

THE
NIGHT OWL
AND OTHER POEMS

WITH
A MANIFESTO ON IMAGINATION & POETICS

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AND OTHER POEMS

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BY
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For
Laura

My redemption, my love, my life

“And there the sea and storm and wind did batter the homes
and tear the shingled roofs and piles asunder,
to shrink and cower once tempest eyes had
placed their view upon our communion,
and felt the heart and beat of affection
that no storm nor wailing gale could rent,
from our entwined hands”

- *Dushyandhan Yuvarajan*

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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“The Night Owl and Other Poems” is a collection of poems that explores four areas of the human condition, destruction, humanity, sorrow and love, and explores how these four areas are affected under a variety of experiences and situations. Written during my travels throughout Asia and Europe, the collection uses the spectrum of my interactions during this time to interrogate the ideologies that motivate people’s actions in the world. The collection of poems is not penned in a particular style but erratically dances through a gamut of poetic forms and schools mirroring the turbulence of my emotions and their manifestations during this period. Each poem is spoken from the viewpoint of a different character, building on the concept that we all have multiple characters harbouring inside our minds, and each character is alive in different ways, leading to an often jarring juxtaposition of emotional tone between the works. Each section of the poetic manuscript relies heavily on abstract and surreal imagery. It transitions from sexual and destructive landscapes to internal and nature laden imagery and was heavily influenced by a combination of Beat poets, Romantic poets and Modern poets such as Allen Ginsberg, Seamus Heaney, Langston Hughes and Galway Kinnell. Supplementing the poetic collection is my philosophical manifesto exploring the unassailable relationship between human imagination and poetry through the application and analysis of objective procedural poetic techniques, where I argue that the human imagination is intrinsically married to poetry and the two cannot be divorced. It begins by laying out five explorative hypotheses to be tested. The philosophy then defines the term “objective procedural poetry” and explores the regions of the poetic sphere that have used or relied on this concept, untangling the history and complex relationship of subjectivity and objectivity in the composition of a poem. Following this, a variety of objective translational and non-translational transformations are applied on a range of my own poetry and that of others, after which I analyse and compare the outcomes to determine if a new self-standing artistic work has been derived or alternatively whether the original has been reimagined in a new artistic light. My philosophy then explores and dissects two specific areas of poetry, DADA and the “cut up”, and compares these techniques and their outcomes with the earlier results. Drawing on the extensive collection of examples, tests,

results and analysis produced and conducted throughout the work, the philosophy concludes by affirming that the five hypothesis at the beginning of the philosophy have been adjudged true. Purely objective production of poetry does not result in artistic works, and thus every poetic work to a degree must be founded in the use of the subjective human imagination and condition.

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Dushyandhan Yuvarajan

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Preface

“But all art is sensual and poetry particularly so. It is directly, that is, of the senses, and since the senses do not exist without an object for their employment all art is necessarily objective. It doesn’t declaim or explain, it presents.” – William Carlos Williams

Do these words by the poet William Carlos Williams divulge the essence of poetry? Williams, a leading imagist poet through the early to late 1900’s, spent his life striving to define the American Poetic, working to break through what he saw as the stagnation of poetry, and yet remain grounded in the exploration of forms of poetic conduction. Williams stated, “The art of the poem nowadays is something unstable; but at least the construction of the poem should make sense; you should know where you stand...” in reference to the evolution of poetry, that was now breaking free of the shackles of traditional poetic constrictions (as demonstrated by Williams’ colleague, Ezra Pound, who during the same period was forging new boundaries of conceptual poetics). To attempt to define poetry is in some part to define creativity, to define the drive to encompass the logical and the structured in the diverse and the abstract, to mate the real with the imaginary, the order with the chaos. Poetry is a purification and examination of the humanity behind ones’ voice. It grasps the essence of what is written and spoken and conveys a message that is raw, that one can feel, that unearths the pleasure to be found in language and communication. There is a savagery, be it gentle and understated or furious and tempestuous, in poetry, that unlike the timely crescendo of a novel, is delivered in doses, in thrusts, that can be launched at the audience in refined, compressed stanzas or winding passages. Williams was not the first and nor the last to attempt to define what poetry entails. To try and define poetry is to undertake an enormous task, thus this poetic work does not seek to answer the question of “what is poetry?” but seeks to add to the collection of knowledge and the wealth of artistic exploration that is ever evolving and growing the sphere of what poetry encompasses.

The following work is a manifesto of my philosophy of the interaction between the human imagination and poetics and a declaration, born, from the creative and critical exploration of my poems. “The Night Owl And Other Poems – With A Manifesto On Imagination & Poetics” is founded upon a collection of poetry that I penned while traveling.

A journey that stemmed from the desire to observe, relate and prove that the objective and subjective aspects of poetry are intertwined and that without both working in a symbiotic and harmonious balance, the creative poetic process can be stifled. The work envelops both the positive and negative aspects of life, and as such is segmented into sections that deal with the destructive, the sorrowful, the human and the loving: important facets of that which composes each and every one of us. The pieces penned in this collection and exploration are at times hard to digest, delving into the demons that I have faced both mentally and physically, but are also at times intimate and expository of the more fulfilled periods of my travels. They follow no set pattern of poetic form but vary from the traditional to the abstract, representing the variety of experiences I faced.

In addition to the collection of original poems, this work strives to use procedural poetic technique that has come to life over the past few generations of modern and post-modern explorative poetic evolution (such as DADA and cut up poetry), to demonstrate the essential relationship between the human imagination and poetry. Over many decades we have observed the birth of new methodologies, terminology and forms in the poetry sphere, an example being computational poetry, from which has arisen the question of whether the human imagination still plays as great a role in the conjuring of a poetic piece. Perhaps as the world's scientific knowledge grows, this imagination is being replaced with procedure and method instead. As such, this work not only includes a collection of poetry but also a philosophical exploration. It was written to explore and define what the modern poetic term of objective procedural poetry encompasses and to demonstrate that the human imagination is not only a mandatory tool in the creation of poetry, but that it is the singular underlying organ, without which, recognizable and understandable poetry can struggle in coming to fruition. This work aims to argue that objectivity and procedure, solely, are at their core an anti-thesis to the artistry in poetry and that without subjective artistic intervention, any application of procedure to poetry (in an objective manner) will yield a result which in all but the most rare of cases, will have no artistic divination. Thus, we would lose that which poetry most passionately strives to create or in the words of Williams "presents": an emotional resonance.

This philosophy explores this question by applying an objective procedural transformation to four of the poetic works in the collection and then analysing the outcome of these transformations. It investigates the change in the structure and content, to observe if the artistic message is retained and transferred to the outcome, and dissects the literary

outputs of the transformations to determine if an artistic divination can be garnered and thus whether the result can be thought of as a new artistic work in its own right. The procedure that will be applied is, in the opinion of this author, the most essential procedure that is applied to poetry on a large scale and yet is inherently intimate and entails the most intricate application: translation. Each of the four poetic works is translated into another language and then undergoes a literal re-translation back into English. Each of these languages heralds a unique and differential aspect to that of English. Whereas English is governed by its own set of rules, each of these unique indigenous languages is governed respectively by a different set and thus, not only is the transformation of language tested, but the very essence and core of poetry (content entwined with structure) will be rent, molded and mutated. These language transformations will be accompanied by further non-translational transformations, ensuring the philosophical exploration delves deeply enough into the various techniques. The outcomes of these transformations are thus an expose of objective transformation of highly subjective artworks.

Unlike many poetry collections, "The Night Owl..." is an exploration of the theory behind the words I have written as much as it is an exhibition of the words themselves, much like that of the journey undertaken by Wordsworth and Coleridge in the experiment of the "Lyrical Ballads". "The Night Owl..." can be enjoyed purely as an artistic work, purely as an academic and poetic experiment, or as amalgamation of both, melding the worlds of both science and art. To assist in the enjoyment of and submersion in the work, included in the experiment are all translations and literal re-translations of the poems, in their respective languages. This will help guide the reader through how the verbal artistic traits of the work have transformed, and will illustrate an alternative viewpoint of my poetry to the audience. This illustration allows the message of the poem to resonate in a surrogate manner, in the hopes of demonstrating how a person of different cultural and linguistic background would observe and absorb my poetry.

Dushyandhan Yuvarajan

4 December 2016, Hanover, New Hampshire, United States of America

CHAPTER 5

A PHILOSOPHY AND EXPLORATION OF OBJECTIVE POETICS

Introduction: The Philosophy of Imagination & Poetry

“The Night Owl” collection, preceding the latter half of this volume, was born from the desire to voice the impassioned thoughts that were stirred from my observations during my travels. They are concentrated seeds writ to bed in one’s mind, to birth the processes of realization in oneself of the nature of world we inhabit. Poetry can be overwhelmingly powerful; a fruit of the conscious and subconscious artistic mind, with poetic works woven almost from one’s soul. Yet, this fervour of composition, this absolute investment by an artist into a poem is matched with a surgeon-like precision in application of form, function, structure and technique. The subjective surge is matched with an objective rein. The sweeping words and cascading rhythms and cadences are tempered and manipulated, they are hemmed and carved and molded to fit the constraints and forms that make poetry the beautiful, daunting, ethereal creature that it is: the child of science and art, of reason and madness.

What follows, is a philosophy that uses my collection of poems to explore why it is that some artists have believed there to be a need to remove the fundamental necessity of the subjective artistic mind (the artist’s imagination) from the creation of poetic works. Why, though it has been greatly debated as to the important and intrinsic inability to separate the human imagination from artistic creation, that we still strive to at times excise as if a cancerous tumour the beauty and un-explainability of human creativity from poetry. This philosophical exploration delves into one specific facet of poetry that is intimately entwined in the relationship between the abstract and rational artistic consciousness: procedural poetry. It journeys through an analysis and dissection of whether the objective application of transformational procedure to my poetic works will yield a work that either amplifies message of the original work or is telling of a new message in the derivative. The transformations involve translating a selection of the works into a collection of diverse languages after which they are literally translated back into English to observe and compare the differences. This philosophy then continues, adding and applying a multitude of various non-translational transformations to further poems, to clarify if the results are independent of the manner of transformation. I end by traversing the complexities of some of the most well documented transformations in poetry: “The Cut Up” & “DADAist” techniques.

You may ask, though, why objective procedural poetry as the tool of the exploration? Why use this method to seek the answers as to why humanity (human

imagination) cannot be removed from poetry? This method is applied for the fact that objective procedural poetry allows myself the artist, the inquisitor, to most easily and simply reduce or completely abolish the effect of the subjective imagination. Objective procedural transformations allow, in a clear and concise analytical manner, to cut the subjective creative influences from the composition of poetic works. What better way in which to explore and discuss, then, how and why there is an unassailable importance of imagination in poetry?

Now, the reader may ask whether it is not an obvious conclusion that by applying this methodology we will see poetic works lacking the essential energy of what gives poetry its mystique, what breathes into the words that essence to which we can ascribe no explanation, that which affects us on a deeper level? Throughout the history of poetry and of art there are movements and artists, such as DADAism, Language Poetry, Computational Poetry, etc. that have pushed the very opposite, that a procedural technique applied to material can create a poetic work; according to these movements a person who thinks themselves incapable of writing can write, who thinks themselves not an artist can become one, completely devoid of, or to a significant degree removed from, the “crutch” of imagination. This is the core of what this philosophy aims to illustrate. Through the journey of investigating objective procedural poetry, I aim to discover whether the tenets of these movements hold truth or if we merely seek truth where there is none to be found, to discover what compels the human condition to assail its own imaginative cognition and thus why, even after such debates, we continue this war upon our own creativity. I seek to know, are we merely reading tea leaves, or throwing bones when we search for meaning in a meaningless work?

A Question of Objectivity

I will begin by comparing to the field of poetry a field that is its mistress, though it can be hard to recognise as such: science. Known for its focus and singular acceptance of objectivity and subjective minimalism, science may seem difficult to reconcile with the field of poetry (which to this author is almost purely subjective). However, this field of study will come to allow, through its methods, this philosophy to resonate more strongly, and in the process highlight that imagination and the abstract are at times far more important than the rational.

One definition of poetry is:

“Literary work in which special intensity is given to the expression of feelings and ideas by the use of distinctive style and rhythm”¹

This definition, though simplified, is apt in allowing readers to consider the impact of poetry on themselves and the objective, that goal which a poet is primarily focused on achieving — the delivery of an emotion, expression or message through the use of distinctive language constructed with a selected structure, specific rhyme, rhythm and/or meter. However, what this definition does not allude to is the above described relationship of poetry to science, the science of language. This relationship will bear fruit in the coming exploration and help explain that, though this relationship exists, poetry cannot unlike science, be of purely objective thought or method.

Let us look then at some definitions of art (in this context applied to poetry) and science:

Art: “The expression or application of human creative skill and imagination, typically in a visual form such as painting or sculpture, producing works to be appreciated primarily for their beauty or emotional power”²

Science: “The intellectual and practical activity encompassing the systematic study of the structure and behaviour of the physical and natural world through observation and experiment”³

There is no doubt that any poem is an application of a poet’s skills (note here, I have used “skills” to describe the poet’s ability to compose the poem), and that poetry can be as much visual as it is lyrical. In addition, it is plainly obvious that a poem’s impact lies in its “emotional power” (regardless of what aspect of the poem elicits such emotion).

Poetic works are intricately composed and structured, centering on the use of and/or manipulation of language, playing off written, visual and verbal aspects (with poets especially working with the lexical intricacies and variations of language). Poetry is both a mixture of written flow as well verbal and visual cadence, with recitations either imparting a separate emotional imprint or one that works harmoniously with the written and visual structure. Poetry pares language down to an essence. This purity is a characteristic trait of the art form and can be observed most clearly in forms such as haiku, sonnets and other genres of poetry that are governed by a very rigid structure. The manipulation of language in poetry has led to the art form having an integral and intimate relationship with the field of linguistics (included in the wider spectrum of the social sciences). Since language evolved, it has (in its written and verbal forms) been used to observe, record and describe the natural and unnatural world (it is prudent to note that poetry is as much a storytelling device, dealing with both fictitious as well as non-fictional themes).

This relationship of poetry to science can be separated into two distinct groups straddling both the scientific and artistic circles. The first are poets who use poetry to describe scientific concepts and/or communicate a message that is scientific in nature. Two examples of this type of poet are René Richard Louis Castel (1758 - 1832), a renowned French naturalist and poet, and Elizabeth Bradfield, a modern poet. Castel combined his love of the natural world and poetry, using the art form to describe and teach about the intricacies of that world in such works as *Les Plantes, poème* and *La Forêt de Fontainebleau, poème*. Bradfield's collection of poems in *Approaching Ice* explore the rugged beauty of, and guide readers on a journey through, the Arctic and Antarctic. The second group are poets who utilise the methodology and application of systems, observation and testing found in science combined with artistic techniques to manipulate the structure of language to craft beautiful and powerful works, testing a result and reworking methods until a satisfactory outcome or conclusion is determined. Two leading examples of this are *Ouvroir de littérature potentielle* (Workshop of Potential Literature), more commonly referred to Oulipo and the field of "Ethnopoetics". Oulipo was founded in the 1960s by the poet Raymond Queneau and mathematician François Le Lionnais and is a collective of artists (both literary, visual and others) and mathematicians. Through the process of applying scientific constraints to the literary⁴ writing process, this collective strives to place upon a pedestal the concept that the objective application of scientific⁵ constraints to a creation of literary art⁶ will remove the spontaneous and subconscious as

fountains of inspiration; declaring that art is best created through the structured application of rigid protocols and constraints.

Ethnopoetics is the study of oral/verbal poetic works found throughout various cultures worldwide and involves the systematic application of linguistic techniques and methodology towards the transcription, translation, recording and understanding of verbal poetic works and the cultures and techniques behind them.⁷ Ethnopoetics of all the poetic fields is the closest to the scientific spectrum and is deeply entwined with the linguistic study of language, focusing on such areas as intonation and tonal applications of language to poetry. The field is growing as our knowledge of spoken human communication increases through the continual progression of the linguistics.

As stated in the preface, this singular work cannot nor does it strive to completely define what poetry is, as poetry predates written or recorded history and is a vessel of communication that is as inherited and ancient in terms of communication as the very cultural structures that have formed the basis of our societal constructs. Instead, this work aims to explore how the removal of the subjective mind from the creative process affects poetic composition and the final poetic output, using the application of objective transformation on poetry.

In order to do this, I must first set in stone what it is that is meant by the term “objective procedural poetry”, where the boundaries of this term lie, what is and is not considered objective procedural poetry and the issues that will affect the application of objective procedure to poetry. Secondly I must ensure that this exploration follows both a scientific and artistic explorative testing method to demonstrate that if we (the poets) are to apply purely objective procedure in the transformation of a poem or text, without singular subjective artistic intervention for each poetic piece, then in the majority of cases, no artistic output can be divined. This assertion would stand fast in opposition to that which is preached by DADAism and the objective transformational poetry work conducted in post-modern poetic spheres. Such a result would illustrate that the artistic subjective mind, the subjective imagination, is a critical component in the manifestation of poetic works and that one cannot put poem to paper, without conjuring from the depths of the human mind those complications that would give the poem an emotional impact or movement that transcends merely a visual or audible satisfaction.

To accomplish this, I will explore the following poetic arguments:

For the majority of poetic results contained in this exploration:

- I. A poem, transformed in an objective procedural manner, without artistic subjective application or intervention, is not capable of capturing or conveying, demonstrating, illustrating or transferring an artistic and resonating message that is similar to or uniquely different from that of the original piece of work.
- II. The transformed work is not able to be considered a self-standing work of art.
- III. Objectivity cannot fully and completely replace subjectivity in the artistic transformation of poetry through procedural application.
- IV. New and unique traits can be divined from the final work but need further manipulation to be fully realised.

And the central crucial issue:

- V. Through the application of objective transformational procedure in the creation or evolution of poetic works, no work of resounding artistic value or interpretation can be produced or obtained. Thus, the human subjective mind, the human imagination, the human condition is an intrinsic and irremovable organ of poetic creation, and in trying to remove such an organ we are in essence erasing that which makes poetry the unique and transcendent form of human expression and communication that it is.

What must be considered here, for the arguments above as well as this philosophy on the whole, is that I will be exploring, discussing and viewing the objective transformations in a purely creative and not critical manner. By contrast, Lisa Samuels, poet and academic at the University of Auckland, New Zealand, conducts work with the deformation (read: transformation and vice versa) of poetic works in the view of it being used as a tool of critical investigation rather than creative inspiration. Samuels' application of transformation is used to further discern meaning, almost as if using a literary microscope to further pry

some form of message or reading from the works at hand. Samuels' states in the work *Deformance and Interpretation*⁸, "...the critical and interpretive question is not "what does the poem mean?" but "how do we release or expose the poem's possibilities of meaning?". This philosophy's exploration, on the other hand, focuses on the meaning of the poetic outputs, after which it then elaborates on the possibilities the outputs could entail. This conceptual divergence is again highlighted by Samuels, who goes on to state in the same work - "so [the interpretation of procedurally transformed poems] serves as a ground for the conflict between poetry-as-meaning and poetry-as-style...", when referencing outcomes which seem meaningless or nonsensical. In short, there are two oppositional armies of thought here, forever clashing - that of poetry as meaningful versus poetry as stylistic.

A key note here is that at all stages of comparative critical discussion in *Deformance and Interpretation*, the original pre-deformation work is always available for comparison. This allows the reader to see and springboard from the original poem that was intended by the poet into the poetic outputs. This allows readers to better understand the context and content of the deformed results and thus in an analytical manner better use the outputs as critical investigative appendages of the original body. But what if we are to apply the methodology of this philosophy to the examples used by Samuels? Using the outputs she creates in the creative sense, to appreciate them as standalone works, only comparing back to the original poem to see if a new meaning has been divined or if the result carries the meaning of the original in an artistic and understandable manner. Let us look at Samuels' "isolating deformance" of *The Snow Man*⁹ by the poet Wallace Stevens, not in the critical light of deeper understanding but in the creative light of the birth, formation or transcendence of meaning, as this philosophy aims to do. Here the isolating procedure is to deconstruct the poem, stripping it of its poetic structure. Once the work is transformed into prose, Samuels is able to deem that the poem is more of a shaped free verse than one that is based off metrical meter and thus is able to comment pre-emptively on the assumed results of the deformation: "...hence we might expect limited success with a critical analysis that relies on metrical prosodies.". Samuels is able to, before applying the transformation, know to a certain degree the probability or lack thereof of producing a "successful" outcome. This highlights an important concept that I will come to focus on in later chapters of this philosophy, that a work by investigation at the outset can be deemed to be more "productive" under one transformation than another. Here applying a meter based transformation would be useless as there is no meter. This shows the incursions that artistic

subjectivity can have even when one believes oneself objective. The deconstruction of the Stevens' poem into prose demolishes the standalone nature of the lines, melding them all into one, after which the nouns are selected and left in place whilst all other words are removed. Below is the original followed by the product of the transformation.

The Original Work

One must have a mind of winter
To regard the frost and the boughs
Of the pine-trees crusted with snow;

And have been cold a long time
To behold the junipers shagged with ice,
The spruces rough in the distant glitter

Of the January sun; and not to think
Of any misery in the sound of the wind,
In the sound of a few leaves,

Which is the sound of the land
Full of the same wind
That is blowing in the same bare place

For the listener, who listens in the snow,
And, nothing himself, beholds
Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is.

The Transformed Work (*below is my application of the procedure, followed by a photo of Samuels' execution*)

mind winter
frost boughs
pine-trees snow;

time
junipers ice,
spruces glitter

sun;
misery sound wind,
sound leaves,

sound land
wind
place

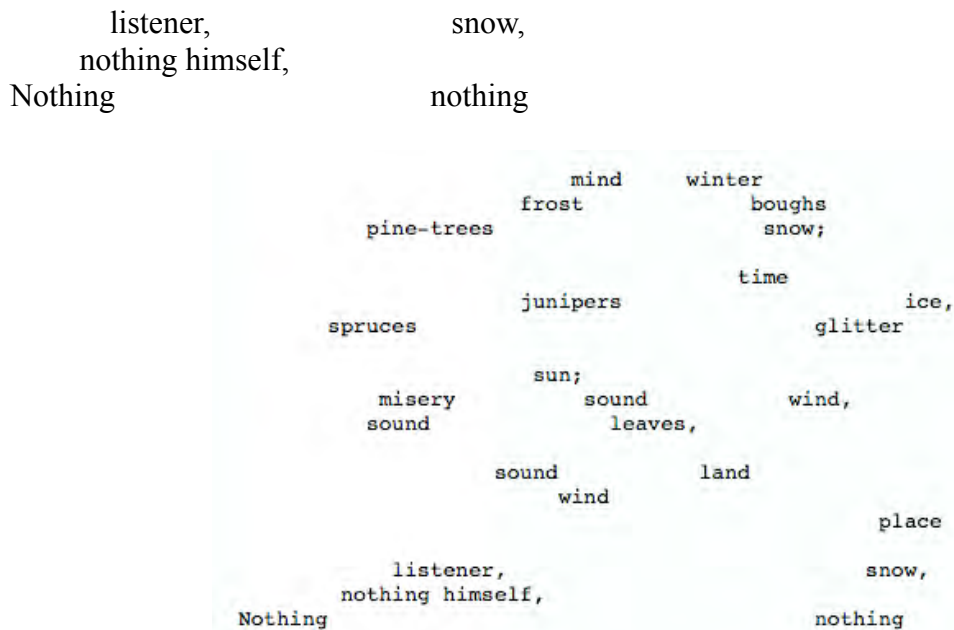


Figure 1: Critical deformation of, *The Snow Man*, by Lisa Samuels¹⁰

From a critical viewpoint, Samuels moves to comment on the balance of nouns in stanzas as well as the imbalance of the type of nouns (concrete or abstract) and comes to conclude that the negative spaces enhance the feeling of nothingness in the poem (though we can see the work has been spread out visually, more so than the typesetting of the original, helping make this space more prominent, again illustrating how subjective artistic applications can work themselves into processes where we believe them removed). Inspecting the end result from a creative viewpoint: does the work say something new or does it add to or represent the original? Looking at the first stanza, in the original we get the feeling of a relationship to winter, how one must be intimate with its subtleties and traits and aware of its faculties. Only with this mindset would a person be able to appreciate the beauty and desolation of winter, be able to regard “the frost and the boughs”. In the transformation all we have is “mind” and “winter” left from the original in the first line and “frost” and “boughs” from the second. This does not allow a reader to garner the same feeling or message that the original ordains. Does one have to mind winter, mind that winter is here, be of mind in winter, lose their mind in winter, keep their mind in winter, have their mind born in winter, hibernate their mind in winter? What is the message or meaning? “Frost boughs” carries the same issue: there is an overwhelming sense of being lost. The piece is not totally without merit however. There is a visuality to it that is beautiful, but what we will come to see is again, this output can be a muse for an artist to further create but as a representation or new

work, in a creative sense it fails. Critically, however, as Samuels makes clear, transformation can be helpful in gleaming further analytical meaning.

Samuels also states that the methods of deformation applied in *Deformance and Interpretation* range in their objectivity [“...and adding (perhaps the most subjective of our deformative poetics)...”], again leading to the concept of subjectivity creeping into what can be thought of as an objective procedure.

What I will discuss in the coming sections is a dissection of the aspects of using objective procedural poetry as a creative tool, clarifying what in the end we can discern as the appropriate definition of what this objective literary tool entails and how varying schools of poetic thought in the past have misused this tool to argue that poetry does not hinge upon the human imagination, in the process placing themselves at the point of a pyramid which has come to be built on foundations of possibly un-sound construction. To do this I will compare and discuss some of the theories and transformation examples used by these schools to highlight the basis of this literary philosophy.

Procedures vs. Constraints

To assist us in defining and testing the term “objective procedural poetry” and the literary theory behind it, we will need to understand the difference between a procedure and a constraint.

We can define a constraint as a limitation or form of constriction that is placed upon an item, object, action, issue etc., whereas a procedure can be defined as a set series of actions that need to be completed or undertaken in a certain manner or in accordance with a collection of rules. Oulipo, as defined by modern poetic and literary institutions, is the application of rigid constraints to a work or text (irrespective of whether that work already exists or if this constraint is applied during the creation of an original piece). The key difference between the example of Oulipo and any procedural poetry is that a constraint is a limitation that does not depend on the method but purely restricts the final output; therefore, a constraint applied to a work could be achieved utilising multiple different methods. In this manner Oulipo not only includes new mathematical methods of poetic construction (such as the algebraic Oulipo method explored later in this section) but may also include traditional forms which are based on numerical or mathematical limitations. We must remember, though, there are many forms of “traditional”¹¹ poetry that are not

based on purely mathematical constraints, and thus will not fall under the constructs outlined by the school of Oulipo. An example of this is free iambic verse, more commonly referred to as blank verse, the use of which is well illustrated in Ezra Pound's *Portrait d'une Femme* (differing from free verse, in that blank verse though also without rhyme must conform to a meter).

Procedural poetry, however, focuses on the process implemented to achieve the final output. Unlike applying a constraint, a procedure must be completed in one particular way, and the method must be adhered to, otherwise the procedure is invalid and the final output will not be the result of the said methodology. Two distinct examples of this type of procedural poetry are DADAism and Computational Poetry.

DADAism was founded by Tristan Tzara - a Romanian-born French poet, in Zurich and is based on rending apart the structures of language. DADAism was in some way a movement against art, against the artist and though it encompassed the visual and audible art forms, DADA was born through words. To create a DADAist poem was to follow the procedure laid out by Tzara in *Dada manifesto VIII - On Feeble Love and Bitter Love, section VIII, TO MAKE A DADAIST POEM*, pictured following:

VIII

TO MAKE A DADAIST POEM

Take a newspaper.
Take some scissors.
Choose from this paper an article of the length you want to make your poem.
Cut out the article.
Next carefully cut out each of the words that makes up this article and put them all in a bag.
Shake gently.
Next take out each cutting one after the other.
Copy conscientiously in the order in which they left the bag.
The poem will resemble you.
And there you are — an infinitely original author of charming sensibility, even though unappreciated by the vulgar herd. *

Figure 2: To Make A DADAist Poem

Here we see the objective procedure that DADAism used to create a poem. To remove the artist as a subjective contributor to the content, the DADAist philosophy allowed anyone to become as writ, “an infinitely original author...”. In Chapter 10 of this exploration, I will

apply this process to one of my poems and show the deeply flawed nature of this DADAist poetic philosophy.

Computational poetry, like DADAist poetry, also uses set procedural methods and rules to create poetic works. The difference here, however, is that the rules are programmed into a computer, which unlike a human does not contain nor operate with any semblance of sentient intelligence and merely responds to rules given to it by us the creators. A leading example of one of many Computational poetry undertakings is the Pythonic Poet¹² project at the University of California, Los Angeles. This project utilizes computational speech/sentence synthesis programs and algorithms created by linguists to analyse and explore the patterns of rhymes, meters etc. in poetry. These programs are then used by the computer to infer how to compose sonnets and poems of other forms. In essence, then, with the computer now informed and aware of the rules of poetic composition should it not be able now to compose poetic works of comparable standing to that of the human poets of past and present? I will compare below the *Octave* sections of two Petrarchan sonnets; one composed by the computational algorithm and the second composed by Willam Wordsworth:

Untitled: Pythonic Poet

not leave me to be if eyes corrupt by
have done a great physician gently say
their injuries yet do not think on thee
in sin in grief the long twilight they pray

he was dead now that thought which truth doth give
like smoke from flame and then I was ware so
hate me as the frail thread that spiders weave
and let my books be then no more thy prow

“London, 1802”,¹³ W. Wordsworth

Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour:
England hath need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,

Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;

Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.

Comparing the sections of poetry above, we can easily perceive the difference between the two. The computational section of poetry, though it audibly sounds like a poem and possesses a cadence and flow to the words, makes no sense. If one was to close ones eyes and read through the poem quickly, then one could mistake it for the work of a human poet. But upon closer examination, where one slows their breath and lives every word they speak and read off the page, letting the connections between these words form a flowing and telling tale in their mind, submitting to the poem and truly immersing oneself in the atmosphere of the piece, we see the marked difference. There is no story. There is no cohesiveness. It is a sham, for there is no affair between the words of the sentences. They do not play nor covet nor fight nor love one another. The words are lost without the supply of human connections - connections brought forth from experience, from passion, from feelings, from the human imagination. Looking now at “*London...*”, in these words we find Wordsworth exuding a message, the passion and emotion clear in the sentences and lines that flowed from his pen. We can connect them and feel the assonance of their coupling. None could read “*London...*” and not be aware of the impressions or more aptly the footprint of the human mind in the poem. One however, would struggle describe these impressions, as these footprints are birthed from the untouchable, what is viewed by scholars almost too intricate and “mysterious¹⁴” to define: the human consciousness.¹⁵

For the objective procedural poetry in this philosophy, a key marker of the objectivity of the procedure will be that multiple persons can apply the procedure to the same work or text and the outcome will be the same regardless of the person who applied the method, except in such cases where randomization is part of the process (here we can suitably expect some variance). What must also be highlighted is that a procedure contains or can consist of multiple constraints, and thus includes not only the process but the final stipulations that mandate the nature of the end artistic work. That is, procedure and constraints are not mutually exclusive.

A critical juncture here of the two concepts is that any procedural poetry requires a work or text for it to be applied to. It is transformative in nature, unlike the example of Oulipo which is both transformational and compositional (“compositional” in this case is determined as the creation of a work without foundational text from which to springboard).

To help clarify the distinction between a procedure and a constraint, let us examine the following example. One of the most popular constraints in Oulipo is the that of “S(N)+7”, which mandates that in the final work every substantive word (noun) in the original is replaced with a word seven times removed (in the dictionary)¹⁶ from that of the initial selection. In addition to this the substituting word cannot be a derivative of the original or contain the same root^{17,18}. In procedural poetry, there would need to be steps dictating in which manner we would approach the selection and application of this constraint, as currently it is ambiguous as to which direction in the dictionary the substituting word can be selected from, and if provided to a control group in its current form could lead to variable outputs. Thus as a procedure, we would need to state which direction in which to move to select the substituting word, the regulations that would disqualify a selection, the actions to undertake if this occurs during the selection of a new substituting word and then once selected how the application of the replacement would occur.

This illustrates a curious issue in that even though Oulipo is an example of poetry that strives to remove the spontaneous and/or subconscious facets of the creative process, it still allows for substantial subjectivity and artistic input in the application and thus result of its constraints, which procedural poetry as deemed in this volume does not allow. In other terms, procedural poetry for the course of this exploration can be described as uncompromising or purely objective. This will add to the illustration of the hypothesis that we cannot apply only objectivity to the procedural transformation or creation of poetry and expect an artistic result.

What Is Procedural Poetry?

Taking into account the above clarifications, we can now determine the definition of procedural poetry as it is applied in this work.

It is apparent that all poetry is formed from procedure and that even free verse poetry, which has no set form, is in a manner governed by a procedure: the procedure of ensuring a lack of form, for if the poem did adhere to any tenet of principled structure then it would not be free verse any longer (a viable though extremely abstract concept). If we took procedural poetry in its most literal form it would include all poetry. This is not the case. We must take procedural poetry as a term that describes a subsector of poetry or in

essence a school of poetry in which a procedural transformation is applied to a text which results in a derivate artwork of the original piece.

The specific constraints of the procedure are not relevant and can be set by the mind of the artist at work, as long as the application of the procedure adheres to the following:

- a. The procedure must be clearly described, in a set manner, with distinct enough detail as to remove any ambiguity in its understanding or application.

And for *testing the hypothesis*:

- b. The outcome can be replicated, so if another person or persons were to apply the procedure in question to the same text, they, without having to apply any individual artistic input (to coerce the result), will have an outcome that is identical to that of the original artist's application.

Therefore, the definition of procedural poetry in this philosophy can be taken as:

A transformational poetic process in which a set procedure governed by a specific collection of rules is applied to a text, poem or other literary work, resulting in a derivative artwork that is both self-standing and holds a pertinent or understandable artistic intent or message.

With this definition, we will proceed with the exploration of whether procedural poetry can be purely objective, or ultimately whether it requires an artist's touch to merit any significant output, and thus if this is the case:

That any poetic work composed or created through the use of procedural poetic technique is reliant upon subjective artistic manipulation to be considered a meaningful artistic work, thus demonstrating that the human imagination and condition is an integral organ of any poetic fruition of compositional endeavour.

Note: From this point forward through this poetic philosophical exploration, I will refer to all objective procedural poetry techniques as simply “procedural”, from the understanding that it is now made clear the definition of what I have set out to explore and prove in this philosophy.

CHAPTER 6

THE INPUT ON ARTISTIC OUTPUT

The Corruption of Artistic Objectivity

Now that we have determined the definition of procedural poetry and how it applies to this philosophy, we must briefly investigate and discuss a crucial point of understanding that is embedded in the theory at hand. Much like veins of minerals that run through a mountain, which are present but buried and that without distinct investigation will not be prominently visible nor consciously identifiable, the theory in question is also not easily recognisable unless thought is given to its understanding: this is the concept of “input into artistic output”.

“Input into artistic output” — it is easy to see how one might be perplexed by this wording as it may seem obvious that no artistic output can be achieved without artistic input. However what the above concept is addressing is, how can one prevent the corruption of a work? When the final output will not be the direct result of the initial composition, but will be the output once the initial work once has undergone a transformative procedure. This concept is addressing how the subconscious drive of an artist to create a work that he or she knows will be going through a transformative process, may alter the composition of the initial text. To make this concept clearer, let us look at the example below. I will take the fifth stanza “Love” of my poem “Meditations on Love”, a series of haiku composed to describe a journey of love and forgiveness, which was not composed with transformation in mind, and apply a procedural transformation to it. I will then compare the result to the first and second stanzas of my poem “Fire Birth”¹⁹, a work which was composed with procedural transformation in mind. Note that the transformation process I will apply to the fifth stanza of “Meditations On Love” is the same transformative procedure that was applied to the first stanza of “Fire Birth”. I will then analyse and compare the end results.

Procedural Method to be Applied:

For this example, I will apply the following procedure:

The even words in the sentences that compose each stanza will be alternated with their respective preceding word. For sentences which are composed of an even number of words, the ending word of the sentence will also be moved. In cases of a sentence

composed of an odd number of words, the final word will remain in its original location. A visual layout of this structure is provided below:

Sentences comprised of an even number of words:

Original sentence structure: A B C D

Transformed sentence structure: B A D C

Sentences comprised of an odd number of words:

Original sentence structure: A B C D E

Transformed sentence structure: B A D C E

Comparison

"Meditations on Love" - 5th stanza, "Love"

Original work:

Her words trace the beat
Of her heart in the stale air
Notes of sonant soul

Derivative (transformed) work:

Words her the trace beat
Her of in heart stale the air
Of notes soul sonant

"Fire Birth" - Comparative poem - 1st and 2nd Stanzas

Original work (first stanza):

Those flames, raw, so harsh
Through blackened eyes, crying pain
I saw, new life born

Derivative (transformed) work (second stanza):

Flames, those so raw, harsh,

Blackened through crying eyes, pain
Saw I, life, new born

Comparative analysis

Let us scrutinise the derivatives of the poems and compare them to the originals to see how the transformations have affected their meanings. This comparison will illustrate how the corruption of artistic objectivity can lead to a false positive during the exploration and testing of the hypotheses at hand.

“Meditations on Love” is written to resonate with and explore the message of love and forgiveness, with the specific stanza “Love” describing a moment where the character is listening to his love singing a song that cuts through a humid and stale night, carrying the echoes and notes of her being. This can be imagined and visualised from the original work. The transformed version, however, does not convey this understanding; the words are now out of kilter, the structure nonsensical and grammatically fractured. The words of the stanza are now incomprehensible and do not transmit the emotion, passion and feeling of the original piece.

My poem “Fire Birth” heralds a message of rebirth, of the pain of suffering sensations which though hurtful to oneself have over time become normal, to see when exposed to a love which had up righted the character’s capsized world, that it is time to shed such feelings. The expulsion of these emotions leads to the forging of a new life. “Fire Birth” was composed with the application of transformative procedure in mind. The application of procedure to the first stanza of the work has heralded an output that not only conveys the artistic meaning of the first but has a uniqueness and quality to its language that lends an artistic and emotional impact to the stanza that is different from that of the first. Note that there is modified punctuation in the transformed version “Fire Birth”; this does not overly disadvantage the comparison, as “Love”, even with added punctuation, will still not make any sense. This example demonstrates the impact that manipulation of the initial compositional objectivity can have on the transformational output. This is critical in testing the hypotheses. If the initial work has been composed in such a manner that has taken into account the procedure to be applied, then there is an absolute certainty that the outcome will meet the criteria that we can divine an artistic message or understanding from the transformational output. The complication in this scenario is that it even though it

would seem that the process being applied has been objective, the output is still corrupted; the subjective artistic input has come from the initial work, which was composed to work with the procedure. In other words, there has been a corruption of the artistic objectivity. To address this in this work, I will note the below:

All poetic pieces in “The Night Owl and Other Poems...” were composed before the conception of this exploration. Therefore all pieces are free and self-standing works of art, which have not been composed with the thought or intent that a procedure will be applied to them in a transformative manner. As such, the “artistic corruption” that is detailed above will not be present.

But is it Art?

In the end, the deciding factor of any poetic experiment conducted in this exploration will be the question: “but is it art?” — will we be able to distill any artistic derivative or any form of artistic interpretation from the final output of the transformations? Can I as an artist, or you as the audience, divine a meaning from the chaos, or is the chaos the art?

What both I the artist, and you the audience, must also relate to is that poetry is not purely composed of linguistic meaning. A poem can be born from the composition of words on a page, chosen to deliver a story with meaning and emotional resonance but poetry can also be born from musicality and visuality, from the beauty of how the words sound and how they look on the page. However, I view these facets as merely supporting the meaning of the words. Poetry is written with language and language is created and governed by rules to communicate meaning, therefore without meaning we are not using the essence of the artist’s instruments. What was shown in the example of Computational Poetry in the beginning is true here: though a piece of text may sound like a sonnet, look like a sonnet and be of the same structure of a sonnet, it still may not be a poem. It may still be nonsensical. Words may take the stage on a piece of paper in the shape of an object but if it cannot be read with meaning then it is more a visual art piece than a piece of language art. Thus we must be aware that at the core truth there must be a message no matter how it is packaged.

How can we hope to answer a question as subjective as “is it art?” — we cannot. We can but add to the permeation of knowledge that flows from the core principles of poetry in hopes that this knowledge will one day advance the capability of the artistic man or woman to build and further refine our enjoyment and creation of the composed word. This addition will come from an exploration driven by the charge to prove that objectivism will not result in a redeemable poetic work unless tempered and ultimately paired with the human imagination (what must be noted is that the interpretation of any piece of art is primarily subjective, thus adding to this conclusion).

Yes, we as sentient, emotional, passionate creatures can look at a work of art and see objectively the traits of magnificence in it. There is not a soul on this Earth that would gaze upon the Sistine Chapel, reflect upon the beauty of the work, the mastery the art and not be able to appreciate it as a pure feat of skill and grandeur, in addition to enjoying the subjective pleasures drawn from its visage.

Yet we must draw a line. At such a point we as artists, readers and participants in the enjoyment of poetry must be able to say that this work has no discernible poetic meaning. If I was to write the following haiku format poem, composed of randomly chosen words from a dictionary:

**Yes pudding toilet
Book sleeping tree seal meat
Aghast nothing nightmare**

Can it be considered art? Maybe. Maybe in an abstract word order sense, yes, but poetry needs format mated with a story, to be able to transmit its message. Here there is form but no content. So many genres, schools and movements of poetry pivot on being able to transfer a specific message, be it idealism, human rights, African American culture, Asiatic culture, politics or emotions of consumption, through the marriage of content with structure. Sometimes that message is hard to decipher, at times it is cryptic, at other times almost maze-like, a twisting convoluted journey of discovery but yet there is always a discernible reason for a composition’s creation. What do we see above? What can I as an artist or you as the audience divine? Images flurry to mind but they do not relate, they do not communicate; they are levitating, unbuckled, severed. We cannot join them: what does the “yes” refer to? That one wishes to have a pudding in the privy, that the toilet is made of pudding, that a book is lain on wood or animal meat, that a book is laying on a creature that

is sleeping. What is the message of this poem? This composition was objectively written using a random procedure. It may have merit, there could be potential, if I was to apply poetic manipulation to the work then the content may be salvaged. In these words, I as the artist can see a path, see the way to spread a message but it requires subjective intervention. This is what will be proved in due course throughout this exploration, that subjective manipulation is required to produce a poem. Let me now take the above and work it, changing it, molding it, breathing life into it.

The initial work - objectively composed with an objective procedure

**Yes pudding toilet
Book sleeping tree seal meat
Aghast nothing nightmare**

The final work with artistic manipulation

**Yet, I am apos-
-tate! Books sleep on frying meat.
Aghast: the nightmare.**

The final piece is composed from the original text, spring boarding from the initial wording, melding it into a passionate and understandable artistic piece of poetic composition. Let us decipher the meaning from this piece.

- a. The first sentence (note not the line, but the first sentence in the poem) reads: “Yet, I am apostate!” If we read this as conversational, then it would resonate of a person (note the non-focus on gender here) making a passionate statement of confliction, that in some ludicrous manner they are assumed to be “apostate” or traitor.
- b. The second sentence: “Books sleep on frying meat” alludes to books, in an environment where they are lain, placed upon flesh that is afire. In that context a reader would deduce that they are in fact being burnt, destroyed along with a hapless soul who is also consigned to the pyre.

- c. The third sentence: “Aghast, the nightmare”. A simple, clear, resonating message. In horror, the nightmare. You (the audience) can easily come to the conclusion that this nightmare is of consumption, a consumption by fire - the sensations and situation of having one's very being convicted, sentenced to death by immolation.

From these interpretations, we can piece together the story and visuality that the poem is conjuring. What the above is describing is essentially the issue of the modern art conundrum. Modern art can be described at the best of times as abstract and at the worst of times as almost incomprehensible without direct identification or elicitation of the concept and meaning behind the work. This identification of meaning is ideally sourced from someone who is knowledgeable of such details, such as the artist. Without this explicit information, the viewer is free to divine or siphon their own individual understanding from the work, which is in some cases the very point of the piece in the first place. This is less of an issue with modern visual art than with modern literary art. I believe this stems from the fact that language is an intimate resource or tool in conveying the required information to understand or decode the meaning of a piece of work (this includes both written language and verbal/oral language). Therefore, when the abstractness is directly linked to the form of communication used to confer the meaning of the piece in the first place it adds a new level of complexity. Merely stating the issue highlights its almost paradoxical nature. How to decipher that which is used to decipher? This is where we must delve in with voracity and poetic tenacity, sifting through the outcomes, trying with all vigour and substance to interpret a meaning out of the experimental outpouring, knowing that in the end, if we cannot, we are beings of adequate and sound enough artistic standing to conclude that the argument this exploration supports is thus adjudged true.

Without doubt, “art” is an interpretive form of expression. A form that can be dissected, reassembled, tortured and contorted, melded and re-labelled, renamed and then re-labelled again and again, as is illustrated with the strata upon strata of genres and schools within “art”. What this explorative argument aims to convey is a clarity. It aims to help deepen the enjoyment of poetic works, not to shoehorn or corral poetic pieces into specific regions or to attempt to insinuate that certain poems fit certain set criteria, which would imply that such poetic works would only be able to be interpreted in a manner fitting to that form or genre. Poets have always been and always will be poets, from the passionate

idealist through to the most cutting of cynics, the mysterious stranger in the corner of the room, the wanderer that rides through town, the blade that pares the mundane and exposes the vibrant flesh our societies and cultures. Poets love and live their works through those who read them, thus I must be firm in stating that I wish not to dilute this in any way, shape or form with this argument. So, with this made clear, read on with me and let us begin our exploration.

CHAPTER 7

THE METHOD WITHIN THE MADNESS

The initial procedures I will be applying to my poems will be translational in nature. Before we apply these transformations, however, I will first deconstruct and discuss each poem in depth. This will allow you the reader to delve into the mind of the artist and understand why I penned such lines, to discover the meaning woven through each sentence, word and morpheme, to know the cadence and atmosphere in which each work was composed and the meaning I as the artist wished to convey. This will build not only an intimacy and relationship with each work but most importantly, as we tear and mend and rebuild the poems through transformation, it will allow you to feel the differences entailed by the changes, to hear the differences in cadence and absorb how differently the final output resonates compared the original. Having this innate understanding of the meaning of each work will also allow you to fully realise how that meaning has changed. This understanding will let you judge truly of your own accord whether that meaning has been retained or whether a new artistic meaning has been created for each sentence, stanza and for the entire poem as a whole.

Following this discussion, each poem will be translated into a chosen language. Note that during this translation a degree of subjectivity will come into play as the translation will be taking the message that the poem is conveying and best reconstructing it into a language that has different grammatical and syntactic structure, verbal cadence, oratory tradition, pronunciation as well as a different vocabulary of words and meanings. The translator for each language will be tasked with trying to keep as close as possible to the original structure without losing any detail or meaning. We must be of mind, however, that this subjectivity will be limited as each translation will still be bound by the meaning and message of the original poem. Each translation will be conducted by a native speaker of that particular language and will be displayed following the original work. This is where we will see the true beauty of language emerge with each example showcasing how diverse and emotive the range of human communication is. The reader is invited to take the time to really verbalise each sound and let the words roll off the tongue and bed themselves in your thoughts, to see how, though the poem is in a different language, it can still resonate with an audience. Note, however, that the original structure of the poem may be lost through the translation due to the different syntactic structures; this will be plainly evident in some of the results but will not affect the conclusions.

The final step of literally translating the poem back into English will be the key point in displaying that a literal word for word comparison of the translation to the original

will show that the objective application of process to poetry will not yield an artistic output. I must highlight that I am using the term “literal retranslation” instead of the term “transliteration” in this context with a determined purpose. This difference of terminology has been applied as the two, though commonly mistaken, are distinctly separate concepts. The act of translation is to take a word or portion of text that is written in a particular language and to then convert it so that it is then readable and understandable in another language. To do this the translator must match the meaning of one word in the original language to its semantic counterpart in the other language as well as to ensure that the new text follows the grammatical and syntactic structure of the new language. Transliteration, on the other hand, occurs when there is no corresponding word in the lexicon of the language into which we are translating or when we wish to use the original foreign word. When this occurs a translator will thus transliterate the original word using the alphabet of the end language along with the phonetic and morphological practices of that language to ensure the word fits as appropriately as is manageable.²⁰ A common example used to display the difference between the two concepts is the word *Aggelos*. *Aggelos* (from which we get the word Angel) is a transliterated word from the original greek ἀγγελος. Ἄγγελος in a literal translation would be taken as ‘messenger’ but instead has been transliterated first to *Aggelos* and then figuratively translated to Angel in English. I have pursued the application of literal retranslation in this philosophy as:

- A. I wish to see how the meaning of the poem has been affected through the translation, and for this, transliteration would not provide sufficient results. Matching the word to the English alphabet is a categorically different undertaking from attempting to match the word to a similar word in the English lexicon. The former would not provide a word of meaning (though we could ascribe a meaning to it) whilst the latter would provide a word with root and history that possesses meaning;
- B. To see clearly, not only the difference in meaning of the individual words and concepts but also how those words are arranged when in a different syntactic structure.

Following the translation/literal retranslation language transformations, I will select a further range of my poetry and apply additional objective procedural transformations, examples of which are below:

- **Set syllabic line variations:** for this transformation a sentence is reversed at a set numerical syllabic cut off point. Any part of the sentence after that point will be then placed at the beginning of the section that remains from before that point i.e. a sentence of structure A-B will be modified to B-A.
- **Alternating word form variations:** for this transformation the word order sequence is alternated in accordance with a set scheme. In this case every odd word will be alternated with the preceding even word.
- **Reversed word order variations:** for this transformation, the word order of each alternating poetic line will be reversed. This will change the poem so that it is as if you are reading the sentence backwards.

The additional transformations on top of the language transformation procedures will illustrate that regardless of the procedure or transformation applied, if it is applied objectively without subjective or imaginative thought, then the argumentative viewpoint will still hold true.

The Languages

For the translation and literal retranslation of the poems I will be using the languages Seenku, Farsi, Toraigh Island Gaelic and Mongolian. These languages were chosen because of their unique syntactic and lexical characteristics as well as to provide a selection that geographically covers some of the major regions of the world. I have chosen to use two relatively endangered languages and two more major languages. This selection will allow us to look at languages that represent populations of various sizes and sociopolitical status, highlighting that poetry can, regardless of its content, be translated into any language. The two more widely spoken languages (Farsi and Mongolian) will assist in covering a more widely used grammatical and oral structure while working with languages that have unique traits and characteristics, not to mention different alphabets. This broad spectrum of linguistic variance will allow us to observe how the output changes as we move further away from the “standard”²¹ of English.

The following sections provide a brief overview of the origin, history and unique traits of each language, allowing the translation and literal retranslations of the poems to be truly appreciated.

Seenku

Seenku (also referred to as Sembla) is a Mande Language of Burkina Faso, West Africa. The word Seenku can be broken down into ‘*Seen*’ and ‘*ku*’, where ‘*Seen*’ refers to the name of the ethnic group to which the language belongs and ‘*ku*’ meaning ‘language’. Thus Seenku means the ‘language of the Seen people’. Seenku is an endangered language with approximately seventeen thousand speakers in a small area of Burkina Faso, with these speakers divided between two separate dialect groups (the northern and southern dialects, Timiku and Gbeneku respectively). There are approximately 5000 speakers of Timiku with the remaining 12000 speaking Gbeneku. The Mande languages are spoken throughout the countries of West Africa. They are classified under the Niger-Congo language family, though this classification has in the past and to this day been very controversial.

Seenku is contrastively different from English as it is a tonal language. Whereas English is structured around the concept of syllabic stress, Seenku is founded on the use of

tones. It is a four tone language with these tones being extra low, low (L), high (H) and super high (S). It is the interaction between these tones and the pronunciation of these tones that gives rise to the meaning and context of the words. As such, Seenku is a highly complex and intricate language where a slight pronunciation difference can lead to a vastly different meaning of what to the eyes and ears of an English speaker/writer is the same word. Seenku also uses a subject-auxiliary-object-verb syntactic structure, which is different to the subject-auxiliary-verb-object syntactic structure of English. These foundational differences in the structure of the languages will lead to a beautiful and resoundingly different cadence, pronunciation and thus impact of the poetic work being translated.

Mongolian

Mongolia is an Central/Eastern Asiatic country located between what is today modern day Russia and the Republic of China. The origins of where the initially nomadic people of Mongolia came from are unknown, but references to the tribes of Mongolia appear approximately two millennia ago in Chinese history. Present day Mongolia consists of the Independent Outer Mongolia that borders Russia and the autonomous region of Inner Mongolia, located in the Republic of China. The area went through many reigns of power, from the Huns through the Kyrgyz people before finally being united as the Mongol empire in 1203 by Genghis Khan. For the 14th and 15th centuries, the “Golden Horde” as it was called drove the Mongol Empire to span through Asia all the way to Eastern Europe, before falling from power due to infighting. At the turn of the 17th century, Mongolia had become part of the Chinese empire. In the 1900’s, Mongolia once again regained some of its independence, becoming a satellite nation of the USSR, with Inner Mongolia becoming an autonomous region.

Mongolian is the largest member of the Mongolic family of languages. It is spoken throughout Mongolia in a variety of dialects, with speaker numbers in the millions. Khalka is the most dominant dialect spoken throughout Outer and Inner Mongolia. The Mongolian language has journeyed through various writing systems and in the post 1940’s era, adopted a Cyrillic form under the orders of the USSR. Post-2004, Mongolian has begun the transition away from Cyrillic back to traditional vertical script, though the majority of Mongolian speakers still use Cyrillic. The Mongolian language (here used to reference the

Khalka dialect) has vowel harmony traits that require vowels within word structures to match class specifications in addition to having a complex syllabic structure. This complex structure allows three consonant clusters syllable-finally. The language is agglutinative in nature. An agglutinative language utilizes complex word structures with multiple morphemes, with each morpheme having a distinct meaning, to communicate concepts and ideas. This is in opposition to a fusional language which would utilise isolated elements or inflection to do the same. Vowel harmony combined with the verb-final form of Mongolian (with sentence structure adhering to subject-object-verb) should give the poetic translations in Mongolian some unique differences when compared to the original work.

Farsi

Farsi, or Modern Persian, as it is commonly known is a descendent of old Persian, one of two languages that dominated the areas known in modern day as Iran, Iraq, Turkey etc. It is widely spoken, with over forty million native speakers, and is a member of the Indo-Iranian language group, a sub-family of the larger Indo-European language family. Farsi is currently predominantly spoken in Iran, Afghanistan and other areas that are linked historically to Persian areas. Farsi (Modern Persian) is a continuation of Middle Persian (the language of the Sasanian empire) which was a continuation of Old Persian (the language of the Achaemenid Empire). The Persian language has influenced a large number of languages in the surrounding areas, such as the Turkic languages throughout Asia and the Indo-Aryan languages of India, Pakistan etc. Modern Persian has through the last millennia undergone a range of stylistic eras, from early to classical through to the now contemporary period. There are three modern varieties of Persian, Farsi, Dari and Tajiki, with Farsi being the most widely spoken of the three varieties. Farsi syntax takes on the form of subject - object - verb, like Mongolian. Farsi (like most SOV languages, including Mongolian) has the trait of suffixes predominating the language with only a small selection of prefixes available. In addition, there is no gender in Farsi, as compared to some languages which have a masculine and feminine within the structure of the language.

Poetry is interwoven into all of the Persian languages; historically in Persian culture, one had to be able to write in verse to be considered a scholar. As such, it was found that all scholarly and language documents and manuscripts were penned in verse, and over time Persian has come to be viewed as one of the most beautiful and malleable

languages for the composition of poetry. Persian, with its vast array of cultural and historical influence, has proven to be a wellspring of creativity for poets. Such topics as love (primarily focusing on forbidden love, in such times commonly eluding to one which was shared between two men), longing, spirituality, formed the basis of wide-spanning and breathtaking literary volumes. Poetry was key in the courts, and over the centuries evolved through many forms and styles; court usage gave rise to the poetic epics and later the advent of the Ghazal form as a common verse technique, helping to bring about the age of lyrical poetry (hastened by the rise of mystical and Sufi poetry). Some of the most renowned poets of all human history were Persian, such as Rumi, whose works have influenced countless generations. As such, these Golden Ages of poetry have given birth to some of the most beloved and respected literary figures of the past and present times and has come to highlight the influential and necessary essence that is poetry within our cultures. It is in homage to these traditions that I have chosen Farsi as a transformational language.

Toraigh Island Gaelic²²

Toraigh Island (also known historically in Irish as *Oileán Thúr Rí*) is a small island off the coast of County Donegal in Ireland's north west. The history of the island is as ancient and unique as the language spoken there, and is filled with tales of conflict, rebellion and war as well as romance, creativity and music. The island is now home to a small collective of artists who contribute to the island's art culture. The already sparse population has been dwindling over the centuries and is now far smaller than what there was over its most active periods, making the unique dialect spoken on the island a rare and exquisite remnant of the past, that is only spoken by a select few individuals.

Toraigh Island is part of what is termed the Donegal Gaeltacht, where Gaeltacht refers to an "Irish language region". A Gaeltacht is categorised into two sub regions dependent on the variance in numbers of Irish language speakers present. A Gaeltacht with a large number of Irish language speakers is labelled a "Fíor-Ghaeltacht" (true Irish area) and those with a smaller number of speakers is labelled "Breac-Ghaeltacht" (part Irish area). Toraigh Island Gaelic is a dialect of Ulster Irish (also referred to as northern Irish) spoken in the Ulster province and is known to have the closest relation to Scottish Gaelic than any of the other Irish dialects. The Toraigh Island dialect is also well known for its

unique pronunciation with a range of differences in how various phonemes²³ are pronounced.

CHAPTER 8

THE NIGHT OWL: DISSECTIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

Poetic Translations: Studies And Insights

The following are translational studies of four poems from my “Night Owl...” collection. The poetic selection in this study is a representation of the broad-natured poetic styles that are found throughout the collection. This spectrum of poetic works will allow the transformational procedures to work upon a variety of poems that span a sufficient and exciting breadth of poetic variation.

The translational studies begin with shorter works that ascribe to more strictly mandated meters/poetic structure and then flow into longer more prosodic works (though these works are still molded with poetic meter in mind, the poetic meters are looser and more varied), ending with the longest poem in the collection “And The Children Went To School And Never Came Home”. The order of the poetic studies allows one to discern more insightful and eventful happenings as they progress, crescendoing in the final study where there is an illumination of how important one’s subjective conscious and unconscious are in the analysis and enjoyment of a poetic work.

That only four of my poems are studied in such a manner is not accidental but is rather led by the constraint of both time and space. To undertake the translational study of every poem in my collection would be an endeavor both too dense and too winding for this philosophy. However, the four selected poems will ensure a breadth that is expansive and thorough enough to provide the requisite insights into the argument at hand. The translational portion of this philosophy can be thus employed as a kernel from which possible further translational studies could be born. An example of one of these possibilities is the case where a singular poem is studied as it is worked into myriad languages, observing how the meaning and thus truth of the work evolves as it transgresses the constraints of its initial poetic boundaries and tongue.

A Study of Longing - Seenku Translation

To She Who Has Forgotten Me

“To She Who Has Forgotten Me” is one of the shorter poetic works in the collection and was penned as a poem of longing. Written among the flowering fields of the south of France, “To She Who Has....” captures the longing and heartache of waiting for a promise to be fulfilled with the full and saddening recognition that that fulfillment will never come to fruition. As a shorter poetic work, “To She Who Has...” does not have the leeway of a longer poem to construct the visual landscape and story that is being told, and as such relies on using impactful imagery and language to concentrate the content of the message into a more distilled and honed lexical composition.

Poetic Cadence

“To She Who Has...” is written with a non-rhyming pentasyllabic poetic structure. Much like other similar forms such as Tanka and Ciquain, “To She Who Has...” relies on the numerical quantity of syllables in each poetic sentence instead of a meter that is dependent on syllabic stress. Here each stanza is 20 syllables long; segmented into four lines of five syllables per stanza. The pentasyllabic structure was used to give the poem a more somber and flat cadence and tone, as if the voice of the poet were subdued, pairing and enhancing the message of longing and sorrow.

Poetic Message

The poem was penned while I was living in the city of Lyon in the south of France. The message that the poem conveys is a simple but powerful one, of the longing felt when one is fulfilling a promise that has been forgotten by the other person that also promised to fulfill its obligations.

The opening stanza alludes to this promise, to meet again in the “land that was untouched”. The reader is never told where this land is or any further description of what this untouched land is like. The ambiguity of location in the poem not only allows the reader to connect with the land (which would be harder if it was specified as an actual

geographical place that the reader has not visited) but in turn also adds a layer of mystery. The poem is penned to explore the mystery of the “what if” that comes with any unfulfilled promise. In the case of “To She Who Has...”, the untouched land for myself, the author, was the city of Carcassonne and thus the imagery of the poem is incited by the landscape of this locale. “Untouched” in this work is used to connect the reader the lack of completion of the promise.

*A promise was made,
when time had passed, to
meet again, in the
land that was untouched.*

The second stanza is one of a restless searching, of wandering the ramparts of ancient castle grounds and of moving amongst the tombstones of the surrounding cemetery, full of the infant deaths that have occurred over the centuries. This is a stanza relating the feeling of aimlessly partaking in the motions of living, of moving through the day when fully aware that that for which you search will not be found.

*Upon the ramparts
I sought out your face.
Among infant tombs
I sought out your voice.*

Stanza three amplifies this hopeless and desperate longing; as the hours pass and the sun slowly sinks back into the horizon, the poem speaks of waiting and hoping without chance, hoping fruitlessly that the person who also promised to be there will appear out of the dusk haze.

*As the light did fade
and the warmth did die.
I waited still to
have that dream fulfilled.*

Stanza four concludes the poem with a settling acceptance that the promise will not be fulfilled. The character has surrendered to the failure of the promise but not to the failure

of the relationship, and as the day ends, he (I) metaphorically leaves that broken promise in the land that is untouched, to wait for a time when it may be finally accomplished.

*The place you are, may
you think of me, as
I wait for you, here,
in this land untouched.*

Poetic Translation - English to Seenku

*mĩ à bà ísí kǎ
sǎn fǎ nǎ kuô
mĩ nǎ nǎ mǎ kǎ ísí jò
guò nǎ mǎ tǎ fǎ guò lé lǎ nǎ*

*dǎ wè
ná girǎ sóo
dǎnǎ kǎ dǎgǎa
ná gurǎ sóo*

*gyoon nǎ
gurí-gurí kiè
nǎ sǎ à kǎ n siò nǎ nǎ
sôo lé gyǎrá sièbè*

*óò lǎ dǎgǎo lé nǎ
á sǎmǎi môe
n sǎ á kǎ n siò nǎ lǎ
guò nǎ mǎ tǎ fǎ guò lé lǎ nǎ*

Poetic Literal Re-Translation - Seenku to English

*we it said each-other to
time pass if when
we will again we go each-other see
country in person touched yet country which in not*

*walls on
I-your face sought
children graves between
I-your voice sought*

*light disappeared
heat died
I-past am it for I wait in still
dream for become reality*

*you for place which in
you think of-me
I am you for I wait in here
country in person touched yet country which in not*

A Study Of Longing - Comparisons

The following is a comparison of the stanzas from my original version of “To She Who Has...” with the literally retranslated version. For ease of comparison, I have removed all poetic format from the original, as the literally retranslated version is lacking this formatting as a result of the transformation process.

Original Text

*A promise was made,
when time had passed, to
meet again, in the
land that was untouched.*

*Upon the ramparts
I sought out your face.
Among infant tombs
I searched for your voice.*

*As the light did fade
and the warmth did die.
I waited still to
have that dream fulfilled.*

*The place you are, may
you think of me, as
I wait for you, here,
in this land untouched.*

Transformed Text

*we it said each-other to
time pass if when
we will again we go each-other see
country in person touched yet country which in not*

*walls on
I-your face sought
children graves between
I-your voice sought*

*light disappeared
heat died
I-past am it for I wait in still
dream for become reality*

*you for place which in
you think of-me
I am you for I wait in here
country in person touched yet country which in not*

What is initially most obvious from the transformation is the different sentence structure in the literal retranslation when compared to the original. Here we can observe that there are some prominent inversions of the object and the verb in addition to postposition changes from previously prepositional sections of sentences. This inversion in structure does not occur in every sentence but it is a prominent facet of the transformation. Comparing the message of the transformed version to the original text, we can see that the story has been maintained but it is highly fractured; it does not read clearly and is as if voiced by a character that is not fluent in English. It is hard to make out the nuances of the story but what can be understood is the root message, however, the literal retranslated version does not convey anything new and does not represent the original in a better light. It has not built on the original message nor is the text speaking with any substance of any new message or story. The original's cadence, which somber and slow paced reflected the character's introspection is now lost and the rhythm of the piece has been thoroughly deconstructed.

In the end, though the transformation does highlight some unique and quirky wording and sentence structures that can be reworked to sound poetic, the end result is not a success in the terms laid out by the experiment. An artistic output cannot be divined, and though there is a possibility for a future poem being born from the ashes of this output, it is not clear as to what that piece would herald.

A Study of Reminiscence - Mongolian Translation

Triptych

“Triptych” is one of the later poems written in the “Night Owl...” collection and is autobiographical in nature, written as a study of reminiscence. “Triptych” is a poem that wanders through three memories that I hold in my mind that are of particular importance, and that have come to obtain specific value in how they have shaped the poet I am.

Composed of four stanzas, stanzas one, two and three describe and explore each of the three memories in chronological order of their inception, with the final stanza delivering the key message heralded by the poem. The concluding message is that all we have at the end of our lives are our memories; and thus we must make the most of creating and valuing those memories in order to aspire to and live a worthy life. The poem explores the idea that memories are in essence the skeletal framework of our existence. Those memories we have are compounded and fleshed out by our experience of events and the summation of all other planetary feelings and interactions that we as people go through on a daily basis.

Poetic Cadence

“Triptych” is written as an internal monologue of the character, in this case (and as with “To She Who Has...”) myself, the poet. As such it was composed in loose trochaic pentameter, which I view as the most fitting to capture the steadily paced pensive voice of the character in terms of verbal cadence and flow, with the majority of lines written to be read with a starting stressed syllable and ending in the feminine unstressed.

Poetic Message

The first memory is a recollection of a night spent on the “Gabriel”, a fishing vessel traveling off a city harbour, watching a constant stream of neon “eyed” vehicles parade over a harbour bridge. The harbour bridge was straddling ocean waves that, under the illumination of the lights of the city and moon mixed with the flowing tides, were like a blanket of forming and dissolving fractal patterns. It is a stanza describing the watching of

a city skyline erupting in new year celebrations, fireworks igniting the sky as the “Gabriel” slowly turning made her way from the revelries of another year’s beginning.

I

*Neon eyed mechanical death machines
Streaming blurred lines – filament fires, burning,
Straddling concrete arches on fractal waves
Breaking the bow, as Gabriel turning,
Makes her way from echoes of birth year raves*

The second memory is a remembrance of a last night spent at the Commons, a grand local bar near where I resided during that period of my life. A memory of drinking and reminiscing during a Pacific hurricane, of the concrete covered patio garden area of the bar that was hemmed by glass panes being hammered with storm rains that slashed across the transparent force field, protecting us from nature’s fury - of feeling like fish in a bowl. It is a memory of being seated, musing on the week that had passed since my love had left, the pain of waiting, bidding the seconds pass quicker as I waited in a form of purgatory to see her again.

II

*The commons, cement gardens, wild hanging
Vines frame rain slandered glass, those panes that speak
Six hundred, four, one thousand seconds – longing
Have passed since struck, meeting, my worn eyes weep
Six hundred thousand seconds, of such – longing*

There are people we wished we met in life. People that we wished we could connect with but only meet through their legacy and the continuation of their voice and study of their work. The third stanza and third memory of “Triptych” peels this feeling open like one would peel a fig, each petal being a comparison between the life of the person that influenced me and my life. This stanza is a metaphor for how the existence of the person I wished to meet, rose and fell in an offset parallel path to my own growth and development as an artist. The paths this artist took was of the same bearing as my own self-discovery, yet at the same time out of sync with my personal artistic progression — knowing that we as

people, as artists, as creative voices will never meet, never share laughter, wine, stories or an embrace.

III

*We were fatal chemistry, flawed mathematics
That I was yet to live, she found her voice
As I inclined to youth, in life she shone
When I emerged a man, did she rejoice
To descend aged, genteel, she will be gone*

The final stanza closes in on the realisation that these memories are alive in our minds like an art exhibition of works that are hung, lit and examined over and over and over. These three memories are merely representations of a moment that has passed and no matter how beautiful the painting, how beautiful the capturing of the moment, it will never compare to witnessing and experiencing the original. The subtleties and intricacies are lost to the dissolution of detail through time and remembrance, a remembrance that changes every time “the painting” — the memory, is examined and eventually that memory forms a completely alternate reality. The alternate reality of these memories are a fragment from which we can discern an infinite amount of tertiary realities. In the end, however, as we draw to a close with all of life’s events, all we have are these memories. They form the structure of our soul and the essence of what we take away after a lifetime of interactions.

IV

*Like an exhibition of the heart, lit
There hang these triptych memories that tease
Spotlights contrast their palettes’ ochre tones
Of confused tertiary realities.
All we have are memories, our Souls’ bones*

Poetic Translation - English to Mongolian

I

*Неон нүдэт моторт үхэл хөдөлнө
Бүдгэрсэн зураасыг гэрэлтүүлнэ - утас цахилгаанжина, шатна,*

Хэсэгчлэн давалгаалах долгионы хатуу ирмэг дээгүүр дамнан явна
Долгионыг нэвтлэн, Габриел эргэхэд
Цуурайнаас тэр гарч ирэв, шинэ он эхлэв

II

Нийтийн газар, цементэн цэцэрлэг, зэрлэг ургамал
Борооны ус тогтсон шилэн хүрээг ороон ургана, тэдгээр шил
Зургаан зуу, дөрөв, нэг мянган секунд урт хүсэл тэмүүлэл
Хагарснаас хойш өнгөрч миний туйлдсан харц уйлна
Зургаан зуу, мянган секунд, тийм урт хүсэл тэмүүлэл

III

Бид алдаатай хими байсан, алдаатай математик
Гэсэн ч надад амьдрал байсан, мөн тэр дуу хоолойгоо олсон
Залуу нас надад ирэхэд, тэр амьдралд гэрэлтэж байсан
Би идэр нас хүрэхэд, тэр цэнгэн баярласан
Нас суун өтлөхөд, тэр одсон байх болно

IV

Дэлгэсэн зүрхний үзэсгэлэн шиг, гэрэлтэв
Тэнд энэ гурамсан дурсамж оршино, тохуурхана
Тодруулна, зөрүү өнгө аясын хослолыг
Гурван давхар оршихуйн
Бидэнд байгаа бүхэн нь дурсамж, сэтгэл зүрхний мөн чанар

Poetic Literal Re-Translation - Mongolian to English

I

Neon eyed motor death moves
Faded slashes illumination – fiber electrified, burns,

*Partially undulate wave hard edge over crossing goes
Waves through the, Gabriel turning
Echoes from it from came*

II

*Public place, cement garden, wild plants
Rain water engrained glass frame around grow, those glass
Six hundred, four, one thousand seconds long want longing [yearning]
Strike from since passing my exhausted eye cry
Six hundred, thousand seconds, such long want longing*

III

*We wrong chemistry were, wrong mathematics
That yet me-to life was, and she sound of-throat found
Young death me-to come-if, she life lighted was
I youthful death achieve-if, she enjoy overjoyed
Age sitting grow-old-if, she gone be will-be*

IV

*Stretched heart-of exhibition like, shined
There this triple memory exists, mocking
Highlighting, difference color between combination
Three layer existence-of
Us-to being all of memories, spirit heart-of also nature*

A Study Of Reminiscence - Comparisons

Original Text

I

*Neon eyed mechanical death machines
Streaming blurred lines – filament fires, burning,
straddling concrete arches on fractal waves
Breaking the bow, as Gabriel turning,
makes her way from echoes of birth year raves*

II

*The commons, cement gardens, wild hanging
vines frame rain slandered glass, those panes that speak
Six hundred, four, one thousand seconds – longing
Have passed since struck, meeting, my worn eyes weep
Six hundred thousand seconds, of such – longing*

III

*We were fatal chemistry, flawed mathematics
That I was yet to live, she found her voice
As I inclined to youth, in life she shone
When I emerged a man, did she rejoice
To descend aged, genteel, she will be gone*

IV

*Like an exhibition of the heart, lit
There hang these triptych memories that tease
Spotlights contrast their palettes ochre tones
Of confused tertiary realities.
All we have are memories, our Souls' bones*

Transformed Text

I

*Neon eyed motor death moves
Faded slashes illumination – fiber electrified, burns,
Partially undulate wave hard edge over crossing goes
Waves through.the, Gabriel turning
Echoes.from it from came*

II

*Public place, cement garden, wild plants
Rain water engrained glass frame around grow, those glass
Six hundred, four, one thousand seconds long want longing [yearning]
Strike-from since passing my exhausted eye cry
Six hundred, thousand seconds, such long want longing*

III

*We wrong chemistry were, wrong mathematics
That yet me-to life was, and she sound of-throat found
Young death me-to come-if, she life lighted was
I youthful death achief-if, she enjoy overjoyed
Age sitting grow-old-if, she gone be will-be*

IV

*Stretched heart-of exhibition like, shined
There this triple memory exists, mocking
Highlighting, difference color between combination
Three layer existence-of
Us-to being all of memories, spirt heart-of also nature*

The literal retranslation of “Triptych” is the most fragmented and broken of all the translational studies of my works. This confused and fractured wording stems from a combination of the possible lack of comparative vocabulary between English and Mongolian and the already fragmented verse of the original English version poem. Thus, this lack of word pairing in unison with a significantly different grammatical structure has entailed a relatively complete dissolution of comprehensibility of the story woven by the poem. If we are to compare the results using the original stanzas as comparative controls, then we can see essences of the relationship between the original poetic lines and the new ones, but standing alone the transformed text makes no sense. Again, this transformed work does not meet the requirements or expectations set out by this experiment. However, what we are seeing is that the transformed texts themselves contain shadows of beauty, there is a language woven into the fragments that allude to a possibility of poetic verse being distilled from them. Let us look at Stanza I of the transformed text below and see how I, the poet, can play with the words to give them further meaning or place upon them a more metaphorical artistic existence.

*Neon eyed motor death moves
Faded slashes illumination – fiber electrified, burns,
Partially undulate wave hard edge over crossing goes
Waves through.the, Gabriel turning*

Echoes from it from came

The above passage from the transformed text shows how distorted and warped the final output is. However, the wording that has arisen from the translation can be used as a pool of inspiration for further iterations. Looking at the material to work with, I can visualise a new story being born from the remnants of this output, demonstrating that the exercise as a whole is not fruitless if using the results as a point of extrapolation. In the following, I will work the above passage into a new poem, self-standing its own right.

*Neon eyed, death moves between
Faded slashes of illumination. Elec-
-Trified fiber burns. Undulating
Hard edged waves cross over waves,
Through this, from this, echoes of Gabriel come.*

Here I have reworked the excerpt into a poem with a different meaning, a different story. Here the poem paints a scene of a night where vehicles, machines, the modern world - “neon eyed” — be it from headlights or phone screens or sirens etc. moves among the daily routines of a bustling city between faded “slashes” or streaks of illumination. The audience may think the scene is near water from the line “hard edged waves cross over waves”, though this is a subtle double entendre as it in reality metaphorically stands for radio waves, from which echoes of Gabriel are heard. Gabriel used here as in many religions as the label for “messenger”, alluding to the condition where unlike pre-modern technology eras, in our modern world a person who seeks a message from the ether is likely to find one. The world we live in is littered with chaotic pollution from radio, from technology, with the unseen world becoming tainted by the fabric of our daily existence.

Thus, though we can deem the original output, objectively, to be a failure, when paired with the human imagination it can be reimagined into a new poetic piece.

A Study of Love - Farsi Translation

And The World Was Without You

“And The World...” is a study of love. Written when I was in a heavily transitional period of my life, both creatively and domestically, “And The World...” is a tale of the discolouration and disquiet caused by the distance between myself and my then to be wife. It is based on the time between our reuniting where it seemed all the world had lost its colour, where the forest songs and sounds of the land had silenced and the warmth that had enwrapped us both, through what then seemed an endless and ever blooming spring, was fading with her not by my side. “And The World...” is a poem that explores the depths of love, and the effect of the emotional strain caused by a distance that separated that love. Throughout “The Night Owl...”, readers will find a transparency and honesty in conveying the personal themes of the collection but of note are a few poems that truly show the emotional fluctuations that I was facing through such a transformative period: “And The World...” is one of these.

Poetic Cadence

“And The World...” is composed in a loose trochaic pentameter. I have penned it in a way that adds a distinct layer of rhythmic cadence to the poem, one that can be heard clearly when reciting the work out loud, in addition to adding a draining somberness to its recitation. As it is read, one can feel the pensive and downcast mood of the speaker in the poem. Out of all the works in “The Night Owl...”, “And The World...” is one of the pieces with the most obviously audible poetic meter, where one can quite clearly discern the effect the meter has on the content of the stanzas. It is important to note that every stanza is one continuous sentence, without any stops. This lends a flowing singularity to each arc of the story which by the end of the poem guides the reader to a breathlessness. This breathlessness instilled by the poem represents a defeat and exhaustion that is also felt by the main character.

Poetic Message

For the following exploration of the messages contained within the stanzas, I will be referring to the character in the poem in the third person, even though it is an autobiographical poem in nature. The analysis of the work will be more fruitful and telling from an outside perspective; to best garner a sense of its story.

Each of the four stanzas of the poem deals with a different deficiency that is felt by the main character during his separation from his love. This can be seen in the opening title sentence of each stanza - colourless, soundless, motionless and loveless.

In the first stanza, we are immersed in the vision that world has been drained of all colour. The stanza begins by accompanying the main character through a reminiscent walk amongst the trees and walkways near his home. The audience sees with him how all that was colourful and full of life now seemed so dull and monotonous; all the palette of the world had turned a monochrome scene, a two toned purgatory to be survived until reunited with that which would bring colour once again to his world — his love.

And the world was colourless

*And the trees that arched the pathway to our
home that bowed and splayed for us as we walked
stood tall, whose browns and tans and ochre
tones were dulled, whose leaves were green and yellow
and harboured seeds and birds, were death,
and rot in piles by the way, whose branches
that were strong and wrought to form a place to
stem the wind that scored the shingles and tiled
roof, gave to gravity and sank
with a weight to furl against a sky of tacit grey.*

In the second stanza we are immersed in the feeling of deafness the character is undergoing. Continuing on his walk of remembrance, he happens upon an old theatre that had once held amongst its breast sounds of happiness, laughter and plays, but now was desolate, quiet and like his existence, soundless. We read of the children and maids and maidens and men and boys and all the souls that have lent their noise and impulse to its halls and walls of brick. We can imagine the rumble, clamour and clatter of heels and feet and voices as they echoed down the hallways that have stood for decades, but now were quiet. It is in this moment we can relate with the character of suddenly losing a presence that had become so common and to which he had become so accustomed that only once

lacked, did he ever come to realise the love he held for it — or more aptly the reliance he held for what brought forth the noise, in this case, his love.

And the world was soundless

*And the cries of all the life that roamed
that carpeted hall ceased to be,
whose skins were shed to hear the music's
hollowed notes jump from wall to wall
knocking doors and shifting skirts, whose
footsteps had rattled the very floor and board
that nailed to beam had lain a hundred
score, now noiseless, whose maids and maidens had
run forth and sung of happier times
and husbands - boys - and men in groves
who silently gazing through the glass
were poised to curl against the walls of silent, brick.*

In the third stanza we are bound by the weight of motionlessness that is gripping the main character as he walks through the city he is soon to leave, that he has called home for most of his life. He notices that it is empty of those who he usually observes, it is void of those that should be shackled to their fate; there is this overwhelming feeling of emptiness. As we progress through the stanza the audience learns of that fate, of these missing souls who are usually moving to their areas of work, slowly dying in offices that are like cages. These absent souls are held there against their will not by force but bound by motivations that would nullify any impulse to cut the bonds that restrict them. This is a unique stanza as it, unlike the other stanzas, is more of a realisation that he is now free of those bonds and is no longer a slave to the machinations that others in his home city are. It is a third person observation of what once was and is no longer.

And the world was motionless

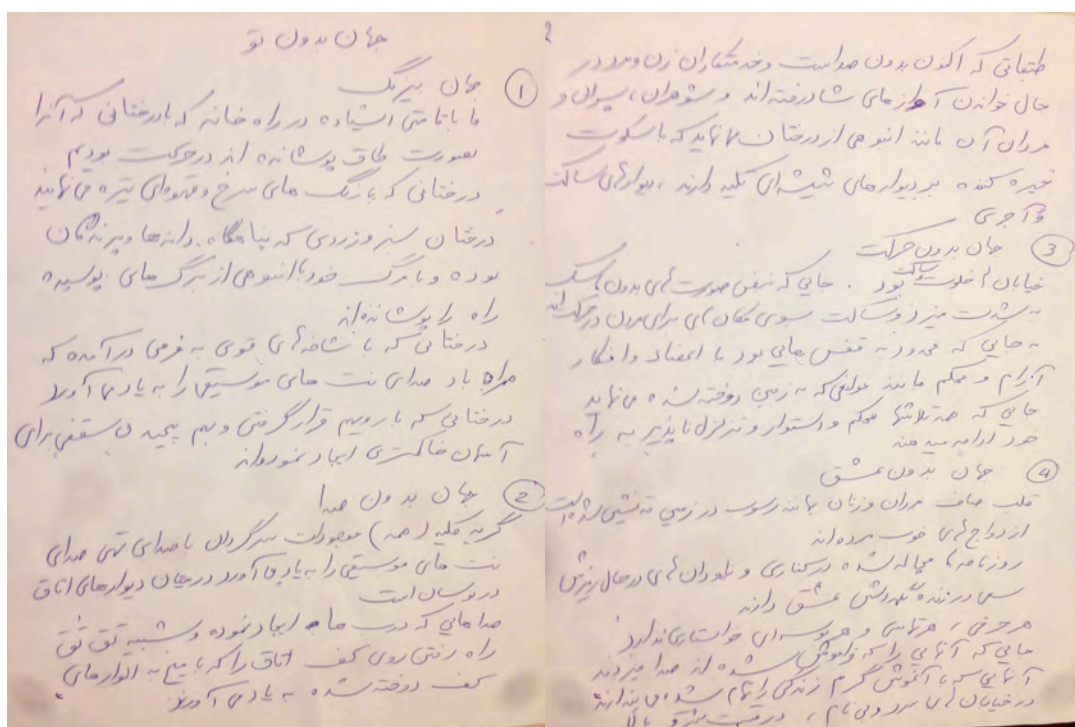
*And the streets were empty where there should
have pulsed a bustling throng of unmasked
faces, moving silently to the places
that they went to die in spaces confined
in cages, whose limbs and minds
were held implacable and distraught,
whose frames were hooked and bolted to turnstile
floors, whose every struggle made
taut the bonds that bound their way with a strength
to sway the most adamant of causes.*

The final stanza of the poem deals with the struggles the character feels of his world becoming void of the love that has surrounded and overwhelmed his senses to that point in time. It seems, as he views the world around him, that the hearts of all the men and women he observes are empty. To him, it seems that all the relationships that tie those around him together are disintegrating and though this is not true, it is a reflection of his mindset at that point. His views are unsettled by the missing presence of his love and as he passes the final section of his walk, all he sees are people drawn together by advertisements and signs and messages of consumption; they appear to be enthralled in the pleasure of indulging in material offerings that are superficial and cannot feed what truly matters: his heart. This material consumption is like some form of modern behavioural tuberculosis, relating them and all he sees to the city of New York, the home of consumption, of false idols and fallen Gods, of metaphorical angels and demons. A city where all those that think themselves above the masses, slowly toil and pass on to the other places unaware of their part in the macabre continuation of the tragic fruitlessness of our modern world.

And the world was loveless

And all the hearts of lean men

*and women were ground to dregs
and the good marriage died, to be laid
aside newspaper wrapped and gutter dropped
to hide from those that sought to keep
love alive, whose every word
and every touch and every kiss
went undesired, in place there stood a screen
of consumption ever calling to those
yet to be destitute, whose warmth was sapped
and lives expired - on the cold
and listless streets - of the upper east side.*

Poetic Translation - English to FarsiPoetic Literal Re-Translation - Farsi to English*World colourless*

*We with standing tall in the way of home that we trees which arch been covered, are in the move
Trees that with colours of red and brown dark looked Trees green and yellow that
shelter of seeds and birds where, and with the death of them with plenty of leaves rotten
road covered Trees which with branches strong in a shape formed which with wind sound of
notes of music one remind Trees that by on each other placing and in each other swirling
ceiling for sky grey have formed*

World without sound

*Cry of all beings roam with sound empty sound of notes of music one remind and in the
midst of walls of room in oscillation is
Sounds which doors have created and like clucking of walking on the floor of the room
which with nails onto frame sewn into one remind
Floors which now without sound are and servant female and male in the state of singing
sounds happy gone, and husbands, sons and men like plenty of trees seem, which with
silence exemplary on walls glass leaning, walls quiet and of brick*

World without motion

*Street empty and quiet were a place where pulse of faces without mask hard were beating
and quietly into places for dying were moving
Into a place which limited to cages where with free thoughts quiet and form like hurdles
which onto the ground were sewn into, looked A place where all attempts hard and firm and
unshakable with path of their own continue*

World without love

*Heart pure of men and women like a concentrate in the ground has submerged Marriages
good dead are Newspapers have crumbled on the sides and gutters in the state of falling
attempt in live keeping of love make Each word, each contact and each kiss suitor not have
A place where those who have been forgotten yell Those who with embrace warm life and
did consider. In the streets cold and nameless in direction of east and up*

A Study Of Love - Comparisons

Original Text

And the world was colourless

*And the trees that arched the pathway to our
home that bowed and splayed for us as we walked
stood tall, whose browns and tans and ochre
tones were dulled, whose leaves were green and yellow
and harboured seeds and birds, were death,
and rot in piles by the way, whose branches
that were strong and wrought to form a place to
stem the wind that scored the shingles and tiled
roof, gave to gravity and sank
with a weight to furl against a sky of tacit grey.*

And the world was soundless

*And the cries of all the life that roamed
that carpeted hall ceased to be,
whose skins were shed to hear the music's
hollowed notes jump from wall to wall
knocking doors and shifting skirts, whose
footsteps had rattled the very floor and board
that nailed to beam had lain a hundred
score, now noiseless, whose maids and maidens had
run forth and sung of happier times
and husbands - boys - and men in groves
who silently gazing through the glass
were poised to curl against the walls of silent, brick.*

And the world was motionless

*And the streets were empty where there should
have pulsed a bustling throng of unmasked
faces, moving silently to the places
that they went to die in spaces confined
in cages, whose limbs and minds
were held implacable and distraught,
whose frames were hooked and bolted to turnstile
floors, whose every struggle made
taut the bonds that bound their way with a strength
to sway the most adamant of causes.*

*And the world was loveless
And all the hearts of lean men
and women were ground to dregs
and the good marriage died, to be laid
aside newspaper wrapped and gutter dropped
to hide from those that sought to keep
love alive, whose every word
and every touch and every kiss
went undesired, in place there stood a screen
of consumption ever calling to those
yet to be destitute, whose warmth was sapped
and lives expired - on the cold
and listless streets - of the upper east side.*

Transformed Text

Note the translation has deformed the poetic structure, which no longer exists and thus the literal re-translation is portrayed as it was rewritten by the native language speaker.

World colourless

*We with standing tall in the way of home that we trees which arch been covered, are in the
move Trees that with colours of red and brown dark looked Trees green and yellow that
shelter of seeds and birds where, and with the death of them with plenty of leaves rotten
road covered Trees which with branches strong in a shape formed which with wind sound of
notes of music one remind Trees that by on each other placing and in each other swirling
ceiling for sky grey have formed*

World without sound

*Cry of all beings roam with sound empty sound of notes of music one remind and in the
midst of walls of room in oscillation is*

*Sounds which doors have created and like clucking of walking on the floor of the room
which with nails onto frame sewn into one remind
Floors which now without sound are and servant female and male in the state of singing
sounds happy gone, and husbands, sons and men like plenty of trees seem, which with
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*Street empty and quiet were a place where pulse of faces without mask hard were beating
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good dead are Newspapers have crumbled on the sides and gutters in the state of falling
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A place where those who have been forgotten yell Those who with embrace warm life and
did consider. In the streets cold and nameless in direction of east and up*

As with previous translational studies of my works, the same results have occurred here. The literal retranslation has shown that objectively changing the language of the poem through rote usage of procedural language, syntax and grammar modification has a destructive effect. The application of language transformation to the original text has disembowelled the poetic work of its core viscera; the structure and cadence of the poem, and to a certain degree, the poetic line composition as well. In a piece of this style and construction, where the poetic meter is enwrapped with a strong sense of internal lyrical rhyme and musicality, any deformation will more than likely alter the work in a manner that makes all sense of meaning evaporate. An example of this loss of meaning is illustrated by the fact that we find the usage of similar terminology throughout the retranslation but still the transformation ends with a piece utterly devoid of emotion and rhythmic cadence and flow. These similarities in terminology show glimpses of what the original poem's written meaning held but is not enough to produce a cohesive literal retranslation.

A Study of Death - Toraigh Island Gaelic Translation

And The Children Went to School and Never Came Home

“And The Children...” was written as a protestation of the cruelty of war to some of those that are most shaped by its malice and vices — children. “And The Children...” rather than descriptively carving a series of static or observational scenes is penned to lead the reader through a fragmented tale; part reminiscence and part present situation narration. The circumstances of that situation facing the characters only become clear in the closing stanza of the work. Interweaving pop culture references with macabre imagery and tonal shifts, the work was written to resonate with all facets of today’s society while still holding true to its main focus: highlighting how the mentality of the young can be corrupted, how those that wield the instruments of destruction are not necessarily instruments of destruction themselves. Note that the poem is geographically ambiguous so as not to place focus on one conflict but to engage with the wider issue of conflict.

Of note are two important facets of the poetic voice in this piece. The first is the constant variation of tense, from present to past and past to present. This tense shift is predominantly realised as the mode in which people frequently reminisce when retelling a memory. Though a memory may be in the past it, its remembrance is in the present and thus the line between that which was and that which is blurs. This is most notable when people are remembering an event or happening that has had a distinct emotional impact upon themselves, such that the emotions they felt when the memory was created manifest themselves in the present. The past is never forgotten and to many who have suffered conflict violence, the past is sometimes more real than the present. The second facet is the use of fractured English throughout the poem. When I sat with those that helped inspire “And The Children...”, I became aware of how beautiful the vocabulary they used was but at the same time how the simplicities of English seemed to disappear during the retelling of their experiences. There was a subverted frustration that words alone could not describe nor detail what the images that fluttered behind their eyes displayed. An example that crossed my path was during one of these discussions, it came to a point where I thought, what is the use of conjunctions? When we should all recognise that the words “death” and “family” accompanied by silence in a sentence together, embodies all that we need to know. Let us work through the poem stanza by stanza to delve into the message and imagery that I used, so that a fair comparison of this version to the literal retranslated version can be completed.

Poetic Cadence

“And The Children...” is composed in a loose alternating iambic/trochaic octameter, with a focus on the stressed syllables in the sentence composure, with a lower focus on unstressed syllables (strict iambic/trochaic octameter would be more exact in the number of unstressed syllables throughout the verse). Loose poetic meter allows the story in this work to have a more fluid sequence of tonal shifts than if subscribing to a more strictly mandated meter. The audience will find that as they work through the poem, the stress of the sentences is interwoven so as to control the pace and flow of the reader’s voice (internal or external) and guide the audience through the story. An alternating meter allows the pacing to be molded to allow certain portions of the story to assume a different level of emotional resonance. An octameter is rarer than a pentameter in poetic work, but was primarily used in this work to allow linking of longer more complex poetic sentences to create a more natural flow of events in the story.

Poetic Message

Act I

The initial first third of Act I sets the imagery and tone of the story. Here we are received by a conjured landscape, the soil is not necessarily red in colour but red in the sense that it is steeped with death — “from blood or anger, or the many myths that we conjure”. The earth, the dirt, the mud itself clings to the limbs of the occupants of this landscape, almost as if it too was trying to escape an encompassing corruption. The landscape moves to images of channels that have been dug by knees into the earth that metaphorically have filled with tears. These stagnate in the shallow trenches mixed with the screams of who, we do not know. There are hands that claw at the bark of trees and snatch through the air to grasp at leaves, though the leaves are not why they flail. The first stanza also introduces the character, *, who is seen through the third person view of the main character who is never identified, highlighting and intensifying the anonymity of the victims of war (as well as the perpetrators) who are often viewed as faceless. Devoid of a

name, * is and can be anyone. This allows the reader to fill his place, to form his face, to give him their own name.

The first stanza ends with the main character coming to the realisation that the one facet of his home - “iron” - that could bring prosperity and peace to the land is the very cause of the “purgatory” in which he and the other characters are trapped. Here “iron” can mean two things;

1. Actual mineral iron ore, which when mined leads to the destruction of habitats, staining the land, the infrastructure and the populace;

And

2. Iron in the sense of firearms. Weapons wrought from metal that corrupt all who wield them and bring only death and destruction.

I

*Our soil is red from blood or anger, or the many myths that we conjure,
the sand it dries and cracks and clings to our fingers in hope to leave this barren
land, the red soil, it clung to *’s hands and coarsely melted to
our knees, that dug hollow channels to the ground that filled with stagnant tears
and screams. Our fingers scratched and scarred the acrid trees and caught rusted leaves,
that broke and flew in shards, that cut through the prairies and sweltering heat that framed
this landscape, dry, flaked and abandoned. * was smart for a boy, he had
been told. He knew that iron tainted all the soil and iron tainted
all his home, that iron tainted all he loved, iron was
all to blame and iron was the bane to which his life succumbed, torn
and tattered as it flapped idly in the street, iron tainted his soul.
* knew his dreams that once were born to lift and glide elsewhere
were now iron and were part of the bloody turmoil that surrounded all, that iron in his hand
had brought him to a purgatory that he had come to call his home.*

The second stanza of Act I highlights the innocence of the main character and ultimately the innocence of any youth dragged into conflict zones and situations of violence. Children are not born with the ability and skills to deal death. That skill is taught to them through a corruption by adults, of elders that are continuing a lesson that should not be taught. The character *, dreamt of one day fulfilling a purpose other than that which had befallen him, a purpose that would have helped change the circular fate of the people he

loved and those that surrounded him; this opportunity is shown to be lost. The youth of today are the future of tomorrow; if we corrupt them we corrupt any chance of a tomorrow that is not twisted and rent with violence and hate.

*He - I - we, went to school that day, that day on which our mothers
buoyed had packed our lunches, slapped our paunches, to fix our posture, knead
our wayward youthful antics to heed a world that slowly made had unravelled
and splintered and was said to sway in declinations none could say and sent us
on our way, to school that day. That * dreamt of being a doctor to mend
the sick and needy in saintly ways, to become the scientist that brought medicine
and power and water and life to his home, to be the one to free his blood
from shackles that had kept them in fields and farms, to guide them like a shepherd's herd.*

The final stanza of Act I opens the reader to the reality of the characters' existences, that all of them went to school to learn and live and know that their lives mattered, only to be cruelly reminded that the choice of what path their lives would take was not in their hands but in the hands of those that had other designs on how their fates would unfurl. We learn that since their birth there was a fear, a shadow that fell over all who lived there, a shadow that is felt by many who live in conflict zones today. Being born into war results in a torturous attachment to all events that occur, no matter how much one tries to distance oneself from all that is happening. The characters were born with a fear that was innate, that all the history and culture and wonder that had shaped the place they lived and society they had grown to love was being destroyed. No matter how bright the light of our cultures shine, they are ultimately eclipsed when the shadow of such a vehement hatred of each other is cast upon them. The stanza is brought to a close by the fact that the only reason the characters are alive to tell the story is through luck, and really it is through this luck that we are made aware of some of the horrors that consume those around the world.

*I - we - he, went to school that day to bare our teeth and eat
all that we could get to feed and see the seeds that sown would lead us to better
homes and know that we the youth and young and future of this world were thread
into the coloured fabric of our lives, taught that our innocence mattered and yet
that was not to come, as vultures swooped into the haze and drums had rattled
and brought to our ears a fear that had been born to us. A fear of men
that skinned as wolves and black things from the night had arrived and cut and burnt
away the history that had made us, birthed from clay and shaped
to be the first of all to set foot upon the path that day, framed
by walls that rose to heights too far to see and encompassed any escape from what
we - I - he, were all to finally be. That we are old and grey
is just the luck of having dodged the bullet on which our names were engraved,*

that was a gift to us that day, the day we went to school.

Act II

The first stanza of Act II pulls the reader into the present situation that the characters find themselves in. The language clearly describes the horror of the scene at hand, with the dead weight being that of deceased or soon to be deceased persons being placed in a circle, a “devil” like figure watching over all, his mannerisms and visage more horrific than what is befalling the unknown persons in the scene. The message voiced from this “devil” is one of hate and greed and lacking in any empathy or remorse, the language painting the picture of him as “the despoiler”. The fear and plight of the characters are surmised here with the final line, in which they learn that if they do not comply then they too would vanish into the long night; we read that some who partake in the horror partake only because they wish to not become a victim of its end.

II

*Dead, dead weight, they are dead stones that are laid, placed in a circle,
superimposed and symbolised, a consolidation of death, displaced from their
homes, we shall crush their bones to dust and drink kaff from their parched throats
and eat their souls, or so he said to *, we were told by that midnight
madman, his belt of bullets and knives and ears of those he had disposed. In the red
now black and potholed road that was paved with flesh, where was the democracy
to which we hold so dear - sense, no sense in this forest of bones, the hot
stench of cigar breath and pétrole, of Chanel number 5 and a slave's
perfume, of glitter eyes and miniskirts, lifted in fear, to him,
that midnight madman, a sweat covered despoiler, they are dead weight
my son, you kill them for your father, you kill your father for your new father,
for me and I will set you free. You see what you like, you take what you see,
you bleed what you bleed and then come feed with me, your father. I - he -
we, glared at the downcast masks and shaking feet, of Mr ***, Mr ****
and Mrs *****, my father, my brother and we feared that if we were not the devil's
sons, we too would disappear.*

The second stanza of Act II illustrates the feeling of fear that is felt by the characters. This is not a passing fear but a deeply rooted physical and mental fear, that is as present as the physical bodies of those around, not only visually but audibly as well. The presence of this fear is made clear by the lack of sound, here denoting the lack of life: a stillness that precedes an attack, or to put it in terms of a well-known social cliché “the calm before the storm”. This stanza is deliberately paced with a cadence and structure that

is used to heighten the sense of apprehension and tension. This altered cadence begins a quickening of pace to signal and imply that we are beginning a downward hurtle to a conclusion none wish to see. The language here is used to induce a distaste, to elicit a reaction from the audience.

They [who are they?] say [how do they say?]

*that you can see fear, you can sense fear but that day we - he -
I, could hear fear, that it appeared like the coming of winter, it could not be stopped
but slowly grew, a tenuous apprehension, a tensioned sinew, this tether
kept the doomed subdued. You can hear fear, it is the silence, where bird
cries are mislaid, the empty landscape, where animals should sing and rain should fall
and wind should bring an orchestral harmony to the daily goings of all
the living things but fear is the mute, the blind beggar on the street, that stops
the tongues of passing folk and turns their stomachs outward, the rancid contents
to fall and scatter in puddles and mire the cobbled stones, and spread a pungent
sickness to all in view. You can taste fear, a curdled bitterness, that sticks
to roofs of mouths and dries the tongue to feel it slowly withering, and gushing
pores give hint of what's to come.*

Act III

Act III consists of four stanzas that are used to weave both the past and the present together, tethering the persons from the main character's past into the present story, illustrating the changes that have happened, how the hierarchy of their interactions have shifted and how the relationship between the main character and the people from his past is now different.

All the people that are described in this act were introduced in the last stanza of Act II, with each person holding a significant symbolic meaning to the main character. In the first stanza we learn of Mr ***, who we come to regard as a joyful and happy fisherman. Mr *** is thought of as "magnificent" in his passion for this life and most obviously a person to whom the main character looked up to. The main character's admiration of Mr *** is paired with the now jarring dichotomy of his submission, down on his knees, the joy now gone and the situation reversed where he is no longer the hunter gatherer but the hunted, the gathered. He represents the joy in the main character's life that is now gone.

*And there was Mr *** in whom I saw the beaches on which I ran
as a child and clawed to haul myself to his boat and play and tangle in cords
and throw the nets to which such fish were drawn, which flew and swam and dove
and jumped and we - he - I laughed to see the magnificent
Mr *** catch them in his bare hands and bark, like a dog among
sheep, the sun a radiant dish that threw such warmth on the sea and glowed
with burning pride at our camaraderie, that now he knelt and looked at me
and in his eyes the joy was gone, where I'm the dog and he the fish and the other
beaten souls the sheep.*

In the second stanza, Mr **** is introduced, who is the main character's link to his home, a link to the past. In Mr **** the main character sees and feels, hears and smells the soil and earth that was bringing he and his family away from famine, the earth that was saving his culture and way of life. The environment in which the main character matured was one that had ensured the survival of many generations. Agriculture is the lifeblood of a large portion of humanity, a life line that is forged with the ecosystems of the environment but also an industry to which entire generations can be enslaved without the farmers themselves reaping the economic and cultural returns.

*And there was Mr **** in whom I felt the fields of home, the soil
that buried my toes in warmth and dew, that bore the fruit and food that stemmed
the barbed famine that wrapped our throats and wrapt our minds to give us visions
in which we would be the bones on the street picked clean by rabid wolves.
The farms that stretched beyond the veil and tore across the stark divide
that split our world in half, the land below the endless sky which seemed
a tranquil paradise to the sapid palette of the Earth, the sky from which we were denied.
I dreamt of growing wings to fly, and reach the end, of that endless sky.*

In the third stanza we are connected with Mrs *****, who is a maternal link from the past. Mrs **** is not the narrator's mother, of whom we never learn the fate (but is stated as robbed from), but a motherly figure leading to the introduction (though not identified until stanza four of Act III) of the narrator's father. His father is the man who was to form the bedrock of the person he was and has become. This introduction is made in stanza three as a precursor to the atmospheric shift that will lead on from stanza four throughout the rest of the poem.

*And there was Mrs ***** in whom I heard the echoes of the womb, that which
was robbed from me, to descry the crying chant - intoned, that was answered by a lonely
soul, the man who raised the hills for me, who taught me how to read,
who would feed and bleed to see me free, the man who ensured I was granted a destiny,
the breath I take, his legacy. In her, I see maternal eyes, that capture*

the want for life, to not die, in the mud, in this place we be.

Stanza four is the pivotal stanza of Act III, in which the audience is provided a first true insight into what is happening. It is made clear in stanza four that there is death here, that there is a violence occurring, that those people whom the main character loves and holds dear are being slain. It is in stanza four that it is made explicitly clear that we the audience are being made privy to the tale of an execution. The brutal and telling detail is that the narrator's loved ones are the final ones to be executed.

*And there was my father and brother in whom I saw chained myself, the blood
that coursed my veins was the blood from which there would spill and stain the remnants
of my ancestry, they were the life I had known, the bedded rock on which my skills
were honed, they were the ones who loved me most, they were the ones they cut
down last, they were the ones I felt depart.*

Act IV

In the final act we have come full circle, as is seen with the opening stanza of Act IV. This first stanza is penned to mimic the structure of stanza one of Act I. This mimicry is symbolic of the concept of coming around to not only the beginning but also the end of the tale, demonstrating that both are intricately linked. The beginning of the reminiscence is told during the beginning of the main characters' death and the end of the reminiscence is told during the end of the main characters' life. This relationship is an important concept in explaining the balance of life and death, that both lead into each other. Here in the first stanza we no longer read of the soil but of hearts, that are without light and hope, full of memories that are seen on the faces of those that carry them, etched into the skin. These memories that cannot be let go; they are born from the hurt endured and from what was witnessed that day, the day which is described in the preceding acts.

IV

*Our hearts are dark and full of ghosts that cling like webs to faces,
afraid to let go, from pain or loss, or the many truths that we
must face, the many eyes that saw the act staged that day, would lament for the rest
of their living moments, if we had crossed a line that was not scored but lurked
as constant reminder to what all should strive to be.*

Here in stanza two of Act IV the reader is made aware of the visceral intensity and inhumanity of the situation at hand, the order to kill, to end those present echoes through the beginning of the stanza. Stanza two highlights that the causations behind such violence - the difference between people - is a common myth. It is a myth that there is a difference in the blood that pours through our veins, and as such, the thought that some are not worthy to be thought of as equal and deserving of life is also a myth. We as a race seem to ignore the brutality of death dealt from the instruments that we as people have created, that spit death with an efficient and macabre detachment, void of any compassion — a bullet does not differentiate. Stanza two discusses that these deaths were committed to birth a supposed new nation, but what is a nation that is born from death and needless violence worth? This stanza questions humanity's essential being, that perhaps we are destined to always be mistrustful and hateful in our nature. This stanza speaks of how these deaths that carry such weight and are the end of beautiful living souls that had spark, character and life, are in the end just another part of an anonymous history — an anonymous history ignored by the majority.

*The bark, the bark that struck at me, to end those on their knees,
they were dirty and not the same, the flesh of theirs was weak and sought to tar
the purity of our blood, the tool, the quill in my hands that was no pen
nor had ink inside but spat hot death and hate and hurt, far
and wide, that roared with anger and hateful pride, that mechanical death
that we designed and used to cut them down like trees, like grass when mown which fell
in heaps and decomposed in piles, to be used to raise the seeds of a new
nation. Democracy, a joke, a punchline, that no one heeds.*

*The heat, the heat of all those eyes, the chant, the chant, that enveloped me,
to nourish the human need that lives in all, to take what we see, to give
nothing, to tread on charity and love and kinship. I raised my hands for he
- they to see, I raised that pen, to write their fates into a history
none will recite, or debate or bring to light, another anonymous atrocity.*

- Click -

The work ends on a fragmented stanza, that fractures into smaller and smaller verses that are interspersed with the noise — “clack”, used here to signify the firing of a bullet. The previous stanza was followed by the sound of the weapon being readied and this is taken as the signal of the conclusion of the story arc. Once the reader is aware of this, the end is inevitable and death is coming. This fractured stanza vividly paints the tension, fear and ultimately the surrender of the victims. The explicit descriptions of the tells and

movements that reveal the gripping fear consuming all who are about to perish induce a relationship with these nameless persons, to instil that as humans we can all relate to death. It is here that the reader is also made aware of the fact that the main character has no say in the end, that his fate is as much sealed as the victims.

*The beads of sweat, like running rain, that poured from temples, frowned and flayed,
the wisps of tears that caressed cheeks, that begged forgiveness, that begged
mercy, the quiver of lips that spoke such sweet refrains, that why were they
to be slain, that shaking of hands that were restrained, the tremble of hearts that were ordained
by no God, or being humane but us, the inhumane, to be culled
and sent away, the stare of eyes without hope, that knew that neither
I nor they, were capable of bringing stay to the coming end, the final
scene that would play before the tribal court convened in haste.*

- Clack -

It is in the final fragment that the lesson from the poem is driven into the audience, that the main narrator is unable to proceed with doling out the punishment that was ordered of him. In the end, that character's true bearing is one of nonviolence, highlighting that many who are caught in conflicts, especially the youth, are at heart and at their core still innocent. Only once this is revealed does the reader learn that the entire story is not told from a living perspective but is a post-mortem exploration of a perished soul. The poem ends in the immersion of gunfire — the immersion of that death with the pop culture reference to a “Kodak moment”. “Kodak moments” are thought of as a unique or interesting photographic moment (usually positive) but is here inverted to be a captured moment in time that frames the utter brutality and nonsensical nature of violence and war.

*In all that I had seen and heard, and drank and shot and had endured, in all
the ways my youth was lost to lie among the host of spite. I could
not that day, bring my hands to pass the judgment, to spill their blood
upon the sand. This was not right, I knew enough, that this was
not the way, this was not an end deserved.*

- Clack -

That was the day, I joined my kin, the day that I, lay so still

- Clack - Clack -

A Kodak moment, a hang in time, to capture our dying eyes.

- Clack -

- Clack - Clack -

- Clack - Clack - Clack -

- Clack - Clack - Clack - Clack -

Poetic Translation – English to Toraigh Island Gaelic

Agus chuaigh na páistí chun na scoile agus char phill siad abhaile arís

I

*Dearga ár bhfód ó fhuil ná fearg ná ón mhiotais as ar fáisceadh muid, an gaineamh ag triomú, ag bloscadh, ag greamú dár méara le dóchas an talamh neamhthorthúil bháin, an fód dearg, a ghreamaigh do lámha * agus a leáigh go garbh go dtí ár nglúine, a thochail failleanna folmha go tóin, a líon le rachtanna de dheora marbhánta. Scriobadh ár gcuid méara colmnach ar na crainn seirbhe agus thóg duilleoga meirgeach, a bhris agus a séideadh ina smionagair, a ghearr fríd an fhéir fhada agus an brothall a chuir cruth ar an tírdhreach, tirim, calógach agus truaillithe. Bhí * géar mar stócach, mar go hinsíodh sin dó. Bhí a fhios aige gur thruailligh an t-iarann na rudaí ab ansa leis, an t-iarann a ba chiontaigh agus ba é an t-iarann an nimh a chlóigh é, stróicthe stollta agus é á gcroitheadh go díomhaoín sa tsráid, thruailligh an t-iarann a anam. Bhí a fhios ag * gur iarann iad anois na haislingí a tháinig chun an tsaoil le forbairt agus éalú in áit éigin eile agus gur cuid iad den chlampar a bhí timpeall gach ní, gur thug an t-iarann a bhí ina lámh aige go purgadóir é, áit ar thug sé a bhaile féin air anois.*

*Chuaigh sé-mé-muid, chun na scoile an lá sin, an lá sin ar phacáil ár gcuid máithreacha ár gcuid lóin dúinn, a líon ár gcuid boilge, a thug deá-sheasamh dúinn, a chothaigh agus a chur ceann ar ealaín ár nOige, chun éisteacht leis an domhan a d'fhás go fadálach, atá roiste, scealphtha agus a dúradh a luascann i díochlaontaí nach fios agus a chur ar ár mbealach muid chun na scoile an lá sin. Bhí brionglóid ag * a bheith ina dhochtúir, chun cuidiú leis na heasláin agus iad siúd ar an anás ar dhóigheanna naofa, le bheith ina eolaí a bhéarfadh leigheas agus cumhacht agus uisce agus beatha chuig a bhaile, ag scaoileadh saor a chuid fola ó chos an phríosúnaigh a choinnigh sna cuibhrinn agus sna feirmeacha iad, chun iad a threorú mar aoire a bheadh ag buachailleacht na mbó.*

Chuaigh mé-muid-sé chun na scoile inniu chun ár bhfiacra a nochtadh agus gach uile ghreim a thiocfadh a fháil a ithe agus le dóchas go dtabharfaidh gach siol curtha, bailte níos fearr dúinn agus fios a bheith againn gur múnlaíodh muidne, an óige agus sochaí an domhain seo isteach i gcreathlach ildaite dár mbeatha, a thaispeáin tábhacht na soineantachta nach raibh le teacht, agus na bultúir ag ruatharach isteach sa cheo agus bhí na drumáí buailte a chuir eagla ar ár gcluasa, a tháinig chun saoil ionainn, eagla roimh fheara i gconríocht le madaidh allta agus rudaí dubha san oíche a tháinig agus a ghearr agus a dhóigh an dúchas as ar fáisceadh muid, a saolaíodh as an chré agus a múnlaíodh, chun an chéad chos a sheasfadh ar an chosán an lá sin, an balla ard timpeall agus gan radharc ná bealach chun éalú againn – agam – aige, mar a bheadh go deo. Ádh atá ann

go bhfuil muid aosta liath inniu agus shábháil sin muid ón philéar a raibh ár n-ainmneacha marcáilte orthu, bronnantas dúinn a bhí ann an lá sin, an lá a chuaigh muid chun na scoile.

II

*Meáchan trom marbhánta, clocha gan aithne, gan urlabhra atá curtha i gciorcal, forshuite agus comhartha agus daingniú báis easáithe as a mbailte, déanfaidh muid dusta dá gcnámha agus ólfaidh muid beoir óna gcuid muiníl thirime agus íosfaidh muid a gcuid anamacha, sin a dúirt se le *, hinsíodh dúinn ón fhear mire na meán hoiche, a chrios lán le piléir agus sceana agus chuasa leo siúd a mharaigh sé. Ar an bhealach dhearg atá anois dubh agus lán poill a bhí pacáilte le coirp, cá raibh an daonlathas atá dílis ionainn – níl ciall ná siosmaid sa choill chnámhach seo, bréantas the anall na todóga agus an pheitreal, chainéal uimhir a cúig agus cumhrán na sclábhaithe, loinnir na súl agus mion sciortaí, tógtha le heagla d'fhear mire na meán oíche, scriostóir lán allais, meáchan marbhánta a mhic. Maraigh thusa iad do d'athair, maraigh thusa d'athair do d'athair úr, domsa, agus beidh tú saor! Amharc ar na rudaí is maith leat, glac an méid a tchí leat tú, glac an méid is féidir leat, ansin tabhair chugamsa d'athair le hithe. Mé – é – muid ag dallrú ar na dallacáin agus ceann faoi orthu agus a gcosa ar crith, cosa an tUasal ***, an tUasal **** agus Bean Uí *****, m'athair, mo dheartháir agus eagla anama ionainn, muna mic an diabhail muid go n-imeodh muidne fosta.*

Iadsan [Cé hiad?] abair [cad é mar a deir siad?] gur féidir scanradh a fheiceáil, is féidir scanradh a mhothú ach an lá sin a chuala muid- sé - mé an scanradh, bhí sé cosúil le teacht an Gheimhridh, ní thiocfadh stad a chur leis ach d'fhás sé go fadálach, faitíos, eagla bheag, féitheog theannta, teaghrán a choinnigh iad ar an leabhar ag an bhfiach dubh. Cluineann tú eagla, is é an ciúnas, áit a dtéann scairt na n-éan amú, an tírdhreach folamh, áit ar chóir d'ainmhithe ceol agus d'fhearhainn titim agus áit a dtabharfadh an ghaoth armóin ceolfhoirnithe chuig gach teacht agus imeacht an lae, chuig gach rud beo ach bíonn an eagla thostach, an fear deirce dall ar an tsráid a chuireann tost ar na teangacha a shiúlann thairis, a thiontaíonn a mboilg amach, an chaidheadais istigh ag titim agus ag spré i bpoill an bhealaigh agus clabar ar chlocha guail an bhealaigh mhóir agus an tinneas spréite faoi shúil an tsaoil mhóir. Blaiseann tú an scanradh, searbh agus géar a ghreamaíonn don choguas agus a thriomaíonn an teanga, a sheargann é agus tugann na piocháin a bhíonn ag stealladh, comhartha faoi cad é atá le teacht!

III

*Agus ba é sin an tUasal * ina bhfaca mé na tránna ar reáchtáil mé mar pháiste, agus mé ag crágáil chun mé féin a tharraingt chuig a bhád agus súgradh agus ag dul i bhfostú sna cordaí agus sna heangacha a raibh an t-iasc tarraingthe dóibh, a d'éitil agus a shnámh, a thum agus a léim agus rinne muid – sé – mé – gáire nuair a fuair an tUasal * ollásaigh greim orthu lena lámha lom agus tafann, mar mhadadh i measc na gcaorach, an ghrian ina mias ghealgháireach a chaith a oiread teasa ar an fharraige agus ag gríos thaitneamh ar ár gcomrádaithe, agus anois shléacht se agus d'amharc orm agus bhí an t-aoibhneas imithe as a shúile, áir gur mise an madadh, eisean an t-iasc agus na hanamacha briste bruite na caoirigh.*

*Agus ba é sin an tUasal * ina mhothaigh mé cuibhrinn an bhaile, an chré ina raibh mo laidhre curtha i dteas agus in drúchta, inár luigh torthaigh agus bia a sháraigh an Gorta*

deilgne – neach a chlúdaigh ár n-intinní chun aisling a thabhairt dúinn, agus muidne na cnámha ar na sráideanna pioctha glan ag na madaidh allta confacha. Na feirmeacha a shín amach os cionn na scáthanna agus a réab trasna na scoilte maolaithe a bhris ár ndomhan ina dhá chuid, an talamh faoi bhun na spéire a bhí cosúil le Cathair na glóire go dtí pailéad bán na créafóige, an spéir a diúltaíodh dúinn. Bhí aisling agam eiteoga á fhás chun eitilt, agus ceann scríbe a bhaint amach ag bun na spéire.

*Agus ba í sin Bean Uí * ba inti a chuala mé macalla na broinnte, mar a goideadh uaim í, chun radharc a fháil ar dhord na caointeoireachta – ag siollabadh, a d'fhreagair anam uaigneach, an fear a thóg na cnoic dom, a mhúin léitheoireacht dom, a bheathaigh agus a chuirfeadh fuil díom, chun mé a scaoileadh saor, an fear a chinntigh go raibh cinniúint agam, gach anáil a tharraingim, oidhreacht s'aige. Inti – tchím súile máthartha, a shealbhaíonn dóchas don bheatha, gan bás a fháil sa chlabar anseo.*

Agus ba é sin m'athair agus mo dheartháir ina bhfaca mé, mé féin ceangailte, agus ba í an fhuil a chuir mallacht ar mo chuid féitheoga, a dhoirtfeadh agus a chuirfeadh smál ar bhfuilleach mo shinsearachta, ba iadsan an saol a bhí a fhios agam, bunchloch a chuir líofacht ar mo chuid scileanna, ba iad a ba mhó a thug grá dom, iadsan a bhrúigh siad síos, iadsan is mó, a chaoín mé.

IV

Tá ár gcroíthe dorcha agus lán taibhsí a ghreamaíonn ar aghaidheanna, eagla orthu scaradh uatha, le pian nó le cailliúint, nó cnámh dhearg na fírinne atá romhainn, mórán súl a chonaic gníomh stáitsithe an lá sin a bheadh ag mairgneach a choíche dá rachadh muid trasna líne gan táille, ach a bhí i bhfolach mar mheabhrúchán bhuan do gach uile dhuine a bheadh a iarraidh a bheith níos fearr.

An tafann, an tafann á lascadh orm, chun deireadh a chur leo siúd ar a nglúine, bhí siad salach agus neamhchosúil le chéile, bhí a gcolainneacha lag ag iarraidh glaineacht ár bhfola á shalú, an gléas, an cleite i mo lámha nach peann é, gan dúch ann ach a sheiligh bás te agus gráin agus nimhneachas i gcéin is i gcóngar, ag scairtí le fearg agus mórtas gráiniúla, an bás meicniúla sin á dhear muid agus á d'úsáid muid chun iad a ghearradh síos mar chrainn, mar fhéar bainte a thit ina chruacha agus a dhreoigh ina mhúir, chun a bheith úsáidte mar phór don tír úr. Daonlathas, cleas magaidh, buafhocal a ndéantar neamhaird air.

An teas, an teas sna súile sin uilig, an chantaireacht, an chantaireacht a chlúdaigh mé, chun ní na daonnachta a mhaireann ionainn a chothú, chun an méid a fheiceann muid a ghlacadh, gan scaradh le dada, déirce, grá agus muintearas a bhrú. Thóg mé suas mo lámha chun go bhfeicfeadh sé – siad, thóg mé an peann sin, go scríobhfainn a gcinniúintí i stair nach n-aithriseofar nó nach mbeidh díospóireacht faoi, nach dtabharfar chun solais, tragóid eile gan ainm.

-Clic-

Cnaipí allais mar fhearthainn ag doirteadh, ag sileadh ó chláir na n-éadan, roic sna malai feanntacha, sopaireacht na ndeor ag muirniú na bpluc, ag iarraidh trócaire, creathán na mbeola á labhair loinneoga milse mar cad chuige a raibh siad le bheith curtha chun báis?

Croitheadh na láimhe a bhí ceaptha, creathanna na gcroíthe nach raibh oirnithe ag Dia ar bith, gan duine ar bith eile daonnachtúil ach muidne, na mídhaonna, le bheith bailithe agus curtha ar shíúil, stánadh na súl gan dóchas, a raibh a fhios nach dtiocfadh liom ná iad stad a chur leis an deireadh a bhí ag teacht, an radharc deireanach a bheadh pléite sula dtiocfadh an chúirt treibhigh le chéile go téirimeach.

-cleaic-

I ngach rud dá bhfaca agus dár chuala mé agus a d'ól agus a scaoil mé agus a d'fhulaing mé i ngach treo dá m'óige, cailleadh iad agus luíonn siad i measc sochaí an naimhdis. Ní thiocfadh liom an lá sin breithiúnas mo lámha a thabhairt, a gcuid fola a dhoirteadh ar an ghaineamh. Ní raibh seo ceart. Bhí a fhios agam go leor, nach seo an bealach, nach seo an deireadh a bhí tuillte.

-cleaic-

Ba é sin an lá, a cheangail mé le mo mhuintir, an lá ar luigh mé chomh socair ciúin.

-cleaic, cleaic –

Bomaite ama, ócáideach, taifead dár súile ag fáil bháis.

-cleaic-

-cleaic-cleaic-

-cleaic-cleaic-cleaic-

-cleaic-cleaic-cleaic-cleaic-

Poetic (Semi) Literal Re-Transliteration – Toraigh Island Gaelic to English

And the children went to school and never came home

I

*Red is our soil from the blood of men or the anger or the myths from which we were wrung from, the sand drying and cracking and sticking to our fingers in the hope to leave this barren land, the red soil, sticking to the hands of * and that melted roughly to our knees, that dug empty channels to the very bottom that filled with floods of sobbing tears. Our fingers were scratched and scarred, the bitter trees and the rusted leaves were caught, that broke and flew into fragments, that cut through the long grass and the sweltering heat that shaped this dry, flaked and abandoned landscape. * was smart, for a boy, as he had been told. He knew that the iron had contaminated all the soil, that iron had contaminated all of his home, that iron had contaminated all that he loved, iron was to blame, and iron was the*

poison that defeated him, torn and shattered as it shook idly in the street. Iron contaminated his soul.

** knew that the dreams that came to life to develop and allow escapism elsewhere were now iron, and a part of bloody turmoil that surrounded everything, that the iron in his hand had brought him to purgatory where he now called home.*

*He - I - we, went to school that day, the day our mothers packed our lunches, that filled our stomachs, that kept us upstanding, that sustained and gave a good start to the art of our youth, to listen to the world that slowly grew, that is unravelled and splintered and that was said to have swung in unknown declinations and sent us on our way to school that day. * dreamt of being a doctor to help the sick and those in need, in saintly ways, to become a scientist that would give healing and power and water and life to his home, setting free his blood from the foot of the prisoner that kept them in the field and farms, to steer them like a shepherd that would be herding his flock.*

I – we - he went to school that day to bare our teeth and to eat every bite we could get, in the hope that every seed sown would give us better homes, and to know that we, the youth and the future of this world were moulded into the coloured cloths of our lives, that showered importance of innocence that was not to come, and the exploiters charging into the fog and the beaten drums were frightening our ears, that was born within us, a fear of men in the shape of wolves and the black things of the night that came and cut and burned our ancestry from which we grew, born and shaped from clay, so as to be the first to set foot on the path that day, the high wall surrounding without a view or a way of escapism for we – I – he, as would be forever. It is lucky that we are old and grey and that saved us from the bullet on which our names were written, that day was a gift to us, the day we went to school.

II

*A dead, dead weight, stones that are dead and buried in a circle, superimposed and a symbol of a consolidation of death, displaced from their homes, we shall make dust of their bones and we will drink beer from their dry throats and we will eat their souls, that was what he said to *, we were told by the midnight madman, his belt of bullets and knives and the ears of those he killed. On the red road, now black and full of holes that was filled with dead bodies, where was the democracy that was loyal within us? – there is no sense in this forest of bones, the hot stench of cigar breath and petrol, of channel number five and the perfume of slaves, the glitter of eyes and the miniskirts lifted in the fear of the midnight madman, a destroyer full of sweat, a dead weight my son, you kill them for your father, you kill your father for your new father for me and you will be free. Look at the things that you like, take what you see, take as much as you can, then bring your father to me to eat. I – he – we glaring at the masks that were downcast and their shaking legs, the legs of Mr **, Mr*

**** and Mrs ****, my father, my brother and the fear within us if we were not the devil's sons we would also disappear.*

They [who are they?] say [how do they say?] that fear can be seen, fear can be felt but that day we – he – I could hear fear. It was like the coming of Winter; it couldn't be stopped but it slowly grew, apprehensively, a little fear; a tensioned vein, a tether that kept them as their days were numbered. You can hear fear, it is the silence, where the song of birds is wasted, the empty landscape, where animals should sing and rain should fall and wind would bring an orchestral harmony to every coming and going of all the living things, but fear is silent, the blind beggar man on the street that silences the tongues that walk past him, that stick their bellies forward, the dirt within falling and spreading in the holes on the road and dirtying the cobblestones on the road and the sick spreading in front of the whole world to see. You can taste fear, bitterness and sharpness that sticks to roofs of mouths and that dries the tongue, and withers it and the pores that gush give a sign of what is to come.

III

*And there was Mr ** in whom I saw the beaches on which I ran as a child and me clawing to raise myself up to his boat and playing and tangling in the cords and the nets to which the fish were drawn to, that flew and swam, that dived and jumped and we – he – I laughed when the magnificent Mr ** caught them with his bare hands and bark, like a dog among the sheep, the sun a radiant dish that threw so much heat on the sea and the burning pride of our comrades, and now he knelt and looked at me and the joy in his eyes was gone, where I am the dog, he the fish and the other beaten souls the sheep.*

*And there was Mr *** in whom I felt the fields of home, the soil in which my toes were buried in warmth and dew, that bore fruit and food that kept the barbed famine at bay that covered our minds that gave us a dream, and we are the bones on the street picked clean by the cross wolves. The farms that stretched out above the veil, and that tore across the sheer divide that broke our world in two halves, that ground below the horizon that seemed like the city of glory to the white palette of the earth, the sky that was denied to us. I dreamt of growing wings to fly and to reach the ends of the earth out on the horizon.*

*And there was Mrs ****, in whom I heard the echoes of the womb, that was stolen from me, to view the crying chant, intoned, that was answered by a lonely soul, the man that raised the hills for me and taught me reading, that would feed and that would bleed for me to set me free, the man that ensured that I had a destiny, every breath I take, his legacy. In her I see the eyes of a mother that capture hope for life, not to die, in the mud, in this place here.*

And there was my father and my brother within whom I saw myself tied and it was the blood that cursed my veins, that would spill and stain the remnants of my ancestry, they were the

life that I knew, the rock that gave fluency to my skills, they were the ones that loved me the most, they were the ones that they cut down last, they were the ones that I mourned.

IV

Our hearts are dark and full of ghosts that stick to faces, afraid to depart, with pain or loss, or of truths that lie ahead, the many eyes that seen the staged acts that day, would cry forevermore if we had crossed a line without score, but that was hidden as a solid reminder to all who wished to be better.

The bark, the bark striking at me, to end those on their knees, they were dirty and unlike each other, their bodies were weak trying to stain the purity our blood, the tool, the feather in my hand was not a pen, without ink within, but that spat hot death and hate and hurt far and wide, crying with anger and hateful pride, that mechanical death that we shaped and that we used to cut them down like trees, like cut grass that fell in heaps and rotted in piles, to be used as seeds for a new nation. Democracy that nobody heeds.

The heat, the heat in all those eyes, the chant, the chant that covered me, to nourish the humanness within us, to take what we see, to part with nothing, to tread on charity, love and kinship. I raised up my hands for he – they to see, I lifted that pen to write their fates in history, that nobody would recite, that will never be brought to light, another nameless tragedy.

Click

The beads of sweat like falling rain, streaming from the foreheads, frowned and flayed eyebrows, building tears, caressing the cheeks, begging forgiveness, quivering lips that spoke a chorus of song as to why they were put to death, the shaking of hands that were stopped, trembling of hearts that were not ordained by any God, nobody humane but us the inhumane, to be gathered and sent away, the staring hopeless eyes, that knew that neither I or they could end what was to come, the last scene that would be played out before the tribal court assembled soon.

Clack

In all that I seen and heard and drank and shot and suffered in all my youthful ways, they were lost and they lie among the host of spite. I could not that day pass the judgement of my hands, to spill their bloods on the sand. This was not right. I knew enough, that this was not the way, that this ending was not what was deserved.

Clack

That was the day that I joined my people, the day that I lay so still.

Clack – Clack

A moment of time, befitting an occasion, capturing our dying eyes.

Clack-

Clack – Clack-

Clack – Clack – Clack-

Clack – Clack – Clack – Clack

A Study of Death – Comparisons

Journeying through the literal retranslation version of “And The Children...”, one notices the startling similarities in cohesiveness and comprehensibility of the retranslation to the original. It would seem at first glance that in this case the literal retranslation has borne to us an example of how we can get an output through applied objective procedure that is representative of the original piece and yet has its own unique twists, traits and wording. These twists are created by the, in some cases subtle and in others not so, vocabulary and syntactical/grammatical differences.

Driven by a possible example that would prove a lance to the side of the artistic and philosophical argument at hand, I sought further commentary from a language specialist regarding the translation (for objectivity, the original translator was not re-approached). It is during this further discussion that it was found that the above is not what I have come to describe in previous cases as a literal retranslation, but more an artistic retranslation. That the language specialist at hand possibly unknowingly thought the concept of providing a word for word accurate literal retranslation that would have been grammatically fractured, as something that no one would ask for, is telling. The consultant, a specialist in this dialect of Irish, a dialect that I the author find subjectively beautiful, melodic and moving, thought the idea of producing something that worked against artistic comprehensibility a mistake. As covered earlier in this philosophy, the corruption of artistic objectivity here is a transparent example of the drive and power of the artistic subjective mind to be present in the composition and writing of literary art and works. The corruption here was not intended nor was it done in an adversarial sense to the instructions at hand but has arisen primarily

from a subconscious disconnect. How could someone want a poem that does not read well or make sense? How does someone appreciate the language the poem is penned in, when that language is destroyed? With the nuances, delicacy and beauty of the poem scarred with a willful ignorance of the rules that govern it so. This subconscious disconnect is what has led to the above and displays the logic of the human mind at work when creating a poetic piece. The mere idea or fruition of thought to produce a poem that goes against how languages work and displays a willful non-adherence to poetic meter, structure or the application of imaginative techniques, is hard to digest. Any creation of a work that aligns with this idea is birthed from a determined anti-logical/anti-imagination font. We as people from earliest childhood onwards are subject to a constant assault upon our senses by sounds, images and stimuli that arise from the human imagination. We listen to music that plays with our communicative tools and heightens our awareness of languages, feeding off of our emotional responses. We watch movies that may be in languages foreign to us. We see images and artworks that react to core fragments of our deepest selves, and there is a connection between all of these. All the subjective inputs we receive as we grow are always to a certain degree coherent. We as people develop, knowing that there is a pattern, that through a deciphering of the manipulation of the language used or whatever format the art arrives in, we can thus interpret the message at hand. Therefore it is an alien concept to our minds and one that does not mount well into our thought processes of taking a work and manipulating it, or creating a work, so that it is fragmented and broken, perhaps impossible to understand or derive meaning from. It is this association of coherency to subjective works that helps us not only appreciate the piece but also helps with the creation of new works of art. Even the most abstract art arises from a meaning. It is this that our minds attune to: the difference between conscious abstractness and random abstractness. In literary works, random abstractness is a foreign (and for sensible reasons so) entity and one that is not associated clearly with thought, intent and reasoning (whereas in visual art, there appears to be greater leeway in the abstractness that can be applied).

Thus, now looking at the result in further detail, there are examples where even though the translator has attempted to weave together a grammatical subjective retranslation, the output is still to a degree fractured and does not read smoothly (e.g. “...*the purity our blood, the tool, the feather in my hand was not a pen, without ink within...*”). This demonstrates that though at first glance this study appears to show a work that has shown the opposite to what was expected, the result is in fact aligning with the

expectations of the analysis. One question this raises, however, is whether translations of poems into other languages from English or vice versa can ever truly capture the meaning, emotional impact and beauty of the original?

CHAPTER 9

ALTERNATE POETIC TRANSFORMATIONS

From the translational studies undertaken in the previous chapter, it is plainly seen that no matter the language that is applied and no matter the format or length of poem translated, the argument holds true: that no observable or understandable artistic relevance is to be found in the comparative literal retranslated versions of the works.

However, to drive this home and truly cement the explorative conclusion in addition to ensuring an honest and true breadth of exploration of this philosophy, I will now apply a range of non-translation transformations to a selection of my poems. This will establish that that which has been shown in the previous chapter is not merely an alignment of probability or chance happenings, but is a fundamental underlying theoretical pattern throughout poetry.

To do this I will use a poem that has been studied in the previous section (“To She Who Has...”) along with another three poems from my “The Night Owl...” collection. The first of these will be “Meditations On Love”, the second being Act III of “I Saw in Fevered Dreams...” and the third “The Death of the Monarch”. “Meditations...” was selected due to its segmented structure with each of the stanzas a contained observation of love composed in a Haiku poetic structure. “Meditations...” in conjunction with “To She Who Has...” will allow further insight into whether strict numerically constrained syllabic poetic structures behave differently under transformation compared to more standard syllabic stress-based meters. The inclusion of Act III of “I Saw in Fevered Dreams” and “The Death of the Monarch” will highlight any noticeable variances between these constraints if they exist, as both of these poems are based on a standard stressed syllable meter.

The four transformations that will be applied to the poems are listed below:

1. **Set syllabic line variations:** A sentence is reversed at a set syllable cut off point. Any part of the sentence after that point will be then placed at the beginning of the section that remains from before the cut off i.e. a sentence of structure A-B will be modified to B-A.
2. **Alternating word form variations:** The word order sequence is alternated in accordance with a set scheme. In this case, every odd word will be alternated with the preceding even word.

3. **Reversed word order variations:** The word order of each alternating poetic line will be reversed. This will change the poem so that it is as if you are reading the sentence backwards.
4. **Initial/final word poetic composition:** The first/last word of each poetic line will be used to form a word of a new poem.

To prevent an over-saturation of procedural analysis, transformations one and two will be applied to two of the four selected poems - one set-number syllable-based poem and one stressed syllable meter-based poem. As such, transformation one will be applied to “To She Who Has...” and Act III of “I Saw in Fevered Dreams...” and transformation two to “Meditations on Love” and “The Death of...”. Transformation three will be applied to all four of the selected poems along with transformation four. After each application of the transformative procedure, I will compare the original and transformed versions to deem whether there has been a worthwhile transformative outcome. We will see by the end of this set of transformations that again, the argumentative viewpoint holds true and no work of artistic merit will be produced.

Transformation I: Set Syllabic Line Variations

The Procedure

For this transformation, I will be applying the following procedural steps:

1. Determine which word forms the third and fifth (fifth for act three of “I Saw in Fevered...” as it is a longer poetic work) syllable of the line to act as the cut-off point. Note that if the third/fifth syllable falls mid-word i.e. falls on a multisyllabic word, then the word as a whole will act as the cut-off point and the separation will be taken from the end of that word. For example, if the cut-off were to fall on *swaying*, then instead of separating the word at *sway*, we would take the end of the word to be the cut-off and separate the sentence after.
2. Once the sentence is separated, the latter half will be transposed to before the former half, effectively severing and reversing the line structure at its midpoint.

To She Who Has Forgotten Me

Original Work

*A promise was made,
when time had passed, to
meet again, in the
land that was untouched.*

*Upon the ramparts
I sought out your face.
Among infant tombs
I sought out your voice.*

*As the light did fade
and the warmth did die.
I waited still to
have that dream fulfilled.*

*The place you are, may
you think of me, as
I wait for you, here,*

in this land untouched.

Transformed Work

*Was made, a promise
to passed, when time had
in the meet again,
untouched land that was.*

*Ramparts upon the
your face I sought out.
Tombs among infant
your voice I sought out.*

*Did fade as the light
did die and the warmth.
still to I waited
fulfilled have that dream.*

*Are may the place you
me, as you think of
you, here, I wait for
untouched in this land.*

Act III - And I Saw in Fevered Dreams the Meaning and Fell into A Divine and Longing Sorrow

Original Work

I am

*The wind that grazed the leafless trees and spoke
to him her name, her name when sighed among
the glacial rise and rustling waves, ran
with rivers rushing lanes and hushed
the fields and stemmed the tumbling seasons.
To instill the painful want, that shame that she
is to blame why paradise shall never
quite appear the same to my eyes,
but is paling and receding in the beauty it transcribes.
She is the nirvana that so many seek
and yet cannot find.*

I am

*The soul that fell from jilted skies to search
for love that could compel my blade to stay
its downward journey, to bed my virgin side.*

*The man void of tongue to speak the words
to be spoken, to ascribe an emotion
to what feeds my pith, would one want to starve if lacking
her warmth and affections, affections that grasp the very
core of devotion. A devotion all consuming.*

*That bade no heed to any God or Goddess with need
to beg for my apostle, like leaves rot before
their fall, and fruit spoiled to curse a farmer's
toil, like that of the Mascoma cutting its way,
relentlessly violent through the dulled
and orange vastness of this wild display.*

Transformed Work

I am

*Leafless trees and spoke the wind that grazed the
name when sighed among to him her name, her
rustling waves, ran the glacial rise and
lanes and hushed with rivers rushing
tumbling seasons the fields and stemmed the.*

*Want, that shame that she to instill the painful
shall never is to blame why paradise
to my eyes, quite appear the same
receding in the beauty it transcribes. But is paling and*

*That so many seek she is the nirvana
and yet cannot find.*

I am

*Jilted skies to search the soul that fell from
my blade to stay for love that could compel
to bed my virgin side its downward journey.*

*Speak the words the man void of tongue to
ascribe an emotion to be spoken, to*

*would one want to starve if lacking to what feeds my pith,
affections that grasp the very her warmth and affections,
a devotion all consuming. Core of devotion.
Any God or Goddess with need. That bade no heed to
like leaves rot before to beg for my apostle,
to curse a farmer's, their fall, and fruit spoiled
Mascoma cutting its way, toil, like that of the
through the dulled relentlessly violent
of this wild display and orange vastness.*

Poetic Transformation Analysis I

Fragmented echoes. This is the metaphorical manner with which we can describe the results from the first non-translation transformative application of procedure. What we have as a result are fragmented echoes of the original works. When juxtaposed and examined, the transformed works can be related to the originals and various tethers can be attached between their respective sections. However, without the original works present for comparison, these tethers unravel and then we are left with merely remnants of an incoherent set of pieces. The fluidity and impact of the original works are lost. This is not to say that we cannot glean an underlying storyline or structure. This transformation has taken large enough portions of sentences that even when inverted we can discern a glimmer of coherence, we can understand an inkling of what is happening, but as standalone pieces of poetry they fail. They fail to convey the story I as an author wish to tell with my original works. Now if we were to investigate these resultant works as telling a new story in and of themselves, then the possibility that they do tell some story does exist, but again without the work of an artist molding the results such that they manifest that meaning, these results could not be looked at as self-standing artworks.

We can feel in "To She Who Has..." that the sadness and longing imparted by the untransformed work is no longer present. This stems from the core fact that poetry surges from a symbiosis of both structure and content. It is a fusion of the context and subject of the words in conjunction with the intimate relationships between the words formed by the poetic structure that was used in the composition. In "To She Who Has..." I used a cadence and poetic meter that lent a fluidity fitting to that of the sombre internal monologue of the main character. This fluidity is pivotal on both the word content and structure. When transformed, however, the structure no longer is in harmony with the content, throwing the

cadence and thus fluidity of the monologue away. Comparing the following lines, we can see an example of this:

Upon the ramparts
 I sought out your face.
Among infant tombs
 I sought out your voice.

When compared to,

Ramparts upon the
 your face I sought out.
Tombs among infant
 your voice I sought out.

In the first excerpt from the original, the poetic structure is both visible and audible, the imagery of standing upon the ramparts of a castle imagining a countryside lain before your eyes, seeking through the throng of faces for one in particular. The poem skipping between the eyes and mouths and creases of the crowd, hunting for a hint of familiarity, then descending from where light and clarity were king to the graves of lost children. This transition bringing forth an image of the dark and of the morose, where among tombstones the main character seeks out a voice among those that ring and reflect off the aging stone, where the notes are known, that carry an intimacy. There is the repetition of the two poetic lines where the face and voice are sought. The original is composed in the manner of the sentence taking the structure of subject verb object, as opposed to the transformation which maintains the repetition but reads as object subject verb. The latter misses the flow and cadence of the original. In English the former is the more common of sentence types, yielding a more relaxed and easy to digest readability, the latter feeling stilted and if applied would slow the passage of the reader's journey through the poem.

In the transformation we see that the poetic lines of "Upon the ramparts" and "Among infant tombs" are now fragmented. The first is now unreadable and completely severs the flow into the next line "your face I sought out". The third line, "Tombs among infant", is not as adversely affected but is still fractured, stilted and grammatically flawed compared to the original.

Contrasting the second poetic example of the excerpt from Act III of “I Saw in Fevered Dreams...” with its respective transformed variation, we again reach the same conclusion where there is an echoing familiarity but the end result is still disjointed and fractured, once again failing to carry the message of the original nor provide any new artistic message or merit. What is fascinating in both of these cases, however, is that if we have transformation procedures that tend not to subject the portions of text to which they are applied to too much fragmentation, then the understanding or ability to understand what is occurring in those portions of text is greatly increased, even when these section orders are changed. In spite of these transformations being applied, the reader can still gleam to a degree what is being said in a very approximate manner. We must note, however, that there is still a significant extent to which the original artistic intent is lost. We shall see in the transformation experiments further on the complete dissolution of the original artistic intent that occurs with highly fragmentary procedures, and also how the trait of the partial carryover of sections can lead to a false sense that the methodology of applying objective procedural transformations to poetic works is creating something that is wholly unique.

Transformation II: Alternating word form variations

The Procedure

For this transformation I will be applying the following procedural step:

Every odd word in each of the poems will be alternated with the respective preceding even word, relative to its position. This technique will scramble the word structure of each poetic sentence. The initial word of each line will be kept as it is found and if the end of the sentence ends in an even positioned word, then it too will remain in its original position.

Meditations On Love

Original Work

Solace

*Sweet weeping slumber
Pieces of a puzzle lost
Found in surrender*

Awakening

*A virgin repose
Dew filled eyes awaken to
Ariose delight*

Connection

*Such fresh birthed fervour
Salaam My ancient brother
Here we forged anew*

Decision

*Do I take that hand
March upon the sands once more*

Solace embrace me

Love

*Her words trace the beat
Of her heart in the stale air
Notes of sonant soul*

Transformed Work

Solace

*Sweet slumber weeping
Pieces a of lost puzzle
Found surrender in*

Awakening

*A repose virgin
Dew eyes filled to awaken
Ariose delight*

Connection

*Such birthed fresh fervour
Salaam ancient my brother
Here forged we anew*

Decision

*Do take I hand that
March the upon once sands more
Solace me embrace*

Love

*Her trace words beat the
Of heart her the in air stale
Notes sonant of soul*

The Death of the Monarch

Original Work

*Stirred from hapless slumber,
gently she is roused*

*Imbued in warmth of Light,
untold miles traversed*

*Lent on windswept fields, eyes pain on midnight spires
fixed on amber vanes*

*The Monarch does dance, observe
her fragile ballet*

*Risen thoughts, unfurl above
writ in wisps of cloud*

*Affixed on endless strings, upon pastel hues they
are forever, bound*

*Now time comes calling home, the
reaper bares his grin*

*Soon descent like autumn leaves whirling in the
wind, I shall be grieved*

*Slow, draws the Queens parade as
candle light does fade*

*The Monarch bestows her bow,
and dances into*

Shade

Transformed Work

*Stirred hapless from slumber,
gently is she roused*

*Imbued warmth in light of,
untold traversed miles*

*Lent windswept on eyes, fields on pain spires midnight
fixed amber on vanes*

*The does Monarch observe, dance
her ballet fragile*

*Risen unfurl, thoughts above
writ wisps in cloud of*

*Affixed endless on upon, strings hues pastel they
are bound, forever*

*Now comes time home calling, the
reaper his bares grin*

*Soon like descent leaves autumn in whirling the
wind, shall I grieved be*

*Slow, the draws parade Queens as
candle does light fade*

*The bestows Monarch bow, her
and into dances*

Shade

Poetic Transformation Analysis II

In the second non-translation case study, I have utilised a more fragmenting transformation, where every odd word in each poetic line is alternated with the preceding even word. This process is more destructive of the initial structure and form of the original work, with the results highlighting a beautiful and distinctive contrast in how the different forms, structures and meters of poetry react and behave when deconstructed and reconstructed in such a manner. Let us explore the outcomes and observe two examples that

reveal how the meter and structure of a poem are so intimately entwined with the final impact and resonating emotional imprint of the work.

When looking at “Meditations On Love” we can observe that generally the structure has remained intact. With the haiku form having much fewer words than other poetic meters and formats, it has lead to what I conclude, a “resilience” to deformation when it undergoes a numerical word alternation transformation. If one was to read the original work and then quickly thereafter read the transformed work, the mind could almost ignore the transformation. It is upon closer inspection however, that we notice that the grammatical, structural and content changes are significant enough to disrupt the haiku’s vivid imagery and thus destroy not only the original impact but again result in a work that is not self-standing. One could force the view that it is a self-standing work as it is primarily understandable but this is in direct opposition to the essence of what the haiku holds dear; a clarity and vividness of imagery, sounds and message. Without that knife-edge sharpness and clarity, a haiku does not achieve the potential beauty that the form entails. Let us look at one haiku, “Awakening”, from “Meditations...” to make this point clear:

Original

Awakening

*A virgin repose
Dew filled eyes awaken to
Ariose delight*

Transformed work

Awakening

*A repose virgin
Dew eyes filled to awaken
Ariose delight*

The original haiku begins with an image of an untouched calm (“A virgin repose”). This leads into the next image of “Dew filled eyes...”, a pair of eyes that are misted with drops of tears that are akin to fine dew drops found on a cold summer dawn, of a person who has just awoken (“...awaken to”). Note there is a duality to the imagery in this line as

when we wake, we oft wake with tears in our eyes but also the world wakes at dawn with dew mists upon the land. Thus, in a sense, both the world and we, humanity, wake with “Dew filled eyes...”. These eyes awaken to a musical splendour; this is left ambiguous so as to resonate with the reader. This “Ariose delight” could be that of music or the sounds of nature. The mystery and lack of identification of the sound will allow the reader of the poem to feel and apply their own memory to the words. I would be confident in the assumption that nearly all people in the world have a memory of waking to a sound, music or some audible stimuli that forms a fond or distinct memory within their mind. When the original haiku is compared with the post-transformation result, it is plainly obvious how the transformation has distorted the flow and clarity of the imagery. The word order, though not significantly different, completely skews the image that the haiku strives to create. It is as if the palette of colours is the same but the application of the pigments is in the wrong order. Our minds can again glean a glimmer of beauty but cannot place the words together to form a resolute and moving whole.

The difference that the poetic structure has on the transformation can be discerned when we explore the second poem used with this transformation, “The Death of the Monarch”. Here, the longer form of the poem composed with a stressed syllable meter leads ultimately to the same end effect of the procedure (a non-understandable derivative) but in the process affirms the theory that not all transformations are equal across the different schools and constructs of poetic language. With the greater number of words per poetic line, the transformation has a more disruptive effect on the poem’s content and message, with the rearrangement of words leading to a greater degree of confusion as to the message, story and imagery put forth. The original was composed with an ebbing cadence and unlike the other poems so far examined, also has a lyrical near rhyme scheme. A near rhyme scheme allows the freedom to use words that have only similar phonetic form, that when combined deliver a more traditional and flowing form of poetic dialogue. The complication of the application of transformative procedures to poetic works that have lyrical rhyme schemes is that the disruption and reformation of content disrupts the rhyming pattern. Thus the transformation cannot transfer across or reconstruct the rhyme in the resultant work, ending with a result that dispenses with a critical feature of the original poem. Though the disjointedness of a verbal recitation can be considered a characteristic of some poetic works (and is found very commonly in free verse and slam poetry, such as in my work “On The Absurdities of Conservative Conversations with Radical Churching

Jingoists....”, which is a performance piece), disjointedness in this case, works against the artistic merit of the poem.

Transformation III: Reversed word order variation

The Procedure

For the reversed word order transformation, I am going to take alternating poetic lines from the poems being transformed and reverse the word order. This will result in the poetic lines reading as if the reader was viewing the poem from right to left, but in the standard reading order of left to right. This may seem a trivial transformation, but it can be in the most basic of experiments that we sometimes find the greatest results and the most telling sign or inference of whether there is a worthwhile output. To maintain a simplicity of experimentation and to not undertake undue repetitive demonstration, I will only use samples of text from the poems to demonstrate the end effects.

To She Who Has Forgotten Me

Original Work

*A promise was made,
when time had passed, to
meet again, in the
land that was untouched.*

*Upon the ramparts
I sought out your face.
Among infant tombs
I sought out your voice.*

... {end excerpt}

Transformed Work

*A promise was made,
to passed had time, when
meet again, in the
untouched was that land.*

*Upon the ramparts
face your out sought I.
Among infant tombs
voice your out sought I.*

... {end excerpt}

Act III - And I Saw in Fevered Dreams the Meaning and Fell into A Divine and Longing Sorrow

Original Work

I am

*The wind that grazed the leafless trees and spoke
to him her name, her name when sighed among
the glacial rise and rustling waves, ran
with rivers rushing lanes and hushed
the fields and stemmed the tumbling seasons.
To instil the painful want, that shame that she
is to blame why paradise shall never
quite appear the same to my eyes,
but is paling and receding in the beauty it transcribes.
She is the nirvana that so many seek
and yet cannot find.*

... {end excerpt}

Transformed Work

I am

*The wind that grazed the leafless trees and spoke
among sighed when name her, name her him to
the glacial rise and rustling waves, ran
hushed and lanes rushing rivers with
the fields and stemmed the tumbling seasons.
She that shame that, want painful the instil to
is to blame why paradise shall never
eyes my to same the appear quite,*

*but is paling and receding in the beauty it transcribes.
Seek many so that nirvana the is she
and yet cannot find.*

... {end excerpt}

Meditations On Love

Original Work

Solace

*Sweet weeping slumber
Pieces of a puzzle lost
Found in surrender*

Awakening

*A virgin repose
Dew filled eyes awaken to
Ariose delight*

...{end excerpt}

Transformed Work

Solace

*Sweet weeping slumber
Lost puzzle a of pieces
Found in surrender*

Awakening

*A virgin repose
To awaken eyes filled dew
Ariose delight*

... {end excerpt}

The Death of the Monarch

Original Work

*Stirred from hapless slumber,
gently she is roused*

*Imbued in warmth of Light,
untold miles traversed*

*Lent on windswept fields, eyes pain on midnight spires
fixed on amber vanes*

*The Monarch does dance, observe
her fragile ballet*

*Risen thoughts, unfurl above
writ in wisps of cloud*

*Affixed on endless strings, upon pastel hues they
are forever, bound*

... {end excerpt}

Transformed Work

*Stirred from hapless slumber,
roused is she gently*

*Imbued in warmth of Light,
traversed miles untold*

*Lent on windswept fields, eyes pain on midnight spires
vanes amber on fixed*

*The Monarch does dance, observe
ballet fragile her*

*Risen thoughts, unfurl above
cloud of wisps in writ*

*Affixed on endless strings, upon pastel hues they
bound forever, are*

... {end excerpt}

Poetic Transformation Analysis III

What we discover here is that unlike transformation II, which had a varying scale of effect on each of the works dependent on their structure, this third transformative process negatively affects each of the works in the same manner, with each of the selected excerpts now losing their meaning to approximately the same degree of confusion and deconstruction. This highlights how the application of objective transformative procedures can and will have random “dust in the wind” effects on the work to which it is applied, and though an artist may have a degree of foresight as to what this effect will entail (dependent on the complexity of the procedure), it can be difficult to determine exactly to what extent the work will be warped and reformed. There is a difficulty in actually immersing oneself in a poem; many will find on the first read through that they will not and do not experience the true impact of the work, finding that it takes multiple read throughs, contemplations, verbal recitations etc. to come to truly appreciate the depth and breadth of a poetic piece of writing. The same could be said for other media, that it takes multiple viewings of a painting or film or listenings of a song to intimately perceive all of the intricacies of the creation. Thus, to truly appreciate in this transformation the loss of meaning and coherency, one must truly read each work to grasp the scope of the damage to the impact of the piece.

Transformation IV: Initial/final word poetic composition

The Procedure

In this fourth study, I am applying an initial/final word compositional transformation. I am taking the first word of each poetic sentence for the first two of the selected poems (“To She...” & “Act III...”) and the final word for the last two poems (“Meditations...” & “The Death...”) and collating these into a word list for each respective work. I will then arrange those words into a new poetic format. To ensure an objectivity of procedure, there must be a logical application of how those words will be inserted into the new poetic format. Here the words that are selected will be put into a haiku format of three poetic lines of 5-7-5 syllables respectively per line. Any words that are left over that cannot form a complete haiku will be placed into as much of the haiku format as they can fulfill so as not to incur any application of format that is not uniform across all the selected sample. Instead of dividing the remaining syllables amongst a haiku with modified syllabic parameters that would mark a deviation from what has been used throughout the rest of the procedure, I will continue with the process as mandated and leave any unfinished Haiku as a facet of the new work.

To She Who Has Forgotten Me

Original Work

*A promise was made,
when time had passed, to
meet again, in the
land that was untouched.*

*Upon the ramparts
I sought out your face.
Among infant tombs
I sought out your voice.*

*As the light did fade
and the warmth did die.
I waited still to*

have that dream fulfilled.

*The place you are, may
you think of me, as
I wait for you, here,
in this land untouched.*

Transformed Work

Word list: A, When, Meet, Land, Upon, I, Among, I, As, And, I, Have, The, You, I, In

End Haiku(s):

*A when meet land up-
-on I among I as and
I have the you I*

In

Act III - And I Saw in Fevered Dreams the Meaning and Fell into A Divine and Longing Sorrow

Original Work

I am

*The wind that grazed the leafless trees and spoke
to him her name, her name when sighed among
the glacial rise and rustling waves, ran
with rivers rushing lanes and hushed
the fields and stemmed the tumbling seasons.
To instil the painful want, that shame that she
is to blame why paradise shall never
quite appear the same to my eyes,
but is paling and receding in the beauty it transcribes.
She is the nirvana that so many seek
and yet cannot find.*

I am

The soul that fell from jilted skies to search

*for love that could compel my blade to stay
its downward journey, to bed my virgin side.
The man void of tongue to speak the words
to be spoken, to ascribe an emotion
to what feeds my pith, would one want to starve if lacking
her warmth and affections, affections that grasp the very
core of devotion. A devotion all consuming.
That bade no heed to any God or Goddess with need
to beg for my apostle, like leaves rot before
their fall, and fruit spoiled to curse a farmer's
toil, like that of the Mascoma cutting its way,
relentlessly violent through the dulled
and orange vastness of this wild display.*

Transformed Work

Word list: I, The, To, The, With, The, To, Is, Quite, But, She, And, The, For, Its, The, To,
To, Her, Core, That, To, Their, Toil, Relentlessly, And

End Haiku(s):

*I the to the with
The to is quite but she and
The for its the to*

*To her core that to
Their toil relentlessly and*

Meditations On Love

Original Work

Solace

*Sweet weeping slumber
Pieces of a puzzle lost
Found in surrender*

Awakening

A virgin repose

*Dew filled eyes awaken to
Ariose delight*

Connection

*Such fresh birthed fervour
Salaam My ancient brother
Here long we forged anew*

Decision

*Do I take that hand
March upon the sands once more
Solace embrace me*

Love

*Her words trace the beat
Of her heart in the stale air
Notes of sonant soul*

Transformed Work

Word list: Slumber, Lost, Surrender, Repose, To, Delight, Fervour, Brother, Anew, Hand, More, Me, Beat, Air, Soul

End Haiku(s):

*Slumber lost surren-
-der repose to delight fer-
-vour brother anew*

*Hand more me beat air
Soul*

The Death of the Monarch

Original Work

*Stirred from hapless slumber,
gently she is roused*

*Imbued in warmth of Light,
untold miles traversed*

*Lent on windswept fields, eyes pain on midnight spires
fixed on amber vanes*

*The Monarch does dance, observe
her fragile ballet*

*Risen thoughts, unfurl above
writ in wisps of cloud*

*Affixed on endless strings, upon pastel hues they
are forever, bound*

*Now time comes calling home, the
reaper bares his grin*

*Soon descent like autumn leaves whirling in the
wind, I shall be grieved*

*Slow, draws the Queens parade as
candle light does fade*

*The Monarch, bestows her bow
and dances into*

Shade

Transformed Work

Word list: Slumber, Roused, Light, Traversed, Spires, Vanes, Observe, Ballet, Above, Cloud, They, Bound, The, Grin, The, Grieved, As, Fade

End Haiku(s):

*Slumber roused light trav-
-ersed spires vanes observe ballet
Above cloud they bound*

The grin the grieved the

Fade

Poetic Transformation Analysis IV

As these explorations have progressed, it can be noted that the transformative procedures applied have successively heightened the level of fragmentation that they induce in the original works. This, the fourth and last transformation before we delve into the grey that is the comparison of the objective and subjective mind, has in accordance with this pattern thus splintered the selected works to a more profound degree. This effect is most strikingly noticed in the completely crumbled outcomes, of which we can barely glimpse a sense of not only the original work but any modicum of structure, content, flow or logic that could be regarded as a new work.

I have collated these resulting haikus, so that we may immerse ourselves in the results of the transformations:

i.

*A when meet land up-
-on I among I as and
I have the you I*

In

ii.

*I the to the with
The to is quite but she and
The for its the to*

*To her core that to
Their toil relentlessly and*

iii.

*Slumber lost surren-
-der repose to delight fer-*

-vour brother anew

Hand more me beat air
Soul

iv.

Slumber roused light trav-
-ersed spires vanes observe ballet
Above cloud they bound

The grin the grieved the
Fade

Reading the haikus, we struggle to make sense of the words and cannot excavate any story from the tangle of words that have been thrown together. Written word art is a complex and intricate construction, composed of nouns, adjectives, verbs, pronouns and so on; what this transformation has shown in clear detail is that an objective procedure will neither differentiate nor place a different weighting or scale of importance on such divisions in word classification. Thus, this in turn leads to transformed compositions that work against the rules and guidelines that allow the human mind to decode the text that it reads.

Language is a puzzle, a vast codex of word interactions forming what we perceive as understandable written texts. The cypher to this code of language, are the rules of writing. If we are to bend and break the rules of language then naturally we will be bending, breaking and rending the way in which we understand the final message the text transfers. Is this to say confusion is bad, or a lack of understanding of a work, a deficiency that will cause us the audience to appreciate and love it less, terrible? Not always so, but there is a limit to how much misunderstanding can be woven into a poetic work, and most crucially this misunderstanding must be subjectively crafted. It demands an artist to select, apply and craft the work using techniques that take into consideration these differences. More importantly it demands a conscious contemplation by an artist of the outcomes that these differences will create on a finished poetic work or during the creation of a poetic work.

CHAPTER 10

DADA: THE DISSOLUTION OF LANGUAGE

Transformation V: DADA - Poetry Without A Poet

DADAist technique, as discussed in the beginning of this philosophy, pertains to an ideology of being able to transform any person into a writer of capable and worthy merit. DADAism attempted this by limiting or removing the factors of individual humanity and the human imagination from their works. By applying DADAist technique and methodology to an excerpt from my poem “Liquid Sunshine Dreams” (discussed in depth in Chapter 11), I will discuss the flaws in this logic, not only driving home the issues with DADAism but also showing that though anyone can be a writer, it will be through the application of their subjective and artistic will and that such status or talent cannot be obtained through pure application of procedure or intent.

To refresh our memories, let us again look at the sequence of steps, mandated in the DADAist manifestos, for the construction of a DADAist poem:

VIII

TO MAKE A DADAIST POEM

Take a newspaper.
Take some scissors.
Choose from this paper an article of the length you want to make your poem.
Cut out the article.
Next carefully cut out each of the words that makes up this article and put them all in a bag.
Shake gently.
Next take out each cutting one after the other.
Copy conscientiously in the order in which they left the bag.
The poem will resemble you.
And there you are — an infinitely original author of charming sensibility, even though unappreciated by the vulgar herd. *

I will apply the above technique to the excerpt detailed below. Note that to prevent a repetitive demonstration of a clear result, I will shorten the length of the procedural output. This will not demonstrably affect the outcome and will not yield any noticeable nor negative alteration of the poetic result.

Excerpt to be transformed:

“I listened to death today. Watched ocean lakes, held above floating meadows, gliding effortlessly evaporating wordlessly. As lambs stood on rocks, took steps, falling, while mothers keeping watch ripped the softs greens from moist soil. The cries unheard, ignored.

The lamb cries. The mother chews her food. Good manners undoubtedly. Am I the only compulsion of being, sentience seeing, the insanity knit here. Dogs plead with reality fearful of their knowns, galloping towards an end unknown as birds flee to sanctuary of all things, chased by a spreading scent, a burnt sage exorcising the demons we designed. Scabs fall from healing skin. I pick the ends from soaked tobacco, mix them in a tin. Smoke them together, eat the flesh of others, take their powers, I fell others, I'll eat myself, for I am king, of what – nothing, a free nothing bests enslaved somethings.”

The output of the DADAist technique to the above passage yielded the following result:

“Unknown scabs compulsion I'll sanctuary end flee gliding from demons while things moist cries. Tobacco, other, a exorcising mother myself, dogs chased evaporating what pick of am galloping her manners enslaved effortlessly watched - nothing held healing seeing, being, them, meadows undoubtedly...”

DADA Poem Analysis

Reading through the output of the DADA composition, it is plainly evident that the text before our eyes makes no sense. One can read through the prose and see there are hints of beauty, but again, as has been shown repeatedly, no artistic truth can be divined. The original piece wove a story, abstract in nature (though this story was held together by a coherent abstractness); every image placed before the audiences' eyes being another piece in a puzzle that at the conclusion resolved itself to show the moral and message of the poem. The DADA version does not accomplish this. Now it may seem that the dismal result is due to the fact that the technique was applied to a poem. However, all pieces of prose, be they from a newspaper, book, article, poem, song etc. are coherent pieces of writing, and DADA in its nature is destructive of order. DADA's destructive abstractness is the excuse for peddling its acceptability as a method of literary construction, even though regardless of what text it is applied to, very rarely will the output be understandable. The output has provided once again a starting point; it has unfurled the threads that can now be woven into a tapestry of poetic language. But the output has demonstrated that a writer cannot be born from objective procedures applied to language. They must be born from an application of selective and subjective procedures in unison with their own visions and compulsions — procedures that are not tainted but uplifted by our humanity. Not necessarily grounded in logic, but most adamantly grounded in passion and emotion.

CHAPTER 11

THE CAVIL WITH THE CUT UP

Transformation VI: The Cut Up

To conclude the poetic studies in this philosophy, I will investigate the “cut up methodology”. Known traditionally known as *découpé*, the cut up methodology was made famous by William S. Burroughs, regarded by critics as one of the most prominent writers and poetic figures of American Literature. This analysis will focus on three cut up techniques in particular: the objective fold, quarter cut up and sentence cut up methods. Traditional cut up poetry is already highly subjective in that the words obtained are consciously rearranged to form new artistic works. These subjective methods would not be suitable for this exploration; however, the three cut up methods listed can be applied objectively to allow the exploration of this methodology while still adhering to the analysis guidelines. I will argue that that no matter how these techniques are applied, without subjective manipulation, an artistic derivative would be hard to produce. To illustrate this, I will apply the techniques in question to a section of prose extracted from my poem “Liquid Sunshine Dreams”.

The cut up technique is not new to the world of literary art. It is what one would consider a process of recycling, taking a portion of text, prose, poetry, imagery...whatever the artist wishes, and melding selected parts or all of the selection into a new artwork. The very description of the cut up technique immediately entails a relationship with what this literary and philosophical argument is striving to highlight. Namely the cut up technique is so often used subconsciously by artists of many mediums, it is in its very nature subjective and requiring of artistic abstraction or intervention to reproduce any wholly worthwhile artwork.

This was made clear by the two most famous patrons of the cut up, Brion Gysin and William S. Burroughs (the former being a painter and the latter a writer, who collaborated on “The Third Mind”, an artistic delving into cut up theory and artwork). Both Gysin and Burroughs, however, were firm activists against the concept of pure subjectivism. Supporting and pushing forth the message of creative objectivity on equal footing with subjectivity, they proclaimed in a sense that we must see the beauty in the procedural, to worship the spirit in the machine. Neither artist was able to ever fully implement any objectively unerring process of reproduction that could be mounted upon any text and still successfully lead to the birth of a new work. In a sense they did not fail but could not prove without reasonable doubt that the implementation of objective cut up technique — an

objective literary and visual copulation — would result in written and visual offspring that were complete and finished works and could be appreciated as such.

This subjectivity mixed with objectivity is made all the more transparent by some of Burroughs' quotes in his interview in the prologue to “The Third Mind”. Here Burroughs states that he does not mind nor see the deficiency in the production of art through what seems a mechanical and unfeeling programmed procedure or machine, for the very procedure and machine must be crafted by someone and thus in a sense everything is a cut up. He goes on to state that “what is any writing but a cut-up?” What is it but a selection of words that has been chosen and put together? How is this different from what is done through all cut up work? What Burroughs has stated here is a case of *reductio ad absurdum* or what is more commonly known as the “appeal to extremes fallacy”. An extreme example can be used to extrapolate any point or theory to a singular moment where that extreme may make sense but is not logically applicable, as we cannot prove that extreme would have occurred. The reverse is also true in that an extreme can seem to lead to the certainty of a theory being plausible. More simply put, this would be the equivalent of a someone stating that since the cut up is an amalgamation of selected items of text, words and imagery, why can't anything that is an amalgamation be classed as a cut up? Why aren't all paintings just a form of drawing, since the artist is still using an object to put marks on a paper, or what is any music or writing but speech, as all written language and musicality is derived originally from a spoken tongue? If this is the theory that Burroughs has used to proclaim the cut up's validity, then it is a flawed one. If the cut up is just the process of taking an item, a piece of work and transforming it any which way to obtain another work in a collagic manner, then what we are seeing is a fundamental facet of how poetry is composed in the first place. Thus we could deduce that the cut up is not able to be separated from the essence of poetic composition as a sector. However, this philosophy is not investigating the authenticity nor ability of the cut up to be a standalone sector of poetry; what it is delving into is whether we can apply transformations onto poetry in an objective manner and still deem whether the result has artistic merit. This is where the cut up method so lovingly praised by Burroughs is useful — it is an excellent way in which to illustrate the failure of objectivity in poetical composition and transformation. We are already aware that the cut up methodology requires a subjective hand to yield “good” results and this is supported by the artists that also supported the importance of the objective conscious in

creation: “Remember that I first made the selections. Out of hundreds of possible sentences I might have used, I chose one”.²⁴ However, to get the raw material for these subjective works, we need to apply transformations that will objectively provide the means for the end. All throughout “The Third Mind” we see examples of the failure of the objective application of procedure to yield a result that is meaningful before we further refine it. Subjectivity can be thought of as the Deus Ex Machina, that ever omnipotent spirit that would right the world in the end, so that the good “true” artwork would survive. But what was wrong with the incomprehensible, the hard to swallow and difficult to decipher art? What is clear and ever present was that no matter how fervent a crusade against the subjective subconscious and conscious we artists conduct, nearly all are in the end plied by its seduction, the path of subjective manipulation. For as this argument and exploration has shown so far, the objective application of procedure to any text without regard for the outcome rarely succeeds in producing that which is considered art or really any form of art that can confer a comprehensible message. Any artwork, derivative or wholly new construction, is in need of both the conscious and subconscious subjective mind to be brought to life. Therefore, to assist in the closure of this discussion I will apply some of these cut up techniques to a selected portion of my poem “Liquid Sunshine Dreams/The Night Owl III”.

Liquid Sunshine Dreams/The Night Owl III

*I listened to death today. Watched ocean lakes, held above floating meadows,
gliding effortlessly evaporating wordlessly. As lambs stood on rocks, took steps, falling,
while mothers keeping watch ripped the softs greens from moist soil. The cries unheard,
ignored. The lamb cries. The mother chews her food. Good manners undoubtedly. Am I the
only compulsion of being, sentience seeing, the insanity knit here. Dogs plead with reality
fearful of their knowns, galloping towards an end unknown as birds flee to sanctuary of all
things, chased by a spreading scent, a burnt sage exorcising the demons we designed.
Scabs fall from healing skin. I pick the ends from soaked tobacco, mix them in a tin. Smoke
them together, eat the flesh of others, take their powers, I fell others, I'll eat myself, for I am
king, of what – nothing, a free nothing bests enslaved somethings. Geological crystal eyes,
blue eyes, look though not at me, topographical examinations of submerged mines, orange
skin sun fanned genetics catalyse a loving sister left to wonder - why God forsakes her
company, and too bad he's starting wars or healing none. We do not ask to be born, our
responsibility is not to request life. Birthed to a rift, a cancer, no light, no fresh water only
stagnant ponds, the humid dark envelops, echoes of voices, tell us there are walls we cannot
see, we erode. Claustrophobia, fear of expansive constricting paradoxes, born to a*

generation in between, to a mother guided by a father driven by a man from a time when whips flayed discorded sinners fucking their way to discontented harmony. My father, a beast run off liquor, 100 proof fuelled v8 mean machine sick of being what he could, took the club and beat the seal and drew my blood, melted the fat for oil, your lamp is done you killed your son for light to see an empty bed room. What is deemed normality is equivalent absurdity, might as well drop your jocks, cut off your cock, fry it up and feed it to yourself, normal abnormality, humanity, we lost, we looked down the barrel of a loaded gun pulled the trigger and wonder why our face is gone. Tears in eyes, tears inside, men should cry and they do in the places they hide, what they do I despise, but cherries I like cherries, pits n all, eat the flesh spit the pit hit the wall. The wines poured, stately vices, served with boar, paired with a sucking wound, that cunts entice, eye sores, I'd have her, but I'm a freak, supposedly a sociopathic entity. Smoke my pipe, smile inside, as the wind blows through trees, a hundred years, still not tried, branches on branches on branches, what they see, happy couples fucking, murdered bodies ground eaten, children learning their way, the secrets they keep, if only scarred wood would speak, salacious memories, printed on their flesh, cannibal sheets, fresh and new, what the words smiths would reap. Verbose conundrums are blind fuelled, day star studded black seeds blowing past daisy duke temptations showing – walking past. Clapping, tremendous thunder claps, to me chick lit disguised as wise advice, the words slipped away like a night boat without a light, slowly adrift, whatever is said, I have indulged too much, this pillow of soil may be my death bed my best friend, rays, holding floating spots of plankton suspended in starlight between deep space voids. What draws flesh to think and throats to sing, absorbing soot stained notes dripped from aged mouths salivating, seeing diversity crumbling, in the greatest ex empire born, a fraction of a second of a moment in the line of what has come, a grand design of a divorce of reason and passion or sane advance. What is truth is our real fathers are stars, real mothers are moons, blood brothers are the cribs of worlds, raised in a celestial maternity ward, they - watching lovingly despite the infinite falls we have stumbled, failed to abate, the self-loathing itself, conscious dirt in crises, a doctor surgeon, master craftsman, dances a scalpel across a fat belly bursting with fruit, grown from a seed eaten in a midnight play, the theatre stage falls quiet, he stands and pulls the younger me flailing, screaming, feral howls of delight and life, and picks the zest from the orange peel, a sweet flesh, that will ripe and grow so sweet at first, to always rot in time, a mother's blood the first thing in first sight, a child's blood the last sight at last light. The knitted knives stabbing the lost lives of our live dead and the un-live loves, compare a constant manuscript of dreams, laid in bed, I watch out the window as a hollow man, walks in my stead.

Liquid Sunshine Dreams/The Night Owl III – Story Analysis

Liquid sunshine dreams was written as a reminiscence of a day viewed through the eyes of a character who is suffering from depression. The story following his memories of a

day spent wandering through a park as he travels home. The poem is telling of the change of state that a mind suffering from depression incites. How visceral the description of his perception of the world is; the language used is not normally associated with what one would consider an enjoyable escape through a park. His mind recollects the confusion of observing the happenings surrounding him and believing himself as the only one consciously aware of the hypocrisy of life, of our society. The memories begin to swarm and become more vivid as he traverses their Daliesque landscapes. His smoking of a cigarette melding with cannibalistic visions of consuming those he meets to absorb their normality, a normality he is not able to weigh as positive. The main character's denying of this "normality" is expressed in the poem when he says "a free nothing beats enslaved somethings", with him viewing his own existence as nothing. The main character views this nothing, however, as not burdened with the shackles of modern society's vices and expectations.

As his memories wander, they skip from his observations of the environment to his observations of a conversation occurring in his vicinity, of two women sitting, one discussing the death of a loved one, questioning where our supposed God is – is he/she busy, off starting wars, not curing the ails of our world, or does he/she just not care? He wonders about the cycle of life: we never request to be brought into this world, a world in turmoil. The work quickly gallops into memories of his childhood, of a father not ready nor built for fatherhood, drinking his way through life. Remembering the beatings and ruminating on the thought that through all of that, through all of the dark crevasses into which his childhood fell, in the end, his father did not find the elixir to whatever ailed him through the violence and melancholy he wrought. He muses on the absurdity of our lives, the trivialities of our pursuits and in the most telling line of the poem, describes how we are bringing forth our own defeat:

"...humanity, we lost, we looked down the barrel of a loaded gun pulled the trigger and wonder why our face is gone..."

His mind dances through visions of excess, of wine and sex, of weak men and of weaker inhibitions. He ponders what the trees, which seem endless, have seen, what their branches have witnessed. The happy couples lost in lust, the many who have died or been buried among their roots and children who have learnt to live and have grown playing among their trunks. He longs for those trees to speak, if only they could give up their secrets to him,

what their “eyes” and “ears” have witnessed and heard. His thoughts are interrupted by two young women walking past, wearing cut-off denim shorts, discussing some topic, their discussion an interaction of advice given from one to the other. The context and words that sound like sage advice are in reality “chick lit” or common social myth fueled by the constrictions of modern culture. He finally concedes that maybe he has indulged too much today in his vices or his thoughts — which one, he does not know. Submitting to the idea that the ground he lies on may be his death bed, with death being his best friend in this world, he watches dust suspended in rays of light, that from the ground seem to be like thousands of plankton suspended in the air. He strives to reason what impassions men and women to think and write and sing and live the lives they do. He thinks that we are born of something greater than what we pursue, greater than what we throw our lives into despair for. We are celestial bodies, delicate constructions of elements forged by the machinations of designs that have been changing for longer than our world has existed. His reminiscence ends on a melodrama of his birth realised as a stage theatre performance, his shrieking new born body an example of the entrance into this world, and though all life is sweet when young, we are all destined to rot in time. His final thought is a present one, where the poem is describing his current situation, revealing that he has this whole time been lain in bed, the entire reminiscence of the day a figment of his imagination. He is defeated, knowing that when he walks outside, it is not him out there but a hollow man, a hollow representation of who he is.

Procedure I - Random Sentence Restructure

In this procedure, the section of prose from the first third of “Liquid Sunshine Dreams” was cut into individual poetic lines. These lines were then restructured randomly into a new objectively transformed section of prose. The lines were chosen at random when restructured and were selected face down so that the text of each line could not be observed to prevent any chance of the wording influencing the choice of poetic line. The piece was restructured by a consultant who had no prior knowledge of the work. In this manner, the opportunity for subjective application of artistic intent into the transformation of the piece was reduced. To ensure all the transformations are able to be read clearly, I in my reading of the following image of the poetic output (and of all following images of poetic transformations) have used the mental rule that if a word is severed, fully or partially at the margins of the cuts, then it will be omitted for clarity. This omission occurs regardless of the word, the severity of the break or the position of the word in the line or work.

conscious dirt in crises, a doctor surgeon, master craftsman, dances a scalpel across a fat belly bursting with fruit, grown
 Smoke my pipe, smile inside, as the wind blows through trees, a hundred years, still not tried, branches on branches on
 constricting paradoxes, born to a generation in between, to a mother guided by a father driven by a man from a time
 so sweet at first, to always rot in time, a mother's blood the first thing in first sight, a child's blood the last sight at last
 cherries I like cherries, pits n all, eat the flesh spit the pit hit the wall. The wines poured, stately vices, served with boar,
 dreams, laid in bed, I watch out the window as a hollow man, walks in my stead.
 screaming, feral howls of delight and life, and picks the zest from the orange peel, a sweet flesh, that will ripe and grow
 tin. Smoke them together, eat the flesh of others, take their powers, I fell others, I'll eat myself, for I am king, of what
 exorcising the demons we designed. Scabs fall from healing skin. I pick the ends from soaked tobacco, mix them in a
 only compulsion of being, sentience seeing, the insanity knit here. Dogs plead with reality fearful of their knows,
 topographical examinations of submerged mines, orange skin sun fanned genetics catalyse a loving sister left to wonder
 branches, what they see, happy couples fucking, murdered bodies ground eaten, children learning their way, the secrets
 nothing, a free nothing bests enslaved somethings. Geological crystal eyes, blue eyes, look though not at me,
 galloping towards an end unknown as birds flee to sanctuary of all things, chased by a spreading scent, a burnt sage
 is our real fathers are stars, real mothers are moons, blood brothers are the cribs of worlds, raised in a celestial maternity
 wordlessly. As lambs stood on rocks, took steps, falling, while mothers keeping watch ripped the soft greens from moist
 soil. The cries unheard, ignored. The lamb cries. The mother chews her food. Good manners undoubtedly. Am I the
 abnormality, humanity, we lost, we looked down the barrel of a loaded gun pulled the trigger and wonder why our face
 dark envelops, echoes of voices, tell us there are walls we cannot see, we erode. Claustrophobia, fear of expansive
 what the word-smiths would reap. Verbose conundrums are blind fueled, day star studded black seeds blowing past
 responsibility is not to request life. Birthed to a rift, a cancer, no light, no fresh water only stagnant ponds, the humid
 - why God forsakes her company, and too bad he's starting wars or healing none. We do not ask to be born, our
 when whips flayed discorded sinners fucking their way to discontented harmony. My father, a beast run off liquor, 100
 paired with a sucking wound, that cunts entice, eye sores, I'd have her, but I'm a freak, supposedly a sociopathic entity.
 light. The knitted knives stabbing the lost lives of our live dead and the un-live loves, compare a constant manuscript of
 I listened to death today. Watched ocean lakes, held above floating meadows, gliding effortlessly evaporating
 from aged mouths salivating, seeing diversity crumbling, in the greatest ex empire born, a fraction of a second of a
 much, this pillow of soil may be my death bed my best friend, rays, holding floating spots of plankton suspended in
 daisy duke temptations showing – walking past. Clapping, tremendous thunder claps, to me chick lit disguised as wise
 advice, the words slipped away like a night boat without a light, slowly adrift, whatever is said, I have indulged too
 the fat for oil, your lamp is done you killed your son for light to see an empty bedroom. What is deemed normality is
 starlight between deep space voids. What draws flesh to think and throats to sing, absorbing soot stained notes dripped
 is gone. Tears in eyes, tears inside, men should cry and they do in the places they hide, what they do I despise, but
 from a seed eaten in a midnight play, the theatre stage falls quiet, he stands and pulls the younger me flailing,
 they keep, if only scarred wood would speak, salacious memories, printed on their flesh, cannibal sheets, fresh and new,
 equivalent absurdity, might as well drops your jocks, cut off your cock, fry it up and feed it to yourself, normal
 moment in the line of what has come, a grand design of a divorce of reason and passion or sane advance. What is truth
 proof fuelled v8 mean machine sick of being what he could, took the club and beat the seal and drew my blood, melted
 ward, they - watching lovingly despite the infinite falls we have stumbled, failed to abate, the self-loathing itself.

Figure 3: Image of transformed prose by sentence cut up

Procedure I Analysis

With respect to the application of the cut up procedures, I again have progressed in a manner where the distortive effects of the transformative procedures are scaled, and in this case it is a descending scale as we move from procedures I – IV. Thus procedure I of the cut up techniques is the most distortive in terms of affecting the readability, content and structure of the poem. In procedure I, we see that each line, as it is a prose poem, is of sufficient length that the reader can garner a sense of a what is being said by the artist; but then as the lines are reconstructed in a random manner they come upon this jarring leap into another line of completely different content and structure. This greatly hampers the reading and enjoyment of the poem and largely eliminates the ability of the reader to make sense of the work.

Comparing the original poem's context and storyline to the transformed poem's storyline, we can see that the continuity and flow of the original has been affected to the point where it does not and cannot be understood as the same story, and though the original was an abstract prose poem to begin with, the new altered form cannot be taken as a representation of this original work. Then if not a representation, can it be seen as an entirely new self-standing work of art? Working through the poetic lines, there are portions which when read can in some way be construed as part of a cohesive story work, an example being lines 26-27:

“I listened to death today. Watched ocean lakes, held above floating meadows, gliding effortlessly evaporating from aged mouths salivating, seeing diversity crumbling, in the greatest ex empire born, a fraction of a second...”

But there are few of these outliers throughout the work. The new structure does not convey a message or a story that an audience would be able to garner any enjoyment from unless the aim was to produce a work of random confusion and abstractness. What the cut up procedure in this case does is provide an interesting abstraction of the story, which through an investment of subjective manipulation may yield a derivative that is removed enough from the original and will be artistically interesting and fulfilling in its own rights.

Procedure II - The Fold

For procedure II, a vertical fold cut up technique was applied to the text. The excerpt of prose was divided into four vertical sections and then folded over so that the far left and right portions were joined in the middle. This effectively removed the middle two sections of wording. Again this method was chosen for its objective application of transformation to the text, with the size of the dividing vertical sections being determined solely by the physical size of the selected prose which in this case was standard US letter size.

I listened to death today. Waterlessly evaporating
wordlessly. As lambs stood or tipped the soft greens from
moist soil. The cries unheard, and manners undoubtedly.
Am I the only compulsion of | with reality fearful of
their knowns, galloping toward, chased by a spreading
scent, a burnt sage exorcising pick the ends from soaked
tobacco, mix them in a tin. Sisters, I tell others, I'll eat
myself, for I am king, of what logical crystal eyes, blue
eyes, look though not at me, skin sun fanned genetics
catalyse a loving sister left to 's starting wars or healing
none. We do not ask to be born a cancer, no light, no
fresh water only stagnant ponds are walls we cannot see,
we erode. Claustrophobia, fear in between, to a mother
guided by a father driven by seeking their way to
discontented harmony. My machine sick of being what he
could, took the club and beat up is done you killed your
son for light to see an empty fly, might as well drops
your jocks, cut off your cock, anity, we lost, we looked
down the barrel of a loaded gun in eyes, tears inside,
men should cry and they do. I like cherries, pits n all,
eat the flesh spit the pit hit the paired with a sucking
wound, that cunts entice, eye, hic entity. Smoke my pipe,
smile inside, as the wind blows on branches on branches,
what they see, happy couples their way, the secrets they
keep, if only scarred wood winnibal sheets, fresh and
new, what the word-smiths unstudded black seeds
blowing past daisy duke temples under claps, to me chick lit
disguised as wise advice, the lady adrift, whatever is said,
I have indulged too much, the holding floating spots of
plankton suspended in startled throats to sing,
absorbing soot stained notes, nbling, in the greatest ex
empire born, a fraction of a design of a divorce of
reason and passion or sane others are moons, blood
brothers are the cribs of worryingly despite the infinite
falls we have stumbled, failed a doctor surgeon, master
craftsman, dances a scalpel pen in a midnight play, the
theatre stage falls quiet, he spews of delight and life, and
picks the zest from the orange, to always rot in time, a
mother's blood the first thing knitted knives stabbing
the lost lives of our live dreams, laid in bed, I watch
out the window as a hollow

Figure 4: Image of transformed prose by vertical fold

Procedure II Analysis

Instead of jumbling the individual poetic lines, the second cut up procedure, removes the middle section of the text, bringing together the first and fourth vertical quarters of the work. This transformation, like procedure I, is also highly deforming of the original structure and though the individual poetic line structure is largely unchanged, the missing internal vertical quarters makes procuring any sense from the remaining prose sections impossible. This is visible if we compare lines 4 & 5 from the original work with the transformed work:

Original Work Excerpt:

“Am I the only compulsion of being, sentience seeing, the insanity knit here. Dogs plead with reality fearful of their knowns, galloping towards an end unknown as birds flee to sanctuary of all things, chased by a spreading scent, a...”

Transformed Work Excerpt:

“Am I the only compulsion of with reality fearful of their knowns, galloping chased by a spreading...”

It is clearly discernible that the transformation has not added anything to the work nor transformed it in a manner that molds the work into a form that can be considered a new self-standing poem.

Procedure III & IV - Random Separation & The Quarter Cut Up

Procedure III

The third cut up transformation of this philosophical literary argument was born from what is best described as a moment of literary frustration. I, having spent considerable effort and time working towards the first cut up procedure only to in an accidental moment of thoughtlessness lose a great deal of the portions of the cut up text I was working with, took to one of the remaining copies of the section of prose with a less than concealed fervent frustration. In the process, I tore the section of prose into multiple pieces, after which it was scattered across the work space at hand. Only once I had done this did I realise I had performed in my moment of irritation what would seem a very random and objective method of the cut up technique by tearing the section of text without thought nor rhyme or reason. *(Note: this procedure does not comply with requirement of repeatability as another artist would not tear the paper in the exact same manner, possibly leading to a different outcome. Regardless, I have included this method at this time, as it will still provide insight into a variation of the cut up technique. Due to the singular nature of the experiment, this subjectivity, will not affect the outcome).*

Please refer to Figure 4, for the procedure III image result.

Procedure IV

The fourth cut up transformation was performed by quartering the selected section of prose and rearranging the quarters into a new numerical order. The page was divided into quarters numbered I, II, III, IV - with the numbers being applied to the quarters in a clockwise manner i.e. top left quarter - I, top right - II etc. The text was then cut into the four quarter sections and each respective numerical sector was then placed into the new order of (in a clock wise manner): I, III, IV, II.

Please refer to Figure 5, for the procedure IV image result.

...as the wind blows through
 what they see, happy couples fucking, mo-
 keep, if only scarred wood would speak, say
 new, what the word-smiths would reap. Ver-
 blowing past daisy duke temptations showin'
 disguised as wise advice, the words slipped.
 I have indulged too much, this pillow of soil
 plankton suspended in starlight between deer
 absorbing soot stained notes dripped from ag-
 empire born, a fraction of a second of a mom-
 reason and passion or sane advance. What is
 brothers are the cribs of worlds, raised in a c-
 falls we have stumbled, failed to abate, the s-

ed to death today. Watched ocean lak-
 ssly. As lambs stood on rocks, took s-
 oil. The cries unheard, ignored. The-
 e only compulsion of being, sentier
 owns, galloping towards an end uni-
 burnt sage exorcising the demons w-
 , mix them in a tin. Smoke them toge-
 , for I am king, of what – nothing, a f-
 ook though not at me, topographical e-
 : a loving sister left to wonder – why
 e do not ask to be born, our responsa-
 ater only stagnant ponds, the humid d-
 eed to yonderbia, fear of expansive
 rigger and wonder why our – a ti-

y hide, what they do I desp-
 es poured, stately vices, ser-
 her, but I'm a freak, suppo-
 a hundred years, still not t-
 red bodies ground eaten, ch-
 cious memories, printed on
 ose conundrums are blind fu-
 g – walking past. Clapping, t-
 away like a night boat without
 may be my death bed my bes-
 space voids. What draws fle-
 ed mouths salivating, seeing
 ent in the line of what has cor-
 truth is our real fathers are st-
 celestial maternity ward, they-
 elf-loathing itself, conscious d-
 bursting with fruit, grown from
 he younger me flailing, scream-
 flesh, that will ripe and grow so
 child's blood the last sight at la-
 loves, compare a constant man-
 y stead.

the flesh of others, take their powers, I fell c-
 g bests enslaved somethings. Geological cry-
 ns of submerged mines, orange skin sun fan-
 takes her company, and too bad he's starting w-
 not to request life. Birthed to a rift, a cancer, ti-
 ops, echoes of voices, tell us there are walls w-
 ng paradoxes, born to a generation in between
 hips flayed discorded sinners fucking their w-
 , 100 proof fuelled v8 mean machine sick of
 od, melted the fat for oil, your lamp is done ye
 normality is equivalent absurdity, might as w-
 self, normal abnormality, humanity, we lost

rs in eyes, tears inside,
 like cherries, pits n all,
 ired with a sucking
 : entity. Smoke my pipe,
 branches on branches,
 ir way, the secrets they
 al sheets, fresh and
 ded black seeds
 claps, to me chick lit
 ft, whatever is said,
 floating spots of
 to sing,
 the greatest ex-
 ivorce ~

eliding effortlessly evaporating
 ; watch ripped the soft greens from
 od. Good manners undoubtedly.
 s plead with reality fearful of
 things, chased by a spreading
 in. I pick the ends from soaked
 powers, I fell others, I'll eat
 Geological crystal eyes, blue
 ge skin sun fanned genetics
 d he's starting wars or healing
 rift, a cancer, no light, no
 there are walls we cannot see,
 ation in between, to a mother
 s fucking their way to
 machine sick of being what he
 r lamp is done you killed your
 ridity, might as well drops
 humanity, we lost, we looked

Figure 5: Image of transformed prose by random tear up

I listened to death today. Watched ocean lakes, held above wordlessly. As lambs stood on rocks, took steps, falling. I moist soil. The cries unheard, ignored. The lamb cries. I Am I the only compulsion of being, sentence seeing, the their knowns, galloping towards an end unknown as birds scent, a burnt sage exorcising the demons we designed. S tobacco, mix them in a tin. Smoke them together, eat the myself, for I am king, of what – nothing, a free nothing by eyes, look though not at me, topographical examinations catalyse a loving sister left to wonder – why God forsakes none. We do not ask to be born, our responsibility is not fresh water only stagnant ponds, the humid dark envelope we erode. Claustrophobia, fear of expansive constricting guided by a father driven by a man from a time when who discontented harmony. My father, a beast run off liquor, could, took the club and beat the seal and drew my blood son for light to see an empty bedroom. What is deemed in your jocks, cut off your cock, fry it up and feed it to your down the barrel of a loaded gun pulled the trigger and we men should cry and they do in the places they hide, what

e floating meadows, gliding effortlessly evaporating while mothers keeping watch ripped the soft greens from the mother chews her food. Good manners undoubtedly. insanity knit here. Dogs plead with reality fearful of flee to sanctuary of all things, chased by a spreading cabs fall from healing skin. I pick the ends from soaked flesh of others, take their powers, I tell others, I'll eat zests enslaved somethings. Geological crystal eyes, blue of submerged mines, orange skin sun fanned genetics her company, and too bad he's starting wars or healing o request life. Birthed to a rift, a cancer, no light, no i, echoes of voices, tell us there are walls we cannot see, paradoxes, born to a generation in between, to a mother ps played discorded sinners fucking their way to 100 proof fuelled v8 mean machine sick of being what he melted the fat for oil, your lamp is done you killed your normality is equivalent absurdity, might as well drops self, normal abnormality, humanity, we lost, we looked under why our face is gone. Tears in eyes, tears inside, they do I despise, but cherries I like cherries, pits n all,

eat the flesh spit me pit hit the wall. The wines poured, so wound, that cunts entice, eye sores, I'd have her, but I'm smile inside, as the wind blows through trees, a hundred what they see, happy couples fucking, murdered bodies g keep, if only scarred wood would speak, salacious memo new, what the word-smiths would reap. Verbose conundr blowing past daisy duke temptations showing – walking I disguised as wise advice, the words slipped away like a n I have indulged too much, this pillow of soil may be my plankton suspended in starlight between deep space voids absorbing soot stained notes dripped from aged mouths s empire born, a fraction of a second of a moment in the li reason and passion or sane advance. What is truth is our brothers are the cribs of worlds, raised in a celestial mate falls we have stumbled, failed to abate, the self-loathing i craftsman, dances a scalpel across a fat belly bursting wit theatre stage falls quiet, he stands and pulls the younger r picks the zest from the orange peel, a sweet flesh, that wi mother's blood the first thing in first sight, a child's bloo the lost lives of our live dead and the un-live loves, comp out the window as a hollow man, walks in my stead.

lately vices, served with doom, paired with something a freak, supposedly a sociopathic entity. Smoke my pipe, years, still not tried, branches on branches on branches, round eaten, children learning their way, the secrets they ries, printed on their flesh, cannibal sheets, fresh and ums are blind fueled, day star studded black seeds vast. Clapping, tremendous thunder claps, to me chick lit ight boat without a light, slowly adrift, whatever is said, leath bed my best friend, rays, holding floating spots of . What draws flesh to think and throats to sing, divating, seeing diversity crumbling, in the greatest ex e of what has come, a grand design of a divorce of real fathers are stars, real mothers are moons, blood mity ward, they – watching lovingly despite the infinite tself, conscious dirt in crises, a doctor surgeon, master h fruit, grown from a seed eaten in a midnight play, the ne flailing, screaming, feral howls of delight and life, and ll ripe and grow so sweet at first, to always rot in time, a t the last sight at last light. The knitted knives stabbing are a constant manuscript of dreams, laid in bed, I watch

Figure 6: : Image of transformed prose by quarter cut up

Procedure III & IV Analysis

In both of these transformations, we can observe that the work has clearly defined sections of prose, which was a certainty given that both of these techniques utilised larger intact portions of the text and did not degenerate the structure and content of the poem to the degree that the earlier techniques did. What is clear from this piece is though larger sections of the poem are legible and can lead thus to the impression that we are able to divine something from the resultant work, we find in the end we still cannot. In procedure III, the transformation remodels the structure of the work more substantially than that of procedure IV. The randomness of the tearing has caused a more severe occurrence of broken words and sentences, which when removed from the final reading, leaves the piece in disarray, compounding the effect that the shuffling of the sections has caused. In the end, we come to find the output of the transformation is in many ways closely aligned to the result of procedure I and still carries a lack of cohesiveness or artful abstractness. The resultant work from transformation IV is likewise not far enough removed from the original to be considered self-standing nor encompassing of any new artistic merit, as it too reads (though more cohesively than procedure III) in a manner from which an audience would not enjoy the content of the original work better or find that they were enjoying the work in a new light.

The Cut Up Conclusion: The Opposition to Objectivity

Every procedure applied throughout this section of the philosophy has been unable to generate or create an artistic derivative from the original poetic works. There may be some who read this exploration and state that they were able to read such works and garner an appreciation of the outcome. I suspect, however, that they would be in the advocative minority. I as the artist behind the composition of the originals can, in the course of reading, vocalizing, absorbing and analysing the outcomes, say with a creative certainty that none of the works herald a story or message that is in any way representative of the originals nor representative of a new message that I would be content in supporting. Thus the cavil with the cut up is that without artistic subjectivity and the application of non-objective

transformative techniques, the probability of an outcome of understandable poetic nature will be minute.

Now, some would argue that the one out of a thousand attempts that does align to form some work of artistic merit is the cause to show that this is not the case. Consider, however, that the literary or art world (unlike the world of the physical or theoretical sciences) has more meritorious grounds for the thoughtful removal of the outlier as it is in its nature a field of subjective consideration. This lies primarily in the fact that the world of the sciences is at its core an objective pursuit of the underlying truths behind a pattern, behaviour or trait of our physical world. Thus, the presence of one case which illustrates or proves that an incident, apparition or facet of the world exists for a particular observable and measurable explanation is very important. The entire endeavour of the world of the sciences, while being assisted by subjective passions and imagination, is reliant on objectively measured data. The arts on the other hand, however, do not set out nor deem to prove an objective truth, but instead pivot on the subjective appreciation and instigation of subjective thought from pieces of art. There may be a few examples of areas of the arts where objectivity plays a more pertinent role, philosophical debate being one of these areas; even in such areas of the arts where objective logic does play a significant part it is still the lesser sibling to the subjective exploration of thought. In addition to this, there are very few constraints in the art world for how a work must be produced (this again can lead us to the dangerously murky area of getting snared in the trap of attempting to define art). We must take into account that there are no meritable constraints or marking schedules by which an artwork can be deemed good or bad, in terms of enjoyment. However, an artwork can be marked as incomprehensible or comprehensible based on whether the message the artist originally intended is received, and to what degree this reception is felt or understood by the audience. This is the very basis of the critical analysis and judgment of art. Does the critic or audience “get it”? Unlike an objective field like the sciences, where a result is deemed true by observational facts and results, an artwork’s effect on the audience cannot be measured in an easily quantifiable manner. This has led to and continually draws those who discuss and delve into the topics of art production to a body of philosophical water that is notorious for leading a spur of logical debate into a depth that has no seeming end — endlessly treading water or ultimately sinking below the cusp to perish. This attempt at

classification and analysis is prone to entering into the trap of aspiring to apply a definition to that which cannot be defined.

CHAPTER 12

CONCLUSION

Into The Grey: Boundaries of Procedural Thought – The Subjective Mind Vs the Objective Mind

This philosophy and the comparison of objective versus subjective application is contingent on understanding, to a surface degree, the difference between the subjective and objective mind and how we realise artworks on each respective level.

A significant portion of this philosophy focuses on exploring how the application of a technique directly effects the outcome of the resultant work, dependent on the objectivity of that application, and how the subjective artistic mind cannot be discounted as an integral facet of the composition of a work. This is important to understand as there can be a tendency to rely upon the medium of an artwork to communicate its message instead of the vision of the artist, especially during the composition of an abstract work. What the case studies during this exploration have shown is that this can rarely be the case. It is the artist that leads the work and the respective medium of that work, to a point that reaches the outcome they desire (a finding supported by other artists throughout the world — “The use of the term art medium is, to say the least, misleading, for it is the artist that creates a work of art not the medium. It is the artist...that gives form to content by a distillation of ideas, thought, experience, insight and understanding”²⁵). One may throw paint on the wall in apparent disarray or place sentences from a book on a page in a manner that seems random, but what has been demonstrated is that if this is a true randomness, then the result will very rarely align with the artistic ideals intended. What we will likely find true is that the artist’s subjective aspirations manifest themselves through this apparent randomness to come alive as a beautiful and magnificent creation of the human psyche, or that the work that is rendered from the objective application must then undergo further subjective artistic manipulation to reach the wanted end state.

The subjective mind is one driven by passions and wants, it disregards the reasoning behind a choice or the causation behind a feeling, only caring about how such feelings manifest themselves and the resultant emotions that stem from this manifestation. The subjective mind is the dark and the light, that which conjures the most beautiful of nightmares and ugly of pleasures. The subjective mind is a melding of the conscious and subconscious: not all the reasoning behind what one feels can be verbalized or consciously stated. The objective mind, however, is one of rationalization, able to weigh the advantages

and disadvantages of a choice and compare the outcomes of given paths. It is the analytical and the measured, able to determine the effectiveness of a method, the application of a technique. The objective mind calculates based on set parameters to what extent a result has been successful. The subjective mind leads to a solution without requiring a foundation; the objective mind builds a foundation on set tenets to lead to the solution.

What I have intended to do in the preceding sections is merely to paint a literary picture of the philosophy that we cannot remove ourselves as an artist (the subjective mind) from any point in the creative process. If we do then there is but a miniscule chance that the attempt to create without creating, to bring forth an artwork with only objective means (the objective mind), will end in a body of work that is desired. There may be merit for further refinement but as is, the work would hardly be comprehensible to any audience, the original meaning of which is now lost in the fresh iteration. This situation (one where even the artist might or does not recognise the message from the original work in the new work) will lead us to find that further abstraction or manipulation is required to fully appreciate and translate the material created from such application of procedure.

The Findings Of This Philosophy

This exploration has delved into a unique and often overlooked region of poetics, to illustrate the necessity of imagination in poetry: procedural transformations and how I as a poet (and thus in extrapolation, also the rest of the poetic community) can utilise transformational procedures during the creative composition period. The conclusive aim is to demonstrate that without human imagination and the subjective artistic application of these techniques and manipulation of the results, the fruits of such labors are primarily negligible. We come now full circle to the statements discussed at the forefront of this philosophy. There is after much inquiry sufficient explorative information and examples to delve into the questions and statements that were asked at the beginning, and to conclude more definitively how the initial explorative arguments stand. The initial arguments have been reproduced below.

[For the majority of poetic results contained in this exploration:

- I. *A poem, transformed in an objective procedural manner, without artistic subjective application or intervention, is not capable of capturing or conveying, demonstrating, illustrating or transferring an artistic and resonating message that is similar to or uniquely different from that of the original piece of work.*
- II. *The transformed work is not able to be considered a self-standing work of art.*
- III. *Objectivity cannot fully and completely replace subjectivity in the artistic transformation of poetry through procedural application.*
- IV. *New and unique traits can be divined from the final work but need further manipulation to be fully realised.*

And the central crucial issue:

- V. *Through the application of objective transformational procedure in the creation or evolution of poetic works, no work of resounding artistic value or interpretation can be produced or obtained. Thus, the human subjective mind, the human imagination, the human condition is an intrinsic and irremovable organ of poetic creation, and in trying to remove such an organ we are in essence erasing that which makes poetry the unique and transcendent form of human expression and communication that it is.]*

Argument I

- *A poem, transformed in an objective procedural manner, without artistic subjective application or intervention, is not capable of capturing or conveying, demonstrating, illustrating or transferring an artistic and resonating message that is similar to or uniquely different from that of the original piece of work.*

I have shown through the many transformations in this volume, on both my own works, works written purely for this exploration, and with the works of other artists, with a sufficiently wide breadth of transformation, that this argumentative viewpoint holds true.

Any application of procedure to a poetic work in an objective manner that disregards the inherent and intimate relationship and symbiosis of the structure and content of a poem will rarely result in a work capable of capturing the essence of the original message or with a comprehensible alternative artistic message. The caveat to this is, of course, the base assumption that the transformative procedure re-works the poetic text to a sufficient degree, lest we, end with a result that is nearly a reproduction of the original, as was seen in the less reformatory cut up transformations.

Argument II

- *The transformed work is not able to be considered a self-standing work of art.*

Observing the results from transformations on my works from “The Night Owl...”, I as the artist can divine no resultant outcome that can be considered a self-standing work when judged on the basis of *argument I* above: that the resultant work heralds a unique version of the original or contains a new poetic message. The possible exception is that some audiences may observe the random abstractness as a work of art. This is an aspect we cannot predict, but as the compositional artist, I can voice with certainty that none of the outcomes convey a sense of artistic meaning that, should I be consigned to put to paper, would bring about my creative satisfaction as a finished work.

Argument III

- *Objectivity cannot fully and completely replace subjectivity in the artistic transformation of poetry through procedural application.*

Throughout this exploration, we have come across numerous cases where applying purely objective methodology to poetry has resulted in possibility of a derivative art, but only after subjective manipulation. There is a line that must be crossed, the “grey” ground — a line that is defined by the difference between a clarion absolute rationality and a more manifold and baroque subjectivity and abstractness. This difference lies between an undertaking that disregards the chance that the alignment of the outcome will be neither

fruitful nor inspiring and an undertaking with the complicit understanding that all that will be born from the process will be ameliorated to align with the artist's vision. Every example, transformation and analysis I have undertaken demonstrates how a "black and white" objective perspective in the composition or transformation of poetry fails produce to a sufficient degree a final artistic work (a work that when untouched by the poet can be critically resilient to analysis and match or surpass the expectations of the artist and the audience).

Argument IV

- *New and unique traits can be divined from the final work but need further manipulation to be fully realised.*

What has become clear is that the objective application of procedure to poetry that results in a work that is artistically non-self-standing and an insufficient artistic derivative of the original piece is not necessarily a worthless endeavour. I have demonstrated with some of the poetic examples that this process can provide a plethora of material that can be used as a source of inspiration. When molded with subjective artistic intent, this source of material can produce a final work that meets the philosophical criteria outlined. The poetic material produced can in the end be altered and reworked to be a new poetic work. Thus the objective application of procedure supports the artistic process but cannot be a purely standalone method in the production or evolution of a work.

Argument V

- *Through the application of objective transformational procedure in the creation or evolution of poetic works, no work of resounding artistic value or interpretation can be produced or obtained. Thus, the human subjective mind, the human imagination, the human condition is an intrinsic and irremovable organ of poetic creation, and in trying to remove such an organ we are in essence erasing that which makes poetry the unique and transcendent form of human expression and communication that it is.*

What has been made abundantly visible through this explorative philosophy is that the objective procedural transformation of poetry cannot be considered a standalone school or methodology, but should be considered a faction of various other schools or movements of poetry. This appendage-like relationship to other schools is made clear by one overriding facet of all the resultant works from the transformations, and that is that they are necessitating further work or creative manipulation. Therefore, these objective transformations that were applied to the poems merely resulted in material that can be used as further inspiration or starting points for poetic works but when considered works in and of themselves, fall short of expectations, classification or understanding. Singularly, objective procedural poetry can and should be considered one of many factors that runs through multiple organs of poetry and cannot be considered a self-standing form or technique. It would be the same as attempting to classify word order, sentence length or the syllabic structures of words as a genre or school: we cannot. Meters are not a school of poetry; meters are not movements, but tools that lend themselves to all poetic undertakings. But what of cut up, DADA or other methods? These again are terminology that merely describe a specific subsector of transformative poetic principle and all are inclusive of subjective transformations. Transformative subjective poetry, as well, cannot be deemed a school of poetry (to which the above example methods are a manifestation of). Subjective procedural poetry and techniques again nest within various specific schools or movements of poetry.

This overwhelming lack of success with the results produced, when delving into the argument of human imagination vs inhuman process (in the sense where the human imagination has been removed), has highlighted that the key argument and statement put forth initially is sound. The argument that this philosophy has pursued through the winding avenues of not only poetics but of the artistry of language itself is that human imagination is the keystone factor in the creation and appreciation of poetry.

This philosophy has shown that the artist is the singularity to which all else is drawn artistically. Without him or her involved in the process of creation exacting his or her will upon the works when using set procedural transformations, those respective works that are birthed will lose a significant portion if not all of their artistic merit. To some, this source of imagination can be an almost spiritual connection with what the artist aims to convey. Such it was to Samuel Coleridge who described in his *Biographia Literaria* that the creative power of the imagination draped upon the poet an almost Godlike aura or presence; or to

other artists such Leigh Hunt, the human imagination was the conduit through which manifested the “embodiment” of feeling, the appreciation of the intimacy and delicateness of the poem.²⁶

What we have seen through the study of multiple examples is that no matter the method of transformation applied here, all the works that resulted, unless molded by the artist could not be considered worthy or redeemable of the title of a complete and understandable artistic work. The core reasoning for this, in the mind and opinion of this author, is the lack of the presence of the human condition in neither the process nor application of the process to those works studied. The human condition is the collective substance of the human experience. It is our memories, our words, our sounds, our sensations and all that encapsulates and forges what makes us human. What is poetry then, or any art without an essence of this human condition? For is not art a representation of the human psyche, a mirror that reflects upon us our innermost humanity? When reading a poem, we engage in a conscious and subconscious realisation of our own humanness, of our faults and strengths, failings and victories. As put by Tanner, “Imagination...allows for the seeing of similarities in difference and differences in similarities...”²⁷ Thus the human imagination not only allows us to create works of art, but also to truly appreciate them. It is both the implement of creation and the utensil of consumption. It is therefore easy to see how the removal or modification of the implement directly affects the consumption of the end work. If we remove the humanity from the creation of the work and then use our humanity when attempting to appreciate the results, there will be a fracture, a fault that runs through the piece and comes to light when disturbed by our trespass.

The above finding does not exclude objectivity from poetry but shows that an artist must temper his or her work so that the subjective and objective are folded into the essence of the poem in unison. Basho, renowned Japanese poet and philosopher, stated:

“The trouble with most poetry is that it is either subjective or objective”²⁸ and “Learn about pines from the pine, and about bamboo from the bamboo. In doing so, you must leave your subjective preoccupation with yourself. Otherwise you impose yourself on the object and do not learn....However well phrased your poetry may be, if your feeling is not natural - if the object and you are separate - then your poetry is not true poetry but merely your subjective counterfeit.”²⁹

Basho, in essence is stating that one should not override the other, and that both are needed in balance and unison to create what all poets strive for: a poem that has truth and

impact. This is what this philosophy has come to show, that objectivity — purely alone, cannot bring forth poetry.

Therefore, after applying these transformations, wandering through the intricacies of the results, and understanding the outcomes in the pursuit of showing that the human imagination is an infallible keystone of poetry, one can see that poetic art is a direct construct of our humanity and not a concept nor result of mere procedure or technique. I - we - you - can regard the importance and necessity of the imagination in poetry and its importance in imbuing the delicacy and detail of our existence into the poetic language of our world.

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ENDNOTES

1. Dictionary, Oxford English. "Oxford English dictionary online." *Mount Royal College Lib., Calgary* 14 (2004): Definition of poetry
2. Dictionary, Oxford English. "Oxford English dictionary online." *Mount Royal College Lib., Calgary* 14 (2004): Definition of art
3. Dictionary, Oxford English. "Oxford English dictionary online." *Mount Royal College Lib., Calgary* 14 (2004): Definition of science
4. Though Oulipo consists of a range of artistic specialisations for the case of this discussion I will refer only to the literary aspects
5. For the example of Oulipo the constraints are mathematical or numerical in nature
6. Poetic Glossary and Definitions: Poetry Foundation
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11. Forms of poetry considered most common, widely known as those before the modern and postmodern movements of poetics.
12. iSchoolReview, http://ischoolreview.com/iSR_Grav/entries/entry-6
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14. Full quote: "Anything that we are aware of at a given moment forms part of our consciousness, making conscious experience at once the most familiar and most mysterious aspect of our lives." - Susan Schneider and [Max Velmans](#) (2008). "Introduction". In Max Velmans, Susan Schneider. *The Blackwell Companion to Consciousness*. Wiley.
15. One definition of being: [sentience](#), [awareness](#), [subjectivity](#), the ability to [experience](#) or to [feel](#), [wakefulness](#), having a sense of [selfhood](#), and the executive control system of the [mind](#). - Farthing G (1992). *The Psychology of Consciousness*. Prentice Hall.
16. Note that this will vary depending on the specific dictionary used
17. *Ouvroir de littérature potentielle* Society: <http://oulipo.net/fr/contraintes/s7> Oulipo Compendium (Mathews, H. Brotchie, A. - Atlas Press 1998)
18. This constraint has had further evolutions since its initial conception by Jean Lescure in 1961, such as S+7+7+3
19. Note that "Fire Birth" utilises the same syllabic meter and structure of that of "Meditations On Love" - making the stanzas uniformly comparative, in terms of structure
20. Dictionary, Oxford English. "Oxford English dictionary online." *Mount Royal College Lib., Calgary* 14 (2004): Definition for transliteration - "Write or print (a letter or word) using the closest corresponding letters of a different alphabet or language."
21. Here I am referring to standard for the language most commonly used in Western poetry.
22. Tory Island (North West Co. Donegal), Hamilton (1974)
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23. Distinct units of sound found within a language that differentiate one word from another
24. Burroughs, William S., and Brion Gysin. *The third mind*. Viking Books, 1978.
25. According to E. Steichen (1879 - 1973, American artistic photographer, painter, art gallery and museum curator, creator of World Exhibition "The Family of Man" -interview source)
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