhodes (London : Chatto & Windus, 1933), P. 29. See also Herbert Baker, Cecil Rhodes by his Architect (London : O.U.P., 1934), p. 11 ff.

9. Millin quotes a slightly more genteel version of this in her biography :

"I am perfectly consistent", he said, "in having voted for the transfer of Basutoland and in now holding these views.... What we want is to annex land, not natives."

(Millin, p.222)

Schreiner's phrase is in keeping with Rhodes's usual blunt and callous style, though.

10. J.G. Lockhart and The Hon. C.M. Woodhouse, Rhodes (London : Hodder & Stoughton, 1963), pp. 348-349.
11. Stanlake Samkange, Origins of Rhodesia (London : Heinemann Educational, 1968), p. 67. Helm claimed to have fully explained and interpreted the Rudd treaty to Lobengula. There were no Matabele witnesses :

....Helm was secretly in the employ of Rhodes. It was not by accident that it was Rev. Helm who interpreted for Moffat most of the time and it was also not accidental that it was Rev. Helm who was the interpreter when the Rudd concession was negotiated. Rev. Helm was a Rhodes man in missionary clothing. (p. 67)

12. William Plomer, Rhodes, (London : Peter Davis, 1933), p. 124.

13. She wrote to Ellis:

Do you know there's a man in Africa whom I've never spoken to but often seen whom I've got a curious feeling I shall marry if I marry anyone....I've had a feeling for him ever since I saw him first in England that I've never had for any human being - not love, a very nervous feeling, but I don't think I could ever conquer my hatred of marriage. It shuts one in so.

(Fryde, 30 August 1870)

14. W.T. Stead, "Character Sketch : Cecil Rhodes of Africa", The Review of Reviews, 1897.
15. S.C. Cronwright's "Notes on the Strop Bill", Albany.
16. Elizabeth Longford, Jameson's Raid, The Prelude to the Boer War (Johannesburg : Jonathan Ball, 1982), p. 45.
17. Olive Schreiner, Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland (Johannesburg : Ad. Donker, 1974), p. 65. This edition is referred to throughout.
18. Quoted as epigraph to Longford's Jameson's Raid.
19. T.O. Ranger, Revolt in Southern Rhodesia 1896-7 A Study in African Resistance (London : Heinemann, 1967), p.375.
20. She had realised this much earlier, before writing Trooper Peter :

You may think me very foolish, but I am feeling very anxious lest . Rhodes in his usual underhand way, and backed by the big conservatives at home should still bring on a war with the Transvaal. I have the same feeling of restless anxiety about him that I had about him last November and December. It is so evidently his last card. I am divided between a sense of intense pity for the man personally, and a feeling of his overpowering wickedness and skill. (To Mary Sauer, SAL, 1 July 1896)
21. Though the sacrifice of the white 'liberal' at the end of Trooper Peter is fruitless, the black man he replaced is set free, an image of continuing struggle and resistance.

22. A letter to her sister Ettie, in the Hemming collection, discusses this point. See V. Buchanan-Gould, Not Without Honour (London : Hutchinson, 1948), pp. 159-160. I have been unable to trace this letter.
23. Her sense that the book failed to change anything echoes that of earlier satirists :
- "Perhaps," so Dr. Johnson has attested, "neither Pope nor Boileau has made the world much better than he found it." And Swift, in a purported letter from Gulliver to his cousin and editor, Richard Sympson, confided impatiently : "I cannot learn that my book hath produced one single effect according to my intention." (Harry Levin, "The Wages of Satire" in Literature and Society (ed.) Edward W. Said, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980, p.2.
24. C.E. Fripp & V.W. Hiller, Gold and the Gospel in Mashonaland 1888, being the journals of 1. The Mashonaland Mission of Bishop Knight-Bruce 2. The Concession Journey of Charles Dunell Rudd (London : Chatto & Windus, 1949), p. 5, my emphasis.
25. Jeff Guy, The Heretic, A study of the Life of John William Colenso 1814 - 1883 (Johannesburg : Ravan, 1983), p.275.
26. Terence Ranger, "Literature and Political Economy in Southern Rhodesia : Arthur Shearly Cripps and the Labour crisis of 1911," unpublished paper delivered at a conference at York on Literature and society in Southern Africa, September 1981. Henceforth "Ranger on Cripps").

27. See Haggard's comments on African Farm in the Casebook pp. 75-76. Haggard argues for the permanent appeal of romantic fiction as against 'Naturalism.' See also the Life, p. 190.
28. Adrian Darter, The Pioneers of Mashonaland (London : Simpkin, Marshall, 1914), p.2.
29. C.E. Finlayson, A Nobody in Mashonaland or the Trials and Adventures of a Tenderfoot (London : George Vickers, 1893), p.9.
30. Colonel R.S.S. Baden-Powell, The Matabele Campaign 1896, being a narrative of the Campaign in suppressing the Native rising in Matabeleland and Mashonaland (Westport : Connecticut & Negro Universities Press, 1970) p. 105.
31. See Joan Findlay, The Findlay Letters (Pretoria : Van Schaik, 1954), p. 155.
32. Darter mentions Alick Halkett as an old Diocesan College boy, and a good cricketer (p. 8). Darter's history follows the course mapped out by Trooper Peter in his materialistic reverie in Part I of the novel. Darter and five fellow-pioneers (including Halkett) drew their cheques at the disbandment of the column and formed the Excelsior syndicate. Like many others, the venture was a failure, and the syndicate was later disbanded. (Darter, p.109, p.191)
33. "Spreckley's column" played a significant role in the Matabele campaign; Baden-Powell describes him as a man with "Dash, pluck and attractive force" (p. 81) and a cool nerve. Schreiner insists on seeing such a man (with "all the qualifications that go to make an officer above the ruck of them," Baden-Powell, p.81), from 'below,' as viewed by his men, by an insubordinate trooper, and potentially by his black victim.

34. Eric Rosenthal, (ed. & transl.) The Matabeleland travel letters of Marie Lippert, 21 September - 23 December 1891 (Cape Town : Friends of the South African Library, 1960) p. 24. Lippert provides a sketch of a hanging-tree, and a caption :
- Bulawayo, Novb. 1, '91. Tree a few yards from our camp, woman hanged on it last year, bones and limbo still to be seen ; Men who hanged her, killed for doing so near White Man's Camp. Intaba Indunas, named after 13 Indunas killed there by Umsilikatze, father of Lobengula.
35. See Rowland Smith, "Allan Quatermain to Rosa Burger : Violence in South African Fiction" World Literature written in English Vol. 22, No. 2. (1983), pp. 171-182, for a discussion of the literary style of the Imperial hero. He argues that "Olive Schreiner produced a model for white liberal scorn of the imperial mode at the same time that Haggard was celebrating it" (p. 172), and that in Trooper Peter Schreiner uses "the unthinking speech of the perpetrators of atrocities to capture the reality of their vicious world," using "her own version of the Quatermain mode," p. 173.
36. These details from Despatches are taken from "Instructions issued to Colonel Sir R.E.R. Martin, relative to the control of the Armed Forces in the territories of the British South Africa Company, and his future position there" and "Instructions issued to Major Gen. Sir Frederick Carrington, relative to Military Operations against the Matabele" (London : Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1896) own private collection.

37. Even the Princess Radziwill,, Rhodes's supporter and author of the retaliatory The Resurrection of Peter, A Reply to Olive Schreiner (London : Hurst and Blackett, 1900), admitted that Schreiner's account of events was not an exaggeration of the truth :

There are dark deeds connected with the attachment of Rhodesia to the British Empire, deeds which would never have been performed by a regular English army, but which seemed quite natural to the band of enterprising fellows who had staked their fortunes on an expedition which it was their interest to represent as a most dangerous and difficult affair....I have been told perfectly sickening details concerning this conquest of the territory The cruel manner in which....the people themselves were exterminated was terrible beyond words. For instance, there occurred the incident mentioned by Olive Schreiner in Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland when over one hundred savages were suffocated alive in a cave where they sought refuge.

Princess Catherine Radziwill, Cecil Rhodes : Man & Empire Maker (London : Cassell, 1918), p. 36.

38. Quoted by H. Lily Guinsberg in a centenary address on Olive Schreiner, SAL collection.
39. The same process of verification was undertaken by detractors and supporters. For instance, Mary **Brown** wrote under the frontispiece to her edition of **the novel** :
"Picture verified by one of the troopers." (SAL)

40. See a review of the 1975 re-edition by J.G., "Fable aimed at vilifying Rhodes" Rhodesian Herald, 7 April 1975. J.G. expresses his astonishment at finding the novel to be "a political document aimed at vilifying Cecil Rhodes. Which may suit the needs of some people." He later invites the reader "to speculate on the reasons for its re-issue."
41. Once the mode of Trooper Peter is identified as satire, many of the critical objections to it fall away, and many of its features are illuminated. Satire "often coincides with pamphleteering" (Trooper Peter is clearly related to Schreiner's political pamphlets in this decade). Satirists are often "disillusioned idealists". In a satirical work "the affirmative conviction lies behind the pejorative demonstration." Satirists are all iconoclasts "in that they have dedicated themselves to the breaking of images" (Schreiner is showing the "great Panjandrum" to have feet of clay; breaking Rhodes's image). The satirist risks suppression (suppression of the frontispiece, and suppression through critical and biographical blindness to the novel's merits, or even its existence). Satire has "recourse to public opinion" and it often uses fantasy, travel, and imaginary voyages to achieve a "Verfremdungseffekt" or a "psychic distancing" (Christ's journey through the ether to a Mashonaland koppie). These features of satire are discussed by Levin in The Wages of Satire, see note 26 above.
42. Hunt's painting, which uses the shadow of the cross to predict Christ's future martyrdom is a visual equivalent to Schreiner's technique in Trooper Peter, which projects the shadow of the cross behind the sequence of hanging-tree images. See a good illustration of Hunt's painting in The Pre-Raphaelites (ed.) A. Bowness (London : Tate Gallery, Penguin Books, 1984), p.222.

43. Matthew, 22,21; Mark, 12,17; Luke 20,25.

44. The 'watch night' services of her childhood had left a deep impression on Schreiner. As late as 1914, she writes to her brother :

I am sitting here alone in my little room, watching the old year out - the saddest and loneliest old Years in all of my life....

One thinks of the watch night services we used to go to in Heald Town. (Old Years Night, 1914?, UCT)

45. The 'germ' of this developed style is first found in The Story of An African Farm, used by the fellow-clerk Waldo tries to befriend, who

asked me if I had ever read a book called the 'Black-eyed Creole ', 'That is the style for me,' he said; 'there where the fellow takes the nigger-girl by the arm, and the other fellow cuts off! That's what I like.'

(SAF. p.236)

Here, too, vulgarity of expression matches crude sexual possessiveness.

46. "All books which throw light on truth are God's books"; p. 66. This is a more didactic version of Waldo's Stranger's view that all books are 'the same book.'

CHAPTER 7

FROM MAN TO MAN

"The worst of this book of mine is that it's so womanly. I think it's the most womanly book that ever was written, and God knows I've willed it otherwise." (Letters, p.153)

(i) Introduction

Because of its complicated manuscript history and many stages of production, From Man to Man is both Schreiner's most problematic work of fiction and her most illuminating in terms of her lifelong concerns as a writer. Like The Story of an African Farm, the novel had its genesis in those richly creative years on farms in the Cradock area in the 1870s, but unlike African Farm, it was not published in the form it had taken by the time Schreiner arrived in England in 1881, but was revised and recast over the later phases of her life in accord with her own developing interests and shifts of awareness. It is thus the most encyclopaedic of her works¹ and the most illuminating of her mature thought and artistic techniques. The novel was an ambitious and lifelong project, one almost of necessity left incomplete at her death, because of its complex status as a progressive compendium of philosophic thought and social protest:

From Man to Man will be quite different from any other book that ever was written, whether good or bad I can't say. I never think; the story leads me, not I it, and I guess it's more likely to make an end of me than I am ever to make an end of it. (Letters, p.125)

When S.C. Cronwright published the novel in 1926, he made a number of claims in his introduction which are worth looking at, as they are both characteristic and confusing. His first claim is that she began the novel as "Other Men's Sins" at New Rush

in 1873, and he posits the theory that when she decided to combine "A Small Bit of Mimosa" and "Wrecked" into one novel (at Ratel Hoek on 3rd August 1876) she "incorporated 'Other Men's Sins' into the same plan" (Intro, FMM p. 9). This was a completely arbitrary conclusion on Cronwright's part, and rests, in turn, on his equally arbitrary decision that the work Schreiner called "Thorn Kloof" must have been the first version of The Story of an African Farm. The real picture of the genesis of the two novels, and their manuscript titles, is clearer and yet more problematic than Cronwright's claims indicate.

The composite evidence for overturning Cronwright's dogmatic conclusions is as follows. The only titles by which Schreiner ever referred to The Story of an African Farm were "Lyndall" (LK Journal, 1880) and the title she told Ellis in 1884 she had once thought of, "Mirage", with the motto "Life is a series of abortions", but there was already a work by that title, and she thought the title and epigraph revealed the direction of the work too plainly (Ellis, HRC). The first title indicates the centrality of Lyndall in African Farm; the second, with its epigraph, one can only be relieved she did not use, though it is not much cruder than the epigraph to Part II of the novel "A striving and a striving and an ending in nothing". Novel titles can be a problem for authors : her later discovery that "Saints and Sinners" was also an existing title necessitated the change to "From Man to Man".² The title "Thorn Kloof" seems to be the key to many of the identity problems surrounding the two novels (Undine, though begun earlier and partially overlapping with work on "Thorn Kloof", was always distinct in Schreiner's references). "Thorn Kloof" seems to have been a parallel working title for "A Small bit of Mimosa",³ the story focusing on an English gentleman farmer's family and farm, situated on the spur of a mountain surrounded by thorn trees (mimosas). Schreiner had been working on "Thorn Kloof" at the same time as Undine, and in July 1876 could not decide which work to complete first. On the 25th she decided to walk up and down

and finish "Thorn Kloof". This seems to indicate rather than the revising and writing out which she Undine. "Thorn Kloof" then became part of a double novel when the story of Rebekah fused with the story of Bertie, (a woman who would be "Wrecked") in August 1876. In August 1876 Schreiner had "some idea" of "Saints and Sinners." In the morning came the thought of - A strong quiet married (by) characters strongly drawn. It will be my next work. Young Willie may be introduced" (21st August 1876). Earlier he decided not to introduce "Old Willie" into "Thorn Kloof". These references seem to indicate that Schreiner was developing two differently angled novels set on different farms with different sets of characters from the farms and the people she was living among from 1875 to 1880. "Thorn Kloof" is the name of the farm in From Man to Man (specifically referred to at the opening of Chapter 3) and the title also refers to the running imagery of the novel, the mimosas which grow in "the flat" in front of the farm,⁴ which produce long white thorns and lovely yellow flowers, which catch at Bertie's dress, and which become a central focus both in the farm's description and its wider symbolic significance. "The Camel Thorn" is the title which actually appears in Schreiner's manuscript, though she at one stage deleted it for the sub-title "Perhaps Only"⁵ taken from a passage in the Prelude to the novel. "The Camel Thorn" thus became an inclusive organic symbol for the combined stories "Thorn Kloof" and "Wrecked", and is itself a central image in the later part of the novel (Chapter 12, p. 433). Nevertheless, her running title for the work after she had combined the two stories was "Saints and Sinners."

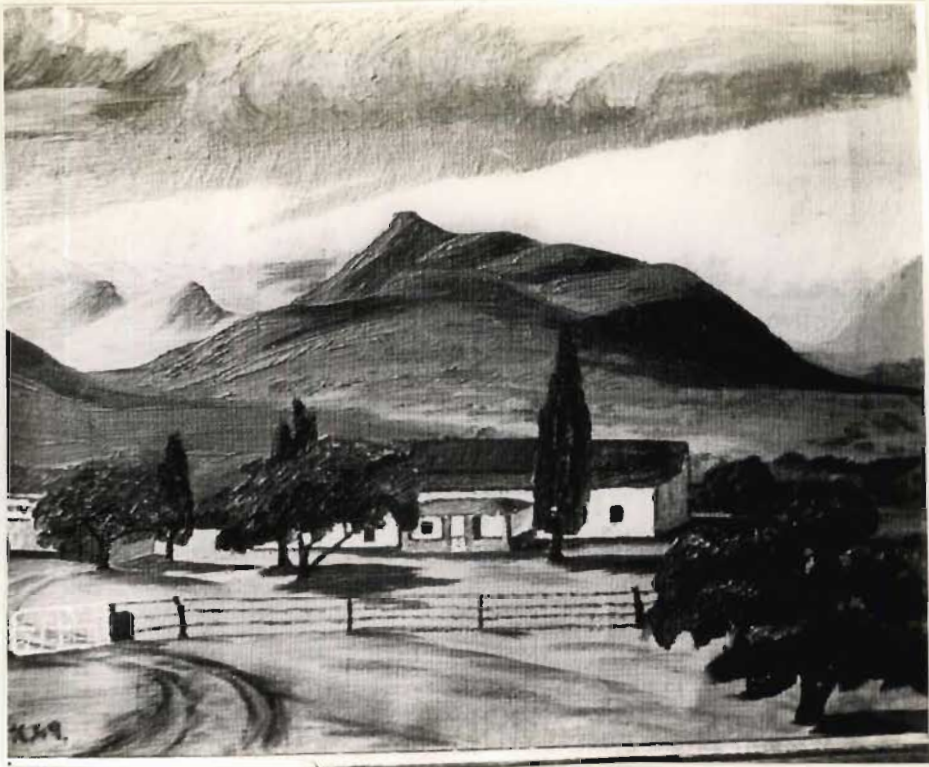
The origin of the title "Thorn Kloof" is of further assistance in understanding the two types of farm Schreiner was trying to distinguish for the aims of her two different novels during this period. "Thorn Kloof" is an English South African farm title, in fact the anglicised form of a farm owned by the Cawood family, which Mr. Cawood later exchanged for Klein Ganna Hoek in order to add it to his own adjacent Ganna Hoek farm in 1896. This farm,



A. Three of the Cawood sisters. Photograph: NELM

Dooren Kloof, was north of Cradock, and Cawood exchanged it for Klein Ganna Hoek, then owned by a Van Heerden, who had bought it from Fouché, the farmer whose children Schreiner taught there in 1875 and 1876. "Dooren Kloof" was thus a name that flowed into Schreiner's consciousness through the Cawood family, whom she had known in Cradock from 1866 to 1870. The Cawoods had moved to 'The Cottage' on Ganna Hoek in 1873, and Mrs. Cawood had induced Olive to come to the Fouchés at Klein Ganna Hoek as governess. The Cottage was a half-hour walk away from the Fouchés' farm, and Schreiner spent her weekends with the Cawoods.⁶ Thus her time in 1875 and 1876 was divided between a Boer homestead and the English colonial family at the Cottage. In 1879, between working at Ratel Hoek and Lelie Kloof (to which the Fouchés had moved) she also taught the Cawood children at Ganna Hoek. Among the 12 children in the Cawood family (Life, p.203) were three goodlooking daughters (a younger daughter Dora died of consumption) an eldest son Oswald, an untaught painter of great talent, and a younger son Willie, possibly the 'young Willie' of Schreiner's reference (though a son in the Martin family was also called Willie). The family thus suggested the situation of attractive female siblings (see photograph A) and an unschooled artistic son like the Waldo of African Farm. It was due to Schreiner's urging that Clifford, one of the Cawood girls, was sent to school at Stellenbosch. Whether her experiences there were like Lyndall's we do not know. But the question of young and intelligent English colonial girls faced with the limited social options of marriage or a slight education was raised by the Cawood female siblings and might well have focussed these issues in Schreiner's real life as the careers of Lyndall, Rebekah and Bertie would in the fictional life of African Farm and From Man to Man.

The two fictional farms are thus distinct extrapolations of the farm and family situations on the Cradock farms where Schreiner worked as a governess. The farm in African Farm is bare, exposed and minimal, and is owned by an Afrikaner (see photograph B); the only English



B. Painting of Ratel Hoek farm by Christo Kuchner
Photograph: Christopher Heywood



C. Garden and farmhouse door at Lelie Kloof.
Photograph: Guy Butler

person on it is an orphan cousin of Em's, Lyndall. The ground is flat and unprotected, red sand, and the only feature on the landscape is the koppie, a slight elevation in which Waldo meditates and prays. The landscape is desolate and seems to suffocate intellectual aspiration and any desire for beauty. Yet it is capable of the fertile efflorescence of greenery after rain which surrounds Waldo's death.

In From Man to Man, the farm Thorn Kloof is from the start a more benevolent place physically and emotionally than the prototypical African farm of the other novel (see photograph C). It has been partially cultivated to resemble an English landscape; it is "Tucked away among the ribs of a mountain" and "a quiet tree-covered farm" (p. 77). The trees and bush are full of a teeming wild life; there is an orangery before the door, and a long orchard beyond the flower garden; the thorn trees on the flat form a "sea of gold" and offer the scent of honey, there are figs and peaches. A nurtured landscape melts by gradations into a wilder African landscape, the two blending in Bertie's 'Wild Flower Garden in the bush.' Within this protected and comparatively civilised landscape, Bertie and Rebekah grow up. The doubling of female protagonist focuses the attention on the possible fates of women in society, their path of entry being the traditional one of courtship and marriage. In other words, the particular environment of Thorn Kloof as an English colonial home with two marriageable daughters determines the nature of the novel and distinguishes it from African Farm. The novel is not about a basic tragic collision between individual potentiality and 'fate', ending before adult life, but about the particular set of social forms and conditions which women seeking to enter adult life would be confronted with, their contrasted but intertwined routes toward full individuality or total shipwreck. From Man to Man, then, resting on the evidence of the actual Thorn Kloof, English colonial female life, and Schreiner's friendship with the Cawoods, can be seen as Schreiner's attempt to anatomise the mores and conventions of Victorian English colonial life through the twin careers of Rebekah and Bertie, in which the colonial variant is certainly relevant but not necessarily central.

The emphasis in the novel falls on the peculiar transitional stage of Victorian life, thought and society as a whole, though the colonial situation modifies the pattern in certain significant ways.

So much for the problematic and illuminating issue of manuscript titles, in which the evidence runs counter to Cronwright's conclusions. The other issues on which he offers definite conclusions are : the extent to which the novel had ever reached a finished form and its 'autobiographical' nature. His conclusions here were also dogmatic and premature, or based on insufficient evidence. The actual evidence helps to clarify the peculiar problems Schreiner had in revising and recasting the novel, and in completing it.

(ii) Composition and revision of the novel

It is clear from a fragment of From Man to Man which was written in Schreiner's very youthful style⁸ that she did begin one version of the novel, concerning a character called Bertie, when she was very young. This might have been the origin of the story she later calls "Wrecked". It also seems likely, though, that she had finished one version of "Saints and Sinners" by the time she left South Africa in 1881. In her first letter to Ellis she spoke of African Farm being only one of many stories she had been working on "since I was five years old" (Letters, p.12), and she wrote to Mrs. Cawood shortly after her arrival in England that she was not yet beginning her medical studies as her brothers advised her to get "her books" ready for publication" (Letters, pp. 9-10). As she had decided not to publish Undine, the books referred to were African Farm and "Saints and Sinners". Her journals indicate consistent work on various sections of both novels; in fact, references to characters and scenes from "Saints and Sinners" are more frequent than those to African Farm. She writes of "Saints and Sinners" as if it were a more ambitious, long-term creative work than her other fictional projects.

A convincing case has been made by C.P. Ravilious that Schreiner submitted "Saints and Sinners" as her first manuscript to Chapman and Hall in 1881, and when this was rejected by Meredith (whose

comment was "Plot silly. Early part well written") she then submitted African Farm the following year. Meredith returned African Farm to her for revision on the 2nd May 1882 and it was re-submitted and accepted on 19th August 1882. The evidence has been thoroughly sifted by Ravilious, and convincingly assembled.⁹ This sequence of events would explain a number of otherwise puzzling facts. She later knew that "Saints and Sinners" was already an existing title (Meredith seems to have pointed out such things in other notes to authors); she seems to have felt that the novel needed a major recasting (as it was the plot Meredith had objected to, not the style); she seems to have revised it mainly by condensing it, as she had done successfully with African Farm, (presumably on Meredith's advice). Chapman was putting pressure on her to finish the novel soon (Life, p.169) which indicates that he knew of its existence, though he had not read it himself (To Kent, HRC, 3 May 1883). She at first hoped to bring it out at the end of 1884, but her deteriorating relationship with Chapman and Hall because of their exploitation of African Farm, and their failure to honour financial agreements, might have been a factor in her delaying work on the novel, or at least being troubled about submitting her second novel to the same publisher, though they tried to force her into agreeing to their having first option on her next work (To Kent, HRC, May 1883).

The major problem confronting her was the radical recasting of the work:

I am so depressed thinking of my work. You see, dear one, I have so cut up and changed the thing that there is hardly anything left and I don't know how to put it together. This afternoon I nearly got up and burnt the whole MS. I would give hundreds of pounds if I had never touched it and published it just as it was. I think it was the Devil made me unpick it.

Ach, I will set my teeth and work at it and make it something better than it was. I can't have Bertie and Rebekah die.

They are as much to me as ever Waldo and Lyndall were. You know, all these months when I have been in such suffering, and have had that yearning to do something for others that I feel when I am in pain, I have always built upon the fact that From Man to Man will help other people, for it will help to make men more tender to women, because they will understand them better; it will help to make some women more tender to others; it will comfort some women by showing them that others have felt as they do. (Letters, p. 29)

This letter indicates that the novel had already existed in a publishable form, and that it was the extent of the revision and recasting that made it a major task. Ellis recognised that she might be trying to alter the conception too much:

Sorry you are troubled about From Man to Man. I feel certain you ought not to abandon it, but it might be a mistake to try and alter the idea of a thing as you have been. Won't you just resolve to make it complete? (HRC, 1884)

Schreiner's letter makes it clear that the novel had always been based on a concern with the relationship between the sexes, and that she hoped to improve the understanding between men and women by portraying their difficulties realistically and sympathetically. However, she had been gathering new insight and experience since coming to England, and wanted to make this part of the book's 'wisdom':

I want, in my life's work, if I work much and live long, to show what a wonderful power love has over the physical and through it over the mental nature, over what we call the soul, the inner self. In this book I have tried to show it. But you see, when I wrote it I did not know what the last three years have taught. I can only try to show it here and there. (Letters, p.34)

This suggests that the novel is an exploration of different kinds of 'love', and that its growth point was the positive, strengthening aspect of love as opposed to the destructive power of sexual love in conflict with convention (Lyndall and Bertie). Rebekah's ability to grow toward strength and independence would thus become a more emphatic part of the novel's later pattern as it was recast and revised in the 1880s and later, after Schreiner's return to South Africa. At the same time such attempts constantly to incorporate the lessons of experience into the fictional narrative would make the novel a continually modified work which would be difficult to terminate except at the moment of death itself.

The process of condensation which Schreiner was attempting seems to have had both moral and artistic aims. She had most problems with the minor characters, the 'hypocrites' Mrs. Drummond, Veronica Grey and John-Ferdinand, both because they were petty (and yet she felt that she should show them more sympathetically than she had in the first version),¹¹ and because they belonged in the less passionate sections of the novel; which she always had difficulty in revising.

I am not adding to my book. It grows smaller and smaller. I am sure that all I am doing is improvement. Condense, condense, condense! But it's the most mentally wearing work. To cut out these few parts has cost me more than to write the whole. I generally write things off best at first; the passionate parts and leading scenes I never need to touch; but the little bits between, where there is not such intense feeling to guide me, have to be thought over.

(Letters, p.46)

Sometimes the revisions were stylistic: ie. recasting of sections into a different stylistic register :

I am changing a whole chapter of From Man to Man from what I call the plain into the "ribbed" style. Sometimes the plain is right, sometimes the ribbed. I think I generally write descriptions in the plain and philosophise or paint thought in the ribbed. (Letters, p.38)

The chief 'ribbed' sections of From Man to Man are Rebekah's Journal in "Raindrops in the Avenue" (Chapter 7) and Rebekah's talk with her children, "Fireflies in the Dark" (Chapter 12). Sometimes the reverse process took place, and a whole chapter could be condensed into a vivid scene :

I am writing such a funny, that is to say, singular, scene. I don't know how it came into my head, where Veronica goes to look at a man's clothes. It is in the place of a whole condensed chapter. (Letters, p.49)

This scene, a variant of the scenes with Gregory Rose and clothing in African Farm, conveys vividly and economically Veronica's desire for John-Ferdinand, and her own secret wilfulness, which will destroy Bertie.

From Man to Man, appropriately for a novel which so often confronts the problems of art and literature, was connected in Schreiner's mind with her conception of organic art as 'true' art, and her belief in self-expression (rather than overt didacticism) as the pathway to a universal expression of human nature. She found as she went on with the revisions that it became more and more 'truth' to her and less and less 'art' (Letters, pp. 98-99). This she linked with her belief in 'organic' art as the highest kind : the titles "Thorn Kloof" and "The Camel Thorn" suggest this quality of indigenous organic growth.

From Man to Man, in the revised version we have as far as it was complete, does convey a sense of an impassioned and organic unfolding, a slow but inevitable life-process very different from the vivid cutting from isolated scene to scene in African Farm. As usual, though, Schreiner would take risks with the incorporation

of non-realistic analytical material, philosophy and social speculation, into her narrative, provided they had a bearing on her subject :

You will think that long rigmarole on sex inartistic.
But it bears on the story; it's all point - if only
anyone will take the trouble to see the point.

(Letters, p.100)

The criterion for the inclusion of such material (apart from its structural relationship with the rest of the work, which can only be shown by analysis) was its interest to the reader. So she tests this criterion by sending chapters to friends, such as the 'ribbed' chapter "Fireflies in the Dark" which she sent to Cronwright to see if she had "lost touch with the intellectual artistic reader" (Letters, p.279), asking him to tell her truthfully if he found it interesting.

Another artistic issue which Schreiner raises in connection with From Man to Man is that of self-expression versus deliberate didacticism, the comparison she makes between her own artistic work and that of George Eliot (Letters, p.160). She said that she would not have been able to write Bertie's death scene if she realised that anyone would ever read it. She seems to be distinguishing here between conscious didacticism and an involuntary living into her characters' existence and careers which would make them sympathetic and alive to the reader. The creation of her characters entailed a kind of creative love which involved both a loss of her own identity and an expression of it in manifold forms :

Yes, it's part of Rebekah's Diary I sent you. Rebekah is me, I don't know which is which any more. But Bertie is me, and Drummond is me, only not Veronica and Mrs. Drummond (except a little!) Sometimes I really don't know whether I am I or one of the others. (Letters, p. 129)

In the same vein, she disclaims any direct authorial comment in From Man to Man, no matter how closely Rebekah's views, or those of Drummond, sometimes resemble her own views expressed outside the fictional world of the novel:

I make no comment throughout the book, I never speak in my own person, the characters simply act and you draw your own conclusions. (Pearson, 10 July 1886)

Possibly because Rebekah is such a fully realised character and is an intellectual and articulate woman, Schreiner needed the role of authorial narrator much less in From Man to Man than she had in African Farm, where there was no consciousness fully developed enough to be close to her own. From Man to Man, despite its long abstract and polemical sections, does convey a sense of impersonal showing rather than direct telling: it is Rebekah, despite her resemblance to Schreiner, who argues out those issues over which she has brooded, and which arise from her own problems.

This impression of impersonality contradicts the 'autobiographical' emphasis which Cronwright was determined to give in his commentary on the novel, especially to the Prelude:

"The Child's Day" is certainly almost wholly autobiographical: to take one small incident — she herself built the little mouse-house on the bare rock at Witteberg and waited for the mouse and then fashioned her hand to imitate the mouse entering it. (Intro., FMM, p.17)

Similarly, he quotes Schreiner's letter asking a friend if she thought the Prelude "was a made-up thing, like an allegory, or ...real about myself I thought it was clear [that it was about herself, Cronwright's note] but the only other person whom I've shown it didn't understand" (Intro., p.29). Cronwright's editorial note here tips the balance toward the opposite reading of the one Schreiner herself gave when she described how the whole Prelude flashed upon her in 1888, and she discovered afterwards that it was "a picture in small, a kind of allegory, of the life of the woman in the book!!"¹² (Letters, pp. 290-291). The Prelude is

in itself the finest instance of the interweaving of memory and creative imagination in Schreiner's work, and Cronwright's emphasis seems to be a deliberate distortion. He might well have been the reader who "didn't understand", though he was not the only person to whom Schreiner had shown the Prelude. His footnotes to the novel often have the same factual and autobiographical emphasis, as when he insists on identifying the town to which Bertie flees as Cradock, when it has been left unidentified in the novel as a representative upcountry South African town.

The Prelude, though it was composed later, forms an integral part of the novel and provides a key to its interpretation; nevertheless, it can be read independently, as Schreiner told her brother in 1913 when she offered it as security against a loan: "it's quite complete in itself" (To WPS, UCT, 12 September 1913). The fact that it is so integral to the novel shows the extent to which Schreiner's creative imagination was engaged with the work over a long period of time. The figure of Ellie, Schreiner's younger sister who died when she was about nine, and to whom the novel is dedicated, seems to focus the issue of autobiography and impersonality, a sympathy for women which is neither self-pity nor too distant :

The novel I am revising now is dedicated to her [Ellie] and the opening chapter is about a little girl's feeling when her new sister is born. I sometimes think my great love for women and girls, not because they are myself, but because they are not myself, comes from my love to her. (Letters, p. 274)

The issue of creative distance, the 'distance' needed to create at all, is also relevant to Schreiner's problems in completing the novel. She worked very hard and productively at revising the novel until her involvement with Karl Pearson, Mrs. Cobb and the Men and Women's Club precipitated an emotional crisis in 1886 and her flight from England to the continent. Apart from the Prelude, she did little work on From Man to Man between 1886 and 1889, and only worked sporadically on the novel after her return to Africa in 1889. So the Pearson love triangle, and the emotional stresses

arising from it, seem to have played a major part in slowing down her progress on the novel. And yet the intellectual stimulus she gained during her years in London was a vital part of her thinking about women, and sexual and love relationships, and thus in another way fed into the novel. Ellis understood Schreiner's need to be isolated from intense personal relationships in order to work, and wrote to Carpenter on this subject while Schreiner was travelling restlessly in Europe (Carp, 2 December 1887).

The sequence of events seems to underline the closely interwoven relationship of life and literature in From Man to Man: the novel had to go on in order to comment on and transform life into fiction, but sometimes the pressures of the life threatened to displace the fiction altogether, or bring it to a halt. Certainly Schreiner in the late 1880's was incapable of sustained creative work of the kind needed for a novel. It is perhaps significant that the Prelude, an allegory of sorts, which was written off in one passionate burst, was the only part of the novel written during this period. The male-female relationships which formed the crux of her novel could in real life render her incapable of completing it.

(iii) Prostitution and feminism

Of course the subject of my book is prostitution and marriage. It is the story of a prostitute and of a married woman who loves another man and whose husband is sensual and unfaithful. Don't think that my mind won't swing round. When I have got this book off my soul I shall look round at other sides. (To Ellis, HRC, 1890)

Schreiner's definition of the subject of From Man to Man indicates the extent to which the twin careers of Rebekah and Bertie were conceived not as contrasted, except in their outcome, but as complementary in their depiction of two cases of women forced to live by their sexual function, the one within marriage and the other without.¹³

Schreiner's thinking about prostitution began early and developed in a complex way as part of her thinking about women's potentialities and social roles in general.¹⁴ In one sense From Man to Man is a Victorian novel about the 'fallen woman', "the story of a woman, a simple, childlike woman, that goes down, down" (Letters, p.16). But the career of Bertie, when juxtaposed with Rebekah's experience inside the apparently safe conventionality of marriage, gains a greater force and significance because of the complex theoretical and experiential intertwining of the two lives as a full condemnation of Victorian sexual morality and social hypocrisy. Prostitution was not a problem Schreiner viewed in isolation. She saw it as intimately related to a false conception of marriage and as a symptom of a radical inequality between men and women :

You will see that if you read my novel all other matters seem to me small compared to matters of sex, and prostitution is its most agonising central point. Prostitution, especially the prostitution of men of themselves to their most brutal level, can't really be touched till man not only says but feels woman is his equal, his brother human to whom he must give as much as he takes; and the franchise is one step toward bringing that about. (Letters, p. 265)

Moreover, prostitution was a symptom of imbalance in the distribution of power, property, wealth and meaningful work :

In Griqualand West there has been for the last 15 years a population in which there were about 10 men to one woman. How would each man having 2 women make things happier for the others? Of the few women living in all those Diamond Field towns, more than half, or quite half, are prostitutes. What makes them prostitutes? The fact that the men have money and that they have power. If you could reverse the position of men and women and give the women the power, the wealth, and the work in life that men have, tomorrow

you would have the selfish and cruel among them hiring men for money, and there would be men prostitutes.... Nothing but a perfect, absolute and complete equality can ever make the relationship between man and woman pure.

(To Ellis, HRC, 30 October 1884)

Schreiner is here countering the Evangelical emphasis on 'male animality' and 'female purity' which formed one strain in Victorian feminism and charitable work among fallen women, with a more logical analysis of social conditions as determining causes. If the male and female positions are as interchangeable as the above letter suggests, then prostitution is not seen as inherent in the baser animal instincts of the male, but as socially determined. The balanced portraits of Frank and Mr. Drummond are part of this thrust towards logical analysis rather than a reliance on the 'angel in the house' stereotype, or a view of woman as the victim of uncontrolled male lust. Despite the depiction of Bertie's seduction and exploitation and Rebekah's experience of consistent male infidelity inside marriage, the novel strives to be fair in its depiction of the causes of distressed male-female relationships.

From Man to Man is a novel based on Schreiner's lifelong attempt to formulate the causes of unhappy relationships between men and women, and to think her way through to their resolution. Her thinking was, as usual, based on her lived experience as well as her reading experience, her encounters with people and books, her experiences before leaving Africa as well as in the intellectual ferment in London in the 1880s.¹⁵ The fictional experiences of both Rebekah and Bertie must have drawn on two crucial areas of Schreiner's life. Rebekah's experience of infidelity inside marriage was possibly based on Schreiner's own experience of marriage. Letters to Betty Molteno indicate that she had confided in her about an inner breakdown of her relationship with Cronwright "it's all ended, there's nothing more for me.... But I feel less than ever that I can go away" (UCT, 26 December 1904). This is parallel to Rebekah's later position within her marriage. The Philpot letters (Albany) also indicate that Schreiner had felt

'betrayed' by Cronwright's relationship with Mrs. Philpot. She wrote to a friend in 1908 that "during the last eight years" she had been "struggling with more than the old bitterness" at the position and plight of women (Letters, p. 281). Her own generalizations about marriage are strongly phrased :

She [Dot Schreiner] may marry soon, and though only with marriage begins a woman's insight into the tragedy and bitterness of woman's fate and her deeper emotional life — her broad intellectual life as a free human creature dies with it in all but a few cases.

(To WPS, UCT, 22 March 1907)

Cronwright's intimate correspondences with Mrs. Philpot and with a younger woman, Ethel Friedlander, do support the idea that he maintained at least emotionally intimate relationships with other women (Horwitz). He met Mrs. Philpot in England in 1897, and the marital crisis seem to have occurred in the period just after the Schreiners' return to South Africa in 1898-1899.

Bertie's story, of an early seduction and being still 'hounded' by gossip far from the scene of her original 'crime', also had its roots in Schreiner's own sense of suffering after the Gau affair. Her first letter about her engagement (quoted in Chapter 2) expresses a fear of colonial gossip, and in March 1889 Schreiner wrote Ellis an extremely distressed letter about Cape people visiting Europe who had awakened all her old terrors connected with Dordrecht (and Gau) : "I'm hunted to death," she wrote, mentioning "the hidden agony" of her life, associated with her vulnerability as a woman, her early exposure to the world, and her homelessness (Letters, pp.157-158). The mood and situation of this letter are very close to Bertie's in England, and at other points when the gossip about her seduction re-surfaces.

In the intellectual background to From Man to Man, W.H. Lecky's History of European Morals was a vital element :

That last chapter on women was the first thing that I ever heard, or knew really, of prostitution. It came upon me like a flash, and it has had an effect on my whole life. "Is it necessary there should be prostitutes?— Then let them be set up on high as the other good and useful things are— but it is not necessary and, by God, it shall not always be!"

(CB, p. 108)

Many of the convictions expressed by Lecky became Schreiner's own. He asserted that monogamy was a higher state than polygamy; he saw the prostitute as "the eternal priestess of humanity, blasted for the sins of the people" and though "herself the supreme type of vice, she is ultimately the most efficient guardian of virtue".¹⁵ Lecky cited Aristotle on the issue of the 'double standard': that is was the duty of husbands to observe in marriage the same fidelity as their wives (p. 313). He thought that the lifelong union of one man and woman was best, but not if prompted simply by blind appetite (p. 348). He saw "of all the departments of ethics the questions concerning the relations of the sexes and the proper position of women" as the key ones for the age. These are the emphases of Schreiner's own thought, but she discarded Lecky's arbitrary distinctions between fixed male and female qualities, so she was already exercising her own powers of rational selection.¹⁶ Her reading of Lecky ran parallel to her work on the story of "Saints and Sinners", as her journal indicates :

I am still reading Lecky. Had an idea bout Bertie this afternoon - suicide, quite strong (LK Journal, 23 October 1880).

Lecky's theories were a shaping influence in From Man to Man, but Schreiner's own experience of financial destitution, and economic dependence, flowed into her insistence on the economic independence of women within marriage. Rebekah's establishment of 'a farm of her own', in comparison with Bertie's inability to earn a living outside a domestic or sexual sphere, is an important part of her

struggle to free herself from the emotional humiliation of her marriage to Frank. Schreiner's own recognition of this principle was established when she insisted on being put on a salaried basis in her first semi-formal position as companion/teacher with a friendly family. And she later developed this point in letters to friends and in Woman and Labour.

Schreiner's experience in London in the mid-1880s intensified her interest in the position of women and helped her to formulate her own principles more clearly. She read Hardy and Ibsen, August Bebel's Woman under Socialism, met women who were doing social work among prostitutes and did some of it herself, heard Karl Pearson's paper on "The Woman Question" at the Men and Women's Club, and argued with him about his theories, asked Ellis for the Blue Books on prostitution, discussed the problem of venereal disease in Europe, and read W.T. Stead's revelations about the abduction and sexual exploitation of young girls in Victorian England.¹⁷ She planned a large study of the position of women, historical, analytical and prophetic, hoping to collaborate with Karl Pearson on it (Pearson, 10 September, 1886). She also planned and began to write a preface to the works of Mary Wollstonecraft (Albany). She was relating her discoveries retrospectively to the problems of prostitution back at the Kimberley Diamond-Fields, and such relationships could assist in her recasting of key scenes in From Man to Man :

A notice of a terrible case at the Diamond Fields of abducting young girls for prostitution has much more fallen in with it [her work].

(To Ellis, HRC; 17 September 1884)

All her reading on 'the woman question' was seen as contributory and stimulating in the writing of her novel :

It's good for me to read and study about the woman question, especially while I'm working at my book. It's the only thing that doesn't take me away from my work. (To Ellis, HRC, 1884?)

Much of Schreiner's intellectual development in these years was tied to the rich discussion that went on between her and Havelock Ellis : the exchange of views, books, and emotions. Ellis and Schreiner discussed Hardy and Ibsen, two writers who had made important fictional explorations of 'the woman question'. Schreiner saw that the situation she had created between John-Ferdinand and Bertie was paralleled by Knight and Elfride in A Pair of Blue Eyes (Letters, p.14). She noted in the same letter to Ellis that Ibsen "shows some sides of a woman's nature that are not often spoken of, and that some people do not believe exist". In her discussion of The Doll's House (the South African equivalent to a Doll's House is the stone 'mouse house' built on a flat rock in the Karoo by little Rebekah) Schreiner isolates an artistic problem which is also relevant to From Man to Man :

With regard to Nora (The Doll's House) I think Ibsen does see the other side of the question, but in a book which is a work of art, and not a mere philosophical dissertation, it is not always possible to show all the sides. I have a sense of something wanting in the book, but I do not see how he could have supplied it. In the ideal condition for which we look men and women will walk close, hand in hand, but now the fight has oftenest to be fought out alone by both. I think men suffer as much as women from the falseness of the relations. Helmer's life lost as much as Nora's did through the fact that they never lived really together.

(Letters, p.15)

The problem of a limited polemical vision versus a humanistic presentation of male problems was one that Schreiner was also struggling with in From Man to Man, and she attempted to resolve it through the introduction of Mr. Drummond, making his position within marriage parallel to Rebekah's. The role of money in Ibsen's play would also have reinforced Schreiner's stress on an income for women as a liberating factor. The point she makes here about men suffering as much as women from gross inequality within marriage would be developed in Woman and Labour, and it formed the main plank of her opposition to Pearson's paper on "The Woman Question": he had left out Man, she wrote to him, and the woman question should not be viewed in isolation from the role and position of man.¹⁸

Schreiner's reading of Victorian feminist theory intertwined with her own social and emotional experience in London, and her memories of the position of women, black and white, in Africa. She seems to have been working toward some synthesis of theory and experience in male-female relationships : artistically, From Man to Man was a lifelong attempt to express this synthesis in fiction; Woman and Labour expressed it discursively. Conceptions of slavery and property were central in the feminist theory she was encountering. Bebel's first axiom was that "Woman was the first human being to come into bondage: she was a slave before the male slave existed".¹⁹ Bebel also quoted Mill's dictum that "Marriage is the only form of slavery that the law recognises" (p. 86) and Schlegel's view that "Almost all marriages are concubinages, left-handed unions, or rather provisional attempts and distant resemblances at and of a true marriage, whose real future consists... in that two persons become one" (p. 86). The Victorian critique of conventional marriage rested on an idealistic conception of marriage as a total union, and in Schreiner's writing took on a prophetic and progressive colouring. Contemporary marriages were unequal because of economic and social imbalances: "To man, woman is, first of all, an object of enjoyment. Economically and socially unfree, she sees in marriage her support. Accordingly

she depends on man and becomes a piece of property to him" (p. 120). In Schreiner's Preface to Wollstonecraft's Rights of Woman she discussed the extreme form of this situation in African society:

The Kaffir female is the property of the male; he may kill, flog or subject her to any use, owing to his superior physical strength; but her functions as builder, manufacturer, cultivator, prevent any deterioration of her mental powers and her physical strength, (p. 10)

This situation is referred to in African Farm, where the herdsman's physical brutality to his wife is a cruder form of the bourgeois conception of marriage as male ownership of a female. Schreiner's conventional males in Undine and African Farm all hold this view, and to that extent are forerunners of Frank and John-Ferdinand (the latter's attitudes are modified by Puritanism and female-worship, illustrating Mill's view that the worship of women leads to as great abuse of her rights as dismissal or contempt). The suffering and grief of 'savage' women at their unenviable plight, being subjected to total ownership, hard labour and polygamy, forms a running motif in the Preface to Wollstonecraft, in Woman and Labour and in From Man to Man. Schreiner constantly makes connections between European and African society here, comparing and contrasting different variants of the same principles, forging a female solidarity but aware of key differences in emphasis. The sense of women as property becomes a sub-text in Trooper Peter Halket, women changing hands as a form of loot in wartime. In From Man to Man the European pattern is foregrounded, Bertie and Rebekah being two white women illustrating the two sides of the marital coin, but the racial extension of the property and slavery principle is provided by Frank's fathering of a 'Coloured' child by his servant, thus fusing a more general abuse of women and marriage with a racist sense of total ownership (but disowning the offspring). Schreiner wrote to her brother Will on this issue:

In my small way I am doing what I can (on 'the native question'). If it were typewritten and easy to read I would send you a chapter of my novel I'm just finishing. The colour question comes in quite naturally there, because one of the centre-points of the story is that the wife has adopted and brings up as her own among the legitimate children a little half-coloured child who is her husband's by a coloured servant. He never suspects the child is his till the end of the book: when he attacks his wife for bringing up a coloured child with his white children. You will of course see how this opens up the whole question of our relation to the darker races, and the attitude which says "they are here for our interest, for our pleasure, and to hell with them when they aren't that!"

(UCT, 4 June 1908)

The prostitute was seen by Victorian feminists as simply the most obvious case of the sexual exploitation of women as property, and a sensitive aspect of prostitution was the abduction and enslavement of very young women, which linked two of Schreiner's victim figures, the sexually abused woman and the child. Stead's journalistic campaign had revealed the abuses directed at young girls in Victorian England ; Bebel also stressed the youthfulness of European prostitutes :

The majority of prostitutes are thrown into the arms of this occupation at a time when they can hardly be said to have arrived at the age of discretion. Of 2, 582 girls, arrested in Paris for the secret practice of prostitution, 1,500 were minors; of 607 others, 487 had been deflowered under the age of twenty. In September, 1894, a scandal of first rank took the stage in Buda-Pest. It appeared that about 400 girls of from 12 to 15 years fell prey to a band of rich rakes. The sons of our "property and cultured classes" generally consider it an attribute of rank to seduce the daughters of the people, whom they then leave in the lurch. (p. 162)

Bebel here links, as Schreiner does in the career of Bertie, youthful seduction of girls "untutored in life and experience" (Bebel, p. 162) with a career of prostitution. Abduction of young girls also plays a role in the career of Bertie; hers is semi-voluntary when she leaves South Africa with 'the Jew'. Her Jewish protector comes from the Diamond Fields, where, Schreiner had been reading, the abduction of young women and prostitution were rife. Thus the over-valuation of virginity, stemming from a sense of the bride as an unsullied lifetime possession and property, played its role in making further sexual experience the only path open to women who had not learned the connection between virginity and a secure marriage transaction. These social attitudes are exposed in From Man to Man by Bertie's Aunt Mary-Anna, whose advice to Bertie is to conceal her disgrace and not compound vice with honesty, sensible advice echoing the mother of Hardy's Tess. In the same way, Bertie's mother advises her not to show her affection for the young tutor too openly, thus suggesting that she understands that the basis of marriage is concealment and strategy, not frankness. The treatment of prostitutes was thus connected with the hypocrisy and property values of bourgeois marriage, and From Man to Man is a thoroughgoing attack on all the interlinked features of conventional Victorian marriage, showing the consequences both within and outside marriage of a false, because external and material, view of male-female relationships.

It was because of this holistic view of the problem that Schreiner saw the philanthropic 'rescue work' aimed at Victorian prostitutes as useless, a sapping at the problem from below instead of the wholesale readjustment of male-female relationships which she saw as necessary (To WPS, UCT, 12 May 1912). And yet her reactions to Bebel indicate that she did not see a socialised state as an automatic answer to women's problems either, not unless the position of women was also radically altered in the direction of "full civil

and political equality with man" (Schreiner's note to Bebel, p.4). Such equality within marriage might make an honest partnership possible, and 'truthfulness' is a central value in the depiction of marriage and prostitution in From Man to Man. Male promiscuity within marriage was socially licensed, and even approved: Schreiner underlines Bebel's statement that while the adultery of women had always been severely punished, "over the adultery of the husband the mantle of Christian charity was thrown" (p. 63).

The pain inflicted by infidelity was compounded by the dishonesty which had to be practised between man and wife, and thus again truthfulness was flouted. The bigamy trial of Howard Hinton, which erupted when Schreiner was in London and acquainted with James Hinton, hero and mentor to Havelock Ellis, became a vivid illustration to Schreiner of the suffering inflicted by 'double' sexual relationships, or "our present form of union which pretends to be single and lifelong and generally is double" ²⁰ (Pearson, 12 October 1886),

This pretence becomes the core of Rebekah's objections to her husband's adultery in From Man to Man.

Schreiner's responses to Bebel's views on sexuality itself also provide a key to the reading of From Man to Man. Bebel, like many other Victorians, like Hinton as well, reacted to Victorian morality (the publically endorsed version) by advocating a healthy sensuality, or sexual licence. When Bebel equates love with sexual intercourse Schreiner annotates :

In the animal and men and women of the lowest type; among birds and among humans more highly developed love has come to mean infinitely more, the purely physical being the expression of intense mental and emotional needs which finally override the purely physical in importance. (p. 79)

Here a Darwinian emphasis does not fully displace the Christian dualism of mind and body as higher and lower faculties. When Bebel argues that the natural impulse toward sexual gratification

should not be denied, Schreiner notes:

On the manner in which we do guide, control and when necessary suppress certain perfectly natural (i.e. primitive) instincts, depends the height of development and the beauty of the human individual. (p. 80).

When Bebel says that the sexual impulse is neither moral nor immoral, Schreiner writes in :

It is entirely moral or immoral in its exercise as it inflicts or does not inflict suffering, and above all as it is compatible with perfect truth and openness. (p. 82)

She makes a similar point elsewhere in her discussion of 'Hintonism' or 'free love', that it "does not look the facts of human nature in the face" :

Advance in the matter of sex means in the future more and more a sense of the awful importance of sex feeling; and the need for its absolute control by the higher centres of the mind, the reason, sense of duty.

(To Ellis, HRC, 4 July 1916)

Thus Frank's behaviour in From Man to Man is condemned not only for its necessary deceitfulness, but for the 'healthy' expression of the sexual instinct uncontrolled by the reason and moral principle. His 'frankness' is of the wrong kind, physical and not mental or moral.

Monogamous unions are not dismissed by thinkers like Bebel, but seen as "bruised and wounded" by a false social and economic system (p. vi). Schreiner, too, believed in the monogamous ideal but did not see it coming into its own in her own lifetime ("We shall die without seeing it", note in Bebel, April 1st 1905), because of the corrupt social system and the inequality of training given to men and women. The ideal of the future was a movement of

the sexes toward 'closer union', a movement partially enacted within From Man to Man (WL, p.252). From Man to Man was intended not only as an exposé and critique of the false face of Victorian marriage and sexual morality, it would also depict the ideal toward which men and women would inevitably move, thus swinging around the myth of the Edenic fall of Christian orthodoxy into a golden vision of future sexual union as free and equal :

The ancient Chaldean seer had a vision of a Garden of Eden which lay in a remote past. It was dreamed that man and woman once lived in joy and fellowship, till woman ate of the tree of knowledge and gave man to eat; and that both were driven forth to wander, to toil in bitterness; because they had eaten of the fruit.

We also have our dream of a Garden: but it lies in a distant future. We dream that woman shall eat of the tree of knowledge together with man, and that side by side and hand close to hand, through ages of much toil and labour, they shall together raise about them an Eden nobler than any the Chaldean dreamed of; an Eden created by their own labour and made beautiful by their own fellowship (WL, p.282).

(iv) Narrative analysis : The Prelude

Though Schreiner's Prelude to the main action of From Man to Man was conceived later than the original story of Rebekah and Bertie, its sudden and spontaneous arrival testifies to its deep alignment with Schreiner's creative processes. Its addition to the main action structures the novel in a pattern similar to that of Undine and African Farm, which both have long opening chapters describing one day in the life of the protagonists as children, preparing us for their adult lives and heralding the themes of the main action.

The first narrative of "The Prelude: The Child's Day" establishes the firm impersonal tone of the main narrative sections and the sensuous presence of the farm, with "the rich dry odour of a warm, African, summer morning" (p. 3). The opening sentence announces the theme of female suffering : "The little mother lay in the agony of childbirth", but the suffering is 'natural', and part of the fecund life of the farm, with the bees buzzing outside but also entering the room. The presence of old Ayah, her hands responding to the mother's pain, with their veins "standing out like cords" (p. 33) and her words expressing an ancient female resignation ("O ja, God! Wat zal ons nou zeg?") links white and black women who have nothing to do but endure. This resignation to the will of God is the older generation's response to female pain, just as old Otto in African Farm is the older generation's response to faith itself, but the new generation in both novels has to find new answers. The father in this opening scene, reading Swedenborg, is not impassive but he is detached from any real role in the proceedings.

Rebekah, through whom the rest of the Prelude will be focalised and partly narrated, is then introduced. She is both an English and an African child, in a pink dress and white knockerbockers, but wearing a kappie, and there are ducks near the step, as there are in the English childhood of Peter Halket and the semi-English colonial childhood of Undine and her brother. The narrative begins to follow Rebekah's movements in detail, which it will continue to do, tracing the movements of her body around the farm, and the smallest shifts of her consciousness. She visits her mouse-house, built, like Waldo's altar, on a flat rock, the stone shrine of Schreiner's superstitious and hopeful children. But Rebekah is not concerned with matters of faith: her stone house is a domestic and secure habitation: there is space for food and a moss carpet for comfort, only the inhabitants, the mice, have not arrived. To unite a secure home and the right occupants (to unite the social conventions and the natural impulses the novel will concern itself with) seems to require an act of faith maintained in spite of reasonable doubts : "Half, she expected the mice to come; and

half, she knew they never would!" (p. 35)

One of Rebekah's first instinctive flashes of the day (the Prelude is concerned with instinctive knowledge, the knowledge of the imagination) is that something is happening at the house, and she acts on it. Her actions are disturbed and impulsive after she hears her newborn sister's cry; she reacts with disgust "Was it this that made that noise?" and she disobeys her father's equally impersonally phrased command : "Kiss it, Rebekah; it is your little sister." "No - I won't. - I don't like it," she said slowly (p. 36). The detail stresses that Rebekah is both firm and womanly (the later story will reveal that jealousy is as relevant to adult life as it is to a five-year-old at the arrival of a sister) and yet a child, unable to reach the door-handle. The locking of the spare room prepares us for the later discovery of the dead twin sister there. Rebekah goes deliberately into the sun to punish herself and provoke adult annoyance, which would at least be better than the total ignoring of her presence on this special day. Then she makes her way into the spare room.

The apparently sleeping baby awakens her curiosity and wonder, as well as the desire to comfort and welcome it. The box of things she has collected²¹ (pp. 39-40) is emblematic of her character and her interests : they reflect her interest in the natural world, her intellectual curiosity, her sympathy with basic African life (the Bushman stone, the stone doll), her feminine interests (the workbox which will feature in the main narrative), and her admiration for Queen Victoria (the tinsel label with Queen Victoria's head is the first of many recurrent images). The placing of the Bushman stone and Queen Victoria's head next to the baby signals the dual inheritance and social position of Rebekah as well as her sister. When she is found and scolded by Ayah she claims the baby as her own, on the rule of finders keepers (p. 42), thus indicating her own maternal impulse, and that part of her jealousy is directed at her new sister who has displaced her, but another part is envy of her mother, who is lucky to have a baby when Rebekah has none. At this point Rebekah scarcely registers that the baby is dead, suggesting the poor impression sometimes made by factual communication.

The next section of the narrative (pp. 43-58) is a version of the dream/allegory situation found in Schreiner's other fiction. Rebekah is both the dreamer and the storyteller, telling herself, (in a semi-tranced state,) a sequence of stories in which she is also an actant. The first narrator retreats into brackets, framing Rebekah's stories and dialogues with references to the little storyteller's physical presence and slight movements. Rebekah's first 'fantasy' is the encounter with the big Queen Victoria (discussed at the opening of Chapter 1, above) in which Rebekah is presented with her own island, which is neither the colony nor the big Queen's Empire. Presents are sent to the inhabitants of the farm (parents and other authority figures, like Ayah) in order to placate them, and the little Queen Victoria is polite but not submissive toward the big Queen. Rebekah's island is a Utopia suited to her own size and needs (objects on the farm were too large or too high). Her house is bigger than the mouse house but smaller than grown-ups' houses. The baby she finds in a pod is a fantasised proportionate baby but born without pain and lying inside a natural 'pod'.

The stories Rebekah tells her 'baby' are expressive of her own fears and needs, and by becoming a 'little mother' inside her fantasy she comforts the imaginary baby and herself: motifs from the other novels such as the ticking clock, prayers for aid, and the 'queer little child' recur, but in the consoling context of Rebekah's position of maternal authority (pp. 48-49). The stories she tells the baby are of the Utopian fantasy type, describing a loving reconciliation between man and nature in an ascending scale from the harmless cock-o-veet to the potentially much more dangerous tiger, lion, puff-adder, and cobra. The evil snake, image of the fall and potential evil, is sung to sleep in Rebekah's lap. The stories thus conquer the threats of the natural world through storytelling and a vision of reconciliation and harmony. But Rebekah also warns her baby that the real world is not like that (p. 52), that she should distinguish between fantasy and reality, and she warns her by relating the true anecdotes of the tiger who almost bit her hand.

The next 'story' is an instance of a confessional story, a 'secret': that Rebekah is in fact a writer, one who has written a great deal, a room full of books : "I've written a book about birds, and about animals, and about the world; and one day I'm going to write a book something like the Bible" (p. 53). Apart from these ambitious projects, there are stories Rebekah has heard others tell. The first is the story about the heroic Hester Durham, a lonely embattled figure who comforted others in need; there is a fragment of heroic verse, then a poem about a heroic woman who resisted the colonisation of her country by the Romans. Rebekah dislikes the orthodox texts and hymns she is given: her imagination selects what is relevant and stirring, such as the text "And instead of the thorn tree shall come up the fir tree; and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle-tree " (p.55).

Rebekah next introduces the baby to her invented male companion, Charles, who is also her best listener and story-teller, as well as the Prince Consort of South Africa to her role of Queen. Charles is favourably compared with two real boys (the two main male characters of the later narrative). Frank and John-Ferdinand's later characteristics are presented in childish form : Frank's sensual cruelty in his treatment of Rebekah and the cats, and John-Ferdinand's self-righteousness and tale-telling in his response to the 'crime' of the Kaffir maid (all of which will be repeated in his later treatment of Bertie). Rebekah is hostile to real boys : "I don't like live boys: they are something like Kaffirs. Jan married Mietje our Kaffir maid, and he used to beat her - I'm glad I'm not a Kaffir man's wife" (p. 56). This piece of childish prejudice is nevertheless accurate in its emphasis on male power and the cruder form of oppression found in the physical beating of Mietje by Jan.²² The last story concerns the emergence of a baby bird from under its mother's wing, and its sight of the stars, a characteristic image of the growth from ignorant security into knowledge of the beauty of nature. The last sequence of Rebekah's internal story-telling/dreaming is a transition back into the waking state, as she mimics the actions of a real mother, trying to feed the baby and then singing to it. She also begins

to build a house for the baby (a further image of a house as a shelter and dwelling for imaginary creatures) and the sun sets on the island (the end of the fantasy day for Rebekah and her 'baby', as the 'real' dusk will later close the 'real' day for Rebekah when she goes to sleep at the end of the Prelude). There is a brief flash-forward (prolepsis) to the memory of the full-grown woman who will remember this moment in her childish life as one of intense delight (as Schreiner, remembering her childhood, imagined Rebekah's day and her dreams).

After this precocious sequence there is a wild chase of the pigs, a physical assertion of energy after the long dreams under the pear-tree (recalling Undine's chase of the monkey, and the use of the pigs as an image of basic farm life in African Farm). Rebekah sees the funeral procession moving toward the land beyond the dam without grasping its function. She avoids thinking of the new baby, has a brief chat with the imaginary Charles, this time about building a house of branches, examines a ball of spiders' eggs and watches the ants. The ants are engaged in a fierce competition, a murderous battle.²³ Then she sees a real and frightening snake, a cobra, and has "a sense of all the world being abandonedly wicked" (p. 62). As she goes indoors we are reminded of the "great framed pictures of Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort" (p. 62), the royal married pair on whom she has modelled herself and Charles. While she is saying her tables, the meaning of the procession she has seen earlier suddenly "flashed on her" (the wording used for the creative inspiration of the Prelude itself). And instantly she knows "vaguely, but quite certainly— something of what birth and death mean, which she had not known before" and she understands something of the baby's genesis. This is the insight, grasped when the figures are not physically present, toward which the fantasy sequence of stories was leading. Birth, sexuality and death, masked in the fantasy images and stories, are suddenly both understood and related to the actual world around her, and yet they are not rationally known.

But still Rebekah does not approach her mother and sister. She is given her supper amid the evening rituals and noises of

the fam; the maids discuss her dismissively; she watches the candle flame with a scientific interest which gives way to a general scpeticism about even grown-up knowledge : "Perhaps, even grown-up people didn't know all. - Perhaps only God knew what lights and shadows were!" (p.67) This expression of doubt which provided a sub-title for the novel anticipates the problems encountered in the grown-up world of "The Woman's Day", where adults are shown to be as puzzled and suffering as children.

Then Rebekah hears another cry from the baby, another summons, and this time her response is to identify with the baby not with its mother, and she rushes in frantically to prevent this baby being 'killed' like the other one (p. 68). (Her response here anticipates the older Rebekah's desperate rush after Bertie when she thinks she hears her voice outside the concert hall in Chapter 12). Now Rebekah watches the baby and accepts that it belongs to her mother : "it's your little baby, eh mother?" (p. 70). She touches the baby for the first time. Then she makes a clear request, and a tactful one, indicating that she understands the respective positions and relations of mother, baby and herself : "Mother, - will you let me have your baby to sleep by me for a little while?" She explains that she wants to "take care of it and teach it", but the request is refused. She then stages a dramatic breakdown into despair and rejection, and goes on sobbing until the baby is put next to her in bed. Now she is called "the elder sister" (p. 73) for the first time, as she accepts that protective position. She half-sings to the real baby as she had to the fantasy one. Later, the baby cannot be removed by Ayah : "But when she turned down the cover she found the hands of the sisters so interlocked, and the arm of the elder sister so closely round the younger, that she could not remove it without waking both" (p. 73). Though there are "deep shadows" where the two sisters lie, "they were all sleeping well."

(v) The Prelude : narrative interpretation

Schreiner was quite accurate in her description of the Prelude as "a picture in small, a kind of allegory, of the life of the woman in the book" (CB, p.126).²⁴ The Prelude indicates the centrality of Rebekah as a controlling focus in the novel as a whole, seeking, as she does, to enter the fullest kind of life open to an intelligent and affectionate woman. The extent to which she fails to achieve this is an index to the peculiarly crippling effects of being a woman in a particular time and place: English colonial society in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The opening of the Prelude stresses the importance of the farm environment : its pastoral beauty, its teeming wild life,²⁵ its isolation from civilised centres, its racial mixture. The repeated references to Victoria , especially the royal Victorian marriage, intertwined with the local and indigenous landscape and culture, indicate the social negotiation which will have to be effected by Rebekah if she hopes to enter into society with her own integrity intact. The 'house' stands as an image of domestic shelter, the social institution of marriage, and the need to find a secure accommodation of natural impulse and social convention.

The opening image of female suffering in childbirth expresses a continuing stratum of female experience against which are set different role possibilities and different individual expectations. Rebekah's childish non-conformism to traditional 'female' behaviour suggests that each individual must negotiate her own choices, and that the way to achieve some breakthrough into a strong female position might be related to an imaginative attitude to experience rather than a rigidly conventional one.

All of the major themes of the novel are adumbrated in the Prelude: sisterhood as a genuine family relationship and as a feminist metaphor; childhood and motherhood as complementary and problematic states for women; the ability to express love as related to the ability to distinguish between the 'real' and the 'imaginary' world; the approach to existential problems through the use of fantasy and ritual; protective and a-sexual love versus rivalry and natural

competitiveness, the twinning of female fates in a society where women suffer disabilities both inside and outside the system. One of the key images of the Prelude, or narrative 'pressure-points', is the situation of female twinning or doubling, repeating in miniature the double female protagonist situation of the main plot. Bertie (though not even named in the Prelude) is one of a twin : one sister is dead, the other alive. These physically contrasted states (the warm baby in the mother's bed, the cold baby in the spare room) anticipate the actual opposed fates of the two women in the novel : Rebekah fighting her way into a fuller life; Bertie dying as an outcast. The doubling is then continued in the relationship of older and younger sisters seeking to establish sibling affection instead of jealousy and rivalry. The whole Prelude is about the means used by Rebekah, consciously and unconsciously, to overcome a negative emotional state and achieve a relational harmony without sacrificing her own sense of herself. Thus it anticipates the struggle she will endure as an adult inside her marriage to Frank, and suggests the ways in which she will succeed in the male-female relationship as she does in the sibling situation.

The family presents a microcosm of social roles and natural love relationships in the Prelude. The family is surrounded by the broader environment of the farm, with its encroachment of wildness and danger on civilised and fertile order. Rebekah's stories under the pear tree create a utopian vision of harmony between 'wild' creatures and young children, the threatening and the vulnerable. The natural world contains the threat of evil and damage, and the snake image is one which becomes expressive of sexuality, hypocrisy, and a fall into knowledge of good and evil as they exist in human nature and the 'real' world. As in the conclusion to Woman and Labour, Schreiner is seeking to replace the Christian concept of a damaging fall into 'sin,' and the concept of original sin itself (John-Ferdinand's view of Bertie), with an 'enlightened' view of female suffering as socially conditioned, and therefore largely amenable to social reform and social progress, even though these are conceived of as slow and long-term. In the same way

as the little Rebekah is not finally damaged by suddenly grasping something of the nature of birth, sexuality and death, but uses it as a transitional stage toward a fuller understanding and a fuller life and love, so does the woman Rebekah, undergoing her fall into the knowledge of adultery and betrayal within marriage, overcome it by negotiating a new agreement and reaching a space where she can be both independent and loving.

The Prelude is not only thematically a miniature of the novel; its structure and images anticipate those of 'the book' itself. The overall direction is one of growth in the face of difficulty and obstruction. The realistic narrative makes way for intense and solitary reverie, as it will in the main book (culminating in Rebekah's diary and her letter to Frank). The leading image of the thorn-tree, self-protective and with indigenous beauty, capable of breaking into golden blooms, is focused in the Prelude by the Biblical text : "and instead of the thorn tree shall come up the fir tree", a Biblical transformational and apocalyptic image which the novel will appropriate for the final transformation of crippled sexual identity and female suffering into a vision of future harmony.

The Prelude also contains within itself analogues for Schreiner's activity as narrative artist (the novel contains a much fuller expansion of this in the discussion between Rebekah and Drummond). Rebekah's 'secret' is that she is already, at the age of five, an accomplished and experienced storyteller and writer of books : about birds and animals (the natural landscape of African Farm?) about 'the world' (the political realities of Trooper Peter?) and the projected encyclopedic book 'something like the Bible' (From Man to Man itself). This ambitious project seems to tell us that From Man to Man is a re-writing of the 'Bible', the lessons of love and charity, the rebirth into a fuller life, by rejecting outmoded ideas of sin and dogma, and reading the essential transformations into the gradual progressions of human life on earth, in real social conditions where nature struggles for nurture, and where

nineteenth century English colonial women had to struggle both against the false conventionality of Victorian marriage (Victoria and Albert) and the ignorance and isolation of a rural South African life. The heroines of Rebekah's stories are romanticised national heroines : when she herself grows up she will have to be heroic in a more private but no less vital sphere, and like Hester Durham and the female martyr against the Romans, she will have to fight in isolation. But Schreiner never does separate individual female achievement from the broader context of country and sex.

(v) Narrative analysis : "The Book: The Woman's Day"

If the Prelude is a day in the life of Rebekah which compresses the whole pattern of her life, the actual story of her adult life is called "The Woman's Day" suggesting an adjustment of temporal perspectives in which every day encapsulates the essential pattern of woman's fate, and yet in the long term of social evolution, a lifetime shrinks to a day.²⁶

Chapter 1 of The Book rests on the contrasted structure Schreiner used in African Farm, but the stress here falls on interrelationship as well as opposition. The title "Showing what Baby-Bertie thought of her new tutor; and how Rebekah got married" announces the crucial events in both women's lives through the simultaneous arrival of Bertie's seducer and Rebekah's husband. The 'strangers' of African Farm, with their puzzling and brief appearances on the stage of the novel's action are here replaced by two socially acceptable and recognisable male figures: one an English cousin who has always courted Rebekah, and another named Percy Lawrie who has come to fill the position of tutor to Bertie. And yet Frank's description links him with the male sensuality and power of Lyndall's stranger, and the casual European attitude to culture of Waldo's Stranger (the "yellow-backed book", pp.82-83). And the tutor's "restless, beadlike small eyes" and pointed nose link him with the Christian hypocrites and sexual predators of Undine.

The opening chapter describes the setting as one of a gradual merging of farm landscape into bush; the rich beauty of the thorn-trees in flower suggests this promising stage of Bertie and Rebekah's lives, as they stand poised at crucial moments, just

before decisive action. The farm is linked with the town by the winding road, only sometimes visible : "Over the nek came the road from the town" (p.78). Though the farm is isolated, it is linked with wider colonial society by that road along which the cart brings visitors, chiefly men courting the two women. There is more continuity between life on the farm and society than there is in African Farm, with its abrupt arrivals and jagged contours. In fact the problematic issues of From Man to Man arise from the insidious contacts between social convention and natural impulse, civilisation and rural life. The tutor will abuse his social position as tutor to seduce Bertie; Frank, it is already suggested, cares more for social forms than for emotional integrity; he agrees to have a civil service only because "it did not matter in the country, where no one knew what you did" (p. 80). Victorian social convention will preside at Rebekah's wedding as "Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort would look down from the picture-frames upon the walls" (p. 80).

In the structure of the chapter, scenes with Rebekah and Bertie together alternate with scenes between Rebekah and Frank, poisoning sisterly love against physical attraction and the sensuality of the brief contacts between Rebekah and Frank (p. 83,p.90) The danger of the contact between Bertie and the tutor is hinted at by Frank's warning : "It's not the garden of Eden yet!" (p. 84) which simultaneously reveals his own physical awareness of Bertie. The reference to Bertie's accident with Rebekah's ~~wedding-ring~~ is also an omen of her misfortune in marriage (p. 88). The chapter moves toward Rebekah's brief meditation on the decision she has made, as she weighs life on the farm against married life and the hunger for a broader experience (pp. 85-86). The passage establishes her habit of self-scrutiny and meditation as opposed to Bertie's more impulsive and unreflective life. Nevertheless, the chapter focusses on the love between the sisters in gestures of physical closeness ("the crown of her head pressing against her sister's cheek")²⁸ . At this point the first narrative voice withdraws a little and makes one of the few generalising comments in the novel, on the continuity of such childhood memory and affection

(pp. 88-89). The scene between the sisters is followed by Frank's kissing Rebekah on the stoep, and that in turn is followed by Rebekah going to Bertie's bed and pressing her head against her side for comfort. And yet the chapter ends with Rebekah's re-reading of Frank's love letters on her last night as a virgin and spinster : the sexual love drawing her to Frank will separate her from the farm and from Bertie, but the chapter firmly establishes the continuing endurance and power both of the farm landscape and of sisterly affection.

The skilful construction and progression of scenes within the chapter are characteristic of the handling of material in the novel. An enormous amount of information is conveyed about character, possible dangers and conflicts, pointers toward future developments, and yet the mood is serene, and the transitions so smooth that the reader is given the sense of the gradual unfolding of life itself.

Chapter 2 is the story of Bertie's seduction and recovery. Chapter 1 moved from a general picture of the farm landscape to one specific afternoon and evening. Chapter 2 begins with a sense of the continuity of life on the farm after the departure of Rebekah, suggesting the farm's ability to absorb human changes, and predicting Bertie's own resilience after her seduction and abandonment. The passing of the seasons is registered in the changing appearance of the thorn trees and other farm vegetation : autumn, winter and another spring. The wild flower garden in the bush becomes the locus of the tutor's romantic advances to Bertie. News comes of Rebekah's first child. The normality of the farm routines is a constant reference point. Then the general cyclical pattern modulates into "one afternoon," and a scene like those in Chapter 1, where the main actors are watched by a third interested party, here Bertie's mother. The mother sees Bertie pleading with the tutor, placating his anger, and asking if he loves her. The mother breaks up the scene and warns Bertie, though half-ashamed by her innocent response. The next scene takes place "ten days after that" (p. 97), when Bertie's mother finds her grieving in her room,

and the tutor disappears on his way back to England, like all the seducers in South African novels. None of the events between Bertie and the tutor is directly described; everything is mediated through the mother's awareness of Bertie's outward symptoms, expressed in the language in which a worried mother might describe them to others,²⁷ and through the news of the destroyed wild flower garden in the bush, the running image for the destructive relationship between Bertie and Lawrie. The last scene occurs "One Sunday afternoon, two months after he went away," after a rainstorm, with Bertie dismissing the past as a dream and consoled by the beauty of the "drenched world" of the farm. Her sense of comfort is expressed in her awareness of a "great hand" which "stretched itself out and stroked her", and this metaphor is repeated by the action of her father, who lays his hand upon her shoulder as he passes into the house. Her sense of safety returns, and her terror "the mute fear of a creature that cannot understand its own hurt" (p. 98), leaves her.

The tutor is not condemned for his action; Schreiner was right to say that she displayed no animus toward the men in the story :

The men whom she comes into contact with, from the first who seduces her to the last who leaves her in London streets, are none of them depraved, they are more or less all of them 'good fellows' in different ways - the only misfortune is that they look upon a woman as a creature entirely for their benefit. (Pearson, 10 July 1886)

It is part of Schreiner's point that the tutor should be an ordinary man of his time and place, and she sketches the ignorance and dependence on love which makes Bertie easy prey to a man like him. But she does stress that Bertie's recovery is also natural : it is not the seduction in itself which causes harm, it is the attitudes which will prevail when she is honest enough to tell her future husband about the seduction. Thus again society is shown as distorting natural patterns of growth and health.

Chapter 2 is a smaller version of Waldo's spiritual crisis in African Farm, in which he suffers, loses faith, but then recovers and finds the sky "an immeasurable blue arch" over his head, and begins to live again (at the end of "Time and Seasons"). In Bertie's case the experience of loss of faith, despair, and recovery is a 'natural', even a sensuous one. Being a woman who lives through the senses and natural affections, her crisis is mediated to her through sexual experience, and her restoration is achieved through her sensuous response to the beauty of the farm after rain. She is described throughout as a mute suffering being rather like a young animal. Unlike Rebekah, she has no intellectual consolation or understanding of her experience. It will be left to Rebekah to probe at final causes.

At this point in the novel the two sisters' fates seem to be very different : Rebekah has gone off with a loving, suitable husband; Bertie has been seduced and deserted. They are also physically separated, and the news of Rebekah's baby seems to underline her role as happy matron and mother. In Chapter 3 the plot thickens and the protagonists multiply. The narrative leaps over "four full years" but the time interval is filled in by the details of the births of Rebekah's three children which she is bringing with her on her visit to the farm. Thorn Kloof is maintained as a continuing and almost human organism responding to the comings and goings at the farm : "Thorn Kloof was expecting visitors, and the lifeblood stirred in its sluggish old veins " (p. 104). The life of the farm is more fully foregrounded than before in the antics of the "little Kaffirs" who participate in the excitement of visitors, especially Little Griet, the Bushman girl, who is a forerunner of the adopted Sartje later in the story, and who behaves like a barometer of instinctive opinion about newcomers to the farm, being intensely loyal to Bertie.²⁸ Griet's instinctive knowledge is also an extreme version of the instinctive knowledge which we have seen Rebekah display as a child, and

which she will draw on again in the interpretation of her marriage and other people. We hear of the pending arrival of John-Ferdinand, Frank's brother, and another visitor from England, a lady delicate in health. John-Ferdinand is coming to buy a farm and settle; Veronica Grey sounds at first like a female counterpart to the tutor, who also came to Africa for health reasons. There is a suggestion that sickly English visitors come to batten on the vitality of the farm, and in certain cases, on its inhabitants. At the same time the pattern of Rebekah's life seems to have settled into a round of childbirth and nursing, with her husband separated from her by business and a hunting trip.

The first meeting between Bertie and John-Ferdinand is marked by the gravity and shyness they will display throughout their relationship. A scene between Rebekah and Bertie recalls their childhood closeness as they touch the baby's feet while Rebekah caresses her sister's hair. Bertie discussed John-Ferdinand's beauty and cleverness, though Rebekah's response suggests a reserve about him. A brief conversation between the father and mother in bed, one of the few in the novel, suggests the ways in which Rebekah has changed, her mind turned away from her daily concerns. The next sequence shows John-Ferdinand drawing closer to Bertie and eventually they go on their first walk into the bush, described in detail from the first "belt of small thorn trees" to "a small open space deep in the bush" : "The bare space between the rocks and the bush was just like a little almost square room, with a rich soft carpet" (P. 43). This open place is like a physical embodiment, the most detailed one in terms of lyrically described African landscape, of all the other 'open spaces' in Schreiner's narratives.³⁰ Here a Utopia of sorts could in fact be realised: John-Ferdinand and Bertie love each other; the terrain is that of Rebekah's Utopian visions in the Prelude, rich with wild life and natural beauty, and yet it is semi-domestic and protected, carpeted with moss, like the mouse-house of the Prelude. This open space suggests a paradise of love which might be translated into domestic life together, with real rooms in a real house. The tributes of love

he brings her are indigenous flowers : the plumbago, "the sweetest flower of Africa" (p. 114). We see that his love for her is tied to his conception of her unspoiled rural purity. These walks become customary and establish a pattern: their movements about the idyllic beauty of the farm suggest an adult fulfilment of Rebekah's childish wanderings around the farm. Here adult happy love is fused with the African farm: Bertie seems to have achieved the best of both worlds.

At the end of the chapter Rebekah and John-Ferdinand go for a walk, through the thorn trees toward the dam. They reach the dam wall, near the grave of Bertie's twin sister. The situation recalls Rebekah's childish protective love for Bertie herself, (which she is here expressing by talking to John-Ferdinand about her), and contains a suggestion of future disaster which will affect Bertie through the action of John-Ferdinand. Rebekah tells him of Bertie's ignorance : she is still a child in the knowledge of men and life and "does not know even the world of books" (p.120). Rebekah has been shown in this chapter as greedily consuming books, living in "the world of her thought" (p. 118). Rebekah's speech modulates into one of the central images in the novel, drawing on African plants to suggest the different kinds of women Rebekah and Bertie represent :

Some women with complex, many-sided natures, if love fails them and one half of their nature dies, can still draw a kind of broken life through the other....But Bertie and such as Bertie have only one life possible, the life of personal relations; if that fails them all fails. If you chop down the stem of a mimosa tree, years after you may come and find from the bottom of the old dead stem sprouts have sprung, which will even bear flowers, though there will never be the glory of the central stem; but an aloe has one flower once; if you cut that down, nothing more comes. (p. 122).

This passage draws a central distinction between Rebekah and Bertie, and is the key to the survival of the one and the destruction of the other. Both will fail in the life of the personal relations, but Rebekah will have some resources left. The fact that the natural African imagery, in line with the rich background of vegetation in the opening chapters of the novel, is here expressed by Rebekah, indicates her closeness to the authorial consciousness, and yet establishes the intense and impassioned mode of her later, longer discourses. As they approach the farmhouse Veronica Grey appears for the first time, with her passionless and pallid exterior, and the cast of characters who will destroy Bertie has assembled at the farm even as Rebekah issues her warning to John-Ferdinand.

Chapter 4 shows Veronica Grey ingratiating herself into the household, assembling information, observing, and involved in semi-comic incidents with Griet, whose dislike for her is even more intense than her dislike of John-Ferdinand. The scene where Veronica goes into John-Ferdinand's room and touches his clothing is not, like Gregory Rose's dressing in woman's clothing, an indication of a desired switch of sexual identity, but rather an indication of her desire for a man, and her intense hatred of Bertie as a more obviously and truly lovable woman, and the scene ends in her symbolic destruction of Bertie's photograph. This whole scene, so melodramatic in description, is yet perfectly integrated and realistically convincing, part of the detailed flow of events. Veronica Grey also ominously criss-crosses the paths of John-Ferdinand and Bertie just before and after Bertie's crucial confession to him. The confession itself is a livid scene without any over-writing. Bertie is concerned only with the painful effects on him; he is concerned with, or says he is concerned with, her moral purity: "It is not pain that matters, Bertie; it is sin" (p. 136). Bertie leaves the farm with Rebekah, with Veronica hoping to take Bertie's place to her parents, heralding, as Chapter 5 outlines, her replacement of Bertie as John-Ferdinand's wife. Veronica's outward show of Christian faith, like Percy Lawrie's embroidering of a religious motif, "Blessed are the pure in heart" (really applicable to Bertie but outwardly claimed by the professing Christians in the novel), reveals that she is suited to John-Ferdinand,

and later scenes between them stress their physical resemblance. A superficial or damaging Puritanism is contrasted with a real purity in Bertie, and the title "Saints and Sinners" would have underlined this basic opposition in the novel between a cloak of Christian virtue concealing moral viciousness and destructive behaviour, and a real charity and honesty at work in Rebekah and Bertie.

Chapter 6 moves the setting to Cape Town, and the environment that Rebekah has been inhabiting since her marriage. Here, too, there is an apparent reconciliation of nature and nurture, with houses bordered by gardens and merging with the larger vegetation of oak avenues and pine woods.³⁹ Here, too, there seem to be space and security "for the great oak trees met over your head", repeating the arched sky over Bertie at her recovery, and the trees and bushes which meet over Bertie and John-Ferdinand's parlour in the bush. But the parlour in the bush was destroyed, though not physically, by Bertie's confession and John-Ferdinand's response, a repetition of the more childish physical destruction of the 'wild flower garden in the bush', after the seduction, which was causally connected with the later destruction of the bush parlour paradise. Rebekah's environment suggests more flexibility, and the opening setting in Chapter 6 is a further instance of Schreiner's ability to fuse realistic description and the appropriate symbolic settings for characters and events. Houses and trees meet and touch, as Rebekah's marriage seems at first to have reconciled natural impulse and social convention. The description of Table Mountain and the sea embraces a dispassionate loftiness, but the Storms which sweep around the coast herald the emotional tumults which will disrupt the marriage. But even here, as on the farm, the daily texture of ordinary life is conveyed in vivid and economical strokes: "and everywhere the peaceful, sleepy life of the old South African town crept on slowly; with its open drains, and its old families, and its old quiet methods of business, still prevailing" (p.148). The house is separated from the street by a hedge of plumbago, indicating the socialisation of farm life in Cape Town (the plumbago

grew wild in the bush 'parlour' at the farm (p. 114, p. 117) and the gate in the rose hedge at the side, there for easy access to Mrs. Drummond's house, is an image of Frank's easy access out of the marriage and out of marital fidelity. Mrs. Drummond is part of fashionable Cape Town society with its gossip and parties and fashionable dress. The news of John-Ferdinand's marriage comes to them, and Bertie begins her distressed pattern of behaviour, alternating apathy with a feverish restlessness. We hear of Frank's extroverted and careless lifestyle, playing no role in the raising of the children, and of Rebekah's small fruit and vine farm, which she has learned how to farm and which indicates a degree of financial independence. The visit paid by Veronica and John-Ferdinand brings about the scene with the two gossiping women that Schreiner did not enjoy writing because of its pettiness. John-Ferdinand and Veronica 'visit' Rebekah's house and garden in the absence of the sisters and Veronica, repeating her behaviour in John-Ferdinand's room, walks about and touches everything. John-Ferdinand's presence indicates the extent to which they have become allies against Bertie, and almost equally invasive. This scene, like the other prowling scene, ends with a photograph of Bertie and the photograph triggers John-Ferdinand's confession to his wife, that he had still hoped to win Bertie for his wife, and still loved her, until this moment. The photograph is then another destructive link in the chain of events, as is the confession, which will make Veronica extract Bertie's secret from her husband and convey it to Mrs. Drummond, thus destroying Bertie's reputation in colonial society. John-Ferdinand's confession, like Bertie's own earlier confession to him, is built on frankness, but is equally destructive. Every event is linked causally and symbolically to another, and they all lead inevitably to Bertie's catastrophic downfall. Veronica also exploits John-Ferdinand's new mood of honesty and love to extract the final detail about the seduction. Her lisping request (a detail linking the cruelty of gossiping Christian women to the sadism of Blenkins in African Farm), suggests that events in themselves are

neutral or endurable, but when society's hypocrisy compounds with natural evil, the real harm is done.

Chapters 1 to 7 develop causally and consistently in the rich realistic-symbolic mode which is the staple style of the novel. There is a minimum of authorial narration, and a predominance of scenes vividly and suggestively grouping the main figures of the novel. Occasionally one figure is slightly detached from the group in a meditative posture, as Rebekah is in Chapter 1, or to indicate a malign purpose toward the group, as Veronica is in Chapter 4. Bridging scenes indicate the effect of central events on bystanders; there are movements toward and away from the farm. Rebekah departs decisively but visits the farm for intellectual peace and emotional sustenance, and rest. Bertie is gradually ousted by the actions of male visitors and the invasiveness of Veronica.³² The expulsion and deterioration of Bertie form a foregrounded plot pattern with Rebekah's life glimpsed in the background in the form of hints and clues. Most of the presentation of central events is indirect, through the reactions and commentary of involved bystanders, and through the suggestive natural imagery. An opposition has gradually built up between groups of figures, with Rebekah and Bertie together again in Cape Town, and Veronica, John-Ferdinand, and Mrs. Drummond as an opposed group of 'Christians' whose actions become increasingly malicious and destructive. Events are causally linked and the descriptions of characters are much more detailed and expressive than in African Farm or Undine. Action is psychologically credible and often anticipatory of later revelations.

The next two chapters, 7 and 8, form the ideological core of the novel, standing in relation to the rest of the novel much as "Times and Seasons" and "Waldo's Stranger" (the Hunter allegory) do to the main narrative of African Farm. They are both discursive and polemical chapters, approaching the issues of the realistic narrative from a different angle and in a different style (the 'ribbed' style). They are both long internal narratives by Rebekah, one in the form of a long journal entry, the other in the form of a letter to her husband. They are the sections of the narrative

which, by some critics, are found objectionable or disruptive, judged to flout the demands of realistic fiction;³³ the objections are the same as those made to "Times and Seasons" and the Hunter allegory of African Farm. They are the only long internal narratives in the novel: they constitute the emergence of Rebekah's intellectual and enquiring nature, which has been active but as yet concealed from the reader, going on in a suggested but subterranean fashion. Both chapters are the summations of a long process and progress in her inner life, which now burst through the naturalistic texture of the narrative and are meant to carry the reader along in their full rhetorical eloquence and rhythmic flow. The first narrative (the journal) is a general philosophical and social enquiry into final causes and a central nineteenth-century shift of sensibility; the second is an impassioned plea from wife to husband which translates that general shift into a new desire for honesty and truthfulness in marriage, couched in impassioned and moving terms. The second narrative (the letter) thus makes the bridge back into the realistic narrative, which is never completely lost sight of during these long discursive sections.

Chapter 7 has a 'realistic' framing section in that it begins with Mrs. Drummond's actively malicious social campaign against Bertie, and ends with its effect on Bertie at the dance where she overhears the gossip about her. These further steps in Bertie's unhappy downward progress frame Rebekah's night-time reflective communings with her journal. Thus, while Bertie is experiencing the actual workings of dishonesty and destructiveness beneath a veneer of Christian social righteousness, Rebekah is discussing the principles seen to underlie them. The two narratives are linked by the setting of one single night, with the "Raindrops in the Avenue" falling alike on Bertie's dance and flight through the streets and on Rebekah's roof as she writes in her study.

Rebekah's diary narrative is introduced through her study environment, the small 'space' she has made for herself within the domestic arrangements of the household, indicating her precarious but necessary hold on intellectual life. The books listed stress Darwin's Variations of Plants and Animals under Domestication

(p. 172) which is a central text in this novel, as Spencer's First Principles is in African Farm, Schreiner being more concerned here with the whole issue of natural and social evolution, and arguing in this chapter in favour of creative and protective love as an evolutionary force against the 'survival of the fittest' slogan. Rebekah's books also draw our attention to the need for an indigenous application of European classifications : the Geology book was written for "people in England, and the plants and rocks and fossils mentioned she could not find in Africa" (p. 173). The instance of geology reminds us that Schreiner's fiction is intended to indigenise European classifications and analysis, and that both African Farm and From Man to Man, in their different uses of farm landscapes and vegetation, complement the analysis of specifically colonial variants of European social and existential problems. Rebekah's collection of cultural artefacts also suggests her links with Mr. Drummond : the little statue of Hercules and the Darwin book both come from him, though she has never met him. Their likemindedness is established before they meet. The Hercules statue is a visible embodiment of the classical art of 'truthfulness' which Rebekah is comparing with the nineteenth-century break with the distortions of Christian dogma in her journal conversation. The only other ornament is the picture of Raphael's Madonna which has hung over her bed since childhood: the illustration is a fusion of classical art and the strength and purity of maternal love, which runs through this chapter in Rebekah's adjacent position to the children's nursery, and the interruption of her work by their small needs, and in the cerebral section in the instance of maternal love as a form of the creative, protective, and sustaining love seen as a binding force in the universe and as the basis of full growth. The study itself is thus significantly positioned within the house, and its trodden carpet is a parallel place to her "walking up and down place" back at the farm "under the trees in the kloof" (p. 175). Rebekah's open space under the pear tree in the Prelude, pastoral and protected like Bertie's parlour in the bush, suggests that her 'space' is that of the intellect and creative thought and composition, whereas Bertie's is the open space of love, much

more vulnerable, and becoming the total opposite in her later confinement in The Jew's house and English boarding-houses. Rebekah's struggle to maintain her intellectual tenure within domesticity is the key to her later survival and emergence as an independent being.

The account of Rebekah's writings (p. 176) is an internal analogy for Schreiner's own varied and developing career as a writer, from childish scrawlings to stories and allegories, journal entries, plans for the future, finished but unpublished stories, and incomplete projects (like From Man to Man itself). Marriage is seen as a watershed in Rebekah's productive writing life, practical details connected with the children and the emotional stress of marriage (her cryptic notes about Frank) taking precedence over other forms of writing. The description might serve as a model of the pattern of Schreiner's own intertwined life and writing career, in which the peculiar stresses of being a colonial woman constantly threatened to sabotage her own writerly analysis of them.

The main section of the journal narrative outlines and identifies a central nineteenth-century shift, from a Christian worldview which stresses original sin and seeks truth only by seeking accord with the ultimate will of God, even distorting or suppressing perceptions which conflict with that Divine will, to the 'new' view, which is nevertheless similar to the classical view, that what is wanted is "an exact knowledge of things as they are" (p. 177), and a humble sense of the universe as "a great, pulsating always interacting whole" (p. 181). For nineteenth-century man and woman "the Universe has become one, a whole, and lives in all its parts" (p. 180). The concept of sin is replaced by that of truth, fidelity to the way things are; the only sin is "the conscious, wilful blinding of our own eyes to any form of reality" (p. 182). This argument, that there are "two opposing intellectual conceptions of the nature of the Universe" is carried through and applied to art (From Man to Man is replacing the Christian concept of sin as the loss of virginity before marriage with a truthful and uncensored account of male-female relationships and their distortion by social convention); to relations between man and woman, that there needs

to be a new "almighty sincerity" instead of subterfuge (the basis of Rebekah's plea to Frank); to moral judgements (the great criminals are not the drunkard or the prostitute but those who deny their own truth and act out false roles, like Mrs. Drummond and Veronica), and finally to the theory of cultural cycles and decadence versus that of social progress toward an ideal. The last application of the theory begins to touch on the South African situation, a society based on gross inequalities and different levels of education and civilisation, arguing against racial exclusiveness and arrogance and for a progress based on the raising of all groups to an equality which will make the progress of the whole easier. This theory will feed back into the narrative through the adoption of Sartjie, Frank's mixed-race child. The arguments move toward a hymn to the creative power of love and growth, imaged in the organic life of a tree "whose essential life and essence lie in its power of growth, in the mysterious power of absorbing and adding to its substance in certain directions and along certain lines and of reproducing itself" (p. 221). The journal argument then becomes the very brief allegory of "The Spirit of the Ages", conceived as a woman who is "from the waist upwards ... fair and powerful, from the waist downward ... ill-nourished and loathsome",³⁴ Her feet are bound, and she cannot move. The allegory is a generalised version of the feminist one, "Three Dreams in a Desert", and the emphasis again falls on a vision of a spiritual and social ideal, with the 'lower' portions of society being fettered by ignorance and unable to move. The strong hands must bend down and remove the fetters before any real progress toward the ideal can be made.

Rebekah's narrative then becomes a dream, a "self to self" story (p. 226) in which she becomes a man in a landscape like that of the farm, holding next to himself a pregnant woman. Then the child is born, and the man feels tenderness for both wife and newborn child. This sexual transference dream seems to happen at a peak of the narrative, just before sleep, when sexual identity is totally freed from its given one, and can move into the opposite role and identity, and create a positive form of that role. The 'maternal' impulse is fused with the male, similar to Gregory's adoption of

a nurse's clothing to act out a protective and non-sexual love. This dream anticipates the conclusion of the Rebekah plot, which will be one of love as kinship and intellectual sharing without sexual consummation, and yet the dream here is one of a 'nuclear' family. In the novel family relationships are constantly used as metaphors for male-female relationships, but in a suggestive symbolic way, without the unconscious incestuous patterns of Undine.

At the end of Chapter 7 Bertie is propelled on further restless travelling to escape the gossip, and returns to a place between the farm and Cape Town, an upcountry town which should be a haven from social stigmas. Chapter 8 opens with Rebekah pregnant again, and comparatively peaceful, though the odd behaviour of the coloured servant-girl is mentioned again as a clue to later discoveries. The birds she watches at her window with their shared nesting and hatching serve as a contrasted image of the discoveries she is about to make on this "One Saturday evening" of which the chapter tell us.³⁵ On this particular evening Rebekah goes to lie next to Frank, acting on impulsive tenderness, and finds him gone. She looks out at the window and the narrative follows his steps in detail as he makes his way to the servant-girl's room, the vividness being part of Rebekah's started¹ clarity of mind as she watches him, though her reactions are not described in detail. At half-past four she finishes her letter to Frank and we are told of her fruitless attempt to make him accept and read it. But he goes out without doing so, dismissing her pleas as ridiculous. The contents of the letter are then given (pp. 252-298). The letter is a narrative analepsis parallel to the narrative time during which Bertie's life has been detailed, returning to the point of Rebekah's marriage and shortly before, to trace the inner and outer history of the marriage relationship. The gradual loss of interest, the gradual destruction of trust, the first discovery of direct infidelity with Mrs. Drummond, the growing of knowledge in the face of disbelief, the frantic instinctive drive to Muizenberg and the glimpse of Frank and Mrs. Drummond on the beach, the attempts at confrontation which fail - all of these events are reviewed, with Rebekah's different stages of hope, despair and knowledge. The impassioned

and desperate narrative is interspersed with more general but equally impassioned rhetorical comments :

Oh, it isn't only the body of a woman that a man touches when he takes her in his hands; it's her brain, it's her intellect, it's her whole life! He puts his hand in among the finest cords of her being and rends and tears them if he will, so that they never produce anything but discord and harmony, or he puts his hand on them gently, and draws out all the music and makes them strong, (p. 272)

Rebekah's discoveries are characterised by the same kind of instinctive knowledge she had displayed as a child, and here too, the knowledge she gains in a flash "as a moving picture in a street flashes on your eye" (p. 274), is of the true nature of things, of Frank's constant sexual infidelity. The episode with the schoolgirl, and Rebekah's attempts to keep respect alive, and even cultivate the friendship of the women Frank commits adultery with: these events are all written in the feverish but controlled eloquence of the letter, with a nightmarish clarity. The general social reaction is also described, and the deliberate cruelty of bystanders, acquaintances, and friends produces some impassioned generalisations on social cruelty to the victims of adultery :

One of the strangest things to me has been how not only women, but men, men who call themselves men, come close to you and prod their finger into your wound to see how much you feel; it is like when wild animals gather round the wounded one of the herd and prod it with their horns when it falls wounded. (p. 285)

Frank's response to living creatures is contrasted with Rebekah's: his interest in hunting and fishing ends when the creature is caught; her desire is to know them, "to form a line of connection ... between me and the life that is in it" (p. 292). Here different responses to living creatures are registered in the terms established in the previous chapter. Nevertheless, as in the allegory of human progress in general, the ideal of harmonious male-female relationships is not

renounced but reaffirmed :

the loveliest thing that has blossomed on earth is the binding of man and woman in one body, one fellowship, and I know that all the failures are only the broken steps which Humanity builds in stairs she is shaping for herself to climb by, which she will have to build better in the future;" (p. 297)

Rebekah comes close to total despair, but her walk outside, in view of the pine woods, calms her; her "quiet onlooking self...woke in her" and her consciousness turns outward toward a wider life : "as she looked up she saw for the first time the green and golden glory of the light through the young oak leaves and the bright shafts shooting through the dark branches of the pine wood and the soft moist air below" (p. 300).³⁶ The scene is parallel to Bertie's regaining of peace after the rainstorm on the farm. That night Rebekah forces Frank to choose between a divorce or a new basis for the marriage in which they will cease to be man and wife but maintain their outward roles. The decision brings relief, and she is under "a vast dome" from which a "dark pall" had been removed. Rebekah recovers from a premature birth and Frank recovers his resilience, but from this moment she is released from the anguish of the marriage, which has been fully chronicled in her letter. The narrative combination of present events and the retrospective information contained in the letter manages to give us the entire history of events, together with her inner reactions, and some of his, just as the basis of the marriage changes and allows her to escape from the anguish which had not been revealed to the reader until now. Although the letter is not realistic in the sense that it could not have been written in one night, Schreiner felt this point was irrelevant, and she was right. Narrative convention is flexible enough to accommodate it, and the pace and interest never flag because of the immediacy and horror of the revelations, so that they flash upon the reader one by one as they did on Rebekah. The first-person form of narration distinguishes Rebekah's letter from her journal, which is cast in the third person and

deals with impersonal issues and first principles. Like the two long internal narratives at the heart of African Farm, the first is meditative and generalising, linking the isolated individual with the universal phases of human existence, and the second is a narrative interchange, though with one speaker and one listener. The posited listener to Rebekah's letter is Frank; the fact that he refuses to accept it is an index to their non-communication. But the real recipient of the letter is the reader of the novel, to whom the workings of Rebekah's inner life are laid bare; the scenic method is filtered through Rebekah's painful consciousness, and the events narrated by her are inseparable from the emotions of betrayal, hurt and mistrust they arouse.

Chapter 9 returns to Bertie's story, and to the main narrative method of direct narration and establishment of setting (here a beautifully economical and evocative sketch of an upcountry town) alternating with scenic presentation and dialogue. The religious conservatism of the town is already present in the opening sketch (three churches) and it will be the catalyst of Bertie's further flight when the news of her past reaches the town. The town is an intermediate haven, having neither the total isolation of the farm nor the social activity of Cape Town. Like the hotel where Lyndall falls ill and is found by Gregory Rose in African Farm, it is a stopping place for travellers to and from the Diamond Fields in "Cobb and Co's great coaches, swinging in their great leather straps" (p. 315), so it is a crucial meeting-place of the old South African life of rural peace and the new commercial and industrial currents which are changing the old patterns. Through the agency of "the Jew", himself a merchant associated with the Fields who offers Bertie a diamond, Bertie will be lifted out of the secure pattern of life she establishes in the town and carried along on the commercial currents which make sexuality into a financial transaction, and the Jew's protection of her will be a stepping-stone toward actual prostitution. The novel's method of suggesting inevitable and understandable degrees of hopelessness and abandonment is consistent.

Bertie is able to establish the old domestic patterns of the farm in her aunt's household, and at first the only painful event is

the letter from her mother, telling of Veronica's baby. Her elaborate sewing of a baby's robe draws an authorial narrative comment in keeping with Bertie's domestic gifts, gentle and almost fulsome in tone, but suggesting how the suffering of ordinary women finds an outlet when there is no intellectual release : "Has the pen or pencil dipped so deep in the blood of the human race as the needle?" (p. 323). Gradually the persecution of Bertie begins again, leading to the scene with her aunt in which old-fashioned caution meets an attempt to be honest about sexual experience. Aunt Mary-Anna's folksy advice endorses the double standard ("the soap isn't invented that can wash a woman's character clean", P.326) and rejects truth-telling ("If there is any truth in what they have been saying about you, the least you can do is to keep quiet about it", p.327). Thus the symbols of Christian faith in the town turn out to have no content of charity or forgiveness.

At this juncture the Jew appears, a man with his own history, whose path crosses Bertie's at a desperate crisis, for she cannot go back to the farm to suffer the connection with John-Ferdinand and Veronica. A narrative analepsis gives us the Jew's childhood and past (p. 331), an indication of Schreiner's determination to give all of her characters an even-handed justice, so that though he is not named, and this is sometimes taken as an instance of anti-Semitic prejudice,³⁷ he is given a sympathetically described past which makes his need for, and high valuation of commercial success understandable. For him Bertie is explicitly a possession, like his diamonds, but his sense of acquisitiveness is simply a more extreme case of the possessiveness exhibited by the other men in the novel : John-Ferdinand who insists that his wife should have a flawless spiritual purity and chastity (the equivalent of the pure diamond Bertie picks out of the Jew's collection), and Frank's easy sense of Rebekah as a possession who should not show unacceptable signs of independence. The flashback to the Jew's childhood also stresses the primacy of sibling affection (he and his sister's childish games) thus establishing his human parallels with the life of Rebekah and Bertie. The night before Bertie's departure she is alone in the dark, like Rebekah before her wedding, and there is another scene

of attempted physical contact between two women for comfort, here Bertie approaching the sleeping Dorcas and taking her hand. But the contact is not sentimental, and Dorcas sleeps on insensible to the gesture, emphasising Bertie's deepening isolation and despair.

Chapter 10 takes us back to the farm, to Griet with her intense hostility to John-Ferdinand and Veronica. The focus on these two people reminds the reader of the causes of Bertie's desolation, and opposes the conventionally happy Christian couple and the blooming matron to the social outcast Bertie has become. Significantly, it is John-Ferdinand and Veronica who bring the news of Bertie's disappearance with the Jew to the farm, and they make the traditional comments of a Christian society; he sees it as "our Father's Will", whereas Schreiner has been dissecting its human and social causes, and Veronica is motivated only by self-protective discretion, to protect her and Rebekah's children from gossip. This is ironical coming from the woman who activated the gossip about Bertie by a decisively malicious action. There is no direct comment on this point, "the reader is left to draw his own conclusions" as Schreiner wrote, but Griet is a comic but accurate barometer of true opinion: "she had a vague feeling... that the bearers of the news were somehow to blame for it" (p. 347). Chapter 9, being set on the farm, is also positioned immediately before the chapter in London, thus making Bertie's misery, depression and homesickness there more understandable.

Chapter 11 is the one singled out by a reviewer as "beating the realists on their own ground",³⁸ which is true, but the whole depiction of life in London is a wonderful further instance of Schreiner's ability to convey a subjective state through the depiction of objects and naturalistic events. The third-person narration is simple and describes a sequence of actions which nevertheless conveys total despair and depression. Bertie has been cut from her emotional, social and geographical moorings, and the nightmarish unreality which overtakes her in this unprecedented situation is a parallel to the nightmare of Rebekah's marriage, described in her letter to her husband, but intensified by the urban monotony of

Victorian London. The pressure of anonymous crowds conveys a sense of total unreality to Bertie : "and a strange feeling always came to her that they were not really people, but like the people from the photographs which you look at through the two glasses, who move when you pull a string and shake their heads and jaws" (p. 373). Her spasms of activity and deepening neglect of herself all convey growing despair, intensifying the pattern which began in Cape Town. The attempts at a change of scenery by taking Bertie to the seaside, which cannot deflect her inner state; the psychologically convincing fusion of her own depression with the objects she sees in shop windows; the desperate attempt to find "country" in England, which everybody knows does not really exist in the South African sense, on a walk which ends in brambles, mud, a few bushes, cows, and a farmhouse — all of this is detailed in a record of monotony and depression which is artistically controlled and coloured by one deepening mood. Bertie is ousted from the Jew's house by his much more predatory cousin, continuing the pattern of Bertie's moral degradation in a sequence of more and more callous and predatory men, offset by the love and devotion of the young Isaac, whose half-wittedness in this materialistic and cynical environment is a sign of his human value. The boarding-house Bertie is taken to by Isaac has a dominant picture of Queen Victoria in a totally sordid environment :

The paper on which it was engraved was yellow with age and under the glass were large swelled marks all over it as if at some time tears had fallen on it and blistered it; there was a little window with a green blind, and below it, through one round hole in it as big as a shilling, two streaks of sunshine came; both fell on the torn strip of carpet beside the bed and showed the dust and dirt which had almost caked it over and obliterated the faint pattern.

(p. 400)

In this setting occurs the chapter's only direct reference to the farm, "the thorn trees in the flat beginning to burst into their yellow blossoms' ready for Xmas", capturing in one passage the full

extent of Bertie's homesickness by contrast with the shabby anonymous Victoriana of her environment. But the Victoria image has a further symbolic function, as it embodies, like the old portrait on the farm, the dominant social convention of the age : "Was it her wedding dress, or do queens wear those coronets and veils flung back behind at any time?" The juxtaposition of Bertie's total sexual and social humiliation with the picture of Victoria's marriage is a crux in this chapter and in the novel as a whole, drawing together all the earlier references to Victoria and Albert in the Prelude, and in the story of Rebekah's wedding and marriage. Both Rebekah and Bertie's attempts to find some 'real' consort to simulate the Victorian conventional ideal have become nightmarish, and this conjunction of the actuality of Bertie's situation (with the reader's understanding of the affection and trusting honesty which have brought her there) and the blistered and peeling photograph of Victoria at her wedding, is a powerful symbolic indictment of the corrupted realities which constitute the real face of Victorian sexual morality and marriage. The chapter ends with Bertie's next disappearance, into even more sordid and uncharted territory :

"Where - to?" asked Isaac,

But the woman said she did not know. (p. 410)

Chapter 12, the last completed chapter in the novel, returns to the pattern of a framing realistic narrative and an internal narrative in the form of Rebekah's story and lecture to her children on racial prejudice, and on the history of civilisation as a communal and progressive project. The chapter opens with a description of the household five years after Rebekah's sexual break with Frank. It presents a family scene between Rebekah and her children, including Sartje, the adopted child. Tension between the white children and the adopted ^{child} mixed-race_^ will trigger the internal narrative. The opening setting suggests Rebekah's position of dignified space and independence within a reconstituted household, one in which some moral reparation has been made for Frank's exploitation of the servant by the adoption of their child. The presence of Sartje modulates the focus of the novel from sexual morality toward

a related political and racial morality, which will be the concern of the chapter.

Rebekah begins her stories to her children before going out to a concert (where she will meet Drummond, the next step in plot development affecting Rebekah). Her first story is of the wild adventure, romantic escape type with a young girl as hero (almost all the narratives focus on a form of female heroism). The story is one of the kind Schreiner herself used to tell as a governess to young children, and Rebekah's storytelling position in this chapter repeats Schreiner's position of teacher/storyteller to children. Frank's outburst concerning taunts in the street about Sartje then leads into the next story, Schreiner's only venture into didactic science fiction, a story about the very superior white race coming from space to despise and destroy white South Africans, despising them exactly as the whites in the country despise 'inferior races' of another colour. The story's mixture of fantasy, adventure, and a battle is designed to appeal to the children and hold their interest; at the same time it has an obvious moral application and didactic message.

The story is followed by a sketch of ancient civilisations, illustrated by the book Rebekah picks up, which has its roots "deep in the life of man on earth" (p. 430) and is "The World's Book". This passage picks up the novel's focus on encyclopedic literature, or the novel as Bible. A further instance of collective effort is provided by huge antheaps which are found "up-country on the great plains, where the camel thorn trees grow" (p. 433). Rebekah recalls her childhood role of Queen Victoria ruling Africa, here adapting the Queen Victoria image to her role as powerful ruler and the force behind Imperialism rather than her social image as the pure Victorian wife and mother in Bertie's boarding-house scene. This shift of image is appropriate to the general shift of focus and context between the two chapters. The childish Rebekah had conceived the first grand and simple apartheid policy by wanting to build a high wall across Africa with black people all on one side. If they crossed the wall they would have their heads cut off.

This childish imperialism and cornerstone of South African policy is broken down when Rebekah hears a man telling of the heroism of a young Kaffir woman during a war being waged near them (pp. 435-436). She identifies imaginatively with this woman, goes to her pear tree, and "at last I lay down on the ground and cried" (p. 436). The other incident which breaks down her prejudice occurs at the age of nine, again the hearing of a story about a Kaffir woman in trouble (the trouble turns out to be her husband's taking of a new 'wife', a situation with which the older Rebekah is now familiar) who climbed a mountain and jumped down with her two children tied to her. Rebekah pays a visit of homage to the spot, and sings a poem there about the woman's story. These two stories, covering both essential situations of the novel, the colonial conflict between black and white, and the private sphere of female pain in marriage, emphasise the solidarity of black and white women, their kinship in suffering, the need for heroism, and the essential role played by imaginative participation in the lives of others in creating kinship and sympathy. As in the Prelude, which first described this method of overcoming a hard core of hatred and anger and achieving a loving identification with other women, whether a sister in the family or in a metaphorical sense, the role of creative imagination and storytelling is crucial. The song Rebekah sings at the foot of the cliff is an internal analogy for the whole novel, which is a tribute to the pain of women, black and white. The racial connection is the vital one in this chapter, and extends the situation of sibling sympathy across the colour line.

In the closing section of the chapter Rebekah sees Drummond for the first time, with a sense of recognition : his hand looks familiar, and later she realises it reminds her of her own. This establishes the pattern of love as a recognition of a similar being rather than a sexual bonding of opposites. At the end of the chapter Rebekah leaps out of the carriage thinking she has heard Bertie's laugh, and this incident brings us up to date on Bertie's rumoured movements since she left the London boarding-house, telling us that she might be back in Africa. Frank and Mr. Drummond's responses are contrasted here :

Frank is concerned only with the social spectacle, and Drummond with offering real but unpatronising help. The chapter ends with another photograph of Bertie, which might help to trace her. The photograph imagery links the ideas of external social identity and inner truth, and suggests that the destruction of an 'image' or social reputation is an equal destruction of inner peace and happiness.

Chapter 13 is concerned to show the resemblances between Rebekah and Drummond. Drummond is a physical explorer whereas Rebekah is a pioneer in the realm of women's social options and inner life: he is associated with the camel thorn in Central Africa (p. 455), a unifying symbol for the mimosa and other indigenous vegetation of the novel, just as the relationship between Drummond and Rebekah is meant to suggest the overarching potentially ideal relationship between a man and a woman, set over against all the fraught and distressed relationships with which the novel is concerned. They have the same intellectual curiosity; they are both writers, and both occupy the same position in a marriage to more sensual and superficial, and socially hypocritical partners. Their conversations suffer from the slight earnestness and stiltedness with which ideal creatures must speak, but they focus on key issues for the novel, and draw together the various earlier discussions of evolution, creativity, and love in a precise and thorough discussion of the nature of the literary impulse and the stages of literary production (pp. 465-477). The prophetic nature of art, artistic work as shaped by an inborn necessity, the relationship between art and the original vision or conception, the function of art in binding together all humanity, art as the great destroyer of human isolation - these central issues in the novel which tie together other manifestations of creative love and sympathy, also illuminate the entire artistic theory on which the novel (and Schreiner's fiction generally) rests. The sympathy between Rebekah and Drummond is expressed in the first full narrative as dialogue, where speaker and listener are wholly attuned, where there is readiness of understanding and quickness of sympathy. The conflict between duty toward people and duty toward literary production is also discussed, and whether "all his life

long a man or woman might live striving to do their duty and at the end find it all wrong" (p. 478). Drummond tells Rebekah that she would always choose the path that gave her "most pain and least pleasure", thus anticipating the note of renunciation on which the Drummond-Rebekah relationship was at one stage intended to conclude.

(vi) The projected ending

The issue in assessing From Man to Man is whether to take the novel as it stands, in which case it ends on the potentiality of the relationship between Drummond and Rebekah, and the possibility that Bertie will be found somewhere in South Africa (Drummond has found traces of her in Simonstown), or to read as the 'real' ending the one Schreiner projected for it in a letter to Pearson in 1886. In this projected ending there was to be a declaration of love from Drummond and they would argue out two sides of the case : he for the right to a full life and self-fulfilment, and she for the binding sense of duty to "the human beings nearest us in our place, time and country" (Pearson, 10 July 1886). Their farewell scene is acted out in the veld, when her wagon is outspanned and Drummond passes. Now they are both strong; both have a future of work before them. The parting is seen as an eternal spiritual union, and thus the consummation of all the scenes in Schreiner's fiction where the independence each grants to the other is seen as a supreme kind of love. The finding of Bertie as she is dying would have led Rebekah to sketch the "woman's dream of the future... the time when men and women shall so use their sexual nature and the power they have over each other that they shall be the source of life and strength; when life shall be no more bound down to material conditions; but shall be what it is striving to be now, the union of mind, the foundation of the entire nature; there is no hereafter for the individual, but for the race a glorious future" (Pearson, ibid.).

The "main scene" of the novel would be the revelation of Rebekah's marriage when she flouts her husband's authority in burying Bertie

openly (possibly an idea Schreiner took from Sophocles' Antigone) and then tells him she knows of his long-term infidelity. Here the sequence of events is quite different from the shape the novel actually took, indicating that the projected ending was strongly modified by the writing process. The two small final scenes would have been the death of Drummond, asking in his delirium for Rebekah, and her reception of the news of his death. When she picks up her child she says "No I am not tired: I am very strong". Thus the novel would have ended in an affirmation of Rebekah as a strong survivor. That is logically consistent with the structure as it stands in the published form. But it is very likely that the process of writing would have modified the proposed sequence of scenes in other ways,

There is also the projected ending advanced by Cronwright, as told to him by Schreiner at an unspecified time. This stressed the hypocrisy of the Christian agents of Bertie's destruction at her death-scene, but the sarcasm of Bertie's dying words seems too prosaic and childish to have prevailed in the actual composition. Cronwright's ending does confirm the renunciation of Drummond by Rebekah, however, thus reinforcing this element in the ending sketched to Pearson, and the hint given by Drummond at the end of the published version (p. 479). Thus the renunciation of a sexual relationship with Drummond and the death of Bertie accompanied by a vision of a harmonious future between the sexes seem to be convincing elements in Schreiner's planned conclusion, and both elements accord with her thinking generally.

(vii) Narrative interpretation

From Man to Man has fewer small internal narratives, and rests mainly on a mature version of symbolic realism, on closely intertwined and psychologically convincing scenes and a steady impersonality in the main narrative sections. The two central internal narratives in the form of journal and letter are long, impassioned and sustained, and they underline the status of the novel as an ambitious encyclopaedic work analysing the central paradigms of Victorian life and thought,

and defining the major shift of sensibility which Schreiner believed was at the core of her age. The images of Victoria suggest that metropolitan society was reproduced in the colonial setting, and that many of its vices and hypocrisies were reproduced in British colonies, by English colonials. It is suggested, too, that the isolation of women growing up on farms increased their ignorance and vulnerability to exploitation. The only escape from total ignorance was through books, which is why Rebekah's shelves of books play such an important role in the novel, symbolising the education which could free women from ignorance, sexual bondage, and domestic imprisonment or worse. But the farm, though offering little in the way of intellectual nurture, does offer, through an early childhood response to the beauty and continuity of African landscape and vegetation, an anchor for emotional life, and is an image of organic health and growth. The thorn trees, with their hardy protectiveness and their capacity to burst into beautiful yellow blossoms, are a central suggestion of the "will to live" which so strongly counters, in this novel, Schreiner's impulse toward the "will to die" by the renunciation of the self. The careers of the two women are opposed in central ways, though their fates are meant as a complementary indictment of Victorian social institutions. Unlike Waldo and Lyndall, who both die at the end of African Farm, one of the female protagonists of From Man to Man is left in a strong surviving position, and the way in which she survives, the techniques she uses, are meant to illustrate the strategy which leads to that survival.

But the novel is not only a full statement of opposed possibilities for women in Victorian English society; it also shows the specifically colonial South African variant of sexual power-play in action in a racial context, and black or mixed-race women figure throughout the narrative as children (Griet and Sartje), as grown suffering women affected by the tribal version of Frank's promiscuity (the custom of polygamy), or by the physical beatings which are a cruder form of the sexual humiliations of bourgeois marriage. At the same time both the colonial and metropolitan societies are contextualised in a broader evolutionary picture of growth through the ages, the nature of civilisation and the principle of creative love in any

relationship as opposed to predatory competition, the "survival of the fittest". This essential moral thrust is what makes From Man to Man a novel "something like the Bible" in that it is a total picture of natural creation as it lives on earth in man-made institutions, and it advocates charity as a key to the social progress which will make a happier accommodation of man and society possible.

From Man to Man is also the only novel of Schreiner's which realistically spans both South African and English society, showing precisely how the cutting off of a woman like Bertie from her roots on an African farm renders her life doubly difficult. Always deprived of a larger intellectual life, she withers when deprived of the source of her sensuous and emotional vitality. Bertie suffers the loss of social fulfilment and of the natural sustenance she would have derived from a life in her home territory. Her story emphasises the total destructive power of social institutions and the predatory manipulation of 'nature' which operates under their cloak. Thus the 'cobra' of the Prelude is real: natural evil is a threat, but can only be checked by social arrangements which limit and do not endorse the brutal impulses of instinct. This illustrates Schreiner's point about the need to control the sexual impulse by reason and duty, and Rebekah's final action would then have been a model illustration of this.

The complexity and artistic control of the novel thus set up a comprehensive debate on the nature/nurture issue, particularly as it affects English colonial women, because their attempts to enter society through marriage show up all the flaws of Victorian convention and of a merely superficial Christianity. Unless there is a deep union of social institutions and human nature, instead of a corroding gap, there will always be wrecks like Bertie, the novel argues. It also argues for a liberating education for women, showing how intellectual training and reading in Rebekah's case keep her identity alive when other options close down. On a deeper level, though, the major breakthroughs of the novel are made by instinctive knowledge, by the knowledge of the imagination which is shown to be as essential in life as it is in art. The final

'message' of the novel, and the constant thrust of its own narrative procedures, seem to suggest that on a deep level life and art are congruent: the gifts that are useful in the one are also central to the other. Bertie lacks the intellectual and imaginative gifts without which she could certainly never have been a writer or artist, but their lack also severely limits her chances in life. The talents which make Rebekah a writer also enable her to survive damage to the self, because she is able constantly to reach out of her own life into distant regions of time and space, to see her own life reflected in others and to make connections between the individual and her wider sex and race. Not every woman can be an artist, but the gift of creative love needs to be expressed in some way, whether in motherhood or artistic creation. Bertie is denied both.

The organic image of the camel thorn stands over against the raddled and decayed image of Victoria's wedding in the novel : the alternatives facing Rebekah and Bertie are submission to a figure emblematic of a distorting powerlust in matters of race and sex, or an attunement to the natural growth indigenous to the continent. The title "Thorn Kloof" is thus a key to the meaning of the novel as well as its manuscript history. Rebekah survives marriage, disillusionment, and the social checks operating on colonial women, and she does it through a deeper commitment to her own inner life and that of the continent she has grown up in: her link at the end with Drummond, the traveller in Africa, who has seen the camel thorn of the great upcountry plains, suggests this commitment to a further exploration of Africa. The replacement of Schreiner's mirror images of female martyrdom in the earlier fiction by the growth and endurance of Rebekah suggests a moral and emotional growth paralleled by narrative skill and artistic maturity. From Man to Man is a novel about the workings of the imagination which at the same time illustrates its finest use : its imaginative strategies for survival were Rebekah's, but also Schreiner's.

Notes.

1. "I'm trying hard to get on with my book, "The Encyclopedia" as Cron calls it, "that is going to be finished in the next century" (To W.P. Schreiner, UCT, 24 February 1908).
2. "I've got so many stories but I don't think any of them have sensational names, I've never that I know told them to anyone. One is called 'New Rush, a Diamond Field Story', and one 'Jan van der Linden's Wife', and one 'Saints and Sinners', but I shall have to call it something else if ever I publish it, because there is another book published under that name" (To Mary Sauer, SAL, 26 February 1891).
3. S.C. Cronwright himself seems to have known, or believed at one stage, that "A small bit of Mimosa" and "Thorn Kloof" were different titles for the same story, and he said so after a public lecture on From Man to Man, given by Mina Freund in Cape Town ("The Genius of Olive Schreiner", Cape Times, 3 September 1925). But he later decided that "Saints and Sinners" was the "germ of the novel" (Freund, ibid.) and that this second theory cancelled the first, instead of reflecting a later stage (the combined stage) of the novel's composition.
4. A letter to Mrs. Cawood indicates the extent to which mimosas on "the flat" were associated in Schreiner's mind with Ganna Hoek (proper) and the Cawood family :

Ach, I would like to see old Africa a bit, I would like to smell the mimosa trees. I often see the sun shining on that flat in Ganna Hoek. It never shines so here. It is only the people that make England so delightful, our old Africa beats this old country through and through, but the people are so delightful that one forgives it.

(Letters, p. 83)

This distinction between Africa as a beautiful, loved landscape and England as an intellectually stimulating society is a recurrent one in Schreiner's thinking and in the fiction.

5. S.C. Cronwright liked the title "Perhaps Only" very much, and it seems to have expressed a characteristic Victorian attitude towards ultimate faith or knowledge. See Browning's "Bishop Blougram's Apology", which climaxes in the phrase "The grand Perhaps" and Carlyle's "We quietly believe this universe to be intrinsically a great unintelligible PERHAPS" (Both quoted by G. Tillotson, p.91).
6. This information is in S.C. Cronwright's Diary I, Albany, 7th to 15th June 1921.
7. A 'trace' of ThornKloof, the English colonial farm, is found in the song Gregory Rose sings in African Farm, the "Thorn Kloof Schottische" (SAF, p.209). Thus Gregory, the English colonial in African Farm is associated with the title of an early version of From Man to Man. In African Farm the Afrikaner farm and society are dominant, with Gregory suggesting the role of social convention and a slight European decadence; in From Man to Man the proportions are reversed, and English colonial life is foregrounded.
8. Showing how Aunt Susanna gave sage advice.
In those bright old days before ever the morning stars sang together, ere ever this progressive and slowly evolving world had been launched into space, it may well have been that Angels of Light descended at one blow from the white hills of Heaven to the dim vale of Hell; but, in this later one laws and things have strangely changed, and whether for weal or woe, move on by inches.
(Sent to Ellis by Schreiner, Cradock). A later reference to Bertie identifies the extract as part of an early draft of From Man to Man; Aunt Susanna is presumably the forerunner of Aunt Mary-Anna in the upcountry town. The opposition

between "a slowly evolving world" and a traditional Christian eschatology is central to From Man to Man.

9. See details in footnote 2 to Chapter 4.
10. Letter to Kent, HRC,
11. .."the work I have before me is dreary. The parts which touch Rebekah and her friend and all the parts which interest me most I hardly need to touch, but when I wrote the book I treated Drummond's wife, and all the good hands-folded-in-the-lap Philistines with sarcastic bitterness. Now I feel that isn't right. I see now always in the men and women about me, 'Durch tiefes Verderben ein menschlicher Herz'. I can't treat them so, and it's dreary work eating one's own fire" (Pearson, 10 July 1886).
12. Despite its being an "allegory" of Rebekah's entire life, the Prelude was also "the incarnation of my own childhood" (Casebook, p.122), which is different from Cronwright's insistence on flat autobiography.
13. See Schreiner's letter on marriage to W.T. Stead (Letters, p. 217 :
Continuance of the physical relation when the higher mental relation is not possible, and when the affection is given elsewhere, seems to me a more terrible because a more permanent prostitution than that of the streets.
14. See First & Scott, OS, p.157, also Letters, p.293, where Schreiner discusses the lives of certain fashionable women whose selfishness and hypocrisy make them prostitutes who" are only not prostitutes because life has never put any pressure upon [them]". In the same letter she says

The terrible thing is that more than half the men in the world are prostitutes and pay no price for being so .

These definitions are relevant to the roles of Mrs. Drummond and Frank in From Man to Man, who are 'prostitutes' accepted by society, whereas Bertie is not.

15. W.H. Lecky, History of European Morals (New York : George Brazille, 1955) p.283.
16. See a letter to Alice Greene, UCT, 1912, in which Schreiner argues that there are no "manly and womanly qualities " :

There are two sets of qualities — courage, sincerity, loyalty, generosity, intellectual vigour, which I believe are naturally and apart from training as much natural to women as men.... And there are other qualities — cowardice, falsehood, cruelty, selfishness, stupidity, which are surely just as inherent in women as men What are the manly qualities and the womanly apart from early training in the home?

This opposition between two sets of qualities is the basis of the characterization in From Man to Man, which rests on a moral, not a sexual, grid.

17. W.T. Stead, "The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon", Pall Mall Gazette, July 1885. See First and Scott, OS, pp. 155-157.
18. Pearson, 14 July 1885. See also First and Scott's discussion of this point in relation to the Men and Women's club, OS, p.148.
19. August Bebel, Woman under Socialism (transl.) Daniel de Leon (New York : Labor News Press, 1904), p.9 Schreiner's own annotated edition of Bebel is in the Horwitz private collection, Schreiner wrote to Ellis "Send me Bebel" (HRC, 1884) while she was revising From Man to Man.

20. See First and Scott, OS. pp. 163-4, also Schreiner's reference to Edith Ellis as a "wreck of Hintonism" (HRC, November 1915), and discussion of the Hinton affair in the Pearson letters.
21. The scene of gift-giving between Rebekah and her dead baby sister placates the forces of death, and anticipates her 'gift' of love to her live sister. See the discussion of the little girl in the "Diamond Fields" internal narrative who presents her teeth to the dead convict. Rebekah's collection is equally primitive and personal.
22. Corporal punishment takes appropriately distinct forms in the different novels : in African Farm the main flogging scene is of a child by an adult (who is also an opportunistic invader of the 'farm' to which the child, Waldo, is naturally attuned); in Trooper Peter white imprisonment, chasing and hanging of blacks are the main forms of physical punishment; in From Man to Man the Prelude introduces us to husband-beating-wife violence, a physical 'prelude' to power-play between men and women in the main 'book'.
23. This is a variation of the ants/insects motif (including the dung-beetle) which runs through African Farm, where they tend to illustrate the delicate life of natural impulse, or an uphill struggle against insuperable odds (the epigraph to Part II). Here it is appropriate that the image should be of fierce natural competition in the insect world, reflecting the 'natural' sexual competition between adults in the main story, and the evolutionary law (the 'survival of the fittest') which Schreiner was countering in the conceptual thrust of the novel.

24. See Jean Marquard for a detailed critical analysis of the Prelude, "Olive Schreiner's 'Prelude' : The Child as Artist", English Studies in Africa, Vol. 22,1, (March 1979), pp. 1-11.

25. Schreiner wrote to Carpenter, from Ganna Hoek, in 1892:

It's so nice here. I'm staying at the old farm where I used to live when I was a young girl and where I finished part of An African Farm [This indicates the extent to which Schreiner thought of Ganna Hoek and Klein Ganna Hoek as essentially one farm, though with two different farmsteads and families]. It's a beautiful wild place, one of the most beautiful in the world and I wish you were here to see it.... The wild bush of mimosa thorns comes right down to the house and it's full of wild animals. I like to feel this wild untamed life with "the will to live" still strong and untamed in it, seething about me. It makes the old strength come back into one's heart. (Carp, Xmas Day, 1892)

This is the 'will to live' displayed by the life at Thorn Kloof, which includes Rebekah's 'will to live'.

26. Schreiner writes to her brother Will :

No, Will, I shall not see what I hunger for. The world I love lies across four thousand years. But what of that — "For a thousand years are in thy sight but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night" (UCT, 25 March 1918).

This quotation illustrates that Schreiner's telescoping of time, and reliance on apocalyptic vision as a narrative ending are biblical in origin.

27. Bertie's mother's worried expressions are very similar to those used by Mrs. Schreiner during Olive's 'trouble' after the Gau affair in 1872. (Findlay letters, 6 October & 28 November 1872).

28. Schreiner uses different 'creatures' to embody this instinctive, preternatural response to the inner qualities of her characters, especially those who wear a social mask. In African Farm she uses the ostrich and Doss, the dog (the latter a 'gift' to Lyndall, and an image of loyalty, like Griet). Griet, being a 'Bushman' is also allied to the traditional San 'wisdom' in a natural African environment. In African Farm, San art is stressed, in From Man to Man, San instinct.

29. Rhodes, of course, was one such 'sickly visitor' to Africa.

30. See the closing section of Chapter 2, above, for Schreiner's discussion of the bush as "a house of your own". The industrialized version of this image occurred at New Rush, where the 'Big Hole' was seen as a gigantic house of five hundred rooms" (Chapter 3, p. 12, above). See also the little girl in "Diamond Fields" "the bush was like her home" (Chapter 3, p. 21, above).

31. Schreiner liked Alassio because it resembled the Cape :
You can go anywhere and pick them [wild flowers].
Nothing is walled off; it's like the Cape.
(Letters, p. 114)

32. In From Man to Man, while the sincere and truthful colonial girl, Bertie, is ousted from her rightful place (as Otto is ousted by Blenkins) by the hypocritical Veronica, who then 'colonises' the neighbouring farm by marrying John-Ferdinand, Rebekah moves away from the original farm of Thorn Kloof and establishes a new small farm in the Cape, expressing her reconciliation of an original nurturing environment with a new, independent social life. Bertie, like Lyndall, leaves the farm 'for good', but circles back to Africa from England (but always in a socially more degraded position). Lyndall, like Bertie a challenger, though for more intellectual reasons, of conventional marriage, also never makes it back to the farm in person.
33. See Arnold Bennett's discussion of this point in The Savour of Life (London : Cassell, 1928) p. 308 and R. Rive, who speaks of these sections as "dull, irrelevant digressions" (Olive Schreiner (1855 - 1920), A Biographical and Critical Study (Oxford Ph.D, 1974).
34. Although this image is an allegorical representation of humanity's progressive and reactionary discussions, it does also suggest the Christian dualism of mind and body itself, repeating an image used in Undine for the hypocritical Cousin Jonathan, an angel above and a devil "from the lip downward" (Undine, p. 37). The allegorical figure is nevertheless appropriate to a novel about a struggle between moral and intellectual purpose and sensuality.
35. Compare Lyndall's 'sermon' to Waldo on feminism while watching the ostriches, a model of shared parental duties, in African Farm.
36. There are striking similarities between this scene and Dorothea Brooke's "turning from private grief to " the manifold waking of men to labour and endurance" in Middlemarch (Harmondsworth : Penguin, 1965) p.846.

37. See Phyllis Lewsen in the Casebook, p.219.
38. A review in The Nation, London, 16 October 1926, which also commends "the variety of her gifts", and "the combination of speculative power with the creative artistic faculty".
39. There is a fuller discussion in the Casebook introduction.

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