was on him," (MD 105), unlike Hector come from battle "with blood and muck all splattered upon him" (*Iliad* 6.268). The customary funeral rites for Patroclus are forthcoming: wrestling, the foot-race, the discus, etc. For Evans there are the nice out-of-door games at "Lords, Ascot, Ranelagh and all the rest of it" (MD 6).

For some, as in the case of Septimus Smith who threatened to throw himself under a cart, "it was cowardly for a man to say he would kill himself" (MD 33). In the usual diagnoses for these soldiers, their injuries were viewed as "the deferred effects of shell shock," according to the alliterative euphemism of Sir William Bradshaw; these wounds were known less poetically as "war nerves" and "battle fatigue" according to various diagnosticians and misunderstood sufferers. A few with such psychological wounds were kindly given a few days rest in bed (MD 279). Some Frenchmen who had been treated as if there were really nothing the matter endured for years under the effects of shell shock and were still in treatment in 1960. There was also the therapy of Dr. Holmes who advised patients to take an interest in things outside themselves (MD 139).

In the next war, General Patton became famous, not for military prowess but for slapping shell-shocked soldiers who were overcome with a hysterical neurosis regarded as cowardice. Those who might have been executed as "cowards" chose suicide instead and were horribly mangled emotionally like Septimus Smith who leapt to his death: "'The coward' cried Dr. Holmes" (MD 226). Although Rezia Warren Smith fails to "bar the passage" of Dr. Holmes despite her efforts, the Verdun pattern is replicated by the intrusive doctor who forces his way past Rezia in a failed attempt to seize Septimus who is sitting on the windowsill and leaps to his death.

Even though there were British subjects who did not think the British invariably right, some freely expressed their ambivalence regarding the war; there were others, like Miss Doris Kilman who starved herself for the Russians and lost her position "because she would not pretend that the Germans were all villains" (MD 197, 187). Clarissa Dalloway herself remains unsure about the difference between Armenians and Albanians. The necessity of maintaining proper expression of one's patriotic sentiments remains a virtue while diction resembling the Verdun aphorism surfaces at intervals (MD 203). In the Cathedral when Mr. Fletcher wished to go, Miss Kilman "did not at once let him pass" (MD 203). Similarly, while "passing through London" (MD 260), Sally Rosseter, née Seton, comes to Clarissa's party, having heard of it from Clara Haydon. The battle has left its mark.

The same day, Peter Walsh serenely passes the Cenotaph, the monumental sarcophagus of Lutyens positioned in the midst of the traffic in Whitehall, the main thoroughfare in the City of Westminster; it is the empty tomb that devours the bodies of the dead to which the young soldiers are carrying their wreath rather than to the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Cathedral, both having been installed to mark the end of the First World War (MD 76). This is an instance of Peter's lack of the ghost of a notion as to what any one else was thinking, a factor that has always annoyed Clarissa (see MD 69).

The Great War is over in *Mrs. Dalloway*, but much has indeed has already been forgotten. The King and Queen are recently returned from Italy as indicated by the flag now flying over Buckingham Palace; they have just knighted the Fascist dictator Benito Mussolini as of Monday, 11 June 1923 (MD 6, 27; *Time/Capsule* 104). If invaders were to come again, Septimus would have been more than prepared to block their way.

But for most, the car backfiring in the street is interpreted as a burst tire rather than the report of a pistol. The skywriting aeroplane, with wingéd words overhead, is not an instrument of aerial bombing. Much has been forgotten. Often it is only the ghosts of the victims who preserve the history of the war. The remains of bodies and explosives still lie beneath the meadows while cemeteries and some several monuments remain on the various battlefields and in the destroyed villages throughout France. A few ghosts are celebrated, but many are simply, in one way or another, just a part of the landscape.

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Unnoticed Burne-Jones: Ekphrasis in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*

Mrs. Dalloway, one of Virginia Woolf's best-known novels, details a single day in the life of Clarissa Dalloway and her coterie of high society relations and friends in post-World War I England. Of the recurrent memories that punctuate the story I will focus primarily on the incident in the garden at Bourton, the family's country estate. Clarissa has agreed to meet with Peter Walsh, her erstwhile suitor, and the episode is a flashback given as follows:

> The fountain was in the middle of a little shrubbery, far from the house, with shrubs and trees all round it. There she came, even before the time, and they stood with the fountain between them, the spout (it was broken) dribbling water incessantly. How sights fix themselves upon the mind! For example, the vivid green moss.
>
> She did not move. "Tell me the truth, tell me the truth," he kept on saying. He felt as if his forehead would burst. She seemed contracted, petrified. She did not move. "Tell me the truth," he repeated, when suddenly that old man Breitkopf[1] popped his head in carrying the Times; stared at them; gaped; and went away. They neither of them moved. "Tell me the truth," he repeated. He felt that he was grinding against something physically hard; she was unyielding. She was like iron, like flint, rigid up the backbone. (*Mrs. Dalloway* [MD] 62-63)

Famed for his evocative illustrations of medieval chivalry and Arthurian romance Edward Burne-Jones's study, entitled *The Baleful Head*, stood completed in 1887.[2] It belongs to an unfinished series of paintings, the

[1] Breitkopf is one of the house guests at Bourton.

[2] Assigned in college-level surveys of English authors, representing collectively the Victorian Age and containing the full text of *Mrs. Dalloway*, since its third edition the Longman Anthology has been graced by the rich color of English painter Edward Burne-Jones.

Perseus Cycle, fashioned from "The Doom of King Acrisius," a chapter in verse of William Morris's *Earthly Paradise*. The eighth and final number in the group, *The Baleful Head* is the harmonious depiction of Perseus presenting the decapitated gorgon: released from captivity, Andromeda and her liberator stand over a still font in order to safely behold the legendary visage that changed soldiers into stone, their refuge a fruit orchard enclosed by marble.[3]

According to its classical sources, chief among them Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, the story of Andromeda's plight begins in Aethiopia.[4] The wife of King Cepheus, Cassiopea, draws the ire of the gods after extolling the beauty of her daughter over that of Poseidon's Nereids, for which offense the lands are devastated by flooding and exposed to bestial terror, namely the dragon Cetus. Yielding to his people's pleas, Cepheus, per the oracle's instruction, attempts to appease the wrathful Poseidon by chaining Andromeda to a large rock in sight of the rampaging creature. Making a fortuitous return journey to Argos, the sandal-winged Perseus is moved by the scene taking place to intervene, on further condition of the king's consent to a marriage. Buoyed by Athena's gifts, Perseus slays the dragon in a great arcing descent, to the emancipation of Andromeda and relief of all those residing in Aethiopia. Ovid's narrative concludes by immortalizing its principle actors, bestowing several new constellations upon the night sky.

Taking another look at the excerpt from *Mrs. Dalloway*, the use of "petrified" is all-too telling; Clarissa is unable to budge and Breitkopf ogles like a corpse, his gaping stare serving as living analog to Perseus's macabre trophy. An oil painting visionary for its time is made exalted use of in *Mrs. Dalloway*. Any but a cursory examination of *The Baleful Head* ought to remind us of Woolf's tableau, the unnoticed *mise-en-texte*; surely one perceives "vivid green moss" in *The Baleful Head*'s rectangular panels and earthen floor. In Morris's "The Doom of King Acrisius," the verse is a retelling of how the grown Perseus, son of Danaë and equipped by the goddess Minerva, slew the hideous gorgon and wed Andromeda, and an exclamatory "tell me" is spoken multiple times between heroine and hero (Morris 1612; 1660) at the beginning of their courtship. In the Bourton scene the utterance appears not less than four times. Peter's earlier remark, the moon rising behind them: "'Tell me,' he said, seizing her by the shoulders. 'Are you happy, Clarissa? Does Richard —'" (MD 46), raises that total to five.

Although Burne-Jones relies on Morris's literature, *The Baleful Head* resembles better the pen-and-ink drawing meant to accompany Dante Gabriel Rossetti's poem "Aspecta Medusa" than the seaside setting in *Earthly Paradise*. Rossetti has the lovers lean into a constructed pool reflecting at their feet.[5] At the end of this complicated chain one may safely venture none other source than Burne-Jones presented Woolf with just those visual markers adorning her prose: the verdant garden, the fountain and its placement *between* Peter and Clarissa.

Although the manner in which Burne-Jones stands Perseus and Andromeda is unique[6] (no small thing, considering the popularity of the subject, depicted numerous times throughout history in painting and literature), there *is* a discrepancy between *The Baleful Head*'s serene bath and the fountain described in *Mrs. Dalloway*, equipped with a defective "dribbling" spout. As motivic subject, however, the change is no mistake but proclaims the obsolescence of phallic potency,[7] exampled throughout the novel. Molly Hoff, in her encyclopedic monograph *Virginia Woolf's* Mrs. Dalloway*: Invisible Presences*, explains:

> The tryst by the broken fountain surrounded by pubic shrubs and moss bears a sexual quality. The dribbling of the broken fountain (perhaps Peter's impotence) which may suggest his sexual thirst is reminiscent of the tap dripping water in Clarissa's room. (Hoff 110)

Further, when Joseph Breitkopf pokes his head through the shrubs, his last name evokes his native tongue in which 'breitkopf' means 'broad head.' Conflating the story and painting gives us the severed head of a German,[8] Breitkopf standing in as he does for defeated Medusa. It becomes tempting to read in this a deliberate provocation targeting allied Europe's chief foe during the Great War. Peter Walsh, the expatriate residing semi-permanently in India, serves as the novel's domestic obtruder.

Attesting to its author's extraordinary ingenuity, *Mrs. Dalloway* upsets roles set down in antiquity by shuffling associated birthrights and temperaments. For instance, 'Andromeda' is defined as the Latinized form of the Greek construction meaning "mindful of her husband," from a combination of *andros*, genitive of 'man,' with *medesthai*, "to be mindful of," and alternatively "ruler of men," which favors *medon*, 'ruler,' over *medesthai* ("Andromeda").[9] A tremendous gulf lies between these poles in their contrariety and relevance to *Mrs. Dalloway*. Between whom this duality should be distributed becomes clear when, scanning the roster of persons remaining, we light on Lucrezia, caring wife to Septimus Smith, a shell-shocked veteran. Marital obeisance thus accounted for, Clarissa can be safely granted the latter etymology (in the matriarchy implied, who should be her subject but Peter?). The content of Lucrezia's melancholy rumination aligns *her* with the original Andromeda:

> Slightly waved by tears the broad path, the nurse, the man in grey, the perambulator, rose and fell before her eyes. To be rocked by this malignant torturer was her lot. […] She was exposed; she was surrounded by the enormous trees, vast clouds of an indifferent world, exposed; tortured; and why should she suffer? Why? (MD 64)

Is not her torture conspicuously coastal—surroundings rise and fall and Lucrezia is "rocked" beneath open sky.

Overeducated and newly unemployed, Doris Kilman is in love with the 17-year-old Elizabeth, Clarissa's daughter. Both for her sexual orientation and inferior social standing, Miss Kilman is repugnant to Clarissa, whom she lambastes as "some prehistoric monster armoured for primeval warfare" (MD 123).[10] Again it proves reasonable to consult the myth, so economically does *Mrs. Dalloway* wring its every character's role, distinguishing hostility from loathing, invitation from fascination. For all Miss Kilman's unkempt offensiveness the archetypal trinity of

[3] See *The Baleful Head* at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Baleful_Head_by_Edward_Burne-Jones_(1885).jpg.

[4] Utilizing lexicographer William Smith's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology*, the Theoi Project (http://www.theoi.com/Heros/Perseus.html) is a comprehensive reference on Greek mythology, carefully sourcing the multitude of authored subplots and conflicting revision.

[5] See http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/s183b.rap.html. Rossetti appears to have been inspired by a Pompeian fresco, likely that removed from the House of the Colored Capitals and now in the collection of the National Archaeological Museum in Naples.

[6] Thomas Albrecht, author of *The Medusa Effect: Representation and Epistemology in Victorian Aesthetics*, contends there is no perfectly direct artistic source for Burne-Jones's arrangement (Albrecht).

[7] Hoff reaches this conclusion (see 110).

[8] Recall that among Septimus's visual hallucinations "he had seen an old woman's head in the middle of a fern" (MD 65).

[9] For "ruler of men" see "Andromeda (mythology)" in Wikipedia. Reading the signs of his marriage's impending dissolution, Septimus ponders silently: "The rope was cut; he mounted; he was free, as it was decreed that he, Septimus, the lord of men, should be free" (66), a reflection that offers a caricature of patriarchal exultation. As Hoff explains in an annotation to Miss Doris Kilman, "fervor in certainty contrasts with Clarissa's epistemological uncertainty and thus merits ironical treatment" (Hoff 173).

[10] Incidentally, Hoff connects Miss Kilman's patchy hair and exposed forehead to Medusa's "snakey locks" (Hoff 178), an abyssal terror like that of death, as well as to the hooved Minotaur (Hoff 38).

hero, damsel, and scourge remains incomplete. Sally Seton, itinerant rebel turned housewife, a youthful friend of Clarissa's at Bourton, rounds out *Mrs. Dalloway*'s multifaced reference to Cetus.

As the catalyst for Clarissa's germinal bisexuality Sally is integral to the other, less distressing mental interlude informing the narrative. After stooping to pick a flower, she kisses Clarissa on the lips. Incidentally the girls' lofty plans, rebellion and the abolition of private property, include reading William Morris and Plato. Sally is now safely Lady Rosseter, but in the years prior to her polite rehabilitation Clarissa feared Sally's recklessness was bound "to end in some awful tragedy; her death; her martyrdom" (177). Cetus is literarily implied, but hardly in one colossal mention; rather, the leviathan's forceful interposition between lovers is supplied by Peter, its terrible presence by Miss Kilman, and its immediate danger by Sally. The near parity of the name Seton to Cetus in sound and pelagic prefixes (the ancestor of 'Seton' refers to a settlement by the sea ["Seaton"], while 'Cetus' gives us 'cetacean') is striking.

Among this small segregated cast, how telling the ambition of the male is to break in upon *Mrs. Dalloway*'s lone reciprocal union. In the instant following the memorable kiss, Breitkopf and Peter, debating the virile music of Richard Wagner, step into the garden. Peter levies animosity in his rhetorical fashion:

> "Star-gazing?" said Peter.
>
> It was like running one's face against a granite wall in the darkness! It was shocking; it was horrible!

Granting the myth's interoperative role, Peter's quip reminds us, with an ironic suggestion of passion "frustrated by the stars," of Athena's ultimate decision to honor Perseus and Andromeda within the firmament:

> [Clarissa] felt only how Sally was being mauled already, maltreated; she felt [Peter's] hostility; his jealousy; his determination to break into their companionship. All this she saw as one sees a landscape in a flash of lightning—and Sally (never had she admired her so much!) gallantly taking her way unvanquished. (MD 35)

Above all it is with this encounter that the Spenserian topoi are dashed, then reconfigured to female advantage. Note the language Woolf employs:

> It was protective, on her side; sprang from a sense of being in league together, a presentiment of something that was bound to part them (they spoke of marriage always as a catastrophe), which led to this chivalry, this protective feeling. (33)

Enriching the trio's dynamism is a further echo of *Earthly Paradise*: the beast poised to devour, the embroiled Perseus's blade glowing amid the poisonous brack is likened to a flash of lightning. Morris's image resonates with the valor Sally displayed:

> But all that passed, like lightning-lighted street
> In the dark night, as the blue blade did meet
> The wrinkled neck, and with no faltering stroke,
> Like a god's hand the fell enchantment broke. (Morris 1573-76)

There is a strong temptation to read in that final line the severing of Sally and Clarissa's brief tryst. Woolf's maneuvering of types here—peevish admiration replacing potent machismo—is deft and cuts *Mrs. Dalloway*'s feminism in stark relief.

Regarding the twin faces of Andromeda (i.e., in *The Baleful Head*, both actual and reflected) one begins to suspect Burne-Jones relied on the then-copious collection of life studies littering his studio at The Grange in Fulham. Is Andromeda's historical sitter an amalgam of the Pre-Raphaelite "stunner" type, a touch mysterious, frizzy haired? Every model is problematic. The features of Laura Lyttleton appear in the 1886 *The Depths of the Sea*, a gesture appreciated as sympathetic to her death the previous year; the agonizing affair between Maria Zambaco and Burne-Jones had by the early 1870s been minimized following an eruption of scandal, with Zambaco fleeing home to Paris. By this time, Julia Stephen (née Jackson), mother of Virginia Woolf, was undoubtedly occupied with the business of her four young children. Captured on numerous occasions by London's visionary portraitists, Stephen was renowned for her beauty, sitting for George Frederic Watts in 1870 and six years later in the guise of the Virgin Mary,[11] an ode to the Roman austerity Burne-Jones met with in his travels across Italy. All this is to say the period during which the Perseus Cycle was undertaken offered Burne-Jones few chances to pose Lyttleon, Zambaco or Stephen from life as he had done in the past.

I quote again from Woolf, this time her posthumously collected autobiographical essays in *Moments of Being*:

> It is perfectly true that she obsessed me, in spite of the fact that she died when I was thirteen, until I was forty-four. Then one day walking round Tavistock Square, I made up, as I sometimes make up my books, *To the Lighthouse*; [...] and when it was written, I ceased to be obsessed by my mother. ("A Sketch of the Past" 92-93)

Note the Hogarth Press brought out *Mrs. Dalloway* on 14 May 1925 when Woolf was 43. Julia Stephen was at least in her late 30s when *The Baleful Head* was begun, by such time unsuited to the youth requisite for Cassiopeia's lofty daughter. Is it Stephen's visage or that belonging to a birch-white generic? In the much-praised biography recalling his aunt the novelist, Quentin Bell speculates: "Burne-Jones used [Stephen] as a model, and I think that the 'Burne-Jones type' owes something to her profile" (Bell 17). Given Stephen's and Zambaco's respective maturity, it follows Burne-Jones fashioned Andromeda after a subjective, irretrievable whim.

Stanley Baldwin, a nephew of Burne-Jones and thrice Prime Minister, inaugurated a major gathering of Burne-Jones drawings and paintings, organized by the Tate Britain in the summer of 1933, the centenary of the artist's birth, with a touching opening address. According to reports the affair was poorly attended. In a typewritten letter to Bell, Woolf remarked:

> Yesterday I went to see the Burne Joneses; no I dont like them; save as remnants of Nessas and my youth—floating lilies; things that have gone down the stream of time; which image is more just than you would think; for every picture has one white face looking down, and another looking up out of water." (Woolf, *Letters* [L] 5 206; see also Wildman and Christian)

The letter to Bell almost certainly refers instead to *The Mirror of Venus*,[12] a prosaic take on Venus and her circle of maidens. If Burne-Jones did not rely on a certain model's likeness when he painted *The Baleful Head*, Julia Stephen's pedigree might have tempted Woolf to recognize her mother in the painting, a conclusion that can be drawn from the voluminous testimony left to her heirs: "I have the ordinary persons [*sic*] love of a likeness and desire to be reminded by portraits of real people […] I am very glad to have these records of them" (L4 6-7).

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[11] Stephen was 33 years old when she posed for Burne-Jones' *The Annunciation*, completed in 1879, the year Vanessa was born. See "Editorial Note" in *Julia Duckworth Stephen: Stories for Children, Essays for Adults* (Syracuse UP, 1987).

[12] The *Mirror of Venus* exists in two versions, completed simultaneously in 1877. The first was begun in 1867, the second 1873.

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"squares where all the couples are triangles"[1]

For years this phrase or similar—such as "lived in squares, painted in circles, and loved in triangles"—about the Bloomsbury Group has been attributed to Dorothy Parker, but no one has ever been able to track it down and verify it. I recently commented in my review of *Queer Bloomsbury* that Regina Marler, in her essay "The Bloomsbury Love Triangle," assured us that the "famous quip [...] is *not* by Dorothy Parker, but 'probably the work of Kingsley Martin' (148 n1). I've never thought of him as witty, so I wait to be convinced" (Clarke 58). Subsequently, Vara Neverow[2] on the Virginia Woolf Listserv provided a reference to an item written by Kingsley Martin, and I discovered that I had had a copy of the article in question for over forty years without realizing its significance.

The New Statesman and Nation had a regular anonymous column, "A London Diary," signed "Critic." It had actually inherited the column from the *Nation*, when it had been signed "A Wayfarer," who was the editor, H. W. Massingham. When the *Nation* amalgamated with the *Athenæum* to form the *Nation and the Athenæum* in 1921, Massingham continued as editor as well as continuing his column until 1923, when he was replaced by Hubert Henderson (with Leonard Woolf as literary editor) under the new management board chaired by John Maynard Keynes. The column lapsed, but was revived after the *Nation and Athenæum* merged with the *New Statesman* to form the *New Statesman and Nation* in 1931.

The column consisted of individual, unconnected paragraphs, usually all written by the editor, Kingsley Martin, but sometimes contributed by others. According to my notes, the column Vara led me to—29 March 1941—was all written by Martin, except for the second paragraph, which was by Raymond Mortimer. It is the third paragraph that is relevant here:

> I wonder what people mean by "Bloomsbury"? I asked myself as I looked at the dismantled flat. Certainly it is no longer what Margaret Irwin used to describe in the 'twenties as the place where "all the couples were triangles and lived in squares." Whatever it was once, it is gone now. Perhaps Göring, whose hand always went to his revolver belt when anyone mentioned culture, had a special down on Bloomsbury? Any way there have been quite a lot of incidents since the Blitz began and no particular sign of the decadence among this varied population that the *Times* seems

[1] This article first appeared in the *Virginia Woolf Bulletin* No. 57 (January 2018): 42-45.

[2] Vara, too, had been writing a review of *Queer Bloomsbury* and also noticed that Marler had ascribed the witticism to Kingsley Martin. In search of the actual source of the phrase, Vara found a Google Forum discussion that quoted Martin and referenced Margaret Irwin. See *VWB* 91 39 n7 for her researches.