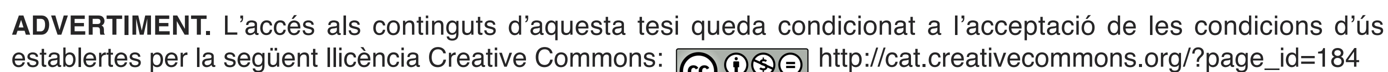
ADVERTIMENT. L'accés als continguts d'aquesta tesi queda condicionat a l'acceptació de les condicions d'ús establertes per la següent llicència Creative Commons:  http://cat.creativecommons.org/?page_id=184

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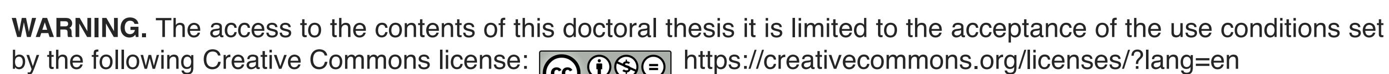
WARNING. The access to the contents of this doctoral thesis it is limited to the acceptance of the use conditions set by the following Creative Commons license:  https://creativecommons.org/licenses/?lang=en

LITERARY ARCHITECTURE, DWELLING AND THE RETURN-HOME IN THE WORKS OF RACHEL SEIFFERT.

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Prefatory Note

List of Abbreviations:

The following works are cited with an abbreviation for ease of reference:

Field Study (*FS*)

The Dark Room (*TDR*)

The Walk Home (*TWH*)

A Boy in Winter (*ABIW*)

Formatting:

This thesis has been written in general accordance with the *Modern Language Association Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (Eighth Edition). For ease of reference, footnotes have been placed at the foot of each page.

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .... **I**

PREFATORY NOTE .... **III**

List of Abbreviations: .... **iii**

Formatting: .... **iii**

INTRODUCTION **1**

I. Rationale and Objectives **4**

I.i. Hypotheses **9**

II. Theoretical Frameworks **11**

III. Overview of Chapters **29**

CHAPTER ONE **35**

Introduction **35**

1.1. Existential Anxiety, Ontological Security and Home in 'Architect' **36**

1.1.i Im-Placement: Going Back Home **51**

1.2. *A Boy in Winter* as a Discourse of Resistance: A Poetics of Place and Proximity **65**

1.2.i The Arrival of Modernity: Totalitarianism and the 'Civilizing Process' 71

1.2. ii. The World as it should be: The Return-Home and Reconstructive Postmodernism 112

Conclusions **134**

CHAPTER TWO **137**

Introduction **137**

2.1. Concealment and Alienation in 'Helmut' **144**

2.2. Hostile Spaces and Displacement in 'Lore' **163**

2.3 The Return of the Repressed and Psychological Disorientation in 'Micha' **186**

Conclusions **206**

CHAPTER THREE. **213**

Introduction **214**

3.1. Globalization, Socio-Historical 'Contamination' and the Emotional Identity of Place in Field Study **222**

3.2. Trauma and the Inability to Return Home in *Afterwards* **231**
3.2.i. Decorating as Psychic Healing 232
3.2.ii. Pastoral Space as a Site of Healing 237

3.3. Diaspora, Displacement and the Counterforces of Memory in *The Walk Home* **249**
3.3.i. Public and Private Worlds 277
3.3. ii. The Journey Home 290

Conclusions **299**

FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH **301**

1. General Conclusions **301**

2. Implications **310**

3. Further Research **312**

WORKS CITED **319**

INTRODUCTION

All the circles of our home […] are an inalienable part of us, and an inseparable element of our human identity. Deprived of all the aspects of his home, man would be deprived of himself, of his humanity (Havel, qtd. in Shelley 83).

[...] they built huts from dead wood and cardboard and old bits of corrugated iron. When they were finished they sat in them, smiling with satisfaction, wondering what to do (MacLaverty 147-148).

Figure 1. Rachel Seiffert. Photographed by Murdo MacLeod for The Guardian.

Contemporary British writer Rachel Seiffert (b. 1971) has received much critical attention for her award-winning debut novel *The Dark Room* (2001) which, amongst many other accolades, was short-listed for the Booker Prize and served as the basis for Australian film director Cate Shortland’s acclaimed film *Lore* (2012). A German-Australian production, the film won

several prizes, including third prize for best German film 2012 and was nominated for the Oscar Awards for Best Foreign Language Film the same year. In 2003, Seiffert was nominated one of Granta's *Best of Young British Novelists*. After the publication and subsequent media hype of her first novel, she moved to Berlin, where she wrote *Field Study* (2005), a collection of short stories which reflects familiarity with German and East-West reunification memory. *Field Study*, the novels *Afterwards* (2007) and *The Walk Home* (2014) were long-listed for the Orange/Bailey's Prize for Fiction. She received the E. M. Forster Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 2011. Her latest novel *A Boy in Winter* (2017) appeared on The New York Time's Notable Book List for 2017 and was nominated The Time's Book of the Year.

Yet despite her evidently growing reputation, to date there has only been a handful of scholarly studies dedicated to Seiffert's work. These have primarily focussed on *TDR* through the lens of Holocaust, trauma and German postmemorial writing and, more specifically, the role of photography, a recurring motif throughout the novel (Berberich; Hirsch, "The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust"; Martinez Alfaro; Pividori; Randall; Tollance). Born of an Australian father and German mother, Seiffert's multi-cultural and linguistic position echoes the emergence of cultural diversity within post-war contemporary Anglophone literature, with writers, such as Kazuo Ishiguro and Salman Rushdie as primary examples. Critics have indeed observed this multi-cultural position that not only allows her to judge British identity and culture with the privileged insight of an insider and the necessary distance of

an outsider, but also to respond to a post-generational historical memory generally considered peculiarly German. Indeed, two of her novels, *TDR* and *ABIW*, specifically address her self-confessed preoccupation with her German grand-parents' participation in World War Two, which deal with the difficult themes of German generational guilt, buried familial secrets and collaboration.[1] Furthermore, many stories that compose the collection *FS* may be read as part of the post 1990s German family narratives, produced by writers generally born after 1970 that explore a more multi-ethnic heritage in an increasingly globalized Europe, echoing memory discourses of her German contemporaries, such as Zafer Şenocak of Turkish origin.[2] Furthermore, as Friederike Eigler points out, the preferred genre of these writers, the family narrative, best allows a confrontation on what Jon and Aleida Assmann termed the communicative memory level, that is the more intimate 'everyday', and thus communal and familial (Eigler 2005: 23. Assmann 1995:126-127), with guilt, loss and the generational reverberations of traumatic experiences. Thus, Seiffert's position certainly reflects familiarity with German generational and reunification memory and critics have legitimately addressed the former in *TDR*. Nevertheless, contemporary literary themes of memory, collective amnesia and psychic generational legacies, considered characteristic of generational German family narratives, have been transposed, in *Afterwards* and *TWH*, to a profoundly English and

[1] See Rachel Seiffert, "Rachel Seiffert: 'My Grandparents Were Nazis. I Can't Remember a Time When I Didn't Know This' | Books | The Guardian." *Theguardian.com*, 27 May 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/may/27/grandparents-nazis-inspired-my-novel-about-holocaust.

[2] For a more complete list of examples and a discussion of the multi-ethnic family narrative within post 1990 contemporary German literary discourse see Friederike Eigler, "Writing in the New Germany: Cultural Memory and Family Narratives." *German Politics and Society* 23.3 (76) (2005): 16–41.

Scottish cognizance respectively. These two novels thus respond to Seiffert's multi-cultural sensitivity as she re-stages the German memory discourse for a British scenario with its specific socio-political and historical memory.

I. Rationale and Objectives

The present thesis broadens the critical gaze briefly outlined above to align Seiffert with a wider range of contemporary writers, such as Kazuo Ishiguro, James Kelman, Ali Smith or J.B Ballard amongst many others, who pose questions about the modern human condition and mirror their socio-political milieu. As well as the complexities of historical memorialization, Seiffert's pared, minimalist, multi-layered art responds to contemporary issues of identity and borders, globalization and environmentalism that promote a sense of phenomenological homelessness, displacement, placelessness and existential anxiety. These elements have also preoccupied many postmodernist literary and cinematographic artists. Nevertheless, Seiffert's fiction appears to transcend a postmodernist representation consumed by the pessimistic impasse of meaninglessness to suggest a way forward for humanity, albeit a tentative one. Thus, the main aim of this thesis is to explore the nature of this transcendence and to identify the thematic elements which lend her work a sense of optimism, placing it within re-constructivist literature in its return to meaning. The present thesis is, I believe, the first investigation to examine Seiffert's work through: First, Literary Architecture; second, a socio-philosophical lens, that is primarily Heideggerian dwelling, and third, to explore how her fiction might operate within re-constructivism.

Although not the primary focus of her work on the American Family Narrative, (which was principally to arrive at a definition of the genre), Kirsten Dell notices a shift from pessimistic meaninglessness towards meaningful optimism in the fin-de-millennium texts, with Jonathan Franzen's *The Corrections* (2001) as exemplary of this trend (Dell 15). Significantly, she points out the use of irony and the techniques of a contemporary realism to portray social criticism. By highlighting the failings of society, these writers point towards a future which includes family values, but rather than the draconic patriarchal kind of the post-war period, a new form that appeals to "honesty, tolerance, empathy, and altruism" (ibid 208). Although I am not specifically concerned here with the Family Narrative, Dell's work has been partially a point of departure for the present thesis in that there seem to be parallels in Seiffert's work with the urge to return to these values if humanity is to progress towards a better future. Thus, although I have limited my analysis to only one British writer, the broader contribution of this thesis to literary scholarship lies in the way a certain mode of fiction, principally that which has the small micro-histories of familial relationships and the seemingly insignificant everydayness of human existence as its focus, appears to depart from deconstructive postmodernity in its evasiveness of meaning. It thus contributes to furthering current knowledge of a kind of contemporary fin-de-millennium fiction that appeals to universal values, community and family ties that are grounded in the connectedness of Mankind with the cosmos as a means of confronting the adversities of our contemporary world. Thus, the overriding question generating the investigation undertaken in the present thesis was initially: What exactly do

these values consist of and what literary devices does Seiffert employ to evoke a return to these values?

From *TDR* to the latest novel at the time of writing this thesis *ABIW*, home, place architectural space and mundane domestic objects are prominent elements of Seiffert's fictional world. Attention is paid to the everydayness of human existence, the intimate interaction with things and others that make up our daily lives, and the way these images interweave to arouse a powerful suggestion of home invited the motivation for this thesis. Furthermore, an interest in war literature and, more precisely, the narratives of home-coming, initially brought to my attention the novel *Afterwards*, the story of two veterans attempting to re-build their lives while haunted by war trauma. Notably, alongside psychic re-construction, there remains a physical re-building as these two veterans strive to create, through painting and decorating, a comfortable home for themselves and, significantly, one that could be shared with others. Thus, in this novel, the physical home appears to overtly parallel the psychic state of its protagonists. Indeed, *Afterwards* and *TWH* are the narratives in which the motifs of home-making, building and decorating most strongly resonate. Thus, the initial enquiry regarding these two novels consisted in the meaning of home and the purpose behind the recurring motifs of building, decorating, architectural space, urban and natural landscape. A further exploration confirmed the persistent presence of these features to a greater or lesser degree throughout much of Seiffert's fiction to date, which incited an initial reading of these elements as metonymical and metaphorical. For the purposes of the present study, I have chosen the works which I believe best exemplify the use of these features.

Seiffert appears to employ these motifs on a narrative level, but furthermore, an observant and careful reader may notice the way the discourse often subtly invites our imagination and consciousness into the intimate spaces of inhabiting and well-being, at times subverting this image to create the opposite effect of inhospitable spaces, verging on the uncanny, which I explore in chapter one. Furthermore, as well as physical architectural spaces, through the same technique she creates a tonality of place and region. This does not entirely function through pure descriptive discourse, but rather through tapping into a phenomenology of the imagination, of our deepest experience and dreams, in the sense that Gaston Bachelard famously observed in his work on the *Poetics of Space* (1958). Nevertheless, the question remained as to the precise poetic function of these features in Seiffert's fictional world and if these ultimately contributed to a sense of optimism within the discourse.

As Ellen Eve Frank observes in her seminal work *Literary Architecture* (1979), the arts of architecture and literature have long been connected, not only through the structural elements by looking up from a book and noticing the chapters and external values, similar to that of a building, but also on the level of consciousness, that which is internal, perceived or "felt" (Frank 6). As a spatial construct, both have the internal and external, the movement of inside and outside. Thus, literature, she observes, gives place, form or idea meaning. She writes that man "imagines his consciousness or experience to be bounded or located in particular space, [...] while what is outside his personal realm he imagines to be boundless as he thinks the universe is boundless, timeless as it is timeless" (ibid).

Reminiscent of Bachelard, who I shall return to below, Frank draws attention to the analogy between literature and architectural space, through the subject of literature, that is life itself and the structures of consciousness. She notes how writers choose architecture, as a 'structure of human space' to organize their perceptions of "felt and remembered experience of life" (ibid 9). She suggests that through architectural images, writers express time or linearity in terms of space or location. Furthermore, the writers she investigates, Marcel Proust, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Henry James, and Walter Pater, employ the architectural analogue to allow "time past to stay on view" (ibid 11). In short, she notes that the connectedness between family, the past and the future and dwelling and consciousness is expressed through the space the characters move in. Writers who employ Literary Architecture in this sense give a dwelling-place, substance and physical space to thought (ibid 12), because, as she states, "it is the art form most capable of embodying thought-spirit, or essences, most capable of the conversion act" (ibid). Unlike Charles Dickens or Jane Austen, according to Frank, these writers, "push the analogue to its perceptual limits" (ibid 13). Thus, like Bachelard, Frank's work is an enquiry into the function of architectural imagery in imaginative literature.

Since the present thesis also turns to the imaginative literature of Seiffert and the use of architectural, domestic spaces, objects and place to express human consciousness, I adopt Frank's term Literary Architecture accordingly throughout this study. I do so in a wider-ranging sense than Frank first intended, to incorporate domestic objects and home as well as more general architectural imagery. Furthermore, as my examination of

Seiffert's Literary Architecture centres principally around the notion of home, at this stage I should point out that I use the concept in this thesis not so much in what might be considered the traditional sense of a dwelling-place or abode, although it is certainly this as well, but as the philosophical notion of 'being-in-the-world'.

I.i. Hypotheses

Through the examination of a selection of texts, the present thesis sets out to investigate the inter-connection between Seiffert's Literary Architecture and a philosophical return-home. There are two main questions motivating this study: First, how does a rhetorical technique, which fuses the metonymical use of home, architecture and place and spatial poetics with a textual sparsity resonant of allegory, articulate meaning? Secondly, what does Seiffert's Literary Architecture convey?

The principal claim is that through the merging of these rhetorical elements Seiffert's poetics expresses:

1) The loss of dwelling inherent to conditions of modernity; that is, that Mankind[3] has lost a philosophical home that implies 'being-in-the-world' because he no longer heeds the relatedness of humanity with the cosmological whole. This loss includes a sense of being-for-others, the realization of mortality, authenticity and attention to the essential elements of human existence.

[3] I use the term 'Mankind' throughout this thesis to mean 'all human beings living on the earth'.

2) The possibility of a return-home, or a return to dwelling-well that means new possibilities for the future of Mankind if only he can be mindful of these essential elements that include attentiveness to the near-at-hand, the qualities of place and natural environment, thoughtful co-habitation with other human beings in equal and tolerant relationships and a sense of existential authenticity; in short, a consideration of the finality of existence and the relatedness of Mankind to the cosmological whole.

3) A return-home as a corrective to the postmodern existential crisis that embraces, in alignment with point two above, contemporary organicist philosophies and a return to humanist values.

I suggest that the above points converge and interweave to ultimately place Seiffert's work within the realm of re-constructive postmodernism that embraces humanist, organist philosophies.

The following section addresses the principal methodological perspectives that inform this thesis. I have necessarily limited an in-depth discussion of these concepts at this introductory stage because the way these underpin my arguments will be clearer if they are accompanied by textual examples. The introduction to each chapter will clarify in further detail those theoretical perspectives that support the specific issues addressed. The first chapter also serves to present the principal theoretical approach extending throughout the thesis. In addition, because of the complexities of the theories I have chosen to analyse Seiffert's work, I should point out that I have strictly

narrowed these to their practical application to the sole purposes of this literary analysis and to the passages I have chosen to support my main hypothesis, which is humanity's fall from dwelling and the return-home. Heidegger's discourse is notoriously dense as he developed a specific vocabulary and writing style to convey complex philosophical thought. Thus, I have limited my analysis to only his later, perhaps most accessible, essays which describe his thinking on architecture, poetry and dwelling. Moreover, because of this complexity, I have relied heavily on scholarly interpretations of his work, mainly by Charles Guignon for clarification on authenticity and Adam Sharr for discussion of Heideggerian architecture.

II. Theoretical Frameworks

Home is the central concept behind this research, and thus, I open this section by focussing on how it is to be understood in the present thesis and a justification for its centrality. I address this concept here in the same manner as the development of my thinking; from simple to complex, from the pragmatic to the abstract. I present a summary of the key concepts that underpin the arguments of this thesis, leaving more recent developments and what I consider to be minor conceptual support to the introductory discussion at the beginning of each chapter.

I suggest that in the works examined here, the notion of home has three pervading levels of meaning: The first is on the level of plot, we read of home, houses, decorating, and making homes. The second lies in the philosophical in that home is a metaphysical space of being-in-the-world and

dwelling in it. And third, on a poetic level, home is often evoked in the reader's mind and imagination. These three elements that make up Seiffert's Literary Architecture merge to create meaning. Although the chapters in this thesis offer an analysis that attempt to locate each of these in isolation, my aim is to reveal that their point of convergence leads to an interpretation that incites an imaginative return-home, raising the issue of what should be the future of a more humane world. To reach these objectives, I have necessarily approached a research methodology that embraces a multi-disciplinary theoretical framework, because this allows a clearer perception of the function of Seiffert's Literary Architecture and spatial poetics. Therefore, this study intertwines literary, philosophical and sociological perspectives.

The notion of home is highly nuanced and has different meanings not only between cultures but also in varying historical periods. In the Western world at least, home is often conflated with a physical structure, such as a house, flat, or caravan that provides shelter, comfort and protection. It may not necessarily relate to a fixed abode, but may be shifting or unstable (Mallett). It may also be related to an enclosed territory or land. How is home encapsulated in Seiffert's texts? It appears to embrace all of these notions. Her narratives are replete with characters who physically and psychologically find themselves dispossessed from home, but journey arduously towards it. Forcefully or voluntarily exiled, they nevertheless quest its comforting security. For instance, *TDR* dramatizes the destruction of home in times of war and the journey to re-find and re-build it; in the short story 'Architect', part of the collection *FS* we read of a man who, despite possessing his own

house, returns to that of his childhood as a means of finding inner peace; as I have mentioned, in *Afterwards* two veterans endeavour to attain a peaceful home-coming that forever escapes their reach; *TWH*, as the title suggests, makes visible home's nuanced, multi-layered associations as a young man, caught up in the deep religious divide that comprises the social strata of contemporary Glasgow, attempts to reconcile family disputes and return home; and finally, *ABIW* re-visits war as cause of exile, separation of families, homelessness and the ensuing journey towards a place of safety, protection and support that is not only a physical structure, but a territory and community. In our times of cosmopolitanism, diaspora, insecurity and existential uncertainty, home is a place of safety, protection and shelter from hostile elements that many people aspire to attain or to return to as palliative measure to precariousness and uprootedness. In the narratives explored in this thesis, home is thematized through building and decorating as well as re-constructing home amongst the ruins of bombed out buildings or half-built and abandoned tenement blocks. Characters strive to construct homes and to make a secure place in the world, to be themselves at the same time as sharing the world with others.

Seiffert's homes are often 'homely' spaces in which people unite around the dining room table or attend to the business of cooking in the kitchen, a space often considered to be the heart of the home. Yet, these spaces often oscillate between an idealized homeliness and one that appears at once unhomely and conflicted, verging on the uncanny. Indeed, rather than a place of warmth and safety, home may be a site of conflict and marginalization. It is, after all, never a perfect space, but perhaps a dream of

what it should represent rather than any truth, such as that of a soldier's wistful fantasy while away at war. Indeed, reality may be far from such idealization, as Homer's well-known home-coming story *Ulysses* revealed and that many other soldier's tales testify to. We shall see in the first chapter of this thesis how the slippage between the Homely and the Unhomely, between comfort and discomfort, plays out in the war-time setting of Berlin in *TDR* and, in the final chapter, home as a conflicted space, in my discussion of *TWH.* Nevertheless, home does ultimately invoke through the reader's imagination a sense of intimacy and protection from exterior hostile elements that Seiffert's characters ever seek to attain. These elements may be real, such as the adversities and dangers of war or violence, or they may be phenomenological in that these adversities exist because of the stresses and strains of the modern condition and the consequent state of existential anxiety. Thus, on a philosophical level, it may be a place that humanity eternally wishes to return to and strive for but never actually achieves.

As a tool to analyse the function of the oscillation between the Homely and the Unhomely and its relationship to the insecurities and alienation of modernity, I have relied on Antony Vidler's ground-breaking work on *The Architectural Uncanny: Essay's in the Modern Unhomely* (1992). Vidler's work examines the sensation of the uncanny as manifested in architecture, and thus accurately serves as a precise means of analysis to address Seiffert's tonality of anxiety, the loss of home and yet the hope of return through her Literary Architecture. Although it may be applied to a lesser degree to other texts, it provides an especially invaluable theoretical basis for its workings in the war-time novel *TDR* since, as Vidler points out,

the Freudian Uncanny arose out of the devastating after-shock of World War One from “something that once seemed homely into something decidedly not so, from the Heimlich [Homely] into the Unheimlich [Unhomely]" (Vidler 6); that is, when the security of the Western nations and their "homeland" was seized by a "barbaric regression; when the territorial security that had fostered the notion of a unified culture was broken, bringing a powerful disillusionment with the universal 'museum' of the European 'fatherland'" (ibid 7). Vidler notes that the uprootedness, depression and the state of unease that arose because of the war linked the Freudian Uncanny with György Lukács' ‘transcendental homelessness’ of the modern condition. Seiffert’s war novel thus provides the perfect paradigm for an analysis of its workings. Furthermore, the uncanny, according to Vidler, as a sensation of psychological unease, arose as early as the eighteenth century as a response to the alienation and insecurities inherent to the growth of the industrial economy, the centralization of the state and the severance of community bonds, long-standing traditions, customs and an intimate relationship with nature. Thus, the uncanny is associated with estrangement resulting from the modern condition as well as a transformation of this unease into the environment of the rootlessness and insecurities of twentieth century post-war Europe, finding voice in existentialist notions of home as ‘being-in-the-world’. In brief, the Architectural Uncanny is the psychological manifestation of this homelessness as estrangement and alienation artistically dramatized through architecture and home.

As well as a physical, tangible site of psychological resistance, a refuge, from the adversities of our contemporary world, from a philosophical

and, more specifically, existentialist standpoint, home may be considered the fundamental place of being; that is, as I have mentioned above, home means 'being-at-home-in-the-world'. A physical home, furthermore, may be a place of proximity, intimacy and co-habitation with others that means family, community members or both. From the standpoint of existentialism, this broadly translates as being-with-others as a constitutive part of one's self which also involves commitment and responsibility to others (J. P. Sartre). Our 'being-in-the-world-with-others' thus forms a fundamental part of our identity, what Havel, (quoted at the top of this introduction), described as "an inalienable part of us" and that formed part of Jean Paul Sartre's thought on the humanist values of existentialism.[4]

Similarly, for Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) in *Being and Time* (*Sein und Zeit)* (1927), human 'Dasein' is also 'being-in-the-world', and in his later post-war thinking, he describes how this 'Dasein' is to inhabit the world. In his lecture on 'The Thing' (1950), he argued for a 'nearness' to the essential reality of things that would give Mankind a closer proximity to the world around him, a closer engagement with the fourfold, (earth, sky, divinities and mortals).[5] His phenomenological exploration of dwelling and place is

[4] See Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism Is a Humanism*. Ed. Carol (trans.) Macomber. Yale University Press, 2007. Print. As I shall argue in this thesis, Seiffert's re-constructive postmodernism forwards those humanist values proposed by Sartre as positive optimism rather than the pessimistic viewpoint that critics often associated with existentialist thought.

[5] For the essay based on his lecture 'The Thing', see Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*. Ed. Albert Hofstadter. New York [etc.]: Harper & Row, 1971.

In *Building, Dwelling, Thinking,* Heidegger does not give much explanation of exactly what he means by the fourfold. He states simply that "'on the earth' already means 'under the sky'. Both of these also mean 'remaining before the divinities' and include a 'belonging to men's being with one another' But a *primal* oneness the four-earth and sky, divinities and mortals-belong together in one'" (Heidegger 149). He then goes on to describe the oneness of the four: "When we speak of the divinities, we are already thinking of the other three along with them, but we give no thought to the simple oneness of the four" (ibid). He repeats the notion of 'oneness' as he describes each of the items constituting the

connected to a philosophy of being that meant 'being-in-the-world' in essential relatedness to the physical world of things. For Heidegger, things are not just mere objects, but exist in practical, everyday relationship with humans that brings them into close contact with the world. He argues for the connection between things and the fourfold through the example of a simple jug, which exists in essential connectedness to human life, since it enfolds the earth in its material and the sky (or heaven) in its pouring of a 'sacred' fluid (water or wine) and so connected mortals (humans) with the divinities (Gods or divine), forming the fundamental circumstance of existence. He believed that Man's relatedness to the simple things, activities and objects that make up human existence within the cosmos had been lost in our contemporary world. Significantly, for the arguments forwarded in this thesis, he argued that technological modernity had been the catalyst for this estrangement.[6] Man no longer experiences proximity or nearness to things, appreciated through the tactile, experiential familiarity with everyday things, but proceeds through his existence without thinking about them.

The notion of nearness and attention to the simplicity of things that surround our existence extends to his thinking about dwelling. Dwelling also meant being in proximity to the world, and at-one with it. In his essay "Building, Dwelling, Thinking" (1971), based on a lecture given to architects in 1951 during the post-war housing crisis, the notion of home-making and building is described as an essential human activity arising out of our need to

fourfold. Mortals are humans and are called this "because they die" (ibid). For an in-depth discussion of the meaning of the fourfold, see Mitchell, Andrew J. *The Fourfold: Reading the Late Heidegger (Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy).* Northwestern University Press, 2015.

[6] See Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology." *Basic Writings*, edited by David Farrell Krell, 1993rd ed., Routledge, 1978, pp. 308–41.

dwell in co-habitation with others: “To be a human being means to be on the earth as a mortal. It means to dwell […] in a primal oneness [---]” (Heidegger, “Building Dwelling Thinking”349-351) which means with other mortals. In this essay, Heidegger argued that although Man constructs houses or physical abodes in which to inhabit, he “does not dwell in them when to dwell means soley to have our lodgings in them”(ibid 348). He thought that we do not build first and then dwell, but that building and dwelling are one, and dwelling is the manner of existing on earth. He arrives at this thought through an etymological analysis of the German word ‘bauen’ which can mean ‘to be’ or ‘to build’ but the latter having taken precedence over the original meaning, which was ‘to dwell’. He also points out that dwelling (bauen) also means “to cherish and protect, to preserve and care for, specifically to till the soil, to cultivate the vine”(ibid 349). Having taken his inspiration from the natural surroundings of his Black Forest mountain cottage at Todtnauberg, dwelling and being at-home had a much deeper sense of humanity’s essential connectedness to the fourfold which he believed to be lacking in contemporary human experience.[7]

Thus, *Building, Dwelling, Thinking* merges his consideration of the way people experience things to an exploration of architecture, and the concepts therein will be central to much of my discussion in this thesis. Like our disengagement with objects, houses have become commodities, consumer products, which we inhabit or occupy without thought. They are built for mass consumption and profit, sold to consumers who have had little

[7] For futher information on the relevance of Heidegger’s Black Forest Hut to his work, see Adam Sharr, *Heidegger’s Hut*. Reprint 20, MIT Press, 2006.

or nothing to do with their construction; for Heidegger, they do not constitute his notion of home. Above all, unlike his Black Forest cottage, which served as inspiration for his thinking on the essence of dwelling, most of these houses do not arise from human habitation in relation to the fourfold. He believed that building and dwelling were one and home thus implicated Mankind as integral part of the cosmos with the consequent responsibility for its care. Man could not build if he had not yet learned to dwell because to build without being 'at-home-in-the-world', in harmonious relationship to the fourfold, would mean he would remain essentially homeless. He should thus learn to dwell in harmony with it if he is to return home, which reflects one of the main hypotheses of this thesis.

Despite much criticism for his membership of the Nazi party, Heidegger's thought on dwelling has served as a springboard not only to environmentalist thought in contemporary architecture, but also to what I will refer to in the present study rather broadly as organicist philosophies that heed the necessity to attend to place, community and family, to care for all organic or non-organic things that form part of the world; in short, to go forward to a humane society based on equality and sustainability as well as thought allocated to the intimacy of human relationships, the ordinary, mundane and near-at-hand. As an example of the often neglected elements of his thought is Heidegger's lamentation of humanity's "loss of rapport with things" (ibid 359), which has been appropriated, in recent years by the advocates of 'Mindfulness' as palliative to the stresses of a contemporary world. Heidegger believed that thought given to these essential aspects of existence provided a means of offsetting the nihilistic meaninglessness of

modernity. Andrew J. Mitchell's work published during the writing of this thesis, on reading the later post-war Heideggerian thought on the fourfold, testifies to the heightened significance to today's world in understanding the essential relationality with the things that surround our existence and the renewed attention to Heideggerian philosophy.

Undoubtedly, awareness of environmental issues, the importance of nature to the well-being of human life and our dependency on the health of the entire Earth has gained ground especially since the end of the 1980s and into the new millennium. One of these thinkers, whose earlier work stemmed from within the 1960 and 70s youth and feminist culture, is Charlene Spretnak. Her influential, yet often overlooked, thinking on Green Politics, spirituality and its connection to modern life has recently developed in accord with the requirements of our contemporary world to propose pragmatic socio-political solutions. Her recent work *The Resurgence of the Real: Body, Nature and Place in a Hypermodern World* (2012) extends the notion of re-constructive postmodernism earlier conceptualized in *States of Grace* (1991). In this thesis, I adopt this conceptualization of reconstructive-postmodernism, with its concept of connectedness and relatedness as a 'truth' of existence that contradicts the meaninglessness and valueless elements of de-constructivist thought. Her re-constructivism, centred on relational existence, forwards an 'ecological postmodernism' that suggests a revitalization of earlier thinking about the connectedness of humanity with environment. Furthermore, in line with global political culture, she merges her re-constructivism with a deep connection to place that, far from isolationist nationalisms, involves respect for the global commonalities of

Mankind without rejecting the necessity to maintain cultural diversity and respect for difference. Hers is a home-coming that departs from any nostalgic notion of 'going back' to a pre-modern state of inhabiting the world and proposes pragmatic solutions based on alternatives to the socio-political and environmental dilemmas that include a responsibility, not only to environment, but to others as part of the existential human condition.

Other philosophers who propose "corrective efforts" (Spretnak 70) include Stephen Toulmin. His work on the failings of modernity in *Cosmopolis: The Hidden Agenda of Modernity* (1990) examines the short-comings and consequences of the scientific and machine revolution, deploring the humanist renaissance philosophy's fall into "formal rigor and exactitude" (Toulmin 153) from that which functioned "within the order of nature" (ibid) with "diversity, ambiguity and uncertainty- [as] the hallmarks of Renaissance culture and rhetoric" (ibid). In brief, in his revisionist analysis of modernity, he blames times of economic crisis and war, at various stages throughout history, highlighting the instability of the Thirty Years War as catalyst for the rise of the Cartesian separation of reason from nature, and a Newtonian hierarchy, rigorous control and logical formalisms that precipitated the formation of centralized controlling Sovereign nation-states. Toulmin's extensive work presents a historiographical and philosophical analysis of Humanity's disengagement from nature from the Renaissance until the 1980s, a period which once again saw an upswing of stability, hierarchy and control over Humanist values. In the final chapters, he proposes practical alternative solutions for life at the turn of the century that must recognize, as Spretnak and others have reiterated, a form of relatedness.

He discerns the need for a ‘third phase of modernity’ that will see the demise of the sovereign nation-states over the smaller vulnerable communities that have been divided among such states, such as the Kurds or others. In this regard, echoing the thoughts of Casey on the importance of place, Toulmin not only laments the loss of natural region with its cultural specificities, but forwards a future in which Sovereign nation-states divide power amongst internal, local communities. I adopt Toulmin’s revised conceptualization of modernity and thus it may be understood, in the present thesis, as based on Cartesian and Newtonian anti-humanist Renaissance philosophies in pursuit of certainty and order. Furthermore, I should point out that my use of the term Humanist or Humanism will also adopt the view taken by Toulmin to mean a philosophy based on Montaigne’s scepticism, lack of certainty, human diversity and relatedness to the cosmological whole. Sartre points out two very different meanings of ‘Humanism’: First, one that “takes man as an end and as the supreme value” (J.-P. Sartre 51) and second, one that “man is always outside of himself, and it is in projecting and losing himself beyond himself that man is realized. [and that] man is not an island unto himself but always present in a human universe” (ibid 52-51). Existentialism naturally takes the second viewpoint and firmly rejects the first. Thus, when I refer to Humanist values in Seiffert’s work, I rely on Toulmin’s description of sixteenth century Humanists and Sartre’s existentialist concepts of the term. All these theories will be addressed in my discussion in the following chapters.

A final example of such ‘corrective effort’, (published during the writing of this thesis), that has shaped my reading of Seiffert’s fiction, is

Catalan Philosopher Josep Maria Esquirol, whose notion of Intimate Resistance and Proximity in *La Resistència Íntima: Assaig d'Una Filosofia de la Proximitat* (2015),[8] approaches a philosophy of organicism and post-materialism that includes a return-home as part of a way forward into dwelling-well.[9] Esquirol's theory has much in common with Sartrean Humanism and Heideggerian thinking on 'The Thing' and a dwelling attentive to the fourfold; a close dwelling in proximity to the simple things that make up human existence, the pleasure taken in modest daily activities and an intimate co-habitation with others, as advocated by existentialism. But, especially interesting for the purposes of this study, and which indeed identify the main arguments forwarded, are the chapters in his work that describe the metaphysical home as a post-nihilist space of refuge and resistance; a community shelter of hospitality and affection which brings us into closer proximity with what essentially remain the vital elements of human existence (Esquirol 48). This return echoes Heideggerian thought, as well as Emmanuel Lévinas' in which Man must reach outside of himself to the Other, not only as 'being-with', but 'being-for' that means in disinterested responsibility. Lévinas, former student of Heidegger, also reflected on dwelling, describing it as "a coming to oneself, a retreat home with oneself

[8] *Intimate Resistance: Essay on a Philosophy of Proximity* (my translation). This publication has not been translated into English.

[9] Other Catalan philosophers also forward similar values. See, for example, Jordi Pigem i Perez, and Àlex Rovira Celma. *Buena Crisis: Hacia Un Mundo Postmaterialista*. 2nd ed. Editorial Kairós SA, 2010. Print., and Jordi Pigem Perez, *Inteligencia Vital*. 1st ed. Káirós, 2016. Piguem and Esquirol appear to be influenced by Catalan Philosopher, Theologist and Writer, Raimon Paniker Alemany (1918-2010). Of Catalan mother and Indian father, Paniker's thinking was based on the convergence of Eastern and Western philosophies and religion (Heidegger was also influenced by Buddhism), in which connectedness, pluralism and a politics of dialogue as a means of peaceful co-habitation were vital elements. I would like to thank, here, my colleague Dr. Jordi Coral (UAB) for bringing Esquirol's work to my attention.

as in a land of refuge, which answers to a hospitality, an expectancy, a human welcome" (Lévinas 156). An analysis of philosophical differences is outside the confines of this thesis, but suffice to say that for Lévinas, as for Heidegger, dwelling forms an essential part of human existence, but the former, echoing Sartre, emphasized the outside world as constitutive of the nature of dwelling. The notion of responsibility for the Other in dwelling will be of relevance for the analysis of *ABIW* in chapter one of this thesis. In the same way, Esquirol's philosophy of Proximity also invites us to understand that being-at-home-in-the-world means going "forth outside from an inwardness" (ibid 152) that implies altruism and tolerance towards the Other. Esquirol fuses existential, phenomenological and Eastern philosophies to create a form of 'Intimate Resistance' that does not "turn its back on politics" (ibid 50) [10] and neither does it look to a utopian past, on the contrary, it offers a practical means of countering what he terms a "banal politics" (ibid 50) that exploits the weakness left behind from a deficient sense of community spirit, with generosity and altruism at its core. Far from the individualism and hopelessness associated with nihilism, this line of thinking turns its sights towards a more hopeful future where Mankind might reach a state of well-being.

The three outlined 'corrective' theories, Spretnak, Toulmin and Esquirol, exemplify a philosophical and cultural movement towards a renewed attention to relatedness. I must emphasize that these 'corrective efforts' to modernity are not nostalgic in the sense that the romantics may

[10] My translation "[…] no gira l'esquena a la política" (Esquirol 50). All further translations of this text will be my own.

have yearned for a pre-industrial era, but rather look forward to a time that can combine the best that modernity has to offer with a dwelling within Humanist values. These will form the basis of my discussion throughout this thesis as to the possibility of a return-home.

These theorists also highlight a revitalization of place as fundamental to the notion of home. Indeed, Antony Giddens in his sociological work on *The Consequences of Modernity* (1990) noted that "[i]n conditions of modernity, place becomes increasingly phantasmagoric" (Giddens 19) insomuch as social and economic relations influencing localized place has become increasingly distant. Seiffert's discourse strongly evokes the nuances of place through overt descriptions of landscape or cultural specificities, such as regional language variations, behaviours or activities. The rural Ukrainian setting of *ABIW* and the urban Glaswegian tenements of *TWH* perhaps best exemplify the significance accorded to place and its influence on the culture, temperament and daily lives of its inhabitants. Nevertheless, just as domestic spaces may evoke the Homely and Unhomely, the embeddedness and rootedness to place that many of Seiffert's characters embody similarly contrasts with the uprootedness of others in our precarious, transient 'liquid times' (Bauman, *Liquid Times: Living in an Age of Uncertainty*). Although Seiffert's fiction abounds with people whose lives are shaped by the qualities of place, their socio-cultural milieu as well as the political and historical times in which they live, some find themselves physically displaced, forcefully or voluntarily, from place and home, such as Helmut, Lore and her siblings in *TDR*, the Jewish brothers in *ABIW*, or Stevie in *TWH*, these are dislocated beings who struggle to re-encounter the comfort and familiarity of

home. The plight of Polish labour migrants portrayed in *TWH* and 'Second Best' (*FS*) in which families are separated by the need to find employment in more affluent countries, such as Britain or Germany, serve as examples of the way Seiffert draws attention to contemporary issues of labour migration and taps into its often-unspoken effect on the well-being of individuals and their families.

To investigate the significance of place in Seiffert, I refer to environmental philosopher, Edward S. Casey's work in his revised edition of *Getting Back into Place: A Renewed Understanding of the Place World* (2009); a pivotal and extensive study of the significance of place to human culture and well-being. Developing Heideggerian thought, Casey proposes homecoming as a 'getting back into place' that entails an inter-connectedness with the natural environment and region. His work characterizes the trend after circa 1990 to recognize the importance of place in philosophy and other disciplines which has been triggered by several factors: increasing globalization, the World Wide Web as anchoring viewpoint over global culture and the mass displacement of millions of human beings around the world due to labour migration, wars and political conflict. All these issues lead to what he terms place-mourning (Casey xxiii) and a "longing-for-place-in-the-face-of-its-absence" (ibid xxiii-xxiv). Just as for Heidegger Man has become estranged from the fourfold, for Casey, he remains alienated from a deep sense of place as integral part of our ontological home. Nevertheless, echoing Heidegger, Spretnak, and Esquirol, Casey's work proffers a solution to the postmodern crisis of physical and philosophical displacement by suggesting an increased awareness of the inter-connectivity of humanity with

environment and place without the segregation of natural regions. This mode of thought will be relevant to the present thesis, since I discuss how Seiffert's fiction draws out the way political borders result in the unnatural, forced separation of human beings, which may not only give rise to violent conflict, but also provoke deeply emotional disturbances in human relationships. In this up-dated edition of his work first published in 1990, Casey underscores the interdependent relationship between region and place thus integrating into his thought a more contemporary view on the entanglement between human culture and natural environment. In short, Casey's homecoming, for what he terms an "unimplaced modernity" (Casey 365) is one that involves a re-implacement which, far from any simplistic notion of nostalgic return, implies renewed consideration of the deeply embedded role that place has on the lives of human beings. In this thesis, I employ Casey's terms of implacement and 'getting-back-into-place' to refer to a return-home that embraces the totality of Heideggerian fourfold with what is perhaps a more pragmatic concern for attention to region, place and culture. I repeat the analogy with the above quoted words by Have, but this time in relation to place as part of our home since it too remains "an inseparable part of our identity".

Finally, Casey, Heidegger and Vidler, find inspiration in Gaston Bachelard's highly influential conception of a phenomenology of the imagination applied to the poetics of space in his well-known work *The Poetics of Space* (1958). The re-edition of this classic text, with an introduction by Richard Kearney for the 2014 Penguin edition, marks its persistent relevance to the study of the poetics of space today. Significantly,

Henri Lefebvre noted the similarities between Heidegger and Gaston Bachelard in their concept of the house as a “sacred, quasi-religious space [that counters] the terrible urban reality that the twentieth century has instituted” (Lefebvre 120-121), and thus, remarks on a phenomenology of home as a corrective measure to the modern condition. It is such a space because, in a nutshell, for Bachelard, to dream an image (of home for example) allows us, albeit momentarily, to occupy another space different from reality which means “to exist otherwise” (Kearney xxv). Bachelard’s phenomenology is based on our spatial experiences within the materiality and physicality of the places and things of our life-worlds; that is, home, houses, huts, attics, cellars, furniture and imaginative spaces that evoke safety and comfort such as shells, nests or corners which may be the dwelling places of animals and insects. He describes his theory of the phenomenology of the imagination as “a study of the phenomenon of the poetic image when it emerges in the consciousness as a direct product of the heart, soul and being of man, apprehended in his actuality” (Bachelard 3). Bachelard speaks of the power of poetic images that emerge from the soul as transformative in space and time, and that “stand[s] outside of pragmatic language” (ibid 11). When we speak of nests, cottages or huts, for example, we may be transformed into the realm of imagination that may be different for every one of us according to our cultural and experiential life-worlds. His phenomenological analysis of the image of the house embraces rooms and objects that make up this space; for example, “wardrobes with their shelves, desks with their drawers, and chests with their false bottoms are veritable organs of the secret psychological life. […] they have quality of intimacy” (ibid 99).

Thus, Bachelard's work on the phenomenology of the house and home that describes the relationship between the tangible physical space of the house and the poetic imagination will inform my analysis of Seiffert's use of Literary Architecture, house, home, rooms and domestic objects. It will allow a textual reading that supports the main claims of this thesis: echoing Lefebvre's observation of Heidegger, Seiffert incites a phenomenological return-home in the reader's imagination, where she takes us outside the realm of our present life-worlds to one that reminds us of what we have lost, and by doing so, paradoxically to a poetic return-home and to a re-implacement.

All the theoretical perspectives outlined above inform the methodology of this thesis. Each chapter focusses with varying emphasis on one or more of these aspects which sometimes fuse and interweave. In what follows, I describe how the chapters reflect the theoretical approach described in this section and how the concepts support the reading of the narratives analysed therein.

III. Overview of Chapters

This thesis is divided into three chapters which develop the arguments previously outlined. To that end, the chapters revolve around the loss of dwelling and the possibility of a return-home to dwelling-well and its literary articulation through Frank's notion of Literary Architecture and attention to place. The texts are organized in terms of thematic similarity as to the disturbances to dwelling rather than chronology of publication.

Chapter one broadly addresses modernity and imperialism as disturbance of dwelling, focussing on the short story 'Architect' (*FS*) and *ABIW*. In accordance with one of the main hypotheses of this thesis, it particularly traces the metonymical and metaphorical use of architectural spaces and place as aesthetic evocation of the fall from dwelling and the possibility of a return-home. Although these two works are separated chronologically, (the former forms part of Seiffert's earlier work and the latter the latest at the time of writing this thesis), discussing them together elicits their shared engagement with modernity as the disturbance of dwelling and the return to a world that accounts for a deep sense of connectedness with place and nature, establishing Seiffert's fiction within re-constructive postmodernism. The first section on 'Architect' foregrounds some key theoretical concepts and themes that will be developed in the following section and the rest of the thesis. Of particular interest here is the way the story thematizes existential anxiety, Heideggerian inauthenticity and ontological insecurity inherent to a crisis of modernity. Likewise, the second section looks at *ABIW* through the lens of modernity and Heideggerian dwelling but, in addition, explores the way imperialistic forces of totalitarian states, and the 'dark-side' of modernity shake the foundations of dwelling-well by dismantling local socio-political institutions and creating an intransient and all-powerful bureaucracy, triggering lawlessness and turmoil that, in extremis, paves the way for self-interestedness for the sake of survival, to the detriment of tending to the Other. To this regard, existential philosophies in their emphasis on responsibility to the Other and a being-with or being-for will be highly pertinent. I conclude the chapter with the thesis

that these texts forward the possibility of a more optimistic course for the future of humanity if only we attend to the near-at-hand and an essential connectedness within the fourfold, reaching outside of the subjective self towards an existence in harmony with the Other. Thus, the analysis of the works in this chapter contextualize part of the main framework for the following sections and establish the main arguments of this thesis.

Chapter two broadly discusses how Seiffert undermines the sensation of security inherent in certain architectural spaces, thus evoking the *in*securities of postmodern placelessness and alienation through the interpretative frameworks of Vidler's Architectural Uncanny and Bachelard's poetics of space in *TDR*. The first is characterized by the slippage between the Homely and the Unhomely and the second by a provocation of the reader's poetic imaginings of home and architectural space. This chapter addresses the relationship between existential *angst* and the uncanny as manifestations of alienation and estrangement, metaphysical homelessness and rootlessness as part not only of the modern condition but inherent to extreme conditions of war. It is divided into three sub-sections: The first focusses on 'Helmut' and discusses hidden familial secrets and concealment along with disorientation through displacement as contributory factor in humanity's loss of dwelling. The second sub-section is devoted to the hostile spaces of a war zone and to forced displacement in 'Lore'. Here, I broadly argue that Seiffert evokes the estrangement and bewilderment, anxiety and dread of physical displacement through the slippage between the Homely and the Unhomely and the Architectural Uncanny. The third sub-section centres on the return of repressed memory and psychological

disorientation in 'Micha'. I discuss the way Freud's 'intellectual uncertainty' and the unknowability of the past manifests itself as a post-generational haunting that impedes dwelling-well. I suggest that this causes a psychological 'un-placement', in Casey's term, verging on the Unhomely, and thus Seiffert exposes the dilemma of knowing how to be at peace with historical memory once it has been uncovered.

Chapter three further develops the issues raised in the last section of chapter two and explores the way cultural memory and identity remain on view as a form of lingering historical anxiety that appears dormant, but nevertheless pervades and resurfaces to similarly destabilize and undermine the capacity to dwell-well. It also develops the eco-critical perspectives in dwelling already outlined in chapter one, particularly the way modernity has profoundly eroded a sense of place but, furthermore, argues for the presence of a deep cultural counterforce that resists nihilism. This chapter is structured in three sections: The first explores the effects of globalization, socio-historical 'contamination' and the emotional identity inherent in place in the short story 'Field Study' (*FS*) and suggests that deep forces of cultural identity resist the razing effects of globalization. The second section addresses haunting traumatic memory and how its persistence can undermine dwelling-well in the novel *Afterwards*. The main argument here is for architectural imagery, building and decorating as metonym, or Literary Architecture, for the difficulties of psychological healing, renewal and a return-home as counter to the destructive forces of history. The final section of this chapter brings together issues previously discussed throughout the thesis, but explores, more specifically, how *TWH* fictionalizes the socio-

political conditions of contemporary Glasgow through the micro-history of a divided and conflicted family struggling to let go of a deeply rooted memory and ethnic patriotism. The main argument is that Literary Architecture reveals how collective and communicative memory remain significant in a fundamental human connection to place. Ultimately the overall thesis of this chapter is that despite the forces of globalization and the invasiveness of the power structures of the nation-state, the persistence of deep local cultural counterforces paradoxically covert the attention that should be paid to such cultural difference and impede a return-home and to dwelling-well. In this sense, this final section brings the discussion full circle in that it broadly raises similar questions to *ABIW* as to humanity's deep connection to place.

I conclude by bringing together the findings from each chapter and, in accordance with the main hypotheses of this thesis, suggesting a general conclusion that Seiffert's work, rather than the more pessimistic impasse of postmodern literary aesthetics proffers a way forward for humanity and therefore postulates a re-constructive postmodernism that appeals to a philosophy of Proximity embracing multi-culturalism, religious pluralism, tolerance towards the Other and attention to the Heideggerian fourfold. Finally, I offer suggestions for further lines of enquiry that have necessarily been omitted from this thesis for reasons of time and space constraints, or that have surfaced during the research process, but that nevertheless may prove fruitful not only in understanding Seiffert's work in isolation, but for placing it within a broader artistic trend that transcends postmodernism and forwards re-constructivism.

CHAPTER ONE

LOST IN MODERNITY: ONTOLOGICAL SECURITY AND GETTING BACK INTO PLACE

Introduction

This chapter focusses on two texts, 'Architect' (*FS*), and *ABIW*. They are discussed together, here, because I suggest they share a common theme; modernity as the principal cause of the loss of dwelling. The specific aims of this chapter are twofold: First, to suggest the negative effects of modernity, as outlined by Stephen Toulmin, as generative for the loss of dwelling and metaphysical homelessness in these two works. Second, to bring to light how these texts articulate the possibility of a return-home that attends to organicism, the Heideggerian fourfold and, Esquirol's notion of 'intimate resistance' or philosophy of Proximity which embraces modesty, physicality, materiality and an acceptance of the Other (in line with the existentialist notion of being responsible for others) into the home. In accordance with my overriding thesis, the question that I strive to answer here is how does Literary Architecture and a sense of place, that appears particularly strong in *ABIW*, underlie the construction of a loss of dwelling and a return-home in these texts? Finally, I suggest that by foregrounding a way forward based on attention to relatedness and the quotidian implicit in these concepts, these texts may ultimately be aligned within a re-constructive postmodernism in their return to meaning.

I have followed the same structure for both texts to highlight the similarities and to facilitate a comparison between the way they thematize the loss of dwelling and a return home. Thus, the first sections broadly address the causes of the loss and the fall into homelessness, and the second, the return in both cases. The first section of this chapter explores the short story 'Architect' (*FS*) and proposes an existentialist reading to highlight the loss of dwelling inherent in the modern condition, of which anxiety or *angst* is symptomatic. The second addresses *ABIW* and I explore the way extreme political ideologies, in their adherence to the 'dark side' of modernity, precipitate the fall from dwelling into nihilism. I conclude each section with the thesis that these texts suggest a return home and an implacement, in Casey's terms, through embracing a 'being-with', in existential terms, that includes family, attention to the simplicity and materiality of things, and above all, to existing within the harmonious state implied in the Heideggerian fourfold as the mainstay of dwelling-well.

1.1. Existential Anxiety, Ontological Security and Home in 'Architect'

I begin, then, with 'Architect' (2004) published as part of the collection of short stories, *FS*. This text has clear thematic similarities with several other contemporary works; Scottish writers, Andrew O'Hagan's *Our Fathers* (1999) and David Grieg's *The Architect* (1996) as well as English writers, Michael Bracewell's *Missing Margate* (1988), and the earlier J.B Ballard's

High Rise (1975).[11] These are novels in which architecture and the architectural profession mirror the failings of modernity, and the commodities and values that can distract Mankind from the materiality and proximity of being; that is, from attention to the modest simplicity of things that make up existence and the relatedness with the cosmic whole that constitutes the Heideggerian fourfold. Characteristically, the characters in these texts find themselves as isolated, postmodern 'lone cowboys' in a meaningless existence, disconnected from what really matters, blanketed in inauthenticity and capitalist consumerism. Here, the similarities end, because these postmodernist works feature typically dystopian endings, exemplified by Ballard's high postmodernist novel and Bracewell's more recent work, in which the architect protagonist sets about destroying all his architectural creations. Ultimately, they use architectural imagery to convey a pessimistic standpoint of modernity and, above all, the meaninglessness and 'disconnect' of modern existence.[12]

On the other hand, I suggest Seiffert's story differs from these postmodernist texts in its more optimistic proposal of a way forward. Although she similarly portrays the fall into a meaningless existence, she ultimately suggests the possibility of dwelling-well; in short, a return-home. This supports Dell's observations, mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, as to the importance of family as a resistance to the modern condition.

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[11] See Andrew O'Hagan, *Our Fathers*. Faber and Faber, 1999; Michael Bracewell, *Missing Margate*. London: Fourth Estate, 1988. Print; David Greig, *The Architect*. London [etc.]: Methuen Drama in association with the Traverse Theatre, 1996, and J. G Ballard, *High-Rise*. 2014th ed., Fourth Estate, 1975.

[12] The term 'disconnect' is used here, and throughout the rest of this thesis, in the philosophical sense to mean the disconnection from the essential elements of human existence: connection to the cosmological whole, to Others and to things as part of that whole, and a consciousness of mortality.

Seiffert's texts similarly imply family relationships as part of the return-home, although not uniquely, as we shall see.

The 'disconnect' from the real, then, may be most acutely perceived in this story, whose protagonist, like that of Bracewell's *Missing Margate*, a "young and enthusiastic, energetic and ambitious" (*FS* 101)[13] architect, suffers an existential depression, a state of *angst*. The plot is characteristically simple. After committing, seemingly minor and apparently difficult to discern, design errors, the successful and revered architect falls from grace. He returns to his childhood home, where he helps his father on his allotment. He ceases to design grand architectural structures to build a "splendid construction surround[ing] the tomatoes" (107). A consideration of the origins of his *angst* might elucidate the reasons that subsequently led him to consider himself "[n]o longer an architect" (ibid).

First, on the surface, the lack of authenticity in the architect's designs reflect American architectural critic Lewis Mumford's early observations about architecture, that have largely gone unheeded; that is, an architecture that fails to attend to the humane and to a deep inter-connectedness to place. Seiffert's architect observes "what he has produced bears no relation to his expectations" (101). We do not know what constitutes these "expectations", but we may conjecture that he feels unfulfilled, frustrated or at a loss in his work. Mumford's critical observations on modern architecture, however, as Peter Critchley's (2012) more recent review of his work attests to, remains highly relevant to our times. Of significance to this thesis is Mumford's

[13] All further references will be to this edition.

critique of an architecture that he considers to be alienated from humanity and disconnected from environment. Of significance here, are the chapters on 'The Age of the Machine' and 'Architecture and Civilization' as they foreground much of Heidegger's later philosophy regarding architecture and its relationship with the fourfold. On building, for example, he believed that for good architecture, one must first "work the ground enough beforehand to sew the new seeds" (Mumford 199), reminiscent of Heidegger's later conception of building and dwelling in 'Building Dwelling, Thinking'. I will return to this concept further in the last chapter of this thesis, because it implies, like Heideggerian architectural theory, that dwelling must occur before building can take place.

Moreover, especially noteworthy is Mumford's critique of modernity. Paralleling the (later) thoughts of Antony Giddens or Stephen Toulmin, he states "[o]ur difficulty it seems to me, is due to the fact that human sciences have lagged behind the physical ones" (ibid 196). Thus, Mumford similarly highlights the over emphasis on the rational side of modernity; in Toulmin's thinking, the Cartesian over the Humanism of Montaigne, in the fall from dwelling, and we shall see the pertinence of this even further in the section on *ABIW*. Perhaps of greater relevance are his thoughts that "[d]uring the last century our situation has changed from that of the machine system; and it is perhaps time that we contrived new elements which will alter once more the profounder contours of our civilization" (196). Indeed, these 'new elements', to which Mumford referred, would seem to pertain to organicist philosophies that forward a thinking of which he would undoubtedly have approved. He would certainly be disillusioned if he could

witness the ongoing struggle of today's environmentalists and the persistent construction of architectural structures that continue to negate the importance of place.

Seiffert's text gestures towards Mumford's concerns in the critique of standardized, technological modernity that ignores the significance of deep place relations and perpetuates difference and distancing from the Other. This is clearly evoked by the architect's error with the carpark of a building in which "[t]welve executive spaces are required not ten" (101-2). The concept of 'executive' recurs in the *TWH*, as the old Glaswegian tenements are replaced by "executive homes" (Seiffert 233); a cultural signifier denoting contemporary Britain, with its ingrained sense of class, as well as the higher values placed on materialism and capitalist corporatism. But it also implies homogeneity. The 'executive houses' mentioned in *TWH*, for instance, have indeed formed a homogenized part of British landscape in the last decades of the twentieth century, with no attention to local building materials or sense of cultural embeddedness. But, of course, 'executive car parking' and houses also imply a higher and privileged value placed on those pertaining to the maintenance and advancement of mechanized, technological industry and the growth economy over socio-cultural, artistic, caring or other professions. Certainly, we may be reminded of Mumford's words mentioned earlier, and I restate here for convenience, that the "human sciences have lagged behind the physical ones" (Mumford 196).

Significantly, for Mumford, as for Heidegger, human beings are "creatures of their environment" (Mumford 195), and thus have the obligation to care for and maintain a "balance between the natural and social

environment" (ibid 24); a causal element of fundamental happiness. Mumford and Heidegger have served as a bridge, and an inspiration to contemporary green movements in architecture, such as that proposed by architect Christopher Alexander and to post-materialist thought.[14] Alexander proposes a return to community architecture, exemplified here in the portrayal of the allotment shelter; simple structures that are built by the people themselves and that attend to the "subtle minutiae in the environment" (Alexander) allowing humanity to have a sense of place, as Casey would put it. Alexander relates this ability to find the subtle connection with the environment, paralleling Heidegger's 'fourfold', to a sensation of 'happiness'. Nevertheless, as Mumford, Heidegger and others have noted, "[t]he sort of simple happiness [Alexander] mean[s] comes about because of something that we largely do not know how to attain" (ibid). In short, contemporary architectural thought based on Mumford, Heidegger or Alexander, in its return to simplicity and modesty, to place relations and to being-with the Other, finds its fictional counterpart in Seiffert's architect, who must also strive to encounter the 'simple happiness' or well-being expounded by Alexander.

Furthermore, the architect has been stripped of his creativity and skill; he must face the imposition of a valueless and barren architecture, far removed from that advocated by Mumford or Heidegger. Significantly, however, and I return to this point in a moment, on the plane of Literary

[14] For further details see Alexander, Christopher. *The Nature of Order*. Routledge, 2005. Print, whose interests lie in domestic architecture for well-being. Also see The Netherlands Design Institute *Doors of Perception 2 Conference Report* 1994, (available online), for an interesting paper given by Alexander on his proposal of a return to community architecture.

Architecture, the emptiness and inauthenticity of his architectural projects mirrors his 'self' in the role he must play as a 'successful architect'. The barren architecture, in other words, reflects his barren interiority and alienated condition.

Nevertheless, let me return to the carpark image that, despite its apparent simplicity, remains loaded with meaning and irony. The architect's error lies not in the design of abodes in harmony with Heideggerian dwelling, but in 'housing' the cars. Such space embodies not only un-lived-in space, but also technological modernity dominating humankind. We use cars as part of a transportation system, but they also use us, a technological 'catch 22', reminiscent of Heidegger's example of an airliner. In Hubert Dreyfus' words, "we are not subjects who use the transportation system, but rather we are used by it to fill the planes" (Dreyfus 306). Certainly, when we imagine many urban British landscapes, they appear to have become one gigantic carpark. Likewise, as Dreyfus notes, "[h]uman beings, on this view, become a resource to be used — but more important, to be enhanced — like any other" (ibid). Humanity and, the architect himself, have become "part of the system that no one directs but that moves towards the total mobilization and enhancement of all beings, even us" (ibid). For Heidegger, this concept of the domination of the technological world formed part of what he referred to as 'planetary technics' that, as we shall see in following sections, does not refer to technological instruments themselves, (such as the gas chambers in World War Two or computers), but the underlying system. Dreyfus' words mirror Heidegger's thoughts on Mankind as having become purely 'standing-reserve'. This will prove to be highly significant in my discussion of *ABIW*,

and so I return to it in the following section of this thesis, but for the moment, suffice it to say that the architect has been desubjectified because he too has been transformed into a resource: "pursu[ing] the development of [his] potential simply for the sake of further growth. [He has] no specific goals" (ibid 306).

Like most of us, the architect clearly does not realize that his status as 'standing reserve' is a contributory factor of his unhappy state, his *angst*. The unconsciousness of this condition is perhaps best observed by trade union activist Jimmy Reid, rector of Seiffert's former Scottish university, Glasgow, in the 1970s, in an inaugural speech in which he drew attention to the social undercurrent of *angst* in our time: "[M]any may not have rationalised it. May not even understand, may not be able to articulate it. But they feel it" (Reid 5).[15] Seiffert depicts the architect caught up in the same indescribable condition that Reid highlights, and neither can he nor does he articulate it; indeed, his brother wonders what "this whole bloody crisis has been about" (106).

However, as I have already briefly mentioned, in Literary Architecture, Frank points out that building remains synonymous with "the nature of experience" (Frank 4). But, in this text, it appears not to be merely

[15] This is part of the speech delivered by Reid at the inauguration of the academic year in 1972 at the University of Glasgow. His definition of alienation, I believe, is appropriate to describe many of the characters in Seiffert's works, and thus, I believe it worth quoting here more fully: "Alienation is the precise and correctly applied word for describing the major social problem in Britain today. […]. Let me right at the outset define what I mean by alienation. It is the cry of men who feel themselves the victims of blind economic forces beyond their control. It's the frustration of ordinary people excluded from the processes of decision-making. The feeling of despair and hopelessness that pervades people who feel with justification that they have no real say in shaping or determining their own destinies" (Reid 5). The notion of self-determination, of being in control of our own destiny on earth has its parallels in Sartre's existentialist concept of inescapable freedom in which Man is "responsible for everything he does" (Pigem Perez).

a reflection of the architect's interiority, but also the demise from dwelling that affects humanity itself; the soul of humanity. He begins to lose interest in the grandiosity and awe of public buildings which begin to be "a puzzle to him, a shape […] his minds' eye sees no interior" (102); the sterility of the building clearly reflects the character's soul. But, there is irony in the word "shape" (102), because architecture is not only geometric *shape*, as Bachelard, Mumford and Heidegger amongst others point out, for an architecture that is in harmony with dwelling, it should embody meaning and phenomenological essence. In other words, it should be related to experience and arise out of the necessities of existence and daily human activity in connection to the environment. Building for Heidegger is a 'caring for' and a cultivation that originates from a strong sense of place, which he exemplified through the bridge in Heidelberg, or the, perhaps romanticised, country farmhouses or cottages; he states, "[t]he bridge is a locale. As such a thing, it allows a space into which earth and sky, divinities and mortals are admitted" (Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking" 357). Thus, the grandiose buildings applauded by public opinion embody geometric 'shape' but lack cultivation and attention to the fourfold. To this extent, they are not dwelling places in the Heideggerian sense, and of course, as he points out, this does not just refer to houses or places in which we dwell in the ordinary sense of the word, but buildings which are, nevertheless, in

> domain of our dwelling. That domain extends over these buildings and so is not limited to the dwelling place. The truck driver is at home on the highway, but he does not have his lodgings there; the working woman is at home in the spinning mill but does not have her dwelling

> place there; the chief engineer is at home in the power station, but he does not dwell there. The buildings house man. He inhabits them and yet does not dwell in them, if to dwell means solely to have our lodgings in them. (ibid 347-348)

From a Heideggerian perspective, then, the architect's public buildings, as mere 'shape' appear to be meaningless, because they are unrelated to dwelling-well in terms of Mankind's relationship to the fourfold.

In addition, for Heidegger, only by *thinking* about our ontological homelessness can we truly begin to dwell. Gary Peters puts it thus: "To dwell is to linger, to wait, to attend, but it is not to make a home. The home, in all its cosiness, obscures the essence of dwelling, which is severe in its demands and devoid of creature comforts" (Peters). Paralleling the architect's constructions are the flat characters in the story, his colleagues, boss, and the secretaries, who by unthinkingly conforming to the system that defines them, remain 'homeless'. In Heideggerian terms, they unquestioningly comply to their status as 'standing-reserve', as products of the system, they go about their daily business without demur. Above all, like the architect until the point of his epiphany, they have lost "rapport with things" (Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking" 359); to re-use Peter's words, "the essence of dwelling" (Peters) elides them. The architect's plight is further encapsulated by Heidegger's thought that:

> The proper dwelling plight lies in this, that mortals ever search anew for the essence of dwelling, that *they must ever learn to dwell*. What if man's homelessness consisted in this, that man still does not even think

> of the *proper* plight of dwelling as *the* plight? Yet, as soon as Man gives thought to his homelessness, it is a misery no longer. Rightly considered and kept well in mind, it is the sole summons that calls mortals into their dwelling.(Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking" 363).

Unlike the other office workers, however, the architect does realize that "he has been walking in and out of buildings without *thinking* about them" (106).[16]. This loss of "rapport with things", then, includes his architectural structures. Heidegger noted this 'disconnect' or unconcern with things, as a cause of existential depression. And, it is only once the architect becomes conscious about his own homelessness that he begins to feel more 'at home'. This is a key point, and for the architect, a moment of epiphany that brings him into dwelling and back home.

Furthermore, the architect's realization that he had not been giving thought to his buildings, mirrors Heidegger's observation that when things run smoothly at work, the tools and material objects remain unnoticed but, as Charles Guignon puts it in his interpretation of Heidegger, when "something goes wrong in the workshop [...] there is a 'changeover' in the way things show up for us" (Guignon 11). This obliges us to stand back and notice what has gone wrong, and thus, "a breakdown makes it possible to catch sight of the worldhood of the world" (ibid). For the architect, then, when things begin to break down, and mistakes and criticisms are made, he realizes that his job, like his buildings, had now become "value free, meaningless objects whose

[16] My italics

usefulness was merely a product of our own subjective interests and needs" (ibid 13).

Thus, the architect comes to realize that his buildings had become 'contextless objects', in that they do not constitute dwelling in its connection with the fourfold, what Heidegger would name a 'dis-worlding of the world' and not the authentic components and their inter-connectedness, inherent to dwelling that truly build it. Esquirol will, more recently, build upon the Heideggerian rapport with things in relation to the importance of their materiality and physicality in dwelling-well that forms part of an 'intimate resistance' to the modern condition; that is human beings' closeness to and contact with things that have meaning in an experiential sense. We shall see how this is played out, not only on a thematic level, but also how this is embedded into narrative technique in the section below on *ABIW*. For the moment, suffice to say that the Heideggerian 'disconnect' from things is manifest in the architect's existential depression, as he seems to have lost proximity to his buildings that in pre-modern times, a carpenter or an artisan builder would have maintained. In Heideggerian terms, the building would have arisen out of the necessities of place, and of human activity in that place, in a similar way that tools would also have a relation to the connectedness of humanity with the fourfold.

Let us return for a moment in more detail to the notion of the building as a *product* and to Dreyfus' observation on Heidegger's thoughts, that humans "become a resource to be used" (Dreyfus 306), since therein lies another significant root of anxiety. The architect is measured for his marketability and his efficiency, and the expectations of Others. His Being

has become welded into his professional title, a mere product or a resource, with no value for itself. This is illustrated in the following passage:

> His drawings and his gracious manner somehow inseparable. Bureaucrats with construction millions would comb their hair and run a checking tongue across their dentures in preparation for their meetings. Those clients who fell for his designs also fell for him. (101)

This passage highlights the inseparability of the man from his profession; further strengthened by using the professional title rather than his name. But, significantly, the architect also defines himself by what other people think of him, by the worth that others bestow on him; he “worries about the need to be something worthwhile, meaningful, substantial and good. He worries about being boring” (104). Our worth is valued on ‘being something’ in life. He attempts to regain “the old charm” (106) and manages to find another job where “the managers understand crossroads, family commitments, appreciate the honesty, the evidence of storms weathered” (106), as he (dishonestly) “cites an elderly parent as a reason for leaving his last employment” (105). But, Seiffert’s use of subtle irony here reveals the divergent ‘dishonesty’ in such socially accepted excuses. Like his buildings, the architect thus embodies ‘inauthenticity’; he chooses to “interpret [his] being in the public way” (Hall 137) and does what he considers to be ‘right’ with “tacit norms of appropriateness” (ibid 134).

Seiffert’s clipped, inexpressive style, moreover, mirrors the superficiality and idle conversations that “make up the inauthentic version of

discourse" (ibid 139):[17] This technique, in combination with comic irony, reveals inauthenticity embedded in norms that are ascribed to different activities. An example of this lies in the conversations in the office, which revolve around "the architect over pub lunches" (102) and with his brother of "women, politics […]" (ibid). Her subtle touch of comic irony highlights the absurdity of these norms of appropriateness that constitute our world. Seiffert's characteristic minimalism, thus expresses on a narrative level what is embedded into the thematic. This technique is perhaps best exemplified in the passage where the architect and his brother's girlfriend are washing the dishes in the kitchen:

> […] he asks her to take off her clothes. She is charming, unfailingly polite and ignores his request. […] His dad tells the architect that he really mustn't say such things. (105)

The architect's almost childlike honesty in expressing his sexual desire for the girl is countered by way of comic irony in the next paragraph, in which he has a "[...] twice weekly hour of silence with a counsellor […]" (105). He fails to reveal his true worries, as "he knows how banal they are. [And] [i]nstead, he cries a little, and after she expresses approval he cries a great deal." (ibid) The reader implicitly knows his condition is not at all "banal", and yet, it also implies a sense of 'something' inexpressible and incommunicable; a contemporary human experience. What has been

[17] For a further explanation of Heidegger's thought on authenticity of discourse, see Harrison Hall. "Intentionality and World: Division I of Being and Time." *Cambridge Companion to Heidegger*. Ed. Charles Guignon. Cambridge University Press, 1993. 122–140. Print. The readers' perception of inauthenticity is furthered by Seiffert's use of elision and evasion on a narrative level. Our imagination, cultural background and values must also work to perceive it, so too must our sensitivity to the anxieties of postmodernity.

revealed, then, is how the architect engages in superficial activity, "noisy chatter that never questions or gets below the anonymous public understanding of things and, hence, never really says anything" (Hall 139).

In addition, Seiffert underscores the architect's engagement with the daily grind of distractions that divert attention from the essential elements of Being: "weeks go by, as they do, and the architect keeps busy. Long hours with little time for brooding, reflecting" (102). As I have mentioned above, only by thinking about the reasons for this homelessness, might the architect get back into place, in Casey's terms, or return-home. To make this relationship clearer, I use Pio Colonnello's words:

> The identity of 'home' and 'homelessness' defines the condition of contemporary people, for only in estrangement is it possible to find oneself. A human being's only duty is to accept without nostalgia, a personal solitude in homelessness as a formative element of personal being. (Colonnello 44-45)

If we apply Colonnello's thoughts on Heideggerian homelessness to the architect, then he can only be at one with himself by giving thought to it. Doing so, however, paradoxically results in estrangement and isolation from the surrounding society. As we have seen, giving thought to homelessness is the trigger for the architect's epiphany.[18] Furthermore, the scene, mentioned

[18] Heidegger's concept of giving 'thought' to our homelessness reminds me of the current trend for 'Mindfulness', founded in 1979 by Jon Kabat-Zinn and his Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program, which he launched at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. The research-based therapy has been employed to help combat depression and chronic unhappiness, and has been used in prisons, schools, veterans' centres amongst others. It consists of what has been coined as 'mindful' thinking in which one must pay full attention to present thoughts without judgement and learn to accept them. It is offered as an antidote to anxiety. It "means maintaining a moment-by-moment

above, in which he takes liberties with his brother's girlfriend, occurs only after he has given thought to his own mortality and imagined his death; thus, it appears as an expression for the architect's consciousness of inauthenticity.

In a nutshell, in this text like the other writers mentioned at the beginning of this section, Seiffert exposes the postmodern condition through her protagonist's troubled and complex subjectivity. But, significantly, she does not stop there, because by having her architect protagonist give thought to his condition, to the loss of rapport with things, she appears to proffer the possibility of a way forward.

1.1.i Im-Placement: Going Back Home

As Robert Ginsberg notes, home is less about "where you are from" [and] 'more about where you are going'" (Ginsberg 35). He associates the notion of home with the perception of going away and returning, or of journeying. Likewise, Casey remarked:

> Going into the earth's arc is always a coming back into it, a homecoming into a homeland whose limits cannot be captured by cartographic borderlines. But the way in is also the way out: truly to go into a place on earth, to homestead there, is to be released from the limes, the wall, and at last the mall.[19] (Casey 298)

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awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment" (GGSC). For detailed definition see GGSC, University of California. "Mindfulness Definition | Greater Good." *Greater Good: The Science of a Meaningful Life*. N.p., n.d. Post-materialist paradigms also advocate Mindfulness.

[19] For Casey 'homesteading' is finding a new place, that is unknown, but will become the 'home-place', much like migrants find a new place outside their home-place. He notes that 'home-steading' often

Metaphorically however, life is also a journey, a journey through time and place. Seiffert's frequent use of time phrases in *Architect*, "[t]he weeks go by, as they do […]" (102), "[t]he days fall by, all swift and exactly the same" (103), "[h]is days are spent sleeping and eating" (104), " a month in" and "sometime later" (106), certainly denote the melancholy passing of time, but also draw attention to the ordinariness of her hero's existence; mundane activities suggestive of a laborious and monotonous life, passing by with neither excitement nor contemplation, like "dead time" in "infinite succession" (Casey 8).[20] This technique of the ordinary, furthermore, alerts us to the story's allegorical status. The end of the journeying, for Casey, involves what he refers to as 're-implacement'; that is, the 'getting back into place'. How does this function in 'Architect'? How does Seiffert portray this re-implacement?

First, on the level of plot, we might perceive a physical re-implacement with the architect, after "sell[ing] his house, his car, his record collection" (104) and "move[ing] in with his father" (ibid). The irony in selling his own "house" and going back to his father's, where he finds himself "back in his old room with the Meccano under the bed" (ibid) is intriguing. Surely, the architect should feel 'at home' in his own 'house'. But the return

"brings building with it" (notes 446). 'Homecoming', on the other hand, is the return to the same place of origin. As he notes, home-place, like Odysseus finds on his return to Ithaca, might have changed and, thus, no longer correspond to the place one remembered before departing on the journey. (Casey 290)

[20] Time is a preoccupation in postmodernist literature, as it is in our hurried, occupied lives. However, Casey suggests that place has been much neglected because of the overemphasis on time. He notes that place cannot be extricated from time, and "we must in postmodern times, begin to appreciate once more the intrinsic ingrediencies of place in our time-bound and spaced-out lives" (Casey 8). For a more detailed explanation of this relationship, see his chapter on 'Implacement' in *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World*. 2009th ed. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993. Print.

to his childhood home also signifies a metaphorical homecoming, since, having been released from the shackles of the 'mall', to put it in Casey's terms –synonymous with the material realm — he returns to an ontological home, to "an inner realm, a private world which is our 'home away from home', our special place distinct from the rest of the world" (Ginsberg 31). For the architect, the way out of his *angst* implies a physical return to his childhood home, where he re-establishes a closer relationship with his father and brother, after which he finds himself feeling "much better" (ibid).

When we think of the family home, or our childhood home, perhaps we return to a place of familiarity, of routine; a place where we might seek inter-generational support or advice, comfort and protection (Dupuis and Thorns 34). The childhood home of the architect alludes to these poetic imaginings, as he returns to the house now occupied only by his father, who also benefits from his son's company: "his father is glad to have him around because he loves him very much" (104). Furthermore, the recall of our childhood homes, or physical return to them, might evoke memory and feelings of nostalgia (Dupuis and Thorns 34). Yet, as Gaston Bachelard claims, this memory has more to do with our imagination than reality. A closer examination of the discourse from a Bachelardian angle, by focussing on poetics of the childhood home, may help to elucidate the evocation of a sense of security and protection through a phenomenological view of re-implacement (Casey).

By returning to his childhood home the architect re-discovers what Bachelard called his 'corner of the world', a place of protection and comfort, his first universe. His return evokes a poetic return, furthermore, in the

reader’s imagination. Bachelard suggests that the house we were born in is "physically inscribed in us" (Bachelard 14), and other houses in our imagination are a version of the same. It remains embodied and unforgettable. He notes “[t]he house we were born in is more than an embodiment of home, it is also an embodiment of dreams” (ibid 15); the imaginative dreams of childhood, which do not, however, correspond to reality, but lie in a fusion of imagination and memory. For Bachelard, then, the function of poetry or fiction is to revive these dreams. Seiffert's prose moves the reader to feel the same tonality of memory and of ‘poetic depth’, to use Bachelard’s term, of the ‘space of the house’ or the childhood home. Frank also posits that "there exists, it seems, a curious reciprocity between place and memory: place triggers or yields remembering and remembering yields place" (Frank 156), yet we remember these places as they were, throwing reflection on time’s changes. But the house remains the embodiment of security, human beings’ first world, the ‘large cradle’ as Bachelard fittingly puts it. Casey parallels this notion, noting that the desire to return to our childhood home reflects that of something reliable in an unreliable and fragmented world: “To refind place, a place we have been losing, we may need to return, in memory or imagination to the earliest places we have known" (Casey ix). To use Casey’s own words, "[t]he home territory embodies the plenitude that being placeless lacks" (ibid). Thus, by returning to his childhood home, the architect recaptures the sense of place, both on the physical and phenomenological plane.

Seiffert suffuses a sense of comfort, protection and security, and the essence of dwelling through the imaginative potential of childhood,

embodied in one simple image: the Meccano set under the childhood bed. First, for the architect, the presence of the toy evokes the retention of memories, and the tonality of home. This apparently banal image is nevertheless a "picturesque detail" (Bachelard 85), that belongs to each reader in an individual and incommunicable way in that "we should never want to tell all there is to tell about it" (ibid 85). The Meccano suggests childhood happiness and day dreaming, yet also subjectivity and intimacy. It expresses the inexpressible and articulates the real. The image of our childhood home, the house itself and our old rooms, perhaps with the toys that still remain there, resonate with the depth of time and the melancholy impossibility of return, but also a yearning for protection and security. Like the toys that Stevie finds in the old Glasgow tenements in *TWH*, the Meccano embodies memory, and as Bachelard notes, such things are "motionless, mute things that never forget" (Bachelard 143).

Second, a Meccano set is a construction toy that facilitates playful exploration, but also reflects perhaps the creative, imaginative building permitted by the purity and innocence of childhood, unencumbered by the actuality and restrictions of adult life. Within the Heideggerian framework, the image suggests a poetic dwelling, “a distinctive kind of building” (Heidegger, *Poet. Lang. Thought* 215) which for the philosopher remains the “basic capacity for human dwelling” (ibid 228). Taking inspiration in a late poem by Friedrich Hölderlin, “In Lovely Blue”, Heidegger notes that “poetry first causes dwelling to be dwelling. Poetry is what really lets us dwell” (ibid). By constructing with Meccano, as a child the architect could make a physical concept come forth out of imagination in the same way that poetry

brings into being an ultimate reality. In his essay *Poetry, Language, Thought* (1951), Heidegger interpreted Hölderlin's notion of 'measure taking' referring to the poetic creation, which, to avoid the philosophical complexities of the term here, suffice to say is not a scientific measuring, nor one that can be grasped, but rather one that refers to the realm of human reflection. Dwelling, thus considered, means abiding in thought and creative imagination and to overcome our homelessness we must first learn to dwell. Christopher Yates, in his discussion of Heidegger's reflections on poetic thought, puts it thus: "We must learn to forgo the reflex to master the 'is' and, so doing, listen for a deeper *poiesis* beneath our rational and creative production" (Yates 103). As an adult, and under the conditions of modernity, the architect's professional life seems to constrain poetic dwelling. Thus, he remains homeless, as his existence has caused him to lose sight of the imaginative life of childhood. The construction set also suggests that his childhood aspirations, his dreams and hopes in the professional world of architecture had not been fully accomplished. This is also implicit in his final recognition, (and the final lines of the story), that he was indeed "no longer an architect" (107). Certainly, Heidegger acknowledges that poetry does not "come to light in every period" (Heidegger, *Poet. Lang. Thought* 228), but as Hölderlin points out, only "[a]s long as Kindness, The Pure, still stays with his heart" (qtd.in Heidegger, *Poet. Lang. Thought 228*). Perhaps this period lies in the freedom and innocence that childhood permits.

Furthermore, the allotment space, where the architect and his father "often spend their Sundays working together" (106), acts as a symbol of desire for ontological security, a return to place and dwelling-well. The

simple construction that will serve to shelter vegetables from the elements may be read on two levels: First, on the textual plane, an analysis within Bachelard's poetics of space accounts for the evocation of security and protection afforded by such an edifice. Bachelard observed, "[B]eing is a value and life begins well, it begins enclosed, protected, all warm in the bosom of the house" (Bachelard 29). The vegetables may function as a metaphor for life itself within the notion of Heideggerian dwelling, and I will return to this in more detail in a moment, since like the vegetables that need 'caring-for', so too the architect "urgently need[s] protection" (ibid) and security as a palliative measure to the modern condition. Bachelard notes, furthermore, how the imagination works on the illusion of shelter, associated with safety and comfort, and that "we live fixations, fixations of happiness […] comfort[ing] ourselves by reliving memories of protection" (ibid). The image of "plants thriving below warm condensation" (107) effectively serves to intensify and reinforce the correlation. Once home, then, like the vegetables growing on the allotment, the architect is bathed in nourishment. The father's house or the architect's childhood home, gestures towards a 'community of affection' (Bachelard), just as the vegetables need protection from hostile exterior elements, such as the hard rain, wind, snow and frost, the architect also requires protection from the hostility of men and the world.

Yet, Bachelard's notion of essential nourishment, and the bodily protection afforded by constructing, resounds Heidegger's notion of building as 'caring for' and of 'cultivating' the already existing dwelling on earth (Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking"). For Heidegger, first we inhabit or dwell and then we build. But, according to his etymological analysis, the

word 'bauen', to exist or to dwell means being on the earth as a mortal, but as I have mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, also means "cherish and protect, to preserve and care for, specifically to till the soil, to cultivate the vine" (ibid 349). To this respect, there is a clear analogy with Seiffert's image of *cultivating* on the allotment, and thus, its allegorical status, but let me explore the notion further. For Heidegger, buildings provide protection and care for the being on earth, and both are, what he terms as, 'genuine building'. It is a gathering of the fourfold. He claims that over time, the essential meaning of 'bauen', that is dwelling, has been lost, or has "fall[en] into oblivion" (ibid 350) and is no longer "thought of as the basic character of human being" (ibid), but merely as the "activity that man performs alongside many other activities" (ibid 349), that is "work here and dwell there" (ibid), or also to build in a material or, significantly, to practice a profession; and we may remember here that this story highlights the role of the architect in his profession rather than in his Being. I have already discussed in the last section, the disconnection with things inherent to the architect's depression, and the way he no longer felt rapport with his buildings. Seiffert's poetic image of simple structures on the allotment that encapsulate a deeper sense of dwelling in their connectedness with the fourfold, can be read as a means of expressing a return to a more primordial dwelling on earth, and a critique of the need to recover the 'essential' and the 'ordinary' in the sense of everyday experience, and of the 'habitual', as Heidegger would have it.[21] We shall see in the following sections, furthermore, how this sits in harmony with

[21] We might also see the relationship here between the evocation of the ordinary via a textual simplicity, and an ordinariness on both a narrative and a thematic level.

Esquirol's proximity of being that embraces and highlights the ordinary experiences of life and an intimate relationship to things.

Moreover, the image of primitive, simple shelters of "crooked panes and corrugated iron [that form] crude but effective structures" (107) are suggestive, not only of protection and resistance, but also unpretentiousness and austerity that contrast with the grandiose or uniform designs of modern architecture, and of which the protagonist had been part. Significantly, these allotment shelters account for site and location, as Heidegger suggested, coherent with the fourfold. They are constructions that arise out of natural necessity, to protect from the wind and the weather. Nature and practical need have inspired the designs. They are not, as Casey would have it, buildings of "brawny aggression and forceful imposition" (Casey 173), but rather 'cultivational', since "the builder respects the already present properties of that from which building begins" (ibid). Casey contrasts 'Promethean' building, that is aggressive and forceful, with the 'cultivational' Epimethean'; "a matter of attentive 'after-thought' (the literal meaning of 'Epi-metheus', brother of Prometheus and Husband of Pandora)" (Casey 173). Interestingly, we shall see how this 'forceful' manner of building is encapsulated in the Nazi highway in *ABIW*. The latter, Casey notes, "seeks not to exploit materials, but to care for them" (ibid), respecting its present properties. He cites examples of native Indian Building materials, which derive from the same location as the buildings. There are certainly echoes of Heideggerian thought here, as Heidegger's notion of building and dwelling within the fourfold also associated natural building elements in architecture as part of cultivation. Seiffert's attention to natural building materials, as we

shall see in *TWH*, where sandstone villas contrast with concrete tenement blocks (Seiffert 2014 40)[22], also substantiates cultivation, in this sense, as part of dwelling-well.

The kind of building embodied, then, in the allotment structure 'cares for' and is cultivated from the surrounding landscape and "starts from the intentions and wishes and practical purposes of those who are to live in the dwelling" (Casey 174), as well as accounting for the necessities and natural elements of location. Ironically, the building materials that the architect uses are indeed from the surrounding landscape, but do not consist of natural materials, but rather "materials from the tip, from skips, from the wasteground by the canal" (107). These materials bring to mind the poetics of recycled materials that J.B Ballard featured in his novels and that, as Laura Corombino points out, similarly express a post-catastrophic dwelling: "a new natural environment human beings were meant to inhabit" (Corombino 26).[23] In brief, these images invite an eco-critical reading in harmony with the return to an authentic Heideggerian dwelling; one that remains in harmony with the fourfold, and a metaphysical implacement, or a return to place.

At the end of the story, the architect finds that he is "no longer an architect" (107). Yet, he feels "sad" and "disappointed" at this prospect.

[22] All further references to *TWH* will be from this edition.
[23] Colombino discusses the influence of Eduardo Paolozzi's pavilion on the writing of Ballard. The pavilion was part of the Pop art exhibition, *This is Tomorrow*, in London (1956), in which Paolozzi made a construction out of, what we would now call, recycled materials, as well as stones, bricks and other found objects. The exhibition represented a shift in epoque, and a challenge to the old world of perfectionism and abstract formalism. Colombino also draws attention to Ballard's interest in existentialist theories of dwelling, and there is a resemblance in Seiffert's story to the notion of "Paolozzi's terminal hut", as Ballard put it. But, we might also make further analogies to Ballard's work with that of Seiffert in his conception of an existential private world of confinement and of "protective isolation" (Colombino 27) that Stevie in *TWH*, or Joseph in *Afterwards* seek.

Mumford notes, that apart from some "jewels" of architecture, "most of our buildings will be outside the province of the architectural profession — they will be the product of minds untouched, for the most part, by humane standards" (Mumford 194). As we have seen in the last section, the architect seems to have realised the impossibility of poetic creation that his profession affords him, and of designing buildings that have more cosmic relationship to Mankind. Through the allotment construction, however, he has approximated dwelling and has 'built' (in the sense of 'bauen'), not in the practice of a profession, nor as a designer of meaningless buildings in which dwelling does not take place, but as a cultivator and a caretaker of Being or dwelling on earth. In other words, the allotment hut represents a more essential relationship to dwelling that much modern architecture no longer affords.

Mumford appropriately remarked that "in a barren soil the most fertile geniuses are cut off from their full growth" (Mumford 193). Here then, the architect's initial failure to create new designs expresses the 'barren soil' of postmodernity. I am further reminded, here, of Architect Steen Eiler Rasmussen's words when he compared the architectural profession with that of a landscape gardener who also

> works with living things — with human beings — who are much more incalculable than plants. If they cannot thrive in his house, then its apparent beauty will be of no avail — without life it will be a monstrosity. It will be neglected, fall into disrepair and change into something quite different from what he intended. (Rasmussen)

Thus, human beings must, like the tomatoes discussed above, thrive in their environments, and as Rasmussen observed, architecture is a failure if the plants cannot thrive in it.

The return-home, or to dwelling-well, seems to be further reinforced by the simplicity and physicality of simple, modest images such as the "brown paper bag and pencil" (107) on which he sketches his design for the allotment, rather than sophisticated computer programs, and the recycled materials. These are suggestive of the contradictions between modern conditions and archaic forms, and Mumford's lamentation on the demise of the 'carpenter builder', whose close relatedness with the vital, humane elements of building contrasts with the gentleman architect (Mumford 54). But furthermore, the physicality and materiality of the paper bag and pencil rather than the more 'distanced' computer, is a key point in Esquirol's philosophy of Proximity and Heidegger's contact with things as part of Being. These are tools that constitute the experience of Being, and engagement with the near-at-hand as a fundamental part of dwelling.

Finally, from an existentialist viewpoint, the return-home also means a return to being with others, a 'being-with' in Heideggerian parlance, and here this means family, as Dell points out in her analysis of the American family novel. This does not necessarily mean a traditional family structure, or one with draconian father figures, indeed, there is no mention of a 'mother' figure in Seiffert's narrative and the father, although he fails to fully understand the architect's reason for leaving his job, welcomes him back and they set about working on the allotment in quiet companionship, re-establishing their bonds. Family ties used to be the only means of social

support available and to be cast out of the home usually meant catastrophe. And, despite the increased role of the state in providing such support, Peter Drucker observes that in our post-capitalist society, “family is actually becoming more important to most people. But it is becoming so as a voluntary bond, as a bond of affection, of attachment, of mutual respect, rather than as a bond of necessity” (Drucker 156). Nevertheless, the contact with the Other that Esquirol reiterates as an essential part of the return to ‘rootedness’ may not be based solely on family, but community, as Zygmunt Bauman points out.[24] Certainly, in our times of globalization, with its increased mobility of people and workers, with the consequent distancing between family members, as Drucker and Bauman observe, the role of community is not so much based on “coercion and fear” (ibid 156), or even necessity, but instead on “commitment and compassion” (ibid 157). The being-with, whether this is family or other people, heightens a sense of security and protection, as well as human warmth and intimacy that forms part of resistance to the hostilities of modernity. I return to the question of family and community in the final chapter of this thesis, where the dichotomy between a community of coercion and fear and one of voluntary bonding and mutual respect will be pivotal.

To conclude, in this exploration of ‘Architect’, I have suggested, then, that the story conveys tensions between material and spiritual life, reflecting a crisis of postmodernity, through a crisis of architecture. The architect's life had lost its meaning, he no longer designed genuine buildings for human

[24] See Zygmunt Bauman, *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World*. Polity Press and Basil Blackwell Ltd., 2001.

dwelling. And, by returning to his father's house with the construction of a simple hut on the allotment, the architect seems to regain the Garden of Eden, in an age of destruction and environmental degradation. He has returned to place, a dwelling-well with a re-found connectedness to the fourfold. But, above all, this is an allegorical story about loss, and a loss of humanity and spirituality on a cosmic level. We can appreciate the simple, only when we have lost it, and we have given thought to it. Yet, the real crisis of the architect lies not in the loss of his job, nor in the *re-discovery* of the simplicity of rural construction as a material element, but, and perhaps most importantly, the drama of a man's value and self-worth and finally his re-finding 'place'; an authentic homecoming and ontological security. In other words, the root of the architect's *angst* and his sense of alienation derive from his condition as mere 'standing reserve', in Heideggerian terms, subordinated to an element of *use* by the modern technological and consumerist world he exists in. He had become objectified within the 'they-world' in which he found himself unwittingly immersed; he was no longer a mortal being, but a depersonalized object of technology, an *Architect*. As we shall see in the following section, Alan Milchman and Alan Rosenberg note how the "secular religion of Modernity [seems] impervious to the reality of alienation as a hallmark of daily life [..]" (Milchman and Rosenberg 180), and indeed, nobody could understand the architect's condition, neither his brother nor his father since, absorbed and dominated by the powers of modernity, they are unable to step outside and peer into the dilemma.

I have suggested that this allegorical story exemplifies Seiffert's reconstructive postmodernist discourse, since not only does she critique the

postmodern condition, but also endeavours to provide, a careful but not overly optimistic, solution in the way of a return to a more authentic or essential dwelling in which Mankind cares for community, environment and others; one in which the connectedness with nature and family serve to ground humanity in the real and, in accordance with the main argument of this thesis, a return-home.

1.2. *A Boy in Winter* as a Discourse of Resistance: A Poetics of Place and Proximity

> Unless the world learns the lessons these pictures teach, night will fall. But, by God's grace, we who live will learn. (Crossman)[25]

In the preceding section on 'Architect', I broadly claimed that Seiffert's estranged protagonist found himself subordinated to 'standing reserve', that is, raw material, or a commodity of capitalism, (what Heidegger called *Bestand*), ultimately destroying the possibility of dwelling-well within the fourfold (Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology"). This condition together with a rationalist sense of modern respectability (the Heideggerian 'they-world') and the loss of relatedness with 'things', drives

[25] The final words of the film *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey* (1945), produced by Sidney Bernstein with technical assistance by Alfred Hitchcock, were provided by Richard Crossman, who was also responsible for the entire commentary. The film, ordered in April 1945 by the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force, was considered a masterpiece in documentary cinema. However, it was shelved for its disturbing images and material at a time when the Allies wished to aid German reconstruction rather than dwell on the past. The film has recently been restored and appears as part of a documentary entitled *Night Will Fall* (2014) directed by Andre Singer and produced by Sally Angel for U.K's Channel Four Films. For an interesting review of Night Will Fall, see Stuart Jeffries, "The Holocaust Film That Was Too Shocking to Show | Film | The Guardian."

the architect into alienation.[26] The architect manages to emerge from this state by giving thought to the real; that is, to mortality and the essential connectedness of humanity. When this connectedness has broken down, however, and all life on earth has become subservient to the forces of rational techno-modernity, or 'standing reserve' (*Bestand*) in Heideggerian terms, objectified to productive economic activity, and has become quantified and subordinated "to the exchange mechanism, the realm of freedom and moral autonomy continually shrinks" (Milchman and Rosenberg, "The Unlearned Lessons of the Holocaust" 179). We shall see in this section, how bureaucratic modernity due to colonization reduces a sense of pre-modern moral autonomy in *ABIW*. Nevertheless, the architect had been enslaved by progress and functionality in his professional role, objectified within the inauthenticity of the 'they-world'. In Heideggerian thought, then, under the conditions of *Bestand*, man and nature become raw material for the

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[26] See Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology." *Basic Writings*. Ed. David Farrell Krell. 1993rd ed. London: Routledge, 1978. 308–341. Print, for further details of Heidegger's notion of *Bestand*. Also, we may be reminded of Jimmy Reid's speech, in the introduction to this chapter, in which Reid draws attention to the way modernity has alienated Man from controlling his own destiny. Furthermore, on the question of 'respectability' and modernity, Stephen Toulmin details the dismissal of Humanist traditions with their sense of connectedness between Mind and Body, (with reference to Montaigne), by the rationalist philosophers after Descartes in the 17th century. He points out the way Rationalism countered Montaigne, serving as social impulse for "the first inroads of 'respectability' that were so influential over the next two-and-a-half-centuries" (Toulmin 41). We have seen how the architect feels strait-jacketed by the modern adhesion to such 'respectability' and his (rather comic) inability to maintain self-control. However, Toulmin's discussion extends beyond Mind-Body issues and into a revised narrative of modernity that considers the political upheavals and instability in 17th century Europe as triggering the disassociation and separation of the emotional, personal and particular (paradigmatic of Humanist thought) from the rational and logical. Thus, he argues for modernity as consisting of two distinct beginnings: First, with the renaissance Humanists, whose scepticism implied religious tolerance and diversity, social welfare and a cosmological, spiritual connectedness between Mind and Body. And, second, the rational, scientific modes of thought pioneered by Descartes and Galileo. Toulmin notes how the latter remained the received view of Modernity in the 1930s and '40s and was also the most "warmly admired" (ibid 81). Similarly, in this section, I suggest that the encroachment of the techno-bureaucratic state of National Socialism crushes the possibility of self-governance and for what Heidegger considered the 'natural forces' of moral behaviour within the 'pre-modern' communities, like the Ukrainian villages depicted in Seiffert's narrative.
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manipulation and use in the projects of others, shattering dwelling within the connectedness of the fourfold. But, what is the connection between our contemporary architect in the last section and Seiffert's World War Two Holocaust narrative?

The architect's existential dilemma may not at first sight parallel the horrors of the Holocaust, and certainly, his anxiety and alienation cannot be compared to the extreme conditions of its victims. The processes of modernity which denigrate the architect's being does appear, however, to be symptomatic of what, Heideggerian and Holocaust scholars, Alan Milchman and Alan Rosenberg have referred to as 'the unlearned lessons of the Holocaust'; that is, a manifestation of global techno-bureaucratic modernity which, besides objectification, embraces features that include

> functional reason as the basis of modern science and technology, man as a subject who represents, posits and dominates nature, bureaucracy as the 'rational' form of economic and political organization. To these must be added the belief in continuous progress — social, economic, political and cultural — as a result of science, technology and functional reason. (Milchman and Rosenberg, "The Unlearned Lessons of the Holocaust" 179-180)

Thus, viewed within this conceptualization of techno-modernity that Heidegger termed 'planetary-tecnics', that is, an aspect of modernity that not only consists in the capacity of technological instruments to aid mass destruction and murder in a short time frame, (such as bombs, poison gas or systems of transportation), but Man as the overriding, all-powerful subject

that seeks to dominate and annihilate anyone or anything that does not conform to the civilizing processes of functional reason.[27] Simply put, it is the mentality of control, administration and manipulation of entities, and our relationship to nature and to others, which characterizes ‘planetary-technics’. Naturally, such a view shatters Being or dwelling within the cosmological relationship of the fourfold, and this is my first contention in this section; that is, *ABIW* speaks to the loss of dwelling implicit in functional modernity. In the extremities of Nazi ideology that includes Hitler’s belief in a dominant master race, moreover, the consequent abandonment of Being, whereby certain humans are objectified, denied control over their existence and even over their own mortality, can lead to the nihilistic ‘un-world’ that Heidegger called *Unwelt.* And, ultimately, such nihilism resounds with insensitivity to the anxieties and pain of Others who have become usable material or *Bestand*, especially to those who are not near us, physically or ethnically, in community or family.

My second contention, in accordance with the main argument of this thesis, lies in Seiffert’s literary use of what appears to be an idealized pastoral backdrop along with sensorial imagery and a focus on the ‘near-at-hand’

[27] For a more detailed analysis of what constitutes ‘planetary-technics’ and its relationship to the “*mentalité* of modern man as *subject*”, see (particularly pages 181-183) Alan Milchman, and Alan Rosenberg. “The Unlearned Lessons of the Holocaust.” *Modern Judaism* 13.2 (1993): 177–190. Perhaps Milchman and Rosenberg’s definition of ‘reason’ best describes the use of this concept in this section:

> [T]he concept of reason that has triumphed in modernity is technical, instrumental or functional reason […]. It is impersonal, breaking asunder the bond that once linked the emotional and intellectual. It is exclusively devoted to efficiency, and thus quantitative and mathematical in substance. As a result, all entities, human and natural are reduced to so many statistics, to quantified objects. It is amoral, exclusively concerned with means not ends. Indeed, there is no place for ethics within the ambit of such functional reason, no ground for the ethical that would stand the test of ‘reason’. (Milchman and Rosenberg, “The Unlearned Lessons of the Holocaust” 182)

Furthermore, they conclude that “[t]he roots of this functional reason can be found at the dawn of modernity. The modern scientific world view is its apotheosis” (ibid). This last point will prove central to my argument here, since the arrival of modernity in Seiffert’s war-time Ukrainian town coincides with the reduction of human life to ‘quantified objects’ in Milchman and Rosenberg’s terms.

(Esquirol) that sets her narrative into Esquirol's philosophy of Proximity as a palliative measure to the loss of dwelling. This ultimately establishes the narrative firmly within re-constructive postmodernism as outlined in the introduction to this thesis.

Finally, I suggest the novel stands as a discourse of resistance, which may be perceived in two realms: the metaphysical and the literary. First, when we think of the word 'resistance', as Esquirol points out, World War Two springs immediately to mind, but I contend that this novel transcends historical specificity and extends into the universal. On a narrative level, there is resistance to Nazism, and a fight for survival. But, it also speaks to a resistance to the loss of Being, a loss of existence and a fall into nihilism that according to sociologists Antony Giddens and Stephen Toulmin, began with the coming of modernity. Others, such as Zygmunt Bauman, Hannah Arendt, Theodore Adorno, or Edith Wyshogrod, have attributed the horrors of World War Two and the Holocaust to a civilized society that took rational, functional technological modernity to extraordinary lengths.[28] Second, on an

[28] The relationship between the Holocaust and modernity is a complex issue that has been amply discussed by sociologists and philosophers including Hannah Arendt, Edith Wyshogrod and Zygmunt Bauman among others, and disputed by others, of which the most canonical is Jürgen Habermas. Habermas sees Nazism not as functioning within modernity but rather as a re-version to the past and a malfunction of the process of modernization (See note 6 in Alan Milchman, and Alan Rosenberg. "The Unlearned Lessons of the Holocaust." *Modern Judaism* 13.2 (1993): 177–190.). For Habermas' discussion of modernity see Habermas, Jürgen. *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*. Ed. Frederick (Trans.) Lawrence and Thomas (Introduction) McCarthy.. John Wiley & Sons, 1984. Print. The debate continues, however, and more recently in a work focussing on the Holocaust in eastern European states. Timothy Snyder (2015), neither sides with the view of modernity as specifically a causal factor of genocide, but argues for the destruction of states and institutions by Nazism along with Hitler's belief in the natural laws of survival of the species in the event of the scarcity of planetary resources. Snyder's stance, then, is more in favour of a misunderstanding of modernity and of a deviation from it, rather than modernity itself as culprit. I adopt the perspective that modernity and Nazism are indeed linked alongside the issues raised by Snyder as to the destruction of national institutions and localized bodies of socio-political organization and so I discuss *ABIW* through a fusion of both frameworks.

artistic level, the novel also stands as a resistance to deconstructive postmodernism which, in Charlene Spretnak's words, "intensifies the atomized, alienated sensibility of modernity' (Spretnak, *States of Grace: The Recovery of Meaning in the Postmodern Age:* 233) in its recognition of what she referred to as the 'Noble Truth'. As part of this 'Noble Truth', that is, the "truth of our existence: the profound communion of all life" (Spretnak, *States of Grace: The Recovery of Meaning in the Postmodern Age* 76), Esquirol reminds us of Arendt's thought that at birth, humans depend upon a primordial acceptance and care by others, and notes that "human existence begins in *the house that is the Other*" (Esquirol 48);[29] that home is a place of acceptance and hospitality that must necessarily include the Other, our neighbour and 'fellow creatures' as part and condition of the oneness of the Heideggerian fourfold; "[b]y a primal oneness the four-fold, earth, sky, divinities and mortals belong together as one" (Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking"). So, for Esquirol, Spretnak and other organicist philosophers, it is not only attention to the ordinary, the 'near-at-hand' and to family that provides an 'elixir vitae' of the modern condition, but receiving the Other into our 'metaphysical' home, that is a primordial "condition of human existence" (Esquirol 49).[30] By accepting the Other we return home, and home, as we have seen in 'Architect', is a site of resistance.

The following section examines the portrayal of the fall into nihilism, rooted in the dark side of modernity, and a palliative return-home. I focus my

[29] "L'existència humana s'inicia *en la casa que és l'altre*" (Esquirol 48).
[30] L'acollida és condició de l'existència" (Esquirol 49).

attention on the way the arrival of a totalitarian state and the events of the Holocaust interlock with a profound sense of pre-modern place relatedness and, on a narrative level, with Literary Architecture. It is thus divided into two parts: The first will examine the loss of dwelling inherent in the coming of the totalitarian state to this Ukrainian community, that is, the fall into nihilism, and the second will hone in on the way Seiffert's novel articulates a return home, to the near-at-hand, and to proximity as a form of resistance, a palliative measure to ontological homelessness.

1.2.i The Arrival of Modernity: Totalitarianism and the 'Civilizing Process'

The main purpose of this first section is to reveal how the novel thematises the loss of dwelling concomitant with bureaucratic modernity engendered by the invasion of the German forces, and specifically, the consequent demise of traditional communal and locally organized institutions that had hitherto in-built, self-regulatory moral order. In this regard, I discuss how the novel suffuses Toulmin's 'hidden agenda' of modernity in its rationalization of human life and Newtonian perspective of nature, together with Timothy Snyder's explanation for the Holocaust in eastern Europe.[31] Snyder considers the forces of modernity as insufficient explanation for the causes of genocide, because Nazism rejected the Enlightenment in favour of the Darwinian

[31] For an in-depth discussion of Communist and National Socialist policies in eastern Europe during World War Two, see Timothy Snyder, (2010). *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (2015th ed.). London: Vintage. His more recent work, (2015). *Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning*, expands on the first by focussing more specifically on the way the demise of state institutions and local political bodies engendered lawless, stateless regions that left the hitherto protected Jewish communities, that had been living in a plural religious state for centuries, without security and protection. This latter work has more specific relevance for my argument in this section. Interestingly, like Seiffert's fictionalized version of the breakdown of order, Snyder's historiographic work serves as a disturbing warning.

theory of survival of the species, paving the way for overt racism. But, for the sake of my argument here, Snyder's most salient point lies in his observation that the Nazi invasion of these regions brought with it the demise of state institutions that had previously protected the Jewish communities. In brief, according to Synder, when these institutions were broken up, these regions lapsed into lawless turmoil often causing the worst behaviour to come to the fore, people looked more to themselves and competed with others for survival. Although Snyder recognizes that Stalinism and Nazism were indeed exponents of modernity, he highlights that they are not its representative; he notes "[t]he answer to the question of 1941 has less to do with the intellectual heritage of the Enlightenment and more to do with the possibilities for imperialism, less to do with Paris and more to do with London" (Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin* 156).

However, I should stress that my emphasis lies not on the causes of the Holocaust that the novel might expose, but rather in alignment with my contention in this thesis, on the loss of dwelling, nihilism, metaphysical displacement and homelessness. And thus, by exploring the novel through the lens of both socio-historiographical frameworks, Toulmin's modernity and Snyder's imperialism, we might better perceive these motives. Thus, my intention here is to draw attention to the way these aspects might be associated with the fall from dwelling and to the literary techniques that underlie their construction; a poetics of space, Literary Architecture, place and indirect characterization.

Interestingly, however, viewed within the framework of postmemorial fiction, (writers who have a personal, emotional commitment

to exploring and interpreting particular facets of the war), the text clearly exemplifies the rejection of postmodern historical relativism in its attempt to "dialogue with the empirical" (Long 124). Natasha Alden observes how writers of postmemorial fiction, such as Graham Swift or Ian McEwan, tap into historical veracity via archival research. [32] She points out that "these authors do make a claim to know the past, and to depict it with a degree, at least, of the accuracy their research is designed to bring" (Alden 12). For these authors, historical realism is reflected in more realist narrative technique as a means of representing unspoken or forgotten aspects of the war, and as we shall see, Seiffert does not overlook historical accuracy; she acknowledges her indebtedness to various sources in the final pages, (also characteristic of such fiction).

Consistent with the attention paid to historical accuracy, the novel's setting mirrors the breaking up of the Soviet farm collectives and the onset of the German occupation. The tone is of turmoil, devastation and lawlessness as the peasants take back whatever of their former belongings they could while the retreating Red Army loots or destroys life-sustaining food products, "the bread and the grain that made it" (33). Snyder narrates the "deliberate mass starvation" (Snyder 55) caused by the Soviet Union in the Ukraine in the 1930s and the millions of people who had been victims of the policies of collectivization. He states that "[t]he last hope of Ukrainian peasants, as they themselves said, was a German invasion of the Soviet Union and the destruction of the Soviet order" (Snyder 55). Seiffert illustrates this

[32] See Natasha Alden. (2014). *Reading Behind the Lines: Postmemory in Contemporary British War Fiction*. Manchester University Press. Introduction.

hope through the locals, weary of Stalinist oppression and the devastation of war, greeting these new invaders as saviours and a means of survival, a return-home, at least, for certain members of the community. As a member of the peasant class who, as Snyder notes, had borne most of the costs of Soviet policies, Yasia, too, sees the Germans as salvation and a way back to her beloved Myko, who she now dreams of marrying and settling down with. So, Seiffert lends her text historical veracity by portraying, like many other Ukrainian women at the time, Yasia, welcoming the Wehrmacht convoys, "at the roadside, […] waiting with gifts […]" (37)

Figure 1 Ukrainian women greeting the German army, 1940s.

However, Seiffert's depiction is steeped in irony. The Nazis viewed the Ukrainians as racially inferior and the exploitation of their land as part of the policy of *Lebensraum* (Living Space). To this regard, Snyder notes the words of Hitler:

> It is inconceivable that a higher people should painfully exist on a soil too narrow for it, while amorphous masses, which contribute nothing to civilization, occupy infinite tracts of a soil that is one of the richest in the world. (Qtd. in Snyder 18)

Furthermore, he also points out Hitler's view of the Ukraine as "a geopolitical asset, and its people as instruments who tilled the soil, tools that could be exchanged with others or discarded" (161), lending support to the objectification of human beings and their conversion into 'standing-reserve'.

As a novel of historical fiction, it takes a contentious issue in contemporary Ukraine; the memory of the events of World War Two and the complexities of local collaboration. Yet, at the same time as exposing the reasons for this collaboration through indirect characterization, she raises the reader's awareness of the dangers of complicity and disregard for more current events, as well as the fall from dwelling implicit in modernity that I have already drawn attention to in the discussion of 'Architect'.[33]

Especially noteworthy is the way the text suggests justifications for collaboration through a form of indirect characterization. These appear to be bound up with self-preservation, duty and honour and the dissolution of more localized, traditional or primeval moral forces. Helen Dunmore, in her review of the novel, sees the lack of emotional availability in the characters as a weakness that can "lead to a certain detachment, where engagement might

[33] Shaun Walker, writing for the Guardian newspaper states that the history of the killings has been "a neglected chapter of the Holocaust", and that "[t]he role of locals in the crimes of the Nazis, as well as the massacres of Polish civilians by Ukrainian nationalists, remains a controversial topic in the Ukraine" (Walker, "Researchers Open 'Neglected Chapter' of Ukraine's Holocaust History | World News | The Guardian").

have made a very good novel into an outstanding one" (Dunmore). Although Dunmore may have a point, this detachment may well be an aesthetic choice. The very absence of emotional depth means that the characters' motivations, personal and moral conflicts remain undivulged, which, as David Lodge puts it, "throws the burden of interpretation back onto the reader" (Lodge 119). And furthermore, as Lodge states, "[t]he text's refusal to comment, to give unambiguous guidance as to how its characters should be evaluated, [is] disturbing, but this is undoubtedly the source of its power and fascination" (ibid). Certainly, the lack of depth may require more intense reader participation. The multiplicity of perspective, from interior to exterior, the latter approximating cinematographic technique, on the surface, may seem to be a failure to fully penetrate subjectivity, as Dunmore proposes. However, a minimalist aesthetics of detachment lends the characters prototypicality, a universality. They often seem to be viewed with the disinterested exteriority of the lens of a camera, a young man coming home from war, an ordinary farm girl, a carpenter, a farmer, an engineer and an S.S bureaucrat. Yasia, for example, is often viewed through city eyes, peering through the windows, as a simple "farm girl" (78) standing there in the empty streets. This detachment is perhaps best exemplified in the collection of short-stories *FS*, where this technique may prove more conventional to the genre. Nevertheless, part of the power of this novel lies in the way we seem deliberately left to make our own judgements, given the circumstances, to wonder what we would do. Certainly, this remains congruent with Seiffert's motivation for writing the

novel: “it is about how we respond when a principle is at stake” (Seiffert).[34] She puts it thus:

> the times being what they are — I have found myself turning again and again to the question above [how it feels to be on the wrong side of history]. When power changes hands, when the mood of your country shifts, how far is too far? What if it’s not just in your own country, but in others’ too? Who is the first to be singled out? Who stands up to be counted? Who sits on their hands? (Seiffert)

Seiffert’s thoughts echo those of Bauman as he noted, *“[t]he present day significance of the Holocaust is the lesson it contains for the whole of humanity*” (Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* 206). Bauman continues thus:

> The lesson of the Holocaust is the facility with which most people, put into a situation that does not contain a good choice, or renders such good choice very costly, argue themselves away from the issue of moral duty (or fail to argue themselves towards it), adopting instead the precepts of rational interest and self-preservation. (Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* 206)

Seiffert’s unsophisticated, minimalist characterization, then, highlights their very ordinariness; these people could be us.

Second, we shall shortly see how Bauman’s comment on ‘rational interest’ is a rather fitting motive for the inaction of her characters,

[34] See Rachel Seiffert, “Rachel Seiffert: ‘My Grandparents Were Nazis. I Can’t Remember a Time When I Didn’t Know This’ | Books | The Guardian.

particularly Arnold the Sturmbannführer, and the way this is associated with rational-functional modernity and the highly bureaucratized state. Thus, *ABIW* seems to be asking the same question as Bauman, caught up in adversity, would we choose self-preservation or make a costly choice? Would we put rational duty and honour above humanity? Would we choose light or darkness?

How does the figure of the Ukrainian collaborator in this novel respond to Bauman's observation and the framework of modernity, and what is the connection with the fall from dwelling? The characters are embedded, not only in the midst of war, but also in an era of change, from pre-modern to modern, from a sense of implacement, to use Casey's term, and traditional modes of life, to one of totalitarian sovereignty and state dominium, and this has a bearing on their actions. They are, as Seiffert points out, caught up "on the wrong side of history" (Seiffert), as well as great changes about to take place in the demise of the pre-modern place world.

Yasia's boyfriend Myko, who perhaps best exemplifies the emotional detachment highlighted by Dunmore, embodies one of the reasons for collaboration. Freshly returned from fighting with the Russian army, to the sorrow of his grandparents who would prefer he joined the partisan resistance in the marshes, he saw the Nazis as "his new paymasters" (59). But perhaps rather innocently, he believes that by joining the German army he will be able to reconstruct the ruined village buildings and buy new seed for "winter fodder" (ibid). Ironically, then, he also viewed the Nazis as a means of returning and 'rebuilding' home. If he is to be allowed to marry Yasia, furthermore, he must first make a decent living: "There will be no wedding,

I warn you, until the boy can feed and clothe a family" (78), putting further pressure on Mykola to use the Germans to his advantage. For Yasia's father too, the new invaders will bring the opportunity for "new barns and houses and new roads being laid" (79) and to restore his farm; a return to dwelling-well that, for him, not only entails a return to his previous life but progress in terms of modernization. Nevertheless, although Myko does indeed physically return home, in a metaphysical sense, ironically, he will remain just as homeless as he was under Russian control. Likewise, for Yasia's father, the price of the new roads will be sorely paid. But, Seiffert's lexical choice, "paymasters", is highly significant. If we consider Myko as 'standing-reserve', his status will not be altered with the German invasion but will prove to be rather more sinister. He will remain under domination, whoever the 'master' turns out to be. In his desperate attempt at self-preservation, and for that of his family, he is merely duped into believing that he will be better off under the Nazis in much the same way as Yasia's father.

However, does Myko epitomise what Adorno describes as a "conforming asocial being" (Adorno and Horkheimer 199); a man who, rendered impotent by the sheer dominance of the invading regime, "can exorcize his fate only by blind obedience"? (ibid). Indeed, how far can any of us 'exorcise our fate' within our own cultural-political environment? As we have seen, the architect also finds himself entrapped in a capitalist modernity that enfolds his Being. He too is consumed by what best serves his self-interest and the preservation of his social status. He conforms to societal expectations and, like Myko, his refusal to conform means criticism and perhaps social exclusion, but if he wants to return to authenticity, he must be

prepared to take risks. But, Myko's choice is, of course, far costlier, because by becoming a partisan, as his grandfather wished, not only would he have to sacrifice the preservation of his self but that of his family. As Bauman points out, "[e]vil needs neither enthusiastic followers nor an applauding audience — the instinct of self-preservation will do [..]" (Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* 206), and this instinct works on diverse levels, but is nevertheless intensified by modernity. However, the architect may have been rash and reckless, to use Bauman's words for such an inopportune decision, but he did make that decision to secede. In the same way as consumerism and inauthenticity can be sidestepped, "[e]vil is not all-powerful. It can be resisted" (ibid 207), and is therefore, a choice, albeit a tortuous one. In this way, the "blind obedience" to the regime, described by Adorno and Dorkheim, would prove not to be so predetermined, but "inevitable and escapable" (ibid 207), thus defying "the logic of self-preservation" (ibid). Viewed within the framework of existentialist Humanism, Pohl, for example, albeit rather unwittingly, opts for a more humane path, maintains his dignity as a human being by a transformation towards authenticity. And indeed, as I have already discussed, this is the question that the novel raises. Under such conditions, would we be strong enough to defy it? The text provides us with no clear answers.

Nevertheless, as I have mentioned, there is provision for hope, the possibility of existential choice. When Pohl's boss, Arnold the Sturmbahnführer, justifies evil and his own collaboration through biblical references, "[w]here the light shines strongest there is always shadow" (129),

he embodies a passive conformity to the inevitability of darkness.[35] Pohl, however, finds Arnold's thoughts perplexing: "What on earth sort of light does this man imagine is shining?" (132). He sees no contrasting light, only a "faint glow" (132) of the headlamps from labourers who remain "in the dark" (ibid); interestingly though, there is still a 'glow'. Pohl makes a choice to transcend Arnold's passive footsteps, not to conform to what already 'is', but to demonstrate his true humanity by exercising his freedom to choose and invent his own values. This considered, *ABIW* thus appears to highlight the possibility of choice forwarded by existentialist Humanism and supported, furthermore, by Bauman's final thoughts on the Holocaust as a caution for humanity.

A discussion of the way the novel raises the issue of Anthropomorphic Humanism and the negation of interconnectedness, inherent to totalitarian regimes, will support the contention that the novel alludes to a re-consideration of relatedness, implicit in the Heideggerian fourfold, as a way forward for humanity. In this regard, worth a closer analysis is the manner in which the marshlands and its native inhabitants, as representative of diversity and difference, are sharply set against the advent of the colonializing forces of National Socialism. Certainly, Esquirol, who champions the need for tolerance to cultural diversity, recognizes that totalitarian regimes "despite appearances […] do not knit a society together, but homogenize and force an apparent false and contrived whole" (Esquirol 13)[36] that looks to instrumental reason and functional rationality as a means

[35] This appears to refer to John: Chapter 4.
[36] "Perquè malgrat les aparences, aquest règims [...] no teixeixen el tapís de la societat, sinó que homogeneïtzen i forcen un tot aparent i fals" (Esquirol 13).

of controlling what they consider to be disruptive elements of society to create one in which the dogmatic 'rule of order' reigns. Robert Wokler similarly expresses concern that the unification of peoples into one common identity, triggered by the French Revolution and the onset of the nation-state, is akin to totalitarian violence.[37] Wokler and Toulmin view such false unification as a betrayal of early Humanist Enlightenment thought, which forwarded a common humanity, embracing difference, ethnic and religious pluralism as well as the chaotic interconnectedness of nature. We may remember that from this perspective, existentialist Humanism, as Sartre points out, remains contrary to its anthropocentric counterpart. To resist totalitarianism, then, is also to resist social and cultural fragmentation, as Esquirol notes. In this sense, in *ABIW*, the marshlands present a site of such resistance. Viewed within a framework of Toulmin's (and Sartre's) Humanism, the grandfather's wish for Myko to hide out in their homeland, emblematic of tradition and interrelatedness, seems no coincidence. Toulmin notes how rational Cartesian thought implied a cleansing of 'tradition', cultural 'folklore' and 'superstition', such as those maintained by the marshlanders, and that the elimination of difference and cultural idiosyncrasies, (also intrinsic to totalitarianism), would, in theory, provide a clean-slate on which to create a society of common grounding that would purportedly bring an end to inter-cultural or religious conflict.[38]

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[37] See Robert Wokler, "The Enlightenment Project on the Eve of the Holocaust." *Enlightenment and Genocide, Contradictions of Modernity*. Ed. James Kaye and Bo Stråth. Brussels: N.p., 2000. Print. (pp. 60-63)

[38] See Toulmin, pp. 198-201 for a discussion of Cartesian Enlightenment as forwarding a solution to the conflicts engendered by intolerance to religious and cultural diversity.

However, the segregation of peoples to categorise and classify them, that would proport a means of unification, along with the attempt to eliminate cultural diversity, also serves to highlight differences that were hitherto accepted or ignored, and to then "perpetuate a hierarchy of humanity more or less steep" (Docker 357). I suggest, then, that the novel bears out the way classification, through the arrival of bureaucracy, draws attention to differences that had hitherto been largely ignored, or at least, accepted. From a historical viewpoint, this acceptance is supported by Synder's study of the central European states during this period, as we shall see. Furthermore, Synder highlights the cultivation of difference in these regions by the Nazis as a purposeful policy, engendering racial inequalities and intolerance. Clearly, Toulmin would agree with Wokler when the latter notes how the ideals of early Humanist Enlightenment thought, in its admission of life's complexities and the connectedness of humanity to the cosmological whole, would have repudiated the Holocaust and opposed any pre-modern barbarism.

Nevertheless, far from any utopian vision of convivial co-habitation, the novel depicts a sense of hierarchy within the community, pre-existing the Nazi invasion. Yasia, for example, instinctively felt herself superior as the "farmer's daughter she knew she was" (58) rather than a "marsh girl" (ibid). Being a 'marsh girl', however, seems to imply a backwardness and unsophistication in comparison with the communities of the drylands. Much to the abhorrence of Yasia's mother, the way her 'dryland' father "laughed" at her uncle, still living in the marshlands, with his "slow way of talking, and his plough that was already old in Egypt" (57) implies that this hierarchy had

been based more on differences between more sophisticated and technologically modernized town peoples and rural communities, eking a living under difficult circumstances, than ethnic prejudice. Interestingly, the townspeople held themselves superior to the marshlanders in terms of modernity. Indeed, the former appear to be a kind of half-way point towards the totalizing rationality of the German nation-state attitude and the pre-modern community of the marshland. For the townspeople, then, the marshland in its localness represented, as Bauman puts it, “backwardness” (Bauman, *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World* 91), whereas the rational modernity of the Germans would mean progress “and this meant raising the mosaic of life to a common to all, superior level” (ibid). Yet significantly, it is the unsophisticated marshlands that will eventually accept the Jewish children into their community.

These local ethnicities, moreover, had long constituted the Ukrainian social strata, including a large Jewish community whose integration, according to Snyder’s observation mentioned earlier, had been so harmonious as to go almost unnoticed. In *ABIW*, this peaceful co-habitation and its interruption by the invasion of the Nazis is dramatized by the registration and census of the population, differentiating between origins, ethnicities and religions, and marking the differences through armbands. Thus, everyone could distinguish for the first time “who was a yid then – and just how many there were” (57). Until this point, though, nobody had been much aware of their presence.

In addition, the bureaucratic registration of citizens further evokes a strong sense of the transformation from a community that had hitherto

functioned on a local level of political consensus to one which, to use Bauman's words, the "rule of order" (Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* 151) and dogmatic, authoritarian law overrule. This is made apparent through two strongly contrasting scenes. The first of these is the local meeting in the "timberman's kitchen, dark and warm and thick with tobacco smoke" (50), with its woodstove and children writhing in their mothers' laps, and the second is the functional rationality of the "*new registration office* [where] "[e]veryone in the district queued and queued" (57) to be "on the correct list" (ibid). The meeting scene suggests a contrast between the workings of local, traditional organization, with its inherent hierarchy, with Nazi sovereignty. Snyder argues for the dismantling of local institutions as precipitating the Jewish persecution in these regions rather than, as Bauman seems to imply, bureaucracy itself. He claims that the breakdown of state order left the Jews without protection (Snyder, *Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning*), pointing out, furthermore, that the Jews faced death when "they were extracted from Germany and deported to bureaucracy-free zones in the East, places where they would have been entirely safe before the war" (ibid 223). Thus, he rejects the notion that German bureaucracy was responsible for the killing of Jews (ibid 222). The kitchen scene, however, when set in contrast with the strict bureaucratic control of the invaders in the following scene, seems to support Snyder's view that it was rather the breakdown of state institutions that had hitherto afforded protection to the Jews, and that the establishment of a new order, (with anti-Semitism as constituent), permitted the killings. Perhaps, then, the question of bureaucracy as precipitating such polices lies not so much in bureaucracy itself, but in the

form and laws of that bureaucracy. It would be outside the confines of this thesis to argue this point further, but I suggest, nevertheless, that the novel points to the collapse of localized and perhaps more traditional, less regimented social conventions that functioned, nonetheless, like state institutions, prior to the invasion, and that maintained a Humanist existence. Snyder, nevertheless, favours a strong bureaucratic state, clearly with a democratic program, that protects human rights, as a safeguard from a repetition of the Holocaust (ibid 341). I contend that this text seems to point to the moral efficiency of a more localized organization, while also disclosing the dangers that Snyder highlighted; that is, that human rights are difficult to maintain when there is no state structure, and its absence can leave a society vulnerable. As he points out, the difficulty we face is to maintain the balance between order and freedom.

While Snyder focusses on the destruction of state structures through colonialization as allowing the establishment of death facilities, Bauman centres on the contribution that strict bureaucratic organization played in the events of the Holocaust: "[the Holocaust] was not the work of an obstreperous and uncontrollable mob, but of men in uniforms, obedient and disciplined, following the rules, and meticulous about the spirit of their briefing" (Bauman, *Mod. Holocaust* 151). Seiffert dramatizes the arrival of this draconian officialdom and the meticulousness that Bauman refers to through the characteristic use of a succinct, minimalist description of "army clerks" (57), that had been brought in "to complete the task, to sit at desks ranked across the flagstones in the sun, inking people onto their index cards" (ibid). If we look more closely at Seiffert's choice of lexicon, the images

conjured up by ‘clerks’ and ‘index cards’, imply bureaucratic cataloguing and objectification of peoples that had hitherto lived harmoniously. The choice of ‘index cards’ is particularly telling, since what perhaps most springs to mind is the library cards that classified and quantified books. In characteristically sparse prose, Seiffert portrays the objectification and dehumanization which is “inextricably related to the most essential, rationalizing tendency of modern bureaucracy” (Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* 103). And, no doubt, when the clerks take off their uniforms, they may well “have behaved much like all of us” (ibid 151).

Furthermore, Seiffert’s Literary Architecture and the description of traditional building materials such as, flagstone and cobble stone, denotes a violent and abrupt disruption to place caused by the new ‘rule-of-order. Their materiality not only resonates Heideggerian thought in the use of natural materials, but also denotes historicity and longevity inherent to place. Indeed, the simple arcadian setting reinforces the relationship between deep rooted tradition as an integral element of place. Myko’s grandfather, sensing this connection, had indeed been right in foreseeing how these “foreigners” (59) would be telling them “how [they] should and shouldn’t live” (ibid), by over-riding age-old traditions and community moral order. The comment also speaks to the regime’s sense of rational ‘superiority’ over local customs, including a social moral order that had arisen over time to satisfy local collective needs rather than forceful imposition of arbitrary rules.[39] Toulmin

[39] For a discussion of the sociological theory of morality in which Bauman contrasts the rational, scientific thought of forceful moral law and that more naturally occurring, and thus open to fluctuations corresponding to time and place, through the interests and needs of a given society, see Zygmunt Bauman, “Towards a Sociological Theory of Morality.” *Modernity and the Holocaust*. 1st ed. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press and Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1989. 169–200. Print.

also supports this view: "Moral issues had pluralism built in from the start; the wisest resolution came from steering an equitable course between the demands that arose in practice, in specific cases" (Toulmin 136). But perhaps it also reminds us, as Bauman notes, that "[m]oral behaviour is conceivable only in the context of coexistence, of 'being with others'" (Bauman, "Towards a Sociological Theory of Morality" 179), in equal status rather than mastery of the Other. In so much as a philosophy of Proximity depends on care for and responsibility to the Other, Yasia is the very embodiment of morality in her concern for the Jewish boys, and her inherent sense of responsibility for "what is not my deed, or for what does not even matter to me" (ibid 183), and I return to this point in the second section below.

In short, to resist the ideologies of totalitarianism also entails resistance to social and cultural fragmentation, as well as enforced moralities. Furthermore, it ultimately means resisting the disruption to an existential Being-in-the-world with Others that entails being in the place-world, with its deep relationship to history, culture, memory and "its associated beliefs and thought" (Casey xxv); a dwelling-well. And ultimately, the loss of this place-world is what Yasia grandfather wanted Myko to resist.

In its association with Heideggerian dwelling, I would like to focus on how the "timber man's kitchen" (50) conveys this deep sense of place as well as space for collective meeting, proximity and, on its metonymical function within the novel, as generative of ethical reflection.[40] First, on a

[40] In referring to 'collective meeting' places and proximity, I have in mind Heideggerian thought of existence with others, and to Esquirol's notion of 'juntament', a joining, collectivity or gathering of peoples, that is commonly used in Catalunya to refer to the Council Building and governing body. (See

socio-political plane, Casey notes how "as international corporations and national governments become increasingly indifferent to the interests and requirements of ordinary citizens" (Casey xxiv), local spaces are indispensable places for public dialogue on "controversial, pressing political and social issues" (ibid). The timberman's kitchen certainly provides this "containing space" (ibid) in Casey's words, a space for genuine public discourse that "allows for the full expression of the 'multi-voiced' body that is the active basis for political life" (ibid). This space, then, strongly contrasts with the repression of public opinion and freedom of speech that lies beyond its walls.

It is a trusted space, the home of a reliable member of the community: "you have to know who is safe now. But the timber man is a good neighbour" (50). Giddens and Bauman also highlight local community as a place of trust, necessary to the sense of safety and ontological security that "are substantially dis-solved in circumstances of modernity" (Giddens 103).[41] Giddens refers to a community that has not yet been transformed by the modern "distanciated time-space relations" (ibid). In this novel, however, as we shall see, as a potent metaphor for the intrusion of imperialism and modernity, the road will threaten these relations.

This sense of community space for dialogue further contributes to the way the heart of the timber man's home, the kitchen and the dining table,

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especially Esquirol pp. 159-173, "Una Metafísica de l'Ajuntament" in Josep Maria Esquirol,. *La Resistència Intima: Assaig D'una Filosofia de La Proximitat*. First Edit. Barcelona: Quaderns Crema, S.A.U, 2015. Print.

[41] Also see Bauman's work on the paradox between security and safety within the community and the stifling sense of control that can also be part of it. I discuss this further in relation to *TWH* in chapter three.

around which the neighbours gather, also reflects "the deep pervasion of place itself by cultural factors" (Casey xxiv). Seiffert highlights these through "ethnic and gender differences" (ibid) as well as strong family ties and generational continuity that constitute this space. As marshlanders, Osip and Yasia are ethnically different to the townspeople. Osip was not "really a townsman, or not a born one in any case" (52), but they are welcomed, nonetheless, into the kitchen with a "cup from the jug" (51) and "room is made at the table" (ibid) for them, echoing the hospitality that Esquirol notes as necessary to a philosophy of Proximity. Furthermore, this is clearly a family space, indeed a space of *proximity*, of ordinary citizens and neighbours, with deeply human preoccupations and emotions, and perhaps above all, one which emphasizes Yasia's role as nurturer and carer, accepting the townsmen's children as if they were her own brothers.

Second, the kitchen is the home, the essence of Being, and can thus be considered on a metaphysical plane. The presence of children are described through the senses, as a "weight to be cradled" (53) or the feel of the gripping of "small fingers" (ibid) around Yasia's own, lending the scene a highly nuanced sense of loss, at what may really be at stake on a human level, the essence of Being-in-the-world with family and others, as well as the anxiety of losing one's children in times such as these. The deep love of a mother for her children is a motif that runs through Seiffert's fiction, but here furthermore, it reaches profoundly back into the moral question posed by the novel, that is, given the natural tendency to protect one's own, the nearest to us, but especially our own children, how far would we put our own at risk to protect those of others? By tapping into emotions in this way,

Seiffert further highlights the difficulty of the two Jewish brothers to find shelter, and the deep human tragedy of the Jewish families. Like the boys on the run, and all the children held up with their families in the brick factory, these are other people's children. Yasia, however, holds the townsmen's offspring "just like her brothers" (53), perhaps a foreshadow of the compassion she will show for the two Jewish boys. But, Yasia, as I have mentioned, seems to embody morality, the 'light', and there is light in the timber man's kitchen, but there is also darkness. The timber man's wife contemplates the thought of the family "across the lane" (55) who had been taken by the Germans and she "pulls her arms around her daughter" (55); no doubt repelled by the thought that it could have been her own. As another woman, Yasia's sensitivity enables her to observe "the tight way she holds her children, and the relief on her face that she was not taken, or her husband" (55).

Although, the timberman's home is a refuge, ("[n]o one is outside; still no one dares"), a safe and trusted place, an "instrument with which to confront the cosmos" (Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space* 67) and a place of "protection and resistance" (ibid), it is, nevertheless, not devoid of darkness. In other words, there is both light and darkness within its walls. It is a place of collective resistance, of democratic dialogue on a local level, of safety, but it also shows human weakness and vulnerability, which perhaps reflects Snyder's observation that the dismantling of local institutions served as impulse to inhumane behaviour that includes acting out of self-interest.

The kitchen meeting place is, at the same time, a closed space of proximity; despite the difference between marshlanders and townspeople, its

occupants share a certain similitude of religion, culture and language. They indeed share a "sameness of Being" (Manning 30), and it is this sameness that arouses our concern for "the others who are near" (ibid). Seiffert employs the word 'neighbours' to describe the people in the meeting, and interestingly, Robert Manning notes the German translation of *Nachbar* (neighbour) of "those that dwell near" (Manning 31); in other words, those that in the Heideggerian sense, share the same essential state of Being-with. Indeed, the philosopher considered it natural to be most concerned with neighbours, or those who dwell near. Despite criticism for a 'blood and soil' mindset, Manning admits a certain truth behind Heidegger's thought, in that "as humans we do feel closer to, more connected with, more concerned about those who are near and who are like us" (ibid 32). In our contemporary world of rapid communication channels such as the internet or television, when we hear of injustices to more socially distanced Others, we do not "feel it in the same way we would feel it if the murder we read about in the morning paper or see on the news is the murder of our own child or friend" (ibid 32). The emphasis on the children and mother-child relationships, discussed in the last paragraph, lead to the same reading. If, as Heidegger thought, our existence is the Other, and a 'caring for' then the Other must be treated with compassion. I return to this shortly.

In the timber man's kitchen, Yasia bears witness to a developing sense of inhumane behaviour: antagonistic rivalry and self-preservation. In a time of crisis, or of 'limit', as Esquirol puts it, rather than compassion and solidarity, people show weakness in their fear for their own destiny. In this scene, the villagers begin to rationalize the Germans' hatred of the Jews,

finding in them a scapegoat. Echoing Milchman and Rosenberg's observations, they appear to "focus anger on the Other" (Milchman and Rosenberg, "The Unlearned Lessons of the Holocaust" 186) by accusing them of having made good through the communist regime. Despite their accusations, however, they knew little about their Jewish neighbours. For example, Yasia's only knowledge of the Jews "had been learned from folk tales or overheard from townsfolk" (53). They do stand together, nonetheless, as neighbours in the same 'house of being', but there is a heightened sense of insensitivity towards the Other: "they are only Jews. Why should we care about that?" (55). This scene seems to stage Man's predisposition to turn a deaf ear to the 'cries of others' and protect only those who are near. If the others lose the shelter of state institutions, as Snyder points out, then it leaves them even more vulnerable to such inhumane behaviour. Thus, the novel also highlights the way the Nazis succeeded in "neutralizing the moral impact of the specifically human existential mode" (Bauman, "Towards a Sociological Theory of Morality" 185). Seiffert not only portrays the fearfulness of becoming the next victims, which goes hand in hand with their lack of solidarity and compassion, but also the progressive change in attitude towards the Jewish neighbours, as they are persecuted by the Germans. Seiffert's fictional world thus lends credibility to Synder's observation, mentioned earlier, of the Nazi's purposeful policy of drawing attention to difference through rational classification of peoples, and the breakdown of traditional moral order, paving the way for religious and ethnic intolerance. The proximity of community and neighbourliness inherent in a sense of existential 'being-with' that Heidegger referred to, means responsibility to

the Other. But, once this has been eroded and the Other has become socially distant, moral responsibility can be replaced by “lack of moral relationship, or heterophobia” (ibid 184). The kitchen scene thus articulates the need for a “different ear”, to use Manning’s phrase, in which we must listen to the more ‘distanced’ other and overcome the weakness of humanity. Finally, the importance placed on Yasia’s care of the children in the kitchen appears unequivocal from a Humanist existentialist viewpoint, since all children are *someone’s* children and deserve to be treated as our own.

Let me return now to the issue of modernity, the demise of the place world in the novel and its relationship with imperialism. Casey points out that modernity has also done violence “not only to people” (xiv), but also nature, culture and place. Indeed, place has been “actively suppressed” (Casey xiv) by modernity. Giddens also sees the crisis of modernity in the loss of the traditional place-world, and as we have seen in my discussion of ‘Architect’, this rupture is the cause of alienation, disallowing a ‘dwelling-well’ in the form of a satisfying life. Oliver Kozlarek also highlights the erosion of the traditional world and its values as the real disenchantment of modernity. Ironically, the way of dealing with it was to embrace enthusiastically the coming of imperialism and the nation state; exemplified, in *ABIW* by Yasia’s father and Pohl; the former sees modernity in the form of new roads and buildings that accompany the new regime as the possibility of a better life.

Despite his seemingly good intentions, and apparent admiration for the rural scenes he bears witness to, Pohl also believes that his beloved road would be good for the area: “he has come to build a road here, good and

broad and fit for civilians" (23), in short, a road "for when Hitler loses" (22). But, if he is "truthful" (23), he is also repelled by the locals' dirty looks, the "rags they wore; by their weather-worn faces and toothlessness [...], their dirty and barefoot children" (23), nor did he like "the onion stink of them" (ibid). Indeed, he felt that he was "*living among people from another century*" (ibid). Pohl cannot help but think of modernity as an improvement over this traditional life-world that both attracts and repels him. His road would be fit for 'civilization'. The irony implied in the use of the word 'civilization' seems clear if we perceive 'civilized' behaviour in opposition to barbarism. According to this ideal, then, the Nazis were anything but 'civilized'.

But, civilization implies political and cultural domination, power over lands and their human inhabitants, and in its essential anthropomorphism entails, furthermore, domination over the natural environment. The marshlands that will finally embrace the two Jewish boys, might not essentially benefit from this model of 'civilization'. I return to the significance of the marshlands below, but for the moment, suffice it to emphasize that Pohl's character reveals a deep human complexity that is neither black nor white. The 'civilizing' process implicit in modernization is for Pohl, as for most of us 'moderns', even today, an unquestioned and accepted ideal. Thus, Pohl is very much complicit in the 'civilizing' process. He remains entrenched in Western modernity and an anthropomorphic vision that considers human life as separate from nature. And thus, like many such 'ordinary' people in our contemporary world, by failing to perceive the paradox, Pohl remains just as complicit in the erosion of the place world and

the domination implied by rational-functional modernity as the Nazi regime itself.

The loss of existence and fall into nihilism that, as Giddens and Toulmin argued, began with the onset of modernity and according to Bauman, Arendt, Adorno or Wyshogrod culminated in the Holocaust, is immediately brought into focus in the opening pages of the novel. Seiffert presents the reader with imagery that evokes a rupture of the traditional life-world, with contrasts between the old stone and half-timbered houses of the town, and the sound of army jeeps pounding the old flagstones as the Nazis arrive to round up the Jewish population. As I have mentioned above, the natural building materials, the cobblestones underfoot, the old church and the clock tower are images that infuse a sense of history, continuity through generations, and a Heideggerian relatedness to the fourfold as well as a strong sense of place. The fog that does not lift throughout the novel resounds Esquirol's description of a nihilistic fog in which we cannot find a way, a place to find shelter and protection: "anxiety is like the humidity of that fog which penetrates our bones" (Esquirol 22).[42] The disorientation and loss that the two Jewish brothers suffer as they run between the buildings, from doorway to doorway, hiding from view in the thick fog, highlights their status as children cast out of a physical and metaphysical home, reminiscent of Helmut, Lore and her siblings in *TDR*: it is a fall into the abyss of nihilism. They have lost the only thread that kept them truly grounded, which is, as Esquirol notes, the 'intimate' (*intimitat*); that is, family and home. They have been dispossessed and banished as if from existence, from a 'being-in-the-

[42] "L'angoixa és com la humitat d'aquesta boira que ens cala" (Esquirol 22).

world' in an existential sense. Without a home, without anyone to protect and care for them, all sense, moral or otherwise, has been erased.

Furthermore, in these opening scenes, the schoolhouse, an image also employed in *TDR*, has been destroyed, broken up and vandalized, and the schoolmaster and his elderly mother literally thrown into the brick factory, like ill-treated animals. Seiffert characteristically highlights sensual experiences, such as the sound of Nazis "hurl[ing] things; school desks and school chairs" (8). The poetic repetition of the word 'school' denotes a strong sense of loss; after all, a teacher, the school, like a doctor or a hospital are places of trust, of protection and care. It epitomizes, moreover, a dependable community. It also means education, and this is life, a place of resistance and a way forward. If family and community are annihilated, then what is left?

Having established the significance of the loss of the place world to the 'civilizing' process of rational modernity, I will now focus on two of the most salient images of Literary Architecture that convey this erosion: the brick factory and the road. First, the brick factory, where the Jews are thrown inside like animals awaiting slaughter, stands as a potent symbol for the industrialization and the 'normality' of the rational technological mentality inherent in modernity (Heideggerian 'planetary-technics'). Certainly, there are echoes of Auschwitz, not only in its architectural features, particularly the chimney, but also in the subtle irony implied in the association with factory workers and the Jews who are taken as slave labourers to build the road or dig graves. The labourers and, thus, the Jews are 'standing reserve' for the use and abuse of the capitalist machine; objectified and dehumanized, "on call for technological purposes" (Krell 309), as David Farrell Krell

fittingly put it. We might also note here, the way they are literally 'standing' up in the factory; if they sit down or falter, they risk being beaten. Heidegger highlighted the word 'stand' in order to express a 'standing by' that echoes the Jews in the factory: "Everywhere everything is ordered to stand by, to be immediately on hand, indeed to stand there just so that it may be on call for a further ordering" (Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology" 322). Interestingly, emphasis is also placed on the way families are divided, parents from children, as if they were indeed objects. Seiffert highlights their suffering through a primordial sentiment, reminiscent of Robert Manning's 'cries of others', (Manning) of family, care for family members and by the calling out of names across the factory (46). The irony becomes even more glaring if we consider the slogan, *Arbeit Mach Frei* (work sets you free) on the gate to Auschwitz, and several other concentration camps (see figure 3). Evidently, work did anything but set the inmates free. Significantly, according to Otto Friedrich, the use of the slogan was not purposefully intended to be cruel, but rather as "a kind of mystical declaration that self-sacrifice in the form of endless labour does in itself bring a kind of spiritual freedom" (Friedrich 2-3).

Figure 3. The entrance to Auschwitz

For the affinities between Auschwitz and the industrial system of Western modernity, we need look no further than Henry Feingold's observation that it

> was also a mundane extension of the modern factory system. Rather than producing goods, the raw material was human beings and the end product was death, so many units per day marked carefully on the manager's production charts. The chimneys, the very symbol of the modern factory system, poured forth acrid smoke produced by burning human flesh. […]. Engineers designed the crematoria, managers designed the system of bureaucracy that worked with a zest and efficiency more backward nations would envy. Even the overall plan itself was a reflection of the modern scientific spirit gone awry. What we witnessed was nothing less than a massive scheme of social engineering […]. (Feingold 399-400. qtd in Bauman, Modernity and the Holocaust 8)

Thus, as a strikingly poignant metaphor, the brick factory clearly conveys the essence of what Heidegger calls 'planetary-technics', the *mentality* of technological modernity, and that Bauman calls 'normality', "in the sense of being fully in keeping with everything we know about our civilization, its guiding spirit, its priorities, it immanent vision of the world […]." (Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* 8). The factory is a symbol of industry, and by having the Jews forced to stand within its walls, awaiting their fate, they have been metaphorically reduced to products. This is a form of nihilism, a fall from Being and into homelessness, in which workers have been used and abused by the capitalist system, "depersonalized and objectified […]

characterized by a pervasive quantification of life and subordination to the exchange mechanism" (Milchman and Rosenberg). For the Nazis, everything would have a usefulness, for Heidegger it is an 'Enframing', in which all entities, and humans as well as nature are at the disposal of technological modernity. Likewise, the people herded and pressed inside are also at the disposal of the Regime, just like cattle going into the industrial slaughterhouses.

Significantly, the word 'herd', repeated throughout the text in varying grammatical forms, is reminiscent of Heidegger's controversial comparison of the Holocaust to modern agricultural techniques which he used to illustrate the workings of 'planetary-technics'.[43] We first encounter the image in Pohl's thoughts; "[the Jews] are ordered to run. They are herded; they are herded —

[43] I refer, here, to the remark that Heidegger made in a 1949 lecture on Technology, where he commented on the effect of technological methods on agriculture. He stated: "Agriculture is now a motorized food-industry—in essence, the same as the manufacturing of corpses in gas chambers and extermination camps, the same as the blockading and starving of nations [it was the year of the Berlin blockade] the same as the manufacture of hydrogen bombs" (Qtd. in Sheehan). Thomas Sheehan's footnote for this entry provides the original German of Heidegger's remark and his own sources, provided here in the absence of the original source, which I believe to be in the Marcuse archives in Frankfurt: "Ackerbau ist jetzt motorisierte Ernährungsindustrie, im Wesen das Selbe wie die Fabrikation von Leichen in Gaskammern und Vernichtungslagern, das Selbe wie die Blockade und Aushungerung von Ländern, das Selbe wie die Fabrikation von Wasserstoffbomben." Cited in Wolfgang Schirmacher, *Technik und Gelassenheit* (Freiburg: Alber, 1983) of a typescript of the lecture. All but the first five words of the sentence is omitted from the published version of the lecture, "Die Frage nach der Technik," in Vorträge und Aufsätze (Neske: Pfüllingen, 1967), Vol. I, p. 14, ad fin.; "The Question Concerning Technology, trans., William Lovitt, in Heidegger, Basic Writings, ed. David Farrell Krell (Harper and Row, 1977), p. 296". (Sheehan). I should point out, here, that this remark by Heidegger in its alleged 'insensitivity' by comparing the Jews to cattle, caused much consternation and has been the object of debate. But, for a highly convincing counter-argument to the criticism aimed at Heidegger, see Robert John Manning, "The Cries of Others." *Martin Heidegger and the Holocaust*. Ed. Alan Milchman and Alan Rosenberg. New York: Humanities Press, 1996. 19–38. Print. Manning points out that, despite its insensitivity, ultimately Heidegger appeals to the way we look to those who are near and those who are like us, as I have mentioned in this section. Manning also questions how different we really are to Heidegger in this respect and calls for the need for a "different ear" (Manning 34). But, what appears to be deeply embedded in Heidegger's remark is the parallel he makes between the industrialized death of cattle, the mechanization of our world, what he refers to as the *mentalité* of planetary-technics and the gas chambers. In this, he does not seem so different from Bauman.

Pohl can find no other word for it" (9). Through repetition, Seiffert seems to be clearly making a point. Pohl's thoughts return several times to the image of "herd" and "herding" when he sees the treatment of the Jews. Later we come across the same image in Myko's mind as he "is pressed in amongst the women he is *herding*. […] The SS are chasing them along the next line of vehicles, with Taras hard behind, *herding* them further along the rat run" (162-163).[44] Intriguingly, the (male) domination of nature, (significantly, Myko's fellow soldiers are chasing women, like sheep who refuse to enter the enclosure), may be read in juxtaposition with the (female) use of the "small herd" (201) of cows that Yasia's uncle caringly tends in the marshlands. The feminine image appears to be highlighted, here, as Seiffert describes one of his cows as "dun and wide-hipped, mother to the others" (212). The uncle, who had been sorely criticised by Yasia's father for his 'backwardness' and technological outdatedness, can now be viewed more in accordance with the Heideggerian fourfold, with the Earthbody, as he 'cares for' rather than exploits the cows "toward driving on to the maximum yield at the minimum expense" (Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology" 321). His is a *small* herd, evidently not kept for capitalist profit, but neither does he exploit what appears to be clearly the feminine embodiment of nature.

Despite the silence Pohl guards as he views the factory chimney from the rear-view mirror of his car, he does seem aware of the objectification of the Jews from amongst whom he is to choose his new labourers. He doesn't see workers in there, but people, families, children and the elderly. He still

[44] My italics

sees them as human beings. Again, with echoes of the Heideggerian 'standing-reserve' then,

> Pohl feels it like a weight in the chest: the SS men must have their new barracks, the new buildings; the territories they have taken must have all the new roads, the new houses, their vainglory orders. The plans leave no room for sleep, for adequate meals, for even halfway adequate conditions to work under. Damn the cost to the people. *They do not think on a human scale. They do not think they deal with humans* (128).

In short, Pohl has recognized the Nazi capacity to think themselves 'masters of the universe', in which all has been relegated to 'standing reserve'. As we shall see, Pohl and his boss, Arnold the Sturmbannführer, have also been reduced to mere resources, petty subordinates under orders, and as such, they may be considered no less 'standing reserve' than the human beings in the brick factory. They are, as Hannah Arendt called them, desk killers "terribly and terrifyingly normal" (Arendt 276).

So far, as centralizing metaphor generating both narrative and thematic meaning, that is, as part of the text's Literary Architecture, I have explored the image of the brick factory. I now turn my attention to the *road*. Since my claim in this thesis is that Seiffert's fiction represents a move towards re-constructivist postmodernism in its return to meaning, but at the same time observes a reality principal, as I mentioned earlier, we shall see here, an exemplary use of metaphor that functions on both levels. First, the construction of the road mirrors historical reality in so much as the autobahn (highway) network formed a part of Hitler's artistic vision and was just as

important an expression of National Socialism and the Aryan super-state as politics (see Figure 4). Frederic Spotts points out that "[e]ven while under construction, [the autobahns] were heralded as one of the great manifestations of Hitler's genius, the vitality of National Socialism and the excellence of German technology" (Spotts 386).[45]

Figure 4. An automobile on the sweeping curves of the autobahn with a view of the countryside

However, while Spotts remarks on their "environmental sensitivity, [and] harmony with the countryside" (ibid), the road, in contrast, appears to be in *disharmony* with the muddy, soft terrain of the marshland, which was "good for horseback only, or foot travel; for sledges in winter, impassable after summer storms" (38). Thus, although the road does conform to reality on a historical plane, it nonetheless raises questions in its clearly subversive role as a *violation of place* (my emphasis) as Casey would put it. As we shall see in the following section, the emphasis on this violation of the place-world

[45] See Frederic Spotts,. "Aesthetics and Transport." *Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics*. London: Random House, 2003. 386–398. Print. I am grateful to Dr.Andrew Monnickendam for bringing this excellent work on Hitler's aesthetic vision to my attention.

points the way precisely towards a return to it and to a more sustainable co-existence with the natural world represented here by the marshlands.

Nevertheless, Spotts notes how Hitler was indeed concerned with "the challenge of reconciling technology with pastoral environment" (Spotts 393). But, this Ukrainian road perhaps manifests the later stages of Hitler's construction process, in which respect for nature and the lack of natural materials that would have been more integrative to environment, gave way to "monumentalism" (Spotts 393). Although, from today's environmentalist perspective, any road project represents a contradiction in terms of ecology, Pohl embodies in this respect the spirit of the Reich, and indeed, of the times. For him, it represents an engineering feat that will test his professional skills, reflecting the reality of Hitler's will to employ "the most up-to-date design and technology" (Spotts 392). As an engineer, Pohl is proud of the technology involved but, for him, it would be a road with a practical purpose, useful to civilians, rather than an example of grandiose National Socialist monumentalism. For Himmler, however, it would indeed be "a grand one" (21). Arnold, too, admires its greatness as he stands on the completed road: "For a moment, Arnold feels the grandeur of the Reich's expansion; its enormity set against his own human smallness" (233). Hence, *ABIW* expresses Hitler's vision of the autobahn network as a manifestation of the genius of National Socialism, "'the greatest single masterpiece of all times and places', 'the sixth wonder of the world', [and] evidence of the superiority of the National Socialist system over democratic government" (Spotts 392). But, Arnold's sense of "smallness" (233) speaks to a certain powerlessness

and vulnerability, as one protracted before an omnipotent god. Furthermore, the road is elevated *over* the marshes and *over* the wild country:

> The road is lifted, it seems. Above the damp and mist, and above the plain, still dotted with snow-mounds and hollows; above everything, or so it seems to Arnold. Even the far stands of birches and the woodland he passed through seem low by comparison. (229)

Through the repetition of the word 'above', Seiffert evokes a sense of domination and power over place; it speaks to the severance of humanity from nature that Toulmin highlighted as the mainstay of modernity until the late twentieth century. The road was "above everything" (ibid), seemingly unstoppable, and Arnold can perceive this separation. Toulmin puts it thus: "From 1720 well into the 20th century, most philosophers and natural scientists continued to defend, in one way or another, their investment in keeping Humanity apart from Nature -'in a world by itself'" (Toulmin 143). It is the dualistic thought of Western humanity that separates the supposed 'privileged' from the 'unprivileged', "'mind, reason, man, male' from 'body, feeling, nature, female'" (Zimmerman 240), and justifies the anthropocentric viewpoint that permits humanity to impose its will over the natural world. I will return to this point below, for the moment suffice it to say that the road, as metaphor, remains a demonstration of greatness, a manifestation of the power and egotism of National Socialism, the nation-state and of anthropocentric modernity and, as I have already mentioned, the transformation of the "distanciated time-space relations" (Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* 101) that have eroded "localized relations organized in terms of place" (ibid).

Let me now explore the characterization of Arnold through the lens of Heideggerian existentialism, permitting a link between the metaphoric use of the road as functional modernity and the behaviour of Arnold as exemplary of a character whose consciousness has been pervaded by it. Seiffert, like many characters throughout her fiction, presents him through different identities. At times, he is Arnold, and others, the Sturmbannführer, or even the SS man. Our view of him oscillates between interior and exterior, from his professional role to a civilian, but perhaps we do not come to *know* him, and above all, he is untrustworthy because, as Pohl seems to sense, we cannot know when he will be simply Arnold, (or if he ever exteriorizes his self), or if he is playing a professional role. Again, this may be the lack of deep characterization that Dunmore pointed out, but I believe Seiffert subtly demonstrates how an 'ordinary' human being might become "so mired down in our ordinary chores that [they] forget [they] are called upon to take a coherent stand in a world where things are genuinely at stake" (Guignon, "Authenticity, Moral Values, and Psychotherapy" 227). The mistrust and aversion that the reader may have towards him lies precisely in the way he lives within this 'they-world'. Like the architect, he is inauthentic in the way he just "drifts along with the latest trends" (Guignon, "Authenticity, Moral Values, and Psychotherapy" 234), goes along with his social, professional role, worries about his own reputation, his success or failure in the eyes of others, and in doing so, he is comfortable with "satisfying the easily handled rules and public norms of the 'they'" (Heidegger, *Being and Time* 334). And thus, he relieves himself of responsibility. Furthermore, through the characterization of Arnold, the final scene hints at the inauthenticity of some

contemporary office workers and government officials. For example, he contemplates Pohl's fate for not having complied, flattering himself for his own ability to conform to his role, complying with officialdom in making "his report on the man's conduct" (230) and then washing his hands of the consequences. He is, after all, a petty bureaucrat indeed, a desk killer. Perhaps most significantly, for his own self-aggrandizement and desire to be seen as successful, he even convinces himself of his own importance and "achievement" (231) in the building of the road over that of the engineer, who after all, had been the real genius behind its construction. He thus uses others' aptitudes and accomplishments to his own ends. But above all, in his inauthenticity he 'forgets' what is "genuinely at sake" (Guignon, "Authenticity, Moral Values, and Psychotherapy" 227). The succinct hint at 'normality' in the characterization of Arnold instils unease in the reader, since we must all know or have known people like Arnold, and what is worse, we might even recognize ourselves in him. Could we leave the public world behind and engage in a more authentic Being? Charles Guignon notes, by

> [t]aking the familiar demands of the public world as of consummate importance — as 'the only game in town' — we can become highly effective strategic calculators, convinced that everything is possible, yet lacking any overarching sense of what makes life worth living. (Guignon, "Authenticity, Moral Values, and Psychotherapy" 226-227)

In his inauthenticity, then, Arnold sees himself in terms of his success or failure and his part in the "grandeur of the Reich's expansion" (233), for which he rewards his consciousness. But at the same time, we are shown how he falters in his thoughts, by metaphorically "miss[ing] his footing, just

briefly, but long enough to throw him" (ibid), we can perceive fleeting breaks in the flow of his inauthenticity in which his real Being might surface. He does exhibit a hint of humanity, a slight sign of authenticity, as we shall see, in his final thought of the "man who gave so much to build it for them" (233). He is not unaffected by "all he's seen through" (230). Yet, at the same time, he congratulates himself for not having been swayed from duty, which not only would have aggravated his conscience, but unnecessarily compromised his status and ultimately, his survival. He is, as Heidegger terms it, Janus-faced.

Arnold remains in the realm of inauthenticity to maintain the sense of duty that will bring him personal *honour,* lending meaning to his life and actions; that is, in his inauthentic professional identity, he must justify his actions even to himself, control irrational thoughts and impulses and hide his true self.[46] He thus represses his thoughts, telling himself that it would "not help to think of Pohl, or of all the darkness he has encountered there" (231), even rationalizing the reason he would be on the road at that time, "he will tell them: *Admiring the good road I had built here*" (ibid). This rational side of Arnold's consciousness, in a nutshell, arises out of the need to manage his emotions. The relationship between technological rationality, embodied here

[46] I take Berger et al. here to define the difference between 'honour' and 'dignity', since from this viewpoint we can see how Arnold strives for honour, whereas Pohl has dignity. Berger states, "[t]he concept of honour implies that identity is essentially, or at least importantly, linked to institutional roles. The modern concept of dignity, by contrast, implies that identity is essentially independent of institutional roles" (Berger et.al 78). In this respect, Pohl has turned away from his role as a member of the German military, and towards authenticity, in short, to his true self. Berger et.al point out that honour, although mostly outdated today, is associated with hierarchical societies and, thus, has survived in groups such as "the nobility, the military, and traditional professions like law and medicine" (ibid 80). Interestingly, the authors, writing the original version of this work in the 1970s, noted its obsolescence in the United States, but its continued existence particularly in the countries of Southern Europe, which they consider "archaic" (78).

in the road, and the human consciousness is perhaps best outlined by Peter Berger et al. who note:

> The rationality that is intrinsic to modern technology imposes itself upon both the activity and the consciousness of the individual as control, limitation and, by the same token, frustration. Irrational impulses of all sorts are progressively subjected to controls. […]. The result is considerable psychological tension. The individual is forced to 'manage' his emotional life, transferring to it the engineering ethos of modern technology. (Berger et.al. 163)

Arnold indeed appears as the embodiment of the 'engineering ethos'. Furthermore, despite his awareness of the injustices going on around him, he prefers to maintain his honour, and I should add a sense of power and self-aggrandizement, as a bastion of meaning in a meaningless world.

But, as we have seen, Arnold, like Pohl and all the labourers who lost their lives building the road, is merely 'standing reserve' for the unstoppable machine of modernity. This is metonymically supported in the menacing images of the "straight line" (227) on the horizon and the sound of the "distant thrum in the cold air" (231) of the troops. Arnold momentarily awakens to this thought, sensing his insignificance and anonymity within this unstoppable machine, evoked in the rumbling sound of the advancing troops. As he stumbles and "falters" (233), he "backs away" (ibid), knowing that "they will not stop" (ibid). He feels the Reich's "expansion; its enormity, set against his own human smallness" (ibid). He is nothing, an insignificant cog in the wheel as he stands in his solitariness on the road. He cuts a lonely

figure, (self)-isolated not only from the banter of his fellow men, but from any human connectedness. Unlike Pohl, Arnold does not have familial kinship relations. In short, he is ontologically homeless; ironically perhaps, as we witness him contemplating the possibility of "walking homewards" (232) along the road. Nevertheless, at the end of the section, he remains "thinking of the man who gave so much to build [the road] for them" (233). This scene is followed by a short space in the text, just enough to leave the reader an inkling of hope and to wonder whether, given the realization of his insignificance and the human cost of the road, he will 'return home' or whether he will be condemned to perpetual homelessness.

However, most notable is the way the road slowly but surely encroaches on the wild natural space of the marshland and its inhabitants. The building of the road seems to be a metaphor for the powers of the 'civilizing' process and the hierarchical domination implicit in Hitler's racial politics, in which technological superiority reflects a stronger race. Furthermore, there are echoes of Mumford's thoughts on the "disregard for geography, topography, or regional surroundings" (Critchley Peter JP 26). But even though ultimately, the road, as symbol of the power of technology over nature and place, will be "resistant to water ingress" (229) and embody a "proud and stately causeway" (228), significantly, for most of the novel, at least, the marshland resists the road. It does not succumb easily to its power. Pohl feels alarmed at this resistance and fears reprisals from his superiors for the delay in the building schedule. The muddy, soft and water sodden terrain of the region makes it difficult for the Germans to "smooth their way through these new and vast territories" (22): "Heap a ton of rubble onto the mud here

and, come the morning it will have sunk without trace again" (21). Similarly, the jeep's wheels sink into the mire, and the motorbikes get "plastered with mud" (38), as if the land itself rejects the invaders. Certainly, the road seems to encapsulate just "how little the Germans knew of the country they had conquered in their Blitzkreig" (38) and reflects the real problems encountered by the German engineers in overcoming the difficulties of the terrain. But, most importantly, the road does not account for place but rides roughshod over it.

Finally, at the end of the novel, it should be noted that Arnold views the autobahn project not so much as an artistic vision of grandeur, but as a facilitating technological tool for the movement of troops. Perhaps for Arnold, as he stands triumphant on the road, rather than suggesting a deep exploitation of place in its destruction and disregard for environment and other people's homes, it represents a means of "clawing out more of that oil and grain land" (232) that will feed the centralized Reich economy and its peoples considered by Hitler to be the superior species. It echoes the competitiveness of hard-capitalism in which the strongest and most competitive see themselves as having the right to exploit and despoil another people's land. According to Spotts, Hitler was, in fact, never in favour of using the autobahns for war (Spotts 394), since they were considered unfit for the use of heavy machinery. Nevertheless, Seiffert's final images of the road clearly express it as the mega-machine of modernity, a symbol of unsustainable growth, an embodiment of a power system and the apogee of bureaucratic rationalization.

1.2. ii. The World as it should be: The Return-Home and Reconstructive Postmodernism

> Reflection is required on whether and how, in the age of technological uniform world civilization, there can still be a home. (Heidegger, *Aus Der Erfahrung Des Denkens* 243)[47]

Thus far, I have broadly argued that *ABIW* thematizes the fall from dwelling that the 'dark-side' of modernity and the powers of imperialism have bequeathed upon humanity. And I have suggested that, as centralizing metaphor for the overpowering 'civilizing' process, the road runs in conflict with a deep sense of place, the annihilation of localized socio-political bodies and subjugation of its peoples, their activities and of the natural environment. I have attempted to show how the text articulates this break-down of traditional political and social bodies, local communities with in-built moral codes and behavioural norms, precipitated by the arrival of a functional bureaucracy and sovereign state institutions that objectified and dehumanized human beings by turning them into statistics and, in an analogy to Snyder's parallels between the Holocaust and our own world, "ethnic objects whose putative interests are determined from abroad" (Snyder, *Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning*). In this regard, I discussed the juxtaposition between the community meeting in the timberman's house and the new buildings of the Reich as exemplary of the use of Literary

[47] Quoted in Hubert Dreyfus, and Mark Wrathhall. "Martin Heidegger: An Introduction to His Thought, Work, and Life." *A Companion to Heidegger*. Ed. Hubert Dreyfus and Mark A. Wrathall. Blackwell Publishing Inc, 2005. 1–17. Print. Translation unknown.

Architecture. In what follows, I discuss the way the text points to the possibility of a return-home; that is, to dwelling-well.

Primo Levi, in his conclusion to *The Drowned and the Saved* (1988) urges us to "sharpen our senses" (Levi 167) against a resurgence of violence rooted in "intolerance, lust for power, economic difficulties, religious or political fanaticism and racialist attritions" (ibid) if we are to avoid a similar catastrophe in the future. Levi's personal reflection of his experience in Auschwitz not only functions as a warning and a reminder to future generations, but speaks to a way forward for humanity. Similarly, Seiffert's fictional portrayal of the microcosmic world of individuals and their families in the days leading up to the catastrophe cautions us of the necessity for solidarity and responsibility for the Other, which fundamentally entails a consideration of human relatedness within the fourfold. This new form of dwelling would, rather ideally, transcend, as Bauman points out, the over institutionalization of moral principles and the organization and categorization of human beings and their activities into any extreme form of modern rational bureaucracy.[48] I must emphasize, however, that far from

[48] This also seems to entail a post-patriarchal and therefore non-hierarchical society, like the one implemented in this novel on the Ukrainian community, resembling Green political movements. See Charlene Spretnak, *Green Politics: The Spiritual Dimension*. Ed. Hildegarde Hannum. Schumacher Center for a New Economics, 1984. Print. (Paper from the Fourth Annual E.F. Schumacher Lectures 1984). Certainly, one could offer an eco-critical reading of Seiffert's works to suggest a politics of eco-anarchism, particularly the form of bioregionalism that, according to John Barry "calls for greater integration of human communities with their immediate environment, with 'natural' rather than 'human-political' (state) boundaries delimiting the appropriate human social unit" (Barry 80), and this would also argue for the novel as suggesting eco-anarchism as a way forward. I discuss the presence of 'boundaries' and frontiers in the section on 'Field Study' in the final chapter of this thesis. I also address a possible eco-critical reading and eco-feminist reading in the section on further research. However, I believe it worth mentioning here, because the presence of pastoral utopian scenes in the novel recalls green political literature, and no doubt there is a relationship to my argument here, that to approximate a form of dwelling-well many elements of Green politics, including the devolution of power to small community and a state-less society, are indeed present.

taking refuge in pre-modern medievalism, this alternative to what may be considered the anthropocentric monoculture of modernity entails, as Spretnak notes, “maturity to value freedom and tradition, the individual and the community, science and Nature, men and women” (Spretnak, *Green Politics: The Spiritual Dimension* Loc.148). Furthermore, as we have seen in the introduction to this thesis, an existentialist being-with and caring for the Other, which entails accepting them into our home, remains an essential part of dwelling.

Levi, whose words I have previously quoted, highlights the dangers of “political fanaticism” and Spretnak also notes the failure of economic or political systems to “deliver us from suffering” (Spretnak, *States of Grace: The Recovery of Meaning in the Postmodern Age*). *ABIW* appears to reflect the incapacity of, albeit extreme, political ideologies to set the human condition to rights. On the contrary, both Stalinism and Nazism led to the destruction of dwelling. Nevertheless, as Snyder points out, the murder of Jews needed the German invasion and the demolition of localized state power and institutions to compromise hitherto harmonious co-existence, (Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin*) and I have argued, in the last section, how this is made evident in this text. The first part of the novel suggests, however, from the outset, the failure of the political body in either extremes of Left or Right-wing politics, to find a return to dwelling-well. Clearly, the text speaks to the loss of ontological home already triggered by the Stalinist regime before the invasion of the German army. The villagers imagined that the arrival of the Nazis and the consequent expulsion of the Soviet regime would result in a return to normality and to the practice of

traditions that had previously been “denied them” (311).[49] Certainly, Seiffert dramatizes the restoration of religious expression in the baptism that Pohl bears witness to: “Toddlers and ten-year olds, wading hand in hand; babes in arms carried into the river’s flow, all born under Stalin, only now allowed their immersion” (24). Interestingly, even in the 1990s, after the collapse of the communist regime and the re-establishment of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, the Russian Orthodox Church condemned certain faiths, with associated rituals such as baptism, as “dangerous ’sects’ that threatened the purity of Russian culture” (Woodhead 329). Yet, this scene remains replete with dramatic irony, as Pohl, rather than an observer of a newfound peaceful idyll, will soon find himself accomplice to murder and destruction.

Because of its ambiguity, at this point I believe it worth focusing for a moment on the baptism scene. My argument that the novel speaks to a return-home lies on the premise that this return necessarily entails cultural and religious tolerance. The two Jewish boys are indeed saved from the same fate as their parents because Yasia, at great risk to her own life and that of her family, leads them to safety in the marshes, where they are eventually baptised into the local faith. On the one hand, the acceptance of the Other that Esquirol highlights as intrinsic to home has indeed been assured; the boys find a new home within the community and are accepted as if they were their own children. Nevertheless, on the other hand, the baptism scene may be read as a certain intolerance to other religious practices and cultures rather the opposite since, after all, through baptism, the boys are then denied their

[49] For more details on this point, see Snyder, 2010, *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin*. London: Vintage. 2015

Jewish cultural practices. But, the scene seems to reflect historical reality. Snyder recounts how certain religious minority groups, such as Baptists (for whom the practice of full adult baptism was an important doctrine) or other Ukrainian minority groups that had been persecuted under Soviet rule, were more favourable to sheltering Jews:

> Members of smaller religions, especially, were able to trust one another in times of stress, and accustomed to seeing their homes as embattled outposts of truth in a broken world. It seems the more alienated Christians were from authority before the war, the more likely they were to rescue Jews. (Snyder, *Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning* 290)

Intriguingly, he also points out that Ukrainian Baptists rescued Jews as they not only "believed they were the children of Israel and liked to discuss the Bible and Zionism with them" (ibid 290), but also because they "operated more or less in isolation from the dominant institutions of spiritual and secular authority" (ibid 291). He further notes that Catholics who rescued Jews usually did so purely out of individualism and, as a result, were often considered "unorthodox or heretical" (ibid 291). Thus, the tension with the authorities demonstrated by the marshlanders, and their condition as outsiders and objects of prejudice by the townsfolk, would explain their reason for sheltering the Jewish boys. Although in Seiffert's text, it is unclear as to which religious group the marshlanders belong, and she does not specifically refer to them as Baptists, they seem to act out of a duty to 'help thy neighbour', to help a stranger by accepting them into their home.

In addition, there is a further practical consideration that also has to do with historical reality. In the bureaucratic world of Nazi imperialism, to be without identity papers was dangerous. Once the Jews had lost their citizenship by occupation, they were highly vulnerable. Often a baptism certificate could be a means of salvation for these Jews. Indeed, Snyder recounts how a Jewish woman was saved this way: by a false baptism certificate which enabled her to eventually become legally documented (ibid 222). Thus, like other Jews in those desperate and chaotic times, baptism was perhaps their only means of salvation. Furthermore, and rather intriguingly, if the locals were of the Baptist faith, then the scene would lend support to the notion of freedom from government and church control as well as a rejection of hierarchical authority, since the Baptists believe that no single church has control over them.

Furthermore, if we consider baptism in biblical terms, the scene appears in sharp contrast to the Sturmbannfüher's later reference to darkness, because the act of baptism implies a return to godliness, light and earthliness. Thus, I suggest it extends the biblical metaphors of light and darkness throughout the text. The return to both a physical and metaphysical home, a return to 'light' and an emergence from darkness, is frequently implied. Examples abound throughout, such as: "menfolk emerged, blinking, from their hiding places in the grain bins and distillery cellars" (34), or "lamps [being] lit in the farmhouse kitchen" (35), the latter suggestive of a return to the house of Being. The replication of baptism at the end of the novel further highlights the possibility of the return to earthliness, hopefulness and, as the ritual also denotes, a new beginning. Moreover, if the marshlanders are

indeed of the Baptist faith, then, as I have mentioned, it might also suggest freedom from hierarchical authorities. Hence, despite some ambiguity, the baptism scene and the fact that the Jewish boys are baptised by the local priest, betokens a historical reality and, concurrently, a sense of freedom and salvation; indeed, I suggest, a hopeful return-home that alludes to a humanitarian society that cares for the Other.

Just as the baptism scene appears to reflect historical reality at the same time as performing a more thematic role, the use of pastoral descriptions mirrors the mainly agrarian Ukraine of the 1940s, yet also conveys a strong sense of place and belonging. This applies particularly to the portrayal of the work-world; for example, families "reaping" and "women sitting companionable in the stubble, tying the stalks into sheaves to dry" (24), or the more traditional skills such as the timberman or farmer. Sensitivity to place in its relationship to human activity, as Casey noted, forms an integral part of the complexity of harmonious dwelling, insomuch as the work-world should function on a basis of equality, justice and dignity, which has become increasingly difficult for modern workers, in their status as 'standing-reserve' to appreciate. In this respect, I suggest the thematic and lexical allusion to biblical imagery, particularly to the testament of John, may not be coincidental, since it is here where Jesus was sent to "finish *his* work" (John chapter 4:34): "both he that *reapeth* and he that *soweth* may rejoice together" (ibid: 36).[50] The implication of this is that the reapers of the harvest finish the labour of the sowers, but both equally enjoy the results. Work, in this sense, has reciprocal value. This stands in sharp contrast with Pohl's

[50] My emphasis

weary, exploited, road labourers, and thus, the wider ‘standing reserve’ of the modern capitalist labour force. Despite its sparse minimalist and descriptive idealism, then, the use of such imagery, conjures up a world in harmony in which “he that reapeth receive wages, and gathereth fruit unto eternal life” (John 4: 36). This biblical resonance also lends additional affective force to the drudgery and exploitation of the labourers and the desperate plight of the Jewish families, locked inside the brick factory, who will be forcefully wrenched apart to supply more hands, not only for the Nazi building projects, but also to, ironically, dig their own grave.

Also, as we have seen in the first section of this chapter, the nature of the work-world within the community can be read through the lens of the Heideggerian fourfold, Mumford’s attention to the traditional skills bounded by the needs of humanity embedded in place and to the village community’s connectedness with *things*, in the Heideggerian sense. The timberman serves as example of this functioning. First, his is a skills-based profession based on the alignment of local needs and place rather than the creation of needs to further activate production, as in a capitalist economy. In addition, he is not yet identified with the process of ‘standing reserve’, not having become a commodified being, unlike Pohl and Arnold. However, the timberman’s relationship to the environment is, by nature, one of ‘caring-for’ and cultivation based on a more sustainable use of resources. But, perhaps most importantly, his work connects him to the fourfold via a ‘being-among-the-things’; the manipulation of natural wood for the production of things that constitute dwelling (*bauen*). In short, he is part of the “primary circumstance of existence” (Sharr 31) that belongs to the fourfold, and in proximity to what

constitutes dwelling. As Sharr points out, for Heidegger "nearness is a fundamental aspect of human experience" (ibid 35) and that "the definitive characteristic of a thing is its possibility to bring people nearer to themselves, to help them engage with their existence and the fourfold" (ibid). In this regard, Andrew Mitchell notes the distancing of the modern subject from the essential relation to things:

> The privilege of the modern subject is precisely its isolation from the world, its imperviousness, its 'disconnect'ion and extricability from the things around it. To not insist on our privileged independence from the world, but instead to accept our place among the things, to give credence to the appeal of things, is to become humble before the modesty of things. (Mitchell 261)

For Heidegger, our relationship with things within the workings of the fourfold is inextricable from place, because building and dwelling are related "through people's involvement with the things of 'place'; and their attempts to make sense of place" (Sharr 36). And thus, the road, as metaphor for modernity and the arrogance of imperialism as a means for facilitating *lebensraum*, stands in sharp contrast to the humble timberman's abode and his way of life. Through this juxtaposition, Seiffert further highlights the devastation of a sense of place inherent in dwelling. Therefore, the timberman's relationship to the fourfold, far from arrogant, remains rather modest. Significantly, this modesty in the relationship to things and to place is of utmost importance to Heidegger and, as we shall shortly see, to Esquirol in dwelling-well.

Another example of such modesty as an essential part of dwelling can be found in Osip's workshop. Its smell of "resin and sawdust" (40) effuses the age-old connectedness between Man and his tools. In the workshop, the fourfold is substantiated in the materials, tools and the things, which, for Heidegger, lends humanity a sense of 'groundedness' and relatedness. But again, sharp juxtapositions emphasize its loss: between the "tools and benches and broken cart wheels, the familiar mess" (ibid) of the workshop and the loudhailer, the new "law of occupation" and the curfew imposed upon the "townsfolk […] crouched and listening" (ibid) behind the stone walls of their homes. The sense of chaos and disorder implied by the "mess" and "broken cartwheels" that are strewn around in a disordered fashion, furthermore, is telling, because it functions as a counterpoint to the rational, stable orderliness of the rigid bureaucracy about to be imposed. The *disorder* of the workshop and the contrasting *order* of the invaders recalls Toulmin's point that humanity and nature function under the laws of rationality only to a limited degree, with social and scientific "disorder (or 'chaos') allow[ing] us to balance the intellectual books" (Toulmin 201). Thus, I suggest the text points towards a disordered complexity in the chaotic nature of the workshop and the untidy yard that does not succumb to rational orderliness. This is further mirrored in the 'disorderliness' or instability of nature substantiated by the marshlands. We may be reminded, here, that Toulmin's thesis is grounded on the opposition between stability and hierarchy, inherent to a Cartesian philosophy of Enlightenment modernity and the instability, improvisation, adaptability and flexibility of a Humanist Enlightenment modernity of Montaigne and his followers. I will return to this question again

shortly, but I draw attention to it here because the metonymical function of the village abodes suggests this instability and complexity in sharp contrast to the ordered, functional modernity of the Nazis.

Further to the sense of a return to dwelling, however, Osip's workshop and, as we have seen, the timberman's kitchen function, above all, as places of refuge and resistance. Osip recognizes the safety of his humble home as he warns Yasia to stay within its walls: "'It is only safe inside', he cautions, and he pulls Yasia further, into the shelter of his workshop doorway" (40). Contrasts between the exterior insecurity and interior safety of the workshop abound throughout the novel, but notably, it is in the workshop that the Jewish boys find respite from their dilemma, and the place where they, ironically, play at the normality of home with

> the wooden blocks with whittled edges […] a house-shaped piece among them, with a steep-pitched roof, or perhaps it is a barn. There are shapes that look like people, almost; ones that look like goats too, or maybe farm dogs; and some others that she can't make out. (139)

Their childish game resembles the Heideggerian ideal of dwelling, inspired, as I have previously mentioned, by his rural cottage in Todtnauberg, and, despite its fictionality, it allows the boys to 'return-home'. Sharr points out that "the farmhouse, for Heidegger, allowed privileged contact with the primacy of being. Its residents marked out their mortality through rites of passage and routines of daily existence" (Sharr 68). Like the simple village houses in the novel, the Jewish boys' fictional farm marks out the ideal of dwelling within the fourfold; a house that its inhabitants engage with in terms

of architecture, but also one which stands "'on the earth' and 'beneath the sky', made by the first dweller there using materials gathered from the immediate surroundings" (ibid). Indeed, the vernacular buildings in the novel suggest a harmony between the activities of their occupants and the nature of their surroundings. As we have already seen in relation to the architect's allotment hut, this is an architecture that arises from the necessities of everyday life that developed over time and thus, dwelling and building are as one, in contrast to modern building projects that are first empty shells for the dwelling that is supposed to occur in them at a later stage. Furthermore, their temporary home in the loft encompasses a proximity of being in its simplicity and modesty, not only in their humble surroundings, but also in the materiality and physicality of *things*. I am reminded, here, of Esquirol's observation of the need for a "new materialism" (Esquirol 64), that of which the "hands take hold and touch; of odours that we feel and of colours-unfiltered-that we can see" (ibid).[51]

Developing Heideggerian thought, Esquirol highlights physical contact with things and with people as an 'intimate resistance' to the modern crisis; we must "touch the earth, tree trunks, stones, fruit, desired bodies …, caress the air and embrace [our] children, cuddle up with a blanket and cook [our] own food […]. This is the authentic materialism of things" (ibid 65).[52] I suggest that, in her review of *ABIW*, Dunmore unconsciously observes this 'materialism' when she notes that the novel is narrated in an "intensely

[51] "[…] les mans que agafan i toquen; el de les olors que sentim i el dels colors -no pantallitzats- que veim" (Esquirol 64).
[52] "Toqueu la terra, els troncs dels arbres, les pedres, la fruita, els cossos desitjats …, acaroneu l'aire i abraceu els fills i agafeu-vos a la manta i feu-vos el menjar […]. Aquest és l'autèntic materialisme de les coses" (Esquirol 65).

physical manner, through the weight of Momik, tied in a blanket to his big brother's back, or the suck and slipperiness of the marsh, the warmth of a newly peeled egg" (Dunmore). This technique is never more prominent than in these passages, lending them a sense of homeliness, safety and security that shelters and protects the boys. In short, attention to materiality and physicality is for Esquirol, as for Heidegger, part of the relatedness with things that constitutes dwelling. And Seiffert incites us to sense it. Being close to the 'non-technological' things that surround us is, for Heidegger, that which brings us closer to existence in our deep relationship to the world around us, forming an essential part of dwelling. Moreover, for Esquirol, the thought given to the materiality of things reminds us of the need to value the present moment. He states, "[i]f every day is like the last, we should care for what we have within reach, in a kind of *carpe diem*, neither rushed nor egocentric" (Esquirol 68). In this regard, he approximates a Heideggerian phenomenology of things, the way we experience them that cannot be accounted for by scientific measurement, bringing us closer to existence and mortality.

Indeed, the scene in the loft of Osip's workshop is replete with the images Esquirol highlights; the way Yasia "knocks the eggs against the bowl rim, breaking the shells" (139) and then peeling them; "pressing the eggs into each of his palms" (140). Seiffert even describes the sensation of warmth from the eggs in the hand. The materiality of the wooden blocks, with which the boys play, is also vividly detailed. This gratification in the everyday simplicity, ordinariness and physicality of our surroundings is within everyone's reach, as Esquirol notes, "[a] certain plentitude of everyday life

is within reach of the majority, and this lies in something other than the logic of property, power or fame" (Esquirol 66).[53] Interestingly, he observes that caring for simple sensations and the quotidian is democratic in essence, unlike property, power or fame, which would only be available for the few. As such, the rich evocation of the simplicity of a 'new materialism' in Esquirol's terms, not only stands as counterpoint to the powerful imperialist values of Nazism outside the homeliness of the workshop, but also to the frustration of Yasia in fulfilling her own desire for the physical touch of Mykola and to becoming a mother. The "oval" shape of the eggs in the hands of the small boy, furthermore, strongly evokes the mysteries of creation, birth and life which, along with the intimacy of the brothers as they sit in close contact, sets Yasia to feel "the emptiness of her own lap. Nothing but her own hands to rest there – and even they have nothing to hold in them" (140), intensifying the fall from dwelling imposed by the politics of power. Thus, the evocation of 'materialism', the proximity of things, effuse a sense of Yasia as caught up in a tragic moment of history which impedes her from dwelling.

Furthermore, the essential physicality and materiality, of being 'near' to things also has its counterpart in the nearness to Others as an essential part of human existence. Indeed, Esquirol, wishing to distance himself from the 'blood and soil' mindset of Heideggerian thought, proposes 'rootedness' as "rooted in the day and its expression, rootedness in daily company, rootedness not in impersonal elements, but in human warmth" (Esquirol

[53] "Una certa plenitude de la vida corrent és a l'abast de la majoria de la gent, i va en una altre direcció que la lógica de la propietat, la del poder o la fama."

64).[54] Thus, for Esquirol, (as indeed for Heidegger), the return to dwelling-well consists in caring for the Other, an existential 'being-with' that embraces not only a close proximity to things, but also to other human beings. The workshop scene illustrates this proximity, not only in the deep connectedness with things then, but also in the physical closeness between the brothers, Yasia's sense of responsibility to them, and her yearning for Mykola. Consequently, the workshop and the simplicity of the village abodes may be understood as sites of refuge and resistance to the nihilistic power of imperial

[54] [L]'arrelament en el dia i el seu gest, l'arrelament en la compañía quotidiana, l'arrelament no en els elements impersonals, sinó en l'escalfor humana" (Esquirol 64). To my mind there is, in fact, not much difference in the two concepts; for Heidegger too, the proximity of human company and the physical contact with things is central to his concept of the fourfold. Esquirol appears to be wary of associating his philosophy with what has been most criticised, and perhaps most debated, in Heidegger's thought, and that is a 'rootedness' that can so easily slip into intolerance and racism. On the question of proximity of the Other, I commented in an earlier footnote in section 1.2.i. of this thesis on Robert Manning, who, in his defence and interpretation of Heidegger's purported insensitive remark, in a 1949 lecture on the techno-industrialization of agriculture in its similarity to the mass murder of Jews in gas chambers, discusses Heidegger's thought that Man is thrown into Being with Others who are similar to him: "we exist within and out of a certain concern for those who are near and with whom we share a certain sameness of Being" (Manning 31). For Heidegger, then, the condition for an ethical value system lies in this nearness and essential relatedness, in our natural bonding with neighbours and family. Manning notes that for Heidegger 'neighbours' means "those who dwell near" (31), and our concern for them is a natural state of Being. Manning appears to notice perhaps rather what 'shouldn't be', rather than Esquirol's observation of the ideal, he notes that what concerns us most is what is ours: "our family, our friends, our race, our gender, our class, our city, our neighbourhood within the city, our country, our fellow Americans. This is our natural orientation in the world. […]. Most of us […] read the newspapers and watch CNN and remain unmoved as long as it doesn't involve us or someone we care about, someone among whom we are too, someone we know". (ibid 32). Manning thus admits Heidegger's comment as problematic and insensitive in its expression for a 'natural' concern only to those who are near us, since it appears deaf to the troubling cries of Others. And yet, as I mentioned in the earlier note, most importantly, it reveals the necessity to "develop a different ear" (ibid 34) with which to hear the Others' pain. Similarly, Theodore Adorno's critique of Heidegger lies in his sense of rooted-ness and what he considers to be a too-close connectedness with our own community that can cover up an underlying darkness. Milchman and Rosenberg also express a concern with the way we seem not to have heeded the lessons "we must draw if we are to have any hope of expunging the death-world from our social landscape" (Milchman and Rosenberg, "The Unlearned Lessons of the Holocaust" 178). I revisit the issue of rootedness, and a heightened sense of place relationship in the final chapter of this thesis, where the paradox between wanting to 'get back into place', in Casey's terms, to a deeper sense of connectedness and closely-tied family and community relationship, and bigoted disrespect and hatred of those who are different, may be discerned in Seiffert's portrayal of the micro-cosmic world of a family living the Protestant-Catholic divide on Glaswegian scheme neighbourhoods.

forces. But equally important is their function as metonymical counterpoint to deconstructive postmodernism, as they re-inscribe meaning via an 'intimate' engagement with the world and with the Other.

As we have seen, through the characterization of Yasia the text draws attention to responsibility for the Other as part of proximity that remains unweakened by social distance. In other words, even though she is culturally and socially distant from the Jewish boys, unlike our present day industrial and technological society, the peasant girl maintains an innocent primal morality which precludes a deafened ear to the 'cries of others'. For Bauman, this remains part of the warning of the Holocaust for our present times.

Furthermore, concomitant with Yasia's moral stance, is the way she appears closely associated with nature and tradition and especially her father's orchards which, along with their fruit, are a recurring image throughout the novel. Reminiscent of Anton Chekov's play *The Cherry Orchard* (1904), Seiffert's "ancient orchards" (23) may also be read as symbols of the past, a Ukraine in the midst of change. Pastoral discourse juxtaposed with the mechanical rationality and functional bureaucracy of the German regime implies something more valuable and worthier in that past that is being left behind. Indeed, Oliver Kozlarek points out that the disenchantment of modernity may stem from the erosion of the more traditional world and values of that world precipitated by the consolidation of Imperialism and the Nation-state (Kozlarek 16). But significantly, for Toulmin, this erosion is linked to a desire to dominate the world, including nature, and closely associated with the orchards and, indeed, nature is Yasia.

Yasia may be interpreted as the epitome of tradition and primal morality and, furthermore, as an earth goddess, an embodiment of nature reminiscent of Gaian philosophy. These two elements share common ground in that her commitment to aid the two young strangers is rooted, echoing Esquirol's concept of 'rootedness', in the basic values inherent to all human society in their relatedness to the fourfold; that is, that all humans are intrinsically connected. As Spretnak puts it, these values are lived out through "ecological wisdom, grassroots democracy, non-violence, and so forth" (Spretnak, *States of Grace: The Recovery of Meaning in the Postmodern Age* 16); the "so forth" encompasses a universal primeval human morality that assumes human beings' mutual need and inter-dependency. In Heideggerian existentialism, inter-dependency is also central to the nature of being, and forms part of dwelling.

However, Seiffert clearly creates an emotional affect in the reader arising from a sense of loss of these elements, not only through pastoral space but through the characterization of Yasia. Viewed as a Gaian figure, she embodies love and caring-for, for all life on earth, and thus forms part of the fourfold. Nevertheless, her performance as a function of fecundity and earthliness remains incomplete, and thus, dramatizes a longing for dwelling-well and a return-home with a sorrowful sense of its impossibility. Seiffert constructs a dialectics of fecundity and unattainability, which is perhaps best illustrated through an exemplary scene in which Yasia's desire for Mykola leads her into the town to try to sell her apples in the hope of seeing her lover: "[s]o she arranges the fruit in the basket- stalk up, bruises down" (77), the

apples parallel Yasia's need to feel attractive for Mykola. The apple metaphor extends further as she

> slices the browning faces off an apple quarter to reveal the pale flesh better, then she places the cut fruit, clean and pleasing, in the centre of the basket. But no one comes to buy from her. No patrols pass, but there are no customers either, and the few shop owners who have opened peer at Yasia through their windows, before withdrawing. What is a farm girl doing alone here-and today of all days? Yasia feels their questioning glances; she is uncertain herself now. (ibid)

With echoes of Katherine Mansfield's short story *Bliss* (1918), in which the frustrated protagonist Bertha attends to a bowl of fruit, the apple metaphor strongly suggests a youthful 'fruitfulness' sadly squandered with a life entangled by war. This passage, furthermore, strengthens the sense of Yasia as isolated in her lonely subjectivity, a young girl deprived of 'physicality,' suggestive of a powerful sense of loss.

Despite this sense of loss, Yasia nevertheless has a strong appreciation of responsibility, which will prove to be a critical element in the return to dwelling. Bauman notes how it may "provide a starting point for a truly different and original sociological approach to morality" (Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* 182). He refers to Emmanuel Levinas' concept of existential responsibility as having

> nothing to do with contractual obligation. It has nothing in common either with my calculation of reciprocal benefit. It does not need a sound of idle expectation of reciprocity, of 'mutuality of intentions' of

> the other rewarding my responsibility with his own. I am not assuming my responsibility on behest of a superior force, be it a moral code sanctioned with the threat of hell or a legal code sanctioned with the threat of prison. Because of what my responsibility is not, I do not bear it as a burden. I become responsible while I constitute myself into a subject. Becoming responsible is the constitution of me as a subject. Hence it is my affair and mine only. (ibid 183)

Thus, as Bauman points out, if the disinterested duty towards the other is part of our fundamental subjectivity and intersubjectivity, then morality is not societal, but rather something that "society manipulates - exploits, re-directs, jams" (ibid). Significantly, he states, "[p]roximity means responsibility, and responsibility is proximity" (ibid 184). When proximity is eroded, then so is responsibility for the Other who becomes an Other. And, for Bauman, it was the "technological and bureaucratic achievement of modern rational society which made such a separation possible" (ibid). I have already outlined earlier how the novel portrays the categorization and subsequent bureaucratization of human beings, and here my point is rather in the counterpoint to the deliberate policy of distancing the Other, and this lies in the sense of unquestioned responsibility maintained by Yasia, even though she does not like it (110). As such, she represents a human being unaffected by the Nazi will to objectify the Jews and to cast them outside of the "protection which such natural morality offers" (Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* 189). Through this characterization, Seiffert appeals to the safeguarding of what Bauman called 'primeval moral drives' (ibid 188) that the Nazis almost succeeded in neutralizing through "the formidable apparatus of modern

industry, transport, science, bureaucracy, technology" (ibid). Yasia, then, in her original innocent proximity, to use Bauman's words, to things and to the Other, as opposed to a proximity of only those in the same 'category', (the social distancing mentioned earlier), and at a physical and emotional nearness, maintains a kind of proximity that is constitutive of dwelling and that Esquirol calls 'rootedness'.[55]

Yasia is genetically rooted, furthermore, through her father to the apple orchards, and through her mother to the marshlands. Just as the orchards recall the Garden of Eden, the spatial imagery of the marshlands evokes the loss of the place-world and the destruction of nature as part of that world. The demise of dwelling and devastation of place inherent in the ravaging of the marshlands echoes the fall from paradise and the expulsion from the Garden. As we have seen, the marshlands remain a site of resistance to social and cultural fragmentation as well as a stronghold of place, and unsophisticated 'backwardness' that nevertheless maintains a 'new materiality' (Esquirol) and a proximity with people and things. Its wildness and resistance to regulation by the rational-functional forces of the Nazis, symbolized by the difficulties entailed in the building of the road, and the sinking of its structure into the sodden, muddy soil, enable the Ukrainian resistance movement to maintain strength and endurance and, perhaps above all, dignity as human beings. Seiffert highlights the character of the indigenous peoples of the marshland, with their distinct features, reminiscent

[55] Seiffert had already thematised the way the distancing of the Other, and the placing of other humans outside of this original innocent proximity, facilitated by modern war through the use of technology and weapons, in *Afterwards*, and I will mention this again in chapter three of this thesis. Bauman also notes how weapons can obscure from view the victims, enabling the erosion of the primeval moral drive.

of native Americans in their vital connectedness with environment and nature. Indeed, their relationship to the fourfold seems to be a model for advocates of cosmological relatedness and earth based spirituality such as Spretnak, who states, "[t]he cosmic union of humans and the rest of the Earth community, including the stars and the moon, is central to the Native American worldview" (Spretnak, *States of Grace: The Recovery of Meaning in the Postmodern Age* 90). Casey also fittingly observes the primal relatedness of native Americans to place when he states, "the solution may lie in a belated postmodern reconnection with a genuinely premodern sense of place, a sense such as the Navajo once had [...]" (39).

By taking the Jewish boys to the marshlands, her ancestral home, then, she rescues them from nihilism by encountering a place of shelter and protection that embraces the Other, proximity, rootedness and relatedness within the fourfold; indeed, a return-home. In Casey's terms, it alludes to a metaphysical getting-back-into-place or an implacement, and for Esquirol, as for Heidegger, "the post-nihilist metaphysics, returning to origins, has to begin with a metaphysics of home" (Esquirol 46-7).[56] And, as Esquirol notes, this home is not necessarily rooted in a specific place (implied in the Nazi mindset of 'blood and soil'), but a finding, an encounter with being and with a 'you' between the earth and sky ('una contrada') and includes hospitality towards the Other. The Other, here, are the two Jewish boys, not from the marshlands, but that are nevertheless welcomed or accepted into the community; the return-home implies an 'opening out-wards,' "the house is

[56] "La metafísica postnihilista, retornant a l'origin, ha de començar essent una metafísica de la casa" (Esquirol 46-7).

the Other" (ibid 49) and "acceptance is the condition of existence" (ibid).[57] Just as the marshlands are a place of resistance, so too the home that the boys find there betokens a form of resistance to all that life has thrown at them, and is thus a metaphysical homecoming.

As a final reflection on this novel, we may first consider the words of Toulmin:

> In choosing the goals of Modernity an intellectual and practical agenda that set aside tolerant, sceptical attitude of the 16th century Humanists, and focussed on the 17th century pursuit of mathematical exactitude and logical rigor, intellectual certainty and moral purity, Europe set itself on a cultural and political road that has led both to its most striking technical successes and to its deepest human failures. If we have any lesson to learn from the experience of the 1960s and '70s, this (I have come to believe) is our need to re-appropriate the wisdom of the 16th century Humanists and develop a point of view that combines the abstract rigor and exactitude of the 17th century 'new philosophy' with a practical concern for human life in its concrete detail. Only so can we counter the current widespread disillusion with the agenda of Modernity, and salvage what is still humanly important in its projects. (Toulmin x-xi).

As an allegorical text, *ABIW* reaches beyond the horrors of the Holocaust, and into the lessons that should be learned from it: inciting general reflection on modernity, the erosion of a traditional world and its self-regulatory moral

[57] "la casa és l'altre" (Esquirol 49) and "l'acollida és condició de l'existència" (ibid.).

code. To this regard, it can be aligned with other contemporary historical texts, such as the play *Himmelweg*, by Catalan playwright Joan Mayoral, in that it takes a historical moment and incites, through artistic form, thought as to our present and future moment.[58] Seiffert's text similarly employs the horrors of the Holocaust to reflect on the dangers of extreme rationality, anthropocentrism, disregard for the Other and Nature, and moral responsibility, which remains alien from dwelling-well within the fourfold. This is indeed a story that looks to the past as a warning to the present, and furthermore, it ultimately points to a way forward if only humanity could embrace what Spretnak terms the 'Noble Truth'; that is, the essential relatedness of human beings to the cosmos.

Conclusions

In this chapter, we have been introduced to several prominent and recurring aspects of Seiffert's work which, despite configuring a postmodernist allusion to meaninglessness and nihilism, suggest the reconstructivist nature of her literary art. This can already be perceived in its simplest and unmitigated form in 'Architect', whose main character appears to be bounded by the conditions of modernity and racked by an existential crisis that in narrative terms, might have remained as an expression of postmodern meaninglessness if it had not been for the realization that, in Heideggerian

[58] Joan Mayoral's play, *Himmleweg*, which was shown in Barcelona during the writing of this thesis, dramatizes a fictional story of the visit of a Red Cross official to a concentration camp and thematizes the way people choose to ignore what is happening to the Other and, like *ABIW*, moral responsibility. For a review (in Spanish), see Europa Press for La Vanguardia newspaper; "Himmelweg', La Obra de Juan Mayorga Que Mezcla Lo Contemporáneo Y Lo Histórico, Llega Al Teatro Fernán Gómez de Madrid. www.lavanguardia.com.

parlance, he had lost rapport with the essence of dwelling. The key to return to dwelling-well for the architect, and thus part of this essence, seems to reside in the 'return' towards a state of nearness to things, to a being-with-others and to Man's deep interrelatedness and rootedness in Being, as outlined in the later essays of Heidegger on the nature of Man's connectedness to things and the nature of dwelling, and carried forward into a philosophy of Proxmity by Esquirol. The first section of this chapter has also briefly explored the literary technique that creates from the imagination a sense of loss of dwelling and the return-home by exploring the parallels between images of building, architecture and home and a phenomenological return as a function of Seiffert's Literary Architecture. Through a Bacherlardian poetics of space, Seiffert also incites the reader into an imaginative place of safety and security that forms a resistance to modernity. In this way, the reader, by having been brought into an imaginative contact with the essential rootedness of Being, can perceive what has indeed been lost to humanity.

ABIW shares an engagement with rootedness and an interrelatedness with the fourfold already implied in 'Architect', but further highlights humanity's intimate relationship to environment and place by sharply contrasting the anthropocentric humanism and the extremities of rational modernity inherent to a totalitarian regime with a more authentic dwelling place attuned, not only to a relatedness to things as objects or living space, but to an acceptance and care for the Other as part of Being-in-the-world. *ABIW* thus builds upon some aspects of 'Architect's loss of dwelling inherent in modernity, particularly the de-subjectification of Man and his conversion

to 'standing-reserve', but also articulates the failure of dogmatic and authoritarian political principals, the lust for power and resources, and a blindness to the 'Noble Truth' of Being as part of the loss of dwelling. I have, furthermore, explored the way this text extends and deepens the use of a poetics of space employed in 'Architect' to embrace the pastoral, through which the reader is taken on an imaginative return-home.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ARCHITECTURAL UNCANNY IN *THE DARK ROOM*

Introduction

This chapter approaches Seiffert's most critically acclaimed work, *The Dark Room* (*TDR*), through a Bachelardian poetics of architecture and home, and Antony Vidler's Architectural Uncanny, and broadly aims to reveal how the writer evokes an acute sense of anxiety and insecurity caused by physical and phenomenological displacement in the aftermath of war. I limit my discussion, here, primarily to the author's aesthetics of the Architectural Uncanny (Vidler), rather than other manifestations, such as in photographic images, since my intention is to demonstrate how the inexpressible emotional realities of forced domestic displacement, and an existential homelessness become visible when expressed "through the subversive and comforting powers of the house" (Vidler 44). Thus, I suggest the poetics of home and architectural space remains just as integral to the narrative as the notion of photography already addressed in several critical studies (Berberich; Martinez Alfaro; Pividori; Rau; Tollance). I contend that through this discourse of the uncanny, Seiffert expresses a loss of identity and a sense of bewilderment, an existentialist *angst* in a disordered, conflicted and estranged world that ultimately speaks to a loss of Heideggerian dwelling.

The first two sub-sections address 'Helmut' and 'Lore', since, despite their divergent moral viewpoints, both address the chaotic final moments of

World War Two. I centre my discussion primarily on the notion of real homelessness and the anxieties of forced displacement. The third sub-section, dedicated to 'Micha', focuses on existential homelessness and disorientation rooted in the contemporary condition of phenomenological placelessness and its intrinsic historical amnesia. Ultimately, the overall thesis of this chapter is that *TDR* articulates a loss of dwelling through a poetics of architectural and domestic spaces, (Literary Architecture), that in this text appears as uncanny, but paradoxically suggests the possibility of a return to place through redemption and forgiveness.

For Heidegger and Freud, war formed an important environment and stimulus to their thinking. For the former, writing in the aftermath of World War Two, *angst* and the feeling of the uncanny are linked through the notion of alienation and estrangement, homelessness and rootlessness as part of the modern condition. World War One, however, and the pioneering explorations of war trauma, bereavement and its psychological impact formed the backdrop for Freud's considerations of the human propensity towards *angst* and despair. Vidler also notes how the Freudian Uncanny emerged at a time when the "secure house of western civilization, was in the process of barbaric regression" (Vidler 7); reinforcing the symbolic allusion of the architectural space of 'house' and 'home' with its phenomenological and psychological implications on the collective psyche.

Notably, both the Heideggerian anxiety, and the Freudian Unheimlich sit in harmony with Homi Bhabha's argument for the uncanny domestic space as a site for the exploration of the invasions of history and the wider political culture: "The unhomely moment relates the traumatic ambivalences

of a personal psychic history to the wider disjunctions of political existence" (Bhabha "The World and the Home" 448). Thus, Freud and Bhabha allude to the uncanny as an articulation, not only of individual subjectivity, but also of the wider society. This is an interesting point, since I contend that Seiffert's stories speak, not only to a certain historical period, but also to a more universal human experience. In *TDR*, the reader can infer the collective psyche of a nation, community or society. And this inference applies not only to World War Two, but to our own times of mass displacement and domestic upheaval. I suggest, then, that she portrays Bhabha's "unhomely moment" of the individual psyche through instances of the uncanny in the architectural space of the house, transforming the image of cosiness and familiarity into something unsettling.

Before outlining the manifestation of unsettledness, I will broadly review the Freudian definition of the term 'uncanny', since an understanding of its nuanced connotations will better illuminate how it infers a sense of anxiety mystery and fear. In his etymological analysis of the German word 'Heimlich', Freud reveals the various shades of meaning therein, and in a nutshell, describes it as belonging to the house and family; not strange, familiar, cosy, intimate, and free from fear, thus, evoking a sense of security and safety (Freud). But, he also observes a meaning that at first sight appears paradoxical, that is, "do or engage in something secretly, secret places" (ibid). Hence, there are two aspects of its meaning: The first relating to the "familiar, the comfortable and the domestic, and the other, to the concealed or kept hidden" (ibid). So, it also implies something mysterious, a secret meaning, allegorical, or locked away and of course, something unconscious

and mystical. As Freud notes, the meaning of 'Heimlich' merges with its antonym, 'Unheimlich', or unhomely, which means "everything that was meant to remain secret has come into the open" (ibid), since both are related to the 'familiar'. Thus, Freud explores how something that was once familiar can become unfamiliar or 'Unheimlich', and this slippage, or convergence between the two terms explains why in literature and the visual arts, the use of something normally considered homely such as a cottage, the perfect family and its abode, or that which conforms to our everyday reality, might be portrayed as withholding something darker, mysterious, strange or insecure; the opposite, in fact, to the homely. Since a significant thematic element of Seiffert's tryptic lies in the silencing of dark, family secrets, we might clearly, at this point, perceive its usefulness as a literary device.

Now, let us turn to how the uncanny relates to architecture and the house. Antony Vidler highlights the importance of the house as a site for "endless representations of haunting, doubling, dismembering, and other terrors in literature and art" (Vidler ix), and points out the Freudian link to the domestic: the 'Heimlich'. Furthermore, like Lewis Mumford and Heidegger, Vidler notes the use of modern architecture and the space of the city as "the sources of modern anxiety, from revolution and epidemic to phobia and alienation" (ibid). As we shall see, the notion of alienation and estrangement will remain of vital importance in my discussion of *TDR*. Vidler observes, however, how this can be traced back to the eighteenth century and the beginning of the industrial revolution, with its ensuing displacement of the rural population to the cities, the result of which was the severing of community and family bonds, and of course, contact with what

Heidegger would term the 'fourfold' or perhaps more simply put, with the cosmic elements of nature. And thus, we may perceive the congruencies between Heidegger's *angst*, his philosophies on dwelling and the uncanny.

Benjamin Constant, writing in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Empire, already noted how

> [i]ndividuals, lost in an isolation from nature, strangers to the place of their birth, without contact with the past, living only in a rapid present, and thrown down like atoms on an immense and levelled plain, [were] detached from a fatherland that they see nowhere. (Constant qtd. in Vidler 4)

Thus, Constant had understood Mankind's predicament in its disconnectedness with historical memory and with the natural environment long before Mumford, Heidegger and others would espouse the condition, in greater strength, in the twentieth century. Undoubtedly, the possibility of 'living comfortably' had become ever further removed from the increasingly urbanized populations. For Heidegger, the uncanny also remains wedded to the condition of modernity; rootlessness and 'unsettledness', as he termed 'Unheimlich', accentuated by the effects of. World War Two.

However, significantly for the arguments forwarded in this chapter, Theodor Adorno called attention to the uncanny as artistic expression of the modern condition, fittingly describing it as a

> significant psychoanalytical and aesthetic response to the shock of the modern, a trauma, that, compounded by its unthinkable repetition on

> an even more terrible scale during World War II, has not been exorcised from the contemporary imaginary. (Vidler 9)

As I have already mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, *TDR*, has been analysed through the lens of Hirsch's postmemorial literary theories (Berberich). However, no critical attention has been paid to the uncanny, the slippage between the homely and unhomely, as a means of conveying insecurity, anxiety and the unhomeliness of the de-domesticated, alienated and estranged subject in the aftermath of war in the novel, and neither to the 'intellectual uncertainty' of knowing the past. Just as the photography trope serves to express the difficulties of representing reality, here, the Architectural Uncanny works to describe a further element that cannot be known by the post-generations: the emotional and psychological disturbances caused by the mass displacement of German citizens in the aftermath of World War Two.

In post-generational Holocaust artistic representations, the uncanny has been employed to approximate the spectator or the reader to the real, and thus, Seiffert's use of this technique appears to parallel that of postmemorial Holocaust fiction. Eric Kligerman describes the difference between what he terms the Holocaustian Uncanny, in contemporary art, and its Freudian counterpart. He observes that for Freud, it is the uncanny figure of the phantom "who crosses the line between the living and the dead to approach the individual [...], [while] in the Holocaustian uncanny the artists lure the spectator into the space of the dead" (Kligerman 60). I do not elaborate on the Holocaustian uncanny here, since I focus on anxieties of displacement and the Architectural Uncanny rather than traumatic events of the Holocaust,

but nevertheless, Kligerman raises an interesting point by highlighting the way the Holocaust artist incorporates trauma into the void of painting, architecture and language. Seiffert also uses the "negative representation", described by Kliegerman, to evoke the unsaid. This "gaze into the void" (ibid), however, will be significant to Seiffert's use of the Architectural uncanny as well. As we shall see in a moment, Kolesnik's house exemplifies this analogy, as does Helmut's photographs of architectural ruins in the aftermath of war. Thus, like the trope of photography, the Architectural uncanny serves to 'reveal what is hidden'; that is, not only the anxieties of displacement, as I have mentioned, but the secrets kept within the family and the feign of normality, while outside events loom ever closer to chaos.

Let me return to how the Architectural Uncanny might apply more specifically to *TDR*. Broadly speaking, the homely, or the Heimlich, of Seiffert's architectural space can appear purposefully deceitful to suggest hidden secrets. These secrets include those kept within the microcosmic world of the family and wider social denial surrounding many German families in the aftermath of World War Two. By veiling what should 'remain hidden', through the ordinariness and simplicity of domesticity, as I mentioned in the last section, she incites suspicion. The void described by Kligerman manifests itself through this mundaneness. By purposefully provoking our dreams and images of home and architectural space, in a Bachelardian sense of daydreaming, the writer undermines the sensation of safety implied by these spaces. On a phenomenological plane, the daydream of cosy domesticity has the opposite effect, because she plays on the readers' historical positionality; all cannot be well, and neither do we expect it to be,

for of course, we know the denouement. Like the perfection of realist art, the text "takes on the aspect of uncanny […] because it veils reality, and also because it tricks" (Vidler 35). Significantly, the knowledge of the author's trickery invokes a sensation of anxiety. To return to Kligerman, then, the reader similarly gazes into the void glossed over by mundane domestic reality. What must lurk behind such contentment? By masking the unspoken, anxiety and fearfulness through an architectural homeliness and domesticity, Seiffert also manages to portray the way the population indulged in trickery, denial and to feign normality by embedding it within the text itself.

2.1. Concealment and Alienation in 'Helmut'

In this section, my discussion of the Architectural Uncanny focuses on the first story in the tryptic, 'Helmut'. I put forward the following arguments: First, as I noted in my discussion on 'Architect', that Seiffert conveys the alienation and estrangement of the subject, by pitting the intimate spaces and the homeliness of Helmut's first childhood experience in the secure, protected, maternal space of the home, with the exterior architectural and disorienting urban spaces of Berlin. *TDR* portrays the loss of historicity, culture and memory finally through its ruined landscape, as well as the sense of disorientation when confronted with physical and phenomenological displacement. Second, the difficulty of discerning the truth through photographic representation has its parallels in Helmut's domestic life and the fakery represented through architectural spaces, such as the station or the shops. As we shall see, the buildings, like Helmut's family, often evoke

homeliness on their exterior, but unhomeliness within; signifying something hidden or unspoken. Like Helmut's photography, then, architecture guards the concealed, the denied and the real.

If we view the narrative within a more universal realm, however, it ultimately articulates an existentialist viewpoint with the estranged, and unreliable protagonist, finding resolution by means of fully embracing and coming to terms with this estrangement through art. Helmut's photographs could be perceived as a kind of measuring, in the Heideggerian sense, in that the images, like the sky, "let us see what conceals itself […] by guarding the concealed in its self-concealment" (Heidegger 223). In other words, and central to my thesis, despite the fall into homelessness and the challenge to dwelling that war engendered, the story speaks to resilience through artistic creation; a Heideggerian poetic dwelling and a return to meaning. As Heidegger puts it, "[a]uthentic building occurs as far as there are poets, such poets as take measure for architecture, the structure of dwelling" (Heidegger, "...Poetically Man Dwells...'" 227). The analogy exists, then, between representing the ruins of Berlin through photographic imagery, disclosing the inexpressible reality of that which uncannily remains hidden, and Helmut's poetic measuring that allows a rebuilding or the possibility of renewal.

Bachelard noted that the image we have of childhood "emerges into the consciousness as a direct product of the heart" (Bachelard 3). Seiffert takes advantage of the emotions provoked by this imagery in her child protagonist, Helmut. Thus, the vulnerability and innocence of child victims of war, such as those all so commonly seen in the media during the writing of this thesis, lends both this story and 'Lore' their deeply heart rendering

quality and universality. Childhood brings to the fore the casting out of the child subject into a chaotic, hostile universe where he seeks a re-implacement, as Casey puts it, or a homecoming, both psychologically and physically, as he yearns for his home and family. The extended use of domestic images strengthens the sensation of uncanniness produced by our homely image of childhood and the unhomely fear of losing it. Examples of this include: the warmth and safety invoked by the blankets with which Helmut's mother tucks him into bed at night, (a trope iterated in 'Lore' and *TWH*), the pyjamas that Helmut is wearing when he finds himself dispossessed of his home and family during the bombings, the intimacy of the child's bedroom, and the uncanny image of the "empty, unmade bed" (49) amongst the ruins.

Reminiscent of 'Architect', Seiffert again employs the childhood home as a "felicitous space" (Bachelard 19), a space that holds "protective value" (ibid), and one that "may be defended against adverse forces, the space we love" (ibid). As J.R. Stilgoe observes in the foreword to Bachelard's *Poetics of Space*, "[t]he house is the first universe for its young children, the first cosmos" (Stilgoe).[59] The story opens, as the title to the chapter suggests, in "Berlin, April 1921" (3), with the birth of Helmut and his archetypically proud and happy parents. Helmut's house was the epitome of the Heimlich, all "cheer and peaceful industry" (Vidler 62), and the mood remains one of a humble, but contented domesticity, with little or no signs of adversities. The scene radiates homeliness, and despite the evident hardships of the times,

[59] See J.R Stilgoe, "Foreward." *The Poetics of Space: The Classic Look at How We Experience Intimate Places*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1994. viii–x. Print.

“[t]he flat he comes home to is always clean [...] there is always something on the table" (ibid). The family’s happiness seems complete with the birth of Helmut; their love for their son is not detracted by his defect, “the absence of a pectoral muscle” (3). Nevertheless, his disability accentuates Helmut’s sense of estrangement; he cannot enlist in the army like the other boys of his age, and he is often ignored or offered charity. Thus, Helmut’s estranged standpoint as well as his unworldliness and naïveté make him a perfect observer, yet paradoxically, as unreliable as his photographs, in his self-deceptive acceptance of the events unfolding around him.

Indeed, soon we are alerted to the fact that all might not be quite as homely as it seems. Papi’s boss, Gladigau, takes photographs of the family in the photography shop where he works, and although the pictures show a seemingly perfect family, they outwardly disguise “the artful masking of a son’s disability” (11), an indication of something hidden from view. This fact will gain relevance as the story progresses, since, like other elements which conceal and deny, I suggest his hanging arm represents his authentic being, his true self. In addition, viewed from Gladigau’s perspective, the family portrait reveals another ‘truth’ behind the "cabbage and potato diet, the mend-and-make-do of the man's life, his wife, his son with the crooked arm" (7). The photos belie normality, and parallel the deceptiveness of Helmut’s photographs of the gypsies being rounded up by the Nazis, which, once developed, do not capture “the chaos and cruelty” (40) of the scene. The “last photo” of the family shows its “encircling warmth” (17-18); the word “last” alerting us to what must inevitably be about to take place. The final words of the scene, as Mutti carefully lays Helmut’s portrait “away in a drawer” (19),

invoke intense poetic images of intimacy, a love of a mother for her child, but also of the hidden and the secret. The photo is not "displayed in the living room where the visitors might see it" (ibid), but initially kept "on the bedside table" (ibid) and finally, concealed in the drawer. It also speaks to the postmemorial narrative, in which the photo embodies a future perfect, what will have taken place, what might have been, and what can never be known. Through just a few household objects, then, the simple image of a photo, a bedside table and a drawer, Seiffert has succeeded in conveying intense homeliness, but also, paradoxically, anxious unhomeliness. Just like the viewers of Helmut's photographs of desolated Berlin architecture, the reader must look to the void, as Kligermen described it, to reach into the pain of loss.

Similarly, Seiffert's language takes us from "the familiar, the ordinary to the banal, returning once more to the status of the unhomely" (Vidler 163). My brief exploration of language here will reveal the parallels between language and the Architectural Uncanny, since it lends support to an unhomely concealment. The minimalist style and unjudgmental narration lends an intense dramatic irony through its extreme ordinariness. One example lies in the expression of the rising fortune of Helmut's family. The link between the improvement in their economic circumstances and the coming of the third Reich are implied by their having "joined the Party" (17). As a result, Papi finds a "well-paid job managing the floor of a new factory" (ibid), which employs workers "from all over Europe" (ibid). Naturally, the reader speculates about the 'European' workers, since our historical positionality leads us to reflect on who the 'workers' might have been, but it

nevertheless remains implicit rather than overtly stated. Simply put, there is a void which requires completion. But, perhaps what is more important, there is "intellectual uncertainty" (McClintock and Houghton 125) surrounding whether the father withheld information from his family, supressed it even from himself, or knew what was happening and deliberately failed to disclose it. The promotion that the father gets, and the news of the "new workers […] from all over Europe" (ibid) is pitted against Helmut's innocent, child's vision of a homely, fatherly image of "the blue-soft smell" (25) of his father's after dinner pipe in the enfolded comfort of the family home. By employing a child's viewpoint, and an overly 'homely' space, then, Seiffert manages to convey a strangeness which speaks to the fuzziness and often misrepresented German family narrative, in which individual family members have different perspectives as to the participation of their relatives in the Nazi regime.[60]

Likewise, this suppression and fakery has its counterpart in Seiffert's architectural spaces. First, the railway station, much like the road in *ABIW*, plays a highly significant part in the narrative of the undisclosed. It embodies the changes taking place in Berlin as the war progresses and the way modernity and progress, in terms of technology and machinery, does not lead to progress in humanitarian terms. The importance of the railway imagery works on several levels: First, it reflects historical authenticity; the expansion

[60] See Harald Welzer, Sabine Moller; and Karoline Tschnuggnall. *"Opa Was Kein Nazi": Nazionalsozialismus Und Holocaust Im Familiengedächtnis*. Frankfurt/Main: Fischer, 2002. Print. Welzer found in his interviews with German families that the social context and the way family stories are passed down through the generations distorts their sense of what really happened in the family, since different family members offered different perspectives. Seiffert clearly articulates this dilemma in *TDR* in all three stories. The theme of perspective, as I argue in this section, filters into family members on all levels, the personal and the political. Helmut's mother, for example, sees her son from a different perspective than the father, and the father from Helmut's teachers.

of the platforms, and the increasing number of trains in the story reflecting the Deutsche Reichsbahn's considerable role in the war effort and the economic development of Nazi Germany (Mierzejewski).[61] Trains transported troops, military supplies, and raw materials for the industrial activity that fuelled the war. And, of course, our image of the trains in war-time Germany can hardly be separated from their notorious use as transportation to concentration camps. The plot device, whereby the family move to a "flat near the station" (7), and the narrative strategy of Helmut's invisibility, due to his physique and child-like innocence, allows a mapping of the changes taking place in Germany at that time. The expansion of the station, and the increasing movement of people, reflects the historical reality of the growing economic power of the Nazi regime, the railway system as "a valuable asset of the Reich" (Mierzejewski) and architectural projects as "means of developing national pride" (Spotts 321).[62] It also mirrors the prosperity of the micro-cosmic world of Helmut's family (11). Second, the railway station, and the wide streets "lined with red banners" (20), suggest the totalizing forces that surround not only the people on the move, but also Helmut as a single individual embedded in a crucial moment of history. Furthermore, the station reflects the chaos and confusion surrounding Helmut and denotes (Vecamer) the impact of the war on the population, finally

[61] In 1949, the railway system, which had been called Deutsche Reichsbahn after World War One, in Western Germany became the Deutsche Bundesbahn, and the East continued to use the same name. After reunification in 1994, both companies merged to become the Deutsche Bahn AG (Mierzejewski; Vecamer). For an interesting account of the link between the Nazi party and the Reichsbahn, see Alfred C Mierzejewski, *The Most Valuable Asset of the Reich: A History of the German National Railway. Volume 2, 1933-1945.* 2nd ed. The University of North Carolina Press, 2003. Print.
[62] For an interesting discussion of Hitler's relationship to architecture and architects, who "were as important to him as his generals" (Spotts 342), see Frederic Spotts,. "The Master Builder." *Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics*. London: Pimlico, 2002. Print.

finishing, like the regime itself, with the "shattered glass" (30) roof, and "empty platforms" (ibid) paralleling the shattered lives, spiritual emptiness and metaphysical homelessness of the transient refugees. But, perhaps the most important point lies in the essential purpose of the expansion of the railway transportation system and, like the expanding power of the Party, remains out of sight. With echoes of the encroaching highway in *ABIW*, the railway signifies an ever more powerful and efficient machine; an encompassing economic progress that will play its part in unspeakable violence and systematic, rationally executed murder.

Nevertheless, the movement, journeying and travelling that the station signifies contrasts with the life of Helmut, whose physical disability prevents him from being enlisted in the army, but allows him to silently observe the comings and goings of the population. Gladigau "tells him to concentrate on the construction work and stop taking so many photos of people" (30), but Helmut continues clandestinely. As Helmut's boss, Gladigau appears to constrain Helmut's inner-wealth. His creative being has become subordinate to "a mere commodity as a wage labourer in the marketplace" (Spretnak, *States of Grace: The Recovery of Meaning in the Postmodern Age*), and of course, to the demands, and political exigencies of the fascist regime.[63] In both cases, the outcome is a loss of dwelling, or in

[63] Spretnak was referring to the Marxist belief that one's creative self, which Heidegger would term poetic dwelling, has been "turned into a possession (of the capitalist employer)" (205). She points out that Marx's early work, still valued by many socialists today, highlights spiritual and existential concerns, and notes Marx's belief in the impoverishment of the creative spirit to the economic capitalist system. This loss of dwelling in existentialist terms echoes Mumford's thoughts on the way building workers' or architects' creativity and craftsmanship has become subordinate to the demands and requirements of large scale promoters or economic forces. Thus, there has been an impoverishment of the spirit and an estrangement from the essential necessities of society, because they do not build for

this case, of poetic dwelling. For the viewing public, however, by focussing only on the construction, his pictures conceal a human reality, the exodus of people from Berlin, their fears and anxieties of the menacing prospect of allied bombing. Finally, despite the magnificence of the engineering, design and efficiency, the architectural space of the station has transformed from the homely space of opulence and holiday travel into one of unhomely displacement and forced migration. If we consider, for a moment, that the railway, like the road in *ABIW*, alludes to a rational technological and highly efficient modernity, then we could read the transformation of the space from homely to unhomely as a critique of rational modernity and, paralleling the casting out of Helmut from the safety and security of his home, humanity's fall into homelessness.[64]

Secondly, in 1943, the Berlin station was expanded and rebuilt, and perhaps Seiffert refers to this, as she narrates, "in the cold dull days of late winter, the station is finally completed" (30),[65] and Gladigau and Helmut are to photograph the opening. However, the shops near the station, under normal circumstances would imply a homely, thriving commerce and the soul of a lively community, but in contrast, they are uncannily boarded up. The subtle reference to "broken glass" (31) appears to reference the *Kristallnacht* or *The*

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social or communal necessity, but to placate the owners of companies or economic systems. We shall see how this notion is enacted through Seiffert's Polish building workers in *TWH*.

[64] As we have seen in chapter one of this thesis, Zygmunt Bauman's analysis of the Holocaust as a product of civilizing, rational modernity turned upon itself, thus takes the event outside the restrictive confines of Holocaust studies, as isolating scholarly discipline, and into wider sociological and philosophical fields of modernity. His discussion of the deep, underlying causes of the genocide take it "*into the mainstream of our theory of modernity and of the civilizing process and its effects*" (Bauman xiv). The italics here are Bauman's own, used for emphatic purposes. Seiffert's novels similarly place the event within the 'ordinary', as I suggest in this thesis.

[65] Seiffert must be referring to the rebuilding of the station after the Polish attempt at sabotage in April 1943. (Vecamer)

Night of Broken Glass which took place on the night of November 9, 1938; the understated reference in keeping with the unworldliness of Helmut's observations. Furthermore, fake shop fronts and window displays, purposefully made for the "grand opening" of the station, intensify the sense of intrinsic uncanniness of the once prosperous community. Nevertheless, the deceptiveness of the shops' exteriors cannot hide their ghostly and uncanny interiors: "Helmut doesn't like their damp interiors, the black graffiti, and the broken glass grinding underfoot" (31). Deceitfulness is further epitomized through Helmut's photographs, the station building and even the postcards:

> Although the station house façade is in reality rather square and plain, on Helmut's photos it looks almost elegant, and full of the energy of the flag-waving crowd. The stationmaster orders postcards to be made and displays them in the station kiosk. (31)

Hence, Seiffert's architecture, exemplified by the station and the fake shop fronts, slides between the homely and the unhomely and serves, like the photographs to conceal realities. But, from the reader's historical positionality, it also appears to mirror something hidden and denied within the consciousness of Berlin's inhabitants, as they go about their daily business, and wave their flags. The apparently simple image of "flag waving crowds" (31) with their ostensibly unquestioning support of Nazism, further exudes uncanniness by exposing, through the reader's temporality, a concealed and surreptitious knowledge.

In addition, the narrative evokes a sensation of the uncanny, not by revealing, but by concealing what remains hidden through a textuality of

extraordinary ordinariness, and a matter-of-fact tone. This works, furthermore, on the level of plot. The ordinariness of style, however, strengthens the sense of impending violence as something within homely mundanity; not outside "the straight path of normality" (Bauman 7), but rather squarely within it. Since this places horror within what we consider to be a progressive, refining, technologically enhanced modernity and a civilized world, it radiates uncanniness.

At this point, let us look at the way Seiffert fuses images of the homely and unhomely to invoke a mounting tension and an escalating sense of despair and tragedy, as the sheltered domestic environment of Helmut collapses into chaos and he is cast out of his home into the hostile spaces of homelessness, alienation and self-estrangement. Seiffert highlights and punctuates the narrative with the interior spaces of the dark room, Helmut's "box room" (25), and the cellar in which he dwells at the end of the war.

First, the concealment embodied in all three places mirrors Helmut's psyche. These are places of intimacy, privacy and interiority, to which he retreats from the uncertainties and the danger of the public sphere; architectural shells, like the house itself, that cloak him in safety. They suggest a dialectical relationship between inside and outside; as Casey notes, "[w]e walk into a world that is as much characterized by exteriority as the home is qualified by interiority" (Casey 179). Helmut confronts the unknown and the threat of the unhomely, "a more precarious and hostile extra-domestic world" (ibid 180), on venturing outside his territory, that is, the station, his home and familiar urban spaces. Yet, until the bombings definitively cast him out, he returns to the comfort of the familiar, and psychologically, to his

interior self. This is best exemplified by the pivotal scene in which the Nazis round up the gypsies, after which he goes back to the shop and the dark room "[s]afe, familiar and all still there" (39); "still there" is telling, since the dark room and its contents suggest an intimate space, seemingly permanent and dependable. The interior spaces of the box room, dark room and the cellar, then, act as a physical and psychological refuge from the chaos of the outside world.

The perception of 'outside' the security of home, however, evokes a sensation of the uncanny and the Heideggarian 'not-being-at-home'. On losing his sense of place and becoming disoriented, Helmut embodies the spatial disorientation, and anxieties of the time. Indeed, the sense of bewilderment in this scene is particularly significant, since this spatial disorientation characterizes the uncanny, which Vidler describes as "more than a figment of the imagination, [but] a mingling of mental projection and spatial characteristics associated with the uncanny" (Vidler 11). This characteristic spatial estrangement, as we shall see, is reiterated in 'Micha' and *TWH.* Nevertheless, Helmut finds himself in the "magnetic pull of the crowd" (36); the magnet evoking the forcefulness of an exterior power compelling him outside his secure zone, and innocent child's vision, into the hostile space of the city and the world, where he "loses himself in the alleys between tenements" (ibid). Significantly, he finishes up on "piece of waste ground" (ibid), where he finally awakens to the obscured events taking place on the exterior of his sheltered environment. Thus, outside the hushed, silent concealment of the conformist Gladigau and his shop, he must finally confront the otherness of the exterior world. The confrontation with otherness

implies estrangement, that appears as a "mental state of projection" (Vidler 11) of Helmut's mind, evocative of the uncanny. (I return in a moment to the portrayal of Gladigau, and Helmut's sense of the events outside the shop, as this will be important to my interpretation of the denouement). Yet, to escape the disturbing unhomeliness of his anguish, Helmut retreats to the security and safety of the dark room. Helmut's journey back takes on an uncanny, traumatic resonance with the "cobbles shift[ing] below him, walls, windows spinning away" (38); suggesting his expulsion from the enclosed safety of his architectural shell, yet also bringing the reader into the visceral sense of anxiety through spatial disorientation.

There are parallels here between Seiffert's use of the Architectural Uncanny and that of postmodern art's disorienting spaces, described by Laura Colombino, in which the "essence of the subject, deprived of its protective and constitutive architectural shell, [...] appears [...] as evacuated from the domestic theatre" (Corombino 13). Thus, like Colombino's work on contemporary urban literature, self-estrangement is also "a main underlying motif" (ibid 14) of Seiffert's works. Helmut embodies self-estrangement, not only in his alienating disability, but also symbolically, as he too finds himself "evacuated from his architectural shell" (ibid 13).

Furthermore, the slippage into the Unheimlich is conveyed through the juxtaposition of homely domesticity and the disorienting sense of 'thrownness-into-the-world'. For example, the final devastating bombing of Helmut's home, finds him in the warm, domestic space of his bed. Yet secrecy penetrates the domestic. His parents had left the house a few moments before, yet they didn't "tell Helmut where they [were] going, nor

does he ask" (46). Nevertheless, he is still in his pyjamas when the impact from the bombs "hurl [him] off balance" (47); again, becoming unbalanced implies a sense of disorientation. Furthermore, homely images of domestic objects and furniture serve to reinforce Helmut's violent projection into the unhomely:

> plaster falls on him in chunks and dust, and in his mind's eye a thousand pots and pans tumble down the stairs to cover him as the kitchen cupboards in every flat empty their contents to the floor. (47)

Also short sentences heighten the sense of urgency, trauma and disorientation as Helmut runs out into the street. People become "bodies" and "shapes" (48), and "arms" pull Helmut underground to a "cellar full of strangers" (ibid). When he surfaces outside, his sense of placelessness, bewilderment and anxiety is strengthened by all the familiar objects of domestic life, "chairs, glass, window frames, an empty unmade bed" (49) on the route towards "what he hopes is home" (ibid). The uncanny sound of children among the ruins echoes his own predicament: "No Mutti. No Papi […] no familiar places at all" (50). He has been cast out of the domestic environment. Homeless, he makes his way to the dark room of Gladigau's shop, his only refuge. By playing on the reader's poetic imagination, in the Bachelardian sense, the discourse offers up images, such as the "dripping black water" (51) and "hollow inside" (51) of Helmut's old house, or "the smoking wet shells of the tenements" (ibid) which imply the complete and utter abandonment of homeliness. Seiffert employs again and again the image of the 'shell'. As I mention elsewhere, this poetic image, discussed extensively by Bachelard, evokes an impression of bodily unity with a home that protects and shelters,

but that also grounds humans into a home at one with the Earth, epitome of the fourfold. Thus, these contrasting images of the homely and the extreme unhomeliness of the empty shell, destroyed by the follies of Mankind, underscore the sense of thrownness-into-the-world, as Helmut, "without his Mutti, without his Papi, stands alone" (ibid), and again later, he returns to the "empty place that used to be home" (ibid).

In addition, the "mental projection" (Vidler 11) of the uncanny experience reappears once back in the darkroom. Disoriented, Helmut can no longer sense if his "eyes are open or closed" (52). Somewhere bordering between dream and reality, the space of the Unheimlich, he envisages his parents "walk[ing] through shattered walls" (54) like ghosts who go through the crumbling walls of home, appearing in "dreams of lenses shattering at the shutter's release" (53). But, when he reaches out to touch them, "the negatives crumble in his hands, black glitter dust on his palms" (ibid), they disappear, like spectral figures in a photograph; they exist no longer. This imagining within the liminal zone of dream and reality thus appears as a further quality of the uncanny; attributes of the ghostly often associated with Gothic romance (Vidler 11). Freud's description of the Unheimlich supports this dreamlike state of the "fundamental propensity of the familiar to turn on its owners, suddenly to become defamiliarized, de-realized, as if in a dream" (Vidler 7). Helmut continues to see his parents in his dreams, "Mutti, routine, Gladigau, warmth, his father's pipe smoke" (53), but they are merely spectral figures of longing that reinforce his sense of estranged separation from his parents and from everything that had previously lent protection and security

to his childhood world; in short, all that had hitherto remained within the Heimlich.

The houses in Gladigau's middle-class neighbourhood further diffuse ghostly uncanny qualities into the narrative, slipping into the Unheimlich. Devoid of domestic life, "no one either enters or leaves the building and there are no cooking smells or radios or footsteps crossing hallways or children crying" (52). Helmut is "shocked by the grand, smooth windowpanes, and the white of the curtains" (52). Interestingly though, there is ambiguity in this scene, since the neighbourhood contrasts with his own "smoking wet shells" (51) of working-class tenements, and for the first time, Helmut sees how the others, perhaps those who had conformed to the party, had lived. But, through this disparity, Seiffert appears to call attention to the working classes' physical displacement as the real sufferers of the calamity; Gladigau's neighbourhood, although bereft of homeliness, remains almost intact. As a keen follower of the Party, Gladigau seems to be less affected. Helmut's only point of refuge, however, is the abandoned shop where he goes to sleep "under the counter" (ibid), rather like an animal seeking shelter.

Colombino noted how home-making stands for the "escape from the anguish of unhomeliness, the indefiniteness of the world into which we are thrown" (Colombino 28). Helmut also attempts to reconstruct a home for himself, the preservation of which remains crucial to resilience. By stressing the sense of danger and insecurity outside, through the looting, the securing of valuables, and by the bolting of the cellar door, where Helmut builds his abode, Seiffert highlights the safety afforded by the interiority of his newly found home. Like a bird building a nest from the urban debris, or the

architect's recycled materials, Helmut constructs his dwelling. But, the cellar mirrors Helmut's psyche, and thus, by caring for his home, he also cares for his mind. In this way, he reconstructs intimacy "out of the estranging chaos and unhomeliness of the world" (Corombino 28). Like the Ballardian spaces described by Colombino, however, Helmut is similarly "marooned, stranded in the narrow confines of [his] place" (ibid), while chaos reigns outside. Nevertheless, by resuming his work in the station, and building a home, Helmut attempts to re-inscribe meaning and familiarity into his life; a corrective measure to homelessness. Notably, the uncanny spectral forms "walk[ing] on and over and through" (54) the buildings, but never into them, "their legs disappearing up to their knees" (ibid) in the rubble, emphasize the anxiety of homelessness. The ghost-like figures cannot settle in the interior of the ruined buildings, but can merely wander disoriented and bewildered on the exterior, searching for a sign of their past lives. The exterior spectral figures, floating in the liminal zone of the Unheimlich, are pitted against the need for safety represented by the relatively homely interior of Helmut's cellar.

Yet, Helmut's antidote not only lies in the familiarity of routine, and the rebuilding of a home, but also in art. I suggest that artistic representation enables him to attain a more essential dwelling, in the Heideggerian sense of

poetic dwelling; a higher spirituality.[66] He begins to photograph the ruins of the city; the "lonely clock tower of the Kaiser Wilhelm Church [...] the grand hotels [...] reduced to skeleton structures. Their chandeliers glittering in the debris, tapestries hanging loose and torn" (58). His pictures connect time and space, cultural and historical erasure, but also speak to the inexpressible realities through the Unheimlich, and furthermore, manifest the vital poetic dwelling of artistic expression and existential freedom. Helmut's marginalization becomes his spiritual salvation for it has afforded him the liberty of individual artistic thinking, no longer being held back by what is thought worthy, rational, or politically correct. Creative artistic expression, like the architect designing his shelter from the debris of a consumer society, has afforded spiritual resilience and a way back home. [67]

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[66] On writing this section, I have been reminded of a family memory that I would like to take the liberty of sharing. John Derek Evans, (an uncle) was in Berlin shortly after the war in 1946 and returned home with a picture of a butterfly made from the dust and ruins of the city, mounted on a piece of card. By all accounts, street art flourished at the time, as it was not only a means of livelihood, but also an expression of chaos and bereavement, but also hope and beauty. Interestingly, this echoes the short story by Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Artist of the Beautiful* (1844), published shortly after the writer's sojourn on Brook Farm, a commune based on egalitarian, transcendentalist thought. This allegorical story is an early critique of consumerism and the utilitarian, machine-world, which is pitted against the essential beauty of the natural and spiritual, embodied in an artistic, mechanical butterfly. Nevertheless, the ending is pertinent to 'Helmut', since the beautiful butterfly that the protagonist of the story had painstakingly created, like the buildings of Berlin, finishes in "a small heap of glittering fragments" (Hawthorne 28). Both artistic creations are ephemeral, yet as Hawthorne's protagonist, Owen Warland, realized, it was "no ruin. He had caught a far other butterfly than this. When the artist rose high enough to achieve the beautiful, the symbol by which he made it perceptible to moral senses became of little value in his eyes while his spirit possessed itself in the enjoyment of reality" (ibid 28). Helmut, then, is analogous to Warland in that he finds consolation over the ruins, for he has achieved a greater spirituality and individual freedom. (I am very grateful to Dr.Joan Corbet of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona for drawing my attention to Hawthorne's story).

[67] The present day ruin of the Kaiser Wilhelm Church serves as a symbol of reconciliation and as former British Royal Air Force pilot, who participated in the bombing raids of Berlin during the war, Charles Geffory Gray puts it "[...] a reminder for future generations of the horror of war" (Gray qtd. in www.dw.com/rescuing-berlins-most-famous-world-war-ii ruin). Nevertheless, and rather significantly, the ruin is now in peril of collapsing due to traffic vibration "causing the walls to crumble" (ibid).

There is a sign of hopefulness in generational renewal, and in the ability to build a new world on the ruins. Martinez concludes that Helmut, who is “standing high on his rubble mountain […] [and] smiling” (63) along with the “fat boys and weak boys with bad teeth, the old men and amputees” (62), has found his “sense of belonging” (Martinez Alfaro 263), by becoming part of a group he “proudly feels part of” (ibid). Certainly, by becoming a member of a group or a gang, like the gang members portrayed in *TWH*, he does indeed restore a sense of community membership, important to self-esteem and to combat isolation. Yet, just as important is Helmut’s attainment of an authentic self, the one which was never portrayed in Gladigau's childhood photographs. By way of his expulsion into unhomeliness and homelessness, he found his way to a metaphysical home, and a way out of his estrangement. Viewed through the lens of existentialism, through adversity he gives throught to and embraces his alienation. In doing so, he gains self-awareness, enabling an encounter with 'being-in-the-world' outside; a spiritual dwelling. In other words, through suffering, confronting chaos and homelessness, and, forced to face mortality through having been surrounded by death, he has found a sense of spiritual ‘belonging’, and meaning in the world.

To conclude, Helmut’s resilience appears to surge from a creative liberty, enabling a more vital dwelling, free, for the moment at least, from the rational modernity of Nazism. Although with the Russian tanks about to invade, and the city to be politically divided, this remains ephemeral. And furthermore, his resilience resides in what Martinez posits as ‘belonging’, in the sense of safety and meaning through a return to community, or

'colaboration solutions', but also what is termed post-traumatic growth, or transformational growth, which has its origins in Heideggerian and Buddhist wisdom traditions (MacDermid Wadsworth).[68] This interpretation of the denouement would align Seiffert's narrative with a more transformative postmodernity, one which approaches Spretnak's paradigms of reconstructivism (*States of Grace: The Recovery of Meaning in the Postmodern Age*) in its return to connectedness, essential dwelling and restoration of meaning.

2.2. Hostile Spaces and Displacement in 'Lore'

People are strange when you're a stranger
Faces look ugly when you're alone
Women seem wicked when you're unwanted
Streets are uneven when you're down
When you're strange, faces come out of the rain
When you're strange, no-one remembers your name.
When you're strange, when you're strange,
When you're strange.
(Morrison et al. 1967)

'Lore' follows on from 'Helmut' chronologically, and picks up on many of the same motifs: concealment, the representation of truth through

[68] For a synthesis of research into hardiness and resilience in the aftermath of violence and war, see Shelley M MacDermid Wadsworth, "Family Risk and Resilience in the Context of War and Terrorism." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 72.3 (2010): 537–556. She mentions the notion of collaboration strategies through community participation, as well as the possibility for personal development and resilience through experiencing adversity, clearly aligned with the notion of self-awareness and existentialism. Intriguingly, Helmut appears to embody this notion of transformative growth.

photography, displacement and estrangement. Furthermore, both are ‘coming-of-age’ narratives with protagonists balancing on the threshold between childhood and adulthood. ‘Helmut’ suggests an unwitting, childish denial, while ‘Lore’, an emergent awareness. Nevertheless, they have in common a disorienting sense of place, of ‘not-being-at-home-ness’, as Heidegger would have it. However, because of forced physical displacement, ‘Lore’ transmits a powerful sense of alienation and shifting identity. The young protagonists are cast out of the secure haven of home and family to venture across unfamiliar, hazardous terrain, facing both geographical and psychological disorientation. Seiffert’s teenage protagonist, Lore, loses “her bearings” (*TDR* 182) in the uncanny space of the chaotic and ruined landscape, and must strive to find her place in it, as a “way of making sense of things” (Tally 66).

Thus, Seiffert’s work reflects contemporary literary motifs of physical disorientation standing for phenomenological displacement in a chaotic world, and this is reiterated in ‘Micha’, as we shall see in the following section.[69] In this section, I argue that the slippage between the homely and the unhomely and the Architectural Uncanny strengthens the sense of estrangement and bewilderment, anxiety and dread of this alienating experience.

The words of the song quoted above, by Jim Morrison, poet and vocalist of the popular 1960s and 70s rock band *The Doors*, appropriately

[69] Laura Colombino discusses spatial disorientation and cognitive mapping in the works of contemporary writers such as Ian Sinclair, J.B. Ballard and Tom McCarthy. See Laura Corombino, *Spatial Politics in Contemporary London Literature: Writing Architecture and the Body*. London: Routledge, 2013. Print.

express the uncanny sensation of alienation generated by displacement, and the sense of disorientation and phenomenological homelessness; familiar themes in the postmodern era of the poet and songwriter's life. From Lore's viewpoint, as we shall see, the Other does indeed become 'strange' and 'ugly', women become 'wicked' and the children also transform into being 'no one'. Their supposed middle-class identity and favoured status as children of the 'regime' transmutes, rather ironically, into casualties and homeless victims of war. Seiffert's characteristic stylistic simplicity, moreover, lends the story its parable-like aura, pointing to a wider inference of the tale in our contemporary times of homelessness, migration, immigration and strangeness.

By naming her protagonist Lore, the story gestures towards the traditional Aryan folktale or folk*lore*. Irony is located in the association between Nazi ideology and traditional folktales and values, which speak to to historical continuity with a deeply Germanic culture. The outcome of the war, however, interrupted this continuity and fractured traditional values appreciated by the regime, but furthermore, it also fractured, figuratively and physically, the sense of what hitherto had been a taken-for-granted secure zone of domestic life. In a wider sense, this casts doubt on the assumed and often unquestioned stability of home, and brings into view its fragility. Once again, we may be reminded of the pain of contemporary displacement. Casey has put it thus: "[…] from implacement in turn the way is all too short to displacement" (Casey 34). Furthermore, the state of displacement and forced homelessness is a "sober reminder of the immense value of human implacement" (ibid). Thus, 'Lore'portrays the unhomely expulsion from the

protective environment of the home, to the dangerous and unsafe milieu of the exterior world on the way 'back' into supposed security and place of the family home; that is, an attempt to re-find place.

Seiffert's fable, however, undermines any sense of fairy tale cosiness by hinting at the difficulty of return to the old, familiar domestic space. There is a clear sense of rupture with the past. As mentioned several times in the narrative, "everything is changing now" (88), never to be the same again; evoked by the breaking or absence of domestic objects in a similar way to the "pots and pans [that] tumble[d] down the stairs" (47) to cover Helmut as the bombs destroyed, not mere houses as architectural structures, but homes. Likewise, just one of many examples of this metaphoric use of domestic objects in 'Lore' lies in the way the "crockery clatters" in Peter's pram, (which stands in for the mother), finally "smash[ing] […] [as] the pram tips over and spills its contents over the track and down the slope into the field" (95). In addition, the metaphor of the kitchen space, the centre of domestic activity and of cooking food, the motherly nurturing of life, the fundamental soul of comfortable domesticity once again pervades the narrative; in the ruins of Berlin, "[c]ooking smells drift out from the shells of buildings, though Lore can't imagine there are kitchens inside" (182), implying a sense of resilience and hopeful continuity of family life, yet a disquieting not-quite-at-homeness. Cooking smells, in addition, not only stand in for the hunger experienced in the post-war period, but also the powerful day-dream of domesticity, of care and home. These images recur throughout the text, as we shall see. The image of the kitchen as well as the smell of food are both homely and unhomely at the same time, since it implies the possibility of

return, resilience in the persistence of domestic life and a yearning for home, but the mere *shells* of buildings lack the wholeness of proper dwelling.

Disorientation pervades the narrative and suggests the phenomenological loss of bearings, isolation and sense of wilderness inherent in the placelessness and homelessness of forced displacement. As Casey notes, when people are displaced, and in exile from their familiar spaces, the "more [they] tend to find [their] surroundings desolate" (Casey 197) and themselves isolated, echoing Jim Morrison's words cited at the beginning of this section. Much like the folktales *Little Red Riding Hood* or *Hansel and Gretal*, Lore and her siblings are set adrift from the domestic sphere on a journey, with provisions in the form of valuables and some food, to reach 'granny's house' in Hamburg. Like the traditional tale, on the way, they face many dangers in the hostile extra-domestic space of war torn Germany. Once outside the secure zone of the mother's protection and the family home, uncanniness resides in the anxiety of disorientation, and the "landscape itself, usually a most accommodating presence" (Casey 34) appears as complicit with their alienation. The children find themselves both physically and psychologically disoriented. Lore embodies the desolation and precariousness of the displaced; the gloomy, forsaken spaces, through which she moves with her siblings, reflecting her dejected subjectivity. Through the uncanny, then, 'Lore' effectively portrays this disconsolation of moving out from local, familiar space, into the hostility of an uncaring world. The ruined landscape, and hostile space that Lore encounters on leaving home, strengthens the sensation of disorientation, but also the fragility and

"the immense value of human implacement" (Casey 34). Put more simply, we appreciate home and a sense of place once we lose it.

Lore's anxiety of disorientation can be perceived on various occasions throughout the narrative. On one occasion, she "lost her bearings. She doesn't want to ask directions, […] worries that they are going the wrong way" (100), finally finding that she has indeed been "walking in the wrong direction" (101). Later, the "slow landscape" is contrasted with the speed of the American jeep, embodying the dangerous unknown, gaining ground towards them; uncannily indicating the vastness of the countryside, as well as the vulnerable position the children find themselves in: "[t]here are no houses in sight" (101). The exposure and defencelessness of their situation appears intensified by Lore's sense of disorientation, and estrangement, not even recognizing the country she was born and brought up in, she "doesn't know where they are. Who the fields belong to. Maybe they aren't in Germany any more" (126).

The uncanniness of disorientation in this scene is further heightened by the intimidating presence of "the man" with "the smudge of face under a black hat" (127) shadowing them, menacingly, at a distance. Paralleling the spatial disorientation of Micha, as we shall see in the following section, the manifestation of the uncanny in the strange man, belongs to Lore's own "mental state of projection" (Vidler 11). Like the landscape and architectural space, the reader perceives the 'man' through Lore's consciousness, imbuing him with uncanny qualities through her own fear of the dangerous (male, and later Jewish) Other. Ironically, however, the man will turn out to be Lore's consolatory friendship, but will later remain both physically and

symbolically silenced. As Casey observes in times of isolation and desolation, we tend to cling more firmly to our companions (Casey 197), as Lore does to her siblings and the Jewish stranger, Thomas, as consolation and a greater sense of security. Nonetheless, Lore's bewilderment and geographical disorientation, her lack of a sense of place, and the difficulty of 'mapping' the country mirrors the not-being-at-homeness, or the Unheimlich, the drudgery of displacement, and ultimately, in its allegorical status, the "existential alienation of modern life" (Tally 67).[70]

One of the symptoms of displacement pervading 'Lore' is "estrangement from self and others" (Casey 38), and this is manifested in the hostile spaces in which the children find themselves. Such spaces comprise the houses of strangers, and what were considered as ordinary 'homely' architectural spaces before the war, such as the cottage in the woods, or the school room where they take shelter. These are not compassionate, comforting spaces in which people pull together in the 'British Blitz spirit', neither are they communities of affection, but rather dark and dangerous spaces in which people are portrayed as the perilous Other, as "bodies in the dark" (115), "sleeping shapes" (ibid), who "hiss in shocked whispers" (ibid) and "threaten" (ibid) anyone who cries or murmurs "into silence" (ibid); an

[70] This brings to mind Jameson's concept of cognitive mapping and literary cartography, which Tally suggests as a "crucial method by which to overcome the real anxiety of being lost, in the most urgent everyday sense as well as the more philosophical or existential sense" (Tally 68). I do not wish to pursue this line of enquiry here, however, since it would involve an exploration of a complex theory that would be mostly outside the boundaries of my discussion on architectural space in this chapter. However, I have included this brief exploration on extra-architectural space in this paragraph, and an incursion into Seiffert's literary landscape, to illustrate the contrasting spatial representation of the domestic 'interior' and secure implacement with the 'exterior' space of displacement and homelessness.

atmosphere of loss, desolation and abandonment, where people must "sleep every night next to strangers" (116).

In addition, the use of contrasting images of protection and intimacy with the hostile space inhabited by strangers, strengthens not only the sensation of insecurity and desolation, but also the uncanniness of displacement and of the tragic loss of the childhood home. These recurring images throughout Seiffert's works are the nest, beds, the warmth provided by blankets, and the protection afforded by the proximity of walls or corners. Bachelard, who explores these poetic images in depth, remarks that "everything comes alive when contradictions accumulate" (Bachelard 60), exemplified in his analysis of Baudelaire's winter cosmos pitted against the cosy comfort of a cottage. Not only does the cottage appear more homely, but "[b]ehind dark curtains, snow seems to be whiter" (ibid). As Bachelard observes, negative images, such as the "dark outside" (114) of the school room in Seiffert's story, with "two lamps burn[ing] by the long window" (ibid), the hard, tough image of "bags and coats on the floor" (ibid) that others use to sleep on, or the inhospitable "shifting" and "irritated" (115) mood of the people in the room, are not just juxtaposed elements, but "awaken daydreams in each other, that are opposed" (Bachelard 64). The hardness, and coldness of the schoolroom floor renders the small comfort of the children's warm blanket "nest", on one of the few straw mattresses available, seem more intimate and secure; a small godsend in a chaotic world. Like images of shells, kitchens and beds, the nest recurs, as we shall see, in other texts, such as 'Micha' and *TWH*. In turn, the warm and cosy images of their makeshift bed, makes the exterior world even more dismal.

As the children journey onwards towards Oma's house, they sleep in different buildings, with the same pervasive uncanniness, and the reader must often work to decipher the encrypted meanings. In an episode in which they had been "turned away at every house; too many faces, too many mouths" (112), the children find themselves in a church. We might assume that the church, as a traditional place of safety, would afford the children sanctuary from a hostile exterior. But, Seiffert undermines this image, creating a sense of anxiety through her description of the building, its damp and dusty atmosphere verging on the gothic uncanny: "Two or three candles burn low on a shelf covered with dark stubs of wax. Above them stands a robed statue" (ibid) and they make their beds from the "cushions from the pews […] at the foot of the statue" (ibid). It seems to be keeping watch over them, providing small comfort while they sleep. Their presence "sets off hissing echoes under the high stone roof"(112-113); the silence and darkness, only lighted with flickering candles, (another persistent motif throughout the story), seems disturbing and disquieting. And, at the end of the scene, followed by a break in the text, as if to leave us room to contemplate the meaning, "Peter's pram is gone with their spare shoes still tied to the sides" (113). Intriguingly, we shall see how the shoe image will be highly signficant in *TWH*, discussed in chapter three, as a means of conveying the difficulty of a return-home. Nevertheless, the church building and the statue speak not only to a complete lack of probity and morality of the Others, but also the futility of religious authorities to prevent crime and atrocities; the statue stands as an onlooker, a mere spectator, and furthermore, a silent one. The hostile space depicted in Seiffert's post-war Germany remains, furthermore, 'Godless'.

Another key scene which exudes an uncanny sense of danger and unease, occurs shortly after the church episode, in which "an old woman offers them a room for the night" (119). Although the old woman should be pitied for having lost her sons in the war, and she does offer lodgings to the children, albeit "a nest on the floor" (119), we do not feel disposed to completely trust her, with her witch-like "pale eyes, the yellow hooded lids" (ibid). We might remember Morrison's words, cited at the beginning of this sub-section, in which he notes how women appear *witch-like* when one feels alienated. Perhaps Morrison was referring to the 'mental projection' implicit in the uncanny sensation of estrangement. Viewed from Lore's subjectivity, as an estranged individual, then, the old woman hardly bears any comforting notion of homeliness, but this appears to be a state of Lore's mind rather than reality. Her perception of the house also eludes an eeriness and strangeness more proper, once more, to fairy tale or gothic narrative: "They eat in her tiny kitchen, crowded around the crooked table, standing because there are no chairs. It is cold and damp in the house" (119). The simple, mundane images of the "crooked table" and lack of chairs, further underscore the unhomeliness of the old woman's house and the tragic severing of family life.

Furthermore, Heidegger highlighted daily rituals, celebrations and family gatherings around the dining table, and the sharing of food, in his exaltation of the farmhouse as paradigmatic of the unity of the earth, sky, divinities and mortals. Sharr noted that for Heidegger the *gemeinsamer Tisch* formed part of these essential rituals of dwelling:

> The changing layout of the table traced those who met there over time and celebrated their meeting by sharing food. It announced the being of its diners; empty seats between meals awaiting the return of their regular incumbents. (Sharr 69)

Seiffert's crooked dining table, however, undermines this sense of homeliness. But the image of chairs is even more telling, since here they are not just empty, but missing. On a narrative level, their absence signifies the "potent absence" (Sharr 69) of the old woman's sons and the severing of family continuity, and on a deeper level, the cessation of dwelling. As Sharr notes, for Heidegger, "the house became a tool to help people make sense of the world around" (Sharr 71). Thus, its loss, symbolized here by the absence of chairs and the ailing dining table, deprives humanity of place, a centre, through which to create meaning. Furthermore, the normal virtues of the house, as Bachelard would have it, of protection, and affection, "a space for cheer and intimacy" (Bachelard 68), the Heimlich, are absent in the old woman's abode. Nevertheless, despite the old woman's adverse circumstances, Seiffert evokes, not sympathy, but rather the perception of unscrupulous depravity, and unhomeliness; intensified by images reminiscent of the gothic, such as the wax from the candle "spatter[ing] on the floorboards. Her mouth […] flat; lips pulled taut over her teeth" (120). Finally, reinforcing the turn into the Unheimlich, the old woman coerces Lore to hand over not only money, but her mother's jewellery.

What happens next illustrates the dehumanization of Lore and her siblings, transforming their middle-class status to anonymous, nameless refugees and the ultimate shedding of any individuality. To kill the lice, the

old woman makes them wash themselves with paraffin, then she burns their clothes and finally cuts off their hair, as she looks on: "Mutti's chain around her neck" (122). This scene not only suggests the severing of the past, as I mentioned above in my discussion of the household crockery, but perhaps above all, with home: "Lore wishes she could save [Peter's] hair. Send it to Mutti, but she doesn't know where her mother is" (123), her chain now worn by a stranger, the antithesis of the mother figure. But, most significantly, by burning the hair, in the "stove", and the "stubble on her sister's head" (ibid), the children of Nazi perpetrators, not only resemble camp internees, but also blend into the harsh, brutal environment of all refugees. As David Brauner notes, the "hair is a signifier of collective identity (as well as gender) by members of victimized groups, as well as by their persecutors" (Brauner 112). They now seem to be fused with all victims of war, which is strengthened by the appearance of the strange man in the following scenes, who seems to be shadowing them, like a spectral figure at a distance, recalling the later haunting of guilt on the German collective psyche, but is nevertheless uncanny in its "unintended repetition" (Vidler 144), since he appears shadowing the children on several occasions.

Freud remarked that the uncanny effect also arises "when the boundary between fantasy and reality is blurred" (Freud 150). This manifestation of uncanniness finds further expression in the woodland scene, where the lost and disoriented children, hide in the "undergrowth" (162). In this scene, the enhanced fairy tale qualities of the narrative, characterized by the cottage, Arcadian woodland, wolf symbolism, and Liesel's red head-dress, intensify the uncanny effect in the Freudian sense, as the boundaries

blur between reality and fable. This is the place where imagined danger becomes reality, as Russian soldiers tragically kill Jochen, the youngest brother.[71] I return to this point in a moment, but let me first turn to a reading of the woodland scene which lends itself to an interpretation of the loss of a profound sense of place in human dwelling, and of essential connectedness to the natural environment.

The presence of a cottage, “set back in the trees” (163) in a clearing, with “the smoke rising from the chimney” (ibid), intensifies the uncanny strangeness and anxiety of the scene; the Unheimlich. The cottage and its woodland, unravished by the war, with its flowering trees, bushes and singing birds offer an idyllic, dreamlike abode in sharp contrast to the surrounding turbulence and chaos. For Bachelard, echoing the Heideggerian dwelling within this “cosmological scope of existence” (Spretnak 127), the cottage image portrays a primitiveness, the essence of Being in a human, and of comfortable living in its connectedness with nature. Bachelard recognizes that by living in spaces such as these, we might start a new life, "a life that would be our own, that would belong to us in our very depths" (Bachelard 33). This image, then, like Heidegger’s Black Forest farmhouse, certainly exudes the homely and, perhaps above all, a profound sense of place.

However, significantly, Seiffert has the children appear to blend in with the natural environment surrounding the cottage, which appears to project a cosmological inter-connectedness with the natural world; the “truth

[71] Australian film director, Cate Shortland, in her adaptation of ‘Lore’ for the cinematographic screen, recognizes the dialogue with *Little Red Riding Hood* by fusing wolf images with the grey colour of Jochen and Thomas’ coats, and portraying Liesel’s “bright rag” (156) as a red hooded cape. See Shortland, Cate. *Lore*. Germany: Edge City Films / Porchlight Films / Rohfilm, 2012. Film.

of our existence" (Spretnak 76) lying in the "profound communion of all life" (ibid). In their primitive mergence with the natural world, the children also seem to have returned, albeit momentarily, to place. Fused into nature, they lie on the "mossy soft and moist" (ibid) forest floor, providing an almost homely comfort, where Lore's "skirt soaks up the damp earth" (163), echoing Ewe at one with the water in 'Field Study'. Like Ewe, she seems to embody the female connection with nature. But perhaps most intriguing, is the way the children have been endowed with animal-like qualities, allowing us to enter another realm of reality; the animal perspective of the all-powerful, dominant human. They seem like creatures of the forest, with "small dark" (162) movements in the bushes, in the silence they keep, and the need "to be quiet, all day […] ready for the night" (162), the active hunting time for most animals. They also appear to have a non-human sense of smell:"the smell of cooking reach[ing] them through the trees" (163). They salivate like animals, crawling around the bushes, and Thomas appears transformed from human to animal, as he

> leans forward, head emerging out of the leaves. He turns his face towards the smell, locating the source: withdraws slightly when the wind blows away the trail, waits for it to return. He moves, climbing past Lore out of the gully. (163)

Thomas is further likened to a wolf as "a dark shape, deep in the forest, mak[ing] his way slowly towards the house" (163), and his "shirt flash[ing] grey-white […] (ibid). Thomas and Jochen also seem wolf-like, in their grey shirts, approaching the cottage to steal food. Like a fairy tale, they too are hunted down, not by a farmer, but by Russian soldiers. This new vision offers

an alternative viewpoint. The 'wolves', rather than wicked or immoral, merely seek to palliate their hunger, a natural vital urge in all living beings. Thus, like the children, these animals usually considered enemies of Mankind and that have been on the brink of total extermination, form part of an "organic connectedness and relatedness" (Spretnak 246) that has formed part of the cosmological victim of the evils of humanity and dominant ideologies of anthropocentric, rational modernity. In this regard, the scene appears to portray, not only the loss of cosmological dwelling, but also how connectedness with nature need not be a source of conflict, but properly understood, can be a way forward.

Furthermore, to return to my point above, the boundaries between fable and reality have become confused; as Freud noted, "we are faced with the reality of something that we have until now considered imaginary" (Freud 150), and this lends the scene its uncanniness. In Vidler's terms, the fairy tale-like setting of the woodland with its cottage, the slippage between the homely and the unhomely, and the wolf-like creatures of the forest exude "the uncanny […] that species of the frightening that goes back to what was once well-known and had long been familiar" (Vidler 124); that is, the homely comfort of a children's s folk tale, and the dream of a cosy country cottage. However, Seiffert undermines this sense of the homely by transforming the comforting image of the cottage, and its inviting "smell of cooking" (163), into an unhomely and unsettling place. As Vidler suggests, these images fuse and fade into each other, reinforcing the "element of unreality, the vulnerability of dwelling, home and family destroyed by the folly of men" (Vidler), and thus, its fragility as I mentioned earlier. In

Bachelard's terms, they represent "two strange images [...] strengthen[ing] each other" (Bachelard 59).

The Architectural Uncanny further erupts, like in Helmut's Berlin, through the ruins and the rubble of Hamburg, expressing the unhomeliness of ruined lives, placelessness, the severing of the past and the ghostly presence of the dead. Once more, the uncanniness of spatial disorientation manifests itself in the children's attempt to find their way in an unrecognizable city, imbuing a sense of uneasiness: "There are no lights in the windows, no other boats on the water, no sounds of work or play" (179). Again, the rupturing of time and history, and the razing of the past remains a motif, as the children cross over the river into the city and wait "under the broken clock" (178).

The rubble and ruins of Hamburg's pre-war architecture, then, stands for a rupture with the past, the embodiment of death, but also the unspoken: the concealed. The fog seems an oppressive spectral figure, "hid[ing] the outlines of the remaining buildings, fill[ing] in the empty spaces, a dirty grey blanket over the rubble" (180), as if shrouding death, like a "hidden wound […] suffered in silence, felt everywhere but confronted virtually nowhere" (Schechner 1990:4). Indeed, concealment and guardedness permeate the survivors as they "don't look at the shattered, blackened buildings around them" (182). The apparent return to normality and domesticity "as smoke rises from chimney pots on top of ruined apartment blocks" (182) counters, however, Lore's psyche as "she walks, shocked at the torn walls, the sudden open spaces" (ibid). And Peter's "low and terrible noise" (ibid) heightens the mood as he senses Lore's anxiety, and their desolate surroundings. Again,

the denial embodied in the rubble also pervades the people as they “look past her, avoiding eye contact” (182), and Lore “looks away, too” (ibid), with no consolation or human comfort in their mutual predicament. Here, Seiffert appears to be building the foundations for the silencing and collective suppression during the post-war period, which will be unearthed from the rubble in the following story, ‘Micha’.

Henri Lefevre in *The Everyday and Everydayness* suggested that a rupture in the everyday, whether by means of violence or something more peaceful could not endure: "In order to change life, society, space, architecture, even the city must change" (Lefevre, 11). In ‘Lore’, everything has changed, but can normality return? Can they return home and get back into place? Once at their grandmother’s house, Lore seems to convince herself that they “*are home* […] *with Oma*” (192-193). Seiffert’s characteristic use of italics means the reader must decipher to whom these thoughts belong. We assume they are Lore’s, as she “tries to whisper to Liesel” (192). Nevertheless, we might suspect that this *home* does not quite embody the ‘at-home-ness’, in Heideggarian terms. Their parents are absent: “Thomas is hidden in the ruins and Jochen is dead” (193). Death, grief and unspoken secrets thwart a real return to normality.

The description of Oma’s house reflects the change that has taken place in society; the ‘not-at-homeness’ of its interior paralleling the psychological and emotional state of Oma herself. Seiffert establishes, once more, a contrastive homeliness with the unhomely, as Lore remembers “Oma’s kitchen and Wiebke; Shelling peas with her on the back step” (186), perhaps idealized memories of childhood. We should note, however, that

Lore's homely memories of Oma's house refer to Weibke, the maid, and not Oma, as I discuss shortly; who appears rather unfavourably portrayed. However, when Lore reaches the house, "[t]he black iron gates are the same, the dark evergreen hedges too, but the house is utterly changed. […]. A single chimney stack juts up at the back, tiles still clinging to the fireplace at its base". (186) The fireplace reminds us of a homely, cosy warmth of domesticity, secure and safe, but here, little remains except the tiles "clinging", like a person might cling onto their homes and memories. The "remaining windows are shattered and the walls blackened" (ibid), the windows, like the "door that was once inside" (ibid) evoke the broken lives of those within: "There was only one chair in the room [..] there is a stove, some bedding and an empty cupboard. […] Lore can't work out which room this used to be before the bombs" (187), resonating once again, the uncanny sensation of disorientation, extended from the geography of Germany, then to the city of Hamburg, and finally, to inside the once familiar home. The emptiness of the house, the solitary chair, echoing the chairs in the old woman's house earlier, empty cupboards, and the lack of a kitchen, with the food "in a small crate on the floor" (ibid), invoke the emptiness of domestic life, furthered by the contrasting images of "late summer sun on the stones outside, the musty damp of the cool walls inside" (187-188). All is clearly not well. The house reflects Oma's interiority, of quiet secrets, grief and mourning, but already the past is not mentioned or talked about. The reiterated curtain symbol, suggesting the strictly guarded privacy of Oma's subjectivity, adds force to the hidden secrets and private grieving that will become the subject of postmemorial literature in the years to follow. But

meanwhile, "no noise penetrates the divide" (192) between the generations, as Lore "stares at the dark folds" (ibid) of the curtains separating Oma from the children. Furthermore, as I have mentioned, the unflattering portrayal of the grandmother resembles the old woman earlier in the narrative. Oma's voice remains "shrill" (187) compared to Weibke's pleasant singing voice, and "crackles as she speaks" (189). The narrative offers us Oma from Lore's teenage perspective, cold, unfeeling and rational, like the regime itself, but above all, neither repentant nor acknowledging, "betray[ing] nothing" (211).

The architecture of Oma's middle-class Hamburg neighbourhood reflects the class differences between Oma and her maid, who embodies the homely mother figure more than the children's own flesh and blood. This contrast touches also on Seiffert's critique of social class and speaks to the social changes about to take place in the post-war period. In addition, she appears to point to the deeper wilful involvement of the middle classes in the Party. Nevertheless, she also subtly hints at the interior anxiety and grief of the grandmother through the curtain metaphor; "resting behind the curtains around her bed" (ibid). However, the uncanniness of the house echoes once more the photographic image, like that of 'Helmut', taken of the family to send to Mutti, and emphasizes the secrecy behind the curtains. It hides the "broken house […] from view" (197). The children wear "borrowed clothes" (198) and Liesel covers her "spiky hair" (ibid), but despite its intent at concealment, it cannot fully hide the broken family within: "Lore feels she is looking at strangers […] or people she knew long ago" (198), not reality. Thus, "everything has changed" (211), but neither the children nor indeed Oma truly return home.

As we have already seen in 'Helmut', another notable aspect of the novel's Literary Architecture is the cellar. Thomas, homeless and alienated, like Helmut builds his shelter in a cellar: his "cellar home" (197). To get inside the children must pull open a door "hang[ing] loose on its hinges" (ibid), and "go down into the cool dark" where Thomas remains inside with a single candle. The cellar skirts the line between Heimlich and Unheimlich, since it represents a make-shift home, an attempt at regaining security and protection from the dangers of the exterior world, a 'getting-back-into-place', where he tries to regain domesticity by "build[ing] a stove" (195) and "cook[ing]" (ibid); again, the iteration of the cooking motif signifies homely domesticity. His re-implacement embraces the company of the other children, but especially Lore:

> He builds a fire outside, Lore cooks potatoes, warming bricks in the embers for Thomas. Something to ward off the chill of the cellar night when she and Jüri and Peter have gone back to Liesel and Oma and Wiebke, and Thomas is alone. (196)

This attempt at a renewed domesticity, intriguingly, includes traditional gender roles, but also the warmed "bricks" invoke a Bachelardian imagining of 'rebuilding' of human care and affection, a bid for homeliness in a desolate environment.

The cellar, nevertheless, also remains a dark and lonely abode, it spells solitude as well as something out of sight; a place where items are stored that we no longer need, do not have immediate use for, or wish not to have on view. Interestingly, with the space of the cellar in mind, Le

Corbusier's modern architecture rejected the underground cellar as metaphorical erasure of the traces of the past (Vidler 63), but as we shall see in my discussion of 'Micha' in the following section of this thesis, the past will "refuse to remain at a proper distance" (Vidler 62).[72] Bachelard, however, has a great deal to say about the poetic image of cellars, and this may be usefully applied here. He describes the cellar as belonging to the "*dark entity* of the house, the one that partakes of subterranean forces" (Bachelard 39), where "darkness appears both day and night" (ibid 40), despite the comfort of a candle. He also reminds us of mice and rats who return, scuttling to "the silence of their holes" (ibid 40) when the master returns. Through these images associated with cellars, Thomas becomes a mysterious figure, almost rat-like, and like the cellar itself "a buried madness, [a] walled in tragedy" (ibid 41), which speaks to an eruption of the uncanny. Thus Thomas, as the "hidden brother" (197) not to be revealed to Oma, remains clearly metaphorical for what will be put 'out-of-sight-out-of-mind', in the years to follow; an 'underground' memory that will also remain fearful. Thomas will disappear into the ruins, unseen and forgotten, "burnt, buried and bombed" (213). He seems to become embodied into the rubble, the ruins and the cellar itself, coinciding with Lore's changing view of him: "Between visits she remembers him differently […] [s]he stares at him; his clothes, his skin, and even his eyelashes powered with dust from the crumbling cellar walls" (197). Finally, by washing his bedclothes and burying them "under

[72] Vidler's analysis of Walter Pater's fragment, *The child in the House*, suggests that for Pater, homeliness "was established firmly on its ability to encompass and overcome death" (ibid 62). Thus, the Heimlich "provided rest for both living and dead" (ibid). This interpretation is interesting, since, an analogy might be made with 'Lore'. Likewise, Lore and her family will not achieve the Heimlich until there is a reconciliation, not only with the dead, as the silenced and unmentioned absence of Jochen, but also with the past.

the stones" (212), Thomas remains metaphorically entombed in the ruins of Hamburg, indeed "a walled in tragedy" as Bachelard put it.

Yet, Thomas and his cellar abode also replace the loss of human connectedness, and what Spretnak described as "profound communion", experienced by the children in their displacement from home, and the subsequent unhomeliness of Oma's house. For Lore's siblings, Thomas represented a "brother" (209), and Lore, feeling "sick and alone" (212) evidently regrets his absence. He also looked forward to Lore's visits; an inkling of hope and comfort in human affection. But, as I have mentioned, he is a "secret brother" (197). And Lore, by avoiding going to the cellar, denies both Thomas and herself any intimate connection. When she does return, she finds "the stove overturned, loose bricks […] torn from the walls, and the door hang[ing] off its hinges" (206). Any possibility of intimacy, friendship and reconciliation, seems to have been overturned. There could have been a return to a deeply needed human relatedness portrayed through their relationship. Indeed, an (alternative) ending in a romantic relationship between the two young people, (lent much more importance in the cinematographic interpretation), would undoubtedly have served the purpose. But, as I propose in my discussion of *Afterwards* and *TWH*, by evading perfect domesticity and the 'happy ending' that many viewers of the

film version clamoured for,[73]she draws attention to what is required to go forward; that is, authenticity in human relationships, cosmological connectedness, good-will, compassion and a willingness to lay the past to rest. But Lore's inability to overcome the relation between Thomas, her parents and the political events in which they are embedded remains too much of a burden. The past will not yet be buried, as the following story, 'Micha', will bear witness. The story finishes with Lore, emerging into a cosmological image of water and wind, sweeping away the old, erasing memory, and looking forward to "no more ruins, only new houses [when] we won't remember any more how it was before" (217). She appears to desire, moreover, to rebuild a former nostalgic image of home, "look[ing] forward to the *silence*[74] at Oma's, to Wiebke's smiles and Liesel's cake" (ibid), that no longer exists and cannot return. Furthermore, the question is, how long can Thomas remain 'hidden'?

In conclusion, 'Lore' broadly portrays the profound human suffering, consequent of the processes of extreme rational modernity, of which National Socialism was a part; a modernity that has failed to "comprehend — in an experiential as well as intellectual way — the truth of our existence: the

[73] Many website comments on the film version of 'Lore' express their desire for an alternative ending in which Lore and Thomas stayed together, (see "(13) Lore + Thomas - YouTube." YouTube. N.p., 2013). Interestingly, the viewers express differing opinions over the identity of Thomas, highlighting the ambiguity as to whether Thomas is a Nazi perpetrator or a Jewish concentration camp victim. Perhaps this ambiguity highlights an essential humanity, and shares with Lore, her family and all other people the same essential origins. Ultimately, and in accordance with my thesis, it is through this mergence, and the supposed lack of what readers would consider a 'happy ending', that Seiffert forwards a reconstructive postmodernism that implicates, in this novel, extreme political ideologies and anthropocentric humanism in the fall from dwelling and a return-home via forgiveness, existential responsibility, a caring-for-others and consideration for human interconnectedness. In short, by portraying what does not happen, she implies what should happen.
[74] My italics to emphasise what seems to be purposeful irony here; the *silence* of the post-war years in which family participation would literally be 'silenced' in order to forget.

profound communion of all life" (Spretnak 76), exemplified by the woodland cottage scene, and finally in the denouement. I suggest this is manifested through a Literary Architecture that embraces the Architectural Uncanny which taps into the anxieties of forced displacement and the fall into homelessness, both on the physical and philosophical planes. But, the final hope articulated in this story, as the situation endured by war-time children is brought to light, is perhaps that if we can only adopt a more humane existence, "neither we nor our children [should] ever have to face the horror of a totalitarian regime" (Spretnak 77).

2.3 The Return of the Repressed and Psychological Disorientation in 'Micha'

> Our universe was full of unsaid things. And that was most helpful. That was best. (O'Hagan 183)

This section explores the uncanny evocation of buried conscience and a repressed unspoken that hovers on the border of disclosure in the third story of the tryptic, 'Micha'. For E. Jentsch, "intellectual uncertainty" (Jentsch qtd. in Freud 125) was "an essential condition for the emergence of the uncanny" (ibid). Significantly, this uncertainty, as we have already seen, embraces a sense of disorientation. Accordingly, 'Micha', falls within these boundaries, since ambiguity, historical speculation and psychological disorientation form the thematic elements. My central hypothesis here, is that whilst searching for identity and a sense of re-connection with the past, the protagonist, Michael, strengthens the Unheimlich by unfurling the 'repressed unsaid' of family history. Michael's problem, as Suzanne Keen also observed

about many contemporary detective novels, lies in “knowing what to do with the truth once it has been located” (Keen 173). Similarly, even though Michael merely approaches it, the question lies in the worthiness of its disclosure. Thus, he unwittingly creates further ‘unplacement’ (Casey) and unhomeliness, which remains “endemic to the human condition in its eluctable uncanniness” (Casey 34), rather than security and implacement. Casey employs the term ‘unplacement’ to mean disorientation, of “not knowing one’s whereabouts at sea” (Casey 34). By focussing on the uncanny in this narrative, as symptomatic of the postmodern condition, I refer to the general loss of historicity, family roots, and a deep sense of place that nomadism, relocation, and globalized modernity throws in our wake. Michael is as much part of this condition as he is of his particular cultural environment. In short, through his strive to find the truth, and to re-imagine an ungraspable family past, he distances himself from returning ‘home’.

Critical analyses of ‘Micha’ that emphasize German postmemorial discourses are perfectly justifiable, but I suggest that they should be read in conjunction with other interpretations. My approach places Seiffert’s protagonist as embodying the contemporary condition; that is, of not being at-home, supporting my overriding thesis that Seiffert articulates a return to the real as a corrective to alienation and the modern condition of the rational, industrialized world that ignores Mankind’s vital relationship to nature and place. I realise, that by focusing on a wider framework of modernity in this text, however, I may risk, as Jay Winter put it “lump[ing] together the Holocaust” (Winter, J & Sivan 4) memory and the wider cultural conditions reflected in the story’s contemporary setting, and thus making it merely

another element. Certainly, as he points out, "its inclusion presents one set of risks, while its exclusion presents another" (ibid). But above all, as I have already established in the analysis of *ABIW*, I support Bauman's thesis by "assimilating the lessons of the Holocaust in the mainstream of our theory of modernity and of the civilizing process and its effects" (Bauman xiv). In Bauman's words,

> the Holocaust was a unique encounter between the old tensions which modernity ignored, slighted or failed to resolve – and the powerful instruments of rational and effective action that modern development itself brought into being. (ibid)

Since German memory discourse, furthermore, is tied to socio-political and generational renewal (Kansteiner), few would disagree with placing Seiffert's protagonist, Micha or Michael, into his generation's political and cultural period, and this deepens his sense of anxiety. The story's setting in post-reunification Germany, as well as just two years after the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War Two, immediately establishes this connection. Yet, as I have suggested, without undermining the specific memory of genocide, the German memory discourse does not stand in isolation from wider cultural agendas, and neither does Michael's obsession with his grandfather's past. Although, as Halbwachs noted, individual, subjective memory occurs within a collective cultural framework (Halbwachs), Michael's memory quest transpires within a wider emerging memory culture, not necessarily limited to the German context. Without underrating the specificities of the Holocaust, then, Michael's question, "*why now*?" (228), which he "asks himself all the time" (ibid), parallels that posed

by theoreticians across diverse disciplines from memory and trauma studies, as well as historiographical enquiries, as to our late twentieth century and fin de millennium concern with the past. Seiffert does not explicitly determine the answer to Michael's question in the text, although she must have been aware of the cultural framework of her work, but her portrayal of modern Germany, which I discuss shortly, and her protagonist's anxiety implicates it to the contemporary identity crisis, in which a sense of historical connection with the past and with place has been lost. In other words, Michael's preoccupation with the memory of the war, corresponds not only with specific German memory culture, but also with a more generalized condition, in which "memory is valorized where identity is problematized" (Kansteiner 184). Indeed, as we shall see in the final chapter of this thesis, *TWH* reveals how this plays out in another context, that of contemporary Scotland. Michael's anxiety, and his sense of disorientation, then, may be put down to these cultural reverberations through society, as well as a condition of modernity in Toulmin's sense of the term.

However, we may more precisely locate Michael's identity crisis not with issues of ethnicity or sectarianism, like Stevie in *TWH*, but with a Western culture absorbed in the processes of renewal and progression; one that "values the new over the ancient, the young over the old, the future over the past" (Nora 12). Winter and Sivan point out that the "collective remembrance" as they refer to it, of "twentieth century warfare is infused with horror as well as honour […] with sadness and dignity; an understanding of its contours requires both" (Winter, J & Sivan 8-9). Thus, Michael's investigation into his grandfather's past belongs to this "collective

remembrance", whether German, British, Russian or other, and the 'requirement' to remember the disparity of forms of which it comprises. Furthermore, the severing of community and family bonds that industrialization implied (Constant), and the consequential disconnection with community memory, that is, memory passed down through family and neighbourhoods (Assmann) that constitutes modernity, reinforces Michael's obsessive quest for family history. Michael's generation lives in a culture of amnesia (Huyssen) prompting a search for identity and concern for ancestries. Nevertheless, within this discourse of contemporaneity, the specificities of his memorialization lie in his embeddedness within the German cultural climate in the *silencing* of the Nazi past and the contemporary victim-perpetrator debate.

Seiffert's discourse of unhomely modernity and inauthenticity, fusing an underlying tension arising from a stressful society and an accelerated "rapid present" (Constant), lies in its architectural setting, car and non-place 'autobahn' culture, in inauthentic diversions and in Michael's furtiveness. His secret smoking and the rest of the family's alcohol consumption serve to compensate the mundane home to work lifestyle: "Sunday to Monday; home to office; son to work" (226-7). There is a sense of life lived in haste and speed, exemplified by the traffic on the 'autobahn', and the time Michael needs to arrive at his parent's house; even the ten-minute time difference between taking the train or car assumes importance, yet remains a source of stress (226). Echoing the architect's 'inauthentic' preoccupations, Michael's parents also concern themselves with cramming their lives with as many activities as possible, with not being "*boring*" (226). Seiffert denies her

characters time to brood over anything except the daily mundaneness of modern life, thus portraying a humanity concerned with distracting and disengaging itself from authenticity.[75] On diversions from the real, Spretnak remarks:

> One response to the human condition is diversion: excessive and often addictive use of alcohol, drugs, television, movies, video games, shopping, spectator sports, amusement parks, and so forth. While focusing attention on such activities does not free the mind from agitation in any lasting way (in fact, it generates agitation through cravings), it does provide temporary relief from painful mental contents, that is, both thoughts and emotional states. Hence there is a large market for such diversions. (Spretnak 48)

It would seem, then, that Michael and his family typify the modern human condition, failing to confront the reality of painful "thoughts and emotional states" (ibid). Furthermore, the secrecy and lies that Michael tells Mina, seemingly to avoid explanations or awkward questions, are, moreover, an important plot device, allowing Seiffert to raise the moral dilemma of deceit, and the question of whether to refrain from telling the truth for the sake of keeping the peace, avoiding offending or upsetting someone, and to maintain the status quo.

[75] For Heidegger 'inauthenticity', as I discussed in relation to 'Architect', but I include here as a reminder, is best defined by Harrison Hall, in a nutshell, as that into "which we flee or fall to avoid anxiety and its unsettling revelations" (Hall 138). This also defines the German post-war generations, whose commitment to a zealous work ethic has often been considered a way of not facing up to the past; although this does not account for the tradition of Protestant work ethics of course.

Furthermore, these seemingly innocent lies remain in an ironic paradox to Michael's own failure to understand why his grandfather's activities in the Waffen SS, have similarly remained unspoken for so long. In the same way that inauthentic diversions distract from the real, Michael's conscience remains trapped in an encircling mesh of deceit, dissatisfaction and frustration that alienates him even further from it.

Seiffert imbues a sense of rational order, technological modernity and the spiritual emptiness of economic affluence through the spatial juxtaposition presented by the opening paragraphs of 'Micha' and 'Lore'; from dark underground cellars to airy high-rise buildings. The story clearly marks a new period in which Germany has rebuilt its ruined cities, embraced modern architecture, high-rise dwellings and landscaped urban parkland. Undoubtedly, this *tabla rasa* signifies the demolishing of the architectural "*durée* which connects the present and the past" (Corombino 180). Indeed, the setting may be described as a 'non-place'; bland apartment blocks, commercial buildings or motorways (autobahns), devoid of any sense of historical connectedness. Vidler, summing up the philosophy behind modernist architecture, puts it thus:

> If houses were no longer haunted by the weight of tradition and the imbrications of generations of family drama, if no cranny was left for the storage of the bric-a-brac once deposited in damp cellars and musty attics, then memory would be released from its unhealthy preoccupations to live in the present. (Vidler 64)

Thus, in this story, Oma's apartment, the nihilistic architecture of the tower-block, the *tabula rasa* of modern building, address a culture with amnesia, and a dwindling sense of historicity. Seiffert's buildings exemplify the razing of such "unhealthy preoccupations" as Vidler would have it. The cold, rational exterior, the pristine environment and the renewal and regeneration of the architectural site, serve to obscure an uncanny "empty uncertainty inside" (389); the exploration of which lies at the heart of Seiffert's postmemorial discourse, since it "reminds us of the distance, the absence, the unbridgeable gap that, in postmodernity, makes us who we are" (Hirsch 267).

Furthermore, the disconnection of modern architecture from nature and a deep sense of place also merges with the severence of generational continuity, tradition and memory of the past with modernity (Mumford). 'Micha' conveys a sensation of historical disconnection through Oma's many relocations, as Michael "lists his Oma's addresses […] Kiel, Kiel, Hannover, here, here. The middle three with Opa; the first and the last without" (223), evoking a perception of rootlessness, displacement and detachment from family tradition and history. Thus, with a sense of nostalgia and, (as Colombino notes about Tom McCarthy's *Remainder*), an "impulse to trace trajectories and establish connections" (Corombino 153), Michael "has taken to mapping his family" (221), as a way of 'getting back into place', of reconnecting with time and memory.[76] But, by attempting to grasp psychological re-orientation, the cure seems to deepen his malaise, as he increasingly becomes troubled by making connections and "imaginary maps"

[76] Amnesia and existentialist concerns are also thematic elements of British contemporary writer Tom McCarthy's *Remainder* (McCarthy) whose estranged protagonist observes those who are "unconsciously inauthentic" (Colombino 152).

(237), both temporal and spatial, historical and geographical: "[m]ore names, more dates and connections running across the maps in his head" (237). In doing so, his intimate familial relationships become more strained. Paradoxically, the more he attempts to locate home, the more distanced he becomes from it.

Despite the nihilistic exterior of Oma's apartment building, tradition and traces of the past linger. Oma personifies stability, permanency and a remaining link to family memory, but also aging, the passing of time and an encounter with mortality, suggested through architectural objects in her apartment: The "red wax cloth […] still smells of Oma's old house" (222), evoking a transference of memory, but also a sensorial Proustian reminder which cannot be permanently erased. We may relocate from house to house in our contemporary nomadism, and dispose of memorabilia, but the past remains hauntingly present. Furthermore, the "dark oil paintings of boys in uniform" (ibid) exude affective memory of deceased family members, a reminder of mortality, as well as the way the political sphere symbolically and uncannily permeates the modern apartment. Homeliness pervades as Oma "fill[s] the cream jug, arrang[es] the cakes onto plates" (222), tradition embodied in the "glazed fruits and marzipan stollen" (ibid). Nevertheless, Seiffert succumbs to a touch of irony in that "Christmas is still weeks away" (ibid); subtle reminder of the presence of a contemporary consumer society. Michael enjoys returning to his Oma's house, where he feels cared for, but is reminded of the relentless passing of time and youth, and the finality of death:

> Michael absorbs the regular Sunday shock of his Oma getting older, *Born 1917; fifty years before me; twenty-four before Mutti, her*

> *daughter. Five years after Opa.*[77]Today Oma's long fingers shake as she talks. Michael squeezes them tight in his rain-cooled hands, and his grandmother smiles. (222)

Thus, the grandmother's aging and thoughts of approaching death, along with the aforementioned subconscious cultural reverberations, awaken in Michael a subliminal desire to investigate the family past. But, it also triggers him to give thought to his homelessness, and to his "proper plight of dwelling"(Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking" 351).

Paradoxically, however, by giving thought to elements Heidegger believed to be a way back into dwelling-well, such as connectedness with history and place, he must also give it to an unsettling family history. Indeed, for some critics, the impossibility of shedding a haunting past implies ultimately a pessimistic impasse, leading to an irresolvable dilemma (Rau; Tollance). But, I would side with Maria Jesús Martinez Alfaro's observation that, "[i]t is only by coming to terms with what came before that one is able to look ahead, aware of, but not trapped by that past — even if it still hurts" (Martinez Alfaro 268). If Martinez is right, then essential dwelling must necessarily encompass coming to terms with a concealed past, and that would mean uncomfortable disclosure. But, as Heidegger implied, dwelling is "to be set at peace" (Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking" 351), to "spare […], leave something beforehand to its own nature, when we return it specifically to its own being" (ibid). We could say, then, that by investigating the past, but also coming to terms with it, Michael would also attain the peace

[77] Italics seem to be employed here to highlight the indescribable realization of the passing of time. Michael appears to reflect, existentially, on his own positionality in family history and in time.

needed to dwell; figuratively he would return home. Thus, we could read Michael's attempt at shedding light on the past as a way back home. Indeed, juxtapositions of light and darkness allude to the way Michael attempts to illuminate the past; for example, in Oma's house, he "walks through the small flat" (223) by "turning on the lamps" (223), which he also does in his own apartment on returning.

A clear example of the workings of the Architectural Uncanny in this text lies in the space of the library. Michael's investigations into the family past take him into the local library and, interestingly, by undertaking library and archival research to search for family history, 'Micha' would appear to comply to what Suzanne Keen terms as 'Romance of the Archive' (Keen). Keen, placed this sub-genre within the postmodern disposition to recover and discover the missing pieces of family history (Keen), substantiating my earlier claim that the text forms part of a wider postmodern discourse. Yet, Keen does not mention, the uncanniness of archival research. As I have mentioned, the uncanny infers "intellectual uncertainty" (Freud), "something that ought to have remained hidden but has come to light" (ibid), and as Vidler observes, also "a condition of contemporary haunting" (Vidler 14). Thus, as architectural space, the library remains "invested with uncanny qualities" (ibid 12); a space of anxiety in its mysteries waiting to be revealed, and Michael's secret fear of finding "Opa Askan in one of the books" (237). The library seems full of ghosts. As Tally noted "anxiety is always tied to the uncanny" (Tally 66), as it is "tied to the sense of the unfamiliar" (ibid). The book spines hint at the unfamiliar, without revealing their content, but when opened expose haunting images and dedications to dead "parents and

grandparents" (230). They arouse such anxiety in Michael that "he turns the spines to the wall" (231) so nobody can see what he is reading. The spines (228) represent haunting "evidence in the middle of the book" (238), inalterable and erasable as they "[bind] firm" (ibid) an unspeakable past. Michael feels an uncanny fear of the "quiet of the library; the cool distance of his notes [and] he decides to go home" (232). At this point, we might recall that the uncanny is "not a property of the space itself" (Vidler 11), but a "mental state of projection" (ibid), and reflects Michael's uncertainty and fear in his own mind of what the books might reveal. Thus, through the uncanniness of the library scene, Seiffert manages to convey the unhomeliness of the unsettling ambiguity surrounding Michael's postmemorial discourse. In doing so, she "push[es] the [architectural] analogue to its perceptual limits" (Frank 79) by creating a meaningful space through which to articulate subjectivity and approximate the real.

His library research, moreover, contrasts with the reality of mundane life with Mina who "has gossip from friends, plans for the weekend" (232) distracting and diverting Michael's intention to confront the family past. Here, however, we could preceive the paradox in the Freudian uncanny. Mina's question "why don't you just come home?" (333) speaks to a possibility of forgetting the unhomely disclosure of the past and thus figuratively 'return home', but the uncanny surges from the blurring of the homely and the unhomely. Michael both needs to come to terms with the past to return 'home', but by doing so creates a state of unhomeliness, of estrangement. Furthermore, the contrasting homeliness of Mina's presence, when Michael returns to his flat after being in the library, "pits the homely,

the domestic, the nostalgic, against an ever-threatening, always invading, and often subversive 'opposite' (Vidler 13). Furthermore, the library is also a place of secrets, not only of haunting ghosts within its walls, but also within Michael's private subjectivity away from Mina as well, as he lies to Mina about his library visits.

The uncanniness of the library scene is further strengthened by the video booth, where Michael falls asleep in front of the video "hum[ing] in front of him, quieter as he slips away" (243). As Vidler observed, the eruption of the uncanny lies in a mental state that "elides the boundaries of the real and the unreal in order to provoke a disturbing ambiguity, a slippage between waking and dreaming" (Vidler 11). Here the uncanny manifests itself precisely through this slippage between waking and dreaming as we are uncertain next as to whether he is asleep or awake: "the headphones have slipped out of their socket" (243) and he hears only "his own breath loud and long; still in the pattern of sleep" (ibid). The images and his own memory of Himmler penetrate his psyche and his dreams, blurring the boundaries between the real world and the dreamed, slipping into the uncanny space of the mind. Michael cannot conceive of Himmler as "*a schoolteacher*" (ibid), the same as himself, a man with a morally upright profession, with the perpetrator who "[h]ad copies of Mein Kampf *bound in human skin*" (ibid). He recoils at the image of an 'ordinary' man, somebody's grandfather, just like Opa. Mina sees it thus: "If Himmler was your Opa, he wouldn't be ugly. It would have made you sad to see him dead, not angry" (244). But this thought incites fear in Michael, the indescribable fear of losing trust in the permanence, safety and support of the people closest to him, his family;

symbolically subverting the homely, "comforting powers of the house" (Vidler 44).

The fear Michael feels towards the loss of trust in his family, furthermore, extends to familiar social institutions; homely, veracious spaces that slip into the unhomely. In the video booth, Michael imagines the space in which Himmler committed suicide: "[t]he room he has chosen is full of chairs. *Like a classroom*" (ibid). The chairs, as I have mentioned in the previous section on 'Lore' are a recurrent motif in Seiffert's texts, and, here, they evoke a ghostly absence of schoolchildren, whose lives were cut short or destroyed, ironically, by men like Himmler, now himself dead within the very walls of safety. Hirsch similarly observes the breakdown of trust through photographic images in her work on postmemorial aesthetics, and fittingly puts it thus: "Family and school photography have lost all sense of comfort and safety, revealing an irreparable darkness and a danger from which our familiar social institutions cannot shield us" (Hirsch, 1997: 263). Seiffert thus "pushes the architectural analogue" (Frank) once again, to articulate the inexpressible. If security and safety are supposed to be inherent in these institutions, but they can no longer be depended on, then who can we trust? This is indeed a disturbing thought, because it leaves us exposed and vulnerable. Commenting on the Eichmann case in 1963, Hannah Arendt noted that "[f]rom the viewpoint of our legal institutions and of our moral standards of judgement, this normality was much more terrifying than all the atrocities put together" (Arendt 276).[78] Thus, the library and the video booth

[78] I am grateful to my colleague, Lola Serraf, at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, for locating this quotation.

serve as sites for the uncanny experience in which the terror Arendt speaks of, and the darkness Hirsch imagines, the slippage between the homely and the unhomely, erupt into Michael's subconscious, penetrating the nihilistic modernity of contemporary Germany.

In addition, with Arendt's words in mind, the spaces of mass murder, "Belsen, Dachau and Auschwitz" (260), do not produce as much fear in Michael as the ordinariness of the scene of Hitler's mountain home, which has him "awake, dry mouthed, smoking at the kitchen table" (260). The appearance of normality here, but the underlying terror, again undermines a profound sense of homeliness, erupting into the unhomely, evoking an uncanny effect. Again, the uncanny rests in Michael's mental projection rather than the 'homely' mountain scene. Indeed, we may remember that for Heidegger, the mountain hut epitomizes the presence of the fourfold, the ideal of dwelling-well, in its cosmological embeddedness. The video shows Hitler at Christmas in his "mountain home" (259) surrounded by family, and close Party members and alludes an aura of normality. As in 'Lore', Seiffert employs the homeliness of the cottage scene, here, with Hitler viewed as a "godfather and favourite uncle, with soft eyes and smiles" (259), as a too-cosy-normality. The eruption of something 'terrifying', as Arendt puts it, appears to be related to a manifestation of the uncanny in the slippage between outer homeliness and the subconscious awareness of what lies concealed within.

Now let me turn to one final example of the trope of the Architectural Uncanny in its evocation of a sense of foreboding, a repressed unsaid and its return: Kolesnik's house in Belarus. The house evokes memory that might

well be better left undisturbed. The simplicity and homely peacefulness of the wooden building, viewed from Michael's subjectivity, belie the dark secrets of its interior. Michael sits and waits outside the house, before venturing to "tap on the glass" (277) and peer inside the windows, but there is "no noise or movement, nobody at home" (ibid). Its "narrow veranda" (ibid) indicates the threshold between interior and exterior. Michael hovers at first on its exterior, but close enough to, symbolically, "peer inside" (ibid). The house, however, like a secretive person, "stays quiet and still" (ibid). The silence of its surroundings and the stillness of the house contrasts with "Micha's hello […] a loud voice in a quiet afternoon" (ibid); clearly hinting at the rupture of silence about to take place. Seiffert creates a tone of uneasiness, strengthened by the "shadows creep[ing] across the street towards him" (278), as Michael steps back across the street enabling him to get another, more distant perspective in which the house no longer seems so empty; perhaps he had better remain at a distance. Once again, the uncanny lies in Michael's mental state, as he begins to imagine that someone is hiding inside "a light coming on behind a curtain […]. [b]ehind a door, or under a window; sitting quiet and still while the stranger called too loudly through the glass" (ibid), the "too" suggesting a sense of excess and pointlessness, a stranger come to disturb the peace. Through the uncanny, however, Seiffert heightens the sense of a looming disruption of the homely about to take place, but also reminds us of the spectral presence of the past lurking inside. Then, the occupants make their ghostly appearance, as if from nowhere, standing on the porch "both of them watching him" (278). Seiffert, thus, applies spatial characteristics associated with the Gothic haunted house, which serves as a

prelude to what will eventually be revealed from its interior; an eruption of what-should-remain-hidden, coinciding with Freud's intuition:

> that from the homely house to the haunted house there is a single passage, where what is contained and safe is therefore secret, obscure and inaccessible, dangerous and full of terrors; that *Heimlich* is a word, the meaning of which develops towards an ambivalence until it finally coincides with its opposite, *Unheimlich.* (Vidler 8)

Nevertheless, we must remain alert as to the bearer of the uncanny in this scene. After all, peace prevails in the house itself, whereas in Michael's mind, only tumult and disorientation. This is a highly significant point in the interpretation of this story, because, as Bachelard remarked, the house "is a psychic state" (Bachelard 91), and this house frightens Michael more through his own imagination than anything real, and indeed, he realizes that this is so when he sees "[t]he old man hold[ing] a bag of shopping, and Micha thinks: *It's fine, he has been shopping. Shopping, not hiding*" (378-279). As Vidler notes, the uncanny lies at the point where the Unheimlich merges with the Heimlich, to "rise up again when seemingly put to rest, to escape from the bounds of home" (Vidler 26). Thus, Michael unwittingly generates unhomeliness in his obsessive quest for knowledge of his grandfather. If the Heimlich is to prevail, the past would have to be pushed back into repression: "back into the interior, that is into secrecy" (ibid). Furthermore, by not hastening to let us inside the house, and through the imagery of idyllic peacefulness outside, Seiffert seems to allow the reader time to wonder if this domestic harmony should be disturbed at all. If what lies inside the house is "obscure and inaccessible" (ibid), then perhaps it would be better to let

sleeping dogs lie. Seiffert thus raises the issue once again of the usefulness of bringing up the past through this scene, and she does so through the subtle use of the Architectural Uncanny.

We have seen, then, how the aesthetics of the Architectural Uncanny express an unhomely return of the repressed, and a contemporary haunting of 'intellectual uncertainty', raising the question of whether a return home is possible once formerly repressed secrets are revealed. Paradoxically, by revisiting the site of the massacres, and by resuscitating the silenced memory of the war, Michael triggers the uncanny experience by disclosing "something which ought to have remained hidden […]" (Freud 132). But, if the secrets had remained repressed, then, in theory, the Heimlich should prevail. As I have mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, in the Freudian uncanny, however, Heimlich also means "locked away, inscrutable" (ibid 133), familiar and private, implying "the hidden and the dangerous" (ibid 134), and here its mergence with the Heimlich. The uncanny anxiety of historical amnesia, that which remains hidden, fuses with the unhomely erasure of memory, alienation and estrangement implicit in modern culture. And here we can perceive the point of contact with Heidegger, who placed the uncanny as the modern condition of Mankind: a "feature of the human essence, and describes, in a nutshell, something "fundamentally unsettling about life" (Withy 11). Micha embodies this mergence between the Freudian and the Heideggerian uncanny in the way concealed historical memory forms part of the anxieties of the contemporary condition. As Havi Carel points out, "[Heideggerian] anxiety is a situation in which one is distanced from the world and the network of significance. The

uncanny is an experience of homelessness" (Carel 166). Carel describes the Heideggerian uncanny as an "integral part of anxiety" and a "philosophical mood" (ibid) instigated by modernity itself, or political ideologies such as National Socialism that render Beings homeless as we have seen in 'Helmut' and 'Lore'. Certainly, Micha experiences the same "distance from the world" (ibid) that, as I have mentioned in chapter one, the architect does, but Micha's homelessness lies, furthermore, in an impasse, because whatever choice he makes, whether to disclose secrets or to let them be, would render him homeless. As Carel puts it, "Dasein has a choice and must "'tolerate not having chosen the others and not being able to'" (ibid). Mina repeatedly pleads with Michael to 'go home', which could be read in the sense of a return to dwelling-well. She doesn't seem to see the point in fomenting homelessness by raking up painful or traumatic memory, but perhaps the text hints at the Heideggerian dilemma of uncanniness as an inevitable part of Being. Thus, the best we can do is to face the past, come to terms with it by, as Heidegger suggested, returning it to its own being, and letting it be. The end of the story sees Michael on his way to visit his grandmother with a new member of the next generation; a point of reconciliation with the past perhaps, and a philosophical homecoming.

Thus, we return to the image of Oma's "birds nest" (223), as she refers to her high-rise apartment; a rather intriguing image explored by Bachelard, who highlights the way it evokes "the natural habitat of the function of inhabiting. For not only do we *come back* to it, but we dream of coming back to it, the way a bird comes back to its nest, or a lamb to the fold" (Bachelard 119). For Bachelard, when we dream of a nest, we "place

ourselves at the origin of confidence in the world" (ibid 123). Nevertheless, Oma's nest is an empty one, but, as Bachelard argues, the human "rhythm of life" (ibid 119) propels us back, albeit in our dreams, "combat[ing] all absence" (ibid). In addition, paralleling the cottage image in 'Lore', the nest also implies simplicity and a calm and restful environment from a stressful, hostile exterior. I suggest that the use of the nest, here, fuses both images. In the first instance, Michael returns to the genealogical nest at the end of the story with "another family member" (390), his daughter, implying a return to place and a hopeful possibility of dwelling.

Perhaps most significantly, Oma's nest suggests reconciliation with the past, a place of "faithful [familial] loyalty" (Bachelard 119) as well as psychological respite from modernity; this embraces the points raised at the beginning of this section, where I discussed the existential nature of Michael's predicament and the issue of contemporary haunting.[79] This further supports my point that Seiffert forwards family connectedness as a way-out of the contemporary condition, including the obsessive, painful return to the past; an oneiric 'homecoming' to a place of protection, intimacy and security. And yet, we must note that a nest is also a "precarious thing" (Bachelard 123), and once we have known the hostility of the world, as Bachelard observed, we must strive to continue to build and maintain it; that is, on the level of humanity.

But, alongside this interpretation of the nest, we should also observe that it remains, ironically, not within the idyll of the fourfold that the simple

[79] I will argue, in later sections of this thesis, that Seiffert maintains this theme with similar images throughout her work, but the nest image, and family allegiances will be significant in *TWH*.

architectural structure implies, but in a concrete high-rise block of apartments with the balcony at its edge. The perception of bodily abjection to modern high-rise living, furthermore, seems to be articulated through Oma's observation that humans "weren't designed to live so high" (223), in reaction to their "ears popping as they descend in the lift" (ibid). Thus, on the one hand, the nest appears to articulate a return-home, to a Noble Truth, in its association with nurturing and family, and in its essential connectedness to the communion of life. But on the other, the nest rests in modernity, with perhaps the implication that if we can use the "past as a reservoir of thinking available to contemporary life" (Sharr 99), following Heideggerian thought, then this return-home would not lie entirely out of reach. Home would serve as a site of resilience, and as alternative to the placelessness imposed upon us by the contemporary condition.

Conclusions

Throughout this discussion of *TDR*, I have examined Seiffert's use of an aesthetic form which Vidler coined the Architectural Uncanny. Reading the narratives through this paradigm has permitted a closer examination of the way Seiffert's juxtaposition of the homely (Heimlich) and the unhomely (Unheimlich) through architectural and domestic imagery, allows us to gaze into the inexpressible anxieties of physical and phenomenological displacement and to perceive the undercurrents of concealed family secrets that formed, and continue to form, part of German post-war memory discourse. I have also attempted to show how, through this aesthetics, the uncanny state of existential *angst* becomes more visible.

Thus, Seiffert's discourse, through an engagement with the micro-cosmic world of the family, reveals itself to be complex and multi-layered in its approach to German memory discourse. For, not only does she access what has remained hidden within the apparent ideal of domesticity, and the psychological and philosophical perturbations of homelessness, but also the *angst* of the contemporary condition. The three narratives form a chronological account of these unknown secrets and anxieties as they are brought to light through the innocent vision of the child protagonist, Helmut, whose family's affluence accumulated through their compliance with Nazi ideology, to the mass migration and denial following the final days of the war in 'Lore', and finally to the contemporary post-war period in 'Micha', where the uncanny existential *angst* of the modern condition intertwines with the intellectual uncertainty of knowing the past.

I have discussed how tropes of the Architectural Uncanny, such as disorientation, concealment and disclosure of 'truths', homeliness and unhomeliness of domestic spaces and intimacy appear in *TDR*. Furthermore, I have suggested that through these characteristics we can better sense how the forces of rational and nihilistic modernity, obsessive memorialization, the repressed unspoken, 'intellectual uncertainty', denial and above all, alienation and estrangement caused by mass displacement in the aftermath of war, have been instrumental in the loss of phenomenological dwelling. As I have mentioned in the introduction, for Homi Bhabha, the uncanny domestic space allows us to visualize the invasions and undercurrents of history and memory that can be considered as unsettling dwelling, and we have seen how this wider picture is played out through Seiffert's images of house, home and

spaces normally pertaining to the Heimlich, such as Kolesnik's rural home or the library in 'Micha'. But, these spaces of concealment, as projected though the consciousness of the protagonist, slide into the Unheimlich. Thus, home has been physically and metaphysically unbalanced.

For Heidegger, writing in the post-war period, the uncanny condition of unsettledness and homelessness was part of Mankind's experience of the world; and thus, the ceaseless quest to go home, or in Casey's terms, for implacement. This quest underlies the narratives throughout and serves to counter and palliate homelessness. Homecoming seems to be offered up as a possibility that exists but has yet to be fully embraced.

The homecoming quest is perhaps strongest in the final story and functions as concluding moral message to the trilogy. As we have seen in 'Micha', the uncanny principally arises out of 'intellectual uncertainty' surrounding the family history. But, Micha's partner, Mina, stands in opposition to obsessive memorialization, and her insistence on Micha's physical return home can be read as an enticement for a metaphorical return to dwelling-well. Furthermore, the birth of their daughter at the end of the narrative and the visit to Oma's 'nest', heightens the sense of resilience, atonement, reconciliation with the past and hope for the future. The message seems to be that there is a need for forgetting, as life indeed goes on, as Polish poet and Nobel Prize winner Wisława Szymborska wrote in *Reality Demands*,

> Reality demands
>
> we also state the following:

life goes on.

It does so near Cannae and Borodino,

At Kosovo Polje and Guernica. (Szymborska)[80]

Notwithstanding the disturbance to dwelling that excessive memorialization implies, Seiffert however, does not appear to oppose disclosure if we are to find reconciliation with the past. I suggest the writer speaks to the necessity to consider a point in which Mankind must set aside the past to return to the essential purpose of Being in existentialist terms. Thus, it does not imply a pessimistic impasse as some critics have assumed, such as Rau, (mentioned above), but a coming-to-terms with the past in order to return to dwelling-well. As I have mentioned, Micha, like Stevie in *TWH*, has a choice, and from an existentialist viewpoint, this is a key point. He can wallow in the past and continue to hold rancour or look to the present and the future. And this includes a co-existence within the Heideggerian fourfold, or one in which all

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[80]Quoted in David Rieff, "The Cult of Memory: When History Does More Harm than Good | David Rieff | Education | The Guardian." *theguardian.com*. N.p., 2017. Web. 20 Mar. 2017. Rieff's article addresses the contemporary obsession with memorialization and suggests a move towards reconciliatory forgetting. Rieff, writing from his experience of conflict in different parts of the world, has also expressed his thoughts on the paradox of the necessity for collective memory on the one hand, and its toxicity on the other in his work *In Praise of Forgetting: Historical Memory and Its Ironies*. Reprint: 2. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2016. Print. In this philosophical text, he examines the moral outcomes of memorialization in diverse situations from Northern Ireland and the Balkans to the Holocaust. His principal thesis and conclusion is that in some contexts "the human and societal cost of the moral demand to remember is too high to be worth paying" (57-58)

Likewise, Will Hutton who, writing for the Guardian online newspaper on the eve of Catalan president Carles Puigdemont's possible declaration of independence from Spain (8th Oct. 2017), wrote, "[T]oo much remembering has become toxic. It is time to forget and move on" (Hutton). Hutton refers, in general terms, not only to the historical roots of the Catalan-Spanish conflict, but to the grievances still rife all over Europe, including those propounded by British Brexiters.

As allegorical texts, I contend that Seiffert's family fiction appears to mirror Rieff's moral paradox, but similarly points towards reconciliation and forgetting, as expressed in 'Micha', *Afterwards* and *TWH*. Thus, the recent interest in the possible toxicity of obsessive memorialization, embodied in many of Seiffert's characters, such as Micha, Alice, David or Eric, lends support to Seiffert's work as a deep reflection on contemporary socio-political themes; one of which is to leave the past behind and find a way forward towards a more harmonious co-existence.

parts, environment, culture and history form part of Mankind's dwelling and are an integral part of the present. But despite, as Bhabha noted, the continuing reverberations of the past in the present, these need not be a hinderance to dwelling, but rather the impetus for a return-home.

In conclusion, the denouement of 'Micha', and thus, of the trilogy, suggests a future that encompasses reconciliation with the Nazi German past and moving on. Far from relegated to nihilism, history and memory are transcended to make way for the values and social justice that must build the trans-ethnic and multi-cultural society of contemporary Germany. The cultural diversity of this society is embodied in, German, Micha and second-generation Turkish Mina's baby daughter. This global diversity, understanding of the past, the not-forgetting, coupled with Seiffert's attention to the perils of inauthenticity in contemporary urban life, and to environmental issues, appears to establish the narrative within the paradigm of a reconstructive postmodernity in its return to meaning.

As we shall see in the following chapter, the concept of metaphysical homecoming recurs in later novels, such as *Afterwards* and *TWH* in response to the loss of dwelling associated with not only obsessive personal and collective memorialization, but also traumatic memory, diasporic experience and confessional religious sectarianism. I will broadly put forward the thesis that these issues serve as further distraction, in the existentialist sense, from dwelling-well, and must be overcome if humanity is to return home. Thus, I further my argument through an existentialist reading of these novels with a focus on spatial, architectural and domestic images, by examining how a return to dwelling-well, further accommodates metaphysical issues of

implacement in its essential connection with place and environment; a relationship that, as we have seen in the opening chapter of this thesis, has been lost in modernity.

CHAPTER THREE.

HOMELESS MINDS RETURNING HOME: LEGACIES OF THE PAST, COUNTERFORCES OF THE SITE

> Although Maycomb's appearance had changed, the same hearts beat in new houses, over Mixmasters, in front of television sets. One could whitewash all he pleased, and put up comic neon signs, but the aged timbers stood strong under their additional burden. (Harper Lee 46)

> "I have turned his hill country into a wasteland and left his inheritance to the desert jackals." Edom may say, "Though we have been crushed, we will rebuild the ruins." But this is what the LORD Almighty says: "They may build, but I will demolish. They will be called the Wicked Land, a people always under the wrath of the LORD". (Malachi 1:3)

> How does it feel, to be without a home, like a complete unknown with no direction home, just like a rolling stone? (Bob Dylan 1965)

In the previous section, I argued that 'Micha' portrayed the way transgenerational haunting and obsessive memorialization restrains the possibility of dwelling-well. In this chapter, I focus on the way pervasive and destabilizing undercurrents of lingering traumatic memory, identity politics, ingrained cultural memory and the social effects of a 'liquid' globalized modernity further impede dwelling in *Afterwards,* 'Field Study' and, perhaps what is Seiffert's most complex and enmeshed narrative to date, *TWH,* to

which I necessarily dedicate the majority of pages. I broadly argue that the writer conveys the way these elements contribute to the metaphysical homelessness of our contemporary era. Furthermore, I contend that these narratives appeal to a return to meaning on a poetic level, and portray the precarity and vulnerability of dwelling through the images of edifying, decorating, architecture and home; which comprise Literary Architecture. I use Vidler terms 'counterforces of the site' (Vidler) to refer to historical reverberations and cultural undercurrents imperilling this return-home. In this final chapter, I conclude in accordance with my thesis, that despite the impediments to re-implacement implied in these counterforces, Seiffert's art forwards an existential return to a life receptive to place, and reconciliation with a restorative 'softer' family structure; one that does not depend on tyrannical obligations, but tolerance and unquestioning acceptance of difference, as a possible way out of our ontological homelessness and, thus, as alternative to the contemporary predicament.

Introduction

The texts I explore here, present a dichotomy between an overbearing presence and commitment to close-knit communities or family, and the will to escape their iron grip and the desire for connection, through 'softer', less inhibited forms of human bonding. For sociologists Peter Berger and his associates, whose work in the 1960s and 70s was based on the youth 'counterculture' at that time, wrote about how this youth searched out alternative beliefs to replace the failing primary institutions, such as state and church, or the more traditional, and often suffocating, patriarchal family

structures. These sociologists noted how alternative religious groups, based on Eastern and environmentalist thought, took the place of what they termed ‘primary institutions’, serving as palliative measure for alienation and estrangement of the self. They used the term ‘secondary institutions’ to describe these ‘softer’ forms. Certainly, these youth countercultures resonate Heideggerian thought, bearing in mind the philosopher’s Buddhist influences. Thus, in simple terms, the weakening of primary institutions meant an increasing individualization, or a casting out of the individual into homelessness, and we shall see how this is manifested in Seiffert’s estranged protagonist, Stevie, in *TWH*.

With nothing to replace their offerings of security and safety, to give meaning to their lives, youth culture turned to alternatives. For Berger and his associates, this meant a return to life in which “life is understood not only as subjective and ‘self-focused’, but as relational, humanitarian, ecological or cosmic” (Heelas, Martin, and Woodhead 43). As I have discussed throughout this thesis, for Heidegger this means dwelling within the care of the fourfold. I have already noted how the protagonist of ‘Architect’ embodies this ideology, and its connection to post-materialist or organicist philosophies and so I will linger no more on its significance here.

However, in these texts, unlike the protagonist of ‘Architect’, Seiffert’s ‘homeless minds’ (Berger et al., *Homeless Mind Mod. Conscious.*) do not seem to fully resolve their condition and find peaceful dwelling, but rather flounder on the edge of a return-home. But this does not imply irresolvable despair, because these texts suggest impediments could be overcome, if only the shackles of inauthentic dwelling could be cast off. The

hope for a return-home, however, lies, not in confessional religion, but in the 'enhancing institution' (Heelas, Martin, and Woodhead 43) of family, community values and human relations. This literal return would also mean a more harmonious and meaningful existence, as well as a safety net for the insecurities of an increasingly globalized and fragmented society.

In the previous chapter, we saw how war induced displacement obstructed dwelling, and that physical displacement functions on a par with metaphysical displacement. In other words, not only are the characters literally displaced from their homes, or physically homeless, but also metaphysically homelessness in philosophical and sociological terms. Similarly, I explore how this also applies to the corpus of this chapter, but, furthermore, how displacement and homelessness appears to be caused by socio-political, economic policies, globalization and, perhaps most significantly, religious intolerance, further contributing to humanity's incapacity to 'return-home'.

In addition, in accordance with my overall thesis, I contend that the the writer manages to communicate the incommunicable nuanced realities of contemporary society through a Literary Architecture and the notion of a return-home. Socio-political and cultural realities are, evidently, also materially perceptible in the changing architectural world. The building and demolishing of houses reflects a changing and ever shifting society. And in this sense, we could situate Seiffert alongside contemporary London writers, such as Moorcock, Ballard and Sinclair, in their consideration of the way architecture and landscape reflect homogenizing globalization and, in the case of the latter writers, the hard capitalism of the 1980s, at the same time

as revealing psychological depth. Sinclair, who has been associated with the literary movement of psychogeography, attempts to illustrate a London that is

> somewhere with endless erasures and reinventions and disappearances and amnesia. [And in which] [a] lot of important cultural stories and figures were wiped out, buildings would disappear and something else is put up in their places. (Sinclair qtd. in Chapman).

As we shall see, parallels between Seiffert and these urban fictions remains most discernible in *TWH*, where the changing architecture of the Glaswegian schemes mirrors the erasure of ingrained cultural memory. Ironically, this erasure plays a part in homelessness. It is ironic, as we shall see below, because memorial and historical interconnectedness, and generational continuity is often considered to be homely, indeed Mumford and Heidegger believed so. But at the same time, as Le Corbusier and his followers would have it, too much adherence to the past can entrap and encumber individual freedom; thus, furthering homelessness. This would reflect, in architectural terms, the dichotomy described above; the need to escape the entrapment of community, overbearing family commitments and the past, but the desire for a 'home' in a much softer form which might provide shelter and respite, indeed a site of resilience, from the barrage of modernity.

To return to my point above on London novelists, these contemporary narratives reflect the rapidly changing world that Pierre Nora fittingly described in his historicist approach to memory as a society deeply "absorbed in its own transformation and renewal, one that inherently values the new

over the ancient, the young over the old, the future over the past" (Nora 12). In architecture, Le Corbusier and his followers' utopian tabla rasa, based on sweeping away the oppressive cobwebs of the past, mirrors this view of modernity. Thus, if Mumford and Heidegger are right, such radical change that failed to account for cultural memory and community customs would ultimately contribute to further physical and metaphysical homelessness. Sociologically speaking, however, following the thoughts of Karl Marx (Marx 1848) on the dearth of solidity in modernity, Bauman reflects on the rapid transformation on different aspects of contemporary life in his extensive works on varying sociological consequences of 'liquid' modernity, which serves to highlight the continuing concern with the deepening condition of instability and plurality since Marx's time. In this chapter, these concepts converge with Pierre Nora's thoughts on the way memory, described as

> true memory, which has taken refuge in gestures and habits, in skills passed down by unspoken traditions, in the body's inherent self-knowledge, in unstudied reflexes and ingrained memories, and memory trans-formed by its passage through history. (Nora 13)

Thus, 'true memory', as he puts it, resurfaces to act as counterforce to ever changing, constant renewal and instability implicit in our 'liquid' times. Nora's definition of memory describes tacit transmittance through generations, communities, and family; thus expressing historical-cultural

undercurrents and reverberations. Fiction allows these hidden undercurrents to remain on view. [81]

Furthermore, in the field of architecture, Vidler discussed the barriers that the collective mentality presented towards transformation and change in urban environments, putting paid to the Corbusierian ideology of a 'tabla rasa'. This opposition creates what he terms a strong "counterforce of the site" (Vidler 200). Vidler has observed the parallel between this cultural 'counterforce' and Halbwach's well-known notion of 'collective memory'. Spaces such as buildings and other places, remain essential elements in personal and collective memorialization. If these disappear, then so does the collective memory of a community, leading to placelessness, and thus, homelessness. In Halbwach's own terms, "[t]he place occupied by a group is not like a chalkboard on which one writes, and then erases, numbers and figures" (Halbwachs 133).[82] Vidler adopting the blackboard metaphor contends that the blackboard "after all, remains profoundly indifferent to the figures inscribed on its surface, while a place receives the imprint of a group" (Vidler 200). This imprint is not so easily erased. He warns architects to consider cultural imprints when drawing up a "seemingly passive plan of streets and houses" (ibid).

This notion of architectural indifference to place finds its philosophical counterpart in Heideggerian thought on the human, emotional

[81] Interestingly, Paul Crosthwaite discusses how contemporary fiction reaches into the incommunicable psychological reverberations of World War Two. He focusses on writers such as J.B Ballard and Graham Swift, to explore their portrayal of traumatic undercurrents; see Paul Crosthwaite, *Trauma, Postmodernism, and the Aftermath of World War II*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. Print.

[82] Le memoire collective, Paris: Presses Universitaire de France, 1968: 133 (qtd. in Vidler 200).

identification to place, as opposed to the mathematical, rational and scientific. If true memory, in Nora's terms, culture and tradition are important to place, then so too the human experience and sensitivities over the technocratic (Sharr 61). Furthermore, these are also key thoughts in post-materialist, organicist philosophies explored throughout this thesis, and the foundation of Spretnak's notion of re-constructive postmodernism.

Halbwach's emphasis on the importance of space in collective memory, and Vidler's Architectural Uncanny may both be ultimately compared to Mumford's earlier warnings about the risks of architectural homogeneity and modern urban planning. Mumford already lamented the loss of humane elements, including an essential psychological connection to genealogy and community identity. Without this psychological connection, then, mankind ultimately becomes 'placeless', alienated from community and left in a kind of psychological limbo, leading once more to a loss of phenomenological dwelling and to homelessness. To return to the blackboard metaphor, then, its pertinence to my discussion of the texts in this chapter lies in its analogy to Nora's 'true memory', including culturally transmitted traditions acting as "counterforce[s] of the site" (Vidler); counterforces that seemingly seep through globalization and the totalizing forces of modernity. Thus, if the future that architectural space offers is too totalizing, it will nevertheless be "invaded by its surroundings" (Vidler).

However, as these stories suggest, the cultural 'surroundings' might neither, ironically, offer any compensation for the anxiety of placelessness. And indeed, here lies the paradox outlined above: cultural and traditional 'surroundings' might prove to be a straightjacket, but if we reject their

protection and homeliness, what can offer the "vacuous, 'lost' homelessness of the self left to itself" (Heelas, Martin, and Woodhead 44) security, safety and a sense of meaning in life? As I have mentioned earlier, the answer, then, must ultimately lie in a 'softer' form of human bonding, without the chains imposed by excessive memorization, religion, or tradition; one that implies reconciliation between collective memory and regeneration. Nevertheless, I do not mean to suggest these texts as romantic, but rather a deeply poetic creation and a re-thinking, which in Heideggerian terms, implies a taking-stock and a measuring of the world as it is and as it could be.

Ultimately, in alignment with my thesis, I contend that these allegorical texts allude to a journey away from metaphysical homelessness and towards meaning. Seiffert's art reveals a "Being that has, according to Heidegger, long been concealed in oblivion" (Hofstader in Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought* x)[83]. Her discourse functions on two levels, and indeed may be read on either of these or at once. On the one hand, there is the purely representational, the pure realism to be found in the portrayal of working class Glasgow with its shoddy tenement buildings and high rise flats, or the plight of the war veteran trying make life anew. But, on the other hand, it goes beyond the purely representational into the inexpressible realm of the creative imagination. Her imaginative world speaks to what "it means to exist as a human being in authentic relationship as mortal to other mortals, to earth and sky, to the divinities present or absent, to things and plants and animals" (ibid x); to a poetic dwelling-well. I attempt to reveal in the following pages, how Seiffert's literary art intertwines these two seemingly

[83] In Introduction by Albert Hofstader.

distant worlds. By way of an overall conclusion, and according to one of the principal questions raised in this thesis, this portrayal of our ‘liquid times’, through a contemporary form of realism, suggests a humanitarian, post-materialist philosophy and a re-constructive postmodernist artistic form.

3.1. Globalization, Socio-Historical ‘Contamination’ and the Emotional Identity of Place in ‘Field Study’

The short story ‘Field Study’, part of a collection in a volume of the same name, is set in the changing socio-political environment of a former Eastern European bloc country, assumedly Poland, and conveys a subtle melancholia and a sense of loss amid encroaching globalization. It stands as an allegory of the way globalizing forces, consumerism and the functionally rational infiltrate this small rural community. This is a theme which, as we have seen, to a certain extent parallels *ABIW*. Yet, in this story, adhesion or return to the tight-knit community and its connectedness with tradition, especially religion, does not seem to offer a viable ‘alternative institution’ in Berger’s terms, to contemporary alienation and homelessness. It is portrayed as inhibitive and inauthentic. Thus, here lies the modern paradox, discussed above, that Berger and Bauman advocated; and thus, the not-at-homeness of Seiffert’s characters. As Berger argued, the disenchantment and consequent disconnection with what he referred to as ‘primary institutions’, such as government and the church have contributed to the loss of meaning. Above all, he argued that the demise of religion, in its central function to provide meaning and stability, has meant that “in modern society, social ‘homelessness’ has become metaphysical — that is, it has become ‘homeless’

in the cosmos" (Berger 165-6, qtd. in Heelas, Martin, and Woodhead 45). *TWH* expresses this same homelessness resulting from the constraints of religion again through disconnected and alienated family members. Nevertheless, modernity, consumerism, and economic activity, rather than compensating for this loss, merely increase frustration, resulting in the same sense of homelessness. I advocate, then, that the short story 'Field Study' forwards another possibility: "the search for a common humanity and joint control over the human condition" (Bauman, *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World* 143), supporting one of the principal hypotheses forwarded in this thesis; that Seiffert's narratives propose a return-home through a philosophy of Proxmity and a primal oneness with the Heideggerian fourfold.

In 'Field Study', the loss of dwelling within the fourfold is encapsulated through highly signifying metaphors; environmental pollution and 'unnatural' political borders. The river, for example, does not heed man-made, rationally constructed borders, it crosses and flows through and into different regions, through East and West. The border between Poland and Germany embodies what Casey termed an unnatural "spatial imprisonment" (Casey 287); that is, a man-made separation of humanity. He rightly remarks that, "there are no strictly drawn borders in the biological world" (ibid xxviii) and "the spontaneous interaction of species takes the place of any regulatory decrees" (ibid). Political borders thus contribute to the loss of dwelling, as they impede a primal oneness and creaturely co-existence. Indeed, borders are a persistent narrative motif in Seiffert's works, as we shall see in *Afterwards*.

'Field Study' evokes the ubiquitous evasion of political borders into private lives and social relations through the inhibited relationship between Martin and Ewe. Their awareness of this barrier is reflected in a sense of restraint and tension that the reader perceives as a loss. Ewe and Martin thus emblematise the difficulty of any 'spontaneous interaction', and yet, like the micro-organisms that Martin scientifically studies in the river, their 'return to life', as Berger puts it, would depend on a 'common humanity' advocated by Bauman, communion between bioregions, as Spretnak proposes, and a union of the fourfold rather than a politically drawn 'spatial imprisonment'. Indeed, the isolating properties of political territory are equally as confining as insular and inward-looking traditional community and the 'iron-cage' of technological modernity.[84] We shall see in subsequent sections how this motif is reified in *TWH*, since such communities become what Bauman termed a 'fortress', limiting the connection between both outsiders and insiders in the same way as unnatural political borders.

The paradoxes of modernization and economic progress with progress in humanistic terms is conveyed through architectural building projects and capitalist consumerism. As we have seen, in *ABIW*, the road the Nazis build represents the encroachment of modernity, but it brings anything but progress. Similarly, in 'Field Study', the image of new buildings put up after the elections, "[n]ew times, new buildings" (21), with all the 'mod-cons'

[84] Max Weber referred to the 'iron-cage' of modernity. Just as religion had been confining individual liberty, industrialization and technological progress determines "the lives of all the individuals who are born into this mechanism, not only those directly concerned with economic acquisition, with irresistible force" (Weber 181, qtd in Heeler, Martin and Woodhead 44). This term reminds me of Bauman's 'fortress' of community, which is just as restrictive as the consumerist, technocratic society we live in, as we shall see in my discussion of *TWH*.

of comfortable dwelling, further exemplifies this metaphor. The new buildings point to hopeful prosperity arising from the new political regime, with the “shop spaces below” (ibid) and the imported “copper piping and ceramics” (ibid), and embody the invasion of a capitalist economy in a country that has recently emerged from communism. The vision of modernity seems to come with the promise of a better life; Berger calls it, “the mystique of modernity” (Berger 128) whereby people have expectations about what advantages lie in store. I discussed in *ABIW* in chapter one of this thesis, how Yasia’s father is also charmed by this ‘mystique’ when he believes that economic progress will be better for the region than the traditional ways of the marshlanders.

However, this myth rather than contributing to a more felicitious state often comes with disappointment, leading not to dwelling-well, but rather into a deeper state of anxious homelessness. In ‘Field Study’, the desire for economic prosperity that capitalism seemingly offered, has been foiled by the failure to live up to the post-communist euphoria; Tadeusz, for example, appears to have sold his soul to the capitalist devil, as he “got a loan to pay for all the materials” (ibid) but “he never got paid” (21), precipitating his depression. The fall into homelessness through capitalist greed is further extended through the contrast between the modesty of Ewe’s home and the stock piling of consumer goods within its walls. This is hinted at by the “narrow entrance hall of Ewe’s flat” (19), which is stuffed with consumer goods still in their boxes for the landlord to sell. But in terms of Literary Architecture, Ewe’s flat is not just a building, but a physical and metaphysical home and the goods embody the collision between

modernization and the old ways. The simplicity of Ewe's "bedroom-dining room" (ibid), with its "table […] in the middle of the room, a wardrobe in the corner. Mattress leant up against the wall and draped with a sheet" (ibid), contrasted with these images of consumer goods "piled high along one wall" (ibid) implies a purposeful incongruity. The presence of consumer goods within the walls of Ewe's home expresses "the collisions, the conflicts and even the rituals brought about by the intrusions of modernity into traditional social life" (Berger, Berger, and Kellner 130).

Furthermore, not only does the emergence of capitalist consumerism inhibit a return-home or to dwelling-well, but so too the persistence of denominational religion which may be viewed as a 'counterforce of the site' in Vidler's terms. As we have seen, Tadeusz welcomed modernity, he has been attracted by its promises of prosperity, and at first, both new and old seemed to cohabit, as his pride in having the priest bless the new houses would suggest. Berger indeed points out that, "modernization may be encapsulated, contained in a kind of enclave, around which the traditional patterns of life go on substantially as before" (Berger, Berger, and Kellner 141). When Ewe's brother-in-law, a plumber

> had the houses blessed when they were finished, but not yet painted. The Priest came and threw his holy water around the empty rooms and Tadeusz was so proud. She remembers the wet, dark spots on the pink-red plasterwork, that it was a hot day, and that the dark spots left white marks behind when they dried. (21)

Metaphorically, I suggest the marks left behind by the holy water allude to a religious counterforce; the "deep pervasion of place itself by cultural factors" (Casey xxiv) which remains firmly ingrained. But, despite Tadeuz' initial pride in having the priest bless the houses, Ewe thought it was he who had graffitied the last of them with "send the nuns abroad and the priests to the moon" (21). Tadeusz, exasperated and frustrated by the 'mystique of modernity', blames his enduring homelessness on the persistence of tradition, represented by the primary institution of the church. In short, for him, the new dwellings represented a promised liberation from the past and the inhibitive shackles on personal freedom and individualism by the church; after all, as Berger notes "[m]odernity has indeed been liberating. It has liberated human beings from the narrow controls of family, clan, tribe or small community" (Berger, Berger, and Kellner 175). But, clearly, neither have been successful in bringing meaning to Taduez' life. The homes remain eerily empty.

In addition, the recurring motif of church bells strengthens the notion of religion as counterforce to a more essential human dwelling. Religion represents a cultural difference between Martin and the tightly-knit host community, and of course, Ewe as one of its members. The church bells, "sounding again outside" (23) as Martin and Ewe verge on a moment of intimacy, speak just as much to the way tradition and deep community ties hamper a vital human dwelling and a "common humanity" (Bauman, *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World* 43) in which the Other is accepted (Esquirol), as does the looming presence of rational modernity embodied in Martin. Ewe's obedience to tradition, and community as a place

of security, parallels the globalizing forces and political borders ultimately separating the couple, in their power to segregate humanity. In Heideggerian terms, these 'inauthentic' elements impede any meaningful relationship between the couple, leaving them in a passionless, nihilistic existence and, thus, disallow a return-home.

Finally, the emptiness of the new houses not only parallels the inhabitants' metaphysical homelessness, but also the abyss between Heideggerian dwelling as 'caring for' and buildings erected merely for economic profit. The first is best exemplified through the character of Martin, and the second through Ewe's simple abode as antithesis of Tadeusz' new houses. First, Martin seems to long for emotional fulfilment. But his inability to commit to a relationship with Ewe, because he fails to surrender to spontaneity, perpetuates his homelessness. Like Kazuo Ishiguro's famous butler Stevens in *The Remains of the Day*, Seiffert exposes the contemporary paradox of being in place by remaining within one's duty, and psychological displacement, "occupying contradictory or incompatible positions" (Lewis 17). Martin's scientific rationality and lack of emotional spontaneity, together with his need for emotional connectedness expresses this inconsistency.

Ewe, on the other hand, characterizes the antithesis of Martin's rational technocratic modernity. Like Yasia in *ABIW*, she appears to be the embodiment of an Earth Goddess, with "the long black weed stuck to her thigh" (6) as she emerges from the river and, later, "pollen stuck to her shoes, the hem of her skirt, damp hair at her temples" (15). Ironically, Martin is drawn to it; suggesting, perhaps, that if Martin is to find his place and 'return

to life', as Berger puts it, he would need to let go of the bondages of rationality, and like Ishiguro's Stevens, heed his most profound human emotions, and strip away inauthenticity. Martin does, however, come to examine the side-effects of modernity and its meddling with nature in his examination of the polluted river. But, he is more concerned with how it affects his scientific data, and if the findings confirm the thesis of his doctoral studies, rather than as anything more authentic.

This brings me to my second point, the scene in which Ewe frustrates Martin's tentative sexual advances, takes place around the dining table. The common domestic table remains a highly simple but persistent motif throughout Seiffert's fiction, as we have seen in my discussion of *TDR* in chapter two of this thesis. It speaks to a kind of dwelling implied by Heidegger; one that cannot be paralleled by the building of houses on an impersonal scale by "mercantile production processes" (Sharr 42), represented in this story by Tadeusz' houses. Sharr notes how

> [i]n Heidegger's scheme, using the table constitutes dwelling. And people's engagement with it constitutes building and dwelling […], here is the building of cultivation inextricably involved with dwelling in the daily micro-organization of eating meals. (Sharr 41)

The description of Ewe's modest flat adds substance to this argument, as the "table stands in the middle of the room" (19), highlighting its central importance in the abode, along with simplicity and modesty in the rest of the contents of the sparse room. Here, we may be reminded of Esquirol's physicality and materiality that highlights the Heideggerian being-with

things within the fourfold as essential to dwelling-well. This same scene also depicts Ewe and her son Jacek in the kitchen "chopping and stirring" (19) in quiet companionship, inferring that dwelling does appear to occur within, despite, or rather, because its simplicity. Indeed, the humility and unpretentiousness of Being, with emphasis on the quotidian domestic objects and daily activities within Ewe's home, lends it a sense of homeliness. In addition, the emptiness of human warmth from the home and Ewe's solitariness, due to the enforced separation from her husband through labour migration and the difficulty of crossing the border, is compensated by the presence of Martin, a stranger, an Other, who she has accepted into her home. There is, then, a moment of tension in which the text offers a small inkling of hopeful domesticity, a love scene at least, but, as we have seen, Ewe, imprisoned by the burdens of tradition, and ironically, community, is unable to submit to Martin's advances. And Martin, like Ishiguro's Stevens, ultimately avoids emotional involvement with Ewe, denying his feelings by deluding himself through the importance placed on work. At the end of the story, Seiffert has 'rational', scientific Martin crossing over the border in his return to Germany. And thus, the emptiness of Tadeusz' houses parallels the consciousness of Seiffert's characters; their homelessness.

In conclusion, if a 'return to life' means human connectedness and intimate relational life with others, and this includes all life on the planet, this story at least implies the persistence of homelessness. However, there is an inkling of hope. On an environmental level, Martin finds the river to be cleaner than he initially thought, implying a 'return to *life'*. But, typically, the lack of satisfactory narrative closure supports LaCapra's observation on

literature as political discourse; that Seiffert's lack of "satisfying meaning on the level of the imagination throws the reader back upon the need to come to terms with the unresolved problems the novel helps to disclose." (La Capra 14). In a nutshell, it is not by giving the story a happy ending, with a harmonious dwelling that Seiffert draws attention to the possibilities of a return-home, but by its absence. Thus, the reader is left to contemplate what made it unsatisfactory; the socio-political and philosophical message of the story lies therein. We can only return-home if Seiffert's points of contention can be reconciled.

3.2. Trauma and the Inability to Return Home in *Afterwards*

The aim of this section is two-fold: First, to further support the way a pervasive traumatic past serves as a barrier to a return-home, and second, to demonstrate how in the novel *Afterwards* Literary Architecture functions not only as a plot device, a mimetic technique in the realist mode, but above all, as a poetic image for the healing of the traumatized mind and an instrument for exploring the difficulties of returning home. I explore here the theme of dwelling in this novel represented not only through Literary Architecture, but also through nature imagery and its expansive, healing capacity for the human spirit. I ultimately suggest that despite their distinctive kinds of trauma, *Afterwards* parallels 'Micha' in that the way forward remains within reach if only the past can be confronted and subsequently laid to rest. Furthermore, in accordance with the overriding argument of this thesis, the return-home, entails a dwelling within the fourfold and a philosophy of Proxmity.

3.2.i. Decorating as Psychic Healing

In this novel, there is a recurring motif of home renovation, with both veterans, David and Joseph, painting and decorating their houses. On the level of plot, building and decorating manages to pull the characters together in the same way as it would in the normal world, since working class communities might do favours for friends, family and neighbours that need a plumber, electrician or builder. Thus, when Alice's grandad, David, decides to redecorate his house after the death of her grandmother, it would only be natural for Alice's boyfriend, Joseph, to offer to do the job. On the surface, then, this narrative device allows Seiffert to remain within a mimetic tradition of realism, portraying the everyday struggles and preoccupation of the working classes, yet at the same time, betokens a deeper signification of the house as mind and psyche. Literary Architecture and a poetics of space seems to function here to dramatize an urge for renewal, but paradoxically, a dismal sense of hopelessness.

First, what does this renewal consist of in *Afterwards*? Both David and Joseph suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) resulting from their war experiences: Joseph in Northern Ireland and David in the Kenyan Crisis. If we read the 'house' as analogous to the mind, as 'home' on a metaphysical level, then painting, decorating and renovating its rooms figure as psychological restoration, a means to cleanse away the old and begin anew, and to purify and sanitize the mind of traumatic memory. David decides to carry out the plan of redecorating his house first outlined while his wife was still alive, and thus it serves both as a memorial function as he completes his wife's desires, and as a means of recommencing and purifying

his own life; an attempt to return-home. To ascend to plot level, Seiffert cleverly manages to unite both veterans under the same roof, to use an architectural metaphor often associated with mind, denoting their shared traumatic memories. In quite a literal sense, both seem to benefit psychologically from each other's company, mirroring the real inability of most war veterans to articulate their trauma to anyone who has not undergone such experience.

The progress made on decorating the house, as the novel proceeds, parallels, in the first instance, advances made by David especially in the realm of his psyche as he gradually shares his traumatic experience with Joseph; something that he could never do with anybody else except his wife. Significantly, in Heideggerian terms, this progress reflects building as dwelling; that is, the repairing of the soul, a re-building on a spiritual level. Nevetheless, David needs to articulate his trauma if he is to approximate healing, and Joseph becomes what psychoanalyst Dori Laub terms as the Listener-Companion (Laub).[85] Joseph, on the other hand, remains reticent of any disclosure. Thus, both men have distinct methods of dealing with their war trauma. Joseph, frightened of disturbing memories that he constantly struggles to contain, and unable and unwilling to reach into the (Lacanian)

[85] Dori Laub's well known (1992) 'testimony therapy' works with the, widely accepted, assumption that the verbalization of the trauma story must be activated for healing to take place. Through subsequent repetition, the trauma eventually loses its power to cause distress. Furthermore, her view means that the 'trauma narrative' should also to be recorded or listened to in order to bear witness to violence. Thus, for Laub, the trauma story must be told. This has been particularly pertinent to Holocaust trauma narratives. In the humanities, Laub's theories have usually been used to explore psychoanalytic readings of literature. There are criticisms of this theory however, and psychoanalysts Kelly McKinny (2007), Strawson and Summerfield (Summerfield) have explored the problems associated with these therapies. Seiffert undoubtedly illustrates some of these problems through the character of Joseph.

real, begins to detach himself from the old man, despite feeling “like a coward” (181), recognizing his own helplessness and failure to face up to his memories. To do so would need more courage than Joseph could muster, leading him to frustration. He seems unable to emerge from isolation and re-connect with others. And, before long, as summer settles into autumn, the cooler season and the advent of early darkness contributes to the sense of mounting hostility between the men, both seemingly aware of maintaining a psychological status quo. Nevertheless, the reader senses that status quo as a coiled spring through an extraordinary ordinariness that verges on the unhomely.

The spring finally uncoils in one key scene, which exemplifies Seiffert’s use of Literary Architecture to denote the difficulty of psychological healing, renewal and a tranquil ‘domesticity’, and thus, the perpetuation of the two veterans’ homelessness. As Bachelard noted, “[i]nhabited space transcends geometrical space” (Bachelard 47), the ‘being’ of the house transposing itself into the ‘being’ and soul of mankind. We can see this at work in Seiffert’s attempt to express the soul of her veteran protagonists clearly in this passage. On hearing David’s war stories, Joseph experiences what therapists call a counter-transference of David’s trauma, that is, a re-awakening of his own traumatic memory. Reactions include feelings of despair, and overwhelming emotion, which can lead to resistance in the form of avoidance by forgetting details, not listening or changing topic (Mckinney). Joseph, then, clearly demonstrates symptoms of counter-transference on two occasions: First, when he hears Alice’s confession of the traumatic relationship with her father he avoids her and disappears,

expressing a non-verbal language of traumatic memory. And second, in this passage in which Joseph's careful self-control, masterfully illustrated by the tension and silence maintained as he stirs pots of paint, "[c]alm and deliberate, only that wasn't how he felt" (249), finally explodes, prompting an uncontrollable rage: "Paint hurled across walls and banisters. Undercoat, heavy and stinking. Thick, oily mess of it under his shoes, slipping on the dustsheets […]" (251). The images of Joseph's rampage as he hurls tins of paint, and of Joseph himself, "palms and fingers coated, paint oozing up his arms" (ibid), and the final sentence in the scene, "[p]aint flung across the floor and walls and the windows and seeping into the carpet" (ibid), have a potent metonymical function, with the paint, normally used for revitalizing and restoring, 'contaminating' both men. For Bachelard, furthermore, the house invokes "tranquillity to body and soul" (Bachelard 39), a protective shield from the outside world and the elements, a sensation of ultimate warmth, well-being and domestic comfort. Thus, the redecoration of the house can be considered as an attempt to return home and to place; in short, a re-building of their lives.

Nevertheless, their PTSD precludes such an attempt. Joseph not only covers *himself* with paint, but also leaves "marks" all over David's house, smashing the window, thus leaving a hole through which the "autumn sky" filters through, reinforcing the chaos within the house and, thus, their psyche; perhaps pointing furthermore, not only to a loss of resistance and protection, but also the 'autumn' of the old man's life. The "[c]old outside air fill[ing] the hallway" (251) strengthens this loss, the difficulty in confronting the real, and the permeability of the mind. Seiffert's choice of the final word "carpet"

strongly contributes to the poetic image of domestic comfort and warmth that home furnishings are supposed to achieve. Yet, as paint "seep[s]" into it, this image of cosy domesticity appears subversive; the word 'seep' denoting porosity, thus, the permeability of such well-being. The scene, then, illustrates, through a Literary Architecture, the desperation and wretchedness of the veterans' plight, the hopelessness and difficulty of 'homecoming', to use a term from veteran literature, and the complexity of its accomplishment. At the end of this scene, (which coincides with the end of a chapter), the reader clearly senses the futility and failure of renewal, the past continuing to haunt its veteran protagonists.

In conclusion, there are clear parallels with the Heideggerian thought that "only if we are capable of dwelling, only then can we build" (Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking" 362), or indeed we may be reminded of Mumford's statement that we must "work the ground enough beforehand to sew the new seeds" (Mumford 199).[86] Furthermore, Heidegger notes the state of peace in relation to dwelling:

> But in what does the essence of dwelling consist? […] The Old Saxon *wuon*, the Gothic *wunian*, like the old word *bauen,* mean to remain, to stay in a place. But the Gothic *wunian* says more distinctly how this remaining is experienced. *Wunian* means to be at peace, to be brought before peace, to remain in peace. […]. To dwell, to be set at peace, means to remain at peace within the free, the preserve, the free sphere

[86] Quoted in section 1.1 of this thesis, in the discussion of 'Architect', and re-cited here for convenience.

> that safeguards each thing in its essence. (Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking" 351)

For all the two men paint and decorate a home, then, they will not dwell until they can find peace with themselves and with others. In the following section, and in support of the main arguments of this thesis, we shall see how a more peaceful dwelling might be possible.

3.2.ii. Pastoral Space as a Site of Healing

Until this point, we have seen how Seiffert draws attention to the plight of the war veteran and to the question of whether Joseph and David will ever find peaceful dwelling. But, the text principally stands as a site allowing a poetic engagement with the fundamental issues considered necessary to attain this peace. Thus, through imaginative creation of these issues, it lets us give thought to dwelling (Heidegger, "Poetically Man Dwells"); and herein lies its optimism. As I argue in this thesis, through this 'letting-dwell', these texts rise above the impasse of postmodernity and its relationship to a traumatic past and forwards towards a world more in tune with the essential essence of humanity, existence and thus, a metaphysical implacement, or a return to place and return-home. Through the figure of the veteran, Seiffert portrays a conflicted being that, despite his retreat from the world, struggles nonetheless to exist "always alongside the world, with Others, and towards [him]self" (Heidegger, *Being and Time* 214, qtd. in Berstein, 215). In the following paragraphs, we shall see how Seiffert conveys the possibility of return to a being in Proximity with the world and the Other, through the use of pastoral spatial elements and simple architectural abodes. I argue, here,

that these homely, natural spaces embody a site of isolation, where the individual might reach a point of anxiety forceful enough to break through their walls into the world outside, yet, also serve as a point of contact between moral reflection, authentic historicity and the "world not only as it is, but as it can and should be" (Guignon 236).

Just as the pastoral juxtaposes the horrors of battle in war literature from World War One to Afghanistan, Similarly, in *Afterwards*, Joseph's trauma is countered with natural spaces, such as beaches or the moorlands of Northern England and Scotland, set against the simple abodes of a caravan, beach hut, tent or farmhouse. These are the spaces where Joseph can manage to "get a grip" (228) on the traumatic memory of war through moral rumination and reflection on his participation in his own life narrative and the historical freedom allotted it. They are spaces allowing contemplation through which to find a 'truth of being'.

Wild spaces and modest abodes at first serve as spaces of isolation for Joseph from the tensions imposed on his psyche by the exigencies of a capitalist society, from the chatter and idle talk that Heidegger believed hid the ontological and also from his own disruptive internal 'chatter', the traumatic memory of Northern Ireland. Interestingly, Joseph's isolatory behaviour typifies many veteran narratives in which self-imposed seclusion from the world remains a central trope. In his seclusion, he embodies a being whose Dasein remains unattached from others, from 'being-in-the-world'. His behaviour oscillates between detachment and connectedness with Others; a "self-contain[ment]" (74) that Alice finds difficult to understand and endure. Indeed, what precipitates their relationship into an abyss is precisely

this detachment. Through Joseph's dilemma, then, the text enacts the Heideggerian paradox of a state of being that feels anxious in its comforting isolation, but unhomely when interconnected 'in-the-world', thus, revealing the homely to be 'not-at-home'. Joseph seems aware of the anxiety raised by self-seclusion, yet he cannot fully free himself from it, because going out into the world and becoming connected with Others also leads him into the state of uncanny exposure. And so he vacillates between self-seclusion and being-in-the-world. The denouement exemplifies this oscillation. Joseph faces a choice between a return to life or isolation, further evoked by architectural features and the juxtaposition of natural elements: "[...] the concrete still felt cold through his socks. The courtyard below him was full of sun, only the stair-well door was in shadow" (327). He can choose lightness or darkness, passion and human tenderness or the stony coldness of solitude. But the question is the choice remains.

Although pastoral space provides sufficient isolation in which to arrive at self-understanding, it also provides the backdrop for choice. He can choose to remain in a state of self-indulgence, or commit to a self-directed future in conjunction with Others. We shall see in the following sections on *TWH*, how this is enacted once more through Stevie's retreat, not into the pastoral, but the urban environment of derelict tenement buildings. Thus, Seiffert offers us individuals who can become more authentic, in Heideggerian terms, in that they can "choose to choose" (Heidegger qtd. in Guignon 233)[87] and build their own lives. Paralleling the veteran plot,

[87] Guignon does not cite the page references, but see Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*. Translated. New York: N.p., 1962. Print.

pastoral places, such as the simple farmhouse in Yorkshire, and the hikes on the moors, similarly provide Alice with a space for reflection: first, in the sense of her grandfather's historical embeddedness and moral choice over his participation in the Kenyan crisis, and second, on her fatherless childhood as part of her own life narrative. Yet, these are places of poetic dwelling; places that incite imaginative recreation and existentialist deliberation and that, furthermore, cultivate a deep sense of connection to place. But most importantly, this perception works not only on the level of plot, but within the text, as Seiffert's art "brings about a veritable awakening of poetic creation" (Bachelard 7), inciting the reader to "greater depth of [their] own existence" (ibid), to use Bachelard's words, and thus, back to a poetic dwelling.

Characteristically, one of the ways Seiffert's discourse strengthens the sense of connectedness to place, as we have seen in *ABIW* for example, is through the image of natural building materials. Here, this is exemplified in the stone bridge and granite school building (157); the former resonant of Heidegger's bridge in Heidelberg, typifying a building congruent with the gathering of the fourfold. We may recall that for Heidegger, as for Mumford, a building was raised according to the necessities of human presence, of place and inhabitants as well as arranging and forming that presence over time (Sharr 9). Building materials were a natural part of the fourfold, as Sharr writes, "[i]t was also built from fruits of the earth: stone, timber and metals" (ibid 10). These are, moreover, enduring materials that denote the "presence of an inhabitant [but also] shows their absence" (ibid). In poetic terms, the simplicity of this textual imagery evokes an existentialist contemplation of

the passing of time, mortality and finitude, as do the beach pepples that Alice collected in her childhood (46).

Furthermore, a sense of deep connection to place is implied through the homeliness felt by Seiffert's characters when in a natural and modest milieu. Nevertheless, the sense of permanency and connectedness of these natural materials with the fourfold is set against the impermanency of other abodes, such as Joseph's flat, which to Alice "all seem[ed] very temporary" (197). We may view the flat as a mirror of Joseph's unstable mind, at the same time as paralleling the volatility and uncertainty of human dwelling. Certainly, Joseph's guilty conscience, traumatic memory, or more broadly, the reverberations of historicity pose a challenge to dwelling-well. On the other hand, however, I suggest Joseph's abode in its austerity, unpretensiousness and modesty ressembles the stress and technology-free simplicity of other impermanent spaces devoid of modern conveniences, such as the caravan, tent, beach hut and farmhouse (in its use as a temporary holiday home), and implies an approximation to the idyl of poetic dwelling, and a possibility for personal healing.

Despite its sense of temporariness, and the aura of simplicity, like the caravan, Joseph's flat is anything but unhomely. The new floorboards and plaster boards denote a process of building, and the window boxes, net curtains, carpets rescued from skips, and perhaps above all, the handmade kitchen table, suggest a simple, but cosy abode (72-73). Alice's pragmatism leads her to mistakenly think that "this was his flat, not Joseph" (73). But according to Frank's Literary Architecture modal, which argues for the association between architecture and consciousness, Alice's hypothesis, that

a man's abode does not tell us anything about the person who inhabits it, would be erroneous. Alice must look below the simplicity of its surface to see, furthermore, that this is a shelter for dwelling, in its modest habitation, and a "house of hope" (Lupton), a spiritual sanctuary, for it stands for an attempt at personal healing, a home-coming and a return to place (Casey). The handmade table exemplifies the meaningful decor that shapes the Heideggerian being-with-things and gestures towards dwelling within the fourfold. Echoing David's 'redecoration' after his wife's death, Joseph's flat represents building (as verb: *bauen*) analogous with dwelling. And for the reader, the images of simplicity resound with security,[88] and of homeliness. But, just as simplicity awakened in Bachelard "a feeling for the hut" (Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space* 71), so too, we are reminded of the architect's allotment construction in 'Architect' or Ewe's simple kitchen in 'Field Study'. Indeed, as we have seen, thus far, the sheer abundance of such imagery in the texts explored here suggest a recurrent theme; a poetic return to place.

When Seiffert's protagonists are surrounded by nature, moreover, they experience freedom from all the challenges to dwelling-well. It is no coincidence that it is in nature that Joseph finds himself most able to free his thoughts, not only from his relationship to David, who serves as a counterforce to his quest for psychological peace, but also from

> crowds and queues of people, confrontation. […] away from raised voices, even if they had nothing to do with him. Two women standing

[88] This was Bachelard's observation on a poem by André Lafon. He noted how the simplicity of the images of the house "asks to be lived in with all the security that simplicity gives" (Bachelard 71).

> at a bus stop […]; Eve and Arthur working out how to cover their loan repayments. (228)

By being immersed in nature, then, Joseph finds himself "attuned to place" (Casey 39), and so more engaged with dwelling. This is a "homecoming that cannot be captured by cartographic borderlines" (Casey 298), but is to "go into a place on earth" (ibid); from a status of displacement in an urban, non-place environment, where people worry about their "loan repayments" (228) and are beleaguered by the onslaught of contemporary life, to "a reconnection to a genuinely premodern sense of place" (Casey 39).

Seiffert's textuality heightens this sense of eternity, of the 'pre-modern' and of the intimacy associated with home through the emphasis on natural, cosmic elements. This is exemplified by Joseph's stay in an off-season caravan site where the wind and the "solid mound of sand skimmed smooth and perfect" (228) resounds the granite and stone of the buildings in its evocation of time. Joseph observes the ebb and flow of the tides, "standing and watching as the sea came in" (ibid), and the recycling of life embodied in light filtering through the bare trees devoid of their summer leaves (229). The way the sun "got in everywhere when it came out of the clouds, lit up the trunks, moss on the stones, and the thick, damp mat of leaves on the ground" (ibid) furthers the poetic sense of life-giving. These images are set against sexuality and love as quintessential generative force, reminiscent of D.H. Lawrence's Lady Chatterley and her veteran lover, Mellors. Nevertheless, Joseph's thoughts turn to Alice, in his desire to share the sense of spirituality that nature instils in him. In other words, Joseph senses that he

must relinquish his reclusion to return to a world shared with Others; one that embraces a return to intimacy and proximity as a way forward.

Furthermore, on a narrative level, as Bachelard points out, the poetic imagination lets us create a sense of homeliness through the opposition created through the elements, such as wind, rain or snow, and the cosy warmth of an abode. This is effectively evoked in this text through the oppositions between pastoral elements and simple abodes. But images, such as the salty winds of the British coast, and the dampness of its climate implied in the moss and leaves, contribute to a "daydream of repose" (Bachelard 60) in which the dreaming reader "experiences all the qualities of intimacy with increased intensity" (ibid 62). This technique reinforces the sense of the protective, sheltering function of inhabiting and dwelling and supports the appreciation of the text as a site of poetic dwelling. In short, the return to dwelling-well is not only implied on a narrative, but also on a textual plane, which incites the reader to consider the need for a return to dwelling within intimacy and proximity to place, things and to others.

In addition, the sense of ease felt by Joseph, Alice, or her mother, in these places is set against the unease experienced by Keith or Alice's former boyfriend. The latters' discomfort, disregard and disrespect for natural surroundings suggests their inability to appreciate anything other than modern technological conveniences and to think beyond distracting, (in the sense of existential inauthenticity), tangibilities and mundaneness. This is illustrated by the scene in which Alice's former boyfriend spent the night "battering [daddy-long-legs] with newspapers" (45), and the friends "ignored the sky and heather and complained about the draughts instead, the lack of

mobile reception" (44). Clearly these characters personify the counterpart of Heideggerian dwelling within the relatedness of the fourfold.

Alice, on the other hand, respects all life. For instance, rather than an irksome disturbance, she sees insects as part of the vital matrix that make up the whole of life on earth; that is, part of the natural order of the fourfold. Although Heidegger did not appear to give thought to non-human life forms, dwelling implies a cohabitation and co-existence with other beings as a natural part of the fourfold. The interaction and interdependence between these beings and the natural world relate Mankind to the divinities in Heideggerian thought. Interestingly, by viewing Alice from an eco-feminist perspective centred on anti-athropocentrist environmentalism, such as that proposed by Spretnak, the text falls into alignment with re-constructivist postmodernism. Rather than a more dualistic idea of woman as homogeneous with nature, thus associating woman and nature in opposition to the domination of masculine power, Alice may be located as a being that acts upon "the basis of conscious coalition, of affinity, of political kinship" (Haraway 157 qtd. in Armbruster 202). In this way, to use Karla Armbruster's words,

> differences between humans and the rest of nature, as well as the differences among humans, including gender, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, need not be the roots of conflict; instead, they can be the potential source of new and more sustainable relationships within human culture and between culture and nonhuman nature. (Armbruster 202)

This critical viewpoint of Alice, then, strengthens my interpretation of *Afterwards* as a re-constructivist representation, because it engages with the poetic creation of the possibility of vital connectedness between humanity and a deep sense of place which includes all life, human and non-human. Although Alice's unyielding denial of atonement and redemption for the past, and her persistent enquiries and analysis into the two veterans' experiences ultimately inhibits her return-home on plot level, on the poetic, it obliges the reader to confront the necessity of such rationalization. It forces the reader to lament at her incapacity to let go of what might be perceived as inauthentic distractions and heed the natural, independent rhythms of life that allowed them brief moments of happiness.

Hence, human relationships appear at their most favorable and least conflicted in natural spaces and simple, rudimentary architectural abodes. They are sites for contemplation, poetic creation and for dwelling-well. The beach hut, for example, where Joseph had retreated into isolation after his time in the army arouses, in the reader, a Bacherlardian sense of the rudimentary with its "[w]ooden walls and shingle, the paraffin smell of the stove […]" (92). Similarly, the tent that was "not exactly the hut, but near enough" (93) that Joseph and Alice spent "[s]ome of the best days they'd had together" (93), embodies, through poetic imagery, a primordial sense of dwelling and being within the fourfold. Joseph and Alice seem to bodily entwine, not only with each other, but also with nature itself:

> She was lying on her belly next to him, covers pulled high, the tangle of hair the only thing showing, and the tops of three fingers, still black under the nails from last night's fire. He rolled gently onto his side,

> curled himself around her sleeping form, its smell of woodsmoke and skin. (93-4)

Joseph and Alice, thus surrounded by elements of nature and free from the preoccupations of urban life, appear to maintain a more harmonious co-habitation and an equilibrium between the sexes that verges on a romantic idyl. And thus, the simple tent, like the beach hut, or Mellor's cottage, becomes more than a "mere container, apartment or house" (Bernstein 129), it assumes a shelter for "the truth of Being" (Heidegger, *Basic Writings* 242). We may remember that for Bachelard, the house is an "instrument of topoanalysis" (Bachelard 68), defined as "the systematic psychological study of the sites of our intimate lives" (ibid 8) through which we can discover the experience and essence of Being. Alice and Joseph, then, by feeling at ease in these spaces encounter a blissful sense of home. But Seiffert's poetics has evoked in the reader an imaginative daydream in which they too set forth into a poetic implacement and a return-home.

In conclusion, as we have already seen in 'Field Study', the reader seems to be ultimately denied what might be considered a classically satisfying narrative closure in the form of a romantic relationship between Joseph and Alice. But, as I have mentioned, this closure draws our attention to the gap between what is and what should be. The ending, and indeed the message of the story, may be summed up through the words of John Ruskin, which are indeed reminiscent of Esquirol's philosophy of Proximity:

> […] all true happiness and nobleness are near us, and yet neglected by us; and that till we have learned how to be happy and noble we have not much to tell, even to Red Indians. (Ruskin 31).

To conclude then, I have attempted to demonstrate in these pages that Seiffert's discourse has permitted us to enter a poetic imagination in which the world that 'should be' might be recreated, and in this way, the reader might intuit a return-home. To do so, we must first give thought to the placelessness experienced by Mankind, and what is required to accomplish this journey. Joseph and David's wars have their origins in religious dogma and imperialist power structures. The unnatural political border between Northern Ireland and the Republic, the defense of which is the root of Joseph's traumatic memory, symbolises Mankind's drifting from and disregard for the universal whole, or a Noble Truth in Spretnak's terms. I have suggested that, in this novel, trauma remains a consequence of Mankind's inauthenticity and failure to heed what essentially matters in human existence. So, for Ruskin, as for Heidegger, only when Mankind has learned to appreciate and live within the unity of the cosmos, nature and with the Other, and "to read, to think, to love, to hope, to pray" (ibid), can he dwell.

Finally, in the fall from place, there are biblical resonances that I will now discuss in more detail in the following section. Nevertheless, for the moment, perhaps Malachi, who I have cited at the beginning of this chapter, may have the final word here: God said, "[t]hey may build, but I will demolish" (Malachi 1:4). In a nutshell, 'we may redecorate' but, until we can

appreciate the 'near at hand', the quotidian and the proximate, we cannot return to dwelling-well.

3.3. Diaspora, Displacement and the Counterforces of Memory in *The Walk Home*

> "You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these." (*King James Bible* 2000, Mark 12.31)

In the previous section on *Afterwards*, the 'homelessness' experienced by the two veterans lies in the failure to find resolution for persistent traumatic memory, contributing to what Vidler terms "the unliveable modern condition" (Vidler x). Furthermore, like 'Micha', Seiffert lays bare the dilemmas and perils of dredging up the past as a challenge to dwelling. In this section, we will see how *TWH* extends these themes through a discourse that blends autobiographical and communicative memory with the collective; thus, portraying the wider socio-political condition of contemporary Glasgow through the micro-history of a divided and conflicted family struggling to let go of deeply rooted memory and ethnic patriotism. As Cynthia Wong puts it in her assessment of Kazuo Ishiguro's writing: "Kinship relations frequently mirror societal ones; what individual families struggle against may be discovered in the kinds of forces found in their particular cultural contexts" (Wong 22).[89] *TWH* portrays the way these

[89] These conflicts, originating from wider historical forces, can be discerned throughout Seiffert's works. The family arguments that take place in *Afterwards* show the younger members' failure to understand the circumstances that lead someone to violence as a member of the armed services. In

forces, manifested in religious and ethnic conflicts deriving from Irish diaspora, play out through individual and familial memory, and the personal conflicts which separate their members. These conflicts convert the domestic scene into a "tyrannous" site (Casey 303), but ironically, "the place of most effective and lasting resistance to the tyranny of sites" (ibid), and we shall see how I suggest the novel conveys this paradox also outlined in the introduction to this chapter.

I propose that the hopelessness of flushing out such deep-seated memory, transmitted through generations, finds its poetic expression in urban architectural images, building and construction and, above all, the notion of home. In addition, issues of gender, class, migration, immigration and globalization co-exist alongside local ethnic conflicts, embedded in patriotic power structures. These intertwine to portray a broader sense of the modern condition and influence the Glaswegian cultural landscape.[90]

Furthermore, this multi-layered critique, (globalization, collective and communicative memory, migration and contemporary nomadism), all combine to convey a sense of 'not-at-homeness' (Unheimlichkeit), of physical and psychological displacement. Although there are certainly site specific issues, such as ethnic and religious bigotry, others may be common to urban environments in which voluntary segregation and exclusion leads to what Bauman termed "urban space war" (Bauman, *Liquid Times* 77).

'Micha' and 'Lore', again the second and third generations cannot equate perpetrator violence with their loving family members; and in *TWH,* dysfunctional family relationships mirror the divided community that surrounds them.

[90] See D Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*. Croom Helm, 1984.

The principal thesis of this section is that Seiffert's narrative exposes the way these aforementioned elements, rooted in socio-historical and political forces, ultimately jeopardise a 'return-home', or in Casey's terms, an implacement; the attainment of peaceful dwelling (Heimlichkeit). In what follows, I attempt to demonstrate how building and architectural images serve as unifying metaphor embracing all these elements simultaneously, enabling Seiffert to cast a critical eye on the nuanced culture of modern-day Glasgow. Furthermore, I conclude, in accordance with my overriding thesis, that Seiffert tentatively proffers an organicist philosophy, also forwarded by Bauman in his discussion of community, whereby homecoming signifies relinquishing the constraints of ethnic or religious conflict, coming to terms with difference and embracing multi-cultural understanding.[91]

As I mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, a house is both an external structure, containing and triggering memory embedded in consciousness, "most especially the structures of our felt and remembered experiences of life" (Frank 9), as well as a poetic device in artist representation, employed to convey a sense of the inexpressible; "something that does not occupy what we call substantial space" (ibid 12). However, these "deeper perceptions of consciousness", to use Halbwach's words, also

[91] The possibility of remaining within a localized patriotism on the one hand, but remaining open to and uncritical of migrant populations and other ethnic communities on the other, resonates the post-colonial perspective proposed by Homi Bhabha which he termed 'vernacular cosmopolitanism' (Bhabha, "The World and the Home"). Pnina Werbner observes that Kwame Anthony Appiah similarly argues for a rooted cosmopolitanism and, in Werber's words, proposes that "cosmopolitans begin from membership in morally and emotionally significant communities (families, ethnic groups) while espousing notions of toleration and openness to the world, the transcendence of ethnic difference and the moral responsibility for and incorporation of the other" (Werbner 497). See also Anthony Kwame Appiah, "Cosmopolitan Patriots." *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation*, University of Minnesota Press, 1998, pp. 91–116.

reside in the “institutions of social or psychic life, which function within us, but strangely do not seem to require either our participation or our explicit allegiance” (Terdiman 34 qtd in Kansteiner 188).[92] In *TWH*, these ‘institutions’ constitute familial, communal, sportive (football clubs), but above all, religious and historically rooted ethnic loyalties, as Brenda realises; “*aw the faimly woes, they all lead back to Ireland” (TWH 16).* Thus, we may discern how houses, dwellings and the deeper cultural institutions, that is the Orangeman’s Walk and ethnic loyalties, begin to merge in *TWH*. Cultural institutions and architectural structure and communities, such as the Drumchapel scheme depicted in this novel, retain the deep power structures, in the Foucauldian sense, implicated in a politics of vigilance and of "suspicion [and] tyranny” (Vidler 168).

A postmemorial aesthetics re-surfaces in this novel by way of transference to powerful religious allegiances seeping through communities and generations. Malky, for example, recognizes that the sense of belonging and loyalty to the Orange Order was just a “scheme hazard, part of life if your life was lived in Drumchapel” (16), and that it was “[Brenda’s] blood coming through” (16). Although postmemorial aesthetics is not my principal focus here, I should point out that Seiffert clearly employs her awareness of the workings of such fiction, and of generational transmittance in this novel through its transposition to the Irish diaspora in Glasgow. Certainly, her post-generational position allows her artistic sensitivity to re-imagine its workings in fresh circumstances. However, as Terdiman has observed, these

[92] See Wolf Kansteiner, “Finding Meaning in Memory: A Methodological Critique of Collective Memory Studies.” *History and Theory* 41.2 (2002): 179–197.

institutions, or power structures, in Foucauldian terms, manifested here in religious allegiances, function and are transmitted predominantly within the male members of a family. *TWH* reveals this transference through Brenda's father who "had been an Orangeman, true blue, forever nursing the wounds of his Free State Youth" (16). Although Brenda may have been influenced by generational allegiances, as a woman she "hadn't even caught the worst of it, that fell to her brother: Eric had spent years on the receiving end. It drove the family apart." (22). Moreover, in Glasgow, these male transmitted loyalties manifest themselves through the attachment to violent urban gangs, which are perpetuated by the need for young men to construct a male identity and achieve manhood (Baird 180).[93] The urban gangs will form part of the nuanced power structures, a metaphorical 'counterforce of the site' ultimately preventing Stevie's return-home. Furthermore, as I have mentioned, the Protestant Orangeman's Walk, with their marching bands, football club allegiances and close-knit family and community also embody these loyalties. We shall now see how Seiffert evokes the difficulty of

[93] T Coles, (2009) writing within the field of masculinity studies noted the intergenerational transmission between male family members of urban gang violence; see ''Negotiating the field of masculinity: the production and reproduction of multiple dominant masculinities'', Men and Masculinities, Vol. 12 No. 1, pp. 30-44. He refers to the transmission of male *habitus*, (a term coined by Pierre Bourdieu 2005); the reproduction of male social behaviour within male family members. In the case of the *TWH*, this is clearly transmitted as transgenerational *habitus* through Papa Robert to his son Graham, and then to Graham's son Stevie. Papa Robert's other son, Eric, also attempts to elude his family's male allegiances. Adam Baird, however, in a sociological study of gang violence concluded that "[m]asculinities alone do not account for urban violence, but they play an integral role why violence is reproduced. In socio-economically excluded contexts the gang becomes an attractive vehicle for ''doing masculinity'' for boys and young men. Youths who did not join gangs tended to have family support to develop a ''moral rejection'' of gangs, crime and violence during childhood, which contributed to them finding non-gang pathways to manhood"(Baird 179). This is particularly pertinent to *TWH*, since it is Stevie's grandmother who ultimately sustains peaceful familial relationships and encourages Stevie to find alternative paths.

breaking away from these ingrained institutions and power structures through a poetics of Literary Architecture.

At this point, I return to Vidler's 'counterforces of the site', mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. As we have seen, we may discern how these religious and ethnic cultural forces are channelled through communicative and collective memory and generational transmittance; the latter transpiring specifically through male genealogies. The juxtaposition of the autobiographical with collective memory, the personal with the public, manifests itself on a narrative level principally in her protagonist Stevie's recollections of the Orangeman's Walk and his uncle Eric's attempt to reconcile familial conflict through religious art. Religious and ethnic rituals, such as The Walk or the distinct football clubs with their shirts denoting the wearers' spiritual, ethnic, national and tribal allegiances, (or, we may remember, the priest's blessing of a building in the story 'Field Study'), create "powerful impersonal factors [that] shape people's worldviews (Kansteiner 196), and form what Halbwachs described as *Lieux de Memoire*, since they form cultural 'object rituals'. These may be passed down to reverberate through generations and communities, as Seiffert portrays through temporal and spatial elements of narrative, the technique of backward chronology, of a textual intermingling of temporality and subjectivities. Nevertheless, on the level of plot, Stevie, his mother Lindsey and uncle Eric strive to test the limits of these cultural forces and attempt to escape their influence.

These forces, embodied within the family and community form the 'tyrannous' domestic site of the novel, but are, nevertheless, subject to

'counterforces' (Vidler), exemplified by Lindsey's flight from family and community in Northern Ireland only for religious conflict to shadow her to Glasgow and, perhaps most poignantly, Stevie's attempt to return to the bosom of his family at the end of the novel. Furthermore, these cultural forces emerge within a subplot in which Stevie's uncle Eric finds himself subject to their oppressive psychic presence.

The Eric subplot forms a significant part of the cultural and historical undercurrent, because despite moving to another part of the city, he continued to struggle psychologically and was outcast by his own family for marrying a Catholic and moving away from the community. These counterforces are most strongly evoked, however, within Eric's artistic representation of urban Glasgow architecture, illustrated in the following passage in which Stevie examines the drawings:

> The city had all the same tenements and schemes and Victorian splendour, and pedestrianised shopping streets in the centre, except the place was full of clues that Stevie knew now from the bible. So when he really looked, he could see beyond the concrete and sandstone, to the timbered high-rises where his cousins lived, except these were built from hand-hewn blocks and cedars of Lebanon. (119)

Eric's blend of Lebanese and Glaswegian architecture, in which Nebuchadnezzer was "dressed up like an Orangeman for the Walk: […] hardened in pride" (ibid), further emphasizes a deeply ingrained cultural reality that lies behind architectural structure and "tenement windows" (ibid). Furthermore, through Eric's obsession with the story of Abraham, Seiffert

conveys how questions of religious pride take precedence above all else, including family: “Stevie knew there were fathers who loved God and would sacrifice their children” (ibid). But through Eric’s urban scenes, and his representation of the story of Abraham, Seiffert manages to portray, not only the degeneration of Papa Robert’s family on a micro level, but also the traces of persistent collective memory in the sense of place, and its influence on cultural landscape. Eric struggles, furthermore, to find a sense of identity and historical connection, in a similar way to Micha, by delving into the past. His biblical drawings express a universal search for belonging as well as enduring human failure: “Nothing new under the sky, same auld failins and frailties, goin back through the ages” (75), the forces of modernization and globalization notwithstanding.[94] Thus, a memory discourse, exemplified through Eric’s art, reveals how religious fervour has served as a distraction, in the Heideggerian sense, strengthening humanity’s inability to dwell, both on the physical and metaphysical planes.

In addition, the memory of enforced displacement illustrates how the after-effects of physical placelessness impinges on family over time, reverberating through generations. This is overtly portrayed through Brenda’s memory of the early days of the Drumchapel schemes. Her father, Papa Robert, had “blown over fae Ireland. By storms that werenae [their] own makin” (41), but nevertheless, he felt proud when they moved from Drumchapel to the slums of Glasgow, where they first settled on arriving

[94] Eric’s thoughts seem to refer to Ecclesiastes 1:9: “The thing that has been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun (“Ecclesiastes.” *King James Bible 2000*).

from Ireland. Indeed, he felt he had been "returned to a standing they'd been robbed of" (38). Nevertheless, neither the totalizing forces of globalization, nor local governments' efforts to mix Catholic and Protestant communities, nor standardized developer-led building projects could erase ingrained cultural memory.

The use of architectural features to represent the difficulty of erasing collective memory abound throughout the novel. The scene in the unfinished executive houses where Kevin and Stevie "took one tap from each house into the next, pairing cold with cold, and hot with hot, all around the cul-de-sac" (234) might well appear to be a childish prank, but I suggest the pairing of like with like remains laden with meaning. Interestingly, at first, despite the two boys' differing religious roots, they nevertheless appear to have a relatively peaceful friendship, suggesting hope of appeasement at least within the younger generations. A sense of domesticity briefly prevails between the boys as both sit by adjacent chimneys, rather like two neighbours living in close proximity, each by their own fireside; Stevie felt "it was all right, good and quiet" (232). But it was not to endure, because when the "marching season" (237) arrived the boys had drifted apart, with finally Stevie giving "Kevin the finger" (ibid). The prejudice maintained by the young Protestant boy, Cammy, against Stevie's family, for either being too radical or for his uncle's marriage to a Catholic, further reinforces a sense of perpetuate intolerance of the Other. But, above all, it also insinuates perpetuation from within the community as well as from without.

The cruel destruction of papa Robert's roses, loved by "both denominations and none" (98) by a Catholic youth gang, suggests the

ultimate shattering of hope in the creation of what Bhabha termed a 'vernacular cosmopolitanism' in which both Protestants and Catholics could live in acceptance of difference (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*). But Seiffert also seems to imply a fissure and intolerance from within the same community as well.

Lindsey, Eric and Stevie's isolation and estrangement from the suffocating confines of family and community echoes Bauman's observations on the communities formed by ethnic minorities, which "are the product of enforcement rather than of freedom to choose and bear little resemblance to the kind of free decision-making imputed to the liberated consumer in liberal society" (Bauman, *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World* 89). Geoff Dench fittingly notes that the perpetuation of such communities "revolve[s] around group membership from which there is in principle no escape" (Dench qtd. in Bauman, *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World* 89). The community depicted in Seiffert's novel is one of enclosure maintained by the "powerful collectivities in charge" (Bauman, *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World* 90). As I discuss below, the symbol of the drum, Stevie's red hand of Ulster patch and the marching band form the 'object rituals' that on a narrative level serve as strong 'counterforces' percolating through the consciousness of the younger generation of Papa Robert's family.

Significantly, the struggle for regeneration and a new life primarily emerges from the female consciousness, with Graham's wife Lindsey and, his mother, Brenda, striving to find a new home, and consequently a fresh start, for the young couple and their son, Stevie, outside the stifling

constraints of the Protestant Drumchapel housing scheme, “where you landed when you fell off the edge of Glasgow” (42). The Drumchapel scheme represents the centre of zealous patriotism, where the “main battles are fought on the domestic front rather than on the ramparts of the fortress” (Bauman, *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World* 97). Interestingly, this interior, domestic conflict parallels the wider one manifested by the discord between Cammy and Stevie. This domestic battle is made visible in Lindsey’s frustration with Graham’s reluctance to leave the familiarity of Drumchapel scheme life and his continuing participation in The Walk, symbol of Protestant values in “Chapter and verse” (8). Her aspirations to escape the unyielding bonds of her “Ulsterman” (22) father and the religious conflicts of her own Northern Irish childhood remains ironically frustrated, as she finds herself once again within the walls of another fortress. Thus, her attempt to opt out of the ‘communal enclosure’ as Bauman puts it, has been thwarted. For Graham as the ‘everyman’ of the Orange institution, collective memory embedded in tribal allegiances and religious brotherhood remains embodied in a strong sense of place. But, as I have mentioned, for the younger members of the family and for Eric, who was ostracised for his marriage to a Catholic, this place beholds a tyranny that belies any sense of homeliness.

Indeed, Bauman observed the paradox of the safety and familiarity afforded by a close-knit ethnic community, but in which dwelling remains hindered by fanatical prejudice, in the form of coercion and intolerance against those who do not belong to that community. Echoing Foucauldian power and self-disciplinary regulated space (Foucault), Bauman likens such

a community to that of a "besieged fortress" (Bauman 96), since it "denies to those inside all options except unconditional loyalty to the common cause" (ibid). Those who desire emancipation risk "cut[ing] [themselves] adrift" (191) like Eric had done, and he feared Lindsey would do. Papa Robert's family thus represents the microcosmic world of this "power-assisted" (Bauman 96) community. Eric's estrangement from family, his relocation to another part of town, and his marriage to a Catholic, in Papa Robert's eyes, was tantamount to treason: "The way Papa Robert saw it, his son had turned his back on [his family]" (41). Graham, however, remains staunchly faithful to both the scheme community and the Protestant lodge, much to the detriment of his marriage. In perhaps the most poignant scene of the novel, when he refuses to move to a housing association flat in the neighbourhood of Whiteinch, Lindsey realises that her only escape is to take flight, leaving Stevie in the arms of his father; a scene replete with symbolic resonances to which I return below.

Nevertheless, Lindsey's hope of eluding religious bigotry and attempting to better their lives sees, at first, a faint hint of optimism in the new flat, despite, much to her disappointment, its position "at the bottom of the scheme" (34), rather than outside it. Yet, Brenda remains encouraging: "saying things like *they're tearing down the auld tae make way for the new. No reason yous cannae have part as that too*" (34). Her words echo the Corbusierian "hygienic space" (Vidler 168) that based its modernist architectural philosophy on a clearing away of the shackles the old world represented. However, Seiffert's characteristic italics here are loaded with significance. Her habitual use of this technique, as Pividori notes "allow[s]

for the fusion of first and third person perspectives in a single style and […] for the intimacy and immediacy of the first person phenomenon of consciousness" (Pividori 82). I would side with this viewpoint, but here furthermore, it allows the writer to portray the wider social issue of housing in Drumchapel by infusing it with the reverberations of subjective experience. In this way, the novel lends us important insights into housing policies, as Tony Manzi observes, through fiction's ability to focus on the microcosmic experience (Manzi). The "*auld*" displacing the "*new*" certainly implies an underlying social reality; the desire to improve living conditions. But symbolically, Brenda's thoughts may be read as her own yearning to be free of a rarely publicly articulated sectarianism. In this way, Seiffert evokes two levels of reality: the material need for new housing to replace the impoverished tenements, but also a Corbusieran clearing away of the nuances of collective memory and community loyalty. Intriguingly, we have already seen, in chapter two of this thesis, in my discussion of 'Micha', the expression of architectural renewal as a physical, but also psychological necessity to eliminate undesirable memory. Nevertheless, the renovation and home-making involved in decorating the new flat, as we have already seen in *Afterwards*, further strengthens the sense of forming and generating a peaceful home life and attempting to erase the past: "work[ing] and work[ing] at the same part until it stayed smooth" (47), the new paint 'smoothing' over the old. There are signs of hopeful homeliness in their common project of home-making, but, with echoes of 'Helmut ' discussed in chapter two, Seiffert incites the reader's suspicion as to the possibility of

peaceful family life through scenes of cosy domesticity that verge on the uncanny.

Yet, how far can they 'smooth' over culture and identity inherent in a sense of place, as their painting and decorating implies? Can the 'true memory', in Pierre Nora's terms, be erased? Mumford's lamentation of the loss of community in the early part of the twentieth century, refers more to a romantic rural ideal than the ethnic community, described by Bauman as a product of "enforced ascription" (Bauman, *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World* 90) in a community "eager to stick to its own ways" (ibid). His observations on the restrictiveness of ethnic communities, mentioned above, whose members have not "been asked for their consent (ibid, 89), mirrors Casey's "tyranny of the home-place" (Casey 303), "which is true of all comparatively closed-in social or political units, including neighbourhoods, towns, cities, and the modern state itself" (ibid). In her depiction of the younger generation's attempt at freedom, Seiffert raises the question of philosophical determinism; after all, despite their flight, they find that they ultimately have nowhere to go, as Bauman suggests of ethnic community members. This determinism reveals itself, not only on the plot level, but also in Seiffert's shrewd symbolism, portraying the hint of underlying counterforces, enticing them back into the enclosure. For instance, as Graham and his family ascend the endless stairs of the apartment block, which are "still wet from being mopped" (31) infusing a sense of 'cleanliness', the cream paint shows "blue below" (ibid); 'cream' implies a neutral state, a 'tabla rasa', but 'blue' is the colour associated with Protestantism in Glasgow. As Glaswegian publican landlord Thomas

Carberry noted after a particularly violent Rangers versus Celtic football match as recently as 2011, “[t]his city is divided and you're not going to change that. It's deep; it's even in the clothes. You can't wear a *blue* top and get away with it in some places” (qtd. in McVeigh).[95] Echoing Eric’s reference to enduring human failures, mentioned earlier, Carberry also appears to accept the deterministic fate of Glaswegian ethnic division.

From a Heideggerian perspective, such determinism seemingly inherent in the generational transmittance of sectarianism can be viewed as inauthentic and unhomely in the sense that it distracts from and conceals ontological being-in-the-world. In a similar way to the architect’s distracted chatter and consumer valued society, (discussed in chapter one of this thesis), community bigotry and sectarianism form a distraction to dwelling-well; being-in-the-world with others. In the next few lines, I argue that Seiffert represents this dilemma through Graham and Lindsey in one key passage: Graham’s geographical disorientation on the way to Whiteinch, where Lindsey has seen some new homes in which she hopes to interest her reticent husband. This passage stands for the homeliness, or Heimlichkeit, inherent in a strong sense of connection to place. We have already seen in Helmut, the importance of orientation in a sense of place. Casey notes the existence of places, such as Seiffert’s portrayal of Whiteinch, that we are neither “strictly in nor outside” (Casey 121), but are transitional spaces that, seen in a positive light, “provid[e] enough protection to encourage experimentation […] without being overly confining” (Casey 122). We could say that such places forego the constraints of tyrannical communitarian power structures and at

[95] My italics

least allow a certain liberty to throw off identity structures. For Lindsey, at least, Casey's optimistic observation would indeed appear valid, since Whiteinch would afford her the freedom from Drumchapel to start anew, and we shall see how, seen from a deeper philosophical viewpoint this becomes even more nuanced. On the other hand, the essential relationship between orientation and identification of place, however, evokes "a sense of balance and well-being" (Lynch 4), evoking a sensation of Heimlichkeit. In contrast to Lindsey's sense of freedom, Graham's disorientation speaks to what home and dwelling means for him; that is, an essential bonding to place. On the way to Whiteinch, he feels out of tune with place; not-at-home. Furthermore, if we take this a step deeper, then, Graham's moment of Unheimlichkeit, or *angst*, belongs to the uncanny, as Heidegger would have it, by awakening the Dasein out of its distractedness of insular sectarianism, familiarity and the Orangeman's club and into its interconnectedness with the exterior world "thus revealing its home to be unhomeliness" (Bernstein 125). To put it in a nutshell, once outside the safety provided by the 'walls' of the Drumchapel fortress, Graham's uncanny disorientation expresses his isolation as a being in space, a momentary revelation of the unhomeliness of the real. On the other hand, and analysed from the same philosophical viewpoint, Lindsey already seems to 'be-in-the-world', the new flat represented something other than "a scheme, it was proper streets, a proper place […]" (137). She too pursues the ideal of the Heimlich, of implacement, but seems to have perceived the unhomeliness of being in the world because, despite her self-assuring words that the flat "was proper streets, a proper place […]" (137), she knows that they are "on the way to somewhere from somewhere else"

(ibid); a transitional abode that would be abandoned for something else “a year or two down the line” (137). Unlike Graham, Drumchapel does not constitute what she perceives as home, but ultimately neither does the flat in Whiteinch. Arguably, she is at home in her unhomeliness, or at least she has arrived at the point of its perception; even if she does not quite know what she seeks, she realises that homeliness cannot be truly encountered by staying within the confines of Drumchapel; a site of inauthenticity, as essential human dwelling, in its sectarianism and ensuing humanitarian conflict.

Viewed, not from Casey’s hopeful viewpoint, but from the counter-modernist perspective of anything but ‘proper place’, maintained by those adherent to a form of architectural nostalgia such as Mumford or Heidegger, the Whiteinch houses embody no real meaning or ‘genius loci’ inherent in ‘proper’ dwelling; the housing estate remains a ‘non-place’ (Augé). Here lies a paradox: Both Lindsey and Graham seek a ‘home’; for Graham this means a familiar, (and masculine), community in which he can feel safe and secure from intruders, but which comes with the heavy price of obligation, whereas Lindsey’s concept of ‘home’ means freedom from such constraints. In addition, the transient nature of the house, from Lindsey’s perspective is akin to the purposeful instability noted by Bauman, which affords liberty from any historical or familial obligation to others, but which comes with the price of isolation and insecurity (Bauman, *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World*). Thus, intriguingly, Bauman’s thinking appears to concord with Heidegger’s philosophy, if we view the freedom from community as Heimlich in its very liberty from inauthenticity and of its connectedness with the world, but Unheimlich in its placelessness; thus, the inescapable

uncanniness and the anxiety of being. Perhaps, like Eric, what Lindsey unconsciously seeks is a sense of homeliness in a community of common understanding. Perhaps the Whiteinch house, pristine in its newness, "stickers still on the double glazing, and site tape across the street doors" (137), will not afford Lindsey this community, but as a clean slate, the possibility exists.

If the Whiteinch house stands for a new start, an opportunity to flee the stifling panopticism of Drumchapel, on the surface it also presents an architecture of faceless, standardized globalization. The price of escape comes with a "big red-brick box" (137), of a soul-less building, a mere container, a useful thing that occupies space, and as a material entity it negates genuine dwelling (Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking") in which "building and cultivating combine in making inhabitation possible" (Casey 178). As Frank Lloyd Wright remarked, such mass produced housing "does not belong anywhere" (Wright 177). Like the standardized 'executive' houses that Stevie and the Poles build, symbolic of a face-less and inauthentic modernity, they could be "anywhere in space" (Casey 178). Nevertheless, the placelessness of the house reflects Lindsey's soul in its transitory nature to escape historical legacy, and "it was the place [she] wanted out of" (138). Seiffert's Whiteinch thus reveals the paradox of modernity: a fragmented and alienated society devoid of intimacy, but at least one of freedom from historical imposition.

In contrast, Graham's sense of [place] belonging and identity, inherent to dwelling, lies beyond geometric entity. It means community and group membership, and this implies residing within the familiar surroundings

of Drumchapel.[96] For him, there must be connection to others. The fact that "[he] dinnae know emdy that lives round [there]" (138), sums up his aversion to Whiteinch. For Heidegger, buildings were indeed about "located individuals" (Sharr 10) in their environment and place, which implies a contrast to Lindsey's transitory and isolated existence in the box-like flats of Whiteinch. From this viewpoint, Graham is at least, to some extent, 'located' in the Drumchapel scheme. But it is precisely this paradigm of location and interconnectedness that fed Heidegger's critics. It could all too easily slip into the untainted nature of Fascist 'blood and soil' ideology. Lindsey certainly perceives Graham's rootedness within this light. I return to this point in a moment, but by refusing to move, he undeniably assures the perpetuation of ethnic conflict, and ultimately its male transmission through his son.

This transmission is nowhere better expressed than in the scene in which Lindsey, realising that her dreams of self-determination will never be resolved, walks out on Graham, leaving Stevie in the arms of his father. Seiffert pays constant attention to the homeliness implied in the protective environment of the childhood home throughout her fiction, evoking a strong sense of Unheimlichkeit by the removal of children from the comfort and security of home and the safety of bed. We may remember the beds that remained on view after the bombing of the homes in Helmut's Berlin. By leaving Graham in the care of their child, Lindsey seems to appeal for Graham to stay at home, but instead of remaining at home, he takes him, still in pyjamas and "with all the bed-warmth […] out of him" (140) across the

[96] For a discussion of the relationship between place and a sense of belonging, see L Rivlin, "Group Membership and Place Meanings in an Urban Neighbourhood." *Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 38, no. 3, 1982, pp. 75–93.

"waste ground where the flats had been razed last year" (ibid) to the lodge. It is an act of defiance, but underneath infers that nothing would stand in the way of generational transmission. The waste ground, furthermore, mirrors T.S Eliot's post World War One battleground to signify the wasteland of humanity, and the silent battles played out within the confines of Glasgow's housing schemes. Interestingly, Seiffert also re-employs the 'waste ground' image, as we might remember that of Helmut's Berlin; used here to liken this unspoken and often overlooked ethnic conflict to a full-scale war, perpetuated from father to son.

Furthermore, one notes the force of this perpetuity in Seiffert's description of the architectural features of the Orangeman's lodge. Viewed from Stevie's innocence, Graham's entrance to the lodge on the other side of the waste ground, speaks to the child's rite of passage into the intensely ingrained patriarchal fraternity of the Orange Order:

> Stevie gazed about the long, dim room and empty tables; at the pictures on the walls, of red lions and Rangers and the Queen. There were more pictures behind the bar: a long line of photos in frames, all of a flute band in full uniform with *Pride of Drumchapel* painted across the big skin of the bass drum. (141)

Indeed, its interior evokes "an overburdening sense of the past" (Colombino 8) in which, contrary to Vidler's assessment of Le Corbusier's philosophy, memory would not "be released from its unhealthy preoccupations to live in the present" (Vidler 64 qtd. in Colombino 8). Stevie's presence in the lodge hints at a defiant generational continuity in his appropriation from the female

"united front" (143) of Brenda and Lindsey. The women's absence in the club is noteworthy. This is a gendered space, "separat[ing] women from knowledge used by men to produce and reproduce power and privilege" (Spain 30), where allegiances, embodied in Rangers football club and the band, remain strong. But perhaps the most important question for my argument in this thesis, lies in whether Stevie will ever be afforded the individual freedom from this gendered fortress to return home, in the physical and philosophical sense. Stevie's presence, however, transcends the symbolism of continuing nationalist patriarchy, and stands for its unhomely disturbance of dwelling, of the possibility of a return-home; rather ironically, he wondered when his Mum "would come to haul them home" (141).

The unhomely transient nature of Drumchapel dwelling is further highlighted by juxtaposing the scheme with the architecture of older, wealthier neighbourhoods, where Eric, "the one who got away" (186), had attempted, but not fully succeeded, at least psychologically, to start a new life outside "the communal enclosure" (Bauman 97). Unlike scheme architecture, the buildings in Eric's part of town comprise of elements that Mumford and Heidegger would have considered essential for 'proper dwelling'; historical and generational continuity and a topographical integration, implied by the local sandstone building materials. Similarly, Brenda also appreciates the loss of homeliness embedded in durable architecture with its sense of history. She senses the contrast between the impermanency of her own tenement block and those of Eric's neighbourhood, which

> were not flung up or breeze block either, like the ones on the scheme […]. The steps here were worn from years and feet, and the paintwork

> ancient on the sashes, but she didn't mind that, it made the place homely. (64)

Despite Casey's argument that "quantity of duration is no more the critical issue than is quantity of material or volume" (Casey 179), for Brenda, (as for Heidegger), the last few words in this passage appear unequivocal. Furthermore, the sense of ingrained history implied in the older parts of town, has its counterpart in Papa Robert's memorialization of his family Irish home which had been "lived in by three generations" (199).

Indeed, the postmemorial aesthetics of this novel is extended through Eric's artistic representation of his ancestor's farmhouse: "a stone and simple house, a single room dwelling, lived in by three generations" (199). His art, like Micha's investigations in *TDR*, attempts to recover "an irrecoverable past in the absence of precise knowledge about it" (Hirsch 263). Like postmemorial literature, Eric uses art to fill in the gaps of his ancestral identity, relying on imagination and snippets of his father's, perhaps disremembered, stories. As Hirsch points out, in the case of diasporic postmemory, it is a way of compensating a "disconnection and loss that is the condition of exile without the hope of return" (ibid).

Yet, I would like to take Hirsch's notion of diasporic postmemory to a deeper level. We could read this postmemorial aesthetics as not just one man's irretrievable loss, nor the lamentations over the Protestant-Catholic divide, but of humanity itself. This is, undoubtedly, a story of a specific religious conflict, diaspora and its deterministic nature, but it is also an ancient one. Like the bible stories that Eric reads to Lindsey, it tells "the same

auld failins" (75) and human weakness. Eric unsuccessfully tries to pierce through Lindsey's pragmatism and attempts to make her "try to go along with him" (200), forget the troubles, come down from the same "moral high ground" (205) that he too had stood on. By attending to the intimate and the proximate, making peace with her father and caring for her son, she would return-home. Although Lindsey repudiates the inauthentic 'they-world' of sectarianism, unlike Eric, she had not given thought to her own 'moral high ground' as just as inauthentic as her father's. To go home, Lindsey, like Stevie, must deny her alienation, give thought to it, and become implicated in the world, with others. Eric, tries to make her understand that through art, he arrives at "something that matters" (75). We might be reminded here of Helmut, as he too, derives meaning from chaos through artistic representation.

Hence, the farmhouse stands for an implacement, and like the Yorkshire farmhouse in *Afterwards*, a poetic journey home. Seiffert writes: "The farmhouse, such as it was, and those few Louth acres, still whole and wholesome, before the civil war descended" (199). The choice of 'wholesome' to describe the farmhouse is intriguing, since if we consider a dictionary definition of the word, it implies "something that is likely to improve your life, either physically, morally or emotionally" (Cambridge University Press).[97] Similarly, the word 'whole' denotes a breaking up, or a fragmentation of the dwelling. Undoubtedly, Heidegger would have agreed with Seiffert's lexical choice. If the farmhouse stands for the ontological

[97] Definition in Cambridge University Press. "Cambridge Online Dictionary." *Cambridge Dictionaries*, 2017, http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/.

Heimat or Homeland,[98] a poetic vision of a 'nearness to Being', then the 'troubles' are the cause of its break up; the ontological displacement. In simple terms, religious bigotry and war, has diverted attention from Mankind's relationship with the fourfold, intimacy and proximity, thus disabling dwelling and distracting us from Being.

Like Stevie's attempt to return-home at the end of the novel, can we too 'go home'? It would seem Papa Robert's imagined simplicity of life in Louth before the family were forced into exile, points to identification with place inherent in proper dwelling reminiscent of Heidegger's Bavarian farmhouse. Eric's architectural representation and Papa Roberts innocent, "childlike view of things" (200), further resembles Heidegger's romanticism. It also infers a loss of *genius loci* in Man's strive to dwell and a dispossession of humanity; a poetics of "exile without hope of return" (Hirsch 263). This imaginative recreation of the past, resonates with poetic force in which the Louth farmhouse invokes the fusion of the Heideggerian fourfold where the family lived "by the sod and the crop and the change ae seasons" (199), with generations of men and families "locked in the rhythm of work, just like the last year, all the years before" (201). This may be Papa Robert's romantic viewpoint of a past that never truly existed, but I suggest Eric's art goes deeper than such innocence and reaches into a poetic dwelling and a state of at-home-ness (Heimlichkeit). Like Helmut, Eric dwells in his art. Seiffert's pastoral description belies its seriousness:

[98] Heidegger employed Holderling's term "as part of the effort to recall a genuine proximity between historical being and dwelling" (Bernstein 128).

> Spring with the primroses massed along the ditches, when his father lent his horse and his hand to the harrow, and then the longer days of harebells and poppies, and skylarks rising from the fields laid to fallow. (199)

Just as Heidegger was often accused of romanticism, so Lindsey jolts Eric to reality; "there had been war and slaughter all Papa Robert's young life" (201). Certainly, given the identity politics implied in the novel, this bucolic memory of his homeland and farmhouse abode could suggest the 'blood and soil' mindset that Heidegger was accused of and that also lay behind the Irish Civil War. This ideal of dwelling, if taken to extremes, could paradoxically perpetuate what Bauman observes in a too-closely knit community, "division, isolation and estrangement" (Bauman, *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World* 142). And, as Sharr notes, "those who honour their locality and celebrate a sense of belonging, others can be cast out as not belonging. And here are the seeds of racism and persecution" (Sharr 13).[99] Yet, the ideal of Heideggerian dwelling lies in a deep connectedness to place and space with its inherent sense of community and identity that does not reject the Other, but rather accepts a being-with that necessarily implies embracing difference, echoing Esquirol's philosophy of Proximity.

Furthermore, the portrayal of the farmhouse suggests a critical eye on the loss of humane elements implicit in modern architectural spaces. As we have already observed in *ABIW*, this resonates with a Bachelardian poetic

[99] See also J. Hillis Miller, "Slipping, Vaulting, Crossing: Heidegger." *Topographies*, edited by Werner Hamacher and Wellbery David E, Stanford University Press, 1995, pp. 216–55. I have my colleague Dr.Joan Corbet to thank for bringing this critical essay on Heideggerian dwelling to my notice.

imagining, and an “awareness of the significance of place” (Casey 310). But the possibility of this multi-levelled interpretation remains intriguing, since, as Heidegger and Casey imply, Man’s alienation means his being displaced from place itself and from ‘cultivation’ implied in dwelling that both Seiffert’s Louth farmhouse and Heidegger’s Alpine home represent.

In this regard, Eric’s older neighbourhood and the Lough farmhouse denote a sense of historical connectedness and more humane facets of habitation in contrast with the new ‘executive’ housing estates and tenements that the Polish labour migrants and Stevie work on. The former suggest inauthenticity and commercial value and the latter, impermanency and short-term solutions to ingrained problems. Certainly, given Seiffert’s enmeshed narrative, the irony implied in having transient workers building equally transient homes may not be unintentional. Brenda’s thoughts as to how long the new flats on the scheme would last echo Mumford’s wry observation that “a building that is erected today, is outclassed tomorrow” (Mumford 167). Her observation also resonates with Bauman’s ‘liquid modernity’. Indeed, Seiffert’s depiction of a shifting architectural landscape, half-built flats, boarded up tenement buildings and ‘box’ like modern constructions, serving as mere half-way-house to something better or more permanent, mirror Mumford’s early anti-modernity discourse and Bauman’s assertions.

Through the intertwining of migrant workers’ and local life-worlds, Seiffert seems to explore several universal issues: The younger generations mistrust and fear of the Other, ethical perspectives, and, perhaps above all, the strive for human dignity in a world in which Mankind has been reduced to ‘standing-reserve’, a theme that has been previously highlighted in the first

chapter of this thesis. First, the hastiness of construction, and urge to build as cheaply and rapidly as possible for economic profit has a causal sequence on workers' motivation, whose

> bargaining for better wages and fewer hours concerns them more than their job and the honor and veracity of their workmanship. What kind of work can a man put into the 'cheapest building that will last for fifteen years?" (Mumford 172)

The older Poles, Jozef and Tomas, exemplify "a world changing generation" (77) of men whose dignity consisted of taking pride in their work. In contrast, the young Marek "was wasted now doing […] all the boring bits Tomas didn't want to do himself" (78). Jozef admits that in Glasgow "he had become a clock-watcher" (ibid), forced to sack a plasterer who had not only been doing a double-shift, but "skimming supplies from Jozef's orders" (ibid), evidently in the bid for a decent living. Marek, who had been taught craftsmanship, but was now "wasted" (ibid), typifies the way modern "mechanized building" (Mumford 171), with its "standard patterns" (ibid) and anonymity, leaves no room for personal pride in one's work. Jozef infers as much when he notes, "[Tomas]'d taught [Marek] well, too. But [he] suspected that was half the trouble" (78). Marek had lost gratification and self-esteem in his work. Not only does he lead the nomadic life of a migrant worker, but he has little "opportunity for the exercise of skilled intelligence, to say nothing of art" (Mumford 171). Just as the protagonist of 'Architect' had lost control of his art in a technocratic world more concerned with pragmatic matters of car parking spaces than human dwelling, so too the builders and craftsmen were, in their turn, "bound to follow the architect's

design" (Mumford 171) as Jozef is to comply with the developer's deadlines and architect's "plans".[100] In addition, the builders clearly exemplify Mumford's observations in their covert double-dealing in supplies and the looting of building materials, copper piping, tiles and bathroom fittings. Stevie and Jozef's nephew, Marek, morally justify their raids as payment owed to Jozef by the developer. In the realm of morality, as we have seen in *ABIW*, mistrust and suspicion amongst these workers reflect Bauman in his comparison of modern civilization's propensity for 'the survival of the fittest' to "the most horrifying lessons of the Holocaust" (Bauman, *Liquid Love* 85).

In contrast, Graham's self-esteem and pride arises out of his inclusion in the Orange community and, above all, its band; as Seiffert notes, "[i]t is a powerful thing to be good at something, and to get acknowledgement for that" (Seiffert qtd. in Darby). Jozef's sense of self-esteem, on the other hand, appears dampened by the developer's lack of recognition: "[w]e deliver good workmanship, yes? And the man threw a last, grudging look around the ensuite" (104), without so much as a hint of appreciation. In addition, these constructions represent meaningless manufactured products; mere

[100] The aftermath of the Glenfell Tower fire in London (June 2017), has seen a surge of interest in how developer-led projects, left to private business functioning within a laissez-faire market directed economy, has led to a building culture led by purely financial, profit-making interests, jeopardizing the lives of what are usually working-class families living on lower wage earnings. This has triggered further interest in the state of developer-led urban architectural projects, reminiscent of Seiffert's representation of the Glaswegian schemes, such as the 'new gateway to Cambridge' designed by renowned architect Richard Rogers. Oliver Wainwright, writing for The Guardian newspaper, described the architecture as "bland", "insipid", a "generic clone-town scene more like a suburban retail park than an illustrious seat of learning" and with "a public space seemingly designed more with cars than people in mind" (Wainwright). As I have mentioned in my discussion of 'Architect', Seiffert, along with other writers, such as Michael Bracewell and John McCarthy, highlight the importance given to the design of car parking space as symbolic of the lack of attention to humane elements in urban and architectural design.

commodities, sold by a "developer" (220) whose only interests lie in financial gain.

In conclusion, the characterization of the builders suggests a meld of interpretations. First, the Polish workers highlight a sense of physical and metaphysical homelessness stemming from their condition as transient labour migrants who are deprived of family and a sense of belonging in a globalized world. This is further strengthened through their more universal status as workers detached from humane elements and dignity and pride in the form of gratifying work. So, although they do experience the specific hardships related to diaspora, they also share the burden of the modern condition. Their empty or at most half-built architectural structures stand as metonym for the emptiness of their lives and their inability to dwell. Like the box-like houses of Whiteinch, on "the way to somewhere from somewhere else" (137), the Poles too reflect the "modern mass produced houses [Frank Lloyd Wright] abhorred […], they do not belong anywhere" (Wright 177 qtd. in Casey 178). Jozef, like Stevie live within the walls of instability, in the transitory dwellings they build, but ironically will never fully inhabit. In conclusion, Stevie and the migrant builders form part of Vidler's "unliveable modern condition" (Vidler x).

3.3.i. Public and Private Worlds.

So far, I have broadly argued for Literary Architecture as an expression of the pervasiveness of ingrained sectarianism and the effects of globalization on Glaswegian culture. I have suggested that this thwarts the possibility of peaceful dwelling. Here, I further the discussion to suggest that, in this

complex and multi-layered narrative, Literary Architecture also works to portray how these cultural counterforces infiltrate individual subjectivity, and to this regard, I explore how these images peel away the boundaries between the exterior public and interior private realms. This imagery allows the reader to perceive the profound psychological resonance of political-social and cultural forces within the individual and family at the same time as permitting a peek into the way migrant workers remain outside the boundaries of local culture. I necessarily limit an depth discussion of the treatment of migrant workers, to the claim for spatial imagery as a means of conveying the way diverse cultures rub shoulders with each other, yet remain spiritually and socially outside the boundaries of a more local culture. Thus, the text brings to attention the clash between identities and meanings implied in an ‘urban space war’, to use Bauman’s term (Bauman, *Liquid Times*). I suggest, then, that the buildings and walls Stevie and the Polish construct and the empty tenements serve as metonym for the boundaries between public and private, an exterior world and interior consciousness, and the spatial boundaries existing between local religious factions, migrants and immigrants. The juxtaposition between exterior and interior strengthens the sense of encroaching and infiltrating collective memory and pervasive culture into the private subjective world of Stevie, and indeed, of the isolated, transient world of the Polish builders. Particularly noteworthy is that ultimately both Stevie and the Poles ironically make their impermanent living spaces within the walls of the homes they build, but they both remain physically and psychologically homeless.

Thus, 'boundary building', in Bauman's parlance, between ethnic communities, and the psychological borders of Stevie's world has its literary expression in the image of walls. They not only form the physical supporting structure of our buildings, but also mark territorial limits and in our physical world, there are walls everywhere. From Hadrian's Wall, dividing England and Scotland, to current President of the United States Donald Trump's proposal to build a wall between Mexico and the U.S. at the time of writing this thesis. Clearly, walls have been employed for the purposes of community exclusion and, in their defensive capacity, the enhancement of security. But paradoxically, they also isolate the inhabitants of the 'fortress'. Furthermore, as Bauman notes, "instead of aiming at the sources of insecurity, [the construction of walled up communities] channel attention and energy away from them" (Bauman, *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World* 143) and "perpetuate the 'us versus them' war" (ibid), generating spatial conflict. Thus, by having Stevie painting and plastering the walls of the houses, Seiffert generates a sense of increasing alienation and estrangement from the hostilities of his exterior space; a trope previously employed in 'Helmut', and 'Lore'. Like Helmut and Tomas, then, Stevie retreats into his architectural 'shell', metaphorically reinforcing his alienation from and avoidance of exterior cultural forces. Indeed, Stevie's "retreat into the house" (177) echoes an army retreating into a defensive position. The image also resonates an animal, like a snail, enfolding itself into its protective membrane from external hostilities. Stevie remains, for most of the novel, within his own private protective membrane, only venturing, to his downfall, outside into public space at the end of the novel, when these forces undermine the

possibility of a 'return-home'. If, as Ellen Eve Frank observed, buildings also signify consciousness and interiority, houses and walls stand for Stevie's subjectivity, his alienation and estrangement from community and family, his own spatial defence system. The retreat into the house also points to Stevie's attempt at alienating himself from identity branding. Yet, as we shall see, the threat of exterior forces, the identity war, disrupts the boundaries Stevie attempts to demarcate, serving yet again as counterforce in Vidler's terms.

Nowhere in Seiffert's narratives is the intersection between the concrete form of house building and the literary imagery more powerfully emblematic of this disruption than the scene in which Stevie and the Poles work on "their last job" (173) before the latter's return to Gdansk. In few paragraphs and in characteristic minimalistic prose style, Seiffert allows the reader to access not only the way history permeates Stevie's interiority as signifier of the wider domestic interior, but also the "schism between the [migrant workers'] truth and experience" (Tally 141) of place that Jameson argued for.[101] The isolation of the Poles, especially Jozef as the older member of the family, results in their failure to perceive any local cultural reality. Furthermore, they remain wary of the Other and anyone who does not belong to their community. As they work, Jozef perceives a sound "almost like music, but not quite, coming across the rooftops, too remote to make out" (173), which was for him, "an unfamiliar sound" (ibid). It floats on the breeze, hauntingly invading the houses from outside, hinting at the way

[101] Fredric Jameson argued for a shift in the experience of space as the collapse of imperialism brought about different viewpoints (Jameson 1991). Seiffert's portrayal of the way the Poles perceive local customs and their ignorance of deep cultural issues would exemplify this argument. Certainly, their 'truth' of place remains rooted in their own sense of identity elsewhere, in this case Poland.

collective memory penetrates the domestic, and thwarts the possibility of dwelling. I will return to this point in a moment. However, the eerie sound of drums, metonym for radical sectarianism, ironically infiltrates the building that Catholic Jozef as well as Protestant Stevie build and, significantly, only temporarily inhabit. The drum, however, has been described as "a loved and hated object" (215); a symbol of faith which Brenda would have liked to be "rid of [it]" (ibid). Like his grandmother, Stevie attempts to rid himself of the Ulsterman's influence by "picking at a stray thread around the patch on his jeans" (175); the recurring symbol of the patch similarly represents sectarianism as well as determinism throughout the narrative. Indeed, the patch not only plays a significant part in this scene, but in the whole narrative, as symbolic of Stevie's identity 'branding'.

The symbol first occurs early in the novel, and is viewed from Jozef's 'outsider' position, paralleling that of the naive reader: "The boy had a patch on his knee, sewn up badly, with a hand pictured on it: a red one, held up, palm forward, *No surrender* stitched underneath" (3). Although Jozef knew that the patch had to do with rival football teams, he had no idea "which side this hand belonged to" (4). Throughout the novel Stevie picks at the "stray threads" (175) securing the patch to his jeans, as if attempting to undo the ties binding him to his ethnic loyalties. The patch appears parasitical, a haunting presence, "older even than its host trousers" (ibid), and is "roughly" sewn on with "thick black thread" (ibid), suggestive of the strength and resolve of generational transmission: "It looked like it had, at one time, been sewn neatly to another garment, and then ripped off and stitched onto these" (ibid). Like a parasite, the patch, then, remains but simply changes its 'host'.

When Stevie rips a hole in his sweatshirt that, significantly, allowed him to "blend into the flats, the sky and the pavements" (238), as if he could remain inconspicuously in harmony with place rather than branded as "a dirty Orange cunt" (280), he finds the hole covered with "a Red Hand of Ulster stitched neat across the tear" (238), impairing any attempt at integration. His father had stitched it on "wae needle and thread" (ibid); the words "*no surrender*" appear as a forewarning of the futility of his flight. At this point, it is worth recalling Seiffert's citation at the beginning of the novel taken from Louis MacNeice's poem, *Valediction*. Stevie clearly stands for the "woven figure [who] cannot undo his thread" (MacNeice qtd. in Seiffert *TWH*). Like the Irish poet, Seiffert raises the philosophical issue of determinism: Will Stevie manage to undo the 'thread' that attaches the patch to his jeans? And will he shake off the religious attachments and return 'home'? In addition, Seiffert shares MacNeice's narrative style in which "surface realism belies symbolic depth" (Brown 11). The patch informs the reader of Glaswegian identity politics on the surface, but at the same time expresses a much deeper intangible reality: a haunting collective memory. Furthermore, and for the purposes of my overriding argument in this thesis, in a similar manner to the protagonist of 'Architect', Stevie finds himself unable to resist the "branding of identity" (Colombino 81).[102]At first sight,

[102] Colombino was referring to Michael Bracewell's novel *Missing Margate*, in which the architect protagonist, Max de Winter, blows up his designs as symbolic of his eschewal of inauthenticity, his branding as designer architect. In the same way that the designer clothes and obsession with image stand for "empty tribal signs and rituals designed to strengthen the sense of social belonging and adaptability (Colombino 81) in Bracewell's novel, so too Stevie's patch represents a "tribal sign" and a sense of "social belonging", which I argue, leads to inauthenticity. Although it is not an "inner emptiness" (ibid) resulting from a capitalist consumer society triggering Stevie's inability to dwell, but rather one of suffocating tribal loyalty. In both novels, however, the need to 'belong' clouds a more "substantial humanity" (ibid), as Colombino puts it, or a more 'essential' dwelling in existential terms.

Stevie's 'branding' appears distinct from that of the architect, but it remains, in Heideggerian parlance, inauthentic, since he is not permitted to be truly himself, to achieve a peaceful and harmonious dwelling free from the shackles of collective memory manifested, in this story, in tribal allegiances. At the end of the novel, as Stevie leaves the safe zone of the tenements he has been inhabiting, a group of Catholic football supporters give him a sharp kick "just by the patch on his jeans" (280), reminding Stevie and the reader, that despite the outward appearance of a new city "getting on with life" (277), the undercurrent of prejudice remains; Stevie could not yet undo the thread weaving him to his identity.

Now let me return to the scene of the Poles "last job" mentioned earlier. I suggest, then, that this scene exemplifies the way Seiffert's Literary Architecture speaks to the pervasion of the public socio-historical and cultural realm into the private experience. Indeed, this reflects Seiffert's attention to the intersection between the private and the public already demonstrated by the use of photography in *TDR* (Marianne Hirsch) and her frequent use of direct interior monologue, echoing that of Virginia Woolf in her novel *Mrs Dolloway* (1925) to represent the pervasiveness of war into the subjective realm (Crosthwaite 115). In *TWH*, the rupture of private and public experience finds its expression in the house and its walls. This exterior world, represented by the drumming and the patch on Stevie's jeans, not only penetrates the house over its rooftops, but also hinders the construction of 'dwelling', in the metaphorical and physical sense, exemplified by the Asian van driver, with a "Glasgow accent" (174), who "got stuck" (ibid) by the marching band and arrived late, metaphorically holding up the build. In

addition, he ironically brought the wrong supplies, prolonging the building even further. Once more, we may discern Seiffert's juxtaposition of surface realism in her portrayal of the often neglectful and lax manner of contemporary building, as I have already remarked, and the sabotage of 'home-building' in a metaphorical sense. I am reminded, here, of the thoughts of Theodore Adorno whose "[post war] world is no longer habitable [...]. The heavy shadow of instability bears upon built form" (Spurr 73). If we transpose these thoughts to *TWH* on an abstract plane, the 'instability' of contemporary 'liquid' society, to use Bauman's term, and the burden of ingrained collective memory, similarly destabilize humanity's ability to dwell. Seiffert's tradesmen cannot get on with the building, literally and metaphorically, because of the inescapability of ethnic allegiances and bigotry.

The scene concludes, however, with Stevie "wiping down the walls ready to render them" (177), maintaining his interiority by focussing his efforts on work as distraction and offensive from exterior bombardment. Ironically, it is the Asian van driver who, upon recognizing Stevie's identity as 'Orange', intimates the malevolence of the marching band, by "point[ing] at Stevie" (176), branded by his "badly patched trousers" (ibid). The Asian is aware of local cultural conflicts, but also remains on the periphery. This has Stevie "retreating into the house" (177), and with echoes of Woolf's figurative use of windows, to keep the sound of the music outside his consciousness, he "strode across [to the open window] and pulled it shut, then went into the kitchen to refill his buckets" (178). As Literary Architecture, then, the house sheds light on Stevie's mind, his body, his

subjectivity and, like an army, his defence from the assault of exterior conflict.

In addition, walls denote domesticity, family and home as defensive position and a place of safety and security. Indeed, home as haven from exterior forces pervades the novel, but just as central is the struggle to maintain it as neutral space. This is best exemplified in the passage where Brenda, resolved to protect Stevie from Graham's corrosive influence orders him "out of [her] house" (216). As Graham leaves the house, Brenda exclaims that she will tolerate it no longer: "Not inside her four walls" (217). Intriguingly, the use of indirect narrative voice in these lines suggests its universality; the 'four walls' a common metaphor for the protective domestic space of the family. Walls imply strength and resolve, but they have become fragile and evanescent. Nevertheless, the scene concludes with the doubt that pervades Brenda as to the rightfulness of her action, "that she might have got it wrong too" (218). These words suggest no easy way out; the eschewal of patriarchal tradition and religious zeal from the house, in this novel, has also triggered familial discord. But, perhaps most importantly, Stevie's half-open "bedroom door" (ibid), in this scene, illuminates the omnipresence and tacit generational transmission of identity politics into the private realm of the home through familial conflict, despite Brenda's resolve to keep it out. [103]

[103] This scene would further exemplify the way silent traces of non-traumatic memory can seep into the domestic space through familial interaction, arguments, strange behaviour and other signs, such as overheard conversations, transmitting "tacit knowledge of the past within the everyday private social milieu" (Kidron. Abstract). Children perceive 'something' within the family, but do not fully understand or absorb details. Carol Kidron's anthropological study into Holocaust survivor families can be usefully transposed to other contexts, such as the transmission of identity politics portrayed in this novel. See Carol A Kidron, "Toward an Ethnography of Silence." *Current Anthropology*, vol. 50, no. 1, 2009, pp. 5–27.

Let me return for a moment to the house as emblematic of the private realm, and to Berger's Homeless Mind theory. By taking cover from exterior conflicts, Stevie exemplifies an individual who has rejected the world and its primary institutions, such as the church or patriarchal family values, and retreated into the self-life or the psychic life, which when Berger was writing his thesis in the 1960s and 70s was the way to "dredge up the meaning and stability that [he] requires to exist" (Berger 85). Stevie seems rather radical in his selfdom, however, cutting himself off from family and the outside world. Yet, for most of the narrative, like the war veterans depicted in *Afterwards*, the outside world remains overwhelming; the barrage of cultural memory and the counterforces of history shake the foundations of his selfdom, reinforcing his retreat into homelessness.

Berger considered the focus on the self and the individual "at the very heart of modernity" (Berger 190). But, as he acknowledges, human beings are not "capable of tolerating the continuous uncertainty (or if you will, freedom) of existing without institutional support" (Berger 168), and thus the turn to alternative, 'softer' institutions. At the time of Berger's writing, these were based on environmentalist, spiritual or other alternative group memberships. Viewed from an existentialist perspective, Stevie finally realizes the need to interact with the world outside his own selfdom and to seize fresh possibilities; significantly, he buys new shoes with which to walk back into the world and back home, metaphorically as well as physically. Reflecting on Heideggerian philosophy, Peter Critchley puts it in a nutshell when he notes that "[t]he world is part of who I am […], a common world experienced with others" (Critchley Peter JP, "Being and Time, Part 4:

Thrown into This World") Thus, at the end of the narrative, Stevie leaves his isolated corner and rolled up bed in the tenement building to immerse himself in life, rather than remaining as a "spectator in a world stripped of value" (ibid). Stevie attempts to keep the counterforces of memory at bay, and reach authenticity without the shackles of religious bigotry, as he literally walks home: "those were old thoughts and he meant to keep himself loose from them […]" (279). Having given thought to his dilemma, he rejects determined conditions and decides to act upon life: "Stevie thought his life was his own and he could do what he wanted" (279). For the moment, I leave Stevie's walk home here, since I return to a more in-depth discussion of the journey back into place in the following section. For the moment, however, suffice to say, that it would appear that he has a choice.

One of my main contentions, however, in this thesis is that Seiffert offers a paradigm shift towards a re-constructive representation, and we shall see, here, how this fits in with the concluding pages of the novel. This perspective allows us to read Stevie, at the end of the narrative, as an individual who wishes to transform himself from a "postmodern individual locked in his or her hedonistic bubble, exhausted and indifferent" (Rodríquez Magda) to interact within a megacity of global multi-culturalism. This implies a city that "the spatial model of the centre/periphery is no longer an alternative or an accommodated lifestyle or an analysis of power" (ibid). Stevie, brought up on a Glasgow scheme on the periphery of the city, finds himself in a such a place, with people "passing [him] *like he was one of them*" (277)[104]. Stevie embodies a new Glasgow, part of a globalized, integrated

[104] My italics

culture that he yet struggles to feel fully part of. It is as if Stevie has been existing in another world and has awakened to a renewed vision of the city architecture which "looked fine, washed by the rain, solid sandstone proud against the evening sky" (277); the buildings thus baring their relationship to the past, present and the future and a cultivated, regionally integrated one, built with the elements and the needs of human habitation in mind. This clearly sits in harmony with the Heideggerian view of architecture and dwelling, as well as re-constructivism.

For a few paragraphs, Seiffert imbues the narrative with optimism through the poetic image of a peaceful city, one that responds to a Glasgow at one with its ancestral history. Reminiscent of Bachelard's conceptualization of the way images play on the reader's imagination, the sandstone buildings speak to their essential relationship to site, place and to "the traditions of a region, its history and its identity" (Sharr 104). Furthermore, the permanency implied by sandstone building materials invokes, not only historicity, but also existentialist reflections on the impermanency and fickleness of human existence and the passing of time; concerns common to postmodernist literature. But, Seiffert's art does not stop at this juncture; hers remains transformative and suggests the possibility of a return to place, in Casey's parlance. I discussed earlier the way Seiffert counters these buildings with the transient, hastily built nature of the schemes, financed through developers and economic power structures. The sandstone buildings of the city contrast with the fragile anonymity of the tenement blocks and executive housing estates on the periphery, and run counter to the non-places of Whiteinch. As I have argued above, Stevie's

homeless psyche has been immersed into a corner of an equally soulless, empty, derelict building, reminiscent of postmodern dystopian settings. Thus, it is highly significant that he finally ventures outside to find himself in the milieu of a more optimistic city, where even “the puddles were bright under the clearing sky” (277), and where there was “no sign of banner or crowds or lodges” (276). Stevie sees the city and himself anew: “he looked just right in all the wide windows he passed” (277). In contrast to the corner of the tenement block that Stevie inhabited, the city “getting on with life” (277) appears almost utopian, perhaps uncannily so. Thus, the reader’s sense of optimism engendered by architectural images and the city engrossed in the daily business of living, evokes a sense of hope and confidence in transcending conflicted cultural memory and a return to life.

The heightened sense of optimism inspired through these spatial, architectural images of a city, parallels Stevie’s memory of the past, his desire to control “old thoughts” (179) disturbing and penetrating his psyche; strengthening the reader’s anticipation that conflict, through conscious effort, can be put to rest, allowing Stevie to finally return-home. In characteristically few words, Seiffert permeates the narrative, as Casey would put it, with a return to place, not only physically, as Stevie literally walks home, but also metaphysically. This is a narrative, not just about one individual, but about humanity; raising the text to allegorical status.

Indeed, we are in the realm of allegory, and the narrative is a return-home for mankind, a ‘getting back into place’. But Stevie, however, imagines a home “with no questions asked” (278), a home that Joseph had also wished for in *Afterwards*, a place where he could be accepted as himself, a place

"that nurtures interpersonal reciprocity" (Casey 303) and a "site of resistance" (ibid 302). But this also implies a place of co-existence and tolerance.

3.3. ii. The Journey Home

Stevie's journey 'home' has similiarites to that of Graham and Eric's 'return' as well as the stories of Abraham, Jacob and Esau; biblical stories which portray humanity in all its compassion as well as 'failings', to use Brenda's term. This analogy lends the narrative its universality. I briefly look here at how the interweaving of these narratives strengthens the notion of a philosophical homecoming and a return to dwelling.

First, Graham's existentialist thought has been prompted by the reality and finality of his Uncle Eric's death: "[…] sitting here with his Mum and thinking about his uncle being gone, Graham got that same ground-shifting-under him feeling of life still going on; full of surprises" (287). Eric's death "had left him quiet" (ibid). Graham's "ground-shifting" insight chimes with a Heideggerian "moment of clarity, a smoulder of enlightenment that can't so much be described as experienced" (Sharr 84). In simple terms, by reflecting on the world and his role in it, he has taken 'measure', in Heideggerian terms. Viewed though this lens, then, Graham's "ground-shifting" (287) moment has brought him closer to an existence verging on intimate proximity (Esquirol); suggested by his renewed relationship to family and the return to his mother's house. This moment has led him towards an appreciation of his existence, of the people surrounding him, and of course, the building (or dwelling) that he inhabits. Unlike Eric, however, this

measuring has not been deliberate; after all, he remains a simple, working man, but capable, nonetheless, of existential insight. Thus, in this sense, the 'Graham plot' finalizes, not in postmodern despair, nor in sentimentalism, but hope. And despite his affiliation to the Orange Order, Graham's "smoulder of enlightenment" (Sharr 84) is to be viewed as the possibility for a way forward to a common human understanding. Graham, may thus have come close to a return-home. Yet this will not be complete until his wandering son comes back to his family.

The final pages of the novel further reinforce the notion of existentialist home-coming through the juxtaposition of individual insight and enlightenment, with the Bachelardian poetic image of the kitchen, where the family are gathered to clear Eric's possessions after the funeral. Significantly, they start on what they consider to be "the easier stuff" (288), perhaps the least sentimental, the contents of the "kitchen cupboards" (288). Though a deceptive perception of simplicity, one might easily overlook the symbolism implied in the kitchen scene; it is, after all, a common, domestic setting. Yet, it imbues the narrative with a sense of the house as 'home' and essential habitation. Like Heidegger's table, already discussed in previous sections of this thesis, the kitchen and the food stored in the cupboards, represent the heart of daily life, existence, and of meaningful dwelling. And it is indeed ironic, and significant, that the family are gathered here in Eric's absence: "it looked like it had been a comfort, having Eric's kitchen full of family, even it had come too late for him to see it" (288). Anyone who has ever been faced with clearing the home of a deceased family member would feel affinity with this scene, and the message remains clearly existentialist as

thoughts turn to mortality, an essential element of dwelling. But, there is an implication that Eric had reached a metaphorical state of home upon death, and I will return to this point in a moment. Nevertheless, on an architectural plane, Seiffert could just as easily have used the sitting room or other space for her family reunion scene, but the kitchen remains the soul of the house, and thus, the heart of dwelling.

Eric's homecoming lies in its artistic imagining; a Heideggerian 'poetic dwelling'. He had come to terms with his homelessness through art. Rather than a "moment of clarity" (Sharr 84), Eric had deliberated on his displacement through the representation of spatial elements, such as the Louth farmhouse and the fusion of modern-day Glasgow with biblical images of the Lebanon, as I mentioned earlier. If we compare Eric's artistic ruminations to Heideggerian thought, such deliberation enabled him to make 'poetic' sense of human existence, not in isolation from environment, site and society, as Eric seemed to live on a physical level, but rather at one with it. Eric's grappling with identitiarian thinking stands for humanity. Through drawing he had finally come to terms with the world and his part in it, and consequently, Eric exemplifies a man who has arrived at authenticity though "a poetic taking of measure" (Heidegger, "...Poetically Man Dwells..." 227). By finally representing Papa Robert in the role of a good father figure, Eric not only found therapeutic consolation but, I suggest, also returned to a metaphorical home. This home-coming appears to be implicit, on the level of plot, by "having Eric's kitchen full of family" (288), managing to convey a home-coming for Eric after death. Despite the seemingly pessimistic, dark ambience of this scene, hope remains in Eric's final drawings: "Pictures of

Papa Robert, drawings that caught his best side […] New scheme, new blooms, and Papa Robert's staunch faith, that life could start anew for them" (289). Yet, like Helmut, hope also derives from art itself, because it involves making creative sense that unifies "the world, mind and insight" (Sharr 87). If we read, then, Eric's artistic deliberation through the light of Heidegger's thinking on poetry and dwelling, Eric's creation is a "letting-dwell" (Heidegger 89), which corresponds to "a kind of building" (ibid). Indeed, Reinhard notes that for architect Norberg-shulz, as follower of Heideggerian architectural thought, "[a]rchitecture is a form of poetry that helps man dwell by gathering together disparate meanings and action-possiblities into a coherent world" (Reinhard Lupton 90). Similarly, viewed through this lens, Seiffert's literary art is also a measuring that 'lets dwell', since it too heeds the poetic gathering of 'disparate meanings' into a coherent world.

Let us return to Stevie for a moment, who we have left earlier on a journey through the city. I have argued above that the derelict building implies a physical and metaphysical refuge from exterior counterforces. However, this space of privacy and solitude has also allowed him to take "measure of the world" (Sharr 81). Stevie had not physically created artistic representation, but had nevertheless participated in poetic measuring though listening, thinking and making sense of his place in the world. Through a series of flashbacks, we are permitted a peek into his thoughts as he comes to terms with the past, and his identification with place. In addition, the empty derelict buildings, which serve as Stevie's temporary dwelling place, reinforce his symbolic status as a metaphysically displaced and homeless Being, existing in a state of precariousness and alienation from Others; that

is, at odds with dwelling-well. Nevertheless, Stevie is a young man, a new generation, and if we view him as representative of generational renewal, then the question lies in whether exterior counterforces, the inauthentic distractions in Heideggerian terms, will yet allow him to return-home and, thus, to regain place.

As Stevie walks home, the familiarity of the city, with its museums, streets and parks, gradually dissolves. In this passage, Seiffert employs the recurring trope of urban disorientation, fusing the narrative with a sense of the uncanny.[105] Stevie, wrapped in his thoughts and taking stock of his freedom to choose his own path home, finds himself on unfamiliar ground. Not knowing which way to go, he faces choices. Significantly, at this point he could turn back or "try another road" (279). By using such a timeless, almost Dantean, trope as journeying through, not a dark wood this time, but an urban environment, we sense that we are indeed in the realm of allegory. We might recall, at this point, that Seiffert has employed this previously in Lore, when the protagonist and her siblings become disoriented in the woodlands of post-war Germany. Similarly, we discern an increasing sense of anxiety and doom, heightened by Stevie's visceral reaction to unfamiliarity. Faced with uncertainty, he too instinctively feels that all is not well. Interestingly, the choices he confronts on his journey are set off against Brenda's characteristically astute observation that "it is Stevie's choice to make. So we'll just have to wait" (290). Simply put, if Stevie embodies a new generation, then perhaps only *they* can make a choice as to which path to follow; the future lies in their hands and is yet to be seen. Despite the

[105] See chapter two of this thesis.

sense of insecurity implied in disorientation, there does, however, appear to be a choice; Stevie could have tried "another road, or another night" (279), suggesting a rejection of determinism and supporting an existentialist view of individual freedom. In existentialist thought, with nothing to hold on to but our own actions, this freedom of choice is also paradoxically the root of anxiety. But, above all, to be oriented and aware of place remains one of the key elements for dwelling-well in the world.

Significantly, Stevie's final journey home remains incomplete. This is a purposefully unsatisfactory conclusion to the novel, which I suggest underscores its re-constructivist stance. In a demonstration of what could be described as masculine power and tribal supremacy, a group of inebriated men, one wearing the identity 'badge' of a green and white football shirt, hurled Stevie's 'new shoes', (another example of Seiffert's subtle symbolism), out of reach. And in a final show of dominium, one of the men "put his hand on Stevie's head as he passed. Pushing it down, hard, mashing the side of the face against the tarmac" (281). Indeed, such a traumatic ending implies that Brenda might be right in that we should not be "getting [our] hopes up too early" (290). But Seiffert does not end the novel here. The following scenes suggest that Stevie could indeed continue his journey home, but not without adversity and struggle, making it "[h]ard to be hopeful, but not too much keeping faith over the long haul" (290); indeed, Brenda seems to voice a key message of the narrative. Nevertheless, this scene finishes with a poignant question: "Why the bloody hell did it have to be like this?" (281). With her habitual use of italics here strikingly absent, these words seem not to emerge from Stevie's consciousness, but appear rather as the author's

interpolation. Although the question rings with resignation, her answer appears to be that it doesn't *have to* be like this; if only we could live together without inauthenticity, embodied here in socio-historically imposed roles (Berger). These roles, as Berger refers to them, are present throughout the novel, but the pitiful consequence of adhering to them appears underscored, in this penultimate chapter, by the portrayal of bigoted thugs in football shirts. Certainly, for the reader, having Stevie's journey home frustrated in this manner surely remains, as I have mentioned, most unsatisfactory.

Yet, as LaCapra points out, such an ending may be "a sign of the refusal to offer purely symbolic, novelistic solutions to real social and political problems" (LaCapra 23).[106] If Seiffert had finalized her novel in a more "falsely comforting domesticity" (Sharr 89), as Adorno perceived Heideggerian thought, then the social reality would have been obscured. In this way, considered as a family narrative, it would certainly support Dell's observation of recent developments in the genre, in that it attempts to "create verisimilitude" (Dell 209), reaching a socio-political truth that remains aware of the "(philosophical) problems entailed" (ibid). But neither is it defeatist, because such an unsatisfying, subversive ending generates a tension that compels the reader to reflect on the issues raised in the novel. And herein lies its hopefulness, since it alludes to the need for a more tolerant co-existence in a constantly changing, global world, if only humanity could realise that change lies in its hands. Indeed, the choice is not for Stevie alone, but for all parties involved. Thus, Seiffert's resistance to "fully concordant narrative closure" (LaCapra 23), as LaCapra puts it, not only exposes a hidden facet of

[106] LaCapra was referring to Stendhal's well-known novel, *The Red and the Black*. 1830.

contemporary Glasgow, but forces the reader to meditate the need to "return to universal values" (Dell 208).

Seiffert's engagement with biblical stories highlights Mankind's drift from these universal spiritual values, and the possibility of redemption as a way forward, and as moral point of the novel. The story of Abraham and his conflicted grand-sons, Jacob and Esau mirror the "ages old struggle" (259) in the narrative, and the family relationships therein, but also serves as a "possible vessel for reconciliation" (Feiler 10). As Bruce Feiler puts it in his analysis of the stories of Abraham, "[i]t's as if Abraham were the Rock, tugging everyone to a common hearth" (ibid 11). Intriguingly, Feiler draws on architectural features (hearth) to symbolize Mankind's home-coming; reinforcing the notion that only by living within the divinities, in the Heideggerian sense of the word, can Mankind build their true home. Home, then, is an "inclusive, pluralizing, creaturely and historically layered" (Reinhard Lupton 97) dwelling place.[107]

[107] Julia Reinhard Lupton's essay on Heideggerian dwelling in Shakespeare's *Pericles* (2017) builds on Shakespeare scholars Hannibel Hamlyn (2013) and Thomas Betteridge's (2013) work which focus on biblical references in late Shakespearean theatre. Reinhard notes the long association that *Pericles* has with the *Book of Jonah* in the Hebrew Bible and, supporting Betteridge's viewpoint, the way the play points to a pre-confessional world in which universal human values united Christians rather than divided them. She points out the way the play draws on Jonah's "Yom Kippur themes of transgression, atonement, and forgiveness in an allusive terrain built up from the deposits left by multiple religious traditions" (Reinhard 97). We can certainly see parallels here with Eric's artístic representation in *TWH*. Furthermore, Seiffert's novel also employs *The Book of Jonah* to bring into play the same values, suggesting a world in which different religious denominations might return to a common humanity to dwell together in peaceful harmony. Interestingly, Reinhard furthers the discussion by analysing the way Heideggerian dwelling, architecture and poetic performance play out in *The Book of Jonah* and, thus, in *Pericles* in similar ways that I have been discussing throughout this thesis. Interesting comparisons can therefore be made between Seiffert's text and Shakespeare's play, since both can be used to "explore the challenges to dwelling" (Reinhard 99) faced, not only by "particular social groups" (ibid), as Reinhard suggests, but by Mankind. I would like to thank, once again, my colleague, and Shakespeare scholar, Dr.Jordi Coral for bringing this important essay to my notice.

Finally, the last chapter is headed by a biblical citation from Malachi (messenger): “Return unto me, and I will return unto you” (Malachi 3:7 qtd. in Seiffert 283). The notion of building as a form of dwelling was indeed present in Malachi: “They may build, but I will demolish. They will be called the Wicked Land, a people always under the wrath of the LORD” (Malachi 1:4);[108] the meaning of which parallels Heideggerian notions of building and dwelling. It matters not how many times people rebuild and re-decorate, until they are prepared to heed the fourfold they will not achieve a dwelling-well. In addition, by expanding Seiffert’s citation, we can perceive the challenge that lies ahead for Mankind; that is, we must recognise the errors, the inauthenticity shackling us to our wayward path before we can hope to return:

> Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances and have not kept *them*. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return? (Malachi 3:7)

In conclusion, my overriding argument in my discussion of *TWH* has been that Seiffert puts forward a metaphysical return-home, in the sense of peaceful, authentic dwelling. And that Literary Architecture, urban spatial imagery, building and literal ‘homes’ contribute to an articulation of the inexpressible homelessness suffered by mankind. In this novel, more than any other so far, I have suggested that Seiffert’s text proposes that this return can only come about if we can throw off inauthenticity manifested, by

[108] New International Version. I have used this citation in a more complete form at the beginning of this chapter, and I partially re-cite it here for convenience.

"turning away from [our] badge of identity" (Berger 84) in the way of socially imposed roles, such as that experienced by Stevie and his father. Such roles, in Berger's words, "entangle [an individual] in 'illusion', 'alienation' and 'bad faith'" (Berger 84). These roles, as we have seen in the final scene of the novel, are of Man's choosing; he defines them himself, and thus can also choose to discard them. This is no easy task, as I mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, since the pull towards continuity, and what Berger calls "anthropological constants" (Berger 85), such as community, group membership and tightly-knit family units, form part of identity, and as Bauman argues, also provide a sense of security and safety in the rapidly changing world of the twenty-first century.

Conclusions

The main aim of this chapter has been to show how these narratives engage with socio-cultural and historical elements pertaining to our contemporary era, and their contribution to the impediment of dwelling-well; that is, dwelling existentially within a world where there exists a common human understanding, and a co-habitation within a multi-cultural world at one with environment and place. I have attempted to demonstrate how the writer's poetics of architecture, space and home evoke the dilemmas presented by modernity, and espoused by scholars from diverse fields, such as Mumford, Heidegger, Berger and Bauman, and the proposal for a way forward. These have included physical and philosophical displacement in the form of migration and homelessness, traumatic historical resonances of war and conflict, political borders that contravene laws of the natural world,

nationalisms and religious bigotry, the need to conform to socially expected roles, globalization, industrialization, disrespect for environmental concerns and the disengagement with place and human mortality.

Reading these texts through the lens of Literary Architecture and a poetics of space, along with insights from theological and sociological perspectives, has allowed an insight into the deep cultural and philosophical structures at play in contemporary society and that are reflected poetically in these narratives. This analysis has allowed me to highlight how Seiffert's representation of the contemporary dilemma presented in these stories, that by throwing off the chains of traditional institutions, especially the denominational Church, patriarchal family values and a suffocating, all engaging community, Mankind finds himself paradoxically isolated and homeless. And, here lies the origins of existential thought brought to light in Seiffert's discourse. Yet, I have also attempted to demonstrate that very the lack of 'satisfying' narrative closure, in the form of a return-home, draws attention to these elements that prevent Mankind from returning to a dwelling-within the fourfold.

FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

1. General Conclusions

This thesis set out to explore two related aspects of Rachel Seiffert's work: First, her engagement with reconstructivist postmodernism which, rather than the pessimistic impasse and meaninglessness usually associated with this literature, suggests a more hopeful return to meaning, and second, how this is conveyed not only on the thematic, but also on the textual plane through the use of spatial and architectural rhetorical devices. This study departs, to some extent, from Kirstin Dell's assertion that the fin-de-millennium American family novel functions within a post-postmodernist literature that highlights the significance of family relationships as one element inscribing meaning and purpose to human existence. Although family and human relationships are similarly emphasized in Seiffert's work, there appeared to be other aspects functioning in parallel that suggest this return to meaning. To this regard, this thesis has broadly been an enquiry as to the nature of these aspects and to their evocation within the discourse.

The hypotheses for this study, and my thinking as to the re-inscription of meaning in Seiffert's work, have naturally been defined by the socio-political and cultural context that the writer inhabits; one that has recently seen the rise of nationalisms, right-wing political ideologies, religious fanaticisms, world-wide conflict and war and the general effects of rapid globalization and technology, (which have contributed to mass displacement and labour migration), and environmental degradation. These complex and

interlocking issues have promoted an increasing sense of existential insecurity, anxiety and a perception of placelessness, and I have addressed some of these issues in the chapters of this thesis. Yet, these adversities are set against the presence of cultural and political movements that appeal to environmentalism, equality, multi-culturalism and human rights, regionalism and community. Seiffert's work, as we have seen, responds to a world altered by the impact of modernity. As Dell points out, fiction can be understood as a "*reaction against* the economic, social and political, and cultural coordinates of a period of time" (Dell 7), and yet, an analysis of the selection of texts in the present thesis reveals that these do not merely function as critique, but also approach the question as to a possible future course of improvement, or at least, the means of refuge from and resistance to the adverse conditions of modernity. I have already mentioned the strong presence of familial relationships in these texts, but I was further intrigued by the prominent spatial and architectural features and the recurring images of home and the return-home, and this motivated an examination of their correlation with a critique of modernity and the re-inscription of meaning. This correlation has formed the central pursuit of enquiry throughout and the principal focus and argument of this thesis. Furthermore, it forms the basis for the central claim that spatial, architectural features and the images of home, (Literary Architecture) and the notion of returning home convey:

i. a sense of the loss of dwelling, (in simple terms, a home in which Mankind can live at peace with the Other and with himself), arising out of the specificities of the modern condition, broadly defined above.

ii. a return-home, which implies a return to dwelling-well in a physical and metaphysical sense. This return implies attention to universal ethnics such as hospitality, kindness and tolerance, attention to the necessities of community and the significance of the place world to human existence. This home also forms a space of resistance to the adversities of the contemporary world.

iii. the return-home outlined above, as an expression of early Humanist Enlightenment values which understand human life as integral to the cosmological whole. This broadly forms the basis for the leftist cultural-political movements of organicism and post-materialist thought.

A close reading of the corpus through a multi-disciplinary sociological and existentialist philosophical framework, particularly the later thought of Heidegger on dwelling, home and architecture, Casey's work on place, Vidler's Architectural Uncanny, Spretnak's thoughts on re-constructivism, and Esquirol's notions of Intimacy and Proximity, as well as Toulmin's and Bauman's critical view of the perils of rational, technological modernity, have allowed me to confirm the claim that these texts speak to the loss of dwelling arising from the adversities of modernity, and to a philosophical return-home (to dwelling-well) on the level of content. On the textual plane, however, Bachelard's poetics of space, in conjunction with Heidegger's thinking on dwelling, have been useful in shedding light on the use of spatial and architectural imagery, (for which I have employed Frank's term Literary Architecture), and its contribution to the imaginative evocation of home as a place of security and resistance to modernity. This combination has allowed

me to confirm the thesis that these rhetorical features indeed elevate the reader to a place that has been lost, but that we ever seek to attain; that is, home. Despite the complexities of viewing the texts through this multi-disciplinary theoretical framework, this approach has nevertheless permitted the disclosure of multi-layered and nuanced meanings often obscured beneath an ultra-minimalist prose. The conjunction of these diverse, yet converging and complementary trends of thought, has allowed me to confirm the central claims of this thesis.

The three chapters comprising this thesis have focussed on different aspects of the fall from dwelling and the return-home within each of the selected texts. Although chapter conclusions have already been provided, in what follows, I offer some general observations.

From the first chapter, which served as a means of introducing some key theoretical concepts, we can perceive the workings of Literary Architecture in the way building and the spaces of domestic habitation embody dwelling rather than functioning as simple metaphor, this extends from the architect's childhood home, the allotment shelter to the timberman's house, the village abodes and the marshlanders' home in *ABIW*. The architect returns, not only to a physical childhood home, but to a dwelling place that clearly functions as a respite from modernity, a space of resistance to the exterior world. Yet, the architect's allotment shelter and the rural abodes in *ABIW* strongly resonate Heideggerian architectural thinking, in that construction remains aligned with a meaningful order of habitation, sensitive to place and human activity and undisrupted by the practicalities of modernity and technological methods. In its simplicity and parred down

applicability to the bare necessities of life, the allotment shelter forms a sharp contrast with the architect's inauthentic existence, one that is distracted from the essence of Being. The architect physically returns home, but because the shelter embodies not only the reconciliation between building and dwelling that Heidegger believed as one, and a milieu attuned to the connectedness of the fourfold, but also a closer proximity to things, he returns to a metaphysical home. The pastoral backdrop of *ABIW* clearly echoes the concerns outlined in 'Architect', sharing with it, a strong sense of place and architectural space that, through a poetics of space and Literary Architecture, allows the reader to return to dwelling-well within the imagination, subverting and contrasting the extremities of rational modernity characterized by Nazism. In so doing, it takes the reader on a journey home, to an imaginative, arguably idealized, place that nevertheless offers an alternative. As an integral part of existence, both texts allude to the need, in the existential sense, for a dwelling-with-others, a being-with, that many postmodernist representations overlook. On the contrary, the architect cannot exist as a 'lone cowboy' but realises the need for others, in this case family. *ABIW* further highlights the return-home as a being-with, but in addition, emphasizes responsibility for and compassion towards the Other, resonant of the biblical story of 'The Good Samaritan' (Luke 10:25-37). *ABIW* firmly establishes the return-home, the way forward for humanity, as a form of existentialist humanism that Sartre clarified as distinct from that of the Nazis' anthropocentrism. Neither is it a pessimistic, inward way of considering existence, but rather one that is "optimistic […] a doctrine of action" (J.-P. Sartre) and one in which, as Yasia demonstrated, we must make choices and

act in accordance with a responsibility to the Other as part of human existence. In short, a close reading of *ABIW* through a broadly existentialist framework and a Bachelardian poetics of space, reveals the notion of a return-home, as clearly aligned to the holistic humanism that Toulmin highlighted as belonging to the early Enlightenment philosophers.

From the second chapter, the study of *TDR* through the framework of Vidler's Architectural Uncanny has allowed me to draw several conclusions. In this text, the juxtaposition between the Heimlich and the Unheimlich makes visible elements that disturb dwelling-well: anxiety and alienation caused by forced displacement, the dark-side of nihilistic modernity, the dangers of obsessive memorialization and the fear of revealing hidden family secrets in tension with the need-to-know. Indeed, I suggested that the uncanny sheds light on the anxieties of intellectual uncertainty, and speaks to the significance of disclosure. This tension highlights that the return-home also requires reconciliation with historical memory, a contended point throughout Europe. In addition, like *ABIW*, the novel points to the destruction of dwelling by the extremes of rational modernity, that is totalitarianism. Similarly, the use of child protagonists, Helmut and Lore, draw further attention to the extreme plight of homelessness and displacement, so characteristic of our times. This novel also functions as an admonition to the impact of extreme political ideologies on the well-being of humanity and to what is fundamentally at stake: tolerance and acceptance of the Other, intrinsic to a peaceful dwelling.

The final chapter broadly concludes that despite the obstruction of deep cultural counterforces and historical reverberations to a return-home,

the texts explored here forward an existential return to a life receptive to place, and reconciliation with a restorative 'softer' family and community structure; one that does not depend on tyrannical obligations, nor dogmatisms or intolerance of the Other, but open-minded acceptance of difference, as a possible way out of our homelessness and, thus, as alternative to the contemporary predicament. In this regard, the Glaswegian setting of *TWH* is as specific as it is universal in that the necessity for a 'softer' structure of family and community in this novel also applies to the need for a more tolerant and accepting human co-habitation. Although *TWH* also points towards human interrelatedness, the analysis of the short story 'Field Study' reinforces the necessity to heed cosmological connectedness. In this latter text, I have addressed the conflict between human-made political borders and naturally occurring phenomena, including the way the former obstructs a romantic relationship between two human beings. The novel *Afterwards*, further highlights the issue of political borders and imperialistic values as cause of conflict that filters and reverberates through society to the individual subject, ultimately impeding both veterans from returning-home. After all, the issue of the border conflict, the root of the younger veteran's trauma, lies at the heart of his inability to maintain a romantic relationship, since, in addition, for his partner knowing the 'truth' forms a prerequisite. As we can see, there are shared thematic elements here with *TDR* as, like Alice, Micha neither can find peace until he 'knows' the truth, forming a paradox, which perhaps ultimately points towards historical reconciliation. The impediment to returning-home appears to be largely encapsulated in the age-old 'human frailties' overtly addressed in *TWH* and perhaps best articulated in the bible,

(and I return to this point in the following section). The overriding findings from the analysis of the corpus in this chapter reveals: First, the presence of a paradox, highlighted by Bauman and addressed also by Berger et.al., that there is a human need, in our times, for security and safety that, hitherto, traditional institutions, especially the denominational Church and close-knit family and community structure provided. Without this support, Man finds himself isolated and homeless. It may be that the solution lies in a middle-ground that entails a return to family and community, but one, as already mentioned, that maintains both respect for and responsibility for the Other as well as tolerance of difference. Second, as I have maintained throughout this thesis, that returning-home entails getting-back-into-place (Casey), that means reflection on the pervasiveness of the place world in constructing culture and identity. As Casey notes, "as places gather bodies in their midst in deeply enculturated ways, so cultures conjoin bodies in concrete circumstances of implacement" (Casey 348).

This brings me to the overall conclusion of this thesis. The multi-disciplinary approach to the study of the corpus has allowed an insight into the deep cultural and philosophical structures at play in contemporary society and that are reflected poetically in these narratives. Despite the barrage of counterforces to dwelling-well, Seiffert's discourse does not present a postmodern impasse, but rather proposes a new paradigm. This embraces alternative institutions, such as a softer and more tolerant version of family and community commitments, an acceptance and tolerance towards the Other, a life lived in accordance with the environment and a move towards authenticity. It also means attending to the near-at-hand, and the daily

experiences that make up a life. Since Esquirol's philosophy of Proximity shares these elements, particularly the attention to accepting the Other into one's home and attending to the 'things' that surround us (in the Heideggerian sense), this would align Seiffert with a philosophy of Proximity, but also in the suggestion of human relatedness with the cosmological whole, with reconstructive postmodernism. This would provide a more redemptive human existence and a philosophical reimplacement.

Finally, Seiffert's discourse implies a poetic return-home on a textual level, thus, supporting one of the main hypotheses of this thesis: that is, Seiffert taps into the deeply subjective and personal reverberations, evoked by spatial imagery, to communicate Heideggerian dwelling and a philosophical reimplacement. Through images of timeless architectural features and the warm cosy intimacies of simple abodes in natural environments, she allows us to imagine an idyll, that may not exist nor have ever existed, but stands as a space of poetic resilience against all the hostile spaces of our exterior world. Bachelard reminds us that our disconnection with the past, the unreal is just as important as the real, and through it we might imagine a future. Seiffert's poetics creates a tension that forces the reader to confront what is at loss, the drift from dwelling, from nearness to things and the simplicity of daily activities. This gives support to my thesis that the texts explored here stand as a site of optimism in our changing times. To quote Bachelard: "If we cannot imagine, we cannot foresee" (ibid 18). Like Heidegger's notion of architecture, and Esquirol's Proximity, Seiffert's poetic home "supports and solicits careful habitation, dwelling (cooking,

eating, sleeping, working, greeting, sharing), conducted with a sense of receptivity to the qualities of place, the mortality of creatures, and the relative duration of things, [which] in turn shapes the shelters that humans erect" (Reinhard Lupton 90). Ultimately, Seiffert's poetic home appears as a place that humanity drifted from but hope to return to.

2. Implications

One of the principal implications of this study relates specifically to the author as focus of this research, that is, that criticism of the works of Rachel Seiffert should imply a consideration of the novelist beyond thematic concerns with the Holocaust, memory or perpetrator discourses or indeed, historical fiction. As we have seen, Seiffert's are grand, universal themes which, at the same time, respond to a highly contemporary world full of contradictions and insecurities that crave resolution. Like many other contemporary novelists, she does not set aside social or political involvement, but chooses to appraise it through the lens of the individual subject, the small micro-stories of humanity. Yet, I have suggested that her critique does not stop there, but offers alternatives, at least on a poetic level, by confronting the reader with what humanity has lost, which places her work within reconstructive postmodernism.

The second implication to which I would like to draw attention lies in the practical realm of research methodology. This study has demonstrated that, rather than a reductive methodology, a melange of interdisciplinary fields, and here I have employed insights from sociology, topography and

philosophy inter-woven with a close study of the corpus through a literary aesthetics of a poetics of space and place, may more effectively disclose contemporary socio-political concerns. Seiffert's works might effectively have been read through gender, culture, historical or eco-critical perspectives, or even by limiting this study to merely one of the disciplines already chosen, for example, a reading solely through Heideggerian dwelling, would essentially have illuminated how a sense of place and the practice of building and homemaking articulates a precarious co-habitation with others and environment, and perhaps with the particular challenges to dwelling in our contemporary world. But, this alone would not disclose the way each apparently distinct vision complements the other, elucidating more than a contemporary literary critique or formal, historical perspective, but also the workings of a poetics that locates the text both in a current literary and socio-political realm. In other words, by conjoining these disciplines, attention is paid both to contemporary culture and socio-political context alongside its literary expression. Perhaps this might, furthermore, point the way towards the importance of literary studies to investigate other fields. This study has merely alluded to some such possibilities, such as the implication of architectural design, urban planning, and enviromentalism on human dwelling, or the challenges faced by the war veteran to re-find a peaceful co-habitation. With regard to architectural design, or uban planning, reading Seiffert through Literary Architecture has permitted a more nuanced interpretation of what might, at first sight, appear as mundane, or purely domestic imagery fused with a romantic pastoral backdrop. Nevertheless, it offers insights into the inexpressible realm of the lived experience of place

and space.[109] I have highlighted, for instance, many scenes which echo Mumford's early warnings about the loss of humane architecture, along with Heidegger's thoughts on relatedness within a consideration of what constitutes dwelling-well, and these express the way architectural space ultimately binds human activity to living space.

3. Further Research

During the writing and researching of this thesis, many questions and issues arose which would be fruitful areas of research that I have not been able, for reasons of time or space to follow up, and, here, I outline some of the most significant areas.

The first areas are those which extend the theoretical framework of this thesis. One of my fundamental purposes has been to elucidate the relationship between Literary Architecture as rhetorical device and meaning in the works of Rachel Seiffert. There is certainly much more scope for detailed study of its workings in contemporary literature. There are many other texts that employ the tropes of architecture, architects, building and home as literary devices, that have not yet, as far as I am aware, received such a critical viewpoint: many of the works of American writers, Nicole Krauss, or Marilynne Robinson, (also a literature of optimism), or others that also thematize the quotidian and family relationships, such as those by Irish

[109] The work by Angeliki Sioli, and Yoonchun Jung. *Reading Architecture: Literary Imagination and Architectural Experience*. 1st. 5th M, Routledge, 2018., published while concluding this thesis, demonstrates the rising interest from architectural theorists in the literary representation of built space. The authors suggest that "questioning the massive architectural production of today's globalized capital driven world, it turns to literature for ways to understand, resist, or suggest alternative paths for architectural practice" (Sioli et.al. foreword).

writers, Anne Enright or Bernard MacLaverty's latest novel, Midwinter Break, (2017), which has recently come to my notice. This novel features a retired architect and his wife, but there are echoes of Seiffert's poetics here as place and architectural space intermingle with the violent conflict of Northern Ireland. The possibilities for extending research into the use of Literary Architecture, combined with a focus on a poetics of home and domestic space is extensive and evidently, the works to which this may be applied would be far too numerous to mention here. Furthermore, Dell's initial incursion into the American family novel, and the return to meaning that, as I have concluded, exists in Seiffert's works, could be taken as a point of departure to include British or Irish novels that take family as central focus. Although I have not specifically included Seiffert within this category despite, as I have mentioned, the strong emphasis on family relationships, her work might be considered as forming part of the genre and, thus considered, would support Dell's thesis. The notion of home and the return-home viewed within existentialism might prove to be a fruitful lens through which to study, not only contemporary fiction in general, but more specifically, war literature, which has homecoming as primary thematic focus. Much more broadly, however, it would be fruitful to investigate the issue of reconstructivism as a paradigm in post millennium literature.

I have not studied in detail some other, related, issues that have arisen from this research. First, the return-home through the notion of Heideggerian dwelling may also be viewed in parallel with Biblical discourses. One researcher, Julia Reinhard Lupton, who I have referred to in this thesis, has studied the relationship between the Jewish *Book of Jonah*, Heideggerian

dwelling and Shakespeare's *Pericles* in which she characterizes Shakespeare's late plays as "'Abrahamic' to describe the inclusive, pluralizing, creaturely, and historically layered landscapes of these testamental works" (Reinhard Lupton 98). Indeed, in chapter three, I suggested the connection between biblical references in the novel *TWH* and the story of Abraham, as both reflect on the plurality of religious belief and cosmological connectedness. Nevertheless, the relationship between dwelling in Seiffert's texts and Biblical discourses would benefit from more detailed research.

Second, in regard to the points outlined in the previous section, Lupton notes the way literature can be employed to explore the "challenges to dwelling faced by particular social groups and to experience our unevenly shared immersion as human beings in creaturely existence" (ibid 99). This would certainly hold true, since Heideggerian dwelling and the notion of home has undoubtedly gained ground recently in other fields outside architecture or literature. Exemplary of this is an article (prior to Lupton's), by Wim Deckkers who, working in the field of mental health care, notes the relationship between dwelling, house and home and dementia care.[110] Likewise, as a 'social group', the challenges to dwelling faced by homecoming war veterans conjoined with artistic representation would be a productive line of enquiry that would tap into the concept of dwelling as a fundamental necessity of being human, the difficulties of dwelling-well and house and home. In this respect, literature enables us to perceive

[110] See Wim Dekkers, "Dwelling, House and Home: Towards a Home-Led Perspective on Dementia Care." *Medicine, Health Care, And Philosophy*, vol. 14, no. 3, 2011, pp. 291–300.

phenomenological elements of home and the impediments to dwelling-well that are otherwise inexpressible. My discussion of *Afterwards* in chapter three has perhaps only hinted at this possibility, but I believe that this may profitably be extended and compared to other works with similar thematic focus. Certainly, as I have already mentioned, there are many such possibilities of research regarding the notion of dwelling and home that would have resonance not only in the realm of literary studies, but for other fields as well.

Third, a fruitful area of research would involve a study of a form of contemporary literature, which often employs minimalist aestheticism and seemingly mundane thematic concerns, through an equally contemporary philosophy that adopts organicism or attention to the proximate as central to a form of resilience and resistance to modernity. In this study, as we have seen, I have referred specifically to Esquirol's framework of Intimacy and Proxmity, but of similar interest are Rosa Maria Rodriquez Magda's conception of Transmodernity or Jordi Pigem Perez' Post-materialism.[111] But, perhaps a more in-depth collaboration with scholars in the field of philosophy could reveal further interesting insights. Again, this may have implications in the field of psychology, in trauma studies for example, but may also be of interest, not only to the war veteran, but to a post-generational

[111] For example, see Rosa María Rodríguez Magda, "Transmodernity : Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World." *TRANSMODERNITY: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World*, vol. 1, no. 1, University of California, 2011, and Jordi Pigem i Perez and Àlex Rovira Celma, *Buena Crisis: Hacia Un Mundo Postmaterialista*. 2nd ed., Editorial Kairós SA, 2010.

literature that reveals the reverberations of historical conflict, and thus its wider societal effects.

Furthermore, Heideggerian dwelling, that is Man's connectedness with the fourfold, underpins much ecological and environmental thought today. This concept no longer seems as alien or mystical as it might have been at the time of Heidegger's writing. Certainly, our ecologically conscious times have facilitated an understanding of his later essays. Seiffert's work could be profitably read through the lens of eco-critical studies, and perhaps, more precisely feminist eco-criticism. I have already briefly mentioned the parallels, for example, that might be drawn between Yasia and a Goddess figure, but this may equally apply to Alice in *Afterwards* or Ewe in 'Field Study'. Furthermore, because of time constraints, I have not paid attention to other stories within the collection *FS*, such as 'The Late Spring'or 'Tentsmuir Sands' amongst others, which clearly lend themselves to such a reading, as the publisher Vintage has reflected in their choice of book jacket for the 2005 edition. In addition, these stories would further support much of my research in this thesis on the loss of dwelling and the suggestion of a return home. But a reading in conjunction with eco-criticism would, I believe, reveal further significant conclusions as to the link between Seiffert's work and organicist philosophies or Green political movements.

In the light of the above-mentioned ecological perspectives, I would like to conclude this section, and indeed this thesis with the following thoughts. I have mentioned, in my exploration of *ABIW* and *TDR*, that these texts function as a warning to the present and future generations. The same

may also be said of the stories in *FS* that have not formed part of the corpus. As Gustaw Herling-Grudzinski wrote “a man can be human only under human conditions” (qtd.in Synder 341), and as Synder points out, it is the State’s responsibility to maintain these conditions, and this includes not only maintaining plurality and tolerance, but also investment in science to care for the environment as part of these ‘human conditions’. If these are maintained then perhaps competition for *Lebensraum*, which according to Synder was the fundamental issue of the Holocaust, would not become once again a challenge to peaceful dwelling. Thus, Seiffert’s work serves as a warning, but it is not a literature of pessimism, but rather one of hope in that it speaks to what is at stake and what may yet be salvaged. As Synder notes “understanding the Holocaust is our chance, perhaps our last one, to preserve humanity” (ibid 342).

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