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'Once more she was part of a novel':  
Dorothy Richardson's Doubly Autobiographical *Pilgrimage*

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Degree of PhD

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## Abstract

This thesis examines Dorothy Richardson's thirteen-volume novel sequence *Pilgrimage* (1915-1967) as a doubly autobiographical text. *Pilgrimage* is widely considered to be a fictionalised retelling of Richardson's own life, and many critics have found little difference between the lives of Dorothy Richardson and her protagonist Miriam Henderson. Following the Künstlerroman tradition, Richardson's novel sequence concerns itself exclusively with the life and coming to adulthood of Miriam Henderson who, like her creator, has an interest in documenting her own life. Thus, as *Pilgrimage* is the product of Richardson's struggle to find a place within literature, it is Miriam's too.

I begin by foregrounding the theoretical landscape of autobiographical theory to date, focusing on feminist works and noting a historical concentration on male autobiography in critical pieces. In particular, Laura Marcus's *Auto/biographical Discourses* (1994) and Max Saunders' *Self Impression* (2010) are used to discuss the uneasy space *Pilgrimage* occupies as an example of autobiographical fiction, fitting into neither binary genre.

*Pilgrimage* is then read chronologically, noting Richardson's development as a writer alongside her protagonist's. Miriam is a voracious reader and the progression of her interest in reading is discussed throughout this thesis, finding the influence of a variety of writers such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Ouida, Charlotte Brontë, Henry James and more. The following of this interest in literature is accompanied by a tracking of the narrative innovations Richardson employs in the writing of the *Pilgrimage* sequence, such as narrative shifts and unusual punctuation formations, which she uses to suggest points in the text in which Miriam can be seen to be telling her life story in the same way that Richardson has.

A case is then made for *Pilgrimage* as doubly autobiographical, meaning that it is Miriam Henderson writing about herself, by Richardson writing about Henderson as herself. This dual mode of life writing can be traced through the novel sequence, developing in its many narrative innovations, as well as in Miriam's clear interest in both the reading and the writing of literature. *Pilgrimage* then represents both Dorothy Richardson and Miriam Henderson's attempts to represent their lives in literature.

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## Introduction

Dorothy Richardson's thirteen-volume novel sequence *Pilgrimage* (1915-1967) is widely considered to be a fictionalised retelling of Richardson's own life, and, as will be discussed at length in my first chapter, very many critics see no real difference between the life of Dorothy Richardson and that of her protagonist Miriam Henderson. The novel sequence concerns itself exclusively with the life and coming to adulthood of Miriam Henderson and, other than close similarities in their life events, of which there are many, the one thing which links Richardson and Miriam inextricably is the desire to write, to create, and to document their lives. Thus, as *Pilgrimage* is the product of Richardson's struggle to find a place within literature, it is Miriam's too. *Pilgrimage* is doubly autobiographical; it is Miriam Henderson writing about herself, by Richardson writing about Henderson as herself, and this dual mode of life writing can be traced through the novel sequence, at times found in its many ellipses and narrative shifts, as well as in Miriam's clear interest in both the reading and the writing of literature.

I use the term 'doubly autobiographical' rather the more definitive 'double autobiography' throughout this thesis when attempting to conceptualise the relationship between Richardson and Miriam's writing. This is because I wish to emphasise the liminality of Richardson's work, which is neither fully autobiography nor entirely fictitious, and I do not believe *Pilgrimage* can fit neatly into any genre or classification. As I will go on to discuss more fully in chapter one, there has been a critical movement towards widening the genre of autobiography to include literary media which are more subjectively autobiographical (such as autofiction, memoirs, letters and more) and this has largely been a way of trying to open up critical interest in the stories of women's lives which are often not lived or written in traditional forms. Key contemporary theorists of auto/biography have written in support of this expansion of the genre, often framing it as a response to the structuralist account of autobiography found in theorists such as Philippe Lejeune. Lejeune, in his monograph *On Autobiography*, translated into English in 1989 by Katherine Leary, attempts to place strict requirements on texts in order for them to be classified as autobiography. He writes that such pieces of writing must be 'retrospective prose narrative written by a real person concerning his own

existence, where the focus is his individual life, in particular the story of his personality.<sup>1</sup> He also gives four conditions which texts must meet for him to consider them autobiographies, noting that he would not consider memoirs or autobiographical novels to meet each criterion. Richardson's novel sequence would therefore not be considered autobiography by Lejeune.

Liz Stanley, whose criticism I discuss in greater depth in the following chapter, includes Lejeune when exploring male critics' lack of female literature in their studies in her monograph *The Auto/biographical I* (1995). She writes:

Indeed, there are few women writers who *are* admitted to the canon as specified by male writers on autobiography: substantially the same relentless progression of names of "great male autobiographers" is invoked in whatever account one turns to.<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, Laura Marcus, whose work on female and feminist life-writing forms the theoretical background of this thesis, criticises Lejeune's writing at the *On Autobiography* for being 'inattentive to questions of gender'<sup>3</sup> noting that he always reverts to masculine pronouns, dismisses alternative forms of life-writing (outside of formal autobiography) which are often employed by women, and ignores, in his discussion of the importance of naming, the potential for women to have problematic relationships to their name due to the patriarchal associations of male ownership which surnames exhibit. Marcus does note however that Lejeune's model of autobiography is 'unusually flexible'<sup>4</sup> compared to his peers' work on life-writing and that his more recent criticism presents a greater awareness of gendered issues. Thus, structuralist definitions of autobiography exclude a great deal of female life-writing by formalising the conventions of the genre of autobiography and giving little regard to traditionally female and feminist forms such as memoir and autobiographical fiction. Therefore, I do not seek to argue that *Pilgrimage* can be measured within these restrictive boundaries due to the hybridity and doubling of its autobiographical writing. Instead, as I will argue in chapter one, I follow feminist theorists of life-writing in finding new language to classify writing techniques

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<sup>1</sup> Philippe Lejeune, *On Autobiography*, ed. Paul John Eakin, trans. Katherine Leary (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), p. 4

<sup>2</sup> Liz Stanley, *The Auto/biographical I: The Theory and Practice of Feminist Auto/biography* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1995), p. 61, emphasis author's own.

<sup>3</sup> Laura Marcus, *Auto/biographical Discourses: Theory, Criticism, Practice* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1994), p. 192

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 193

which have not received a great deal of critical attention to date. It is for this reason that I find 'doubly autobiographical' to be the term which fits with Richardson's unusual and innovative style most closely, where she utilises known forms such as autobiography and autobiographical fiction but operates just outside of their strict boundaries to create something new in the doubling of authorship when her protagonist takes up the writing of the piece.

There are many points throughout this thesis in which I refer to Miriam's 'noting down' or 'recording' of ideas of events to be used later in her life writing. While at times these moments do entail the physical act of writing (see, for example, my discussion of Miriam's letter writing in chapter five) this is more often in reference to the conceptualising of ideas - Miriam noting, in her mind, to herself, which of her experiences may one day make for useful life writing material - and should not, therefore, be assumed to mean physical writing. This then complicates what is meant by 'text' when discussing *Pilgrimage* in this thesis, with the traditional definition given in *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* defining 'text' as 'the actual wording of a written work, as distinct from a reader's (or theatrical director's) interpretation of its story, theme, subtext, etc.'<sup>5</sup> However, in relation to Richardson and Miriam's writing the text is not always something which has been written yet by Miriam, although it has been written by Richardson. Similarly, 'character' cannot be taken to simply mean 'a personage in a narrative or dramatic work'<sup>6</sup> as these are often real people in Richardson's life fictionalised twice through her writing and through Miriam's. Furthermore, as this thesis explores throughout, it is not necessarily possible to single out the points of the narrative of *Pilgrimage* which are definitively to be viewed as being written by Miriam. Instead, there are moments woven into the narrative which, due to Richardson's experimental narrative techniques such as shifts between first and third person, can be suggested as times when Miriam is controlling the narrative. The process of Miriam's coming to writing, as my thesis

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<sup>5</sup> Chris Baldick, 'Text' *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015),  
<<http://www.oxfordreference.com.ezproxy.lib.gla.ac.uk/view/10.1093/acref/9780198715443.01.0001/acref-9780198715443-e-1134?rkey=r2EeNl&result=1159>>

<sup>6</sup> Chris Baldick, 'Character' *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015),  
<<http://www.oxfordreference.com.ezproxy.lib.gla.ac.uk/view/10.1093/acref/9780198715443.01.0001/acref-9780198715443-e-187?rkey=5lBrCY&result=188>>



explores, takes many years and encompasses a broad range of influences and experiences.

Most critical works on Dorothy Richardson use either the 1967 J. M. Dent collected edition, the first to publish all thirteen chapter-volumes together, or the 1979 Virago edition and its subsequent reprints, which are identical to the Dent edition, as their primary texts. Both the Dent and the Virago editions use the same page numbers and as such the texts allow scholars to easily track down important moments in the long narrative of *Pilgrimage*. However, the Dent edition vastly alters the punctuation of some of the chapter-volumes from their first editions published by Duckworth, as I will go on to discuss in later chapters. The unusual punctuation of the first editions is vital to the argument of this thesis for *Pilgrimage* as doubly autobiographical and for Miriam's and Richardson's progress as writers and as such I have decided to use the first editions in all cases. Since the Virago output in the late 1970s, only two further republications of Richardson's novel sequence have been produced; *Pointed Roofs* (1915) and *The Tunnel* (1919), both published by Broadview in 2014.<sup>7</sup> In a note on the text, the editors of these editions, Stephen Ross and Tara Thomson, cite George H. Thomson's 2001 electronic guide to the varying editions of Richardson's work to claim that *Pilgrimage* has had a 'troubled publication history'<sup>8</sup> and that 'Gerald Duckworth and Company, the press that published the first edition, wanted to regularize the punctuation somewhat to make it more accessible to readers - a move the author unsuccessfully resisted.'<sup>9</sup> They also note that Richardson made some changes to the text for the collected editions, mainly to correct spelling and punctuation errors. Ross and Thomson view this, as they describe it, troubled history as a reason to take the Dent edition as a source text as the punctuation has been corrected by Richardson and by editors to simplify the text, meaning that it is arguably the final state that Richardson wanted her work to be presented in. However, the fluctuation in punctuation and narrative style of *Pilgrimage*, which is particularly concentrated in earlier chapter-volumes as I will go on to discuss, is a fundamental element of both

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<sup>7</sup> The Dorothy Richardson Scholarly Editions Project are also currently working on new editions of *Pilgrimage*, as well as Richardson's shorter fiction and letters, to be published by Oxford University Press in the near future: <<https://www.keele.ac.uk/drsep/>>

<sup>8</sup> Stephen Ross and Tara Thomson, 'A Note on the Text' *Pointed Roofs*, ed. Stephen Ross and Tara Thomson (Peterborough: Broadview, 2014), p. 49

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

Richardson's and Miriam's development as writers and must be viewed in its original uncorrected state in order to identify and to analyse the effects of these moments of literary experimentation.

Furthermore, I follow some other critics in using the term 'chapter-volumes' to refer to the thirteen novels of *Pilgrimage*, the first eleven of which were published individually. This distinguishes from the four volumes of the collected edition and was indeed a term used by Richardson herself, who saw each chapter-volume as a small part of the wider whole of her project. In a 1934 letter to the bookseller and publisher Sylvia Beach, Richardson discusses the individually published novels as 'small bits of a continuous book'<sup>10</sup> and 'small chapter-volumes,'<sup>11</sup> reinforcing that they are part of a whole.

In a 1938 letter to her friend and contemporary Bryher, Richardson notes that a reviewer approaching the enormity of *Pilgrimage* for the first time, with the twelve chapter-volumes available at the time newly collected into four volumes, would find the experience 'something of a facer.'<sup>12</sup> Dealing with such a large and complex text is certainly challenging, but the chronological approach of this thesis hopes to illustrate the development of two writers - Dorothy Richardson and Miriam Henderson - for whom the novel sequence is the product of their ongoing study of writing.

Chapter one opens with an overview of the critical and theoretical background of auto/biographical and life writing studies, particularly focusing on how attitudes to and scholarly work on the life writing of women have changed over time. This then foregrounds a discussion of the critical works to date on Dorothy Richardson, giving a loosely chronological review of the developing themes within Richardsonian criticism.

In chapter two, the events of *Pointed Roofs* (1915) and *Backwater* (1916) are discussed, focusing on Miriam's first steps into living independently as an adult when she moves to Germany to teach in a school for girls. Miriam's apprehension

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<sup>10</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'To Sylvia Beach, 10 November 1934' *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson*, ed. Gloria G. Fromm (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), pp. 276-277 (p. 276)

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'To Bryher, 28 October 1938' *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson*, ed. Gloria G. Fromm (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), pp. 353-355 (p. 354)

on being faced with a new life and career is expressed by Richardson through hesitant punctuation, with an extensive use of ellipses which, along with Miriam's clear interest in reading and in the English language, is used to explore her future as a professional writer.

In chapter three the most experimental of the chapter-volumes, *Honeycomb* (1917), *The Tunnel* (1919), and *Interim* (1919), are explored. These chapter-volumes see Miriam's life change dramatically once again with her mother committing suicide and Miriam subsequently moving to London to work in a dental surgery. This upheaval and unsettlement is displayed by Richardson greatly increasing the instances of her shifts from third to first person narrative and her experimentation with punctuation which in *Interim* now includes playing with how she reports speech. I then see these as developments in the writing of both Richardson and Miriam, who begins to see herself taking to writing in the future.

Chapter four discusses *Deadlock* (1921), *Revolving Lights* (1923) and *The Trap* (1925), which focus on Richardson's developing romantic relationships and platonic friendships as the narrative steps away from work to explore Miriam's private life as an independent young woman living in London more fully. This then provides Miriam with experiences on which to write and as such these chapter-volumes represent a tangible increase in expressions of her desire to write, as well as further encouragement from friends. Miriam's love of reading also continues, focusing on the work of Henry James and Ralph Waldo Emerson here.

In chapter five I look at *Oberland* (1927), *Dawn's Left Hand* (1931) and *Clear Horizon* (1935), where Richardson provides new experiences for her protagonist to write on, furthering Miriam's journey towards taking up the writing of her own life as her profession. This involves Miriam taking a trip to Switzerland, where she not only gets welcome relief from her stressful working life in London to focus on how to make her dream of writing professionally a reality, but Miriam also experiences the natural world of Switzerland and gains inspiration from this voyage. This, along with a tangled love life and difficulties at home and at work, are explored as material for Miriam's writing.

Chapter six covers the penultimate and final chapter-volumes of the *Pilgrimage* sequence, *Dimple Hill* (1938) and *March Moonlight* (1965) and discusses how their publication as part of collected editions sets them apart from the previous eleven chapter-volumes. With the final chapter-volume unfinished and published posthumously these do not indicate a neat closure to the sequence but rather a further continuation of the *Pilgrimage* sequence's lack of conformity. The final chapter-volume does see Richardson's autobiographical protagonist make serious steps towards making writing her vocation and this is discussed alongside the character's developing interest in religious pursuits as inspiration for the narrative of her life that she will come to write, in much the same way as Richardson has written *Pilgrimage* using the material of her own life.

## Chapter 1

### 'If women had been the recorders of things from the beginning...': Dorothy Richardson, Life-Writing, and Doubly Autobiographical Fiction

Most scholarly writing on Dorothy Richardson will note the autobiographical nature of the chapter-volumes which make up her *Pilgrimage* novel sequence. This is in part because few details are known about her life outside of the fiction she created (although this may change soon with the publication of her letters in their entirety by Oxford University Press), forcing the curious to plunder *Pilgrimage* for apparent information. Furthermore, the facts which are known correspond closely with details of her protagonist's life. Additionally, Richardson is said to have stated to the writer Vincent Brome in a meeting shortly before her death: 'my novel was distinctly autobiographical.'<sup>1</sup> This is then compounded by Richardson's protagonist, Miriam Henderson, taking an interest in life-writing, particularly that of women like herself whose stories have historically not been told. In the fourth chapter-volume, *The Tunnel* (1919), Miriam imagines a different historical and political landscape had women been able to tell their stories: 'If women had been the recorders of things from the beginning it would all have been the other way round . . .'<sup>2</sup> She then, slightly later in the same chapter-volume, disparages the kind of men who historically have had their stories told: 'I hate "great men" I think. . . .'<sup>3</sup> This chapter outlines the theoretical landscape of auto/biographical studies, paying particular attention to feminist theory to disengage from biography's long-held focus on the lives of the "'great men'" who Miriam so despises. These theories are then considered in relation to Richardson's *Pilgrimage* novel sequence, discussing the varying degrees to which critics have considered the autobiographical status of *Pilgrimage*, and exploring this against the life-writing of Richardson's protagonist, who I see as the part-author of *Pilgrimage*, creating a doubly autobiographical text.

#### Auto/Biographical Theory: Past and Present

Two theorists of auto/biography - Laura Marcus and Max Saunders - stand out as writers whose critical works engage most closely with my own reading of

<sup>1</sup> Vincent Brome, 'A Last Meeting with Dorothy Richardson' *London Magazine*, 6 June 1959, pp. 26-32 (p. 28)

<sup>2</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *The Tunnel* (London: Duckworth, 1919), p. 267

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 303

auto/biography and life-writing in relation to Richardson's work. For this reason, I discuss their contribution first before taking a loosely chronological approach to more general theoretical works. Laura Marcus's 1994 monograph *Auto/biographical Discourses* provides a valuable introduction to criticism on the literary genres of both biography and autobiography, particularly as Marcus explores auto/biography from outside of the traditional context of the white upper-class male subject. Marcus begins by stating her interest in the life-writing of women:

Autobiography was a central case for feminist criticisms in the 1980s, exposing processes of exclusion and marginalisation in the construction of literary canons. Not only were women autobiographers self-evidently outside the "Great Men" tradition with which many autobiographical critics operated; generic definitions served to exclude forms of "life-writing" such as diaries, letters and journals, often adopted by women and those outside mainstream literary culture.<sup>4</sup>

This makes it very clear that Marcus intends to work outside of circumscribed genres. Indeed, her use of the same term as Richardson - "Great Men" - to quickly refer to those she is not as interested in illustrates just how well Marcus's theoretical writing works together with Richardson's life-writing, sharing a concern for the work of women. Marcus's work is used throughout this thesis to provide context when discussing Richardson's work as autobiographical or otherwise. Furthermore, Marcus's use of the ambiguous term 'life-writing' here, rather than autobiography or biography, show that her theories are open to being applied to writing which does not fit strict criteria, again showing a comfortable fit with Richardson's hybrid of fiction and autobiography. This is made even clearer when Marcus notes that 'one undertheorised theme in these discussions is the relationship between autobiography and the novel, in particular the *Bildungsroman*.'<sup>5</sup> Here Marcus highlights a clear gap in the criticism on auto/biographical writing, which I do not believe to have been filled by critical works on *Pilgrimage* to date, despite Richardson's writing very clearly sitting within the liminal categories that Marcus discusses. I would then suggest that the work done by this thesis to explore a text, which is both a fictional

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<sup>4</sup>Laura Marcus, *Auto/biographical Discourses: Theory, Criticism, Practice* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1994), p. 1

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 171

novel and an autobiography based in real experience (as well as following the Künstlerroman tradition), <sup>6</sup> can go some way to bridge this critical gap.

Marcus does not discuss Richardson's work in her monograph, but she has contributed an essay entitled 'Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage*' (2006) to a collection of criticism on modernism. Here, Marcus names Miriam as Richardson's 'auto/biographical persona'<sup>7</sup> and notes that '*Pilgrimage* is an autobiographical fiction, with all the complexity that this term, both composite and oxymoronic, carries with it.'<sup>8</sup> Marcus also gives a biographical account of Richardson's life, noting how closely this intersects with Miriam's experiences, and surveys Richardson's writing endeavours outside of *Pilgrimage*, such as her work on cinematic techniques and the medium of film itself, which at the time was a new invention, which Marcus then sees as intersecting with Richardson's approach to writing in an innovative way in her novel sequence. Fundamentally, this essay makes clear just how suitable Marcus's ideas on auto/biography are for my study of *Pilgrimage* as doubly autobiographical, with Marcus viewing Richardson's writing as occupying a liminal location between life-writing and fiction. She states: '[*Pilgrimage*] creates a literary space of its own between the genres of novel and autobiography,'<sup>9</sup> emphasising the innovation and uniqueness - 'of its own' - as well as the difficulties in defining this hybrid text, which writes the life of its author as well as the life of its fictional protagonist.

More recently, Max Saunders has also undertaken some of the theorising needed to explore the relationship between autobiographical and fictional texts in his book *Self Impression* (2010), which discusses the 'combining and disrupting'<sup>10</sup> manner in which autobiography and fiction meet in modernist literature. In his introduction, Saunders discusses the terminology of life-writing - a 'contentious term'<sup>11</sup> apparently - and notes that he will be following the lead of Hermione Lee

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<sup>6</sup> The Künstlerroman genre is defined by J.A. Cuddon's *A Dictionary of Literary Terms* (1998) as 'a novel which has an artist (in any creative art) as the central character and which shows the development of the artist from childhood to maturity or later' (p. 446). A Bildungsroman also shows a character gaining maturity, without the artistic element.

<sup>7</sup> Laura Marcus, 'Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage*' *A Companion to Modernist Literature and Culture*, ed. David Bradshaw and Kevin J.H. Dettmar (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), pp. 440-449 (p. 440)

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 440-441

<sup>10</sup> Max Saunders, *Self Impression: Life-Writing, Autobiografiction, and the Forms of Modern Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 1

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 4

by using the term when distinct lines between auto/biographical genres are blurred.<sup>12</sup> Saunders finds that traditional autobiographical writing of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had become 'shadowed by an increasing scepticism'<sup>13</sup> due to the experimental autobiographical writing which was taking place simultaneously, which led to autobiographical writers questioning the conventions of their genre. Saunders gives the autobiographies of Mill, Ruskin and Nietzsche as examples of 'impressionist experiments'<sup>14</sup> which have allowed for later experimentation. Saunders concludes his findings by discussing the performative nature of life-writing and autobiography, in that the author is performing the role of the character they are writing, even if that character is firmly rooted in the reality of their own life. Saunders explains:

After all, how better to show the story of an artist's life than by giving an example of his art? This technical self-consciousness isn't just a matter of saying that an artist's autobiography must attend primarily to that subject's aesthetic sensibilities. It is also to say that the writing of the autobiography is itself an aesthetic act: in short, a performance of being an artist; of being that artist, who had that life story. This [...] may in turn shed light on why it is that historically the emergence of life-writing is inextricable from the experimentation in fictionality that gave birth to the modern novel.<sup>15</sup>

The artist's autobiography as aesthetic act is a key concept in the study of Dorothy Richardson's writing, as her autobiographical writing and her artistic output are one and the same. This then suggests that the term 'life-writing' may provide a way into applying a genre to her complex novel. Saunders does mention Richardson in his study but it is never more than a passing reference to reinforce a point on another writer, with Saunders calling *Pilgrimage* an 'autobiographical novel' like D.H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*,<sup>16</sup> and 'profoundly autobiographical' like the novels of Conrad, Ford, Proust, Lawrence, Joyce and Woolf.<sup>17</sup> He does, however, dedicate a whole chapter to Virginia Woolf's work, discussing at length her 'sustained parody'<sup>18</sup> of biography in *Orlando* (1928). The

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<sup>12</sup> Hermione Lee notes in *Body Parts* (2005) that 'the term "life-writing" is sometimes used when the distinction between biography and autobiography is being deliberately blurred, or when different ways of telling a life-story - memoir, autobiography, biography, diary, letters, autobiographical fiction - are being discussed together' (p. 100).

<sup>13</sup> Max Saunders, *Self Impression*, p. 500

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 501

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 516

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 202

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 443



chapter dedicated to Woolf's writing in *Self Impression* raises a particularly important point of note on Richardson: that her work has never gained the critical respect and readership of Woolf's. Saunders claims that Woolf's work 'represents the most sustained and diverse exploration of the relation between fiction and auto/biography'<sup>19</sup> in the English language, noting that Proust was doing similar work in French. To not even consider Richardson here, however, is most definitely an oversight. Saunders notes that '[his] subject is how modern writers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries found new ways to combine life-writing with fiction',<sup>20</sup> showing a clear alignment with Richardson's work, which, as this thesis seeks to illustrate, falls somewhere within the two genres. Furthermore, Richardson has been shown by some critics to be a key figure of the modernist movement, raising further questions over her exclusion by Saunders. Indeed, Jane Goldman names her amongst 'the most important writers (in English) of this period'<sup>21</sup> in her 2004 survey *Modernism 1910-1945* while Deborah Parsons' monograph *Theorists of the Modernist Novel* (2007) discusses Richardson alongside the work of James Joyce and Virginia Woolf, viewing all three writers as believing 'fundamentally in an underlying rhythm and connectedness to modern life'<sup>22</sup> where 'a reflexive attention to style and form is central'<sup>23</sup> in their works, showing the similarities to be found in the writers despite Richardson's lack of critical success compared to her contemporaries. Parsons then defines Richardson, Woolf and Joyce's work as modernist, despite noting that 'none [...] would have thought of themselves as modernist'<sup>24</sup> but rather would have considered their writing modern. Parsons gives a definition of modernist literature which emphasises innovation, drawing clear links with Richardson's work:

For a generation born into the last decades of the Victorian era, yet whose maturity coincided with technological innovation, scientific revolution and the destructive rupture of world war, the sense of living in a new age was acute, and what had become the conventional

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 439

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 4

<sup>21</sup> Jane Goldman, *Modernism 1910-1945: From Image to Apocalypse* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. xiv

<sup>22</sup> Deborah Parsons, *Theorists of the Modernist Novel: James Joyce, Dorothy Richardson, Virginia Woolf* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), p. 15

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 16

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 10

forms of fiction seemed inappropriate, even hostile, to the depiction of their contemporary movement.<sup>25</sup>

Richardson, along with Woolf and Joyce, fits easily into this definition with Parsons' focus on experimentation to represent changes in society. Very many critics have theorised modernism and its many definitions, finding it multidimensional and difficult to categorise - indeed much like Richardson's work - and often with an emphasis on newness. Just one example of this, from Sean Latham and Gayle Rogers' text on the evolution of modernism, does well to explain the struggle in defining works of this period:

There is no such thing as modernism - no singular definition capable of bringing order to the diverse multitude of creators, manifestos, practices, and politics that have been variously constellated around this enigmatic term.<sup>26</sup>

Furthermore, although this thesis aims to emphasise the uniqueness of Richardson's doubly autobiographical writing style, it must be stated that her work did not exist in a vacuum and she was working within a context of other experimental female modernist writers and therefore it is not simply her position as a female writer which allows her to create something innovative. There have been several critical studies of the interconnecting relationships and influences of female modernist writers in recent years although this work is not yet complete, as Bonnie Kime Scott notes in her 2007 study of the subject *Gender in Modernism*, 'scholars continue to recover works consciously or unconsciously neglected on the basis of female authorship.'<sup>27</sup> In this text, Scott discusses Richardson's writing alongside that of many other female authors of the period and provides extensive samples of their writing. In doing so, Scott allows for both the similarities and differences between the writing styles to be observed, as well as explained. Writing specifically on Richardson, she notes that 'movement across disciplinary boundaries is now an expectation for modernist studies. [...] In the present volume, Virginia Woolf, H.D., and Dorothy Richardson become models of interdisciplinary practice,'<sup>28</sup> exemplifying the modernist literary networks in which Richardson operated. Other critics have explored the

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 2

<sup>26</sup> Sean Latham and Gayle Rogers, *Modernism: Evolution of an Idea* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), p. 1

<sup>27</sup> Bonnie Kime Scott, *Gender in Modernism: New Geographies, Complex Intersections* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2007), p. 2

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 3

connections between Richardson and various other female modernist writers, such as Rebecca Bowler's monograph, discussed later in this chapter, which includes a comparison of Richardson and May Sinclair's work. The female modernist writer whose work is most closely aligned with Richardson's own is that of Virginia Woolf. This is in part due to their writing style having similarities in the way they have attempted to portray female interiority, but the frequent recurrence of this comparison in critical works (with Richardson very often a brief comparator for Woolf's better-known works as this chapter often notes) is most likely also because Woolf reviewed Richardson's work, as I will go on to discuss in this chapter. The relationship between Richardson and Woolf and their writing is explored throughout this thesis, most fully in chapters three and four, and is an attempt to situate Richardson within what Bonnie Kime Scott calls the 'tangled mesh of modernism'<sup>29</sup> where there are many intersections. Although, as this thesis sets out, there are many elements of Richardson's writing style which are innovative, she still remains as a figure within the modernism movement and thus has connections within it, particularly with other female writers who have been similarly marginalised within critical writing.

Thus, I do not seek to explore the definition of modernism in this thesis, nor do I attempt to debate Richardson's place within the movement. Rather, I view it as a useful term for the discussion of how Richardson relates to her contemporaries, and how her work has been somewhat neglected in comparison to writers with a similar focus on textual innovation, even though, as Parsons and Goldman have indicated, she did make a significant contribution to modernism. Saunders then, with his aim to comprehensively explore the intersection between fiction and life-writing in the modernist period, would have strengthened his study by widening it to include Richardson's autobiographical fiction.

Saunders' oversight is further pronounced when he discusses Woolf's work in terms of the act of reading, which is a recurrent motif in *Pilgrimage*. Saunders claims that:

Instead of being the autobiography, reading prompts the creation of autobiography. If texts energize our imaginations in this way, as they

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 373

surely do, then the boundaries between self and other, fact and fiction, writer and reader, become even harder to maintain.<sup>30</sup>

This preoccupation with the transgressing of boundaries, particularly those between fact and fiction, is a key concept in Richardson studies and therefore Saunders' theoretical writing could have benefitted greatly from focussing on her work in its own right, rather than as a comparative element in discussing the work of others. Nevertheless, the work done by Saunders to explore the intertwining of autobiography and literature in modernist writing is fairly comprehensive, meaning that his work is used throughout this thesis to provide a critical backdrop where Laura Marcus's reach ends.

Outside of Marcus and Saunders, there has been a great deal of critical writing on auto/biography and life-writing, proving a sustaining interest in the subject over time. Surveying this criticism chronologically reveals that although, as I will go on to discuss in this chapter, some common themes, such as the intermingling of auto/biography and fiction, are pervasive, there have also been changes with time, particularly in reference to the language used to speak of what is now often called life-writing. A very early example of writing on biographical texts is that of Sir Sidney Lee, who was an eminent biographer, succeeding Virginia Woolf's father Sir Leslie Stephen as the editor of the *Dictionary of National Biography* in 1891. In 'The Perspective of Biography,' his departing speech on retiring as the president of the English Association, Lee made the claim that:

Unlike the dramatist or the novelist, the biographer cannot invent incident to bring into relief his conceptions of the truth about the piece of humanity which he is studying. His purpose is discovery, not invention.<sup>31</sup>

Lee's use of the male pronoun as his standard is important to note but, beyond that, it is notable that he can find no room for fiction in his vision of biography, despite many more recent critics of auto/biography finding some element of fiction in all examples of life-writing, as I go on to discuss with reference to Paul Jay and Liz Stanley's work. Lee's speech took place in 1919, the year that Richardson published her fourth and fifth chapter-volumes of *Pilgrimage*, and yet Lee's vision of biographical writing is firmly rooted in the tradition of the

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<sup>30</sup> Max Saunders, *Self Impression*, p. 481

<sup>31</sup> Sir Sidney Lee, 'The Perspective of Biography' *The English Association Pamphlet No. 41* (Oxford: The English Association, 1917), p. 9

past. Laura Marcus observes this idea of the biographical tradition throughout her monograph, noting that 'autobiography proper is perceived to be the right of very few individuals: those whose lives encompassed an aspect or image of the age suitable for transmission to posterity.'<sup>32</sup> Richardson had not, in 1919 in any case, fulfilled this criterion. Lee's thoughts are further separated from the work of Richardson when he claims that 'it is an essential quality of biography that the career which it treats should be complete,'<sup>33</sup> which was not at all the case of Richardson's ongoing and unfinished narrative. Richardson's modernist contemporary, Virginia Woolf, perhaps inspired by her father's work as a biographer, also wrote on the subject in the first half of the twentieth century. However, Woolf viewed the genre of biography negatively, reporting it to bear only a 'superficial likeness'<sup>34</sup> to those who are the subject of biographies. Despite having differing views to her father's colleague, Sir Sidney Lee, they both come to a similar conclusion on work like Richardson's which is between fact and fiction: that it cannot exist. Where Lee was preoccupied with the truthfulness of the biographer, Woolf instead states outright that the merging of auto/biography and fiction cannot be successful, stating that 'for though both truths [of real life and fiction] are genuine, they are antagonistic; let them meet and they destroy each other.'<sup>35</sup> Woolf does not discuss female or feminist biographies in her essay but her disparaging of her father and Sir Sidney Lee's writing style, calling them 'funeral processions,'<sup>36</sup> looks toward a future which has a far greater focus on the auto/biographical writing on the lives of women.

Another writer who continues the tradition of focusing on the writing of men is Roy Pascal, who published *Design and Truth in Autobiography* in 1960, making it a fairly early example of critical writing on the genre. Indeed, the text is discussed by Marcus in *Auto/biographical Discourses*, where she describes his book as 'an influential text in the field of contemporary autobiographical studies, as well as literary criticism more generally.'<sup>37</sup> Pascal devotes an entire chapter to the autobiographical novel, although with a focus on male writers as

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<sup>32</sup> Laura Marcus, *Auto/biographical Discourses*, p. 31

<sup>33</sup> Sir Sidney Lee, 'The Perspective of Biography' p. 19

<sup>34</sup> Virginia Woolf, 'The Art of Biography' *Collected Essays Volume Four*, ed. Leonard Woolf (London: The Hogarth Press, 1967), pp. 221-228 (p. 222)

<sup>35</sup> Virginia Woolf, 'The New Biography' *Collected Essays Volume Four*, ed. Leonard Woolf (London: The Hogarth Press, 1967), pp. 229-235 (p. 234)

<sup>36</sup> Virginia Woolf, 'The Art of Biography' (p. 222)

<sup>37</sup> Laura Marcus, *Auto/biographical Discourses*, p. 163

is found in many older critical works. Marcus who, as has been noted, is particularly interested in women's life-writing, discusses the tendency to dismiss women's writing in the work of many critics. She states that the life-writing of women is 'rarely incorporated into discussions of model or seminal autobiographies.'<sup>38</sup> This is most noticeable in Pascal's work when he discusses fiction as a finished product and autobiography as an on-going endeavour but puts forth this idea purely in masculine terms: 'there is a difference that cuts deeper, in that the novel is complete in itself while the autobiography always reaches forward to the man writing.'<sup>39</sup> Indeed, the biographical and autobiographical criticism during Richardson's working life maintained a focus on the 'Great Men' tradition that Marcus - and Richardson's protagonist Miriam - sought to disparage and which Pascal continued into the 1960s.

This attitude of Pascal's, focusing always on male contributions to autobiographical literature, did not end in the 1960s however, and can be found once more in Paul Jay's 1984 survey of self-representation *Being in the Text*. Indeed, there are some notable gaps in his reading as he does not refer to Dorothy Richardson or Virginia Woolf at all but writes a sustained evaluation of the work of James Joyce. Jay's text is useful, however, in its assessment of how writers have written themselves into their work throughout literary history, tracing the phenomenon back to William Wordsworth in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Importantly, Jay notes that 'the literary self-representation is always already a form of self-fictionalization,'<sup>40</sup> pre-empting the critical turn to work on autobiographical fiction, as found in Max Saunders. However, Jay does not appear to support this widening of the autobiographical genre, stating that naming autobiographical fictional texts such as Joyce and Proust's as autobiographies 'defines a genre so impossibly large as to be worthless.'<sup>41</sup> Jay's monograph then is significant as it illustrates the work still to be done in the field of auto/biographical criticism in the mid-1980s, with female writers still to be given the attention their work deserves and autobiographical fiction not yet considered particularly worthy of further study.

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 45

<sup>39</sup> Roy Pascal, *Design and Truth in Autobiography* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960), p. 164

<sup>40</sup> Paul Jay, *Being in the Text: Self-Representation from Wordsworth to Roland Barthes* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1984), p. 35

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 17

Furthermore, Jay's text also provides a useful way into considering the notion of selfhood in life-writing, where he, for obvious reasons, views the genre as particularly focused on the self. He writes: 'if all writing is a form of self-analysis, then autobiographical writing is probably the most *explicitly* self-analytical.'<sup>42</sup> Jay's emphasis here on autobiographical writing giving an *explicit* focus to selfhood suggests that Richardson's work, which masks its autobiographical sources in apparent fictionality, would not be considered autobiography by Jay, showing parallels with the structuralist criteria for autobiography set out by Philippe Lejeune and discussed in the introduction to this thesis. However, Jay does then go on to theorise the difficulties in representing the self in writing which has clear connections with Richardson's work. He writes:

It is precisely this dissimilarity [between identity and discourse] that is at work in disrupting the smooth transition of the psychological subject of an autobiographical text (the author) into its literary subject (its protagonist).<sup>43</sup>

This idea of the disruption caused by attempting to convert oneself from author into protagonist when writing autobiographically can then be read in *Pilgrimage*, where Richardson problematises the selfhood of the relationship between herself as writer and herself as autobiographical protagonist by doubling the role autobiographer. Miriam then functions as both the self-reflexive protagonist and the author, attempting to write a representation of herself into the narrative in the same way that Richardson has done in the creation of *Pilgrimage* from her own life story. Dennis Brown in his monograph *The Modernist Self in Twentieth-Century English Literature* (1989) suggests that problematising selfhood in literature is a common theme of modernist literature, stating that 'Modernism shows the problem of the literary self as always being involved with the problem of discourse.'<sup>44</sup> Brown, who does mention Richardson's work briefly in his text despite a larger focus on canonical male modernist writers such as James Joyce, also discusses the fragmentation of the self in modernist literature in relation to a turn towards attempting to write consciousness. He explains that writers 'began to explore inner space as never before, desperately trying to map the

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 22, emphasis author's own.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 29

<sup>44</sup> Dennis Brown, *The Modernist Self in Twentieth-Century English Literature: A Study in Self-Fragmentation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1989), p. 9

debris left by selfhood's disintegration.'<sup>45</sup> While Brown's critical work provides a useful account of the fragmentary self in modernist literature, his theoretical approach would have been strengthened by a greater focus on female writers of the period, such as Richardson and Virginia Woolf, who devoted a great deal of their writing to explorations of the self.

Thankfully, as discussed, Laura Marcus's *Auto/biographical Discourses* has been instrumental in gaining critical attention for female and feminist biography and autobiography. She was by no means the only person working on this strand of criticism, with Liz Stanley's 1995 monograph *The Auto/biographical I* discussing her experiences as a reader, critic and writer of biography through the theory of feminist auto/biography. Stanley is well-known as a biographer of, amongst others, the suffrage campaigner Emily Wilding Davison but in this piece of work she instead focuses on telling the story of her academic and personal life, detailing her particular interests in biographical subjects as well as tying stories of her family into the narrative of her coming to the study of auto/biography. Stanley briefly discusses Dorothy Richardson, calling her an 'inscriber of a woman's sentence and a woman's voice, an originator of "stream of consciousness" fiction, a fictional biographer of the inner lives of self-conscious subjects.'<sup>46</sup> Stanley deals well with the idea that autobiography can never be considered factual, as I have noted above, stating that 'auto/biography is not and cannot be referential of a life. Memory is selective: paradoxically, a defining feature of remembering is that most things are forgotten.'<sup>47</sup> Further, she claims that the events included in any kind of life-writing are 'highly selective,'<sup>48</sup> where she is making a point to note the agency of the writer of biography and autobiography. Stanley's attempts to find a new language to use when discussing feminist biography and autobiography is notable, particularly when she places it in the terms of the historian: 'the "writing of a life" is the writing of history, an account of the past by a particular historian known as an auto/biographer.'<sup>49</sup> Stanley appears to be making the point that historians are also known to be

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 74

<sup>46</sup> Liz Stanley, *The Auto/biographical I: The Theory and Practice of Feminist Auto/biography* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1995), pp. 15-16

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 128

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 101



selective in what parts of historical fact they choose to relay, thus altering the very idea of historical fact to contain some element of fiction.

*The Auto/biographical I* is a useful and accessible introduction to feminist theories of auto/biography, especially due to Stanley's discussion of her own experiences, both as a woman and as a biographer. She also recommends several other critics who have worked on women's biography and autobiography, including Estelle C. Jelinek who edited and introduced the collection *Women's Autobiography* in 1980. Jelinek's introductory chapter provides a valuable chronological overview of both women's autobiography and the critical work inspired by it. Jelinek also gives a brief historical overview of critical works on the genre of life-writing as a whole, observing that: 'in none of these works is it even noted that there are many important autobiographies by women.'<sup>50</sup> Jelinek also points specifically to Roy Pascal as a critic who has a particular lack of discussion of women's writing in his work and looks to how poorly the very few examples of women's writing, such as Beatrice Webb's autobiography in *Design and Truth in Autobiography*, are discussed by Pascal and others: 'even when women's autobiographies are given some scant attention in studies, social bias against the condition or the delineation of their lives seems to predominate over critical objectivity.'<sup>51</sup> Jelinek then theorises that a different approach is required for critiquing the life-writing of women: 'even if we ignore the subjective biases of critics of autobiography, we find that most of their objective theories are not applicable to women's life stories.'<sup>52</sup> Jelinek then goes into more detail on her desire for an alternative approach to the study of women's life-writing, stating:

More significant are discrepancies between the critical canon and women's autobiographies on matters relating to their form and content. Despite the fact that women's life studies are excluded from the evidence from which characteristics of the genre are drawn, it is assumed that they will either conform to them or else be disqualified as autobiographies. One may reasonably question whether including women's autobiographies in critical studies might force modifications in their definitions and theories. Or we might find that different criteria are needed to evaluate women's autobiographies, which may

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<sup>50</sup> Estelle C. Jelinek, 'Introduction' *Women's Autobiography: Essays in Criticism*, ed. Estelle C. Jelinek (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), pp. 1-20 (p. 2)

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5

constitute, if not a subgenre, then an autobiographical tradition different from male traditions.<sup>53</sup>

Here, Jelinek suggests that disregarding women's life-writing historically has led to the different forms that their work takes from male autobiography - diaries, letters, and so on - means that their life-writing is then not considered to be autobiography at all. Jelinek calls these differing forms of women's life-writing 'analogous to the fragmented, interrupted, and formless nature of their lives.'<sup>54</sup> Thus, a widening of the definitions of life-writing and auto/biography to include forms which women were more likely to produce, such as diaries, letters, and perhaps even some forms of fiction, would allow for a more in-depth study of women's life-writing as it would accept that the constraints of traditional male autobiography cannot be followed.

Also included in the collection is an essay by Suzanne Juhasz which discusses the form of feminist autobiography. Juhasz makes clear the differences between the structure of male and female autobiographical writing, noting that women more often tell their life stories in a 'repetitive, cumulative, cyclical structure'<sup>55</sup> rather than the linear structure favoured by male autobiographers, claiming that this is due to women's attention to the detail of everyday life in their writing and memoirs, rather than the momentous events around which traditional male autobiography has been structured. Liz Stanley's detailed account of how women construct their autobiographical stories left little room for a comparative discussion of the more traditional auto/biographical writing that critics such as Sir Sidney Lee and Roy Pascal have dealt with. As such, Juhasz's essay and Jelinek's collection are an informative addition to the study of feminist biography and autobiography due to the space they give for comparative study between male and female auto/biography.

A similar essay collection, edited by Martine Watson Brownley and Allison B. Kimmich, is *Women and Autobiography* (1999), where the editors follow other collections on women's life-writing by noting in their introduction how few examples of women's work have been used in critical texts on the subject of

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 6

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 19

<sup>55</sup> Suzanne Juhasz, 'Towards a Theory of Form in Feminist Autobiography: Kate Millett's *Flying and Sita*; Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior*' *Women's Autobiography: Essays in Criticism*, ed. Estelle C. Jelinek (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), pp. 221-237 (p. 223)

auto/biography. They also discuss the previous critical focus on 'formal patterns tracing an author's life from youth to adulthood is too limited [...] such approaches reflect a gender hierarchy that excludes much of the writing that women typically produce,'<sup>56</sup> in line with Jelinek's contention that the rules defining autobiography within which critics attempt to situate women's varied forms of life-writing are too narrow. Also in this collection is an essay by Shari Benstock which considers the difficulties in classifying and defining within women's life-writing and within the genre of autobiography more generally. As other theorists of women's life-writing have done, again including Jelinek as discussed above, Benstock reports that the rules of traditional criticism of overwhelmingly male autobiography do not meet the needs of critics for assessing women's life-writing. Benstock writes:

This mark of doubt leads me - by way of women's autobiographies - to consider academic theories and practices, our collective desire to know, define, and sum up. The very possibility of autobiography repeats this desire and puts it into question raising all sorts of specters: self/other private/public, center/margin, genre/gender, reading/writing, etc. We all know this, but what we may not know - or cannot bear to acknowledge - is the way autobiography refuses to admit our academic research practices.<sup>57</sup>

Benstock is very clear here in stating that the fluidity of women's life-writing, with its ever changing and expanding definitions, does not sit well within academic criticism of autobiography. She reinforces that the urge of criticism to define and to classify simply does not work with the many variations of what can be considered life-writing by women. She ends her essay by reaffirming this idea and nodding to the complexities of working on a form of writing which is almost indefinable:

My point, very simply, is that autobiographical writing - whatever form it takes - questions notions of selfhood rather than taking self for granted. The coordinates of self cannot be graphed or plotted. Like autobiography, which slips in and out of genre definitions, self is both culturally constituted *and* composed of all that culture would erase - rather like a fishnet, composed both of string and empty spaces

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<sup>56</sup> Martine Watson Brownley and Allison B. Kimmich, 'Introduction' *Women and Autobiography*, ed. Martine Watson Brownley and Allison B. Kimmich (Wilmington: SR Books, 1999), pp. xi-xiv (p. xiv)

<sup>57</sup> Shari Benstock, 'The Female Self Engendered: Autobiographical Writing and Theories of Selfhood' *Women and Autobiography*, ed. Martine Watson Brownley and Allison B. Kimmich (Wilmington: SR Books, 1999), pp. 3-13 (p.4)

between the fibers. Or a skein of tangled yarn that cannot be successfully untangled - where knots and frayed elements remain.<sup>58</sup>

This tangle of metaphors does well to portray the difficulties of theorising and critiquing a genre which encompasses seemingly all forms of women's writing which draws on elements of their lives and which has constantly changing definitions and vocabularies. Benstock does not provide any concrete solutions to these difficulties, as perhaps Jelinek has attempted to do in her assessment that critics must stop evaluating women's life-writing by the same rules as male autobiography. However, what Benstock does offer is reassurance that it is normal to find it difficult to untangle women's life-writing.

The essay collection *Feminism and Autobiography* (2000) specialises not only in the life-writing of women, but also more specifically in the writing of marginalised groups within the female gender, whose auto/biographical writings have had even less recognition than other women's, and as such the contributors cover a broad range of literature including slave narratives, working class memoirs, and testimonies of trauma. In the introduction to this collection, editors Tess Cosslett, Celia Lury and Penny Summerfield discuss how feminist approaches have 'helped to revolutionise the study of autobiographies, expanding its definition to include not just a literary genre or a body of texts but a practice that pervades many areas of our lives.'<sup>59</sup> Their work then builds on that of Laura Marcus and others, who have noted a need to include in the study of life-writing work which would not traditionally be considered autobiography, with Marcus giving fiction as her example. Cosslett, Lury and Summerfield also use their introduction to reinforce the lack of recognition given historically to women's life-writing, noting that: 'women's stories typically do not reach the public domain as readily as men's.'<sup>60</sup> They do however suggest that the positive outcomes of more women being encouraged and able to write their life stories is a renewed sense of self, with the claim that: 'if women had been categorised as "objects" by patriarchal cultures, women's autobiography gives an opportunity for them to express themselves as "subjects," with their own selfhood.'<sup>61</sup> This is

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 12

<sup>59</sup> Tess Cosslett, Celia Lury and Penny Summerfield, 'Introduction' *Feminism and Autobiography: Texts, Theories, Methods*, ed. Tess Cosslett, Celia Lury and Penny Summerfield (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 1-21 (p. 1)

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., pp. 3-4

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., pp. 5-6

then developed into a discussion of a duality of selfhood, where Cosslett, Lury and Summerfield observe that: 'critics of autobiography have long realised that at least two "selves" are involved in the writing of a life: the self then, and the self now, doing the writing.'<sup>62</sup> This is pertinent for my study of Richardson's writing as doubly autobiographical, as Cosslett, Lury and Summerfield's work suggests that Richardson's creation of a second self in her autobiographical protagonist Miriam Henderson follows a tradition set by others, but her allowing of Miriam to then create her own second self in her writing shows Richardson's innovation.

Another critic who has focused on the autobiographical writings of marginalised groups of women is Georgia Johnston, whose monograph *The Formation of 20th-Century Queer Autobiography: Reading Vita Sackville-West, Virginia Woolf, Hilda Doolittle, and Gertrude Stein* (2007) explores the life-writing of women who identified as, or were later suggested to be, homosexual. Johnston claims that lesbian autobiographies 'contest the generic conventions in order to rewrite early twentieth-century assumptions about human sexuality and sexual identity,'<sup>63</sup> something Dorothy Richardson has also done by contesting conventions to write the life of a working, unmarried woman in Miriam. As I will discuss in chapter five using the work of Joanne Winning, Richardson also writes a questioning of sexuality into the text of *Pilgrimage* and into the life of her protagonist, which Winning calls a 'splitting of selves.'<sup>64</sup> Johnston discusses how queer female life writers 'multiply their self-representations so that readers unable to accept the lesbian will not recognize her,'<sup>65</sup> providing a reason for women of an outsider status, such as Richardson, to fictionalise their lives so as to maintain a degree of privacy. Johnston does not discuss Richardson's work in her monograph but does give a sustained critical reading of Virginia Woolf's work and leaves room for many parallels to be drawn with Richardson. Writing on Woolf's autobiographical essay 'A Sketch of the Past' (1939) which was edited and published by Woolf's husband Leonard following her death, Johnston speaks of

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 8

<sup>63</sup> Georgia Johnston, *The Formation of 20th-Century Queer Autobiography: Reading Vita Sackville-West, Virginia Woolf, Hilda Doolittle, and Gertrude Stein* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 1

<sup>64</sup> Joanne Winning, *The Pilgrimage of Dorothy Richardson* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2000), p. 69

<sup>65</sup> Georgia Johnston, *The Formation of 20th-Century Queer Autobiography*, p. 18

Woolf doubling herself - creating a written Woolf as well as a writing Woolf - which has clear resonances with *Pilgrimage* where Richardson writes herself as Miriam writing herself, creating a double autobiography. Johnston notes that in 'A Sketch of the Past' Woolf 'creates two simultaneous texts, doubling audience and "I," placing audience and "I" both within *and* outside the patriarchal Oedipal text.'<sup>66</sup> Still discussing Woolf's autobiographical essay, in which Woolf looks back to her childhood and time spent with her siblings, Johnston states that 'she creates two positions for herself. Presenting herself, first, as participant, then, as observer of her Victorian family.'<sup>67</sup> This dynamic of a participant-observer is intriguing to consider in relation to Richardson, who undertakes a similar task in *Pilgrimage* but with the added dimension of fictionalisation which then creates the second doubling of Miriam, who also participates and observes. The theme of 'doubling' is continued by Johnston, who speaks of Woolf's 'doubled text and doubled audience'<sup>68</sup> and notes once more that 'Woolf created a doubled narrative position in "Sketch."<sup>69</sup> 'A Sketch of the Past' is an important text in Johnston's study, illustrating how Woolf 'queers' the genre of autobiography both with regards to her sexuality and in terms of subverting the expectations of the genre with this piece of autobiographical writing that is neither written as a private diary nor as a public memoir. Discussing its experimental status, Johnston writes: 'the memoir also implicates memory as a textual structure, rather than a scientific discovery. It presents memory in palimpsestic layering.'<sup>70</sup> This focus on the textuality of Woolf's work once again has parallels with Richardson's writing, where her experiments with narrative and text are vital in her presentation of feminine consciousness. Both Woolf and Richardson then create a layering of experience, with Woolf's work on memory, as Johnston describes, and Richardson's layering of autobiographers and subjects, writing herself and Miriam into the text of *Pilgrimage*. This discussion of the work of Woolf, as well as that of other queer female modernist writers throughout Johnston's text, has implications for the study of Richardson's writing regardless of whether she or Miriam can have their sexuality considered to be queer. By choosing to double herself in her writing, as Johnston finds Woolf to have done, Richardson subverts

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid. p. 74

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 87

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p. 15

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 88

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. 74

the genre of autobiography and takes it one step further from its past of focusing on the 'great men' that Richardson so dislikes by widening the genre to include life-writing that is presented as fiction. Indeed, Richardson goes even further than Woolf by also doubling her protagonist, who at once takes part in the narrative and inscribes it.

Liz Stanley also works on forms of life-writing outside of the norm in her contribution to the *Feminism and Autobiography* essay collection. Here, she writes in the first person to call for work to be done to 'enable a feminist auto/biographical analysis'<sup>71</sup> and expands the definition of life-writing even further than has been suggested previously by including what she calls 'audit selves'<sup>72</sup> which are the selves created when giving information about oneself in an official capacity, such as in an application for employment or when filling out a medical form. Although this focus on 'audit selves' is not particularly relevant to the study of examples of autobiographical fiction such as Richardson's *Pilgrimage*, it does illustrate just how wide the definition of women's life-writing has become in more contemporary criticism, encompassing all kinds of writing on the self. This then reinforces that it is entirely possible to discuss Richardson's fiction in the context of autobiographical theory and criticism.

Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson are veterans of women's life-writing and auto/biographical criticism, having published extensively on the subject for two decades. Their most recent output, *Life Writing in the Long Run* (2016), gathers work on the subject done by themselves and by others over the years and provides a comprehensive guide to theorising life-writing. In their introduction, Smith and Watson discuss how they have not amended old articles of theirs, despite changing attitudes to the study of and even the defining of life-writing, as has been discussed above. This includes a guide to the shifting terminology used from the early 1990s into the present day, which has seen a move from 'autobiography' to the more all-encompassing 'life-writing' which Smith and Watson see as the 'preferred umbrella term for the heterogeneous genres, modes, and media of autobiographically-inflected storytelling and self-

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<sup>71</sup> Liz Stanley, 'From "self-made women" to "women's made-selves"? Audit selves, simulation and surveillance in the rise of public woman' *Feminism and Autobiography: Texts, Theories, Methods*, ed. Tess Cosslett, Celia Lury and Penny Summerfield (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), pp.40-60 (p. 58)

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54

presentation.<sup>73</sup> This is then a useful explanation for the back and forth in terms throughout this chapter, which deals with critical literature from long before Smith and Watson were writing and right up to the present day.

Furthermore, in a section entitled 'Prospects for Further Research' in their introduction, Smith and Watson name autofiction as a sub-section of life-writing requiring further study, just as Laura Marcus did in 1994, which they define as 'a genre working at the boundary of "fact" and "fiction" by eliding distinctions between the authorial narrator and the fictional character, while engaging non-fictional elements such as references to contemporaneous historical events.'<sup>74</sup> Smith and Watson go on to note that further work on this subject 'could open up more extensive conversations between narrative theorists and autobiography scholars than currently occur,'<sup>75</sup> suggesting that this could be done with a greater focus on the literary, rather than the historical, elements of autofiction and indeed other forms of life-writing and auto/biography. That Marcus viewed a turn to fictional works as the next step in auto/biographical theory in 1994 and Smith and Watson are still asking for the same in 2016 points to the timely nature of this study into the autobiographical context of Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage*.

These varying theories of life-writing can then be applied in the context of Dorothy Richardson's writing to discuss how critics viewed the autobiographical elements of her *Pilgrimage* novel sequence. In particular, the critical works of Marcus and Saunders, which I return to throughout this thesis, allow for a consideration of how women's life-writing has historically been considered and how this is changing, as well as for a questioning of Richardson's place within the canon of experimental modernist life-writers.

#### Richardson's *Pilgrimage* and (Auto)biography

Criticism on life-writing is therefore vital for developing an understanding of what Richardson has achieved in her doubly autobiographical narrative and how this differs from what has come before her. Literary criticism looking specifically at Richardson's work has also focused on the autobiographical in her writing and

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<sup>73</sup> Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, 'A Personal Introduction' *Life Writing in the Long Run*, ed. Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson (Ann Arbor: Michigan Publishing, 2016), pp. xix-li (p. xxi)

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xxxvi

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xxxvii



many of these critics, such as Joanne Winning, similarly look to Laura Marcus and others theorising life-writing for context. Until recently there was not a great deal of academic work on the subject of Richardson's writing. Averill Buchanan noted in her bibliography of works on Richardson (2000) that she 'appears to attract less interest in her own right'<sup>76</sup> than her more famous contemporaries such as Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, and Marcel Proust. Buchanan also claimed to be able to find just seventeen book-length studies on the subject of Richardson and her work.<sup>77</sup> Similarly, in her 1995 monograph on Richardson, Carol Watts provided a select but fairly comprehensive annotated bibliography that features just eight books and fourteen scholarly articles, with a significant proportion of her commentary on the critical works having a negative tone. For example, Watts criticises Caesar Blake for his 'sensationalist and unsympathetic'<sup>78</sup> approach and describes the critical writing of John Cowper Powys as 'rather hyperbolic.'<sup>79</sup> In the last decade or so the study of Richardson's work has begun to gain momentum, as can be seen in the bibliography section of the Dorothy Richardson Society's website, which lists a significant number of books and articles on Richardson published since 2000.<sup>80</sup> However, the field of Richardson studies remains small even with the popularity it is gaining. Despite this relatively small pool of scholarly thought within which to situate oneself, contributors to the field of Richardson studies take significantly differing stances on *Pilgrimage* as an autobiographical text, with some seeing no trace of Richardson in Miriam whilst others view the two as interchangeable.

Literary critics who reviewed the various chapter-volumes of *Pilgrimage* as they were published did not have access to even the small amount of information now available publicly on Richardson's life, and therefore were unable to see the autobiographical links between the lives of Richardson and her protagonist. However, the question of auto/biography can still be found in some of these reviews, suggesting that Miriam's interest in writing her life can be seen. A review of *Backwater* (1916), the second book of the sequence, in *The Scotsman*

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<sup>76</sup> Averill Buchanan, 'Dorothy Miller Richardson: A Bibliography 1900 to 1999' *Journal of Modern Literature* (Vol. 24, No. 1, 2000), pp. 135-160 (p. 136)

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Carol Watts, *Dorothy Richardson* (Plymouth: Northcote House, 1995), p. 91

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p. 92

<sup>80</sup> 'Works on Dorothy Richardson' *Dorothy Richardson 1873-1957*,  
<<http://dorothyrichardson.org/workson.html>>

newspaper described it as 'merely a chapter in a biography,'<sup>81</sup> which notes the focus on a life but is unable to see the links to Richardson's. However, almost two decades later, once some details of Richardson's life were known, a reviewer in *The Manchester Guardian* described *Clear Horizon* (1935) as the 'eleventh in a series of autobiographical studies.'<sup>82</sup> In 1963 the critic Gloria Glikin (later Gloria Glikin Fromm) made a point of noting Richardson's wish for privacy, stating:

During her lifetime Dorothy Richardson withheld all but the essential facts about herself - and gave even these grudgingly. [...] She offered only what was known: the title of her books and her publisher's address, and in a parenthesis her married name. It would seem that she wished to remain for her readers the author of *Pilgrimage*, the creator of Miriam, the historian of a woman's stream of consciousness.<sup>83</sup>

As such, it is logical that few reviewers were aware of the proximity of Miriam's life to Richardson's given that the author allowed so little of her life to be known.

Thus, many contemporary reviews of the *Pilgrimage* sequence did not have the focus on the question of its autobiographical content which pervades more recent criticism. Instead, newspaper reviewers appear to have focused on the difficulty they experienced in understanding the various chapter-volumes. In 1923 *The Scotsman* described *Revolving Lights*, the seventh novel in the sequence, as 'bewildering,'<sup>84</sup> featuring 'little definite incident'<sup>85</sup> and yet the same review also notes 'a remarkable suggestion of life and movement.'<sup>86</sup>

Contradictory opinions, then, appear to be entirely commonplace in reviews of Richardson's novel sequence. For example, her fourth novel, *The Tunnel*, was called 'fatiguing'<sup>87</sup> in *The Manchester Guardian* in 1919 despite Virginia Woolf reviewing it for the *Times Literary Supplement* as being 'better in its failure than most books in their success.'<sup>88</sup> This review was published several years before Woolf's essays on biography in which she poses that fiction and reality cannot

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<sup>81</sup> 'New Fiction' *The Scotsman*, 24 August 1916, p. 2

<sup>82</sup> B.S., 'Miss Richardson' *The Manchester Guardian*, 29 November 1935, p. 7

<sup>83</sup> Gloria Glikin [Fromm], 'Dorothy M. Richardson: The Personal *Pilgrimage*' *PMLA* (Vol. 78, No. 5, 1963), pp. 586-600 (p. 586)

<sup>84</sup> 'New Fiction' *The Scotsman*, 23 July 1923, p. 2

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> A.M., 'New Novels: A Young Woman Alone' *The Manchester Guardian*, 14 March 1919, p. 5

<sup>88</sup> Virginia Woolf, 'The Tunnel' *Times Literary Supplement*, 13 February 1919, p.81

coexist and as such it is possible that Woolf may have had the successful failure of *Pilgrimage* on her mind when she was making these claims on biography. Indeed, in the summer of 1926, the year before Woolf wrote her essay 'The New Biography', she spoke in her diary of 'the story of Dorothy Richardson's struggles'<sup>89</sup> and noted that the volumes of *Pilgrimage* were failing to sell. As such, the apparent failure of Richardson's meeting of fiction and reality was most definitely known to Woolf at the time of her writing on biography.

With this lack of critical agreement as to the autobiographical, or otherwise, nature of the *Pilgrimage* sequence, a spectrum of thought can be established, where some critics believe the degree of autobiographical input into the novel sequence to be so great as to render it almost entirely factual, whilst others appear to dismiss the idea entirely. A critic for whom it appears simple to fully commit to *Pilgrimage* as almost pure autobiography is George H. Thomson, a huge name in the small field of Richardson studies, but who seems to readily accept that Richardson is Miriam and vice versa. In his *A Reader's Guide to Dorothy Richardson's Pilgrimage* of 1996, which is primarily a straightforward guide to *Pilgrimage*, plotting the novel's chronology and giving a detailed directory of characters, Thomson describes the novel sequence as consisting of 'subjective autobiographical narrative,'<sup>90</sup> seemingly leaving some room for interpretation towards either pure autobiography or towards pure fiction. However, he then goes on to claim that 'the events of Richardson's personal life [...] are precisely and accurately depicted,'<sup>91</sup> and that 'a grid of precise temporal and factual reference [...] affirms the realism of the narrative,'<sup>92</sup> making very clear his interpretation of *Pilgrimage* as a direct description of Richardson's own life, actions and thoughts. This is further confirmed by Thomson's work to create a guide on the novel sequence, both here and also in his later *Notes on Pilgrimage: Dorothy Richardson Annotated* of 1999, where the language and layout he uses in both books to explain his methods seem only to confirm that he believes *Pilgrimage* to be as good as fact. For example, in the directory of characters from his *Reader's Guide*, Thomson explains at the very beginning that

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<sup>89</sup> Virginia Woolf, 'Thursday 1 July' *The Diary of Virginia Woolf*, Vol. 3, 1925-30, ed. Anne Olivier Bell (London: Penguin, 1982), p. 92

<sup>90</sup> George H. Thomson, *A Reader's Guide to Dorothy Richardson's Pilgrimage* (Greensboro: ELT Press, 1996), p. 2

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7

he lists 'actual persons who served as models for certain characters'<sup>93</sup> in square brackets alongside their fictional counterparts. After this point, this is never explained again and thus any reader turning to a main character will find it displayed as, for example, 'Hypo Wilson [H. G. Wells]',<sup>94</sup> the lack of clarification of which seems to suggest that the two names can be read as interchangeable.

In contrast to George H. Thomson's approach to Richardson's work, which takes the form of literary excavation, searching for the facts amongst the writing, is the work of Joanne Winning who is another of the leading critics in the field of Richardson studies. Winning's monograph *The Pilgrimage of Dorothy Richardson*, published in 2000, instead focuses on a queer reading of *Pilgrimage* as a fictional text. She does, however, give attention to the autobiographical question when she asks: 'What is the exact nature of the relationship between Miriam Henderson and Dorothy Richardson? Who, in fact, enunciates the *I* of *Pilgrimage*?'<sup>95</sup> Winning also discusses that 'the boundaries between Dorothy Richardson and Miriam Henderson are not so well defined'<sup>96</sup> which suggests that the genre of *Pilgrimage* can also not easily be defined. This then recalls Liz Stanley's theories of feminist auto/biography, where she focuses on the lack of definition between fact and fiction. Stanley also claims that: 'it could be argued that auto/biography is by definition about an individual self, and that if feminist auto/biography departs from this then it is no longer "auto/biography" but something different in kind: an entirely different genre.'<sup>97</sup> This new genre Stanley proposes would perhaps allow for a much simpler categorisation of Richardson's novel sequence, giving a name to her hybrid of fact and fiction. Furthermore, it also complements Joanne Winning's queer reading of *Pilgrimage*, which discusses Miriam Henderson's experience of 'a splitting of selves in gender and sexual terms'<sup>98</sup> to form something new. The contrast between the work of George H. Thomson and Joanne Winning is clear, with Winning suggesting new paths to understanding Richardson's writing that make Thomson's autobiographical stance appear somewhat heavy handed. However, both are

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid., p. 91

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., p. 113

<sup>95</sup> Joanne Winning, *The Pilgrimage of Dorothy Richardson*, p. 28

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., p. 70

<sup>97</sup> Liz Stanley, 'From "self-made women" to "women's made-selves"? Audit selves, simulation and surveillance in the rise of public woman', p. 253

<sup>98</sup> Joanne Winning, *The Pilgrimage of Dorothy Richardson*, p. 69

valuable critics in the field of Richardson studies and their opposing views serve to highlight the enormity of the variety of viewpoints that can be found in such a small field of study.

#### Other Perspectives on *Pilgrimage*: A Chronological Overview

The remainder of the critical work on *Pilgrimage* as an autobiographical text does not follow a linear path and reaches no concluding or cohesive stance on the subject. As such, exploring the criticism on Richardson's work as an autobiographical text in loosely chronological order serves to emphasise this lack of unified opinion. One of the very earliest examples of critical work on Richardson is the short monograph *Dorothy M. Richardson*, written by John Cowper Powys and published in 1931, when Richardson was just nine chapter-volumes into the writing of what would eventually become the thirteen-volume sequence that is *Pilgrimage*. Powys has a great deal of praise for Richardson's writing, describing her as one of 'the most interesting writers of fiction in our time.'<sup>99</sup> Indeed, the pair were close friends, with Gloria G. Fromm stating in her biography of Richardson that Powys and 'his extravagantly humble heart won her affection,'<sup>100</sup> suggesting a mutual admiration. When discussing the autobiographical elements of *Pilgrimage*, Powys claims that the author and the protagonist are entirely separate entities, stating that he believes, as a close friend of Richardson's himself, that 'Miss Richardson's intimate friends could point, one may be sure, to countless important differences between the novelist herself and the heroine.'<sup>101</sup> Powys emphasises here that it is close friends of Richardson who would be able to easily distinguish between herself and her protagonist Miriam Henderson, implying that the average reader might not. However, by making a point of the differences, Powys does somewhat draw attention to the similarities between Richardson and her protagonist. Powys instead sees the novel sequence as 'a psychic biography: the biography of a solitary human soul'<sup>102</sup> of Miriam, with a real focus on the protagonist where he names *Pilgrimage* as 'Miriam books.'<sup>103</sup> Despite having written his critical text before Richardson's novel sequence had reached Miriam's taking up of writing,

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<sup>99</sup> John Cowper Powys, *Dorothy M. Richardson* (London: Joiner and Steele, 1931), p. 10

<sup>100</sup> Gloria G. Fromm, *Dorothy Richardson: A Biography* (Urbana and London: University of Illinois Press, 1977), p. 231

<sup>101</sup> John Cowper Powys, *Dorothy M. Richardson*, p. 15

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24

Powys does appear to hint at some awareness of Miriam as writer or potential writer, noting that the ninth chapter-volume *Oberland* (1927) sees Miriam 'pausing to look around, as it were, and take stock of what she has attained out of so many sharp experiences.'<sup>104</sup> Powys is recognising here Miriam's collecting of experiences to later write about, which then shows the strength of Richardson's writing of Miriam's desire to write into the text from the very beginning, something I explore throughout this thesis in relation to Miriam's love of reading and interest in writing and language. Powys does find a link between Richardson and her protagonist in Miriam's interest in music (as I discuss in chapter two), noting that it 'stems backwards, it is hard not to feel, directly to her author.'<sup>105</sup> Having claimed that a close acquaintance such as himself would be able to find little trace of Richardson in Miriam earlier in his monograph, Powys seems to do just that. His praise of Richardson's writing, however, is unwavering, and Powys not only discusses her in relation to other female writers, naming George Eliot and Virginia Woolf, but also aligns her with 'the great *men* of genius'<sup>106</sup> such as Marcel Proust, noting that she has in fact gone further experimentally than her male peers and 'greatly surpasses Joyce.'<sup>107</sup> As an early study, Powys's paves the way for a great deal of the later critical works on Richardson's writing, despite having access to only nine of the eventual thirteen chapter-volumes at the time of writing. Powys claims Richardson to be 'our first pioneer in a completely new direction'<sup>108</sup> of writing; likewise, Powys was a pioneer in Richardson studies.

Following Powys's critique in the 1930s, Richardson's writing lost the little critical attention it had attracted and only began to find favour once more in the 1960s. Indeed, a recent publication of some of Gloria Glikin Fromm's research diary from her early studies of Richardson's work as a doctoral candidate is prefaced by 'in 1961 Gloria Glikin (later Gloria Glikin Fromm) was one of very few scholars interested in Richardson,'<sup>109</sup> marking her as one of the first to take up researching *Pilgrimage* following the decline in interest. Another critic from this time who wrote on Richardson, but who found her work difficult to

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid., p. 46

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., p. 41

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., p. 7

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., p. 28

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., p. 8

<sup>109</sup> 'Out of the Archive: Entries from Gloria Glikin Fromm's Research Diary' *Pilgrimages: A Journal of Dorothy Richardson Studies* (Vol. 9, 2017), pp. 72-82 (p. 72)

categorise, and indeed to understand, is Leon Edel who discusses *Pilgrimage* in his 1966 book *The Psychological Novel 1900-1950*. Here, Edel describes the novel sequence as an 'elaborate fictional experiment,'<sup>110</sup> thus choosing to firmly situate Richardson's work within the realms of fiction, rather than autobiographical writing or indeed autobiographical fiction. However, Edel admits to finding the novel sequence confusing, as many readers do, anecdotally referring to his inability to decipher the age of the protagonist on his first reading as an example of 'reading the novel with an unfocused vision.'<sup>111</sup> His statement that the protagonist 'emerges a rounded, one might say a three-dimensional, figure'<sup>112</sup> could suggest an autobiographical status to the character that has previously been denied by Edel. However, Edel could also be said to be recalling theoretical works such as E. M. Forster's essay *Aspects of the Novel*, compiled from a series of talks given at the University of Cambridge in 1927, in which he famously discussed round and flat characters. Forster claimed:

We may divide characters into flat and round. Flat characters were called "humours" in the seventeenth century, and are sometimes called types, and sometimes caricatures. In their purest form, they are constructed around a single idea or quality; when there is more than one factor in them, we get the beginning of the curve towards the round.<sup>113</sup>

This simplistic division of characters seems to suggest that the round characters, or 'three-dimensional' in the words of Edel, are fictional constructs even if they do have more substance than the flat, unrealistic characters. In his book-length essay Forster also touches on the subject of the difference between memoir and fiction when he states:

If a character in a novel is exactly like Queen Victoria - not rather like but exactly like - then it actually is Queen Victoria, and the novel, or all of it that the character touches, becomes a memoir. A memoir is history, it is based on evidence.<sup>114</sup>

Here Forster makes the distinction that memoir, which can also be assumed to encompass autobiographical writing more generally, occurs when a character exactly resembles a real figure, as opposed to fiction which can feature

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<sup>110</sup> Leon Edel, *The Psychological Novel 1900-1950* (New York: Haskell House, 1966), p. 32

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., p. 68

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., p. 74

<sup>113</sup> E. M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1993), pp. 46-7

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., p. 31

characters reminiscent of real people and yet remain fictitious. By possibly making reference to Forster's essay, even obscurely, Edel's claim that Richardson's writing is an elaborate fictional experiment is reinforced.

At the other end of the spectrum of belief in Richardson as a writer of autobiographical fiction is Horace Gregory, with his 1967 monograph *Dorothy Richardson: An Adventure in Self-Discovery*, where he confidently describes *Pilgrimage* as 'closer to the art of autobiography than to fiction'<sup>115</sup> from the very outset. Gregory also makes an early announcement as to his belief that Dorothy Richardson and her protagonist Miriam Henderson are so similar as to be able to be considered as a singular being, stating that 'I often refer to her as "Dorothy-Miriam"'<sup>116</sup> and continuing to do so throughout his critical work. This can initially seem to be a very simplistic view to hold of Richardson's complex and layered narrative, projecting the author onto the protagonist as fact, and a closer reading of Gregory's criticism does suggest that he did not distinguish at all between writer and protagonist. For example, Gregory uses real place names that have had significance in Richardson's life, such as 'the daily route from her attic room in Endsleigh Street to 140 Harley Street.'<sup>117</sup> However, at this point in his monograph Gregory was discussing the daily routine of Miriam Henderson's life, and as such it would have been far clearer to use the fictional street names that Richardson uses in *Pilgrimage*, such as Tansley Street, which is entirely fictional, for Endsleigh Street, where Richardson herself lived. This could either be a clumsy forgetting of the facts on the part of Gregory or a disregard for the fictionality which Richardson presents, meaning that Gregory's contribution to the field of Richardson studies now largely lies in his continuation of the notion of *Pilgrimage* as purely autobiographical.

Indeed, much of the critical work on Richardson of the 1970s takes a biographical form and, despite a focus on the life of Richardson rather than the content of her writing, similarly confuses author with protagonist. John Rosenberg's *Dorothy Richardson, the Genius They Forgot* (1973), published for the centenary of Richardson's birth, treats Richardson's own life and *Pilgrimage* as entirely interchangeable in much the same way as Gregory. His introduction

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<sup>115</sup> Horace Gregory, *Dorothy Richardson: An Adventure in Self-Discovery* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), p. x

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xi

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49



calls the novel sequence 'largely autobiographical'<sup>118</sup> and states that his methodology involves using *Pilgrimage* as source material for his biography of Richardson's life and works. His introduction is then followed by chapters on Richardson's life before she began to write her novel sequence, although many of his sources appear to be word of mouth claims from Richardson's acquaintances. The remainder of Rosenberg's biography is devoted to his inferring of the events of Richardson's life from the narrative of *Pilgrimage*. His position with regards to the autobiographical nature of the novel sequence is very similar to that of Gregory in that Rosenberg views Richardson and Miriam Henderson as one and the same. Rosenberg echoes Gregory's use of 'Dorothy-Miriam' when he asserts that 'Dorothy became Miriam'<sup>119</sup> and he further claims that Richardson's 'impressions were set down exactly as she recalled them.'<sup>120</sup> This is not only hyperbolic but also inaccurate, as there are many examples to be found throughout *Pilgrimage* where Richardson has changed details from her own life in small but significant ways, such as when she places Miriam in the guest house at the time of her mother's suicide, when in fact Richardson had been away at the time of her own mother's death. Rosenberg also attempts to justify the manner in which he uses Richardson's novel as source material when he claims that 'autobiographical as [the first three *Pilgrimage* chapter-volumes] largely were, reflecting on the facts of her own life, their details are relevant here.'<sup>121</sup> Rosenberg's attempts to convince the reader that his method is sound do little to improve this poorly researched critical biography. Unfortunately, Rosenberg's conclusion that Miriam is a neatly autobiographical figure of Richardson has then been used by other critics as a source text, leading to M. C. Rintoul including Richardson in the *Dictionary of Real People and Places in Fiction* (1993), citing Rosenberg as evidence for Dorothy Richardson being 'in'<sup>122</sup> the *Pilgrimage* novel sequence, a gross mischaracterisation of the real relationship between author and protagonist.

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<sup>118</sup> John Rosenberg, *Dorothy Richardson, the Genius They Forgot: A Critical Biography* (London: Duckworth, 1973), p. ix

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., p. 70

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., p. 72

<sup>122</sup> M.C. Rintoul, *Dictionary of Real People and Places in Fiction* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 774

Published four years after Rosenberg's biography in 1977 is Gloria G. Fromm's *Dorothy Richardson: A Biography*, which gives a much fuller account of Richardson's life than Rosenberg's attempt. Fromm's view on the autobiographical nature of the novel sequence draws on what Richardson has Miriam say in *Pilgrimage*, that 'I have just discovered that I don't read books for the story, but as a psychological study of the author...' <sup>123</sup> which Fromm describes as 'interesting remarks in light of the autobiographical content of Dorothy Richardson's own books.' <sup>124</sup> To take these remarks as indicators of Richardson's own feelings, however, is first to assume that anything Miriam says or thinks is also true of Richardson. Thus, Fromm's evidence for the autobiographical status of *Pilgrimage*, that Richardson sees the author and not the characters in novels, is reliant on a belief that the novel sequence is autobiographical to begin with. Fromm also describes how Richardson got away with including real people in her writing without them being detected by providing them with false names and compares this to the work of Richardson's lover, H.G. Wells. Wells, who himself appears in *Pilgrimage* as Hypo Wilson, 'had more trouble' <sup>125</sup> passing his writing off as fiction according to Fromm, which she claims is due to his work being largely written in the first person narrative style, providing a point of contrast for *Pilgrimage*, where the novel sequence's status as autobiography is tied up in Richardson's shifting from third into first person and back again. There are obvious differences between the biographies created by Rosenberg and by Fromm, not least that Fromm's is considered to this day to be a valuable contribution to the field. In contrast, Rosenberg's work has been discarded, considered a 'piecing together' <sup>126</sup> by Joanne Winning, rather than a serious attempt at a critical biography. However, despite their differences, the two biographies do share the same view on *Pilgrimage* as autobiography in that both Fromm and Rosenberg use the novel sequence as source material for their account of Richardson's own life.

#### Critics on *Pilgrimage*: The Wider Context

Early in the 1980s Diane Filby Gillespie paired Richardson with Virginia Woolf for an article on the politics of their writing which provides an original perspective

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<sup>123</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Honeycomb* (London: Duckworth, 1917), p. 66

<sup>124</sup> Gloria G. Fromm, *Dorothy Richardson: A Biography*, p. 104

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105

<sup>126</sup> Joanne Winning, *The Pilgrimage of Dorothy Richardson*, p. 20

on the autobiographical elements of *Pilgrimage*. Despite her focus on Richardson's political affiliations, Gillespie does devote some time to Richardson and Miriam's interests in writing, suggesting that 'Richardson actually applied to her fictional method the implications of [Richardson and Miriam's] shared belief that such a thing as the art of life exists and that all people are potential artists,'<sup>127</sup> which alludes to Richardson and her protagonist's shared act of writing that unifies them. Gillespie's piece provides a different angle on Richardson by discussing the politics of her writing, which does not appear to have been carried out elsewhere. However, she falls into the trap of using the events of *Pilgrimage* as evidence for the elements of Richardson's own life, as so many other critics have done, noting that 'Miriam's attitude reflects, as usual, Richardson's.'<sup>128</sup>

In 1983, the same year as the publication of Gillespie's article, Stephen Heath also wrote on Richardson, focusing on the writing process and the novel's self-awareness of its own writing. Heath writes:

What is at stake is writing. The book records the necessity for the book that this book is; Miriam's pilgrimage to be undertaken is this *Pilgrimage* written through the recreation of a life which is indeed already the pilgrimage for Miriam and which she must now learn in writing, "discovering the truth about one's own thoughts and beliefs."<sup>129</sup>

What Heath considers here is the process of Miriam writing the story of her own life and the proximity of this to Richardson's own writing of her life. Indeed, Heath repeats the word 'writing' here several times, which makes clear the connection between Richardson's writing and that of her protagonist's. Heath also sees Richardson as linked with Miriam in their 'rhyming, chiming names'<sup>130</sup> of Henderson and Richardson, which perhaps provides some context for so many critics being unable to separate the two. Heath does not read Richardson and her protagonist as one and the same but does survey the closeness of the lives of Richardson and Miriam, noting that Richardson's is a 'life taken up in a

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<sup>127</sup> Diane Filby Gillespie, 'Political Aesthetics: Virginia Woolf and Dorothy Richardson' *Virginia Woolf: A Feminist Slant*, ed. Jane Marcus (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), pp. 132-151 (p. 145)

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Stephen Heath, 'Writing for silence: Dorothy Richardson and the novel' *Teaching the Text*, ed. Susanne Kappler and Norman Bryson (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983), pp. 126-147 (p. 132)

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., p. 133

permanent act of writing,<sup>131</sup> as she transcribes her life onto her protagonist. Heath also appears to claim that *Pilgrimage* is the book in which Miriam goes on to write, although in somewhat opaque language, as seen in the quotation given above. Heath also notes that the subject matter of *Pilgrimage* is 'identity, one's self, its definition or not, life and book together as pilgrimage.'<sup>132</sup> This then furthers his belief in the link between Richardson's life and that of her protagonist by claiming that both are the subject matter for the novel sequence.

Avrom Fleishman also wrote on Richardson in his 1983 text *Figures of Autobiography*, dedicating a chapter to studying *Pilgrimage* alongside further chapters on Joyce, Woolf, Dickens and others. Fleishman views Richardson's novel sequence as being an example of autobiography, stating: 'as exceptional as *Pilgrimage* is among novels, it is firmly in place in the autobiographical tradition and forges stronger ties with its predecessors than any other modern self-writing.'<sup>133</sup> Here, Fleishman acknowledges that *Pilgrimage* can and should be considered a novel, or fictional, but his opinion is that Richardson's writing has more in common with traditional autobiography than with 'modern self-writing' like that produced by Joyce and Woolf. This is despite calling Woolf 'her closest avatar,'<sup>134</sup> suggesting that he sees the work of the two female modernists as aligned. Having made this claim of *Pilgrimage* as autobiography, Fleishman then goes on to reinforce it by treating Richardson and her protagonist as a single entity:

By sketchily bringing her narrative up to 1915, the year of her first novel's publication and by adding some theorizing on fiction and her own first efforts to write, Richardson seems to be urging a *Künstlerroman* upon us, with a Proustian loop of time and form that would bring the tail of the novel's action into the mouth of its origin - the decision to write a novel like itself.<sup>135</sup>

Fleishman suggests here that Richardson has included in *Pilgrimage* her own personal thoughts on her approach to writing, despite the narrative of the novel sequence showing her protagonist Miriam's journey towards taking up writing, which clearly illustrates his belief that the two are inseparable. While the link

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid., p. 126

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., p. 127

<sup>133</sup> Avrom Fleishman, *Figures of Autobiography: The Language of Self-Writing in Victorian and Modern England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), p. 428

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., p. 453

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., p. 429

between the works of Proust and Richardson is explored by Fleishman in a later chapter, what the reference to the French writer does here is suggest that Fleishman views Richardson primarily in relation to the work of others, rather than as a significant artist in her own right. This is reinforced by the suggestion that Woolf and Richardson closely parallel one another. Despite this lack of respect for Richardson's writing, Fleishman does notice the elements of *Künstlerroman* in *Pilgrimage*, as well as noting that the protagonist of the novel sequence eventually comes to write 'a novel like itself' which points towards Miriam Henderson writing autobiographically like her creator, or indeed writing within the narrative of the *Pilgrimage* sequence. Despite this perceptiveness, and indeed the closeness to my own argument for *Pilgrimage* as a doubly autobiographical text, Fleischman also repeatedly shows that he believes the lives of Miriam Henderson and Dorothy Richardson to be entirely interchangeable, particularly when he refers to fictional counterparts for real life people and groups, discussing 'the Lycurgan (read: Fabian) Society'<sup>136</sup> and 'Hypo Wilson (read: H. G. Wells).'<sup>137</sup> Although the names he suggests the reader use in place of Richardson's fictionalised ones are the corresponding real-life subjects on which Richardson based parts of her work, Fleishman's suggestion that the reader should disregard Richardson's fictional names for the real ones shows Fleishman does not care to analyse Richardson's decision to base characters on real acquaintances. This then associates Fleishman with George H. Thomson who would later come to describe the relationship between real and fictional people in the same dismissive way as the 'read' that Fleishman uses here. Unsurprisingly, Thomson includes Fleishman in his select bibliography of works on Richardson.<sup>138</sup>

Gillian E. Hanscombe's *The Art of Life: Dorothy Richardson and the Development of Feminist Consciousness* (1985) provides critical space to discuss the explicit feminism which can be found in Richardson's work. Hanscombe states that Richardson's feminism, as well as that of Virginia Woolf, was 'generated from and sustained by a self-conscious sense of female psychology and of the female

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid., p. 442

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> George H. Thomson, *A Reader's Guide*, pp. 159-160

mind.<sup>139</sup> This awareness that Richardson has of the female mind is then the subject which Hanscombe makes the argument of her book, specifically that:

The psychological role conflict between "personhood" and "womanhood" suffered by Richardson gave rise to her bi-polar world-view, in which female consciousness is contradistinguished in nearly every particular from male consciousness.<sup>140</sup>

By focusing on Richardson's differentiation between female and male consciousness, Hanscombe appears to view *Pilgrimage* as working within the attempt 'to produce a feminine equivalent of the current masculine realism'<sup>141</sup> which Richardson herself claimed to have been endeavouring to do in her 1938 foreword to the collected edition of her novel sequence. In doing so, Hanscombe could then have explored the differences between, as well as the proximity of, the consciousnesses of Richardson as author and Miriam as protagonist, with particular reference to Richardson's own statements pertaining to *Pilgrimage* as 'realism' and thus as within a genre of fiction. Indeed, Hanscombe does appear to have been aware of *Pilgrimage*'s status as something of a hybrid text, noting:

Richardson's achievement as a writer of fiction which, being art, necessarily generalizes, and her achievement as a writer of autobiography which, being an account of a life, necessarily personalizes. In *Pilgrimage*, the interdependence of one with the other is compelling, offering, by any standard, a significant contribution to our understanding of the demands of art and of the processes inherent to its generation.<sup>142</sup>

By discussing fiction and autobiography, or art and life, as interdependent of one another, Hanscombe appears to have had a sophisticated view of the novel sequence which is far removed from the clumsy muddling of Miriam and Richardson's lives which critics immediately preceding her chronologically, such as Rosenberg, have presented. Hanscombe then goes on to state that 'the reader is asked to accept an identification between persona and author.'<sup>143</sup> This is a perfectly reasonable claim, for Richardson and Miriam are indeed very similar in many ways and Richardson very obviously used her own life as inspiration for her

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<sup>139</sup> Gillian E. Hanscombe, *The Art of Life: Dorothy Richardson and the Development of Feminist Consciousness* (London and Boston: Peter Owen, 1982), p. 22

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34

<sup>141</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'Foreword to *Pilgrimage*' *The Gender of Modernism: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Bonnie Kime Scott (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), pp. 429-432 (p. 430)

<sup>142</sup> Gillian E. Hanscombe, *The Art of Life*, p. 35

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49

novel sequence. However, when paired with Hanscombe's claim that 'the reader should identify Miriam's voice with that of the author, since no other consciousness is brought into play'<sup>144</sup> this becomes problematic as the critic seems to be negating any possibility of Miriam having her own fictional consciousness by suggesting that only one consciousness - Richardson's - can be found in the text. Reviewers of Hanscombe's book at the time of publication also found this troubling, with Penny Boumelha noting in *The Review of English Studies* that 'much of the argument suggests that Miriam is simply a kind of transparency superimposed upon Richardson herself.'<sup>145</sup> Perhaps even more notable is that Gloria G. Fromm negatively reviews Hanscombe's book with a similar complaint to that of Boumelha's:

Since *Pilgrimage* itself serves as Hanscombe's primary source and principal body of evidence, it is not clear how she distinguishes Richardson from her novel, or her world-view from the novelistic expression of it over several decades.<sup>146</sup>

Fromm's own biography of Richardson's life also slipped into a similarly troubling area, taking a statement by Miriam as indication of Richardson's own thoughts as I have discussed, and as such Fromm's issues with Hanscombe are questionable. Nevertheless, the merit of Hanscombe's *Art of Life* can be found in its forward-thinking vision of *Pilgrimage* as a feminist text.

Gillian Hanscombe also co-authored a book, *Writing for Their Lives*, in 1987 with Virginia L. Smyers which discusses Richardson's work alongside that of other female writers such as Djuna Barnes, Mina Loy, H.D., and various contemporaries of Richardson. Smyers begins the book by describing what she calls her 'biographical obsession'<sup>147</sup> with Richardson and noting that this interest in Richardson's real-life exploits led to the research for the book, which focuses on the network of writers within which Richardson operated. In this instance, Smyers is making reference to a personal fascination with the biographical details of Richardson's life and yet her opening comments have a doubled

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<sup>144</sup> Ibid., p. 45

<sup>145</sup> Penny Boumelha, 'Review: *The Art of Life: Dorothy Richardson and the Development of Feminist Consciousness* by Gillian E. Hanscombe' *The Review of English Studies* (Vol. 35, No. 140, 1984), pp. 577-578 (p. 578)

<sup>146</sup> Gloria G. Fromm, 'Gillian E. Hanscombe, *The Art of Life: Dorothy Richardson and the Development of Feminist Consciousness* (Book Review)' *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920* (Vol. 27, No. 2, 1984), pp. 158-161 (p. 159)

<sup>147</sup> Gillian Hanscombe and Virginia L. Smyers, *Writing For Their Lives: The Modernist Woman 1910-1940* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1987), p. xvi

meaning as they refer forward to the critical discussion on the biographical elements of *Pilgrimage*. However, the chapter that Hanscombe and Smyers dedicate to Richardson and her work mainly retells the biographical details of Richardson's life, with Hanscombe and Smyers appearing to make little differentiation between the life of Dorothy Richardson and the fiction of Miriam Henderson. For example, a comment on the passion of Miriam's relationship with Amabel is said to be 'too much for Dorothy (or Miriam) to contemplate,'<sup>148</sup> which seems to almost return to Horace Gregory's 'Dorothy-Miriam' of 1967 and is of course reminiscent of Hanscombe's slips between author and protagonist in her monograph. Hanscombe and Smyers also note that:

And yet it is Richardson [...] who never faltered for any cause, person or purpose from her single-minded pursuit of the truthfulness and integrity of her own existence and her recording of it.<sup>149</sup>

This statement makes very clear that the two critics view Miriam's life as an exact copying down of Richardson's. It is notable, however, that Hanscombe and Smyers rarely use the word 'autobiography' in their writing, and almost never in relation to Richardson. Instead, they discuss the writing of her life, even naming their chapter 'Dorothy Richardson's life-style of writing.'<sup>150</sup> As has been discussed by Smith and Watson, the language of life-writing and auto/biographical writing has changed over time but this early use of 'life-style of writing' by Hanscombe and Smyers suggests that they were looking for new ways to describe the hybridity of *Pilgrimage* long before other critics had begun to name it as anything other than autobiography or fiction.

Joanne Winning also uses this kind of language to discuss Richardson's writing in *The Pilgrimage of Dorothy Richardson* where she discusses 'the complex relation between "life" and "text" which Richardson herself inaugurates in her endeavour to produce this kind of life-writing.'<sup>151</sup> Thus, 'life-writing' becomes a key term in Richardson scholarship, perhaps providing an alternative for the very definitive, and entirely opposing, terms of 'autobiography' and 'fiction' which make up much of the earlier criticism of Richardson's work. As we have seen above, critics such as Saunders and Marcus have used the terminology of 'life-writing' and as such

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<sup>148</sup> Ibid., p. 57

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., p. 62

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., pp. 47-62

<sup>151</sup> Joanne Winning, *The Pilgrimage of Dorothy Richardson*, p. 17



their theoretical framework can be applied here. Saunders also discusses experimental auto/biography and provides the example of 'giving a fictional character the author's life-story.'<sup>152</sup> Laura Marcus uses the term 'life-writing' in the introductory chapter to her monograph on auto/biographical theory returns to the subject later in her book, looking at how her predecessors in autobiographical theory in the 1950s and 1960s found 'the collapse or merging of autobiography into novel'<sup>153</sup> to be 'less than satisfactory for critics who wish, for whatever reasons, to retain a sense of autobiography's distinctiveness.'<sup>154</sup> This is perhaps a way to give context to the decisions of the earlier critics of Richardson, in particular Horace Gregory and John Rosenberg, who attempted to push *Pilgrimage* fully into the genre of autobiography.

Doris B. Wallace and Howard E. Gruber follow other critics such as Fleishman by including a full chapter on Richardson's work in their book. In *Creative People at Work*, published in 1989, Wallace contributes an essay to the collection on *Pilgrimage* as an example of stream of consciousness. From the start, Wallace names Richardson's work as a clear example of autobiography, stating:

She wrote about herself, reconstructing her own past and thus her identity. The very fact that no one knew of the autobiographical nature of her novel *Pilgrimage* gave her more latitude, both for revelation and for blending the lived life with the created one.<sup>155</sup>

Wallace here notes, as others have done, how little was known about Richardson's life at the time of *Pilgrimage*'s publication, meaning that the autobiographical link was not immediately obvious. However, unlike earlier critics such as Rosenberg who saw this as an obstacle to fully understanding the narrative of the novel sequence, Wallace instead views the lack of known biographical information as having allowed Richardson to write intimate details of her own life and the lives of her friends and family without repercussions. This means that Wallace views *Pilgrimage* as a very nearly factual account of Richardson's life, which is reinforced by her statements that 'Miriam is in many ways Dorothy Richardson'<sup>156</sup> and 'in *Pilgrimage* Richardson gives herself another

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<sup>152</sup> Max Saunders, *Self Impression*, p. 501

<sup>153</sup> Laura Marcus, *Auto/biographical Discourses*, p. 236

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> Doris B. Wallace, 'Stream of Consciousness and Reconstruction of Self in Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage*' *Creative People at Work: Twelve Cognitive Case Studies*, ed. Doris B. Wallace and Howard E. Gruber (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 146-169 (p. 147)

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., p. 152

name, Miriam Henderson.<sup>157</sup> However, Wallace does accept that her opinion is not the one held by all critics, and indeed not by Richardson herself, querying: 'why did she call it a novel when it was so closely autobiographical?'<sup>158</sup> Furthermore, Wallace discusses Richardson's aim of depicting consciousness accurately, and how this meant that she needed to create a new way of writing to describe something so complex:

Richardson wanted to depict inner experience as it appears to the experiencing person, often unorganized and unselected. To communicate this disorder, she invented a new literary genre and techniques that changed the relationship between writer and reader.<sup>159</sup>

By acknowledging that in order to write consciousness Richardson required an entirely new genre of writing, something between fact and fiction or autobiography and the novel, Wallace admits that *Pilgrimage* is not so clearly an autobiographical text as she had previously claimed, highlighting once again the conflicting opinions which are so prevalent in criticism of Richardson's work, even within the writing of an individual critic. Wallace ends her essay by discussing the unfinished nature of the *Pilgrimage* novel sequence, with the final chapter-volume published posthumously, and reflects on how this works within the autobiographical tradition, where one cannot report one's own death, with Wallace stating: 'the autobiographical novel marvellously fitted Richardson's purpose.'<sup>160</sup> In referring to *Pilgrimage* as an 'autobiographical novel' Wallace seems to find a halfway point between fiction and life-writing in which to describe the complex and shifting genre of Richardson's work.

Lyn Pykett also includes Richardson amongst discussions of other writers such as Woolf and D.H. Lawrence in her monograph *Engendering Fictions*, published in 1995, where she dedicates a chapter to discussing *Pilgrimage* as a 'life-novel.'<sup>161</sup> Pykett's criticism sits with that of Fleishman and Thomson in that she views the fictional characters in Richardson's work to be exact representations of their real-life counterparts. Discussing the character of Hypo Wilson, based on H.G.

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<sup>157</sup> Ibid., p. 157

<sup>158</sup> Ibid., p. 149

<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., p. 166

<sup>161</sup> Lyn Pykett, *Engendering Fictions: The English Novel in the Early Twentieth Century* (London: Edward Arnold, 1995), p. 78

Wells, Pykett refers to 'Richardson's technique of ventriloquism,'<sup>162</sup> suggesting that Richardson is simply putting words in the mouth of the real Wells; a rather simplistic view. Pykett does, however, raise pertinent questions on Richardson's portrayal of Miriam taking to writing in *Pilgrimage*, and how this then makes it even more difficult to classify the text as it displays the writing of more than one author. Pykett queries:

*Pilgrimage* disrupts genre boundaries and resists classification. Is it fact or fiction? It is philosophy, psychology, autobiography, poetry, or a novel? Is it one novel or several novels? Is it a *Bildungsroman* or a *Künstlerroman*?<sup>163</sup>

She provides no answers to these questions, reflecting the open to interpretation nature of *Pilgrimage* which does little to explain itself. As yet another critic suggesting Richardson's work could fit within the *Künstlerroman* tradition, as Fleishman also does, Pykett notes the importance of discussing Miriam as a writer alongside Richardson as a writer, claiming '*Pilgrimage* is, among other things, a novel about its own genesis.'<sup>164</sup> This succinctly summarises the critical perspective taken by this thesis that *Pilgrimage* depicts Richardson's protagonist writing the text which will become the chapter-volumes, authored by both women simultaneously.

Deborah Parsons in *Theorists of the Modernist Novel* (2007) decides against committing to a side by making careful use of language, describing the novel sequence as 'quasi-autobiographical'<sup>165</sup> and a 'fictionalised account,'<sup>166</sup> although she does go as far as to call Miriam Henderson the 'autobiographical protagonist.'<sup>167</sup> As I've discussed above, she also views *Pilgrimage* as an innovative piece of literature, claiming it as an attempt to 'convey aspects of human existence typically unrepresented by conventional prose.'<sup>168</sup> Similarly, Carol Watts begins her 1995 book *Dorothy Richardson* with the statement that she 'does not read the writer's life into her work'<sup>169</sup> as biographers have already done this, but she later goes on to discuss the use of memory in *Pilgrimage*. This

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<sup>162</sup> Ibid., p. 82

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., p. 89

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Deborah Parsons, *Theorists of the Modernist Novel: James Joyce, Dorothy Richardson, Virginia Woolf* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), p. 8

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid., p. 9

<sup>168</sup> Ibid., p. 3

<sup>169</sup> Carol Watts, *Dorothy Richardson* (Plymouth: Northcote House, 1995), p. 1

is then linked to viewing the novel sequence as part of the autobiographical tradition as the ideas of memory and life-writing are so close, as noted in my earlier discussions of the critical works of Georgia Johnston and Liz Stanley. Watts focuses on Richardson and cinematic techniques, discussing this in relation to the way Richardson presents the memory of Miriam as a young girl in her garden discovering a bee, which Watts notes is also used by Richardson as the subject matter for her short story 'The Garden.'<sup>170</sup> The bee memory is an important focus of Richardsonian criticism, which many critics including Joanne Winning have discussed at length.<sup>171</sup> Watts notes that this 'material has been reworked'<sup>172</sup> but the question remains whether it has been reworked within Miriam's memory, as a short story transferred to the longer fictional medium, or as Richardson's memory, taken from one of her autobiographical sketches and transformed into part of her novel sequence. A more contemporary critic who deals with Richardson's short stories is Claire Drewery, who published her monograph *Modernist Short Fiction by Women* in 2011. Here, Drewery examines Richardson's short fiction in comparison to that of Katherine Mansfield, May Sinclair and Virginia Woolf and discusses a 'tendency in Richardson's short fiction to transgress boundaries.'<sup>173</sup> In this instance, Drewery is referring to crossed boundaries such as short story length and lack of finality in the endings. However, this can also be interpreted as a reference to transgressing the boundaries of the short story itself, such as with 'The Garden' which is both independent of and a part of the larger novel sequence. Drewery does not discuss 'The Garden' at length but she does note that its subject matter is 'the consciousness of a child who has not yet made the full transition into a speaking subject.'<sup>174</sup> This again draws comparisons with *Pilgrimage* as it is also concerned with the writing of consciousness, as has been shown in the various discussions of criticism, such as Hanscombe's, which uses these terms for Richardson's autobiographical narrative style. Parsons, Watts and Drewery then are critics who do not take the view, as some such as George H. Thomson have, that Miriam and Richardson are so closely linked as to be interchangeable. However, Parsons,

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<sup>170</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'The Garden' *Journey to Paradise: Short Stories and Autobiographical Sketches*, ed. Trudi Tate (London: Virago, 1989), pp. 21-24

<sup>171</sup> Joanne Winning, *The Pilgrimage of Dorothy Richardson*, p. 99-102

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25

<sup>173</sup> Claire Drewery, *Modernist Short Fiction by Women: The Liminal in Katherine Mansfield, Dorothy Richardson, May Sinclair and Virginia Woolf* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), p. 4

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21

Watts and Drewery do all find some interest in Richardson's method of writing her life and memories into *Pilgrimage* and into her short stories, despite their differing thematic focuses. All three critics then find innovation and experimentalism in Richardson's boundary crossing writing.

Another recent critical work on Richardson (alongside Edmund Gosse, Henry James, and Siegfried Sassoon) is Mhairi Pooler's *Writing Life: Early Twentieth-Century Autobiographies of the Artist-Hero* (2015). Stating her classification of *Pilgrimage* as autobiography in the very title of her monograph, Pooler repeatedly uses this term to describe the novel sequence, leaving little room for the nuances of what this implies in relation to Miriam as a writer in and of *Pilgrimage*. Pooler also calls the chapter-volumes a 'unique portrait of the female artist,'<sup>175</sup> with all of Pooler's other case studies of autobiographical artist-heroes being male writers. As has been reported in this chapter, the early theoretical works on autobiography often focused entirely on male writers and, as Pooler illustrates, this phenomenon has not entirely died out over time. However, Pooler does present an in-depth look at the experimental narrative techniques of *Pilgrimage*, discussing Richardson's 'shift from reported speech to free indirect discourse'<sup>176</sup> - that is, the shifts from third to first person - and looking at Miriam's interest in reading and writing throughout the novel sequence. Pooler writes:

As the protagonist's fascination with language in the early volumes suggests, Richardson's largely autobiographical focaliser eventually becomes a writer in *and* of a purportedly fictional narrative written with the intention of creating a new kind of "feminine realism" in order to accurately communicate her consciousness.<sup>177</sup>

Pooler's acknowledgment of Miriam as the author of her own life narrative aligns closely with the argument of this thesis, as does Pooler's focus on Richardson's protagonist's interest in literature - later noting that 'Richardson makes the act of writing an intrinsic part of the story'<sup>178</sup> - which is the catalyst for Miriam taking up writing as a hobby and eventually as a profession. However, Pooler's belief that this interest of Miriam's in language only features in the early

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<sup>175</sup> Mhairi Pooler, *Writing Life: Early Twentieth-Century Autobiographies of the Artist-Hero* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2015), p. 142

<sup>176</sup> Ibid., p. 141

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., p. 142

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., p. 144

chapter-volumes is unfounded, particularly as Miriam discusses her literary influences at length, focusing on Henry James and Ralph Waldo Emerson in later chapter-volumes, as I will go on to discuss in chapters four and six. Pooler has possibly reached this conclusion as the earlier chapter-volumes, particularly *The Tunnel* and *Interim*, feature the most densely experimental narrative style used by Richardson, including many instances of shifts from third to first person and extensive and erratic use of punctuation. Pooler then confuses Richardson's moment of interest in language and its limits with Miriam's coming to an interest in language and literature, which occurs throughout. Thus Pooler seems to succumb to the trap that many critics before her have fallen into of failing to maintain the distinction between author and protagonist. Despite this, Pooler does make some excellent points about Miriam as a writer in and of *Pilgrimage*, noting 'scattered references to the feeling she is in a novel draw attention to the perceived link between writing and reality, which is enhanced when Miriam begins to work as a writer.'<sup>179</sup> Miriam's awareness of how she could be a character in a novel eventually leads to her writing down her experiences, having realised her life would make for good art, and thus this is a key moment in the novel sequence. Pooler also describes how 'the moment of the text's and of Miriam's birth is enacted'<sup>180</sup> in the final scene of *March Moonlight*, the final chapter-volume, which suggests that Pooler also sees the end of the novel sequence as the beginning of Miriam writing *Pilgrimage*.

Rebecca Bowler has also published a recent addition to the field of Richardson studies with *Literary Impressionism: Vision and Memory in Dorothy Richardson, Ford Madox Ford, H.D. and May Sinclair* (2016). In this text, Bowler uses Richardson's work as a lens through which to view the writing of some of her modernist contemporaries, reinforcing the continuing critical impact of Richardson's experiments in writing. Bowler notes throughout her monograph that Miriam takes up the writing of *Pilgrimage*, often linking this to a preoccupation with memory, writing: 'as Miriam considers her past through memory, she also thinks about how she is going to go about the task of beginning to write.'<sup>181</sup> This work of beginning to write is found by Bowler to be in the final

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<sup>179</sup> Ibid., pp. 156-157

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., p. 175

<sup>181</sup> Rebecca Bowler, *Literary Impressionism: Vision and Memory in Dorothy Richardson, Ford Madox Ford, H.D. and May Sinclair* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), p. 14

chapter-volume - 'in *March Moonlight*, Miriam becomes a writer'<sup>182</sup> - which is indeed the moment that Miriam makes clear her intentions to make writing her profession, as I discuss in chapter six. However, my own critical position on Miriam's status as a writer differs very slightly from Bowler's in that I would argue that Miriam 'becomes' a writer throughout the novel sequence, not only in the final chapter-volume, as this thesis will show in her gaining of confidence, experience, and a passion for literature from the very outset of *Pilgrimage*. Bowler does provide a very comprehensive critical discussion of the ways in which Miriam gathers information and experiences for later use in her writing, 'storing [memories] as permanent data in the mind, and ensuring their availability as raw material for art,'<sup>183</sup> as I go on to explore in chapter five, where I note that Miriam records her experience of visiting Switzerland for later use, having turned to writing in a more professional capacity. Bowler also discusses how this storing of data and experiences does not translate to a simple repeating verbatim of what has happened, but rather Miriam works on 're-viewing the events with a renewed perspective,'<sup>184</sup> suggesting that Richardson's protagonist works on developing a unique writing style based on her life experiences, as Richardson has done. This creation of a writing process is also touched on by Bowler, who states that 'Miriam's thoughts about memory and writing are not merely theoretical in *March Moonlight*, they are based upon her own actual writing practice,'<sup>185</sup> once again illustrating that by the final pages of the *Pilgrimage* sequence Miriam has achieved her goal of making writing her profession. Bowler also notes the closeness of Miriam and Richardson's writing practices, writing that:

Later chapters are more fragmentary and unpolished, racing from place to place and character to character, as if in a frantic effort to bid farewell to everyone encountered in *Pilgrimage*, and to reach the point in Richardson's own life when she sat down to begin writing her novel.<sup>186</sup>

Bowler here suggests a circularity to the novel sequence, with Richardson writing her life into Miriam up until the point when she began to write, allowing Miriam to then take up the writing. This is then, according to Bowler, 'not time

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<sup>182</sup> Ibid., p. 193

<sup>183</sup> Ibid., p. 221

<sup>184</sup> Ibid., p. 195

<sup>185</sup> Ibid., p. 198

<sup>186</sup> Ibid., p. 194

regained, but time reshaped',<sup>187</sup> as the constant reuse of memory as material allows for new experiences to be had and to be written with each turn of the circle.

As Bowler has brought to critical attention, alongside Parsons and Pooler, Richardson is a writer who inspires comparison with many of her modernist contemporaries. Richardson's writing may be experimental and innovative to the point of exceptionality but, as these critics have shown, her concerns with narrative voice and life-writing are universal enough as to allow for her work to be read alongside a broad spectrum of modernist writers from James Joyce to May Sinclair.

### *Pilgrimage as Écriture Féminine or 'a feminine equivalent'*

Richardson herself saw the uniqueness of her writing, claiming in a 1938 foreword to a collected edition of *Pilgrimage* that she was attempting 'to produce a feminine equivalent of the current masculine realism',<sup>188</sup> as has been previously noted above in relation to the criticism of Gillian E. Hanscombe. Viewing her writing in this way, as a feminine force against the male standard of the time, designates a gender to her writing that goes beyond it simply having a female author and protagonist. Richardson instead appears to suggest that the language and construction of her writing is intrinsically female. Richardson was not alone in relating the innovativeness of her writing to its focus on representing a female consciousness. Indeed, as I have discussed, Richardson's modernist contemporary Virginia Woolf reviewed her writing, and in 1923 claimed that Richardson had produced in her work 'the psychological sentence of the feminine gender'.<sup>189</sup> This now often repeated phrase, made some years before Richardson designated the 'feminine' in her writing, similarly links the textuality of the novel sequence, in this case the sentences, to the female gender. Richardson and Woolf then are suggesting that Richardson's narrative innovations - her experiments in narrative shifts, punctuation, and in expanding the genre of life-writing - manage to articulate the female experience in a way that has not been managed previously.

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<sup>187</sup> Ibid., p. 232

<sup>188</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'Foreword to *Pilgrimage*', p. 430

<sup>189</sup> Virginia Woolf, 'Romance and the Heart' *The Essays of Virginia Woolf, Vol. 3 1919-1924*, ed. Andrew McNeillie (London: The Hogarth Press, 1988) pp. 365-368 (p. 367)



It is unsurprising then that, with Richardson herself and her more well-known contemporary having tied her prose to gender, critics have chosen to explore her work through the lens of feminist theory. Although, as I have shown, a vast majority of the critical works on Richardson's writing to date have focused on the autobiographical elements, some critics have also explored *Pilgrimage* within the tradition of *écriture féminine*; a feminist theoretical term coined by Hélène Cixous in her article 'The Laugh of the Medusa' which was first published in French in 1975 and translated into English the following year. This chapter, a survey of the critical landscape on auto/biographical theory and of criticism on Richardson, concludes with a discussion of *écriture féminine* not because I believe the term necessarily can or should be applied to Richardson's work but because those who do employ the term, Jean Radford in particular, come closest to my own critical evaluation of *Pilgrimage* as a doubly autobiographical text.

In this influential second-wave feminist text, Cixous has created a call to arms urging women to write their lives and to write in a uniquely female manner from a uniquely female perspective. This is hugely relevant in the study of Richardson's writing, as she made clear she was striving to create a female equivalent of male writing styles in her 1938 foreword, as discussed above. Cixous's insistence then that 'woman must write her self: must write about women and bring women to writing'<sup>190</sup> echoes Richardson's sentiments. However, Toril Moi in *Sexual/Textual Politics*, her guide to second-wave feminism first published in 1986, queries the meaning of *écriture féminine*, asking: 'does *écriture féminine*, for instance, mean "female" or "feminine" writing?'<sup>191</sup> This is a question that must be considered when naming Richardson's work as an example of *écriture féminine*, particularly as she described her work as a 'feminine equivalent' of the work done by men, not as female writing, and her protagonist often describes herself as somewhere between male and female, as I will go on to discuss in later chapters. Moi later states that in *écriture féminine* 'it is not, apparently, the empirical sex of the author that matters, but the kind of writing at stake,'<sup>192</sup> further connecting Richardson with the theory in that her own focus was on creating a feminine style of writing, to showcase feminine consciousness,

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<sup>190</sup> Hélène Cixous, 'The Laugh of the Medusa' *Signs*, trans. Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen (Vol. 1, No. 4, 1976), pp. 875-893 (p. 875)

<sup>191</sup> Toril Moi, *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 97

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 108

and was not particularly tied to the gender of its author. Cixous also rallies against the canon of male writing, in the same way as Richardson and Laura Marcus have been shown to, stating that women wanting to write their experiences face an 'inevitable struggle against conventional man'<sup>193</sup> and the 'self-admiring, self-stimulating, self-congratulatory phallogentrism'<sup>194</sup> of the literary world. Furthermore, Cixous also speaks of the tradition of 'great men' in writing, using inverted commas to show her displeasure and disagreement with this in the same way that Richardson does in *Pilgrimage*:

And why don't you write? Write! Writing is for you, you are for you; your body is yours, take it. I know why you haven't written. (And why I didn't write before the age of twenty-seven.) Because writing is at once too high, too great for you, it's reserved for the great - that is, for "great men"; and it's "silly."<sup>195</sup>

In many ways, Cixous's call to arms for women to write is an extension of the one which Richardson put forth much earlier in the twentieth century, with Richardson showing women what a feminine narrative could look like, while Cixous provides outright encouragement in a way that would have enabled Richardson's protagonist to come to writing sooner had she had as strong a female example. Cixous's work also lends itself to a critique of Richardson's work by describing the difficulties in categorising women's writing:

It is impossible to define a feminine practice of writing, and this is an impossibility that will remain, for this practice can never be theorized, enclosed, coded - which doesn't mean that it doesn't exist<sup>196</sup>

As many critics of both Richardson's writing and of female life-writing in general argue, it is extremely difficult to define the shifting and expanding genre of women's auto/biographical writing, which has ultimately led to its exclusion from the canon.

Both Lynette Felber and Jean Radford have discussed Richardson's work in relation to the term *écriture féminine*. However, despite the close links between Felber and Radford's research, they fail to agree on many points. In her introductory chapter to *Gender and Genre in Novels Without End: The British*

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<sup>193</sup> Hélène Cixous, 'The Laugh of the Medusa', p. 875

<sup>194</sup> Ibid., p. 879

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., p. 876

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., p. 883

*Roman-Fleuve*, where she compares Richardson's work to that of Anthony Trollope and Anthony Powell, Felber accepts that 'some theorists postulate that certain genres (the romance, epistolary novel, or even the novel itself) may be feminine, or woman's, genres'<sup>197</sup> without a great deal of interrogation, seemingly intent on gendering the work of Trollope, Powell and Richardson as feminine from the outset. Felber does however note that to use all female examples 'is to leave unexplored the distinction between gendered writing and the sex of the writer'<sup>198</sup> and mentions the 'problematic nature of these designations'<sup>199</sup> but seems unwilling to put forth an alternative, instead preferring to remain within a relatively conventional critical mindset. With this in mind, it is easy to find fault in Felber's ideas, particularly her seeming obsession with the length of *Pilgrimage* and its lack of an ending, calling it a 'meganovel'<sup>200</sup> and claiming that 'Richardson evades the conventional resolution and writes beyond the conventional marriage ending,'<sup>201</sup> which entirely dismisses the idea of the narrative of the novel sequence being at least based on Richardson's life. Overall, Felber's critique of *Pilgrimage* lacks a depth of study, allowing several important points, particularly in relation to the designation of the female gender to specific genres such as romance novels, to be mentioned without the explanation or exploration that they require.

Radford, in contrast, treats *Pilgrimage* and its autobiographical background with care, choosing not to lean too heavily in either direction. Radford notes that the critics Elaine Showalter and Rachel Blau DuPlessis 'tend to treat Miriam/Richardson/*Pilgrimage* as identical,'<sup>202</sup> and takes her own stance on the novel sequence as 'the fictionalising of [Richardson's] autobiographical subject,'<sup>203</sup> choosing to situate herself somewhere in the middle of the wide gulf of Richardson's critical reception. A key idea that Radford mentions but does not dwell on at length is that of the protagonist Miriam as a writer, making the claim that:

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<sup>197</sup> Lynette Felber, *Gender and Genre in Novels Without End: The British Roman-Fleuve* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1995), p. 5

<sup>198</sup> Ibid., p. x

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., p. 7

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., p. 76

<sup>201</sup> Ibid., p. 107

<sup>202</sup> Jean Radford, *Dorothy Richardson* (New York and London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), p. 68

<sup>203</sup> Ibid., p. 48

What Miriam begins writing at the end of the sequence is, in other words, the novel that the reader holds in her hand. We are reading what she began writing as she writes "While I write" (IV, 657). At this point, the journey comes full circle, for reader and writer.<sup>204</sup>

This is a return to, and perhaps a clarifying of, Stephen Heath's discussion of the similarities between Richardson's writing process and that of her protagonist. Radford then allows the novel sequence to be both autobiographical - of Miriam's life - and yet remain fictional. Radford's idea of *Pilgrimage* coming full circle in its writing is also reminiscent of Suzanne Juhasz's essay where she claims that women write their life stories in a 'repetitive, cumulative, cyclical structure'.<sup>205</sup> However, other critics specifically disagree with the idea of Miriam mirroring Richardson in the creation of life-writing, such as Elaine Showalter who claimed that Richardson created 'a heroine whose life paralleled her own up to the point of authorship',<sup>206</sup> suggesting that she does not view Miriam as having followed her creator by writing her own life by the end of the novel sequence. Showalter does, however, note that '*Pilgrimage* is a portrait of the young woman on the way to becoming an artist',<sup>207</sup> acknowledging that *Pilgrimage* is of the Künstlerroman genre, but believes that 'the novel ends when the heroine is ready to write it',<sup>208</sup> which does not take into account the many examples of Miriam's considering how and what she will write and trialling this, which this thesis explores.

Radford and Heath's critical perceptions of *Pilgrimage* and its relationship to the writing of Richardson's protagonist Miriam are therefore those which work most productively with my own view of the novel sequence as doubly autobiographical, of Richardson writing Miriam writing herself. Radford in particular, with her vision of the reader holding the book authored by Miriam, is especially fitting. Radford, Marcus and Saunders then, alongside a selection of the other theoretical texts and key works from the field of Richardson studies discussed in this chapter, forms the basis for my reading of *Pilgrimage* as doubly autobiographical. Where I perhaps deviate from Radford's reading, however, is

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<sup>204</sup> Ibid., pp. 86-87

<sup>205</sup> Suzanne Juhasz, 'Towards a Theory of Form in Feminist Autobiography: Kate Millett's *Flying* and *Sita*; Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior*', p. 223

<sup>206</sup> Elaine Showalter, *A Literature of Their Own: from Charlotte Brontë to Doris Lessing* (London: Virago, 1999), p. 248

<sup>207</sup> Ibid.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

that she appears to suggest that the entirety of *Pilgrimage*'s writing belongs to the fictional Miriam, whereas I view the text as a hybrid of Richardson's writing and of Miriam's. This is partly due to the shifting between first and third person narrative, often facilitated by an extensive use of ellipsis, which can be read as a shift from one author to another. Furthermore, as this thesis will show by discussing the text chronologically, Richardson's protagonist builds slowly on her interest in reading and in language before deciding to take up writing her own life as her profession. This gradual coming to writing is helped by encouragement from friends and by trying out other forms of writing - letters, reviews, translations - but the time this takes, as well as the fractured forms of writing Miriam rehearses on first, suggest that the narrative of her life that Miriam will, and does, write may be very close to that of *Pilgrimage*.

Chapter 2  
 'I must make a beginning of my own life. . . .':  
 Ellipses and Work in  
*Pointed Roofs* and *Backwater*

The experimental narrative style of *Pilgrimage* which contributes to Richardson's writing of a doubly autobiographical narrative begins from the very start of the sequence, although it does reach a peak of experimentation in later chapter-volumes. This experimentation can be seen in Richardson's disregard for the rules of punctuation, using ellipses extensively and even eliminating quotation marks to indicate speech in *Interim* of 1919, as well as in her frequent movements between first and third person narrative. Both the first chapter-volume *Pointed Roofs* (1915) and its follow-up *Backwater* (1916) feature this experimental narrative style which Richardson would come to develop and refine throughout the *Pilgrimage* sequence, closely following the trajectory of her protagonist, Miriam Henderson, who also in time comes to work on developing her own writing style. When the series opens with *Pointed Roofs*, Miriam is not yet a writer but is a young woman who has left home for the first time to work as a language teacher in a German school following her father's financial collapse; a narrative which repeats Richardson's own experiences as a teenager. In *Backwater* Miriam returns to England and continues to work in education, teaching young girls in North London. Neither chapter-volume depicts Richardson's protagonist beginning to write or even articulating a real desire to take it up as her profession. However, in Miriam's interest in reading and in language, which is explored in this chapter, as well as in Richardson's initial experiments with punctuation and with language and narrative voice, the beginnings of Miriam's future life as a writer can be seen to tentatively take hold.

In this chapter I focus on Richardson's ellipses, and the shifts from third person narrative into first that these ellipses often indicate, being used to signpost instances of self-doubt in her protagonist, who often appears unsure of her path in life and uncertain that she is suited to teaching. This self-doubt in her ability to carry out her employment, emphasised by instances of experimental punctuation and narrative voice, is then an early example of Miriam beginning to hope for a future for herself outside of the forms of employment that are currently open to her, such as teaching. Richardson uses these moments of

unusual writing to signify to the reader that Miriam would be better suited to a less traditional lifestyle. Miriam's strong interest in reading and in exploring new literature is also discussed in this chapter as an indicator of her future path to making writing her vocation, as is her focus on female writers which suggests an early interest in female and feminist voices and narratives.

Indeed, in his introduction to a recent edition of *Pointed Roofs*, published by Broadview in 2014, Stephen Ross explores how *Pointed Roofs* 'establishes [...] the experimental style'<sup>1</sup> and suggests that this developing of a style is something of a feminist act by Richardson. He writes:

As the series title indicates, *Pilgrimage* is about a journey, one with a quasi-sacred objective. It's a quest to write what had not yet been written in English literature: a woman's life from a woman's perspective and using what Richardson herself thought of as a feminine style.<sup>2</sup>

Here, Ross references Richardson's foreword to the 1938 collected edition of *Pilgrimage*, where she explains her goal of creating a feminine version of the more readily canonised male writing. In doing so, Ross emphasises that developing a unique narrative style with the aim of making it representative of women's experiences and of women's writing, Richardson has taken on not only a deeply personal project but enacted a feminist deed by creating the process and the space for women to write their own experience. Richardson's feminism is then furthered by her creation of a protagonist who also dismisses traditional experiences to achieve her goal of making a living as a writer, as Ross explains:

Fusing stylistic innovations with thematic and substantial daring, Richardson's *Pilgrimage* manages to be avant-garde in its technique at the same time as it introduces into English literature a female protagonist whose chief concern is not to get married or to eliminate her competition, but to grow into a fully realized mature woman with intellectual and artistic ambition equal to those of a man.<sup>3</sup>

By bringing together the progressiveness of both Richardson's writing style and the life of her protagonist - who, it must not be forgotten, is based closely on herself - Ross then makes clear how interrelated Richardson's experimentations with language and punctuation are with Miriam's coming to being a writer and

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<sup>1</sup> Stephen Ross, 'Introduction' *Pointed Roofs*, ed. Stephen Ross and Tara Thomson (Peterborough: Broadview, 2014), pp. 9-46 (p. 11)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 10

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

how this works with Miriam and Richardson's dislike of the "great men" tradition, as has been discussed in the previous chapter.

Susan Gevirtz has also identified the uniquely female and feminist aspects of Richardson's writing and, like Ross, draws on her 1938 foreword. Gevirtz writes:

The quick succession of flat fields of prose, composed of some fragments and some complete sentences, embodies the technique ` Richardson calls "feminine prose" as it mimes the shape of traveling consciousness on the page.<sup>4</sup>

Gevirtz sees this focus on consciousness by Richardson as being enabled by her experimental narrative style and punctuation usage, the rhythm of which Gevirtz compares to train travel. Gevirtz then goes on to note that women have an awareness of consciousness that men do not: 'Richardson's "feminine" is not strictly located in women's bodies or writing but is a state of consciousness more likely present in or recognized by women.'<sup>5</sup> It then follows that an urge to represent consciousness on the page would be found more frequently in female writers than in male.

Gevirtz and Ross's commentaries then also have links with the theoretical writing on auto/biography of Laura Marcus, as discussed in my introduction, particularly her thoughts on women creating the space for their own life-writing endeavours. Marcus writes:

The autobiographies of many twentieth-century women writers, for example, have been overlooked or diminished, even by feminist critics, because they are not primarily concerned with literary culture, or are incommensurate with cultural images of the writer, or fail to exhibit the required degree of literary self-consciousness. There is immense scope for exploration of the ways in which women, and other marginalised groups, have used autobiographical writings as a way of writing histories that would otherwise be omitted from the records.<sup>6</sup>

Marcus's ideas resonate with Richardson's writing, where she was also concerned with writing the history of a woman like herself, indeed based on her own life, that would have otherwise gone unheard. Richardson also avoids her

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<sup>4</sup> Susan Gevirtz, 'Into ellipse: Geographic and Grammatical Disappearance in Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage*' *Women's Studies* (Vol. 20, No. 5, 1997), pp. 523-533 (p. 525)

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 527

<sup>6</sup> Laura Marcus, *Auto/biographical Discourses: Theory, Criticism, Practice* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1994), p. 269



autobiographical writing falling into the trap that Marcus identifies of critics viewing life-writing as of less value than literary works, with Richardson writing her life within the fictional novel tradition, as well as within the tradition of autobiography. Thus, the hybridity of Richardson's text is yet another way she has diverged from what is expected of writing.

Max Saunders deals extensively with writing on the margins of fiction and autobiography in *Self Impression*, as has been noted in the previous chapter. He too sees *Pilgrimage* as benefitting from its hybrid status, naming it alongside other autobiographical novels such as May Sinclair's *Mary Olivier*, Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, Rosamund Lehmann's *Dusty Answer*, and H.D.'s *Bid Me to Live*. Saunders writes:

Fictionalized autobiography evidently offered a space for women as well to enter the mainstream in a way that straight autobiography did not. Though we might also note that these examples are all also *romans à clef*: essentially pseudonymous autobiographical novels. It's a form which allows writers to appear not to be writing about themselves; which self-protection may have been especially appealing to women writing at a time when to write overt autobiography would risk still be read as appearing threateningly independent, and transgressing from the private and domestic to the public sphere.<sup>7</sup>

Here Saunders notes that the list of autobiographical novels he refers to, which also includes texts by Marcel Proust and James Joyce, features a significant number of works by women. He then suggests that female writers may have benefitted from the privacy of fictionalising their personal stories, which still allowed them to tell the narratives of their lives that would not otherwise have been told. Therefore, while Marcus views fictionalising autobiography as a way to strengthen the critical reception of a narrative, Saunders instead, at least for female writers, sees it as a method of softening the threat of their independence. Although Saunders does name Richardson amongst the authors he believes to have operated on this basis while Marcus does not cover Richardson's writing at all, it is Marcus's guessing as to the motivations of women writers to take to fictionalising their lives which seems to suit Richardson's work more closely. Saunders does however claim that 'such [autobiographical] fiction doesn't only encode the lives of authors and contacts; it becomes the most

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<sup>7</sup> Max Saunders, *Self Impression: Life-Writing, Autobiografiction, and the Forms of Modern Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 210

productive site for the representation of consciousness, gender identity, education, and the inner life.<sup>8</sup> It is in this representation of inner life that Richardson succeeds in her use of autobiographical fiction as her genre, writing about the subject she knows best - herself - and employing her experimental narrative and punctuation to do so. Thus, as Marcus and Saunders have shown, there has been an ongoing critical interest in all aspects of life-writing, and specifically in women's life-writing, for some time. However, Richardson's innovative doubling of autobiography, writing a writer who is writing her life, as well as her experimental writing style, create a gap in the body of critical works on life-writing which this thesis aims to address.

### 'Creating unnecessary difficulties': Punctuation in *Pilgrimage*

Richardson's atypical use of punctuation, particularly her extensive use of ellipses, often appears in a section of the novel sequence which is written in first person narrative, from Miriam's perspective, rather than the third person realist narrative style which Richardson employs for a significant amount of *Pilgrimage*. These shifts in narrative between first and third person, which are so often announced by a break in the narrative caused by ellipses, led to *Pilgrimage* being deemed the first example of stream of consciousness by Richardson's contemporary, the novelist May Sinclair. Sinclair called Richardson's writing 'Miriam Henderson's stream of consciousness going on and on,'<sup>9</sup> in a 1918 review, suggesting that it was not necessarily a positive label given the tedious connotations of 'on and on' that Sinclair puts forth, despite her positive review of the chapter-volumes. Indeed, Richardson herself disagreed with the term, claiming that 'amongst the company of useful labels devised to meet the exigencies of literary criticism it stands alone, isolated by its perfect imbecility'<sup>10</sup> and describing it as a 'death-dealing metaphor'<sup>11</sup> in a 1949 letter to her friend and contemporary Bryher. It was not the negativity surrounding the label that Richardson appears to have disliked, however, but rather it was the

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> May Sinclair, 'The Novels of Dorothy Richardson' *The Egoist* (Vol. 5, No. 4, 1918), pp. 57-59 (p. 58)

<sup>10</sup> Carey Kaplan, 'Dorothy Richardson' *Women Writers of Great Britain and Europe: An Encyclopaedia*, ed. Katharina M. Wilson, Paul Schlueter and June Schlueter (New York and London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 386-387 (p. 387)

<sup>11</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'To Bryher, New Year's Day 1949' *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson*, ed. Gloria G. Fromm (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), p. 597

linearity that the term suggested. Bryony Randall notes this in her 2007 monograph, claiming that: 'her rejection of the expression "stream of consciousness" would seem to relate to this distinction, since a stream implies some kind of process, or forward movement.'<sup>12</sup> However, the *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* definition of stream of consciousness seems to describe Richardson's writing style well and, unsurprisingly, names *Pilgrimage* as a textual example. Chris Baldick writes:

The continuous flow of sense-perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and memories in the human mind; or a literary method of representing such a blending of mental processes in fictional characters, usually in an unpunctuated or disjointed form of interior monologue.<sup>13</sup>

Although parts of Richardson's novel sequence which feature extensive ellipsis use are far from unpunctuated, Baldick accurately represents the way in which Richardson depicts consciousness. His noting of the 'unpunctuated' form of stream of consciousness narratives is however close to Richardson's style in some chapter-volumes, specifically the lack of quotation marks for reported speech in *Interim* (1919). The stream of consciousness term has been heavily used by critics to discuss Richardson's work despite her dislike of it and as such I view it as a useful term but not a precise category or definition. Rather, my position is that Richardson's doubly autobiographical writing incorporates elements of what is considered stream of consciousness, made up of a series of ellipses, missing quotation marks, and shifts between first and third person, which all work to form the narrative style which Richardson has created.

The issue of punctuation, or a lack thereof, followed Richardson throughout her writing career. In a 1924 article for *Adelphi* magazine entitled 'About Punctuation' she discusses the standardisation of punctuation, claiming that 'the rules of punctuation are neither sacred, nor execrable, nor quite absolute'<sup>14</sup> but noting that over time writers had begun to use punctuation in a more conventional manner. She asserts, however, that 'so long as it conforms to rule

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<sup>12</sup> Bryony Randall, *Modernism, Daily Time and Everyday Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 64

<sup>13</sup> Chris Baldick, 'Stream of Consciousness' *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015),  
<<http://www.oxfordreference.com.ezproxy.lib.gla.ac.uk/view/10.1093/acref/9780198715443.01.0001/acref-9780198715443-e-1089>>

<sup>14</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'About Punctuation' *The Gender of Modernism: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Bonnie Kime Scott (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), pp. 414-418 (p. 417)

punctuation is invisible.'<sup>15</sup> Yet, one of the ways in which Richardson subverted the rules of punctuation was to dismiss speech marks entirely, making the punctuation quite literally invisible in that it is missing. She addresses this in the foreword to the first collected edition of *Pilgrimage*, dated 1938, in which she discusses herself and her work in the third person, stating:

But when her work is danced upon for being unpunctuated and therefore unreadable, she is moved to cry aloud. For here is truth. Feminine prose [...] should properly be unpunctuated, moving from point to point without formal obstructions.<sup>16</sup>

Richardson then ends her foreword with humour, noting that 'the author desires here to express her gratitude and, further, to offer to all those readers who have persisted in spite of every obstacle, a heart-felt apology.'<sup>17</sup> This attitude of apology, which contradicts her earlier assertion that the rules of punctuation are neither fixed nor absolute, continues to the end of Richardson's life and can be found again in an interview conducted by the writer Vincent Brome and published in *London Magazine* in 1959, two years after Richardson's death. Brome writes:

We spoke of the lack of punctuation in the early volumes of *Pilgrimage*. "A mistake," she said. "I felt later like apologizing to my readers. A reputation for creating unnecessary difficulties is very difficult to live down."<sup>18</sup>

These unnecessary difficulties to which Richardson is referring are her lack of quotation marks for reported speech, and I would suggest that her extensive use of ellipsis, often with more than the standard three marks, can be considered a so-called "unnecessary difficulty" in punctuation for readers also. Indeed, Richardson often uses four ellipsis points to indicate a finished sentence that has trailed off into silence, as opposed to the more common three-point ellipsis which suggests a mid-sentence break. Even more unusually, in the fifth chapter-volume of *Pilgrimage*, *Interim* of 1919, Richardson used an ellipsis mark consisting of a highly irregular six dots, which features in both the *Little Review* and Duckworth and Company publications of the chapter-volume but has been

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'Foreword to *Pilgrimage*' *The Gender of Modernism: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Bonnie Kime Scott (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), pp. 429-432 (p. 431)

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 432

<sup>18</sup> Vincent Brome, 'A Last Meeting with Dorothy Richardson' *London Magazine*, 6 June 1959, pp. 26-32 (p. 30)

replaced in the more recent Dent and Virago collected editions by a single comma. This will be discussed more fully in the next chapter, which focuses on the third, fourth and fifth chapter-volumes of *Pilgrimage*.

Anne Toner, in her comprehensive guide *Ellipsis in English Literature*, claims that 'ellipsis points came to consciousness at the turn of the [twentieth] century,'<sup>19</sup> noting that the punctuation marks began to be used to represent consciousness at this time, having previously been used more simply as a method for 'making lapses in connectivity explicit for a reader,'<sup>20</sup> that is, to make unclear statements and fragmented sentences somewhat clearer for the reader. Toner also notes that 'ellipsis marks have long served as a means of promoting access to emotional or psychological states.'<sup>21</sup> Here Toner, who does not reference Richardson in her monograph, perhaps allows for the suggestion that Richardson's innovation in language is not particularly experimental after all, as she is allowing access to the first person psychological state of Richardson's protagonist - apparently a long-standing use of ellipses. In her final chapter, on ellipsis marks in modernism, Toner notes that 'ellipsis points can be seen as a symbol of the [twentieth] century as they articulate its ever-unravelling coherence.'<sup>22</sup> Toner's thoughts on punctuation as a facilitator of disorder are then different from those of M. B. Parkes whose comprehensive punctuation guide *Pause and Effect: An Introduction to the History of Punctuation in the West* claims that punctuation's 'primary function is to resolve structural uncertainties in a text.'<sup>23</sup> It is possible then that Richardson's ellipses and the narrative shifts that they often signify fulfil both Parkes and Toner's ideas on punctuation, creating textual confusion for the reader whilst simultaneously allowing for a deeper understanding of Richardson's protagonist and her consciousness, as I will go on to discuss.

Richardson uses ellipses to allow the reader into the mind of her protagonist, made possible despite the third person narrative style that she employed for the writing of *Pointed Roofs*. For example, the narrative moves from a discussion

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<sup>19</sup> Anne Toner, *Ellipsis in English Literature: Signs of Omission* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 151

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 151

<sup>23</sup> M. B. Parkes, *Pause and Effect: An Introduction to the History of Punctuation in the West* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1992), p. 1

between women in the school on hairstyles into something of a word association game for Miriam that is only ended when a character speaks aloud:

Miriam's mind groped . . . classic - Greece and Rome - Greek knot. . .  
 . Grecian key . . . a Grecian key pattern on the dresses for the sixth  
 form tableau - reading Ruskin . . . the strip of glass all along the  
 window space on the floor in the large room - edged with mosses and  
 grass - the mirror of Venus. . . .  
 "Eh bien? Eh bien!"<sup>24</sup>

This example of Richardson's use of ellipses sees the protagonist's narrative leave her day to day existence and enter her consciousness, slipping into a state of remembering previous learning experiences. This shift from observations of the world around her into the mind of Miriam occurs throughout *Pointed Roofs*, and indeed the novel sequence as a whole, and is often facilitated by ellipses, particularly in the early chapter-volumes. Another example can be found slightly later in the chapter-volume, when Miriam attends a church service in Germany:

They were singing a hymn. The people near her had not moved.  
 Nobody had moved. The whole church was sitting down, singing a  
 hymn. What wonderful people. . . . Like a sort of tea-party . . .  
 everybody sitting about - not sitting up to the table . . . happy and  
 comfortable. Emma had found her place and handed her a big hymn-  
 book with the score. (*PR*, p. 111)

This passage sees Miriam observe the hymn being sung, which then begins a series of associations in her mind. The narrative moves from events which are happening in Miriam's reality - the singing - presented in third person, to loosely related thoughts and observations - 'like a sort of tea-party' - and then back to the third person reality of Emma handing Miriam a hymn-book, all enabled by a series of ellipses.

*Backwater* features far fewer instances of ellipses than *Pointed Roofs* but continues to feature Richardson's experimentation with narrative. A review of Richardson's first chapter-volume in *The Scotsman* from October 1915 criticised her erratic use of punctuation, stating that her writing: 'is done in the most abrupt, ecstatic almost hysterical sort of way, and the punctuation is arranged to match.'<sup>25</sup> It is possible that criticism of her style such as this example contributed to a decision to eventually go on to lessen the use of ellipses, as

<sup>24</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Pointed Roofs*, hereafter cited as *PR* (London: Duckworth, 1915), p. 90

<sup>25</sup> 'New Fiction' *The Scotsman*, 4 October 1915, p. 2

well as Richardson having refined how she would use punctuation. The very first use of ellipsis marks in *Backwater* occurs several pages into the text, unlike in *Pointed Roofs* in which Richardson takes very little time to introduce her extensively punctuated narrative style. In the second chapter-volume of *Pilgrimage*, Richardson uses ellipsis to indicate a shift in mood for her protagonist, as well as a change in life circumstances:

Ahead of her, at the end of the long drive, lay three sunlit weeks,  
bright now in the certainty that of the shadow that lay beyond them .  
. . "the junior school" . . . "four boarders."<sup>26</sup>

Here, Miriam Henderson is thinking of her forthcoming employment at a school in North London, and how that means the end of her enjoyable summer at home. The ellipses employed here are shifting the protagonist into a new life. Moreover, the words which follow the ellipses are in speech marks, indicating a repetition of words spoken by someone else in the first person, which suggests that Miriam may be beginning to mentally take note of things which she observes, possibly to be used later when she begins to write the story of her own life. Indeed, these phrases she remembers are directly quoted from an earlier exchange in which Miriam is interviewed by the sisters who own the school in which she is seeking work. Richardson writes:

The sisters talked quietly, outlining their needs in smooth gentle voices, in small broken phrases, frequently interrupting and correcting each other. Miriam heard dreamily that they wanted help with the lower school, the children from six to eight years of age, in the mornings and afternoons, and in the evenings a general superintendence of the four boarders. (*BW*, p. 2)

That Miriam hears the sisters' requests 'dreamily' then foretells that what they say will later become an anecdote which Richardson has Miriam keep for later use, as I have shown above. Thus, even before Miriam has considered that writing may be her true vocation, she has possibly begun to think about the importance of documenting, or at least remembering accurately, her own experiences for later use.

However, speech marks are not only used by Richardson to illustrate direct speech or a memory. Richardson also, confusingly perhaps, uses speech marks to

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<sup>26</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Backwater*, hereafter cited as *BW* (London: Duckworth, 1916), p. 10

indicate words spoken inside the mind of Miriam. For example, on an omnibus journey through North London with her mother, Miriam:

roused herself at last from her puzzled contemplation and turned to glance at her mother. [...] "Useless to try to talk about anything. . . . Mother would be somehow violent. She would be overpowering. The strange new impressions would be dissolved." (*BW*, p. 13)

There are no other characters present in this scene besides Miriam and Mrs Henderson and Miriam cannot be discussing her mother's 'violent' nature with her mother herself. Thus, Miriam's consciousness is represented within speech marks, perhaps something that she wished she could say aloud, and this shift into first person consciousness features Richardson's infamous ellipses. Speech marks are once again used to show the inner workings of Miriam's mind when Richardson writes "'I wonder where we're going - I wonder if this is a Piccadilly bus," Miriam thought of saying. Impossible to shout through the din' (*BW*, p. 14), representing once more words which cannot be said aloud, and which are therefore potentially being recorded for later use in writing. Punctuation then - both ellipses and quotation marks - are vital tools for Richardson in her creation of a doubly autobiographical narrative. Both Richardson and Miriam use these marks to move between narratives and consciousnesses, shifting from listening and speaking into considering writing, indicating this with the use of punctuation.

#### 'Out of the house, out of the world': Miriam and Music

In *Pointed Roofs* Richardson also uses ellipses as a means of expressing feelings outside of everyday physical human experience, despite the first chapter-volume in her sequence being largely written in the third person. For example, a scene in which Miriam observes a student playing the piano seems to trigger something beyond simple enjoyment of the music in Richardson's protagonist:

She felt that she was looking at nothing and yet was aware of the whole room like a picture in a dream. Fear left her. The human forms all round her lost their power. They grew suffused and dim. . . . The pensive swing of the music changed to urgency and emphasis. . . . It came nearer and nearer. It did not come from the candle-lit corner where the piano was. . . . It came from everywhere. It carried her out of the house, out of the world.

It hastened with her, on and on towards great brightness. . . . Everything was growing brighter and brighter. . . . (*PR*, p. 52)



Here Richardson appears to attempt to distance Miriam from those around her, using 'human forms' rather than a more personal description of the students and teachers in the room. Miriam is even described as being carried by the music out of her existence in the world, furthering her detachment from reality. The ellipsis employed here is extensive even by Richardson's standards, with this short excerpt featuring five instances of the punctuation form. By breaking from standard sentence structure, letting so many of her sentences trail off into ellipsis, Richardson emphasises her protagonist's distancing of herself from people and from the world. Miriam here is so detached from reality due to the music that her thoughts and feelings cannot be represented in straightforward sentences.

Music as a facilitator for escaping Miriam's everyday existence is a recurring theme in *Pointed Roofs*, and music remains important for Miriam throughout the novel sequence, often as a way to explore creative thoughts. For example, in Richardson's ninth chapter-volume *Oberland* (1927), Miriam makes a connection between her life and the composer Beethoven's:

No wonder Beethoven worked at his themes washing and re-washing his hands. [...] Soap is with you when you are in that state of feeling life at first hand that makes even the best things that can happen important not so much in themselves as in the way they make you conscious of life, and of yourself living.<sup>27</sup>

As I discuss more fully in chapter five, Miriam uses the sensory experience of soap as a way for her to enter a creatively productive state of mind, something which she claims Beethoven also did. By this later stage in the narrative of Miriam's life she has realised her vocation lies in writing and is working towards making that happen, whereas in *Pointed Roofs* and *Backwater* writing is a vague interest. Thus, as Miriam's relationship to writing changes so too does her connection to music, with the Miriam of the first chapter-volume viewing music as an escape and therefore something disconnected from her physical reality, whereas the more mature Miriam of *Oberland* makes a sensory and physical connection between herself, a producer of music, and her own creativity. Thus, Miriam in *Oberland* can see similarities between herself and Beethoven in their creative processes suggesting a confidence in her own abilities.

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<sup>27</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Oberland* (London: Duckworth, 1927), pp. 112-113

Angela Frattarola has also noted the pairing of music and ellipses in *Pointed Roofs*, stating that 'music envelops Miriam and allows her to momentarily pause in her self-conscious "inner speech," signified by the ellipses of the narrative.'<sup>28</sup> Frattarola seems to also agree with Anne Toner's assertion of ellipses as a marker of consciousness, noting that Miriam's inner narrative is often signalled by the ellipsis marks. Another example of this musical escape from reality can be found later in the chapter-volume, although this example does not feature any original ellipses by Richardson:

Miriam found herself with her hands on the doors leading into the saal, pushing them gently. Why not? Everything had changed. Everything was good. [...] The voices from the schoolroom came softly, far away. [...] She heard the schoolroom windows close and escaped upstairs singing. (*PR*, pp. 152-153)

In this instance, Miriam is quite literally escaping as she exits through a door in the German school in which she works. More than this, however, there is an escape into the inner dialogue of the protagonist, leading the reader to question just who 'why not?' is directed towards and if it is in fact Miriam talking to herself. 'Everything had changed. Everything was good' then appears to be a further descent into the consciousness of Miriam and away from the third person narrative of the novel. In a more recent article, Frattarola asserts that 'Miriam slips into a meditative state with the aid of music'<sup>29</sup> which perhaps goes some way to explaining the sentences here which appear out of place in the narrative, where hearing the singing transports Miriam to a meditative or unconscious mental state that is far from reality. Another occurrence of music as meditation for Miriam, which does feature ellipses, can be found much later in the first chapter-volume:

She remembered the moment of taking her eyes away from the singer and the platform, and feeling the crowded room and the airlessness, and then the song going steadily on from note to note as she listened . . . no trills and no tune . . . saying something. It stood in the air. (*PR*, p. 233)

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<sup>28</sup> Angela Frattarola, 'Developing an Ear for the Modernist Novel: Virginia Woolf, Dorothy Richardson and James Joyce' *Journal of Modern Literature* (Vol. 33, No. 1, 2009), pp. 132-153 (p. 145)

<sup>29</sup> Angela Frattarola, 'Auditory Narrative in the Modernist Novel: Prosody, Music, and the Subversion of Vision in Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage*' *Genre* (Vol. 44, No. 1, 2011), pp. 5-27 (p. 9)

The ellipsis marks in this example enhance the meditative quality of the slipping into Miriam's consciousness, where 'no trills and no tune' can be read as Miriam's thoughts rather than the descriptive third person narrative which surrounds it.

Susan Reid has noted that Richardson, as a 'life-long Wagner enthusiast',<sup>30</sup> 'may have used Wagnerian leitmotifs to give structure to her seemingly unstructured novel.'<sup>31</sup> The Wagnerian leitmotif is defined as:

Musical ideas that would obtain a distinct associative meaning (relating to character, object, idea or emotion) in conjunction with a significant dramatic moment and concomitant text. [...] These musical ideas would accumulate additional layers of significance through their modified reappearance in appropriate dramatic context throughout the drama, at the same time endowing the drama with a compelling sense of a larger structural unity.<sup>32</sup>

Thus, the Wagnerian leitmotif appears to be a useful comparison for Richardson's recurring images and ideas, musical or otherwise, which do indeed tie the lengthy narrative together in some way. The critic Thomas Fahy also notes a similarity between the writing of Richardson and the composing of Wagner. He writes: 'by providing Miriam with a repeated connection to the past [...] musical compositions and forms enable her to forge her identity in a consciousness which continually fuses past and present.'<sup>33</sup> This fusing of past and present can be clearly identified as the recurring musical imagery is not only found in Richardson's first chapter-volume, but continues into *Backwater*. In this chapter-volume Richardson writes:

How quietly everyone was listening. . . .  
After a while, everything was dissolved, past and future and present and she was nothing but an ear, intent on the meditative harmony which stole out into the garden. (*BW*, p. 31)

Once again, very much like in the previous instalment, Miriam hears the playing of a piano and is instantly transported out of her physical presence with the shift indicated by an ellipsis mark. This use of ellipses as a shift into a new state of being also recurs in *Backwater*, with Richardson employing punctuation to

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<sup>30</sup> Susan Reid, 'In Parts: Bodies, Feelings, Music in D. H. Lawrence and Dorothy Richardson' *Pilgrimages: A Journal of Dorothy Richardson Studies* (No. 7, 2015), pp. 7-29 (p. 14)

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Barry Millington (ed.), *The Wagner Compendium: A Guide to Wagner's Life and Music* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992), pp. 234-235

<sup>33</sup> Thomas Fahy, 'The Cultivation of Incompatibility: Music as a Leitmotif in Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage*' *Women's Studies* (Vol. 29, 2000), pp. 131-147 (p. 133)

suggest a new-found freedom for her protagonist after trying a cigarette for the first time. The tenth section of chapter two ends with ellipses: 'she had chosen to smoke and she was smoking, and the morning world gleamed back at her. . . .' (*BW*, p. 39). Immediately following this, the next section of chapter two begins with the same language: 'the morning gleamed. She would choose her fate' (*BW*, p. 40). As such, the ellipses in this example are not only used to link the sections which have mirrored language; the ellipses also indicates the shift for Miriam into the freedom to choose to smoke a cigarette and to choose her fate.

Richardson is not the only modernist writer to use music in her writing, as Brad Bucknell discusses in his monograph on musical aesthetics in the works of Walter Pater, Ezra Pound, James Joyce, and Gertrude Stein. Bucknell introduces his text by noting the frequency of the theory and practice of music being written into modernist texts. He writes:

In the expressive potential of music and in its capacity to go beyond the mere rationality of language, many moderns do indeed turn to music in their search for a form to represent both conscious and unconscious levels of emotion.<sup>34</sup>

Bucknell does not cover Richardson's work in his text but this general introduction to music in modernism describes Richardson's engagement with musicality and consciousness well. Indeed, the passage from *Pointed Roofs* discussed above in which Richardson shifts the narrative from third person briefly into the 'no trills and no tune' of Miriam's inner thoughts is a clear example of a modernist writer using music to portray both consciousness and unconsciousness. Thus, Richardson's use of music and musical language, while not a unique and innovative creation, shows her engagement with literary trends and a willingness to try all kinds of experimentation in her creation of a doubly autobiographical novel sequence.

'I must make a beginning of my own life': Work in *Pointed Roofs* and *Backwater*

Another theme which runs through both *Pointed Roofs* and *Backwater* is that of the protagonist's self-doubt which is often highlighted by Richardson through her use of ellipses and the trailing ends to sentences which they provide. These

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<sup>34</sup> Brad Bucknell, *Literary Modernism and Musical Aesthetics: Pater, Pound, Joyce, and Stein* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 2-3

moments of low confidence occur most often in relation to Miriam's work as a teacher, which she seems to feel incapable of performing well:

She grieved over the things that she felt were lying neglected, "things in general" she felt sure she ought to discuss with the girls . . . improving the world . . . leaving it better than you found it . . . the importance of life . . . sleeping and dreaming that life was beauty and waking and finding it was duty . . . making things better reforming . . . being a reformer. . . . Pater always said young people wanted to reform the universe . . . perhaps it was so . . . and nothing could be done. Clearly she was not the one to do anything. She could do nothing with even these girls and she was nearly eighteen. (PR, p. 147)

Miriam's discomfort in her role as an educator is evident when it is noted that 'clearly she was not the one to do anything' which indicates a helplessness at feeling unable to properly impart knowledge onto her female students. Miriam's attitude that 'nothing could be done' with her students recurs later in *The Tunnel*, the fourth chapter-volume of *Pilgrimage*, by which time Miriam is working as a dental secretary in London. In *The Tunnel* (1919), which alongside the fifth chapter-volume *Interim* (1919) features the highest volume of ellipses and third to first person narrative shifts in the novel sequence, Miriam claims of her work in the dental surgery that 'there was something to be done before anything could be done,'<sup>35</sup> suggesting a pointlessness to her work which will apparently never be complete. This inability to find satisfaction in her work is an early indication that Miriam's true vocation lies somewhere outside of the traditional workplace, and indeed in writing.

Miriam's lack of real interest in her role as a teacher continues throughout the first chapter-volume. This can be seen clearly when Miriam worries in *Pointed Roofs* that her employer, Fräulein Pfaff, does not like her:

Pretending to be occupied with those about her she sat examining the look Fräulein had given her . . . she hates me. . . . Perhaps she did from the first. . . . She did from the first. . . . I shall have to go . . . and suddenly, lately, she had grown worse. . . . (PR, p. 213)

Here the ellipsis marks can clearly be seen to facilitate the narrative shift from third person into first. Another example can be found slightly later in the

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<sup>35</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *The Tunnel* (London: Duckworth, 1919), p. 30

chapter-volume, when Miriam is attempting to fit in with the other teachers in the school:

It's perfectly natural that they should all be excited about the holidays she told herself, stifling her thoughts. But it must not go too far. They wanted to be jolly. . . . If I could be jolly too they would like me. I must not be a wet blanket. . . . Mademoiselle's voice was not heard. Miriam felt that the steering of the conversation might fall to anyone. (PR, p. 269)

This instance of narrative shifting involves not just a shift from third to first person but also a movement back to third person, the pronouns shifting from 'her' to 'I' and back to a use of Miriam's name. Both examples here mark a moment of self-doubt for Richardson's protagonist, where she is worrying about how others feel about her. A retreat inwards, and into first person thoughts rather than third person description, is then fitting for these self-reflective moments. A common element of these two moments of low confidence in herself, both from the first chapter-volume, is also that they are moments of reflection by Miriam on her career as a teacher, which, as I have discussed, she gives no real indication that she enjoys.

The worry over her employment continues into the second chapter-volume, where Miriam is again in a teaching job, although now nearer her family home in a North London school. Whereas in *Pointed Roofs* Miriam's main concern in her work is that her colleagues do not like her, or that she does not have the personality necessary for teaching, the slightly more mature Miriam of *Backwater* is instead focused on her lack of passion for her work and her confusion over what to do with her life. This is explicitly mentioned in a scene in which Miriam receives a letter from her sister Harriet:

I was right just now. I was on the right track then. I must get back to that. It's no good giving way right or left; I must make a beginning of my own life. . . . I wish I had been called "Patience" and had thin features. . . . Adam Street, Adelphi . . . (BW, p. 144)

Here, Miriam appears to be reminded of her previously happy life at home, before she was required to leave her family and find work due to her father's financial mismanagement, noting in first person that she had been on the right track. Her statement that she 'must make a beginning' of her life makes very clear that she is not happy in her current situation and feels as though her life is not progressing. This statement then allows her, through the use of ellipses, to

shift into imagining a different reality for herself, with a different name. Thus, ellipses not only allow Richardson to show her protagonist speaking in first person and to show Miriam's memories, the punctuation also allows a glimpse into Miriam's fantasies for her life. This uncertainty over her path in life is also obliquely referred to slightly earlier in the chapter-volume when Miriam is thinking of her family which causes her great sadness due to her loneliness as a boarder at the school where she teaches. Richardson writes:

She knew that everybody was alone and that all the fuss and noise people made all day was a pretence. . . . What to *do*? To be walking about with a quiet face meeting death. Nothing could be so alone as that. The pain, and struggle, and darkness. . . . (*BW*, p. 119)

Once more, the ellipses here suggest that this is Miriam's consciousness on display. Further, the emphasis on the 'do' in 'what to *do*?' where the italics are Richardson's own, suggests that Miriam's sadness, although due to homesickness, can be traced back to an uncertainty over her employment, where she does not know what she wishes to do with her life.

Miriam's unhappiness, specifically her unhappiness due to her employment as a teacher, is directly referred to slightly later in *Backwater*, when Miriam goes to a train station to collect a new teaching assistant, Julia: 'prospect, said the noisy train. That was it, there was no prospect in it. There was no prospect in teaching' (*BW*, p. 156). These few sentences appear to be written in third person narrative, surrounded in the paragraph by third person pronouns, and there are no ellipses or other unusual punctuation forms, but these sentences do seem to be said aloud inside the protagonist's mind, rather than as a comment by the third person narrator, due to the personal opinion given about Miriam's situation, in words only she would use. Furthermore, the personification of the train, having it give the idea of 'prospects' to Miriam, suggests that here Miriam is beginning to think about trying out writing techniques. It could be suggested then that this small section is not in fact written in third person by Richardson, writing on Miriam, but that it is Miriam writing in third person about her own life. Richardson does not use a great deal of personification of inanimate objects in *Pilgrimage*, giving greater weight to the argument that it is Miriam who is to be viewed as the author here.

Indeed, one very rare example from *Pointed Roofs* of Richardson using the technique of personification also features several ellipses, suggesting that it is potentially written by Richardson as Miriam. She writes:

Miriam almost ran home from seeing Minna into the three o'clock train . . . dear beautiful, beautiful Hanover . . . the sunlight blazed from the rain-sprinkled streets. Everything shone. Bright confident shops, happy German cafés moved quickly by as she fled along. (*PR*, p. 203)

Here the German cafés are personified, having been given the emotion of happiness and confidence, as well as the ability to move quickly. In contrast to the example from *Backwater*, this is a happy occasion, where Miriam seems to appreciate her adopted home in Germany. There are several indications that Miriam is being presented as the true author of this section, such as the personification which, as has been noted above, is not a technique employed by Richardson often. Additionally, 'dear beautiful, beautiful Hanover' and 'everything shone,' both fragments following ellipses, are closer to feelings than they are descriptions, reinforcing that they are from the consciousness of Miriam, who is happy in her surroundings, as well as from the narrative of Richardson. This example suggests that while a great deal of the moments of ellipsis and narrative shifts between third and first person occur in moments of personal doubt and self-doubt, they are used by Richardson to indicate heightened emotion in Miriam of all types, including occasional moments of happiness and confidence.

However, another worry which causes self-doubt in Miriam, and as such is marked by ellipses, fractured sentences and first person narrative, is that of money. This is very closely linked to her worries over her work as her teaching roles do not appear to have been well paid and Miriam had only sought employment as a teacher due to her family's financial difficulties. Her discomfort around a lack of money becomes evident when Miriam visits the home of the Broom family, who have daughters at the school where she teaches. Miriam wonders:

What was the good of their being alive . . . a house and a water system and drains and cooking, and they would take all these things for granted and grumble and snarl . . . the gas meter man would call there. Did men like that resent calling at houses like that? (*BW*, p. 120)



Although not explicitly written in first person narrative, this question here suggests that it is in the mind of Miriam, who is pondering on the lives of the Brooms who are even less financially fortunate than she is, especially as this question is rather rude so it would not have been polite to ask aloud in the Brooms' home. Furthermore, the ellipses here allow for a fractured sentence structure, again indicating that these are not fully formed statements by a narrator but rather they are fragments of thoughts by Miriam.

Money is again on the mind of Richardson's protagonist when she becomes preoccupied with the working lives of the servants at the school, worrying that 'they were the servants - there would never be any dancing. Nobody thought about them' (*BW*, p. 147). It is notable that Miriam projects her own financial worries onto the lives of those around her who are less fortunate, possibly a technique to distance herself by denying how bad things are in her own financial life. Miriam's worrying occurs as she is attempting to fall asleep and Richardson accurately depicts the uncontrolled way that thoughts run through one's mind before sleep. Miriam even states to herself 'go to sleep. It would be better to think in the morning' (*BW*, p. 148). She does not take this advice to herself however and continues to worry, turning to her own financial troubles: 'save, save [money]. Sooner or later saving must begin. Why not at once. Harry, it's no good. I'm old already. I've got to be one of those who have to give everything up' (*BW*, p. 149). By saying that 'I've got to be one of those who have to give everything up' Miriam appears to once again be considering leaving her role as a teacher - giving everything up - and perhaps attempting to make money doing what she truly enjoys: writing.

Later in the *Pilgrimage* sequence the instances of Miriam taking on the role of autobiographical writer of her own life narrative become more explicit, as I will go on to discuss in later chapters, with Miriam eventually stating that she has been writing and clearly repeating phrases heard earlier in the novel sequence. However, at this early stage in Richardson's doubly autobiographical writing, these moments must be searched for in the instances of narrative shifts and unusual punctuation, emphasising once more how important Richardson's trials with language and text are to her narratological experiments.

#### 'I am myself': Miriam, Reading, and Writing

Miriam's urge to write can be seen in its early stages by way of her love of

reading, and her imagining of herself in the roles of the protagonists whose lives she observes on the page. This becomes linked to her financial worries when, in *Backwater*, she joins a small circulating library and borrows a series of books by the Victorian novelist Margaret Wolfe Hungerford, who often wrote on high class society. Whilst reading, Miriam imagines how different her life would be if she was able to live as extravagantly as Hungerford's characters:

These were the things she wanted; gay house-parties, people with beautiful wavering complexions and masses of shimmering hair catching the light, fragrant filmy diaphanous dresses; these were the people to whom she belonged - a year or two of life like that, dancing and singing in and out of houses and gardens; and then marriage. Living alone, sadly estranged, in the house of a husband who loved her and with whom she was in love, both of them thinking that the other had married because they had lost their way in a thunderstorm or spent the night sitting up on a mountain-top or because of a clause in a will, and then one day both finding out the truth. . . . That is what is meant by happiness . . . happiness. But these things could only happen to people with money. She would never have even the smallest share of that sort of life. (*BW*, pp. 174-175)

In this lengthy paragraph Miriam imagines herself in a hypothetical marriage, which does not appear entirely happy, throwing excessive parties and wearing expensive clothing. Richardson uses third person pronouns, but it is clearly a deeply interior moment, occurring inside the mind of the protagonist, particularly as towards the end of the section it dissolves into fragments and ellipses, indicating that Miriam's consciousness is being portrayed. The fantasy of marriage and excess which Miriam imagines is then dismissed by her assertion that it can only happen with money, excluding herself entirely with the final sentence. Despite the negativity of this section, it does illustrate Miriam's ability to imagine herself as the protagonist of a novel and to voice this experience with eloquence.

At the early stage of the *Pilgrimage* novel sequence in *Pointed Roofs*, which is indeed also early in the protagonist's Künstlerroman journey, Miriam has not yet expressed interest in beginning to write. However, she does at times place herself in the context of the novel, as has been shown to occur later in the second chapter-volume of *Backwater*. For example, when imagining that her employer at the school in Germany is listening in on her first lesson as a teacher, Miriam thinks: 'Heads of foreign schools did. She remembered Madame Beck in

"Villette" (*PR*, pp. 73-74). The reference here to the Charlotte Brontë novel of 1853 allows Miriam to envision herself in the place of Lucy, the protagonist and narrator of Brontë's novel. In doing so, Richardson's protagonist can then be seen to have an awareness of her own status as protagonist and as narrator. The idea of Miriam as a character in a novel recurs throughout the *Pilgrimage* sequence, such as in the *Interim* chapter-volume when Richardson's third person narrator states that: 'A haunting familiar sense of unreality possessed her. Once more she was part of a novel.'<sup>36</sup> This instance, occurring later in the sequence when Richardson's narrative style had begun to become even more experimental, is far more explicit in its intentions than the earlier reference to *Villette*, making very clear Miriam's awareness of her role as a protagonist in a piece of writing.

There are many similarities in plot between *Villette* and the early chapter-volumes of *Pilgrimage* which make Brontë's 1853 novel an important intertext with Richardson's novel sequence. Both young female protagonists, Brontë's Lucy Snowe and Richardson's Miriam Henderson, are forced to leave behind family connections and seek employment due to a lack of money, with both finding teaching jobs in foreign schools; Lucy in France and Miriam in Germany. A common theme which can be found in the lives of Lucy and Miriam is the obvious self-consciousness which both young women experience in relation to their financial poverty. For Richardson's protagonist, this is first expressed when she notices that her father is 'playing the role of an English gentleman' (*PR*, p. 24) on their journey to her teaching post in Germany and pretending to fellow boat passengers that Miriam is to be a pupil abroad, rather than an employee, and thus her father's insecurity is passed on to Miriam. Similarly, Brontë's Lucy Snowe first has the direness of her financial situation brought to her attention by someone other than herself: her pupil and friend Ginevra Fanshawe in this case, who names Lucy's situation as 'unpleasant'<sup>37</sup> and compares Lucy's life unfavourably to her own, which is financed by a wealthy uncle. Lucy then adopts this self-conscious awareness that her bleak financial situation is obvious to others, querying:

How could inn-servants and ship-stewardesses everywhere tell at a glance that I, for instance, was an individual of no social significance, and little burdened by cash? They *did* know it evidently: I saw quite

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<sup>36</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Interim* (London: Duckworth, 1919), pp. 174-175

<sup>37</sup> Charlotte Brontë, *Villette*, hereafter cited as *V* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1873), p. 53

well that they all, in a moment's calculation, estimated me at about the same fractional value. (V, pp. 57-58)

For both Miriam and Lucy, their lack of money and low status as a working woman is something to be ashamed of which lowers their confidence. Another link between the two protagonists is their lack of confidence in their teaching abilities. I have already detailed Miriam Henderson's unhappiness and uncertainty in her role as a teacher in Germany; Lucy Snowe's begins in much the same way. Lucy begins her career in France as a nanny to the children of Madame Beck, the headmistress of a school for girls. Lucy is then asked to take over the role of English teacher in the school, which she doubts she has the skill for. The exchange between Lucy and her employer when she is asked to begin teaching is as follows:

"In classe, Madame?" I asked.

"Yes, in classe: in the second division."

"Where there are sixty pupils," said I; for I knew the number, and with my usual base habit of cowardice, I shrank into my sloth like a snail into its shell, and alleged incapacity and impracticality as a pretext to escape action. If left to myself, I should infallibly have let this chance slip. Inadventurous, unstirred by impulses of practical ambition, I was capable of sitting twenty years teaching infants the hornbook, turning silk dresses and making children's frocks. Not that true contentment dignified this infatuated resignation: my work had neither charm for my taste, nor hold on my interest; but it seemed to me a great thing to be without heavy anxiety, and relieved from intimate trial: the negation of severe suffering was the nearest approach to happiness I expected to know. Besides, I seemed to hold two lives - the life of thought, and that of reality; and, provided joys of fancy, the privileges of the latter might remain limited to daily bread, hourly work, and a roof of shelter. (V, p. 76)

Here Lucy brings attention immediately to her self-doubt, claiming 'cowardice' and 'anxiety' and using the imagery of a snail retreating into its shell to suggest she is being asked to work outside of her comfort zone. However, unlike with Richardson's protagonist who never becomes comfortable in her teaching role, Brontë's Lucy does appear to find satisfaction in her employment as a teacher. She states that: 'from that day I ceased to be nursery governess, and became English teacher. Madame raised my salary; but she got thrice the work out of me she had extracted from Mr Wilson, at half the expense' (V, p. 81). Although this could appear to be a dismissive comment on her low pay and high workload in comparison to the school's previous English tutor, it can also be seen as Lucy's

acceptance of her new role and identity as a teacher. Indeed, the lack of the indefinite article 'a' before either nursery governess or English teacher suggests a total immersion in her work by Lucy. Her role as a teacher is not just one element of her life but it is the sum of her entire identity. This becomes very clear as the novel progresses, particularly in the closing scenes in which Lucy is gifted a school of her own to run by her romantic interest Paul Emanuel, who presents her with a building labelled in French "Externat de demoiselles. Numero 7, Faubourg Clotilde, Directrice Lucy Snowe" (V, p. 508); a day school for girls with a headmistress by the name of Lucy Snowe. Lucy is overwhelmed with emotion on receiving this gift and struggles to express herself:

In such inadequate language my feelings struggled for expression: they could not get it; speech, brittle and unmalleable, and cold as ice, dissolved or shivered in the effort. He watched me still; he gently raised his hand to stroke my hair; it touched my lips in passing; I pressed it close, I paid it tribute. He was my king; royal for me had been that hand's bounty; to offer homage was both a joy and a duty. (V, p. 510)

Her joy at receiving a school to run as her own is evident here, which strongly suggests that Lucy has grown to view herself as an able and competent teacher who is able to continue her work independently. The protagonist does however note that 'I promised to work hard and willingly' (V, p. 510), suggesting that her doing so is not a given and thus must be made explicit, suggesting some element of uncertainty in what appears to be Lucy's destiny to work in teaching.

However, very much unlike Richardson's Miriam who quickly realises her true vocation lies in writing, not teaching, Brontë's Lucy can imagine nothing for herself outside of her life in the school as a teacher to young women.

Hilary Newman has compared *Villette* and *Pointed Roofs* in an essay on how Brontë has influenced Richardson's work, discussing the novels' autobiographical elements and the narrow perspective of their single protagonist viewpoint.

Newman writes:

In both novels, the reader only has access to the heroine's perspective, perceiving only what she sees, knows and feels. We do not have access to any other characters' motives, emotions or thoughts other than through Lucy's or Miriam's perceptions or

reactions. Likewise, the reader only perceives the scene and setting through the heroine's impressions.<sup>38</sup>

These formal similarities of the two novels are then expanded on by Newman, who states that: 'Richardson is famous for her experimental punctuation in *Pilgrimage*. Actually, Charlotte Brontë anticipates this technique.'<sup>39</sup> Newman gives no specific examples of what she calls Brontë's 'unconventional punctuation'<sup>40</sup> and instead quickly moves on to discussing Miriam and Lucy as unreliable narrators. Newman is also less than forthcoming when she notes that 'there are several distorted echoes of *Villette* in *Pointed Roofs*, no doubt deliberate on Richardson's part.'<sup>41</sup> While this is true - there are many coded similarities between the two stories of a young woman working abroad, as I have discussed above - Newman does not fully explain the extent to which *Villette* features in *Pilgrimage* and just how influential it appears to be for Miriam as a reader and eventually as a writer. Indeed, while the novel is important to the young Miriam of *Pointed Roofs* as a reassurance that her situation is not unique to her, the novel also reappears later in the sequence of *Pilgrimage* when the more mature Miriam of the sixth volume, *Deadlock* (1921), returns to the text as a site of learning the craft of writing, 'supposing books had no names . . . . *Villette* had meant nothing for years; a magic name until someone said it was Brussels.'<sup>42</sup> This recurrence of *Villette* as intertext is discussed more fully in chapter four.

Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz also discusses *Villette* and narrative forms in her essay on Brontë's novel and first person narrative, where she explains more fully than Newman just how the novel's narrative functions experimentally. She views Brontë's protagonist as a knowingly unreliable narrator who 'does not tell us all she knows'<sup>43</sup> and Rabinowitz goes on to dissect the power balance of the novel, where Lucy's unreliability as a narrator means that she and Brontë hold power over the reader to reveal or to hide information. Rabinowitz writes:

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<sup>38</sup> Hilary Newman, 'The Influence of *Villette* on Dorothy Richardson's *Pointed Roofs*' *Brontë Studies* (Vol. 42, No. 1, 2017), pp. 15-25 (p. 16)

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22

<sup>42</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Deadlock* (London: Duckworth, 1921), p. 79

<sup>43</sup> Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz, "'Faithful Narrator" or "Partial Eulogist": First-Person Narration in Brontë's *Villette*' *Villette: Charlotte Brontë*, ed. Pauline Nestor (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), pp. 68-82 (p. 68)

Just as her material in her dealings with the characters in the novel is information about herself, so in her dealings with the reader, her only material is her biography, which she can either give or withhold.<sup>44</sup>

Despite making no mention of Dorothy Richardson or of *Pilgrimage*, focusing only on Brontë's novel, Rabinowitz does explore *Villette* in a way that seems to foster links with Richardson's writing. She views Lucy as very much the author of the autobiographical tale of *Villette*, stating that 'she has written the book we are reading'<sup>45</sup> and noting her narrative power in that 'she is able to interest us in her by controlling the telling of her history.'<sup>46</sup> Rabinowitz then explains the innovation of Brontë's novel, which Newman finds difficult to articulate, is that of a self-aware protagonist and narrator who 'has developed the strength of character necessary to live her life and narrate it in a new and challenging way.'<sup>47</sup>

Thus, while *Villette* is written entirely in a standard first person narrative style, the novel does feature some unusual narratological quirks which appear to reveal that the protagonist is aware that her story will find physicality as a book. This self-awareness of herself as having the potential to become a writer then links Lucy with Miriam, whose awareness of herself as writer is illustrated throughout this thesis. Brontë is known for narrators who address the reader, most famously in her 'reader, I married him'<sup>48</sup> line from *Jane Eyre*, but Lucy appears to go further than Jane by addressing the reader as a companion, even issuing instructions such as 'think not, reader' (V, p. 147). More than this, Lucy also seems to anticipate the reader speaking back to her when she claims, 'religious reader, you will preach to me a long sermon about what I have just written' (V, p. 163) which also draws attention to the act of Lucy as writer. The writing of *Villette* by Lucy Snowe is also indicated by references to the textuality of her story, such as when she refers to 'the little scene treated of in the last chapter' (V, p. 119). Lucy also corrects her writing as she is in the process of completing it, stating in parenthesis at one point that 'I was going to write *sylph* forms, but that would have been quite untrue; several of these "jeunes filles," who had not numbered more than sixteen or seventeen years,

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 73

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 74

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. p. 75

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 79

<sup>48</sup> Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre* (London: Penguin, 1979), p. 474

boasted contours as robust and solid as those of a stout Englishwoman of five-and-twenty' (V, p. 224). That Lucy uses the verb 'write' rather than a verbal one such as 'say' suggests a clear awareness by the protagonist and first person narrator of her role as storyteller and as writer. This is something which Richardson has also created in her character of Miriam, who can eventually visualise herself in the role of writer as the *Pilgrimage* sequence progresses and her confidence increases.

Miriam's awareness of her own desire to write begins early in the novel sequence, despite not being fully articulated until much later. It can initially be seen in *Pointed Roofs* when she remembers her time as a school pupil:

She remembered even old Stroodie [...] had gone from girl to girl round the collected fifth and sixth forms asking them each what they would best like to do in life. Miriam had answered at once with a conviction born that moment that she wanted to "write a book." (PR, p. 120)

Here, Miriam recalls a teacher of hers, who she identifies as far superior to those teaching at the school which employs her in Germany, enquiring as to her peer group's future intentions. The phrasing of it as 'what they would best like to do in life' rather than a simple question of employment prospects seems to emphasise that this desire to write, although said here to be a spontaneous decision, is in fact an important aspect of Miriam's life and has been for many years and is a true vocation about which she can be passionate, rather than a simple job to earn money.

Throughout *Pilgrimage* several characters suggest to Miriam that she should take up writing, most notably the husband of her school friend Alma, a writer called Hypo Wilson with whom Miriam later goes on to have a romantic relationship. It is Hypo Wilson's suggestion that she should write which appears to influence Miriam enough to really begin to write in a professional capacity. However, the first person to bring the vocation of writing to Miriam's attention is her sister Harriett, in a letter written from the family home to Miriam at work. Harriett, often referred to by Miriam as Harry, as seen above when Miriam writes to her sister on the subject of work, writes:

"Have you ever thought of committing your ideas to paper? There's a book called 'The Confessions of a Woman.' It had a great sale and its



composition occupied the authoress for only six weeks. You could write in your holidays." (*BW*, p. 145)

This suggestion to write, along with the advised timeframe of six weeks, occurs shortly after Miriam has noted that her sister 'doesn't realise a bit how short holidays are' (*BW*, p. 143) and as such the idea of Miriam writing an entire book in that time seems laughable. Furthermore, the writing of *Pilgrimage* took Richardson several decades and was left unfinished at the time of her death, a retrospective point which makes Harriett's six weeks seem even more unachievable. Although Miriam does not immediately begin to write her life story on the recommendation of her sister, this suggestion does mark the beginning of Miriam being able to envision herself in the role of a writer. This illustrates the first step in a clear development in the character of Miriam from reader to writer.

The importance of reading to Miriam continues throughout the novel sequence but it is especially notable in *Backwater* due to her frequent visits to and use of the circulating library. Several books which have a particularly significant effect on Miriam are *Under Two Flags*, *Moths*, and *In Maremma* by Ouida, the pseudonym of the English novelist Maria Louise Ramé. Speaking of Ouida's novels, Richardson writes: 'from that moment the red-bound volumes became the centre of her life' (*BW*, p. 176), illustrating the importance of the books, and indeed reading as an activity itself, are to Miriam. Indeed, Richardson then states that 'she ceased to read her bible and to pray. Ouida, Ouida, she would muse with the book at last in her hands' (*BW*, p. 177), showing just how vital this writer became to Miriam, overtaking even religion in her life. The appeal of Ouida's books is perhaps explained earlier in *Backwater* when Miriam first notices the books in the library and recalls that an unremembered person had told her they were 'bad; evil books' (*BW*, p. 168) and conversely that her father had told her Ouida was 'an extremely able woman, quite a politician' (*BW*, p. 168). Thus, Ouida's books are not only risky and somewhat forbidden, but they also appeal to Miriam's feminism as Ouida appears to have been an impressive female figure, and the books are approved by her father, who Miriam admires. The importance of Ouida's books to Miriam is finalised by Miriam's realisation, through reading the books, that 'I am myself' (*BW*, p. 177). This suggests that her newfound independence, choosing to read whatever she wishes, has aided her in identifying her own unique literary tastes and therefore some fundamental

question of herself has been answered, once again focalising the importance of literature to Miriam. In the statement of 'I am myself' Miriam's reading of Ouida's novels has then forced a shift into first person narrative, which has been shown previously to often indicate Miriam writing, or planning to write, about herself. This is an indication that Miriam has discovered her true self through her reading, reinforcing the importance of literature in her quest to find her true vocation which she has emphatically shown is not teaching.

Ouida's 1880 novel *Moths*, in particular, covers many of the same issues that concern Richardson in her *Pilgrimage* sequence, such as attitudes to female education and the concept of art as meaningful work. George H. Thomson has noted that *Backwater* is set in late 1893 through the majority of 1894,<sup>49</sup> meaning that Miriam's reading of the late nineteenth century novel would be timely as the issues raised in Ouida's text would have resonated with Miriam even more than with contemporary readers of *Backwater* in 1916. Furthermore, Ouida critic Hayley Jayne Bradley has claimed that: 'credited for being her greatest success, both artistically and financially, *Moths* proved so popular that even Mudie's library could not meet the lending demand for copies.'<sup>50</sup> Mudie's was a circulating library based in the Bloomsbury area of London from 1840 to the late 1930s, meaning that it could well have been a source of inspiration for Richardson's fictional lending library, particularly as she lived in the area. The critic Eleanor Fitz also notes Ouida's influence on late Victorian culture, stating:

Ouida's decadent novels celebrated a lush aristocratic existence and her aesthetic style kicked against the fetters imposed by Victorian notions of prudence, rationality and worth. She pioneered a new style of language, studded with witty epigrams, which allowed her characters to indulge in the most subversive behaviour imaginable. Her paeans to beauty earned her a devoted following amongst Aesthetes and Pre-Raphaelites, but she was also hugely popular with the shop girls and footmen who frequented the circulating libraries or saved up for six shilling, single-volume reprints of her latest novel.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> George H. Thomson, *A Reader's Guide to Dorothy Richardson's Pilgrimage* (Greensboro: ELT Press, 1996), p. 17

<sup>50</sup> Hayley Jayne Bradley, "'A hack as harmful as he is brainless and, one, moreover, who stabs where he steals": Ouida, the Victorian Adaptor and *Moths*' *Ouida and Victorian Popular Culture*, ed. Jane Jordan and Andrew King (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), pp. 73-90 (p. 73)

<sup>51</sup> Eleanor Fitz, 'Ouida: The Forgotten Novelist Who Inspired Oscar Wilde'  
<<https://eafitzsimons.wordpress.com/2016/01/23/ouida-the-forgotten-novelist-who-inspired-oscar-wilde/>>

*Moths* itself depicts the coming of age of a young female protagonist, Vere Herbert, just as Richardson describes the same maturing process for Miriam. Vere's mother, Lady Dolly, is scornful of her daughter's urge to educate herself - "Mathematics! Science! Why, what can you want to make yourself hateful for, like a Girton College guy?"<sup>52</sup> - and so arranges a loveless marriage to a wealthy Russian socialite, Prince Zouroff, despite Vere's love for a musician called Corrèze. Much of the novel focuses on the tension between mother and daughter, highlighting the obvious differences between the women, such as 'Vere was shy but brave. Lady Dolly and her sisterhood were audacious but cowardly' (M, p. 19). Lady Dolly constantly instructs her daughter on how to behave, telling her:

"Don't be sensational, don't be stupid, don't be pedantic; and, for mercy's sake, don't make any scenes. Never look surprised; never show a dislike to anybody; never seem shocked, if you feel so. Be civil all round, it's the safest way in society; and pray don't talk about mathematics and the Bible." (M, p. 32)

Vere is also told by her mother that "you have so much to learn, my child, as yet" (p. 34) but Lady Dolly of course does not mean in the sense of formal education, referring instead to social etiquette. Vere's marriage to Prince Zouroff promotes her to a higher social status than her birth and as such she is required to implement the advice of her mother. *Moths* then becomes focused on the differences not between mother and daughter but between Vere Herbert and her new identity as Princess Vera Zouroff. Vere's husband does not understand her intelligence, dismissing her as 'a beautiful, blonde, ignorant, religious creature' (M, p. 140), heightening the sense that there is a duality to her personality. Prince Zouroff calls her "'a lovely woman, and a cold one'" (M, p. 102) and Lady Dolly refers to her as 'contradictory' (M, p. 15). The split in personality between old and new Vere is highlighted by her two similar but distinct names, Vere and Vera, which are used almost interchangeably throughout the novel. Vere's true love Corrèze notices this, stating:

"You are certainly Russian. You are no longer Vere even; you are Princess Vera."

"I am always Vere," she said in a low tone. "They must call me what they will, but it alters nothing." (M, p. 123)

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<sup>52</sup> Ouida, *Moths*, hereafter cited as *M* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1897), p. 12

Here Vere denies that she is Princess Vera, seeming to indicate that it is a public role she is playing for the sake of her marriage. However, Vere's mother expresses similar sentiments:

Vere was not one tithe so much her dead husband's child as she was the Princess Zouroff, and there were many times when Lady Dolly caught herself thinking of her only as the Princess Zouroff, as a social rival and social superior, and, as such, hating her and forgetting, quite forgetting that she had ever been a little flower-like baby that had owed life to herself. (*M*, p. 164)

This duality seems to have some influence on Richardson's writing of the *Pilgrimage* sequence, with the shifts between first and third person being used in a similar manner to Ouida's switching from Vere to Vera to emphasise duality. Richardson's creation of a hybrid author-protagonist in Miriam Henderson also has resonances with Vere who enacts two roles simultaneously as both Vere and Princess Vera.

Another lesser theme of *Moths* which can be traced through *Pilgrimage*, and particularly in *Pointed Roofs* and *Backwater*, is the question of whether artistic work is meaningful work. *Moths* has an artist character in the opera singer Corrèze and indeed the beginning of Lady Dolly's disapproval of a romance between her daughter and the musician can be traced to his vocation as a musician. Lady Dolly is scornful of Vere's dream to learn his trade, mocking the suggestion that the couple could live happily: "'Is that your scheme? To teach music? and Corrèze to teach you, I suppose? *O la belle idée!* You little fool! you little idiot!'" (*M*, p. 54). Furthermore, Vere's husband, Prince Zouroff, is similarly dismissive of Corrèze's work when the musician makes it clear that he cannot be paid to sing at private functions. Zouroff angrily claims to his wife that: "'if an artist cannot be hired the world is coming to an end. They have no right to prejudices, those people; and, in point of fact, they only assume them to heighten the price'" (*M*, p. 133). It is in this moment that the difference between Corrèze and Zouroff is made especially clear: Zouroff is motivated only by money and cannot imagine anyone who is not, whereas Corrèze is far more concerned with his craft.

Finally, although Vere Herbert leads a very different life from Miriam Henderson, one of financial excess and social etiquette, parallels can be drawn between the two protagonists, who are both independent and forward-thinking women for

their time. Vere claims that "'I am not as other girls are. I hope there is no other girl in all the world like me'" (*M*, p. 63) and Miriam states that 'I don't like men and I loathe women' (*PR*, p. 31). Both Vere and Miriam see themselves as different from other women, perhaps in part because of the conflict and opposition that can be found within them.

*Pointed Roofs* and *Backwater*, then, may not depict Miriam writing or even particularly thinking about being a writer in a serious way, but the first and second chapter-volumes of Richardson's novel sequence are where Miriam's dream of writing professionally begins to develop. This development occurs most obviously in her interest in reading and in language, showing an early attention paid by Miriam to how novels are structured and the very early inklings of how Miriam will eventually go on to compose her own life narrative thanks to her appreciation of novels depicting independent female protagonists. More than this, however, the opening chapter-volumes also provide Miriam with the first in a series of forms of employment that she is not passionate about - teaching, here - which will eventually focus her to make more of her life in writing. These initial introductions to the character of Miriam also describe challenging experiences - moving to Germany as a teenager and beginning her first job - that Richardson's protagonist will eventually use as a basis for her own life-writing, as Richardson herself has done in recreating her own first steps as an adult in *Pointed Roofs* and *Backwater*. Miriam continues to seek new experiences as a way of gaining writing material throughout the *Pilgrimage* sequence and becomes increasingly aware of her motivations for doing so as the novel sequence progresses. Furthermore, her interest in and enjoyment of literature and language continues throughout the sequence and again she becomes steadily more aware that her interest in this is not purely for her own entertainment, and she begins to use her reading for writing guidance. Finally, as the next chapter will discuss, Miriam continues to work in professions she has no real interest in for financial reasons. However, this apparently wasted time eventually provides the experiences required for Miriam and for Richardson to tell the story of her life.

### Chapter 3

#### 'This was the novel going on. . . .': Writing and Narrative in *Honeycomb*, *The Tunnel* and *Interim*

The third, fourth and fifth chapter-volumes of *Pilgrimage* continue the theme set in *Pointed Roofs* and *Backwater* of artistic work versus practical labour. *Honeycomb* (1917) sees Richardson's protagonist Miriam employed as a live-in governess for a wealthy family in Newlands, the countryside home of the Corrie family, whereas *The Tunnel* (1919) and *Interim* (1919) find Miriam working as a dental secretary in a fictionalised representation of the Harley Street dentist where Richardson herself worked, as well as beginning to find her voice as a writer. These three chapter-volumes of *Pilgrimage* feature an increase in Miriam discussing her urge to write and even beginning to put pen to paper, indicating a shift in the protagonist's attitude to what is considered meaningful work.

This chapter explores the beginning of Miriam Henderson's progression from a voracious reader and teacher of English into a writer of literature. This is done by examining Richardson's protagonist's attitude to work and specifically to different kinds of work, where Miriam contemplates the role of artistic work and of productive work. As discussed in the previous chapter, a theme which runs through the early chapter-volumes of *Pilgrimage* is that of the protagonist's anxiety and lack of confidence, which is often highlighted by Richardson through her use of ellipses and the trailing ends to sentences which they provide, suggesting hesitation. As such, the discussion of Miriam as fledgling writer focuses on Richardson's punctuation and narrative style, which, as I have also discussed in the previous chapter, often indicates a shift from Richardson's third person narrative into a writing of Miriam's first person consciousness. Furthermore, as I will go on to explore throughout this thesis, Richardson's experiments with narrative and language can often be read as times when Miriam is exploring how she will write her own life narrative.

#### 'The same method as I': Punctuation and James Joyce

*Honeycomb*, *The Tunnel* and *Interim* include a significant increase in instances of unusual and extensive punctuation, indicating Richardson experimenting further with her writing, along with Miriam as she comes to writing professionally. As in the first two chapter-volumes, Richardson writes with far more ellipses than is common, taking this to new extremes by going beyond the

three and four dot ellipses of her earlier writing and beginning to use five, six and seven dot ellipses, an innovation of her own which cannot be found in regular punctuation rules. Even more unusually, in *Interim* Richardson dispenses with quotation marks to indicate speech for the majority of the chapter-volume. Published in 1919, some years after James Joyce's *Dubliners* (1914) and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) which use a dash to indicate dialogue rather than quotation marks, Richardson's innovation in *Interim* is just as notable because she chooses not to signify speech at all. In May 1919 Richardson wrote to Percy Beaumont Wadsworth, a friend and admirer, stating that 'in James Joyce I recognise one who uses [my: cancelled] the same method as I.'<sup>1</sup> The cancelled possessive determiner gives a hint that Richardson views her own narrative style as uniquely hers, perhaps even copied by the much more widely read Joyce, although she does see the similarities between their work which critics have continued to discuss into the present day. Even their modernist contemporary Virginia Woolf aligned Richardson and Joyce, although not specifically in relation to their punctuation usage, having written in her diary in January 1920 'I suppose the danger is the damned egotistical self; which ruins Joyce and Richardson to my mind: is one becoming pliant and rich enough to provide a wall for the book from oneself without it becoming, as in Joyce and Richardson, narrowing and restricting.'<sup>2</sup>

However, where there are just a few journal articles on Richardson's punctuation style available, by contrast there has been a vast amount of critical writing on Joyce's unusual use, or lack thereof, of punctuation and this has become a popular area of Joyce criticism, with *European Joyce Studies* dedicating a full issue to the subject in 2014. Additionally, Derek Attridge discusses Joyce's punctuation throughout his *Joyce Effects* monograph, published in 2000, where he notes that in *Ulysses* 'once the missing punctuation and other typographical absences have been made good [...] the syntax, though it exhibits dialectical features and some of the ellipses, corrections and changes of course that

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<sup>1</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'To P. Beaumont Wadsworth, 1 May 1919' *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson*, ed. Gloria G. Fromm (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), pp. 26-27 (p. 27)

<sup>2</sup> Virginia Woolf, *The Diary of Virginia Woolf, Vol. 2 1920-1924*, ed. Anne Olivier Bell (London: Penguin, 1984), p. 14

characterize spoken utterances, is not particularly transgressive.<sup>3</sup> It is perhaps in this that Joyce and Richardson differ, then, as Richardson not only plays with the rules of punctuation but also with syntax and narrative voice, suggesting that Richardson's writing could be seen as even more unusual and innovative than Joyce's. The 'missing punctuation and typographical absences' to which Attridge refers encompasses Joyce's decision to indicate speech with a dash instead of quotation marks. Erik Bindervoet and Robbert-Jan Henkes have co-authored a paper on this subject for the *European Joyce Studies* special 2014 edition on punctuation, where they discuss Joyce in translation, noting that 'punctuation is the life and breath of an author,'<sup>4</sup> before going into the details of their own Dutch translation of *Ulysses*, which is the first to use the 'extended dashes' - extended indented dashes - that Joyce used in his manuscripts. Bindervoet and Henkes, as well as describing in detail the exact typographical nuances of Joyce, also highlight the impact of editorial decisions, where editors and translators have chosen to use a different kind of dash from the one Joyce originally intended until this new Dutch edition. This is again relevant to Richardson as she too has had her writing style radically altered by editors, as I will discuss later in the chapter when examining the punctuation of *Interim*, which was intended by the author to feature very few instances of speech marked by punctuation.

Elizabeth Bonapfel has also written on Joyce's dashes for speech for *European Joyce Studies*, choosing to focus on his 1914 short story collection *Dubliners*. Bonapfel, similarly to Bindervoet and Henkes, discusses Joyce's conviction against speech marks, stating that 'he protested against the actions of compositors, publishers, and printers who often changed his experimental punctuation to conform to their expectations of "normal" punctuation.'<sup>5</sup> Bonapfel covers a brief history of the representation of speech in literature, both in English and in French, concluding that 'while Joyce aligned himself with a continental tradition as a deliberate move away from the "perverted commas" of the English novel, the effect for an English audience would have been strange

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<sup>3</sup> Derek Attridge, *Joyce Effects: On Language, Theory and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 95

<sup>4</sup> Erik Bindervoet and Robbert-Jan Henkes, 'Punctuated Equilibria and the Extended Dash' *European Joyce Studies* (Vol. 23, No. 1, 2014), pp. 189-192 (p. 189)

<sup>5</sup> Elizabeth M. Bonapfel, 'Marking Realism in *Dubliners*' *European Joyce Studies* (Vol. 23, No. 1, 2014), pp. 67-86 (p. 68)



because punctuation conventions, once established, belong to national language traditions and are not typically translated<sup>6</sup> and noting that Joyce's publisher, Grant Richards, was strongly against the idea of using dashes. Bonapfel writes that 'Richards assumes that punctuation does not carry semantic value in the same way that words do, but the fact that this debate happened at all shows that the marks do signify, in this case, because they distract.'<sup>7</sup> Bonapfel's idea of punctuation having significance in its absence is then key in discussing Richardson's unusual and innovative narrative style.

Richardson's lack of speech marks in *Interim* has of course made it difficult to decipher what is a section of first person dialogue between two or more people and what is a first person internal monologue of the protagonist's, amongst the more standard third person narrative. It may be due to this element of unreadability that *Interim* was not initially published by Duckworth, who had published the first four chapter-volumes, and instead was serialised in the literary journal *The Little Review* between June 1919 and May 1920, the same time as Joyce's *Ulysses* was also featured. It is not entirely clear who made the decision to publish *Interim* in *The Little Review* and not with Duckworth - publisher or author - particularly as much of Duckworth's archive, including author correspondence, was destroyed by two fires, one in 1929 and one in 1953, as well as by enemy action during the Second World War in 1942.<sup>8</sup> Richardson herself, however, does refer to the decision in her private letters, a selection of which have been published as *Windows on Modernism* and, as I have noted previously, more are soon to be published by Oxford University Press, but she gives no clear indication as to why the decision was made in the currently available correspondence. She wrote to Curtis Brown, a literary agent, in June 1919 requesting advice on publishing in *The Little Review* and noting that she wishes to 'secure better terms'<sup>9</sup> for *Interim* than she had received for the previous four chapter-volumes. Money is again on Richardson's mind when she writes to Curtis Brown once more in July 1919 listing her financial woes and

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 73

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 77

<sup>8</sup> 'Gerald Duckworth and Co Ltd' *Senate House Library University of London*  
<<http://archives.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/detail.aspx?parentpreref=>>

<sup>9</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'To Curtis Brown, 2 June 1919' *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson*, ed. Gloria G. Fromm (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), pp. 27-28 (p. 27)

requesting that Brown 'rescue [her] from this difficulty.'<sup>10</sup> It is possible then that the reason for Richardson's initial publication of *Interim* being serialised in a magazine rather than through traditional publishing routes was due to a disagreement with Duckworth over pay, which she claimed to Brown was only ten percent royalties, instead of having anything to do with the unusual, and thus not especially readable, punctuation and narrative style of the chapter-volume, although of course they may be linked in that the style of *Interim* may have prevented it from being commercially viable for the publishers. However, *Interim* was published by Duckworth after its serialisation in *The Little Review* and again it is not clear how or why this came about. Thus, *Interim* stands out amongst the other twelve chapter-volumes of Richardson's *Pilgrimage* for both its especially unusual punctuation and for its somewhat mysterious publication history. No matter the reason for what Richardson scholar Scott McCracken has called the 'sad publication history'<sup>11</sup> of *Pilgrimage*, this lack of availability of her work, which continues into the present day with only some chapter-volumes currently in print, has meant that readers do not find her work as readily as they do that of her contemporaries such as James Joyce despite, as has been shown, her innovation surpassing his own.

#### 'Everything was a dream; the world': Miriam's Absent Mother

A significant event which takes place in *Honeycomb*, Miriam's mother's death, has its emotion highlighted through Richardson's use of punctuation. The actual event of the death, which takes place towards the end of *Honeycomb*, the third chapter-volume in the sequence, does not feature in the narrative and is instead signified by a break in the text. The text which precedes this break makes use of ellipsis marks to signify both Mrs Henderson's descent into a depressive state as well as Miriam's emotional reaction to the responsibility of dealing with this. Richardson writes:

Someone else must know. . . . At the end of an hour a descending darkness took her suddenly. She woke from it to the sound of violent language, furniture being roughly moved, a swift angry splashing of water. . . something breaking out, breaking through the confinements

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<sup>10</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'To Curtis Brown, 28 July 1919' *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson*, ed. Gloria G. Fromm (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), pp. 29-30 (p. 29)

<sup>11</sup> Scott McCracken, 'Review: Dorothy Richardson, *Pointed Roofs*, edited by Stephen Ross and Tara Thomson' *Pilgrimages: A Journal of Dorothy Richardson Studies* (No.7, 2015), pp. 112-114 (p. 112)

of this little furniture-filled room . . . the best, gentlest thing she knew in the world, openly despairing at last.<sup>12</sup>

The punctuation here is extensive, creating a fragmentary piece of writing, but it is not particularly unusual or innovative. Indeed, the practice of using four dots to indicate an ellipsis at the end of a sentence and three to indicate the same within a sentence or at the end of an incomplete one is relatively standard. As discussed in the previous chapter, the critic Anne Toner has noted that 'ellipsis marks have long served as a means of promoting access to emotional or psychological states'<sup>13</sup> and that 'the intrinsic difficulty of conveying a non-verbalised internal state is expressed typographically by the ellipsis and the common human struggle to communicate is communicated in an instant.'<sup>14</sup> As such, Richardson appears to be using ellipsis marks in a conventional manner here. The section of text which follows the break in which Miriam's mother dies introduces a far more innovative use for the punctuation. Richardson writes:

The bony old woman held Miriam clasped closely in her arms. "You must never, as long as you live, blame yourself, my gurl." She went away. Miriam had not heard her come in. The pressure of her arms and her huge body came from far away. Miriam clasped her hands together. She could not feel them. Perhaps she had dreamed that the old woman had come in and said that. Everything was a dream; the world. I shall not have any life. I can never have any life; all my days. There were cold tears running into her mouth. They had no salt. Cold water. They stopped. Moving her body with slow difficulty against the unsupporting air, she looked slowly about. It was so difficult to move. Everything was airy and transparent. Her heavy hot light impalpable body was the only solid thing in the world, weighing tons; and like a lifeless feather. There was a tray of plates of fish and fruit on the table. She looked at it, heaving with sickness and looking at it. I am hungry. Sitting down near it she tried to pull the tray. It would not move. I must eat the food. Go on eating, till the end of my life. Plates of food like these plates of food. . . . I am in eternity . . . where their worm dieth not and their fire is not quenched. (*H*, pp. 258-259)

This block of text ends the third chapter-volume of Richardson's novel sequence, which was published in 1917. This means that readers were left hanging until the next chapter-volume, *The Tunnel*, was published in 1919 to find if there was any sense to be made of the ending which dissolves into ellipsis marks and biblical

<sup>12</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Honeycomb*, hereafter cited as *H* (London: Duckworth, 1917), pp. 255-26

<sup>13</sup> Anne Toner, *Ellipsis in English Literature: Signs of Omission* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 1

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13

references,<sup>15</sup> specifically to Mark 9:48 which illustrates the unending suffering of hell and which some, such as the critic Brad Pasanek in his monograph *Metaphors of Mind: An Eighteenth-Century Dictionary*, have seen as an allusion to the conscience.<sup>16</sup> Pasanek discusses Mark 9:48 in relation to metaphors of predators and parasites, noting that eighteenth century writers such as Alexander Pope have invoked biblical tropes to allude to a guilty conscience. In Richardson's writing then her unreferenced quoting of the bible, not a common occurrence in her work, is perhaps an early suggestion of the guilt over her mother's death which Miriam will go on to experience. Richardson's use of ellipsis marks in this instance encapsulates more meaning than in the previous section, which used ellipses in a fairly conventional manner to display fractured sentences - 'someone else must know. . . .' (*H*, p. 255) - to indicate Miriam's emotional thought process of dealing with her depressed mother. In the second example, however, the ellipses shift the narrative into similarly fractured sentence but which are less easy to understand the meaning of - 'I am in eternity . . .' (*H*, p. 259) - in keeping with a protagonist who has suffered a tragic bereavement and cannot think clearly. More than this, however, Richardson's punctuation here coincides with her shift from third into first person, allowing her protagonist to become narrator.

Richardson's use of this narrative style to suggest the presence of the absent mother has been touched upon by critics but it has not been fully explored. In an essay on Richardson's allegedly "unreadable" style, which 'require[s] a strenuous search for meaning,'<sup>17</sup> María Francisca Llantada Díaz notes that 'this ellipsis [at the end of *Honeycomb*] is intended to recreate Miriam's mental state with reference to her mother's death.'<sup>18</sup> Díaz then goes on to explain that:

The sense of void left by this ellipsis is more disquieting for the readers than the references to the event. They have to wait expectantly and continue reading in order to find out about what happened. This ellipsis can be explained in light of Freud's theories as

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<sup>15</sup> Mark 9:48

<sup>16</sup> Brad Pasanek, *Metaphors of Mind: An Eighteenth-Century Dictionary* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2015), p. 42

<sup>17</sup> María Francisca Llantada Díaz, 'Unreadability in Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage*' *Anglistik* (Vol. 24, No. 1, 1994), pp. 149-163 (p. 161)

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 155

a way to represent the protagonist's attempts to deny a traumatic event.<sup>19</sup>

It seems then that the critic is referring to the blank space in the text in which Mrs Henderson's suicide occurs, rather than to the specific punctuation, as 'ellipsis' also has the meaning of missing information as well as the punctuation mark for which it is better known. Díaz's naming of the ellipsis as a void emphasises this. But while the punctuation mark that shares the void's name also signifies missing information, left out for the reader, I do not believe either indicates a denial of the event as Díaz suggests. Instead, the ellipsis mark is a physical element of the text that is overlooked by readers and critics due to its silence. Even though she ultimately is no longer there, Miriam Henderson's mother remains physically within the text in the ellipsis marks which display her daughter's grief. The use of punctuation to reveal the death of a mother is not exclusive to Richardson; Virginia Woolf also employs this technique in the 'Time Passes' section of her 1927 novel *To the Lighthouse*. Woolf, describing the passing of the book's matriarch, writes within brackets: '[Mr Ramsay stumbling along a passage stretched his arms out one dark morning, but, Mrs Ramsay having died rather suddenly the night before, he stretched his arms out. They remained empty.]'<sup>20</sup> Here, Woolf operates similarly to Richardson by using punctuation, brackets in this instance, to make physical the death of a fictional character. Richardson's ellipsis marks allow her protagonist's mother to trail off into silence, while Woolf encloses Mrs Ramsay and her death. Both allow the tragedy of the bereavement to be kept separate from the rest of the text, while maintaining a physical presence for the deceased. Anne Toner has claimed that 'all punctuation provides guidance as to breathing, but a common function of the ellipsis [...] is to tell of a last breath. [...] A simple symbol can stand for the most painful and substantive of losses.'<sup>21</sup> This is an especially fitting description of one of the many uses of the ellipsis for the study of Richardson's work, particularly as the loss she was writing was also the loss of her own mother.

The second way in which Richardson sustains the memory of her protagonist's mother, and of course the memory of her own, in the *Pilgrimage* sequence is to feature recurring locations on the streets of London which bring Miriam's mother

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (Oxford: Shakespeare Head Press, 1992), p. 110

<sup>21</sup> Anne Toner, *Ellipsis in English Literature*, p. 20

into her mind. The first example of this can be found in *The Tunnel*. Richardson writes:

Why must I always think of her in this place? . . . It is always worst just along here. . . . Why do I always forget there's this piece . . . always be hurrying along seeing nothing and then, suddenly, Teetgen's Teas and this row of shops? I can't bear it. I don't know what it is. It's always the same. I always feel the same. It is sending me mad. One day it will be worse. If it gets any worse I shall be mad. Just here. Certainly. Something is wearing out of me. I am meant to go mad. If not, I should not always be coming along this piece without knowing it, whichever street I take. Other people would know the streets apart. I don't know where this bit is or how I get to it. I come here every day because I am meant to go mad here. Something that knows brings me here and is making me go mad because I am myself and nothing changes me.<sup>22</sup>

This one paragraph is the full text of the seventh chapter of *The Tunnel*. It comprises just 16 lines of text that features a total of twenty-eight punctuation marks, including three uses of ellipsis marks, all of which takes place in first person narrative. More pertinent, however, is that Miriam marks this location in London as bringing to mind her mother, giving a physicality to the deceased and to her absence. The ellipses that Richardson implements here serve a dual function of illustrating the physical movement of the 'hurrying along' that Miriam is doing, as well as suggesting the mental fragility of the protagonist, who is 'meant to go mad' and thus struggles to complete her thoughts.

The same location then reappears later in the novel sequence, here in *Deadlock* (1921), the sixth chapter-volume. Richardson writes:

Two scenes flashed forth from the panorama beyond the darkness, and while she glanced at the vagrants stretched asleep on the grass in the Hyde Park summer, carefully to be skirted and yet most dreadfully claiming her companionship, she saw, narrow and gaslit, the little unlocated street that had haunted her first London years, herself flitting into it, always unknowingly, from a maze of surrounding streets, feeling uneasy, recognising it, hurrying to pass its awful centre where she must read the name of a shop, and, dropped helplessly into the deepest pit of her memory, struggle on through thronging images, threatening, each time more powerfully, to draw her willingly back and back through the intervening spaces of her life to some deserved destruction of mind and body, until presently she emerged faint and quivering, in a wide careless thoroughfare. She had

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<sup>22</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *The Tunnel*, hereafter cited as *TT* (London: Duckworth, 1919), p. 137

forgotten it; perhaps somehow learned to avoid it. Her imagined figure passed from the haunted scene, and from the vast spread of London, the tide flowed through it, leaving a daylit part of the whole, its spell broken and gone.<sup>23</sup>

This scene does not mention Miriam's mother at all, not even obscurely, instead relying on the reader's own memory of the earlier scene from *The Tunnel* to link the emotional response here to that which occurred much earlier in the sequence. The two scenes are linked by the act of 'forgetting' and of a sense of Miriam being lost in the city. However, the paired scenes are stylistically very different, with the first from *The Tunnel* featuring short, staccato sentences, while the second from *Deadlock* comprising just three sentences, the first of which is over 100 words long. This could suggest a change in Miriam's attitude, where the young, recently bereaved dental secretary of *The Tunnel* cannot process her emotions, resorting to short, digestible chunks of thought. Contrastingly, the more mature Miriam of *Deadlock* is now writing more seriously and is in a relationship with Michael Shatov, a fellow boarder at Mrs Bailey's Tansley Street lodgings. The Miriam of *Deadlock* is able then to be reflective on her earlier self, noting how the streets 'haunted her first London years' in a gesture to her mother's death.

Richardson also mentions a shop here but does not name it, making a silent signal of the Teetgen's teashop which so disturbs her protagonist in the earlier scene perhaps. This recurring location, and the aforementioned teashop, feature yet again in *Pilgrimage*, this time in *Dawn's Left Hand* (1931), the tenth chapter-volume. Richardson writes:

Teetgen's Teas, she noted, in grimed, gilt lettering above a dark and dingy little shop. . . . *Teetgen's Teas*. And behind, two turnings back, was a main thoroughfare. And just ahead was another. And the streets of this particular district arranged themselves in her mind, each stating its name, making a neat map. And *this* street, still foul and dust-filled, but full now also of the light flooding down upon and the air flowing through the larger streets with which in her mind it was clearly linked, was the place where in the early years she would suddenly find herself lost and helplessly aware of what was waiting for her eyes the moment before it appeared: the grimed gilt lettering that *forced me to gaze into the darkest moment of my life and to remember that I had forfeited my share in humanity for ever and must go quietly and alone until the end*.

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<sup>23</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Deadlock* (London: Duckworth, 1921), pp. 130-131

*And now their power has gone. They can bring back only the memory of a darkness and horror, to which, then, something has happened, begun to happen?*<sup>24</sup>

Not only does the writer once again employ ellipsis marks to shift into this state of emotion for the protagonist, Richardson also emphasises the significance of the location when she italicises 'this' and reiterates how lost the street makes Miriam feel. There has been a critical interest in Richardson and the teashop, with Scott McCracken having published two articles on the subject. The first discusses Richardson's protagonist's love of eating in London cafes, noting that 'the rituals of eating make the link between identities made by work and identities made through consumption.'<sup>25</sup> McCracken's focus on differing identities, suggesting that Miriam has a separate work identity from the self she is in her day to day life, fits with the idea of Miriam as conflicted between her employment priorities and her desire to live and develop as a writer. McCracken views the teashop's role in this as a space in which Miriam can be her true self away from the pressures of work; teashops are 'key sites for the performance of new gendered identities'<sup>26</sup> and can be found 'at the moment of crisis.'<sup>27</sup> McCracken continues his work on Richardson and the teashop into his essay for the 2005 collection on *Geographies of Modernism*, where he explores the spread of teashop chains such as ABCs and Lyons throughout London in the early twentieth century and how these locations can be found in the literature of the time, in Richardson but also in the work of Ezra Pound, H. G. Wells, T. S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf, amongst others. McCracken notes that for Richardson's protagonist the teashops were 'safe havens for women'<sup>28</sup> which reiterates his earlier contention of the teashops as an area to try out new and more progressive identities, although the idea is perhaps contradicted by the painful memories which certain teashops seem to induce in Miriam. Indeed, McCracken discusses this in the essay, writing:

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<sup>24</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Dawn's Left Hand* (London: Duckworth, 1931), pp. 50-51, emphasis Richardson's own.

<sup>25</sup> Scott McCracken, 'Embodying the New Woman: Dorothy Richardson, Work and the London Cafe' *Body Matters: Feminism, Textuality, Corporeality*, ed. Avril Horner and Angela Keane (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2000), pp. 58-71 (p. 60)

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66

<sup>28</sup> Scott McCracken, 'Voyages by Teashop: an Urban Geography of Modernism' *Geographies of Modernism: Literatures, Cultures, Spaces*, ed. Peter Brooker and Andrew Thacker (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 86-98 (p. 93)



The network of cafes produces a dreamscape in which its repetition draws the dreamer back to the scene of trauma. In Richardson's *Pilgrimage*, it is the sign of a tea company, Teetgen's teas, that reminds Miriam of her mother's suicide. As she wanders London's streets in a semi-dream state, the kind of reverie or fugue the new modernist geographies of the city seem to induce, Miriam is drawn back unconsciously to the company's sign and the repressed memory of her mother's death.<sup>29</sup>

Thus, McCracken's suggestion that the repetition of the cafes, which could be found throughout London with several on some streets, is responsible for Miriam's return to thoughts of her mother's death is found again in Richardson's repetition of these moments. The writer then uses this as a way of illustrating her protagonist's emotional journey towards accepting that she is not responsible for her mother's suicide. To build upon McCracken's analysis, I would suggest that Richardson and her protagonist Miriam use the recurring cafes not only as an emotional marker but as a literary one too. These moments where the cafe becomes significant to Miriam allow Richardson to try out her unusual punctuation and narrative techniques, as can be seen in the above example from *The Tunnel*, where Richardson uses the moment of emotion to switch into first person narrative and use ellipses frequently. In this section, then, it is possible that it is Miriam who is the author of this first person narrative which is markedly different from the more standard prose that surrounds it. Thus, the cafes and the emotional memories they evoke give Miriam inspiration for her writing, as well as the physical space and freedom to do so.

Richardson makes a real effort then in *Pilgrimage* to maintain the memory of her own mother and Miriam's mother, writing the absence of a mother figure into the gaps and silences in her narrative. This reinforces just how powerful Richardson's experimentations with punctuation can be. Furthermore, the loss of her mother has been shown to provide Miriam with material for her writing, as Richardson's emotional response to this event has also done, bringing the double autobiography of the novel sequence into focus once more.

#### 'There was something to be done before anything could be done': Work and Writing in *Pilgrimage*

As previously discussed, the financial difficulties which affected Richardson are

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 91

yet another element of her own life which she has written into that of her protagonist. As such, Miriam must continue to find employment, with *Honeycomb* seeing her employed as a governess, caring for and teaching a family's young children while living in their home. As in her previous childcare roles, Miriam is unhappy with her work and feels out of place. Once again, Richardson employs ellipses to illustrate her protagonist's anxiety, such as when Miriam considers her otherness, stating: 'They wanted a governess. She was not a governess. There were governesses . . . the kind of person they wanted. It was a mistake; another mistake . . .' (H, pp. 7). Miriam's sensation of being different, in this example different from the kind of person her employers require, continues throughout the chapter-volume. One manifestation of this difference is her coming to feminist thought, and her subsequent worry over how to balance her ideas of equality with her current subservient job role. An example of this can be found when Miriam tries a cigarette for the first time at a party hosted by her employers. She says: "'I suppose I'm a new woman - I've said I am now, anyhow," she reflected, wondering in the background of her determination how she would reconcile the role with her work as a children's governess' (H, pp. 163-164). This awareness of the incompatibility of her work with how she wishes to live her life is then a driving force for Miriam to take up writing professionally. In *Honeycomb* Miriam continues, as she had done in previous chapter-volumes, to read voraciously and to focus on female authors. However, her focus is no longer just on the simple enjoyment of a book as a reader, but instead she begins to think about authors and their relationship with their texts. For example, Miriam discusses her reading of a book by Ouida, Miriam's initial interest in whom has been discussed in the previous chapter, stating:

That was why Ouida put those others in the shade, not, not, *not* because her books were improper. It was her, herself somehow. Then you read books to find the author! That was it. That was the difference . . . that was how one was different from most people. . . . Dear Eve; I have just discovered that I don't read books for the story, but as a psychological study of the author . . . she must write that to Eve at once; to-morrow. (H, p. 67)

This reading of Ouida, which sees the author as intrinsic to her own writing, reveals that Miriam considers even fiction to be an outpouring of the author's life and personality, reinforcing not only the autobiographical status of *Pilgrimage* but also the idea that the novel sequence could be at least in part the writing of

its protagonist whose life it describes so closely, making it doubly autobiographical. In the previous chapter I discussed Miriam's reading of Ouida's novels in *Backwater* and the way in which they were used by Richardson to illustrate Miriam's passion for reading. To reintroduce Ouida in relation to writing illustrates a clear progression in Miriam's attitude to literature as she begins to be able to think of herself as a writer and not simply a reader.

*The Tunnel* is where the idea of Miriam as a writer truly comes to fruition, with Richardson's protagonist being encouraged to write by friends and family, as well as Richardson herself increasing the frequency of the experimental aspects of her writing. Thus, *The Tunnel*, and continuing into the following chapter-volume *Interim*, are truly where the reader can begin to see the narrative as told by Miriam, particularly the examples of first person narration which reach a peak in these chapter-volumes. As a writer, the issue for Miriam of finding the balance between productive, paid work which is not mentally stimulating and artistic work which does not pay the bills is a recurring theme in *The Tunnel* and in *Interim*. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Miriam is pushed to write by the husband of her school friend Alma, Hypo Wilson, who Miriam later goes on to have a romantic relationship with. In the eleventh chapter-volume of *Pilgrimage, Clear Horizon* (1935), Hypo, who by this time is Miriam's former lover, suggests that Miriam use her experience as a working woman to write, stating: "'You know, Miretta, if you really *are* going away, you ought to write the first dental novel.'" <sup>30</sup> I would suggest that Miriam followed this advice and that this first example of a dental novel exists in *The Tunnel*, which is largely devoted to describing in great detail the realities of work in a dental surgery, often with a focus on the dull and seemingly endless nature of the work for Miriam. For example, Miriam describes her job of cleaning the dental equipment as: 'it was everlasting and the long tubes and metal body of the little furnace were dull again' (*TT*, p. 25), suggesting here a futility to her hard work, as the furnace will just get dirty again despite her cleaning. Similarly, she describes the tasks she has to do as: 'there was something to be done before anything could be done. Everything would look different if something were done' (*TT*, p. 30). Here Miriam's work is portrayed as overwhelming and without end, with Miriam unsure where to begin. She addresses this more clearly slightly later,

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<sup>30</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Clear Horizon* (London: J. M. Dent, 1935), p. 232

stating: 'the things were begun, they were getting on, she had half-done . . . the exasperating tediousness of holding herself to the long series of tiny careful attention-demanding movements' (*TT*, p. 33). The 'tiny careful attention-demanding movements' that Miriam describes in her work are then replicated in the descriptions of the work which are given extreme attention to detail. Miriam then attempts to overcome the anxiety about her work by setting small goals - 'she would tidy one drawer every afternoon' (*TT*, p. 62) - a detail which the reader does not necessarily need to know in order for the narrative to progress, and which adds little to the overarching narrative of the novel sequence. Thus, it is possible that this very specific attention to detail is Miriam trying out writing styles for her in-progress dental novel.

During these scenes of Miriam at work in the dental surgery it becomes clear that she would prefer to be writing. This is obvious not only in her dismissal of the dull work as a dental secretary but also because she finds herself enjoying writing of all kinds, for example:

At intervals she worked with a swiftness and ease that astonished her, making no mistakes, devising small changes and adjustments that would make for the smoother working of the practice, dashing off notes to friends in easy expressive phrases that came with thought.  
(*TT*, p. 140)

Here, Miriam is simply writing notes but she puts care and 'thought' into it and seems to find pleasure in the writing, and indeed more pleasure than usual in her other work because she has had the opportunity to write. However, Miriam is conflicted about her work, feeling guilty that she is doing menial work for pay rather than artistic work for pleasure - 'Why was there always a feeling of guilt about a salary?' (*TT*, p. 190) - as well as guilt for not devoting herself fully to her paid work: 'I must stop thinking from now, and be fearfully efficient' (*TT*, p. 36). Miriam feels neither truly a dental secretary nor fully a writer, and this sense of not belonging is compounded by her unusual position in the dental surgery, where she is an employee of the owners, the dentists Mr Hancock and Mr Orly, but her relationship with them is intimate enough that she often dines with Hancock and Orly and is even invited to social functions in their homes and attends a theatre production of *Hamlet* with Mr Orly and his wife. Due to this intimacy between employers and employee, Miriam is in a similar position to when she was a live-in tutor to the Corrie children, as described in *Honeycomb*,

and is in a similarly liminal position to household staff such as maids. Terri Mullholland calls this the 'ambivalent threshold space between sheltered domesticity and the freedom of independence'<sup>31</sup> describing how Miriam must find work in imperfect conditions in order to achieve financial independence. Mullholland also discusses how Miriam's home life as a boarder in Mrs Bailey's home, rather than living with family or owning her own home, is also a liminal existence where, as Mullholland notes, Miriam is 'forced to become more involved with the Baileys' family life'<sup>32</sup> by exchanging French lessons for a discount in boarding fees. Miriam's existence as part employee and part family member both at home and at work is therefore a continuation of her life as a live-in school teacher, despite the façade of new-found freedom in London.

Morag Shiach discusses the lack of boundaries for household staff in her monograph *Modernism, Labour and Selfhood in British Literature and Culture, 1890-1930*, where she notes that this type of work 're-draw[s] the boundaries between the public and the private, between work and home, and between repetition and creativity.'<sup>33</sup> It is interesting that Shiach sees a tension as well as an overlap in these type of domestic workplaces between repetition and creativity, which at first glance appear to be opposing concepts but can perhaps work together. This is most definitely relevant to Miriam's work at the dental surgery, where she has no time to be creative due to having to work to earn, but then finds creativity in her mundane working situation to write about it as the dental novel that Hypo Wilson suggested. Shiach discusses Richardson's work briefly in her monograph, noting that 'both washing and typing appear at various points in *Pilgrimage*, and are mapped explicitly onto questions of freedom, autonomy and the possibilities of sustaining a narrative of selfhood.'<sup>34</sup> By focusing on the acts of washing and typing, which Shiach views as central to 'domestic order'<sup>35</sup> in the novel sequence, the critic seems to dismiss the products of this washing and typing - paid work and writing work - and thus reduces both of these productive acts to their physicality. Shiach does, however, make valid

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<sup>31</sup> Terri Mullholland, "Neither quite sheltered, nor quite free": on the Periphery of the Domestic in Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage* *Pilgrimages: A Journal of Dorothy Richardson Studies* (No. 6, 2013-2014), pp. 25-45 (p. 26)

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35

<sup>33</sup> Morag Shiach, *Modernism, Labour and Selfhood in British Literature and Culture, 1890-1930* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 99

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 96

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

points about gendered work, stating that there is a 'problem for the analysis of women's work, which assumes so many disparate and unpaid forms that it can be invisible, or at least invisible as "labour."' <sup>36</sup> Although Miriam's work at the dental surgery is not strictly domestic labour it still encompasses many tasks which are above and beyond her role as a secretary, such as serving tea to her employers, and these tasks are gendered in that the male dental surgery employees are not expected to carry them out. Bryony Randall, in an article on the temporality of the working day, discusses the many tasks which Miriam is expected to carry out that are not specifically related to the work of the dental surgery. She notes that Miriam is asked to play the piano for her employers and to choose reading material for them, and that these tasks are seen as 'part of her working day and thus susceptible to the same level of surveillance and critique as her official duties.'<sup>37</sup> Randall also notes that this kind of task is part of the 'caring work of women' where 'Miriam is expected to provide the kind of comfort, beauty, distraction, and so on, still in the late nineteenth century seen as women's duty to men.'<sup>38</sup> This kind of domestic work is made all the more difficult for Miriam to protest at carrying out as her employers live in the same building as the dental surgery and thus for them there is no real boundary between home and the workplace, further placing Miriam in a gendered and subordinate role. Anita Levy notes this in her paper on gendered labour in Richardson's work, where she discusses Miriam's role in the dental surgery as a 'subordinate position to a professional man'<sup>39</sup> which 'propels the heroine into the male professional world.'<sup>40</sup> Levy notes that the tasks Miriam carries out at work are 'feminized labors,'<sup>41</sup> that is, women's work, and as such she must 'construct an identity for herself outside of work'<sup>42</sup> by making friends and attending lectures, as well as, of course, writing.

Similar themes are also explored by Mary Wilson in her 2013 monograph *The Labors of Modernism: Domesticity, Servants and Authorship in Modernist*

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 1

<sup>37</sup> Bryony Randall, "'Telling the day" in Beatrice Potter Webb and Dorothy Richardson: The Temporality of the Working Woman' *Modernist Cultures* (Vol. 5, No. 2, 2010), pp. 243-266 (p. 263)

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Anita Levy, 'Gendered Labor, the Woman Writer and Dorothy Richardson' *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction* (Vol. 25, No. 1, Autumn 1991), pp. 50-70 (p. 58)

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 59

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 68

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 60

*Fiction*. Here Wilson discusses the liminal nature of domestic employment, stating:

Domesticity is made by, and of, thresholds: between spaces, objects, and people. Even as employers attempt to segregate domestic labor from the space of home, and to monitor the interior liminal spaces as well as those which link the home with the outside world, servants nonetheless both observe and disturb those thresholds simply in the fulfilment of their duties.<sup>43</sup>

Again, although Miriam is not a servant in a household in the way that Wilson describes here, this sense of moving between spaces of work and of domesticity can be found in *The Tunnel* when Miriam finds herself drawn into long lunches with her employers, where she is treated as companion rather than staff, that she must then clean up as part of her work duties. These duties of cleaning and caring seem to be a part of Miriam's paid employment to which she must devote herself in order to have the freedom of living independently from her family - as Shiach notes, 'work enables freedom, but also negates it'<sup>44</sup> - but this kind of work would also have been expected of her if she had relied on the support of family or of a husband. Thus, this is specifically female work, which prevents women writers from truly committing to their artistic work. Richardson's contemporary Virginia Woolf has discussed this idea in detail in her essay 'Professions for Women,' which was given as a speech to the National Society for Women's Service, a group for women seeking employment, in 1931. In the essay Woolf discusses the 'Angel in the House' idea that women must fulfil household tasks which include maintaining emotional and physical order in the home, which she claims must be eradicated before a woman can truly become a writer. She argues:

For, as I found, directly I put pen to paper, you cannot review even a novel without having a mind of your own, without expressing what you think to be the truth about human relations, morality, sex. And all these questions, according to the Angel of the House, cannot be dealt with freely and openly by women; they must charm, they must conciliate, they must – to put it bluntly – tell lies if they are to succeed. Thus, whenever I felt the shadow of her wing or the radiance of her halo upon my page, I took up the inkpot and flung it at her. She

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<sup>43</sup> Mary Wilson, *The Labors of Modernism: Domesticity, Servants and Authorship in Modernist Fiction* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2013), p. 10

<sup>44</sup> Morag Shiach, *Modernism, Labour and Selfhood in British Literature and Culture*, p. 98

died hard. [...] Killing the Angel in the House was part of the occupation of a woman writer.<sup>45</sup>

This Angel in the House figure is of course based on Coventry Patmore's 1854 narrative poem *Angel in the House*, which is itself based on the poet's devoted wife, who he viewed as the ideal woman for managing his household so well. Patmore's Angel carries out her 'duties' 'humbly'<sup>46</sup> and is 'so benign'<sup>47</sup> and thus is reduced purely to the acts she carries out to care for her husband, dismissing her own skills and personality entirely. Woolf's urge to kill this idea, to free women from their household duties in order to give them time to devote to writing, is something which Richardson's protagonist also supports. Miriam notes that 'she could not for ever go on being secretary to a dentist. . . .' (*TT*, p. 167), seeing for herself that she can do more with her future than work in a menial job, as well as stating that: 'they would expect more of her in future. Surely it would be possible to give more; with so much money; to find the spirit to come punctually at nine; always to have everything in complete readiness in all three surgeries; to keep all the books up to date. . . .' (*TT*, p. 191). Here she seems to worry that by being good at her job as a dental secretary she has then given herself even more responsibility in a job that she does not enjoy. In *The Tunnel*, then, Miriam becomes more fully aware that her true vocation lies not in service work, be it teaching or secretarial work, but in writing and as such Richardson adapts her writing style to signify a newly creative protagonist writer. This different writing style, which builds on the few narrative shifts from third to first person found in the previous chapter-volumes and increases the use of ellipses, allowing Richardson and Miriam to develop a writing style that differs from that used by the overwhelmingly male canon.

Levy notes that 'the middle-class female is forced out of the house where little gratification remains, into the equally ungratifying male world of work,'<sup>48</sup> which can be seen in *Pilgrimage* in Miriam's certainty that she is not suited to a more traditionally domestic female role - for example, describing caring for children as 'hard work' (*H*, p. 19) - suggesting that Miriam would not have escaped her

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<sup>45</sup> Virginia Woolf, 'Professions for Women' *The Death of the Moth and Other Essays* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1947), pp. 149-154 (p. 151)

<sup>46</sup> Coventry Patmore, *Angel in the House* (London and Cambridge: Macmillan and Co., 1866), p. 12

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46

<sup>48</sup> Anita Levy, 'Gendered Labor, the Woman Writer and Dorothy Richardson', p. 51



dissatisfaction with working life by following this path. Miriam also sees a gender divide in the world of writing, claiming that there is a male manner of writing:

To write books, knowing all about style would be to become like a man. Women who wrote books and learned these things would be absurd and would make men absurd. There was something wrong. It was in all those books upstairs. "Good stuff" was wrong, a clever trick, not worth doing. And yet everybody seemed to want to write. (*TT*, p. 132)

Here Miriam acknowledges that female writers who attempt to imitate the male canon will not be taken seriously, which can be seen as one of her first steps to creating her own innovative writing style which does not base itself on what has gone before. As I have discussed in chapter one, Virginia Woolf described Richardson's work as creating the 'psychological sentence of the feminine gender',<sup>49</sup> and so once again parallels between author and protagonist's writing can be found in the gendering of literature, strengthening the argument for Miriam as the writer of parts of the novel sequence.

Miriam returns to her argument about the difference between male and female writers at various points in *The Tunnel*, claiming that:

Rows and rows of "fine" books; nothing but men sitting in studies doing something cleverly, being important, "men of letters"; and looking out for approbation. If writing meant that, it was not worth doing. (*TT*, p. 131)

Here, she is adamant that writing is only worth the effort if it is more than men 'being important' and clever, again suggesting that the exclusively female language which Woolf sees in Richardson is a product of her protagonist's urge to create a new way of writing that does not rely on male clichés, with Miriam claiming that some women say 'things that sounded like quotations from men' (*TT*, p. 266). Miriam is not only dissatisfied with male writing habits, however; she also criticises male reading habits. She claims:

A man's reading was not reading; not a looking and a listening so that things came into the room. It was an assertion of himself. Men read in loud harsh unnatural voices, in sentences, or with voices that were a commentary on the text, as if they were telling you what to think . . .

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<sup>49</sup> Virginia Woolf, 'Romance and the Heart' *The Essays of Virginia Woolf*, Vol. 3 1919-1924, ed. Andrew McNeillie (London: The Hogarth Press, 1988) pp. 365-368 (p. 367)

they preferred reading to being read to; they read as if they were the authors of the text. (TT, p. 277)

This description portrays men as narcissistic readers, always viewing the text in relationship with themselves, which seems somewhat hypocritical as *Pilgrimage* itself is the story of Richardson's life and in turn the story of Miriam's, including all the notable events of both the author's and the protagonist's lives. Furthermore, Richardson specifically refers to Miriam's 'selfish way of reading'<sup>50</sup> in *Deadlock*, further aligning her with the men she disparages in *The Tunnel* in her focus on herself.

This idea of male narcissism can be found not only in their reading habits but in the writing lives too. In an essay on new forms of female autobiography, Carolyn G. Heilbrun notes that 'men have been writing autobiographies shaped by the contemplation of their own singularity at least since the time of Saint Augustine,'<sup>51</sup> signifying a certain form of narcissism in her use of 'their own singularity, and then going on to discuss how little critical attention has historically been given to female life narratives. Heilbrun explains that this lack of academic works on women's life-writing can be traced to women writers' lack of confidence in the need for their stories to be told, which are 'tucked away into other forms'<sup>52</sup> and 'secretive, either wholly disguising the personal struggle, or encoding it in another story or form.'<sup>53</sup> She then goes on to explore the more recent form of confessional female autobiography, which allows female writers to tell their life narratives without 'too readily conforming to the male model of distance and apparent disinterest.'<sup>54</sup> Thus, perhaps entirely new forms of life-writing must be created by female writers to compete with the success of their narcissistic male contemporaries. In that case, Richardson's innovative method of doubly autobiographical writing does well to create something never seen before in women's life-writing.

#### 'The thing one had always wanted to do': Writing and Female Encouragement

Other than Hypo Wilson, Miriam is also encouraged to write by her friends Mag

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<sup>50</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Deadlock*, p. 172

<sup>51</sup> Carolyn G. Heilbrun, 'Women's Autobiographical Writings: New Forms' *Women and Autobiography*, ed. Martine Watson Brownley and Allison B. Kimmich (Wilmington: SR Books, 1999), pp. 15-32 (p. 16)

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29

and Jan, who she has grown close to since moving to London. The women are cosmopolitan and live independent lives, with Jan described by George H. Thomson as having 'a spirit of independence matching that of her friend Mag with whom she lives. Confident and irreverent, they exemplify the New Woman of the 1890s.'<sup>55</sup> Micki Nyman then makes clear that they have influenced and improved Miriam's life, describing how: 'in *The Tunnel*, Mag's and Jan's alternative lifestyle (as we might call it today) functions as a foil for Miriam in her quest to think freely.'<sup>56</sup> However, on closer inspection, Miriam's interactions with Mag and Jan on the subject of writing and literature are somewhat contradictory. The women are voracious readers and regularly discuss both contemporary and canonical literature with Miriam, which she admires as they are knowledgeable and critical: 'Mag read books - for their own sake; and could judge them and compare them with books by the same author . . .' (*TT*, p. 77). Miriam also finds the flat shared by Mag and Jan to be fascinating, particularly as it is filled with books:

The dimly shining mysteries of the room moved about Miriam, the outside darkness flowing up to the windows moved away as the tall dressing-gowned figure lowered the thin drab loosely rattling Venetian blinds; the light seemed to go up and distant objects became more visible; the crowded bookshelf the dark littered table under it, the empty table pushed against the wall near the window - the bamboo bookshelf between the windows above a square mystery draped to the ground with a table cover - the little sofa behind Mag's chair, the little pictures, cattle gazing out across a bridge of snow, cattish complacent sweepy women. Albert . . .? Moore? the framed photographs of Dickens and Irving, the litter on the serge draped mantelpiece in front of the mirror of the bamboo overmantel, silver candlesticks, photographs of German women and Canon Wilberforce . . . all the riches of comfortable life. (*TT*, p. 80)

This description of the women's living quarters takes a particular interest in both the 'crowded bookshelf' and the 'bamboo bookshelf' as well as portraits of the writer Charles Dickens and theatre actor Henry Irving, reinforces that literature is of significant importance in this household. Furthermore, Miriam seems to use this setting in which she feels comfortable to work on her descriptive writing, providing a depth of description which is not evident in all of *Pilgrimage*, but

<sup>55</sup> George H. Thomson, *A Reader's Guide to Dorothy Richardson's Pilgrimage* (Greensboro: ELT Press, 1996), pp. 113-114

<sup>56</sup> Micki Nyman, 'Sexuality and Subjectivity in Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage*' *The Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association* (Vol. 44, No. 1, 2011), pp. 105-121 (p. 108)

which is employed in moments of inspiration for Richardson's protagonist, as discussed in chapter five when Miriam visits Switzerland. Ellipses are also used here to illustrate Miriam's wandering thoughts, in keeping with their use at times throughout the novel sequence to signify points in the narrative which are from Miriam's perspective, rather than a third person narrator. Mag and Jan also encourage Miriam to talk about herself, providing her with further experience of describing herself and her surroundings, working towards eventually writing her life story: 'Miriam blushed and beamed silently at her [Mag's] reiterated demands for an account of herself' (*TT*, p. 79).

Mag and Jan, then, have created both a physical environment where Miriam can feel comfortable to try out her own descriptions of setting and character, as well as an intellectual environment where she can be challenged and educated by the knowledgeable women. However, Mag and Jan are not overwhelmingly encouraging of Miriam's writing ambitions. On returning from a visit to the home of Hypo and Alma Wilson when Hypo Wilson had suggested Miriam try writing, she queries why her interesting and unique friends have not written their own lives: "Someone kept telling me the other day I ought to write and it suddenly struck me that if anyone ought it's you two. Why don't you Mag?" (*TT*, p. 170). Jan replies that anything she would write would be mediocre, making Miriam worry that this means that she could not produce anything of merit either:

Miriam's heart sank. If Jan, with all her German knowledge and her wit and experience of two countries felt this, it was probably much truer of herself. To think about it, to dwell upon the things Mr Wilson had said was simply vanity. He had said anyone could learn to write. But he was clever and ready to believe her clever in the same way, and ready to take ideas from him. It was true she had material, "stuff" as he called it, but she would not have known it, if she had not been told. She could see it now, as he saw it, but if she wrote at his suggestion, a borrowed suggestion, there would be something false in it, clever and false.' (*TT*, p. 170)

This unworthiness that Miriam feels, comparing herself unfavourably to Jan 'with all her German knowledge and her wit and experience of two countries' - conveniently forgetting that she too has lived and worked in Germany and is a skilled linguist in both French and German - reduces Hypo Wilson's encouragement to 'vanity' and she concludes that she should not bother trying writing. However, she does agree that she has something to write about - the

'stuff' as Wilson calls it - and she is prepared to accept his assertion that anyone can learn to write if they have the material, only despairing that she had not come to this conclusion herself and was instead encouraged by Wilson. The decision not to pursue her dream of being a writer having been discouraged by her friends saddens Miriam, and she dwells on it:

It was true. But how could they speak so lightly and cheerfully about writing . . . the thing one had always wanted to do, that everyone probably secretly wanted to do, and the girls could give up the idea without a sigh. They were right. It would be wrong to write mediocre stuff. Why was she feeling so miserable? Of course because neither of them had suggested that she should write. They knew her better than Mr Wilson and it never occurred to them that she should write. That settled it. But something moved despairingly in the void. (*TT*, p. 171)

Here Miriam does question the wisdom of Mag and Jan's lack of encouragement of her ambition, although deciding that they must be correct as neither had suggested that she write even though they are her closest friends at the time. More interesting, however, than Miriam's obvious low self-esteem is her contention that 'everyone probably secretly wanted' to write, highlighting just how deep-rooted her desire to write is in that she believes this urge to be almost universal and therefore simply part of the human condition. In an article on women's life-writing discussed in chapter one, Liz Stanley explores the terminology of women's life-writing, which changes often due to the constantly shifting set of definitions and growing innovations. She writes: 'more recently, companion terms such as the "autobiographical impulse" and the "autobiographical urge" give expression to a similar emphasis on autobiography as the site for articulating an emergent female interiority in a culture seen as preoccupied with testimony and confession.'<sup>57</sup> Here, Stanley observes a fairly recent turn to autobiographical writing as an irresistible impulse for women, with her article published in 2000, but which Dorothy Richardson identifies through Miriam many decades previously. Miriam's belief that everyone wishes to write, combined with Hypo Wilson's suggestion that writing can be learned by any person, perhaps goes some way to suggest why Miriam feels that she can so easily give up on this long-held ambition; if everyone can write and everyone

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<sup>57</sup> Liz Stanley, 'From "self-made women" to "women's made-selves"? Audit selves, simulation and surveillance in the rise of public woman' *Feminism and Autobiography: Texts, Theories, Methods*, ed. Tess Cosslett, Celia Lury and Penny Summerfield (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), pp.40-60 (p. 43)

wants to, why would her writing be anything but mediocre? The lack of confidence in her own abilities that Miriam displays here is disheartening, even more so because it is the product of her close female friends dismissing the idea of writing. However, Mag and Jan do not say that Miriam should not write, they simply do not pick up on her subtle mentions that Hypo Wilson has encouraged her to write and therefore they do not reinforce his encouragement.

Thus, Mag and Jan's influence on Miriam as a writer is complex, as neither of her close female friends explicitly state that they think she should write despite their obvious interest in what she has to say, with Mag's 'reiterated demands for an account of herself' and the amount of time they spend with her. The value of Mag and Jan then is in the environment they build for Miriam, where ideas can be explored in a safe and comfortable female space. Miriam identifies the impact this had on her writing in the later chapter-volume of *Dimple Hill* (1938), noting that it was Mag and Jan 'in whose presence the words [Miriam is writing] had first been put together.'<sup>58</sup> This realisation of Mag and Jan's encouragement is discussed more fully in chapter six, where I suggest that Miriam's female friends have been a more productive influence than Hypo Wilson due to his ongoing misogyny. However, in the context of *The Tunnel*, and despite the negativity they put forward about writing, with the women calling the idea of them writing their lives 'silly' (*TT*, p. 170), Mag and Jan do at the very least succeed in bringing writing as a vocation into the receptive mind of Richardson's protagonist.

#### 'A haunting familiar sense of unreality': Punctuation in *Interim*

The idea of Miriam as a writer continues into *Interim* from *The Tunnel*, and with it comes her objection to male writers, with Richardson's protagonist asking 'why did men write books?'<sup>59</sup> and claiming that 'novelists were angry men lost in a fog' (*I*, p. 276). More notable though is her seeming realisation that she is a protagonist, where Richardson writes: 'a haunting familiar sense of unreality possessed her. Once more she was part of a novel' (*I*, pp. 174-175). *Interim*, then, continues the themes of writing and work found in *The Tunnel* and further pushes the boundaries of traditional narrative and punctuation styles by using

<sup>58</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'Dimple Hill' *Pilgrimage IV* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons and The Cresset Press, 1938), pp. 401-552 (p. 408)

<sup>59</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Interim*, hereafter cited as *I* (London: Duckworth, 1919), p. 210

ellipses with far more than the standard three or four dots and disregarding quotation marks to report speech. Perhaps most notably, the loss that Miriam feels after the passing of her mother continues into the fifth chapter-volume, *Interim*, and is again brought to the attention of the reader not through explicit explanation but instead through ellipses, with Richardson writing 'forgetfulness blotted it out and let one live on. But it was always there, impossible, when one looked back. . . .' (*I*, p. 43). As mentioned earlier, *Interim* is the chapter-volume which features Richardson's most highly innovative use of punctuation, particularly in that she chose not to mark dialogue with quotation marks, or even with dashes as Joyce does, for the majority of the chapter-volume. However, quotation marks for reported speech return midway through the eighth chapter of *Interim* and are used for the remainder of the chapter-volume, perhaps due to an increase in dialogue towards the end of the chapter-volume which would have been entirely indecipherable if it were not punctuated in an ordinary way. Both *The Little Review* serialisation and the later Duckworth publication of *Interim* use this unpunctuated version of the chapter-volume, but the J. M. Dent & Sons collected edition has standardised the quotation marks, and indeed the ellipses as I have discussed, throughout, perhaps in an attempt to increase the readership of Richardson's work by making it more accessible. However, a memorandum on punctuation sent to *The Little Review* by Richardson around the time the magazine was publishing the first instalment of *Interim* in May 1919 has recently been found by the Dorothy Richardson Editions Project team, working at Queen Mary University of London. This memorandum states that the editors should 'please adhere most carefully to the punctuation, particularly safeguarding the sometimes unconventional presence, & absence of the comma.'<sup>60</sup> This issue of punctuation was then obviously of such importance to Richardson that she felt compelled to ensure her editors respected her unique style, somewhat ironically as of course her punctuation would later be changed, although not by the editors of *The Little Review*.

For example, the original 1919 publication of *Interim* in *The Little Review* begins its third chapter with Richardson's protagonist, Miriam Henderson, exploring the family home in which she rents a room. Miriam fantasises about the freedom of

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<sup>60</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'Memorandum for Printer's Reader', Box 8, Folder 53, *Little Review* Records 1914-1964, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries Department c. 8 May 1919

owning a home and it is described as: 'She imagined herself in the doorway . . . .hullo! Fancy you *here* . . . .The dining-room door had opened and Mrs Bailey was standing in the hall.'<sup>61</sup> By contrast, however, the 1938 J. M. Dent & Sons collected edition reprint of *Interim* (as well as the subsequent Virago editions) portrays this scene as 'She imagined herself in the doorway. "*Hullo! Fancy you here.*" The dining-room door had opened and Mrs Bailey was standing in the hall.'<sup>62</sup> Not only does the more contemporary publication discard Richardson's unusual use of ellipsis but, furthermore, the introduction of quotation marks to report the speech of Mrs Bailey completely alters the scene. In the 1919 edition, which was of course a publication in an artists' magazine and therefore far less commercial, I would like to suggest that the speech, the 'Fancy you *here*,' is part of Miriam's fantasy, that Richardson's italics represent the protagonist putting on a voice of imitation of her landlady in her own mind and then being caught by her landlady as she is lost in thought. That Richardson speaks of Miriam imagining herself in the doorway, through which she eventually does see her landlady, reinforces my contention that Miriam is imagining herself in the place of Mrs Bailey. The current edition of *Interim* removes this option, rendering the scene a formulaic exchange between renter and homeowner that leaves the thread of Miriam's imagining hanging without explanation. The original writing of this scene, in which Miriam is enacting a fantasy and copying the voice of her landlady, can be read as Miriam experimenting with embodying different characters and their voices, which then contributes to her learning of the craft of writing.

M. B. Parkes' comprehensive punctuation guide *Pause and Effect: An Introduction to the History of Punctuation in the West* makes very clear just where Richardson's use of punctuation has veered away from the standard when he claims that punctuation's 'primary function is to resolve structural uncertainties in a text, and to signal nuances of semantic significance which might otherwise not be conveyed at all, or would at best be much more difficult for a reader to figure out.'<sup>63</sup> Richardson may just be an exception to this rule, as she uses punctuation to create, rather than resolve, structural uncertainties,

<sup>61</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'Interim' *The Little Review* (Vol. 6, No. 4, August 1919), p. 5

<sup>62</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'Interim' *Pilgrimage II* (1919; London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1938), pp. 289-453 (p. 337)

<sup>63</sup> M. B. Parkes, *Pause and Effect: An Introduction to the History of Punctuation in the West* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1992), p. 1



whilst simultaneously signalling semantic nuances of speaker and of narrative. It is sad that this creativity of writing is now partially lost to readers due to editorial decisions. Indeed, Anne Toner notes that 'punctuation marks are vulnerable to alteration and one cannot always assume that punctuation is authorial.'<sup>64</sup>

Another example of discrepancies in punctuation in Richardson's *Pilgrimage* novel sequence, again from the fifth chapter-volume of *Interim*, can be found in a scene where the protagonist thinks about her sister, Eve, which appears in *The Little Review* as:

I shan't see very much of Eve. She won't want me to. She will strike up a friendship with one of those young women. . . . Miriam found herself glancing up the table towards the centre of a conflict. (I, p. 154)

The text in the edition published by J. M. Dent & Sons instead appears as:

I shan't see very much of Eve. She won't want me to. She will strike up a conversation with one of those young women. Miriam found herself glancing up the table towards the centre of a conflict.'<sup>65</sup>

The ellipsis marks in the original example illustrate Miriam's hesitancy over her sister's potential friendship with 'one of those young women,' indicating a jealousy that her sister is making friends without including her. This emotion is removed in the second example due to the lack of ellipses. Furthermore, the ellipses allow for a shift from first person into third - from 'I' to 'Miriam' - which occurs far more bluntly in the edited edition. The sentence immediately before this section also suffered from editorial cutting, with an ellipsis mark consisting of an unusual six dots that features in both the *Little Review* and Duckworth & Co. publications of *Interim* having been replaced in the J. M. Dent & Sons edition with a single comma. This playing around with punctuation which can be found in the earlier editions is just one of the ways in which Richardson sought to indicate that Miriam was herself trying new writing methods and testing the boundaries of language in her journey to making writing her profession.

However, in *Interim* Miriam has not yet managed to support herself by writing full-time and is therefore still a dental secretary for the Orly family, although

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<sup>64</sup> Anne Toner, *Ellipsis in English Literature*, p. 14

<sup>65</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *'Interim' Pilgrimage II* (1919; London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1938), pp. 289-453 (p. 377)

her work is less of a focal point than in *The Tunnel*. Miriam continues to work hard in this job that she does not love - 'her resolutions kept her at work on Saturday afternoon' (*I*, p. 56) - and she remains aware that it is a better form of employment than that of domestic household staff as she previously has been. This is clear when her sister Eve is employed by a florist in London, to Miriam's relief: 'Eve, not a governess, free, in London, just as she was herself' (*I*, p. 104). The tension between menial work and artistic work also continues into *Interim*, with Miriam meeting Mr Bowdoin, a musician friend of a fellow boarder, and thinking 'he was a musician and that made him understand' (*I*, p. 101), indicating her feelings of fellowship with other artists of differing mediums.

*Honeycomb*, *The Tunnel* and *Interim* are where Richardson's protagonist begins to be able to see herself as a future writer and describe her ambitions, calling writing 'the thing one had always wanted to do' (*TT*, p. 171). This increase in literary confidence by Miriam is then mirrored in Richardson's more frequent shifts from third person narrative into first, as well as her unusual and innovative use of punctuation which is carried out to a much greater extent than in the earlier chapter-volumes. Thus, it is in these three chapter-volumes that Richardson and Miriam both begin to truly find their voice as writers, creating a new female style of writing that does not rely on the canonical male writers that have come before. Richardson has instead created a new style and genre of autobiographical writing, which doubles the autobiographer and sits between fact and fiction. She then allows female writers who have been 'kept out of the autobiographical club,'<sup>66</sup> according to Laura Marcus, due to their lack of conformity to patriarchal standards of the autobiographical genre, to find a new way of writing their lives. In his monograph *Being in the Text* Paul Jay looks at writing on the self throughout literary history, noting in his introduction that what unites life-writing through time is 'the tendency to formal experimentation within the general bounds of an autobiographical literary practice.'<sup>67</sup> Innovation, it seems then, is key to a successful piece of life-writing, even more so for a female writer, whether that be critical or personal success. Virginia Woolf found the 'psychological sentence of the feminine gender' in *Revolving Lights*,

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<sup>66</sup> Laura Marcus, *Auto/biographical Discourses: Theory, Criticism, Practice* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1994), p. 238

<sup>67</sup> Paul Jay, *Being in the Text: Self-Representation from Wordsworth to Roland Barthes* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1984), p. 27

Richardson's seventh chapter-volume, but its origins are in *Honeycomb*, *The Tunnel* and *Interim*, where a new form of autobiography has been crafted.

## Chapter 4

'She wrote busily on': Developing on Experience in  
*Deadlock*, *Revolving Lights* and *The Trap*

If *Honeycomb*, *The Tunnel* and *Interim* were focused on Miriam Henderson's realisation that her true vocation lies in writing, then the next three chapter-volumes of Richardson's *Pilgrimage* look at Miriam's search for inspiration. *Deadlock* (1921), *Revolving Lights* (1923), and *The Trap* (1925), do not spend as much time at work with Miriam as in the previous three chapter-volumes, although the protagonist is still employed as a dental secretary. Instead, the focus turns to Miriam's relationships, both platonic friendships and romantic attachments, which provide Miriam with content to write on as well as the friendly encouragement to do so. These chapter-volumes then see Miriam mature both in her personal life and in her attitude to work, seeking out a career in writing which will satisfy her. Richardson too develops her writing over the course of *Deadlock*, *Revolving Lights* and *The Trap* by including fewer instances of narratological experimentation - inverted commas for reported speech are returned to the text - and yet still managing to craft a narrative which clearly illustrates the mind of Miriam Henderson. The doubly autobiographical writing of the *Pilgrimage* sequence continues, then, as Miriam and Richardson grow together.

'But always the author; in the first few lines': Miriam, Reading, Writing

Early in *Deadlock* Miriam is introduced to Michael Shatov, a fellow boarder in Mrs Bailey's Tansley Street lodgings, and agrees to tutor the Russian student in English. Although this brings Miriam back into the teaching profession which she so despised, it also gives her new confidence in her teaching abilities, with her landlady personally recommending her: 'teaching, being known as a teacher, had brought about Mrs Bailey's confident promise to the Russian student.'<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, this provides Miriam with the opportunity to revisit her favourite novels, as well as discovering new books, in the process of recommending reading material to her pupil. On a visit to the British Library's Reading Room with Michael Shatov, Miriam ponders American literature, specifically considering how she will convince Shatov to read the transcendental philosopher and writer Ralph Waldo Emerson:

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<sup>1</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Deadlock*, hereafter cited as *DL* (London: Duckworth, 1921), p. 9

English Literature. Stopford Brooke. He would think it childish; not sceptical enough. Matthew Arnold. *Emerson*. Emerson would be perfect for reading; he would see that there was an English writer who knew everything. (*DL*, p. 18)

The writing of Emerson comes up again later in the chapter-volume, with Miriam comparing the writing of others to that of Emerson, finding his to be superior

She wanted to explain that she used to read novels but could not get interested in them after Emerson. They showed only one side of people, the outside; if they showed them alone, it was only to explain what they felt about other people. (*DL*, p. 168)

Here, Miriam exposes something of Richardson's attitude to writing, noting that other novel writers who are not as skilled as Emerson focus only on superficial character traits. Richardson's first to third person shifts and ellipses-induced inner monologues can then be seen to be a reaction to the multifaceted writing style her protagonist so admires in Emerson. Ralph Waldo Emerson is a recurring theme in *Deadlock*, coming up in Miriam's thoughts and conversations a total of twenty-one times throughout the chapter-volume. George H. Thomson has noted that the many references to Emerson and his work, in *Deadlock* and in other chapter-volumes, 'makes evident his expressive influence on Miriam's thought (and Richardson's). Her youthful enthusiasm responded to his breadth of knowledge, his style and phraseology, his profound simplicity of language, and his mysticism.'<sup>2</sup> Although Thomson is most definitely referring to Miriam's 'youthful enthusiasm' here - she is in her mid-twenties (*DL*, p. 27) in *Deadlock*, set in 1900-1901, while Richardson was nearing fifty in 1921, the year of its publication - that this is a discussion of Miriam, rather than Richardson, being a fan of Emerson is not entirely clear. As I have explained in chapter one, Thomson often has difficulty separating Richardson from her protagonist in his work, and therefore there are times such as this, where the distinction between author and character should be more clearly made, which draws attention away from his useful and adept criticism, undermining the important ideas being raised. Furthermore, the phrase 'youthful enthusiasm' somewhat belittles an important influence on Richardson and on Miriam as a mere youthful whim, when in fact Emerson is a key intertext in *Deadlock* and in the novel sequence as a whole. Deborah Longworth reinforces this importance of Emerson, noting that 'it

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<sup>2</sup> George H. Thomson, *Notes on Pilgrimage* (Greensboro: ELT Press, 1999), p. 97

is [Emerson] who holds perhaps the most pervasive and lasting influence over [Miriam's] thought throughout *Pilgrimage*.<sup>3</sup> Longworth also makes clear how well Miriam knows Emerson's work: 'Miriam's familiarity with Emerson's writings is clearly manifest in the detail of her conversations with both Michael Shatov and Hypo Wilson, as well as the free assimilation of his theories and imagery into her consciousness.'<sup>4</sup> Indeed, Miriam quotes from and refers to his work many times, focusing particularly on his essays, and states how she admires the 'chills and contradictions' (*DL*, p. 44) in his writing. Longworth sees this as Miriam being 'alive to the element of self-doubt in Emerson's writings'<sup>5</sup> which can be linked to Miriam's own lack of confidence in her writing, as has been discussed previously. Being able to find moments of insecurity in the work of more successful writers is then a comfort for the fledgling writer, who remains bothered by low confidence. Indeed, Miriam finds self-doubt even in her studies of Emerson's writing, claiming that 'Emerson would have hated me' (*DL*, p. 14) in a rare moment of first person narrative in *Deadlock*.

What is appealing to Miriam in Emerson's writing, other than her idea that he is flawed as a writer and thus in some way like her, is Emerson's involvement in Transcendentalism. In an article on Emerson and Transcendentalism, David Lyttle describes the literary and philosophical movement as being a 'celebration of uniqueness'<sup>6</sup> and goes on to discuss how this relates to art and literature:

His transcendental thesis speaks to the fact that an artist must find his own voice, or unique presentation of material, to be a great artist. That is, an artist must realize his unique style to receive enduring, universal acclaim; he must express themes of universal import by a unique and, therefore, memorable method. He thereby validates at once universal values and his own uniqueness. For Emerson, uniqueness in itself is trivial and odd, but uniqueness grounded on universal values is genius.<sup>7</sup>

This idea of finding an individual way to represent the uniqueness of the artist in their art, a key belief of the Transcendentalists, must surely have spoken to

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<sup>3</sup> Deborah Longworth, 'Subject, Object and the Nature of Reality: Metaphysics in Dorothy Richardson's *Deadlock*' *Pilgrimages: A Journal of Dorothy Richardson Studies* (No. 2, 2009), pp. 7-38 (p. 20)

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24

<sup>6</sup> David Lyttle, 'Emerson's Transcendental Individualism' *The Concord Saunterer* (Vol. 3, 1995), pp. 88-103 (p. 91)

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

Richardson, who has used her unusual narrative style to express her individualism as a writer. Richardson has described Emerson as 'my earliest close friend'<sup>8</sup> in a letter of 1950, indicating the long-lasting appeal of his writing throughout her life, as well as her lifelong interest in literature more generally, and this appreciation has very clearly been passed on to her protagonist who is also attempting to find a writing style that will represent her uniqueness. One essay of Emerson's which George H. Thomson has identified as one of the many referenced by Miriam Henderson in *Pilgrimage* is 'Experience' (1844) in which Emerson discusses creativity. In this essay, Emerson claims that literature 'is a sum of very few ideas and of very few original tales; all the rest being a variation of these,'<sup>9</sup> suggesting that new and different writing and writing styles are required to stop the cycle of repetition in the art form. It is entirely possible then that Richardson, striving to create a new and little-understood narrative style, would have found reassurance in Emerson's claim that following a more traditional writing style would not produce great art. Richardson then passes her admiration of Emerson and his Transcendentalist ideals on to her protagonist, who is also searching for a unique writing voice to call her own.

Another of Emerson's essays which has resonances with Richardson's writing is 'Nature' of 1836. Here, Emerson explores humanity's appreciation of nature and looks at how he himself observes the world around him. He writes:

Standing on the bare ground, - my head bathed by the blithe air and uplifted into infinite space, - all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eyeball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part and parcel of God.<sup>10</sup>

This idea of the self as an all-seeing and absorbing eye has links with Richardson and Miriam's observations of their environment, which so often include great detail about something entirely unimportant, like the dental processes described in *The Tunnel*. Furthermore, Emerson notes that 'I am not solitary whilst I read

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<sup>8</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'To Ferner Nuhn, 24 July 1950' *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson*, ed. Gloria G. Fromm (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), pp. 645-647 (p. 647)

<sup>9</sup> Ralph Waldo Emerson, 'Experience' *The Portable Emerson*, ed. Carl Bode and Malcolm Cowley (London: Penguin, 1981), pp. 266-290 (p. 268)

<sup>10</sup> Ralph Waldo Emerson, 'Nature' *The Portable Emerson*, ed. Carl Bode and Malcolm Cowley (London: Penguin, 1981), pp. 7-50 (p. 11)

and write, though nobody is with me,'<sup>11</sup> which suggests a doubling of the experience of writing: he is in one instance the person being written about and the person writing. This has clear links with Richardson's doubling of herself in *Pilgrimage*, writing herself into the narrative while her protagonist does the same.

Emerson is not the only writer to have recurring appearances throughout the *Pilgrimage* sequence. Charlotte Brontë's *Villette* is mentioned once again in *Deadlock* when Miriam ponders book titles and fictional locations: 'supposing books had no names . . . . Villette had meant nothing for years; a magic name until someone said it was Brussels' (*DL*, p. 79). Miriam's inability to find meaning in the Villette of *Villette* until someone explained its real-life counterpart is ironic, as much of the meaning of *Pilgrimage* remains beyond the grasp of many readers due to Richardson's narrative style and habit of not introducing characters. This then reinforces that Richardson and her character are not one and the same, as Richardson often writes differently from what Miriam claims to be a good writing style or process. Miriam brings up authorial intent again later in the chapter-volume when her reading style is described:

It was not only that it was her own perhaps altogether ignorant and lazy and selfish way of reading *everything* so that she grasped only the sound and the character of the words and the arrangements of the sentences, and only sometimes a long time afterwards, and with once read books never, anything, except in books on philosophy, of the author's meaning . . . . but always the author; in the first few lines; and after that, wanting to change him and break up his shape or going about for days thinking everything in his shape. . . . (*DL*, p. 172)

This breaking down of reading material into the 'arrangements of the sentences' and the words they contain shows that Miriam is beginning to consider how she will write her own narrative, drawing inspiration from the novels she reads. However, this inspiration is not always based on admiration like that which she has for Emerson. Instead, Miriam makes a note of what she does not like in her reading and chooses to write in a different way, developing her own writing style that fills the gaps she sees in the writing of others. For example, Miriam states: 'that's the worst of novels, something that has to be left out' (*DL*, pp. 192-193). In some ways the *Pilgrimage* sequence leaves little out, following every detail of

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9



Miriam's working day in *The Tunnel*, for example. Richardson's writing also leaves gaps, however, both physical gaps in its narrative with the frequent ellipses and narratological gaps when the author does not fully explain the events of her novel sequence. Richardson and Miriam are of course not synonymous and as such Miriam's thoughts on reading and writing cannot be presumed to be entirely representative of Richardson's process. However, it is clear that the two are closely linked and elements of Richardson's prose of *Pilgrimage* will have found its way into her protagonist's fictional writing, as well as Miriam's writing style being found in the very real words of the novel sequence.

*Deadlock* also sees Miriam begin to discuss her desire to write with others, particularly her friends Alma and Hypo Wilson and their writer and artist friends. This encourages her, with Hypo describing her translation work as 'slick and clean' (*DL*, p. 193) and 'really remarkable' (*DL*, p. 193), but also leads to jealousy aimed at more successful writers:

In the very moments that were passing, the writing world was going actively on, the clever people who had ideas and style and those others, determined, besieging, gradually making themselves into writers, indistinguishable by most readers, from the others, sharing, even during their dreadful beginnings, in the social distinctions and privileges of "writers" (*DL*, pp. 194-195)

This scorn for people making themselves into writers, and thus not being real or true writers, suggests that Miriam sees herself as above these writers who must work at it, rather than having their style come naturally. At this point in the narrative of *Pilgrimage* Miriam has completed some translation work but, as far as the reader knows, has not written anything of substance in her own words. Thus, Miriam sees herself as a writer without having actually written. Miriam also notes in this passage that these inauthentic writers for whom the art does not come naturally are 'indistinguishable by most readers' and therefore not inferior at all to these readers who cannot tell the difference. This seems to then be a comment on the role of the reader, surely the figure for whom a novel is written, and suggests that their opinion is of little worth.

This could then be Richardson voicing through Miriam her low opinions of the poor reviews that the previous chapter-volumes of *Pilgrimage* had begun to receive by suggesting that readers, in this case reviewers and thus professional readers, do not understand the nuances of her writing. Indeed, newspaper critics

were beginning to find serious flaws in Richardson's writing, with a reviewer from *The Scotsman* calling *Interim*, the chapter-volume which immediately precedes *Deadlock*, 'destitute of incident'<sup>12</sup> and another from *The Times* finding a similar criticism: 'like its predecessors it is empty of incident and devoid of "movement" in the ordinary sense of the term.'<sup>13</sup> The problem that these critics seem to have with *Interim* is not explicitly its unusual narrative style, but rather that there is not much of a story to the chapter-volume. However, it's possible that Richardson neglects storytelling in her fifth chapter-volume, even more so than in previous chapter-volumes, to instead focus on developing and furthering her narrative style. As I have discussed in the previous chapter, Miriam also places importance on her own role as a reader, thinking of reading as her way of getting to know an author when she reads the work of Ouida in *Honeycomb*:

Then you read books to find the author! That was it. That was the difference . . . that was how one was different from most people. . . . Dear Eve; I have just discovered that I don't read books for the story, but as a psychological study of the author . . . (H, p. 67)

Therefore, Miriam sees herself as a competent reader, who can find the true meaning - the personality of the author, reinforcing the idea of *Pilgrimage* as a doubly autobiographical novel - within the text. In her critical text on auto/biographical writing Laura Marcus discusses the impact of literature on writers, noting that for novelists writing their own lives 'the autobiography becomes a way of defining what literature is or should be and charting the course of the writer's relationship to the literary.'<sup>14</sup> Although *Pilgrimage* cannot be taken to be fully within the genre of autobiography, Marcus's idea that writers very often focus on the influence literature has had on their path to becoming writers is notable. In her novel sequence, Richardson sketches out Miriam's, and perhaps her own, route to beginning to write by including the literary influences that got them to that point. Thus, Miriam is reflecting on herself as a reader, noticing that the meaning she finds in books has changed over time, furthering the idea that her voracious reading has been beneficial to her way of thinking and therefore inevitably to her writing as well.

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<sup>12</sup> 'New Fiction' *The Scotsman*, 22 December 1919, p. 2

<sup>13</sup> 'Books of the Week' *The Times*, 18 December 1919, p. 15

<sup>14</sup> Laura Marcus, *Auto/biographical Discourses: Theory, Criticism, Practice* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1994), p. 268

This changeable and contradictory side to Richardson's protagonist can also be found in her introduction to feminism: 'Miriam pondered. The word was new to her. But how could anyone be a feminist and still think women most certainly inferior beings?' (*DL*, p. 290). This statement does not necessarily suggest that Miriam aligns herself with feminist thought, which is reinforced by her claim that 'feminists are an insult to womanhood' (*DL*, p. 294). However, this seeming aversion to feminism is contradicted by Miriam's repeated expression of anger at the misogyny of those around her, especially her colleagues at the dental surgery. For example, she dislikes overhearing jokes at the expense of women in the workplace: 'the men make sly horrible jokes together . . . . the Greeks had only one wife; they called it monotony' (*DL*, p. 13). Furthermore, she discovers Mr Leyton's offensive book:

Because women had corn, feminine beauty was a myth; because the world could do without Mrs Heman's poetry, women should confine their attention to puddings and babies. The infernal complacent cheek of it. This was the kind of thing middle-class men read. (*DL*, p. 58)

It is possible then that Miriam cannot imagine herself confined to puddings and babies not only because of her need to work for money in the dental surgery but also due to her desire to forge a career in writing, which would be interrupted by marriage and motherhood.

Throughout *Pilgrimage* Miriam has been a passionate and voracious reader, mentioning books she has read with frequency and enthusiasm. In *Deadlock* this has progressed into an urge to share her passion for reading with others, which overwrites her contrasting desire not to teach, allowing her to pass on her interest in Emerson, for example, to Michael Shatov through his learning of English. This shows an ongoing maturing of Miriam, who can now see the benefit to herself of acting as a teacher in order to share her interest. In doing so she is then also able to discuss her thoughts on writing and literature with another person, which allows her to work on developing her own writing style.

#### The 'hidden flaw': Miriam, Relationships, and Religion

Miriam does, however, have the opportunity to take her life down the route of domesticity in *Deadlock* through her budding relationship with Michael Shatov, who proposes marriage to her but is turned down because, as Maren Linett notes in an article on Richardson and Judaism, she 'quickly decides that he is too

masculine and therefore declines his proposal.<sup>15</sup> This apparent masculinity that Miriam dislikes in him is expressed through his misogyny, where, for example, he makes a derogatory remark about women and, when questioned by Miriam as to what he meant, he replies "'I speak only of women in the mass. There are of course exceptions'" (*DL*, p. 287), suggesting that he views her as unlike other women, who he sees as inferior. This upsets Miriam, who says that his misogyny has 'turned life into a nightmare' (*DL*, p. 288). Indeed, it is Shatov to whom Miriam is referring when she asks 'but how could anyone be a feminist and still think women most certainly inferior beings?' (*DL*, p. 290) as Shatov, apparently just as contradictory as Miriam herself, claims to be feminist: "'I was a feminist in my college days. I am still a feminist'" (*DL*, p. 290). However, Linett goes on to note that Miriam's rejection of Shatov on the grounds of sexism is indicative of a bias against Jewish men, thus suggesting Miriam misrepresents Shatov. Indeed, the reader never hears the disparaging comment Shatov makes about another woman while in Miriam's company, instead witnessing only Miriam's strong reaction to it. Linett notes that 'Miriam connects Jewishness to femininity'<sup>16</sup> and thus her reasons for rejecting him are flawed and point towards a bias against men of the Jewish faith:

[Shatov's] association with femininity does not disappear when Miriam begins to see him as masculine. Instead, Shatov continues to represent a femininity of which Miriam manages to be largely unaware. While Richardson uses Shatov's masculinity to great effect, she does not seem to have intended to betray the extent to which Miriam (and perhaps Richardson's earlier self) recoils from Shatov's connection to femininity. But her honest and detailed portrayal of Miriam's thoughts does not cover up her misogyny; it allows us to see the ambivalence within Miriam's feminism. And so we are given reason to be skeptical of Miriam's claim that she is rejecting Shatov simply because of his sexism.<sup>17</sup>

Miriam does visibly struggle with Shatov's Judaism, calling it his 'hidden flaw' (*DL*, p. 258). She visits Mrs Bergstein, an acquaintance who has converted to Judaism for marriage, to receive advice but becomes immediately aware that she could not covert as Mrs Bergstein has:

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<sup>15</sup> Maren Linett, "'The Wrong Material': Gender and Jewishness in Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage*" *Journal of Modern Literature* (Vol. 23, No. 2, 1999-2000), pp. 191-208 (p. 192)

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 194

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 200

"You are considering the possibility of embracing the Jewish faith?"

"Well, *no*," said Miriam startled into briskness by the too quickly developing accumulation of speech. "I heard that you had done so ; and wondered, how it was possible, for an Englishwoman."

"You are a Christian?"

"I don't know. I was brought up in the Anglican Church." (*DL*, p. 304)

Here it is apparent that while Miriam cannot reconcile with the idea of converting to Judaism, neither does she particularly view herself as Christian, instead seeing religion as something she was brought up with, not a choice she has made as an adult.

Miriam's contradictory personality traits are evidenced once again when it becomes clear that she does consider herself to be in love with Michael Shatov, despite refusing his proposal of marriage and viewing him as a misogynist:

He was at the end of the street in the evening, standing bright in the golden light with a rose in his hand. For a swift moment, coming down the shaded street towards the open light she denied him, and the rose. He had bought a rose from some flower-woman's basket, an appropriate act suggested by his thoughts. But his silent, most surrendered, most child-like gesture of offering, his man's eyes grave upon the rose for her, beneath uplifted child- like plaintive brows, went to her heart, and with the passing of the flower into her hand, the gold of the sunlight, the magic shifting gleam that had lain always day and night, yearlong in tranquil moments upon every visible and imagined thing, came at last into her very hold. It *had* been love then, all along. Love *was* the secret of things. (*DL*, p. 260)

The use of italics here, as well as the very long sentences, highlight that Richardson has once again turned to typography and textual experimentation to emphasise a moment of extreme emotion. As I have discussed in earlier chapters, Richardson's protagonist uses particularly emotional moments as a catalyst for her experiments with writing, an earlier example being the death of her mother which inspired experimentation with punctuation that suggested Miriam was the author of these moments, rather than Richardson. Thus, this experience of love in *Deadlock* could be seen as another point of *Pilgrimage* in which Miriam takes over the writing. Indeed, the narrative of this passage differs from that which comes before it which is straightforward reported speech, differing greatly from the descriptive and romantic language of this realisation of love. This then is Miriam's artistic outpouring of love for Michael Shatov.

Miriam's love for Shatov also invokes memories, which are again a catalyst for her writings, as seen with the recurring motif of the memory of the death of her mother. Contrastingly, Shatov transforms unhappy memories, which Miriam associates with specific locations in London as seen with her mother who she sees repeatedly in the streets of her city: 'Why must I always think of her in this place?'<sup>18</sup> With Shatov and their relationship, 'wandering in the green spaces of London' (*DL*, p. 262), however, these London landmarks become the sites of happiness, rather than grief:

And as her thoughts had been, so now, in these same green places were her memories transformed. She watched, wondering, while elderly relatives, hated and banished, standing, forgotten like past nightmares, far away from her independent London life, but still powerful in memory to strike horror into her world, came forth anew, food as she breathlessly spoke their names and described them, for endless speculation. With her efforts to make him see and know them, they grew alive in her hands, significant and attractive as the present, irrecoverable, gone, lonely and pitiful, conquered by her own triumphant existence in a different world, free from obstructions, accompanied, understood. (*DL*, p. 262)

It is important to note here that Miriam takes pride in her 'independent London life' despite at this moment walking around the city with her romantic partner 'accompanied, understood' rather than alone. Thus, Miriam's individualism remains strong even when she is in a relationship. It becomes possible, then, that Miriam, consciously or otherwise, views the relationship with Michael Shatov not necessarily as particularly emotionally fulfilling, but instead as a method of gaining emotional experience which will in turn enhance and inspire her writing.

For Miriam, the experiences told in *Deadlock* of reading, of attempts at writing, of trying out new relationships and of considering her religious options are all indicative of a character who is recording experiences in order to use them for writing material in the future. Although the Miriam of this chapter-volume is merely working on translations, rather than creating her own writing, she has begun to consider which elements of her life would make for good autobiographical art.

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<sup>18</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *The Tunnel* (London: Duckworth, 1919), p. 137

"Women were the first socialists": Politics and Writing

Miriam's aforementioned conflicted relationship with feminism continues into the seventh chapter-volume of *Pilgrimage, Revolving Lights*, published two years after *Deadlock* in 1923. This chapter-volume sees Miriam become more involved in politics, with Hypo Wilson suggesting "you shall be a Tory socialist. My dear Miriam, there will be socialists in the House of *Lords*."<sup>19</sup> Miriam's introduction to socialism is fuelled by her attendance at Lycurgan meetings; a group based on the real-life Fabian Society of which Richardson was a member. The Fabian Society, founded in 1884 and continuing into the present-day, is a left-wing political organisation, closely associated with the Labour Party, who promote 'greater equality of power, wealth and opportunity'<sup>20</sup> amongst other socialist aims. Richardson, who joined the Fabian Society with her married lover H.G. Wells, wrote to the writer Vincent Brome in 1950, seemingly to answer some questions on Wells, following his death in 1946, that Brome had put to her. Richardson calls Wells a 'mass of contradictions'<sup>21</sup> and notes that "'free-love" formed part of the gospel of the younger Fabians,'<sup>22</sup> which provides context for her affair with the married Wells. Richardson has then written this interest of hers in left-wing politics and all that it entails into *Pilgrimage*, with Miriam following her author and joining the Lycurgans.

However, despite this newfound passion for left-wing politics, Miriam does not appear to support the campaign for women's suffrage, the aims of which would have allowed her greater access to, and influence on, political opinion. She states that "'women are emancipated'" (*RL*, p. 43), apparently dismissing the idea that the ability to vote is an important element of freedom and emancipation. Miriam even brings humour into her lack of a vote as a woman, joking "'I want an oat *and* a vote. . . . No. I don't want a vote. I want to have one and not use it. Taking sides simply annihilates me'" (*RL*, p. 252). Despite this attitude that women do not need any direct involvement in politics, Miriam also claims that "'Women, everybody knows nowadays, have made civilisations, the thing civilisation is so proud of - social life. It's one of the things I dislike in them.

<sup>19</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Revolving Lights*, hereafter cited as *RL* (London: Duckworth, 1923), p. 39

<sup>20</sup> 'About' *The Fabian Society* <<http://www.fabians.org.uk/about/>>

<sup>21</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'To Vincent Brome, 16 June 1950' *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson*, ed. Gloria G. Fromm (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), pp. 631-633 (p. 631)

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 632

There you are, by the way, women were the first socialists" (*RL*, p. 42). Miriam's lack of interest in the political freedom of women can perhaps be linked to her personal disassociation from the female sex, noting that "some women want to be men" (*RL*, p. 46) and 'I am a man' (*RL*, p. 81). She sees herself as not fully female, something which she reveals is due to her parents' desire to have a male child: 'within me . . . the *third* child, the longed-for son [...] feeling so identified with both, she could not imagine either of them set aside' (*RL*, p. 34).

This individualism, not fitting in with male or female peers and not meeting unrealistic family expectations, is clear when Miriam states "I don't want to exercise the feminine art" (*RL*, p. 46), with Richardson's italicising of Miriam's first person 'I' emphasising her isolation. This statement also highlights that Miriam wants to create art with her writing and do so in her own unique way. She also later suggests that writing can be an antidote for isolation, stating: 'people who *record* loneliness, bare their wounds, and ask for pity, are not wholly wounded' (*RL*, p. 143). Miriam does not, however, paint the act of confessional writing in a good light, worrying about 'people being helplessly picked out and put into books' (*RL*, p. 173), which is of course something Richardson did when she created the many characters of *Pilgrimage* who have real-life equivalents. These characters, such as Hypo Wilson who was based on the real-life H.G. Wells, reinforce just how closely Richardson's novel sequence resembles her own life, whilst also raising questions around the morality of including real friends and family members in literature without their consent - as Richardson has had Miriam disagree with here.

Wilson also suggests scenarios for Miriam to write about, focusing on a story of a Lycurgan meeting he found amusing: "you ought to write up that little meeting by the way. You're lucky you know, Miriam, in your opportunities for odd experience. Write it up. Don't forget" (*RL*, p. 225). Wilson is indeed the catalyst behind Miriam joining the Lycurgans, as Richardson writes:

"There's mountains, my dear Miriam, mountains of work ahead, that only an organised society can compass. And you'd like the Lycurgans. We'll make you a Lycurgan."

"What could I do?"

"You can talk. You might write. Edit. You've got a deadly critical eye. Yes, you are a Lycurgan. That's settled." (*RL*, p. 37)



Here, Wilson links Miriam's proficiency in writing and editing, which he has been encouraging her to develop and use, with her usefulness for the society. Convincing Miriam that her artistic skills are useful and indeed sought after is perhaps a turning point in her journey towards becoming a writer, since, as I discussed in the previous chapter, she has formerly felt conflicted and guilty for undertaking menial work for pay rather than artistic work for pleasure, questioning: 'why was there always a feeling of guilt about a salary?'<sup>23</sup> If artistic work is indeed useful as Hypo Wilson claims, Miriam could then begin to be able to envision herself as a full-time professional writer at some point in the near future.

However, as with her conflict over her gender identity and her vocation, Miriam is also conflicted over her commitment to the Lycurgan Society's cause, stating:

It was when Eleanor went away that autumn that I found I had been made a Lycurgan; and began going to the meetings ... in that small room in Anselm's Inn. . . . Ashamed of pride in belonging to a small exclusive group containing so many brilliant men. Making a new world. Concentrated intelligence and goodwill. Unanimous even in their differences. Able to joke together. Seeking, selflessly, only one thing. And because they selflessly sought it, all the things of fellowship added to them. . . . From the first I knew I was not a real Lycurgan. Not wanting their kind of selfless seeking, yet liking to be within the stronghold of people who were keeping watch, understanding how social injustice came about, explaining the working of things, revealing the rest of the world as naturally unconsciously blind, urgently requiring the enlightenment that only the Lycurgans could bring, that could only be found by endless dry work on facts and figures. . . . (*RL*, p. 88)

This passage is notably narrated in first person, whereas the prose immediately surrounding it is in the third person. By making this discussion of the Lycurgan Society, where Miriam is becoming aware that she does not relate entirely to their beliefs, stand out as a piece of first person narrative against the more regular third person narration around it, Richardson then makes it possible that this is in fact Miriam getting around to writing her take on the Lycurgans as Wilson had suggested to her earlier.

Miriam then has no real commitment to joining the Lycurgans, and her lack of interest in joining groups permanently, preferring to come and go more freely, is

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<sup>23</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *The Tunnel*, p. 190

a trait that will be shown to be repeated throughout *Pilgrimage* when I discuss Miriam's links with the Quaker faith in chapter six. Instead, Miriam uses her introduction to these new (to her) political thoughts as a method for gathering interesting anecdotes and experiences to later write on when she comes to take up the writing of her own life, just as Hypo Wilson has suggested she should.

'Mysteriously clever work': Typewriters and Text

As we have seen, Hypo Wilson is indeed intrinsic in Miriam's journey to a career as a writer and goes out of his way to encourage her to begin:

"I've got *fifty* ideas," she said beginning to write.

"That's too many, Miriam. That's the trouble with you. You've got too many ideas. You're messing up your mind, quite a good mind, with too swift a succession of ideas." She wrote busily on, drinking in his elaboration of his view of the state of her mind.

(*RL*, p. 213)

This advice to refine her ideas is also accompanied by a suggestion as to her writing implement: "'but writing Miriam, should be done with a pen. Can't call yourself a writer till you do it *direct*" (*RL*, p. 214), giving an indication that Wilson considers the physicality of writing to be important. As George H. Thomson has noted, *Revolving Lights* is set in 1903<sup>24</sup> and as such the Miriam of that time would have had access to a typewriter. The typewriter was first patented in Great Britain in 1714<sup>25</sup> and by the end of the nineteenth century the machines were become more commonplace, as G. Tilghman Richards notes 'competitive design now broadens rapidly as more and more inventors and designers enter the typewriter field.'<sup>26</sup> By the early years of the twentieth century, the period in which *Revolving Lights* is set and Richardson's protagonist was beginning to write, the use of typewriters was widespread in the English-speaking world and was beginning to be seen as specifically women's work. As Robert A. Waller explains, stenography was widely taught to young women in the United States of America: 'the typewriter was being inserted into the education of women with a vigor only matched by salesmen's desires to broaden their

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<sup>24</sup> George H. Thomson, *A Reader's Guide to Dorothy Richardson's Pilgrimage* (Greensboro: ELT Press, 1996), p. 17

<sup>25</sup> G. Tilghman Richards, *The History and Development of Typewriters* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1964), p. 17

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28

potential market.<sup>27</sup> Waller also notes that 'during the period 1873-1923 many forces were operating which lead to the feminization of the clerical labor force. Among the important precedents was the large-scale recruitment of women as clerks in the Treasury Department during the Civil War.'<sup>28</sup> In the United Kingdom the situation was much the same, with Leah Price noting in an essay on the development of the practice of ghost-writing that the number of female office workers vastly increased in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: 'a group that multiplied more than eighty times between 1850 and 1914, going in the same period from 2 to 20 percent of the total number of British clerical workers.'<sup>29</sup> Thus, in the early twentieth century, women were taking to the typewriter in their office roles as never before. Price does note in a separate essay that the modern-day presumption that all secretaries and typists were female is not accurate, stating that 'it's striking how exclusively it's framed in terms of women's history.'<sup>30</sup> However, as both Price and Lawrence Rainey discuss, the female secretary and typist was common enough to become a stereotype figure in literature of the period. Rainey, in an article on British fictional secretaries, discusses the high volume of such characters, asking if together these fictional secretaries are common enough to 'constitute a previously unnoticed genre of secretarial fiction.'<sup>31</sup> Price draws attention to the problems that arose from this mass influx of female office workers, both real and fictional, who almost always reported to a male superior, thus meaning it was 'a male voice dictating to a female hand,'<sup>32</sup> removing the possibility in office contexts that women could be typing their own ideas. Price associates this with the act of ghost-writing, asking whether 'a text owes its value to the "mind" that designs it or the "hands" that produce it.'<sup>33</sup> By placing value on the method of production, Price then provides context for Hypo Wilson's fixation on Miriam writing by hand.

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<sup>27</sup> Robert A. Waller, 'Women and the Typewriter During the First Fifty Years, 1873-1923' *Studies in Popular Culture* (Vol. 9, No. 1, 1986), pp. 39-50 (p. 43)

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47

<sup>29</sup> Leah Price, 'Delegating Authority at Fin de Siècle' *The Faces of Anonymity: Anonymous and Pseudonymous Publication from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century*, ed. Robert J. Griffin (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 211-231 (p. 213)

<sup>30</sup> Leah Price, 'Stenographic Masculinity' *Literary Secretaries/Secretarial Culture*, ed. Leah Price and Pamela Thurschwell (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 32-47 (p. 33)

<sup>31</sup> Lawrence Rainey, 'Secretarial Fiction: Gender and Genre in Four Novels, 1897-1898' *ELT* (Vol. 53, No. 3, 2010), pp. 308-330 (p. 326)

<sup>32</sup> Leah Price 'Delegating Authority at Fin de Siècle', p. 213

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

However, Miriam's job as a dental secretary does requires an element of typewriting, or at the very least it is imminently going to become part of her work, with Miriam preparing a 'printed card of appointment with Mr Hancock'<sup>34</sup> to send to a patient and, in *The Tunnel*, pondering the loss of beautiful handwriting:

She took up her packet and surveyed it upside down. The address looked like Chinese. It was really beautiful . . . but handwriting was doomed . . . short-hand and typewriting . . . she ought to know them if she were ever to make more than a pound a week as a secretary . . . awful. What a good thing Mr Hancock thought them unprofessional . . . yet there were already men in Wimpole Street who had their correspondence typed. What did he mean by saying that the art of conversation was doomed? He did not like conversation.<sup>35</sup>

Here, Miriam is aware of the marked change in the workplace, particularly for secretaries, towards the use of typewriters instead of handwriting notes and correspondence. She is also aware that her pay would be greatly increased if she were to learn how to use a typewriter. However, Miriam does not appear to be wholly convinced by the merits of stenography in the workplace, seeming instead to focus on the artistic qualities of handwriting over the practical advantages of the typewriter.

If the use of the typewriter was such a mark of progress for women, getting them into the workforce in a way that had not been possible for previous generations - as Waller claims, 'feminists bragged that economic independence had been achieved'<sup>36</sup> - it begs the question again of why Hypo Wilson was so insistent that Miriam should handwrite her art. Wilson claims to Miriam that she 'can't call yourself a writer till you do it *direct*' (RL, p. 214) and as such he seems to be suggesting that the physical act of writing is important to the creation of good or authentic art, and this then suggests that writing in one's own hand, putting oneself into one's writing, is what is important. It is possible then that what Hypo Wilson is really encouraging Miriam to do is to begin to write her own life, and to do so in as personal a way as possible, as Richardson has done. Therefore, it is not surprising that Richardson wrote by hand for at least part of her writing career, with one of the four surviving manuscripts of

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<sup>34</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *The Tunnel*, p. 30

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41

<sup>36</sup> Robert A. Waller, 'Women and the Typewriter During the First Fifty Years, 1873-1923', p. 41

*Pilgrimage* chapter-volumes described as 'a handwritten manuscript with revisions.'<sup>37</sup> Thus, Richardson, whose writing is so deeply autobiographical, seems to have taken the advice which she has her character of Hypo Wilson give to her protagonist.

However, Hypo Wilson's encouragement to take up her pen also reintroduces the feelings of jealousy towards other, more successful, writers that were discussed in *Deadlock*. In this chapter-volume Miriam meets Edna Prout, a published author, at a party thrown by the Wilsons:

Away outside the window stood the wonderful stuff, being written, rolled off; the vague figure of a woman, cleverly dressed, rising pen in hand from her work to be socially brilliant. Popular. Divided between mysteriously clever work and successful femineity. (RL, p. 166)

It is clear here that Miriam's jealousy is not only of Edna Prout's successful career as a writer but also of her ability to do so while passing in society as visually feminine and popular, neither of which are attributes of Miriam's. She also takes particular offence at Hypo reading Edna's book in front of her - 'he was *reading*, in her presence, a book she had written. . . .' (RL, p. 172) - which suggests romantic feelings for Hypo Wilson that will be developed more fully later in the novel sequence. Furthermore, Richardson uses here the word 'femineity' - an obscure term for femininity - which the *Oxford English Dictionary* classifies as belonging to a group of words that 'occur fewer than 0.01 times per million words in typical modern English usage. These are almost exclusively terms which are not part of normal discourse and would be unknown to most people.'<sup>38</sup> In using such an unusual word, Richardson then emphasises Miriam's own cleverness, a trait she is jealous of in Edna Prout who has used her intelligence to become a successful writer, something which still eludes Miriam.

*Revolving Lights* sees Richardson's protagonist reach even closer to her aim of making writing her vocation, as she not only receives encouragement to do so from Hypo Wilson but also appears to take the advice of her friend and write a description of an interesting experience at a political meeting, which Richardson indicates through her shift from third person into first. As in *Deadlock*, *Revolving*

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<sup>37</sup> 'Dorothy M. Richardson: An Inventory of Her Collection at the Harry Ransom Center' *Harry Ransom Center: The University of Texas at Austin*  
<<http://norman.hrc.utexas.edu/fasearch/findingAid.cfm?eadid=00975&kw=dorothy%20richardson>>

<sup>38</sup> 'femineity, n.' *OED Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017)

*Lights* is an accumulation of experiences from which Miriam Henderson will write her life, just as Richardson has done.

'Filled with memories': Co-habiting and Contradictions

While Miriam's developing friendship with Michael Shatov dominates *Deadlock* and the Wilsons are key figures in *Revolving Lights*, *The Trap* (1925), the eighth chapter-volume of the *Pilgrimage* sequence, concerns itself with the relationship between Miriam and Selina Holland, with whom she rents a room in London. As with most of Miriam's interactions, this is a conflicted relationship, with the pair disagreeing over trivial matters such as Miriam's fondness for rattling windows which Selina despises, creating 'a fresh source of division.'<sup>39</sup> Miriam eventually feels herself to be 'estranged from Miss Holland' (*Tr*, p. 69), with the pair 'separated now, utterly' (*Tr*, p. 179) after their various arguments. An especially painful disagreement, where Selina claims that Miriam only keeps promises to men and not to women, leads to Miriam searching 'her memory in vain for anything to equal the venom of this attack' (*Tr*, p. 178). This conflict has an impact on Miriam's already fragile confidence, with her belief that 'Miss Holland, it was clear, despised her and wished, had found, in wishing to make her look small in her own eyes, crushing eloquence' (*Tr*, p. 180). However, the relationship between Selina and Miriam was not entirely painful, and in their friendly moments they found that 'filled with memories, the rooms [they live in] had grown dear' (*Tr*, p. 98).

The conflicted friendship with Selina does, however, provide writing inspiration for Miriam, giving her the rising and falling of emotions which, as discussed in relation to Miriam's relationship with Michael Shatov, fuel her writing and literary experimentation. This can be seen when Richardson shifts into first person narrative, with Miriam claiming: 'yet Selina Holland is afraid of losing me' (*Tr*, p. 229). The use of first person is of course one of Richardson's methods of handing over the writing to Miriam and indicating that this is a moment of her protagonist's life-writing, as well as her own. As such, this moment of confused anger towards the woman she shares a home with is a very brief moment of Miriam's writing, or inspiration for the intention to write, making itself visible. Miriam also uses her relationship with Selina as a method of defining herself: 'she

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<sup>39</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *The Trap*, hereafter cited as *Tr* (London: Duckworth, 1925), p. 74

was her fellow-lodger. Now that personal depths had been revealed, that strange fact remained; an achievement' (*Tr*, p. 63). Thus, Selina is important to Miriam, despite their differences.

The location of Selina and Miriam's rented property is also as influential on Miriam as her flatmate, with the pair living opposite a poet called E.W. Sayce, based on W. B. Yeats, who Richardson lived near in Bloomsbury from 1905 to 1906.<sup>40</sup> Selina delights in the nearby presence of Sayce: "'a poet. That is charming. Quite enchanting to feel that poetry is being written so near at hand'" (*Tr*, p. 90). Miriam too finds having him so close enjoyable, but selfishly it is so that she can exploit this proximity: 'if unobserved she could catch him at it, she would note his methods' (*Tr*, p. 91). Miriam intends to watch Sayce at work so that she can emulate his success by copying his process. This intention of Miriam's to gain writing advice by watching Sayce work, presumably through a window, is somewhat laughable, as she would not be able to see any of his writing from such a distance, merely the action of him putting pen to paper. However, this focus on writing and method does have some productive use for Miriam as she uses it to describe something which occurs in her own life as 'this scene that she persisted in seeing as a background, stationary' (*Tr*, p. 187), giving a sense of theatricality to her everyday existence. Although Miriam's experience in living with Selina Holland is not altogether positive, it does provide her with material to write on, as well as with a setting, so excitingly close to a professional writer, that can inspire her to take to writing.

#### 'Representing it in memory': Cinematic Writing in *The Trap*

*The Trap* features a very short chapter - just one page long - which is stylistically close to the chapter of a similar length in the earlier *The Tunnel* chapter-volume, where Richardson writes Miriam's remembering of her late mother, as I have discussed in chapter three. In *The Trap* Richardson uses this short chapter to portray the passing of time:

Another spring vanished. . . .  
A sheet of crocuses singing along the grass alley. White, under trees  
still bare. Crocuses dotting the open grass with June gold. . . .

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<sup>40</sup> Rebecca Bowler, 'Dorothy M Richardson Deserves the Recognition She is Finally Receiving' *The Guardian*, 15 May 2015 <<https://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2015/may/15/dorothy-m-richardson-deserves-recognition-finally-receiving>>

Suddenly a mist of green on the trees, as quiet as thought. . . . Small leaves in broad daylight, magic reality, silent at midday amidst the noise of traffic. . . .

Then full spring for three days. Holding life still, when the dawn mists drew off the sea and garden and revealed their colour.

Everyone had loved it, independent of other lovers. Become for a while single. Wanting and trying and failing to utter its beauty.

Everyone had those moments of reality in forgetfulness. Quickly passing. Growing afterwards longer than other moments, spreading out over the whole season; representing it in memory. . . . (*Tr*, p. 214)

This cinematic representation of the passing of spring into summer is an opportunity for Richardson and Miriam to experiment with a different way of writing time. Indeed, Richardson wrote on films for the cinema magazine *Close Up* from 1927 until the magazine's close in 1933, indicating that she had an intimate knowledge of cinematic techniques which may have informed the visual nature of her description of the passing of time here. Furthermore, Richardson's knowledge of the techniques of cinema, which were rapidly changing and developing in the early twentieth century, made her aware of the way in which new and unusual techniques were not immediately understood by a film audience. For example, writing in 1928 on the introduction of the slow-motion technique, Richardson states:

No one who heard the hysterical laughter that greeted the first slow-motion pictures can fail to be struck by the quiet bearing of the average audience of today when confronted by these strange transformations. And were it not for a haunting suspicion of the part played by mere familiarity with the spectacle, it would be possible to claim this change of attitude as the surest direct evidence of the educative power of the film.<sup>41</sup>

Thus, Richardson acknowledges that experimental art is not always popular when it is first made as the audience, or in Richardson's case the reader, is not familiar with the medium, but that people do eventually come to appreciate it. Furthermore, Richardson claims that this 'change in attitude' makes the artistic medium, in this case that of film, educational. As such, it could be suggested that Richardson's own lack of popular and financial success will still make for a useful contribution to literature as her new and unfamiliar writing style will educate readers in years to come.

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<sup>41</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'Slow Motion' *Close Up* (Vol. 2, 1927), pp. 54-58 (pp. 54-55)



Susan Gevirtz has also explicitly linked Richardson's critical film writing to her interest in narratological experimentation and more specifically to her creation of a doubly autobiographical narrative. Gevirtz notes that Richardson rarely reviewed individual films, instead choosing to focus on filmmaking techniques and audience enjoyment: 'her concern was almost never with specific films but rather with the film as a medium or experience.'<sup>42</sup> Developing on this idea, Gevirtz then observes that Richardson's focus is more specifically on 'a processual subject, language, and content, and her alertness to the subtle dependencies between form and content.'<sup>43</sup> There are obvious parallels between the things that Richardson found interesting in films and that which she, and Miriam, are concerned with writing into their literary works. In particular, Richardson is interested in the interrelation of form and content, which, as I have discussed in chapters two and three, her experimentations with punctuation to illustrate hesitancy and moments of low confidence exemplify. Gevirtz also sees the synchronicity between Richardson's interests in cinema and the focus on artistry of *Pilgrimage*, writing:

In the *Close Up* columns, Richardson invents films as an extra-literary object that provokes her into a continuous writing performance about the desire to write. For her, the film and the experience of viewing it repeatedly posed the question, How to write the desire to write?<sup>44</sup>

Gevirtz's naming of Richardson's career as a 'continuous writing performance' reinforces her own desire to make writing her profession, which then furthers her autobiographical links with Miriam, whose desire to write is woven into the text of *Pilgrimage*, even in the early chapter-volumes when she cannot fully articulate the urge to make writing her profession. Furthermore, that Gevirtz links the question of how to write writing with Richardson's criticism on film is significant as it shows just how concerned she was with answering this question, writing it into all that she creates and not just her doubly autobiographical fiction.

Thus, the passage from *The Trap* quoted above displays a cinematic style in the writing of Richardson and of Miriam, representing the pervasiveness of their

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<sup>42</sup> Susan Gevirtz, *Narrative's Journey: the Fiction and Film Writing of Dorothy Richardson* (New York: Peter Lang, 1996), p. 48

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61

interest in developing their writing method, finding inspiration everywhere and trialling techniques in all kinds of texts. It can be seen to be Miriam's writing, as well as Richardson's, as the passage is neither discernibly narrated in third person nor first, occupying a space between the two, and is concerned with 'representing [time passing] in memory. . . .' (*Tr*, p. 214), which suggests that it is Miriam writing on her experiences, or at least mentally noting them for later writing. The passage also has links with the 'Time Passes' section of Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* (1927), which, falling in the centre of the novel, shows an entirely different method of representing the passing of time from the realist prose which precedes and follows it. Woolf uses punctuation as a way of delivering emotional plot points - such as the death of Mrs Ramsay, the mother - to readers in a clinically unemotional way, as I have briefly mentioned in the previous chapter. For example, Woolf writes, in parenthesis, '[Mr Ramsay stumbling along a passage stretched his arms out one dark morning, but, Mrs Ramsay having died rather suddenly the night before, he stretched his arms out. They remained empty.]'<sup>45</sup> Kate McLoughlin, in an article specifically on these square brackets in *To the Lighthouse*, claims that the brackets, or crotchets as square brackets are known, perform 'not a burial but a preservation,'<sup>46</sup> functioning as a memorial for the dead which they enclose. Similarly, Richardson also turns to punctuation at times of emotional distress, using ellipses, for example, when describing the death of Miriam's mother in *Honeycomb*, indicating that Richardson's use of punctuation for this purpose predates Woolf's. A review of Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) in *The Observer* noted that in this novel, published just two years before *To the Lighthouse*, Woolf 'may be said to carry the method of Miss Dorothy Richardson into a two- or three-dimensional scale.'<sup>47</sup> The method which the unnamed reviewer associates with Richardson is that of narrative experimentation - the review is titled 'An Experimenter' and *Mrs Dalloway* is known for its free indirect discourse - meaning that at one time Richardson was more closely associated with narrative innovation than even Virginia Woolf. The work of these two female modernist writers is not precisely the same but a continuum of modernist experimentation can be found in the ways in which their work has had an influence on each other. Indeed, as

<sup>45</sup> Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (Oxford: Shakespeare Head Press, 1992), p. 110

<sup>46</sup> Kate McLoughlin, 'Woolf's Crotchets: Textual Cryogenics in *To the Lighthouse*' *Textual Practice* (Vol. 28, No. 6, 2014), pp. 946-967 (p. 960)

<sup>47</sup> 'An Experimenter' *The Observer*, 24 May 1925, p. 3

described in the previous chapter, ellipses are frequently used throughout the novel sequence by Richardson to portray moments when her protagonist is reminded of her grief, which function similarly to Woolf's memorialising brackets. The short chapter in *The Trap*, however, represents a moment of happiness at the changing of the seasons and as such is even more similar to the passage from Woolf's *Orlando* (1928), where she alludes to 'Time Passes' from *To the Lighthouse*:

He saw the beech trees turn golden and the young ferns unfurl; he saw the moon sickle and then circular; he saw - but probably the reader can imagine the passage which should follow and how every tree and plant in the neighbourhood is described first green, then golden; how moons rise and suns set; how spring follows winter and autumn summer; how night succeeds day and day night; how there is first a storm and then fine weather; how things remain much as they are for two or three hundred years or so, except for a little dust and a few cobwebs which one old woman can sweep up in half an hour; a conclusion which, one cannot help feeling, might have been reached more quickly by the simple statement that "Time passed" (here the exact amount could be indicated in brackets) and nothing whatever happened.<sup>48</sup>

The preoccupation with nature here is very much like that of Richardson's description, and both writers use the changing seasons to visually illustrate the passing of time without describing actual events in their protagonist's lives. Thus, artistic experimentation, rather than narrative content, is key here. For Richardson, this, like the moments of experimental ellipses and shifts from third to first person, is yet another example of a moment when the narrative of *Pilgrimage* gives room to its protagonist to try out her burgeoning writing technique.

However, even though this passage of Richardson's does feature three instances of ellipses, they are all standard four dot examples, and this chapter-volume as a whole includes far fewer ellipses than the more experimentally written *The Tunnel* and *Interim*. Thus, *The Trap* displays Miriam and Richardson as having perhaps found their chosen narrative styles, and so they can now move on to experimenting with content, rather than with style. Richardson then has been shown to have found many sources of inspiration for her writing and for Miriam's, looking to other artistic media such as cinema and music, as well as drawing on

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<sup>48</sup> Virginia Woolf, *Orlando* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 94

her personal experiences. That Miriam follows Richardson in finding material to write on in every aspect of her life is another way in which Richardson doubles her autobiography in the *Pilgrimage* sequence, with Miriam's writing inspiration mirroring that of her creator.

'The centre of her life': Reading Henry James

*The Trap*, like much of the *Pilgrimage* sequence, features many examples of Miriam's love of reading, which is yet another source of inspiration for her writing. She becomes obsessed with a book, *The Ambassadors* (1903) by Henry James, to the point that it preoccupies her: 'her forgotten book was lying on the table. The book that had suddenly become the centre of her life' (*Tr*, p. 25). Miriam then uses this book in her own writing, experimenting with narratological devices by personifying the book:

Sitting thus with the book in her hand and her eyes upon the title, set within the golden lines of an upright oblong in letters of gold upon the red cover, she found herself back within the first moment of meeting it. (*Tr*, p. 25)

This idea of meeting the book, which seems to be a shared act unlike Miriam simply choosing a text, continues into her description of how the book has affected her life:

She glanced through the pages of its opening chapter, the chapter that was now part of her own experience; set down at last alive, so that the few pages stood in her mind, growing as a single good day will grow, in memory, deep and wide, wider than the year to which it belongs. (*Tr*, p. 27)

Here, the writing is described as being 'alive' which could be viewed as a continuation of the personification of the text found in the previous example. This mentioning of 'her own experience' also suggests that there is a physical connection between the writing and its reader. This then is Miriam taking up her pen to write her own experience, or at the very least being moved to consider it, by a novel she finds inspiring.

*The Ambassadors* follows the character of Strether, an American who has travelled to Paris to convince his soon to be stepson to return home, focalised through a single character. The novel is not just a favourite of Miriam's; it is also mentioned by Richardson several times in her published correspondence with friends. In these letters Richardson focuses on the autobiographical elements of

*The Ambassadors*, claiming, in a letter to Henry Savage on reading James's novel, that 'every novel, of whatever date & kind is a conducted tour &, inevitably, a self-portrait of the author.'<sup>49</sup> She then uses the same language again when discussing the novel with Eleanor Phillips: 'every novel is a conducted tour & everything turns upon the vision of the conductor.'<sup>50</sup> Richardson is then even more explicit about just how autobiographical she believes *The Ambassadors* to be when she writes again to Eleanor Phillips, calling the protagonist of James's novel 'of course, James-when-young.'<sup>51</sup> This close association which Richardson sees between author and protagonist in the work of James is reminiscent of Richardson's links to her own Miriam Henderson, making very clear why she sees *The Ambassadors* as such a key text, both for herself as a writer and for Miriam who is just beginning to write. Critics have also seen similarities between James and Richardson, with John Cowper Powys noting that for Richardson's readers: 'after reading [Richardson] they can hardly read others. In this respect she resembles Henry James.'<sup>52</sup>

The English novelist E. M. Forster too has written on *The Ambassadors*, claiming that:

The plot is elaborate and subtle, and proceeds by action or conversation or mediation through every paragraph. Everything is planned, everything fits; none of the minor characters are just decorative [...]; they elaborate on the main theme, they work.<sup>53</sup>

Forster here accurately describes the novel, which proceeds gently with little drama or action, and suggests that it is elaborately planned with very little wastage, despite being a reasonably long text of around four hundred pages. It is curious then that Dorothy Richardson would choose such a neatly plotted novel as writing inspiration for her protagonist when Richardson's own writing is of such a length and includes many unexplained threads. This then further

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<sup>49</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'To Henry Savage, 18 September 1948' *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson*, ed. Gloria G. Fromm (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), pp. 589-590 (p. 590)

<sup>50</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'To Eleanor Phillips, 25 January 1949' *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson*, ed. Gloria G. Fromm (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), pp. 598-599 (p. 599)

<sup>51</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'To Eleanor Phillips, 3 December 1948' *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson*, ed. Gloria G. Fromm (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), pp. 595-596 (p. 595)

<sup>52</sup> John Cowper Powys, *Dorothy M. Richardson* (London: Joiner and Steele, 1931), p. 25

<sup>53</sup> E. M. Forster, *'The Ambassadors' Henry James: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Leon Edel (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1963), pp. 72-78 (p. 72)

emphasises that Richardson and Miriam are not entirely interchangeable, and suggests that Miriam's writing, inspired by her reading of James, may not resemble that of Richardson. However, Richardson does cite James as one of her influences, although she does not mention *The Ambassadors* specifically, in her 1938 foreword to the first collected edition of *Pilgrimage*. Here, she claims that James is known for 'keeping the reader incessantly watching the conflict of human forces through the eye of a single observer.'<sup>54</sup> This single observer in *The Ambassadors* is not outwardly the protagonist, Strether, as the novel is narrated in third person although is entirely focused on Strether. However, the third person narrator does occasionally slip into something else when referring to Strether as 'our friend'<sup>55</sup> which occurs frequently throughout the novel. Furthermore, Forster claims that the artistry and experimentation of the novel has rendered it potentially unreadable, suggesting a connection with Richardson's writing:

The beauty that suffuses *The Ambassadors* is the reward due to a fine artist for hard work. James knew exactly what he wanted, he pursued the narrow path of aesthetic duty, and success to the full extent of his possibilities has crowned him. [...] But at what sacrifice! So enormous is the sacrifice that many readers cannot get interested in James, although they can follow what he says (his difficulty has been much exaggerated), and can appreciate his effects.<sup>56</sup>

This description of readers of James being unable to relate to his work due to its aesthetic experimentation is very much reminiscent of the problems readers have had with Richardson's work, suggesting that the two writers have many commonalities. Indeed, George H. Thomson has noted 'the demand James makes for unwavering concentration and participation'<sup>57</sup> and suggests that 'it is this Dorothy Richardson values in Henry James, for she was well aware that *Pilgrimage* required the same kind of participation from its readers.'<sup>58</sup> This requirement of total participation from their readers suggests that James and Richardson had similar priorities with their writing, choosing artistic experimentation over appealing to readers. Mhairi Catriona Pooler has addressed

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<sup>54</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'Foreword to *Pilgrimage*' *The Gender of Modernism: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Bonnie Kime Scott (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), pp. 429-432 (p. 431)

<sup>55</sup> Henry James, *The Ambassadors* (London: Penguin, 1982), p. 77

<sup>56</sup> E. M. Forster, 'The Ambassadors', p. 76

<sup>57</sup> George H. Thomson, 'Dorothy Richardson's Foreword to *Pilgrimage*' *Twentieth Century Literature* (Vol. 42, No. 3, 1996), pp. 344-359 (p. 351)

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

this point in an article on both Richardson and James, where she notes that Richardson mocked James for his emphasis on style over content in a letter to Henry Savage - 'his style [...] can only be, very vulgarly, described as a non-stop wagging of the backside'<sup>59</sup> - and suggests that this was hypocritical of Richardson as she is known for the same. Pooler also states that 'both James and Richardson's methods reflect thought patterns as if they were enacted before the reader's eyes'<sup>60</sup> which indicates the close proximity of both authors to their subject matter as Richardson claimed of James. Pooler then suggests that writing which focuses on style over content, such as James and Richardson's, allows the reader a better understanding of the plot through a closeness to the characters and their motivations.

The English essayist and biographer Percy Lubbock, who was a close friend of Henry James, has also written on *The Ambassadors*, where he suggested that readers of James were so far removed from *The Ambassadors* that many would not even understand the method:

But though in *The Ambassadors* the point of view is primarily Strether's, and though it *appears* to be his throughout the book, there is in fact an insidious shifting of it, so artfully contrived that the reader may arrive at the end without suspecting the trick.<sup>61</sup>

This idea that readers might not fully understand what the author is attempting to achieve with an experimental writing style is one which could apply just as easily to Richardson's work as to James's.<sup>62</sup> Thus, *The Ambassadors*, and Henry James's work as a whole, perhaps function for Miriam as a reassurance that her unusual writing style which she is experimenting with in *The Trap* is not outlandishly unusual, as James has had some critical success with his writing of a similar level of experimentation. *The Ambassadors* may have also functioned for Dorothy Richardson in the same way, showing her that the style she had worked

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<sup>59</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'To Henry Savage, 25 August 1948' *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson*, ed. Gloria G. Fromm (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), pp. 588-589 (p. 588)

<sup>60</sup> Mhairi Catriona Pooler, 'Of Language, Of Meaning, Of Mr Henry James' *Pilgrimages: A Journal of Dorothy Richardson Studies* (No. 4, 2011), pp. 95-111 (p. 109)

<sup>61</sup> Percy Lubbock, 'The Point of View: *The Ambassadors*' *Henry James: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Leon Edel (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1963), pp.37-46 (p. 40)

<sup>62</sup> See, for example, *The Scotsman's* review of *Revolving Lights* which described it as 'bewildering',<sup>62</sup> ('New Fiction' *The Scotsman*, 23 July 1923, p. 2).

so long and hard on - *The Trap* being her eighth chapter-volume of *Pilgrimage* - was not immune to success.

*The Trap*, for Miriam Henderson, represents yet more experience gained, both positive and negative, which can be transformed into writing material at a later time, such as her ill-fated period of lodging with Selina Holland or her new interest in nature to experiment with writing time passing. Furthermore, Richardson once again emphasises the depth of knowledge of literature and writing that her protagonist possesses, illustrated by Miriam's preoccupation with *The Ambassadors* by Henry James. In *Deadlock*, *Revolving Lights* and *The Trap* Miriam does not yet have the technical skill or the confidence to truly begin to see writing as her career, rather than a hobby, but she is beginning to experiment with writing, encouraged by Hypo Wilson amongst others, and seems to be viewing any new experience, be it romance, friendship, political activism, or simply an interesting novel, as an experience which can provide material for her to write about. She may not be putting words down on the page just yet, but by the end of these three chapter-volumes, Miriam Henderson is starting to write her life.



Chapter 5  
'Being versus becoming' in  
*Oberland, Dawn's Left Hand*  
and *Clear Horizon*

In a break from the intensity of her relationships in *Deadlock*, *Revolving Lights* and *The Trap*, Miriam Henderson begins the next chapter-volume, *Oberland* (1927), by travelling out of London and away from her responsibilities and worries both at work and in her personal life. This escape from the everyday drudgery of her life as a dental secretary in London is then continued into *Dawn's Left Hand* (1931) and *Clear Horizon* (1935) by Richardson allowing her protagonist to turn to writing in a more professional capacity than possible before. Although *Dawn's Left Hand* and *Clear Horizon* feature Miriam returning to London and to her complex friendships and romances, the inspiration to write that she finds on her trip in *Oberland* continues. This chapter explores how Richardson provides new experiences for her protagonist to write on, furthering Miriam's journey towards taking up the writing of her own life as her profession.

'She longed to glide forever onwards': Observing in *Oberland*

*Oberland*, published two years after *The Trap*, sees Miriam depart the crowded London streets for a ski resort in Switzerland. This chapter-volume is written in a style that does not feature the experimentations in punctuation and narrative voice of those which precede it and for which Richardson had come to be known, with no instances whatsoever of shifts from third person into first, and fewer than ten examples of ellipses to be found, none of which feature more than the standard three or four points. The experimentation of *Oberland* then, for Richardson and for her protagonist as a fledgling writer, can be found not in the narrative experimentation but in the opportunities that the vast landscape of Switzerland and Miriam's free time while holidaying present for the writers to work on their descriptions of setting. Thus, *Oberland* both provides Miriam with a holiday from her working life in London and the reader with a break from Richardson's complex narrative style.

Howard Finn discusses *Oberland* as a break in the narrative in an essay which introduces articles by Richardson on the subject of Swiss ski resorts for *The Sphere* magazine as precursors to the style and setting of *Oberland*. Finn writes:

The term "interlude" refers to something which is dependent on what comes before and after, and yet something standing apart, distinct and separate. And Richardson seems to have approached the writing of *Oberland* with this in mind.<sup>1</sup>

Here, Finn sees *Oberland* as an interlude between the earlier chapter-volumes, which deal with often emotionally challenging subject matter, and the later chapter-volumes which see Miriam beginning to take up writing in a professional capacity. This break in the narrative is emphasised again when Finn discusses how the previous chapter-volume ends with scenes of poverty and hardship:

It is hard to imagine a greater contrast than between that scene at the end of *The Trap* and the picturesque Alpine resort where most of *Oberland* is set. It was seemingly evident to Richardson that if *Pilgrimage* was to continue she needed to write something with a change of ambience to attract new readers.<sup>2</sup>

Finn attributes this move away from writing about the difficult life of Miriam Henderson in London to a far more beautiful and exciting setting to Richardson requiring new readers to boost sales and allow her publishers to continue to produce her work. By creating this chapter-volume for motivations other than purely a desire to include it in the narrative, *Oberland* stands out among the rest of *Pilgrimage*. However, the writing of the chapter-volume for financial and professional necessity carries out a similar function for its protagonist, providing Miriam with the inspiration, setting and experiences of the natural world in Switzerland she has been seeking to write on. *Oberland*, which Finn notes was well received in America and nominated for an award in France, rescued Richardson's career and made a start on Miriam's.

The turn to a focus on setting, inspired by the natural world of Switzerland, is exemplified by Richardson's description of observing a mountain peak. She writes:

And now from just ahead high in the mist, a sunlit peak looked down. Long after she had sat erect from her warm ensconcement the sunlit mountain corridors still seemed to be saying watch, see, if you can believe it, what we can do. And all the time it seemed that they must open out and leave her upon the hither side of enchantment, and still they turned and brought fresh vistas. Sungilt masses beetling variously up into pinnacles that truly cut the sky high up beyond their high-

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<sup>1</sup> Howard Finn, 'Oberland: "A Charming Light Interlude"?' *Pilgrimages: A Journal of Dorothy Richardson Studies* (No. 1, 2008), pp. 118-144 (p. 119)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

clambering pinewoods, where their snow was broken by patches of tawny crag. She longed to glide forever onwards through this gladness of light.<sup>3</sup>

This description of the mountain is detailed and beautiful, capturing the light and forestry observed by Miriam, as well as the joy she experiences on viewing this impressive sight. Richardson's use of personification, suggesting that the mountain is speaking to her protagonist to entice her into climbing it, allows Richardson to play with narrative voice - here diverting into second person - without the switches from third into first person which she has been experimenting with throughout *Pilgrimage* but chooses to abandon in *Oberland*. Perhaps then, these moments of highly descriptive writing, which stand out against the rest of the chapter-volume, are Miriam noting details to use in her writing later, or indeed writing in her chosen style the narrative of her trip out of London. At this point in the narrative Richardson's protagonist is beginning to find her feet as a writer, having been encouraged to take it seriously as a vocation by Hypo Wilson amongst others. As such, the remarkable beauty of the landscape of Switzerland, so different to the environment she is used to in London, as well as a break from the drudgery of her employment as a dental secretary, provides an exciting and unmissable opportunity to focus on developing her craft. Rebecca Bowler also notes this move towards describing setting, suggesting that 'as Miriam matures and becomes more conscious of her surroundings and the way in which they shape her being, it is possible to show surroundings: but only through Miriam's impressions,'<sup>4</sup> which reinforces that this exemplifies Miriam's maturation as a writer who has found the material on which she wishes to write within her own life experiences.

Another example of her turn to nature writing can be found when Miriam again observes the Swiss landscape:

Those high, high summits, beetling variously up into the top of the sky, with bright patches of tawny rock breaking through their smooth whiteness against its darkest blue, knew nothing of the world below where their mountains went downward in a great whiteness of broadening irregular slopes that presently bore pines in a single file upwards advancing from the dense clumps upon the lower ridges, and

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<sup>3</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Oberland*, hereafter cited as *O* (London: Duckworth, 1927), p. 45

<sup>4</sup> Rebecca Bowler, *Literary Impressionism: Vision and Memory in Dorothy Richardson, Ford Madox Ford, H.D. and May Sinclair* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), p. 206

met in an extended mass along the edge of the valley floor. (*O*, pp. 102-103)

The mountains are once again personified by Richardson, where this time her observation that they know nothing of the land below them suggests that they have an almost human understanding of their own mountain landscape. Furthermore, Richardson once again uses the word 'beetling' to describe the vast heights of the mountain. This unusual word is defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as 'projecting or overhanging'<sup>5</sup> and so evokes circumstances of mountaineering in this not entirely obvious definition, as well as the movement of the insect to which it also seems to refer. Its repeated use by Richardson is notable as it is not a common word, and is certainly not one of Richardson or Miriam's, who have no known experience of mountain climbing or outdoor pursuits and thus no real reason to know the true definition of the word. Thus, to be used twice over the course of a chapter-volume suggests that these two passages describing mountain scenes are linked and are perhaps then a description of the same singular experience repeated in a different way. I would suggest then that this is Miriam trialling the writing of her experience on viewing a beautiful and impressive scene once and then rewriting it, using some of the same techniques - personification - and indeed some of the same words. Getting out of London and into the countryside seems to have provided Miriam with an opportunity for a different kind of scene setting to that which her usually metropolitan lifestyle allows. As such she is taking advantage of this new source of inspiration, appearing to trial the writing of her life and experiences by indulging in detailed descriptions of the landscape she encounters. By moving away from experiments with punctuation in *Oberland*, Richardson too is working on refining her craft, once more keeping the duality and doubly autobiographical nature of *Pilgrimage* at the forefront.

#### 'She turned to the other scenes': Writing and Remembering in *Oberland*

The quiet solitude of her trip to Oberland also provides Miriam with the opportunity to return in her memory to her time as a young woman working in a school in Germany, as described in *Pointed Roofs*. Miriam, who is approaching the end of her twenties in *Oberland*, is reminded of the time she spent in

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<sup>5</sup> 'beetling, adj.' *OED Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017)

Germany as a teenager, most likely inspired by the similarities in the northern European landscapes of Germany and Switzerland. Richardson writes:

In a swift glimpse, caught through the mesh woven by the obstinate circlings of her consciousness, she saw her time in Germany, how perfect in pain and joy, how left complete and bright had been that piece of her life. (*O*, p. 35)

As I have demonstrated in the second chapter, this looking back fondly to a perfect past is not at all how Miriam at the time observed her obligation to find work as a pupil-teacher in Germany to support her family, where she spent a great deal of time feeling homesick and underqualified to carry out the job for which she had been hired. Thus, Miriam is perhaps using a kind of revision here to colour her past in an idealised way, softening many of the unpleasant memories when she edits her life in the process of writing it. Laura Marcus has also touched on this idea of reframing events in autobiographical fiction to achieve a better, or at least different, outcome. She notes that: 'the "fictional" can become the space for more general identifications, or for the trying-out of potentialities and possibilities - what might have been, what could have been, what might yet be.'<sup>6</sup> Thus, as Marcus shows, life-writing often features an element of recontextualising events and as such Miriam can be seen here to be following in the path of many other writers as she develops her skills.

Miriam's time in Germany as a teenager is again referred to fondly slightly later in the chapter-volume, with Richardson writing:

For an instant she was back in it, passing swiftly from scene to scene of the months in Waldstrasse and coming to rest in a summer's evening: warm light upon the garden, twilight in the saal. Leaving it she turned to the other scenes, freshly revived. (*O*, p. 56)

Here Richardson makes it even more explicit that this is a moment of her protagonist's writing experience with her use of the word scene, invoking ideas of writing and drama. Miriam's writing of her trip to Switzerland is never directly mentioned by Richardson but what she does allow her protagonist to write and to enjoy writing, as has been the case throughout *Pilgrimage*, are letters to her friends and family:

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<sup>6</sup> Laura Marcus, *Auto/biographical Discourses: Theory, Criticism, Practice* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1994), p. 280

The writing at top-speed of half-a-dozen letters left arrival and beginning in the past, the great doorway of the enchantments she had tried to describe safely closed behind her, and herself going forward within them. With letters to post she must now go forth, secretly, as it were behind her back, into Oberland; into the scene that had seemed full experience and it was but its overture. (*O*, p. 106)

This description of letter writing again uses language of fictionality and drama - 'scene' - to describe the events of Miriam's day, once again suggesting that Richardson's protagonist is always considering how her everyday life will translate into the written word. Writing is also on Miriam's mind when she ponders the everyday language of writing such as advertisements:

The simple text was enthralling. For years she had not so delighted in any reading. In the mere fact of the written word, in the building of the sentences, the movement of the phrases linking part with part. It was all quite undistinguished, a little crude and hard; demanding, seeming to assume a sunny hardness in mankind. And there was something missing whose absence was a relief, like the absence of heaviness in the air. Everything she had read stood clear in her mind that yet, insufficiently occupied with the narrative and its strange emanations, caught up single words and phrases and went off independently touring, climbing to fresh arrangements and interpretations of familiar thought.

And this miracle of renewal was the work of a single night. (*O*, p. 104)

Here, Miriam's focus on the craft of writing, discussing every detail of creating a sentence, suggests she is beginning to consider writing to be a serious vocation for herself, treating the art as if it was a profession she can train for.

Furthermore, her repeated mentioning of 'absence' and a focus on the intricate details of writing allude to the highly stylised narrative of *Pilgrimage* itself with its narrative shifts and extensive ellipses, which are often indicative of silence. Richardson has mentioned many reading experiences which Miriam has found interesting and indeed informative in her path to becoming a writer throughout the *Pilgrimage* sequence, most notably the works of Charlotte Brontë, Ouida, and Henry James, amongst others, and so it is significant that she marks this reading of mere promotional material as quite so noteworthy for her protagonist; 'for years she had not so delighted in any reading.' Perhaps then what Miriam is appreciating so greatly in this advert is not the content of the words themselves, which are presumably encouraging some form of consumerism, but instead it is what she calls 'the movement of the phrases' -

that is, the rhythm of the words and how they link together - which are so inspiring to her. Richardson does not print the advert which Miriam is observing, meaning that the reader cannot reach the same conclusions as Miriam and nor can it be seen if this is indeed an exceptional example of advertising material. However, Miriam's description of the words as 'interpretations of familiar thought' suggests that the mysterious prose of this advert is in some way articulating her inner consciousness, expressing familiar thought in words, and giving some hint of how to express her own life in words. Richardson is not, however, the first writer to use the language and images of advertising as an important aspect of their writing. The poet and novelist Hope Mirrlees, best known for her 1926 fantasy novel *Lud-in-the-Mist*, published *Paris: A Poem* in 1918 with the Hogarth Press and the longform poem has since been described as 'modernism's lost masterpiece'<sup>7</sup> by Julia Briggs as it had been out of print. The poem, describing a single day in the French city, opens with 'I want a holophrase'<sup>8</sup> before breaking into phrases such as 'ZIG-ZAG/LION NOIR/CACAO BLOOKER'<sup>9</sup> and describing 'the Scarlet Woman shouting BYRRH.'<sup>10</sup> Although not explained in the body of the poem, accompanying notes by Mirrlees do clarify that '*Dubonnet, Zig-zag, Lion Noir, Cacao Blookers* are posters.'<sup>11</sup> Briggs, referencing Jean Cocteau's French language critical work on the poem *Oeuvres Poétiques Complètes*, also notes that Byrrh is a fortified wine 'advertised with a poster of a woman dressed in scarlet, playing a drum and shouting.'<sup>12</sup> Melissa Boyde describes this recording of advertisements passed as Mirrlees creating an 'archaeology of the city'<sup>13</sup> and 'layered with [...] topical references,'<sup>14</sup> suggesting that this fixation on seemingly innocuous and everyday examples of advertising media have significant resonance for Mirrlees. Thus, both Mirrlees in *Paris: A Poem* and Richardson in *Oberland* touch on the increasingly consumerist urges of society, where advertisements are common and widely disseminated enough to

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<sup>7</sup> Julia Briggs, 'Hope Mirrlees and Continental Modernism' *Gender in Modernism: New Geographies, Complex Intersections*, ed. Bonnie Kime Scott (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2007), pp. 261-303 (p. 261)

<sup>8</sup> Hope Mirrlees, 'Paris: A Poem' *Collected Poems*, ed. Sandeep Parmar (Manchester: Carcanet, 2011), pp. 3-18 (p. 3)

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 18

<sup>12</sup> Julia Briggs, 'Hope Mirrlees and Continental Modernism', p. 288

<sup>13</sup> Melissa Boyde, 'The Poet and the Ghosts Are Walking the Streets: Hope Mirrlees - Life and Poetry' *HECATE: A Women's Interdisciplinary Journal* (Vol. 35, Nos. 1-2, 2009), pp. 29-41 (p. 30)

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

be instantly recognisable as Byrrh's scarlet woman is. The two authors differ, however, in their approach. Mirrlees names the brands she is referencing, meaning that a reader can easily find a historical example of the advertisement which has attracted her attention and see it for themselves. Mirrlees does not, however, go into any detail on the impact of these advertising images on the protagonist or poet. Richardson, conversely, gives no real details as to the advertisement she is viewing, meaning that readers and critics can never know just what she found in it to be so very inspiring for her writing beyond her protagonist finding it 'enthalling.' Therefore, while both Mirrlees and Richardson have experimented with drawing inspiration from advertising material in the early twentieth century, they have done so in very different ways. Richardson then uses it as a way to provide for her protagonist yet another catalyst to begin her career as a writer and to consider her chosen style and influences.

Thus, while *Oberland* may suggest that Miriam is experimenting with how she will choose to describe the settings of her experiences while recounting her time in Switzerland, there is also a suggestion as to her awareness of a modernist writing aesthetic which was becoming apparent in the very early twentieth century setting of the chapter-volume. George H. Thomson has noted, with reference to biographical details on Richardson's own experiences in Switzerland, that *Oberland* is set in February 1906<sup>15</sup> despite being published in 1927. This twenty-one-year gap creates a dual temporality, meaning that while Richardson is approaching the end of the modernist period - arguably dated 1890 to 1930, as Peter Childs notes in his guide to modernism,<sup>16</sup> and typified by the work of T. S. Eliot, James Joyce, Marcel Proust, and Virginia Woolf - Miriam is towards the beginning. While it is not possible to single any one section of *Pilgrimage* out as being a fictional example of Miriam's writing, as I have noted in my introduction to this thesis, moments such as this inspiration drawn from advertising, as well as a constant fixation on rhythm and language, do point towards Miriam having an interest in experimental narratives.

This focus on words and language can be found throughout *Oberland*, and the chapter-volume's setting of multi-lingual Switzerland allows for Miriam to

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<sup>15</sup> George H. Thomson, *A Reader's Guide to Dorothy Richardson's Pilgrimage* (Greensboro: ELT Press, 1996), p. 17

<sup>16</sup> Peter Childs, *Modernism* (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 2



consider her own understanding of language, which in turn allows her to focus on the sounds of words rather than the meaning when she does not always fully comprehend the language spoken. She repeats foreign words heard in passing, 'Coffee. Café, mon dieu!' (*O*, p. 22), here seeming to ruminate on the translation of the English word 'coffee' into the French 'café' and expressing interest in the different sounds made. A further example can be found when Miriam contemplates her successes so far in skiing and the plans made for the next day. Richardson writes:

There was to be *ski-running* to-morrow. Si-renna, what else could that mean? Patois, rich and soft. Doomed to die. Other words gathered unawares on the way came and placed themselves beside those ringing in her ears. Terminations, turns of sound, upon a new quality of voice. Strong and deep and ringing with wisdom that brought her a sense of helpless ignorance. The helpless ignorance of town culture. (*O*, p. 43)

Here Miriam appears to be struggling to understand local accents and dialect, having to piece together that the plan for the following day is to go ski-running, presumably referring to cross-country skiing. Miriam evidently enjoys hearing variety in language, noting it to be 'rich and soft' here, a pursuit particularly relevant in Switzerland which has four recognised national languages, German, French, Italian, and Romansh, and many varying dialects.<sup>17</sup> However, it is obvious that Miriam is having difficulty understanding all of what is happening around her and in expressing herself to others, noting that she is in 'helpless ignorance' when trying to communicate. Indeed, her hearing of 'si-renna' and assuming she has correctly translated it into English as 'ski-running' from one of the various Swiss languages and dialects further suggests she is not fully comprehending, as 'si-renna' has no real meaning, particularly in relation to outdoor pursuits such as skiing, in any of the known Swiss languages. What is more likely is that Miriam hears someone say 'ski-running' in English with a heavy European accent. Thus, while Miriam is worrying about the decline of local dialects - 'doomed to die' - she is in fact hearing her own language spoken in an unrecognisable way.

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<sup>17</sup> 'Federal Constitution of the Swiss Confederation' *The Federal Council*, 18 April 1999  
<<https://www.admin.ch/opc/en/classified-compilation/19995395/index.html#a4>>

Another example of Miriam becoming engrossed in and attaching significance to something which is entirely everyday, as has been shown in her interest in advertising and the language of skiing, can be found when she ruminates on the artistic potential of soap:

It was not only the appeal of varying shape and colour or even the many perfumes each with its power of evoking images: the heavy voluptuous scents suggesting brunette adventuresses, Turkish cigarettes and luxurious idleness; the elusive, delicate, that could bring spring-time into a winter bedroom darkened by snow-clouds. The secret of its power was in the way it pervaded one's best realisation of everyday life. No wonder Beethoven worked at his themes washing and re-washing his hands. [...] Soap is with you when you are in that state of feeling life at first hand that makes even the best things that can happen important not so much in themselves as in the way they make you conscious of life, and of yourself living. (*O*, pp. 112-113)

Here, Miriam seems to find the action of washing her hands, and the sensory experience of the scent of the soap, as somehow soothing and this then allows her to enter a creatively productive state of mind, as she claims that the German composer Ludwig van Beethoven also did. This is not, however, a one-off occurrence in the *Pilgrimage* sequence, as Bryony Randall notes in *Modernism, Daily Time and Everyday Life* when she discusses Miriam's 'passion for soap'<sup>18</sup> which recurs throughout the chapter-volumes. Richardson and Miriam's assertion that soap makes one 'conscious of life' suggests that some unique combination of the strong pleasant scent of the soap and physical act of cleaning oneself, and therefore being fresh for the day, allows this everyday act of self-care to become significantly enjoyable enough to inspire it to be written about.

While *Oberland* is illustrative of Richardson's protagonist's journey as a writer in finding her voice to describe the world she observes around her, examples of Miriam's writing on her personal relationships, which are an important aspect of the earlier chapter-volumes, are not as prevalent here. Miriam does mention Michael Shatov, despite him being many miles away in England, although not until late in the chapter-volume, and only to remind the reader of his faults by comparing the sexist remarks of other men to those of Michael: 'he was

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<sup>18</sup> Bryony Randall, *Modernism, Daily Time and Everyday Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 76

extraordinarily like Michael in his belief in the essential irrelevance of anything a woman may say' (*O*, p. 229). However, the Miriam of *Oberland* is not lonely despite her lone journey as a single woman, and she seems to use her time without company in Switzerland to reflect on her many relationships back home, noting of the feeling of loneliness that: 'it was only in its moving that she had noticed its existence' (*O*, p. 231). Observing the world around her, and finding new ways to describe it in language, are the focus for Miriam and for Richardson in *Oberland*.

'She could find nothing to adore': Relationships and Romance in *Dawn's Left Hand*

Richardson's focus on Miriam's relationships, both romantic and platonic, is picked up once more after the brief break in *Oberland* and continues into the next chapter-volume of the *Pilgrimage* sequence, *Dawn's Left Hand* (1931). In this chapter-volume, Miriam continues her friendships with Michael Shatov and Hypo Wilson, but the narrative is dominated by a new relationship with Amabel, a fellow boarder in Mrs Bailey's home who she first meets in a women's club. Miriam seems unsure of this new female acquaintance, calling her 'the strange girl'<sup>19</sup> at first, but she becomes more comfortable with Amabel and begins to look forward to messages being left between the two women: 'Am-a-bel, calling herself by her own name, as if at once insisting on her smallness and pathos in a great world' (*DLH*, p. 135); 'Queer staccato pen strokes, sloping at various angles, with disjointed curves set between: *Amabel*' (*DLH*, p. 156). Here, Richardson's focus on the sound and physical written shape of Amabel's name draws attention to what Joanne Winning in her monograph on *Pilgrimage* and homosexuality calls the 'sensual epiphanies'<sup>20</sup> of the women's first meeting. Winning also writes on the real-life assumed sexual relationship between Richardson and her female companion Veronica Leslie-Jones, the nature of which was alluded to in a letter from Leslie-Jones to Rose Odle, Richardson's sister-in-law. Leslie-Jones, then Veronica Grad, writes: 'we were in some way I don't understand more "lovers" than we ever could be to any man.'<sup>21</sup> The character of Amabel was based on Leslie-Jones. Winning then goes on to discuss

<sup>19</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Dawn's Left Hand*, hereafter cited as *DLH* (London: Duckworth, 1931), p. 135

<sup>20</sup> Joanne Winning, *The Pilgrimage of Dorothy Richardson* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2000), p. 4

<sup>21</sup> Gillian Hanscombe, *The Art of Life: Dorothy Richardson and the Development of Feminist Consciousness* (London: Owen, 1982), p. 171

the difficulties biographers of Richardson, that is John Rosenberg and Gloria Glikin Fromm, have had in separating Richardson from Miriam, particularly when dealing with ambiguous biographical details such as this suggested lesbianism. Winning writes:

The representation of Richardson's "life" is thus severely complicated by her "life-work." The often seamless division between "life" and "text" presents particular problems to the biographer. Marking the differentiation between the textual events of *Pilgrimage* and the "real" events of Richardson's own life is not an easily accomplished task. How is one to write the life of someone who has spent forty years writing it herself? Such a project is doubly complicated when that person remains extremely reticent about revealing the "real" biographical facts that underpin the fiction.<sup>22</sup>

Irrespective of whether or not Richardson and Leslie-Jones did share a sexual relationship which Richardson has fictionalised in her work, the connection between Miriam and Amabel is clear, with Miriam considering in first person narrative how Amabel will remain an important aspect of her life: 'Amabel. But Amabel will move on. And remain with me forever, a test, presiding over my life with others' (*DLH*, p. 223). Here, using first person narration to mark this as a moment of emotional turmoil and insecurity, Miriam is fixed on the idea that Amabel does not feel as strongly as she does about their relationship.

Despite this new relationship with Amabel, Miriam's romantic interest Hypo Wilson continues into the narrative of *Dawn's Left Hand*, with the chapter-volume featuring an intimate scene between Miriam and Wilson, who is of course married to her friend Alma. Richardson writes:

This mutual nakedness was appealing rather than stimulating. And austere, as if it were a first step in some arduous discipline. His body was not beautiful. She could find nothing to adore. [...] The manly structure, the smooth, satiny sheen in place of her own velvety glow was interesting as partner and foil, but not desirable. It had no power to stir her as often she had been stirred by the sudden sight of him walking down a garden or entering a room. With the familiar clothes, something of his essential self seemed to have departed. Leaving him pathetic. (*DLH*, p. 188)

This lack of physical attraction to Hypo, making him pathetic in her eyes, may indeed be because the sight of his naked body is not as pleasing as Miriam had

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<sup>22</sup> Joanne Winning, *The Pilgrimage of Dorothy Richardson*, pp. 17-18

hoped. Indeed, in Richardson's final interview with Vincent Brome she is said to have proclaimed H.G. Wells, on whom Wilson is based, as being "rather ugly without his clothes,"<sup>23</sup> showing again the autobiographical links between Richardson and Miriam. However, it is just as possible that in seeing Hypo Wilson vulnerable, Miriam fully realises just how unpleasant and manipulative he has been towards her as well as to those around them, as suggested by her noting that he now has 'no power.' For example, in a restaurant before their sexual encounter Hypo is 'half-friendly, half-patronising' (*DLH*, p. 167) towards a young waiter exemplifying his inflated sense of self-importance that Miriam is beginning to notice. Furthermore, although Hypo has been encouraging of Miriam's writing ambitions for some time, even in *Dawn's Left Hand* suggesting she turn to journalism - "You've got to switch over into journalism, Miriam. You're wasting yourself. It's risky but you're a courageous creature" (*DLH*, p. 195) - his advice is not always helpful and is indeed rather patronising and misogynistic at times. Hypo, who has previously said that Miriam has gained plenty of the experience necessary to write her life, conversely advises her that she will not be able to complete a book until she has a child. He says:

"Ee-yes. Books. Almost everything can be got from books. Plus imagination. [...] You've had London. Enormously. But it'll end by wearing you down. You want a *green solitude*. An infant. Then you'd be able to write a book." (*DLH*, p. 200)

He insists on motherhood as a positive career move once more later in *Dawn's Left Hand*, claiming that she could fit writing in to her free time as a mother: "'Middles. Criticism, which you'd do as other women do fancy-work. Infant. Novel'" (*DLH*, p. 204). By reducing Miriam's developing interest in writing as a career to something that be slotted in to precious free time while the child sleeps, comparing it to something like knitting or sewing, Hypo makes clear that despite his encouragement he does not take Miriam's writing ambitions as seriously as he would a man's. This growing realisation as to the real flaws of Hypo Wilson's personality, seemingly only fully apparent when she finally sees him in a vulnerable state of nudity, then allows Miriam to somewhat move on from their relationship, noting that 'I'm a free-lover. Of course I'm a free-lover.

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<sup>23</sup> Vincent Brome, 'A Last Meeting with Dorothy Richardson' *London Magazine*, 6 June 1959, pp. 26-32 (p. 29)

But not his' (*DLH*, p. 228) and that Hypo is 'fatal to the female consciousness' (*DLH*, p. 247).

These relationships write intimate details of the real lives of Veronica Leslie-Jones and H.G. Wells into the fictionalised narrative of *Pilgrimage*, and so the doubling of the autobiography allows Miriam to broadcast private experiences that Richardson may not have been comfortable revealing as her own. Max Saunders has discussed female writers' use of autofiction as a genre to mask their own place in a narrative, noting that works such as Brontë's *Jane Eyre* contain 'female subjectivity which would have been difficult to express outside fictional form.'<sup>24</sup> Additionally in *Pilgrimage*, Miriam writing herself means that Richardson can portray how influential romantic and sexual experiences have been to her narrative without the shame of writing a truly factual piece of autobiography.

#### 'Unconscious nostalgia': Richardson as Reviewer

Hypo Wilson's advice for Miriam to take up writing middles or criticism may be yet another way in which Richardson has written herself into the narrative of *Pilgrimage*, as she produced critical work, reviewing literature and films for several periodicals. Richardson also published a short critical work *John Austen and the Inseparables* in 1930, just one year before *Dawn's Left Hand*, on the life of an artist she was friends with through her husband, Alan Odle, also an artist. The book is often cited as a key text on Austen, a book illustrator who is relatively unheard of and understudied in art history, meaning that Richardson's critical text on his work is a significant contribution to the very small field of Austen studies. Indeed, an entry on Austen in Alan Horne's 1994 monograph *The Dictionary of 20th Century British Book Illustrators* references Richardson's text as one of just two critical works on Austen.<sup>25</sup> In her critical work, Richardson muses on literature and its relation to visual art for several pages before reaching any information on John Austen, suggesting that she saw this not only as an exercise in art criticism but also as an opportunity to consider her own artistic decisions. Indeed, she states that literature reveals itself as a serious art

<sup>24</sup> Max Saunders, *Self Impression: Life-Writing, Autobiografiction, and the Forms of Modern Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 11

<sup>25</sup> Alan Horne, *The Dictionary of 20th Century British Book Illustrators* (Suffolk: Antique Collectors' Club, c. 1994), p. 80

form following 'prolonged collaboration between reader and writer,'<sup>26</sup> hinting at a consideration of her own writing which requires a great deal of commitment and involvement from the reader. Richardson then muses on literary criticism and how it differs from criticism of other art forms, noting that literature compared to visual art is considered complimentary while the reverse is not. She writes:

When a literary critic describes a work of literature in terms of any of the other arts, calls it three-dimensional, compares it to a cathedral, draws our attention to the plastic quality of its style, we may be sure he is doing his best to praise.<sup>27</sup>

This theory that using the terminology of other art forms to describe the written word means that the critic has enjoyed the text suggests that this is something Richardson seeks in reviews of her own fiction. A 1919 review of *The Tunnel* in *The Manchester Guardian* finds cinematic, musical and visual references in her writing, noting that 'it partakes of the nature of a kinematograph revue helped out by the phonograph, and it reminds one, too, of these Futurist pictures.'<sup>28</sup> The review of the chapter-volume is indeed an encouraging one, calling it 'a delightful series of clever portraits,'<sup>29</sup> and therefore Richardson's theorising of art as a positive descriptor for literature quite possibly comes in part from her own experience.

Richardson, in her typical style of explaining as little as possible to the reader, gives very few biographical details on Austen. Instead, she focuses on her own appreciation of his art, inserting herself into the factual narrative as she does in her fiction. This is apparent when comparing the tastes of those who dislike and those who enjoy textual illustration:

Balanced between these extremes are those of a more or less catholic taste. I confess myself of their number. I like the old-fashioned picture books, explicitly illustrated. I like the decorated book, whether its decorations be the undulating sing-song of patterns that are composed transmutations of natural objects, or the angular din of those that are mechanisms likewise transmuted and composed.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *John Austen and the Inseparables* (London: Jackson, 1930), pp. 16-17

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11

<sup>28</sup> A.M., 'New Novels: A Young Woman Alone' *The Manchester Guardian*, 14 March 1919, p. 5

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *John Austen and the Inseparables*, p. 16

Outside of her somewhat literary and self-centred criticism, Richardson does treat Austen's work well, describing his 'power of characterization and his mastery of composition and figure-grouping.'<sup>31</sup> However, she gives few biographical details, instead discussing the influence of Beardsley 'whose genius overwhelmed,'<sup>32</sup> as Alan Horne notes, but was ultimately discarded, and Austen's departure as a member from a prestigious art society 'owing to its prevalent spirit: reactionary pontificality finding vent in childish fury with any critic interested in modern art.'<sup>33</sup> By focusing on character traits that have a sense of gossip about them, Richardson then discredits her praise of Austen's artistic work by suggesting more of an interest in his personal life. She ends her critical text by describing an interruption to his London-based and London-centric work:

There is perhaps nothing arbitrary in attributing the curious wistfulness to be found in Austen's London work to a quite necessary and helpful, but also devastating, displacement. He had become a townsman and was suffering an unconscious nostalgia.<sup>34</sup>

What is being described here is a move to Kent for health reasons, taking up 'more simple, country pursuits'<sup>35</sup> according to Horne, which Richardson does not explain in the text. This lack of contextual information is entirely reminiscent of Richardson's writing style in *Pilgrimage*, where the reader must accept that they will not necessarily be introduced to a character or setting. Therefore, *John Austen and the Inseparables* can be considered a continuation of Richardson's artistic development, despite its tangential subject matter. In turn, this allows for the possibility that Hypo Wilson's advice to Miriam Henderson is not as insulting as at first glance, as writing criticism can be a worthwhile endeavour to provide space for considering, trialling and extending a narrative style to test its limits in a new literary genre.

#### 'To-morrow morning, if I happen to wake': Writing and Text in Dawn's Left Hand

Despite Miriam's rejection of Hypo Wilson's advice on her fledgling writing career, Richardson's protagonist does continue her experiments with putting down words. This is not explicitly narrated by Richardson but instead becomes

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 18

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 20

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p. 22

<sup>35</sup> Alan Horne, *The Dictionary of 20th Century British Book Illustrators*, p. 80



apparent through subtly repeated words and phrases which suggest the drafting and redrafting of a piece of writing. For example:

*To-morrow morning, at dawn, if I happen* - the bell of the wall telephone sounded from its corner to which she went, away from her table with the freshness of the outer air and the radiance of morning light streaming in through the open door. (DLH, p. 126)

Here the italics indicate something being written down and interrupted by the ringing telephone, but it is not immediately clear what the nature of this writing is, meaning it could be a simple note or letter to a friend rather than literature of any kind. However, slightly later in the chapter-volume very similar italicised words are repeated, this time being named as work:

But long before that, *to-morrow morning, at dawn, if I happen to wake, I shall breathe the freshness of morning from a Tansley Street window.* [...] Here, going on with her work in the same morning light, with rain-damp earthy scents streaming in from the potted mould of the house-plants, she felt the heart's ease of going home with a deeper rapture than in yesterday's excited twilight. (DLH, p. 132)

Here, Miriam expands on the previously noted words, adding to the work she had already completed. The same words return even later in the narrative and are once more described as work: 'Miriam put the letter aside and turned to her work. *To-morrow morning, if I happen to wake . . .*' (DLH, p. 161). By calling these examples of writing 'work', which are very obviously expansion and redrafting of the original and very similar italicised text, Richardson is then suggesting that Miriam now views the writing of her life, and the subsequent drafting it requires, to be work and therefore it has begun to become her vocation, equal to any of her paid career paths to date.

Further examples of experimentation with writing in *Dawn's Left Hand*, which is far more narratologically experimental than the preceding chapter-volume's entirely third person prose, can be found in frequent shifts from standard third person narrative into first person narration and back again, as has been shown to be the case in earlier chapter-volumes such as *The Tunnel* and *Interim*. Richardson appears to shift into first person narration when Miriam is lost in moments of thought, such as when she is at work in the dental surgery:

For the whole of that summer that seemed then to approach from earth and sky and, as if it were a conscious being, to greet me coming down the steps in my rose-hat with loosely-tied strings, and, as I

paused in delight, to claim me as part of its pageant; so that in that moment my sense of summer was perfect and I knew it was what I had stayed in London to meet.

The saliva tube ceased its busy gurgling. Gave out its little click of glass on glass as Mr Hancock bent across and hitched it over the rim of the spittoon. [...] In a moment she would be alone with him in that world of silent of speechful communion that was so powerful still to set her other worlds at a distance. (*DLH*, pp. 147-148)

Richardson writes a long section of first person prose, which lasts for several pages, and then abruptly brings both her protagonist and the reader back to reality with a very quick transition back into third person narration of daily tasks at work. This then seems reminiscent of such moments in the earlier chapter-volumes of *The Tunnel* and *Interim* where Miriam first began to lose interest in her work as a dental secretary and started to dream more and more of a vocation as a writer. For example, in a scene from *The Tunnel*, as discussed in chapter three, Miriam also loses interest in her work in the dental surgery and instead turns to writing letters:

At intervals she worked with a swiftness and ease that astonished her, making no mistakes, devising small changes and adjustments that would make for the smoother working of the practice, dashing off notes to friends in easy expressive phrases that came with thought.<sup>36</sup>

This is an early example of Miriam's disinterest in her work as a dental secretary, where she finds pleasure in writing letters to friends, and appears to view herself as good enough at her paid employment - 'making no mistakes' - to allow her mind to drift. As the example from *Dawn's Left Hand* shows, this disinterest in dentistry escalates to the point that Miriam dreams not of other more satisfying forms of work, like writing, but of summer escapes. The contrast between Miriam's unhappy self at work and her freer and happier attitude at leisure is noted by the naming of these states as 'other worlds at a distance' and this is further reinforced with first person narrative for happy thoughts of summer and third person for thoughts on work. A move towards considering writing as her profession - and undertaking writing as 'work' - is a significant moment for Miriam, particularly as she has had so little interest in her other paid roles so this is a rewriting of the meaning of 'work' for her. In using her experimental literary device of narrative shifts to evidence Miriam's changing

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<sup>36</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *The Tunnel* (London: Duckworth: 1919), p. 140

attitude, Richardson then ensures that *Pilgrimage's* doubly autobiographical status becomes more prominent.

'To open the book is to begin life anew': Writing and Reproduction in *Clear Horizon*

Although narrative shifts continue to be employed by Richardson in *Clear Horizon* (1935), and Miriam's confidence in her role as writer continues to increase, the eleventh chapter-volume sees a change in circumstance for Richardson as she moves to a new publisher J. M. Dent. As with the earlier move from publishing with Duckworth to a literary journal and back to Duckworth once more for *Interim* in 1919, the reasons for this change to releasing her work with J. M. Dent is not entirely clear and must be pieced together with her surviving letters. In a 1935 letter to Bryher, Richardson says that her only hope for a 'compact, corrected edition'<sup>37</sup> of the *Pilgrimage* sequence is to move to J. M. Dent. It was J. M. Dent who first published a collected edition of the sequence in 1938, dividing the (at the time) twelve chapter-volumes into four volumes, as well as making editorial changes such as reintroducing inverted commas to mark reported speech in *Interim*, all of which has since been carried forward by Virago in their relatively recent editions which, despite being out of print, are the most readily available publications of the novel sequence currently. Virago's decision to use the J. M. Dent texts rather than the first editions is unexplained, as are the reasons for J. M. Dent's changing of the texts, but what Richardson's note to Bryher about a corrected edition of *Pilgrimage* does suggest is that she was the driving force behind the editing of the texts when they were republished, viewing the early experimental editions as imperfect. The decision to first publish *Clear Horizon* with J. M. Dent, however, is another matter as it is the only chapter-volume to be published outside of a collected edition by them, and thus some catalyst other than the urge to correct her previous work must have pushed Richardson away from Duckworth. Letters between Richardson and Bryher are once again illuminating, suggesting a financial motive when Richardson notes to her friend that there is 'nothing coming to me from that

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<sup>37</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'To Bryher, 6 March 1935' *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson*, ed. Gloria G. Fromm (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), pp. 290-292 (p. 291)

source'<sup>38</sup> following a review of her earnings. She also expresses disappointment in 'the slender result of publicity efforts'<sup>39</sup> and discusses the extent of her debts to Duckworth as she has received an advance from them that her sales have not repaid, meaning that she owes Duckworth money. This financial worry and lack of trust in Duckworth's publicity efforts suggest that Richardson's move to J. M. Dent for *Clear Horizon* was in pursuit of better financial terms, as well as a hope that a new publisher could more widely distribute her writing to find a new audience.

In *Clear Horizon*, first person narrative is once again used to highlight moments of strong emotion for Miriam, such as when she thinks back on moments from her failed relationship with Hypo Wilson - 'I thought of Hypo's definition of music as a solvent'<sup>40</sup> - as well as happier emotional moments, for example time shared with Amabel: 'Amabel, downstairs at dinner, ignoring everyone but me (CH, p. 35). The chapter-volume also opens with a scene in first person, beginning 'And his eyes met mine and rested upon them for a moment' (CH, p. 9) on Miriam meeting a poet, Lionel, who is staying in her boarding house. After several pages of constant first person narrative Richardson then, without even the warning of ellipses that she has used in earlier chapter-volumes, shifts back into third person narrative: 'having paid him tribute while pouring out her tea and getting back to the window-end of the long empty breakfast-table, she bade farewell to Lionel Cholmley and watched him for a moment' (CH, p. 13). With the first person narration retreating as Lionel Cholmley does, it becomes clear that, in this chapter-volume and indeed throughout *Pilgrimage*, Richardson has consciously reserved this narrative experimentation for moments in Miriam's life which are out of the ordinary - a meeting with an interesting poet, a moment of emotional upheaval - and uses standard third person narrative for the more everyday occurrences of work and home. It is possible once again, then, that the moments of first person narration are Miriam writing down her experiences, where exciting and emotive moments provide Richardson's narrator with

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<sup>38</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'To Bryher, 11 April 1932' *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson*, ed. Gloria G. Fromm (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), pp. 232-233 (p. 232)

<sup>39</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'To Bryher, April 1932' *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson*, ed. Gloria G. Fromm (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), pp. 233-234 (p. 233)

<sup>40</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Clear Horizon*, hereafter cited as CH (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd. and The Cresset Press, 1935), p. 9

inspiration and therefore the urge to undertake her creative work. However, that these moments of switching are not signalled by ellipses, as they have been in earlier chapter-volumes, is significant. This suggests that Miriam now feels more comfortable as a writer and is writing far more frequently and at times professionally, meaning that for Richardson the transitions between her third person narrative and Miriam's first person narrative can be slicker to reflect the developing writing skill of her protagonist.

Despite this increase in Miriam's writing confidence, Hypo Wilson's negative attitude to Miriam's writing ambitions is also a focal point of *Clear Horizon*, with him returning once again to his obsession with her having a child: "You, Miriam," ran his message, "booked for maternity, must stand aside while the rest of us, leaving you alone in a corner, carrying on our lives" (*CH*, p. 99) He uses the same terminology just a few pages later, again describing her as 'booked for maternity' (*CH*, p. 106). Indeed, it is possible that Miriam was impregnated by Wilson around this time in the narrative, although her evasive writing style masks any information about this event in the text. George H. Thomson, in his annotations for *Pilgrimage*, records the textual suggestions in *Clear Horizon* that point to Miriam experiencing pregnancy and ultimately going on to suffer a miscarriage, although hiding this fact from Wilson: 'apparently she allows Hypo to assume simply that she was mistaken; thus she deprives him of the satisfaction of knowing he has impregnated her.'<sup>41</sup> Thomson also makes clear that there is not a great deal of evidence to support this claim, and notes that, as with much of *Pilgrimage*, there is a suggestion of an autobiographical link:

One cannot be dogmatic on this matter [of Miriam's miscarriage] any more than one can be decisive about the same event in Richardson's life. As far as I can determine, the only evidence for the author's own pregnancy is the novel itself and Pauline Marrian's conviction of its truth, based on personal information from Dorothy Richardson.<sup>42</sup>

Other critics, however, have been more certain, with Esther Kleinbord Labowitz claiming that Miriam 'feels joyful to experience maternity'<sup>43</sup> and Gloria G. Fromm, in her biography of Richardson, suggesting that in early 1907 'Dorothy

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<sup>41</sup> George H. Thomson, *Notes on Pilgrimage: Dorothy Richardson Annotated* (Greensboro: ELT Press, 1999), p. 237

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Esther Kleinbord Labowitz, *The Myth of the Heroine: The Female Bildungsroman in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Peter Lang, 1986), p. 262

was sure she was pregnant'<sup>44</sup> but that 'sometime during the early summer, if not before, she had miscarried.'<sup>45</sup> Whether or not, for both Miriam and for Richardson, this was a case of a simple bodily misunderstanding or indeed an experience of miscarriage, the implications for Miriam as a writer are vast. Had either Richardson or Miriam carried a pregnancy to term and become a mother, they would most likely not have been able to continue their pursuit of a fulfilling career, instead devoting their time to raising a child as an unmarried mother.

Thomson also notes another way in which the details of Miriam's possible pregnancy have been obscured, finding that Miriam's discussion of the miscarriage with Wilson differs across the editions of *Clear Horizon*:

It may be important that the first edition does not include the last clause of Hypo's statement: 'not that you had been mistaken, but that. . . .' Thus the first readers would believe simply that Hypo did not understand Miriam's second note, a note that said through its imagery that she was no longer pregnant. The added clause in the Collected Edition opens the way for the reader to conclude that Hypo was mistaken in assuming that Miriam was mistaken about her pregnancy.<sup>46</sup>

The scene to which Thomson is referring, where Miriam and Hypo Wilson are meeting for coffee, in the first edition of 1935 has Wilson state: "'when you said you had come down from the clouds, I thought you meant you were experiencing the normal human reaction after a great moment'" (*CH*, p. 107) where he assumes Miriam is returning to normality - coming 'down from the clouds' - after a momentous experience. In contrast, the 1938 collected edition, featuring *Dimple Hill* for the first time and also published by J. M. Dent, portrays it as: "'when you said you had come down from the clouds, I thought you meant you were experiencing the normal human reaction after a great moment, not that you had been mistaken, but that . . .'"<sup>47</sup> This version suggests that Miriam's fall from the clouds is a reaction to sad news - a miscarriage or mistaken belief she is pregnant - rather than a return to normality from an upwards peak in emotion. By revealing somewhat more explicitly in the updated version that Hypo knew of the suspected pregnancy and had been told by Miriam that it was not in fact to

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<sup>44</sup> Gloria G. Fromm, *Dorothy Richardson: A Biography* (Urbana, Chicago and London: University of Illinois Press, 1977), p. 54

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55

<sup>46</sup> George H. Thomson, *Notes on Pilgrimage*, pp. 237-238

<sup>47</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'Clear Horizon' *Pilgrimage IV* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons and The Cresset Press, 1938), pp. 269-400 (p. 325)

be, is just one example of the correcting and clarifying that Richardson wished to carry out on a collected edition of her novel sequence. In the first edition, where Hypo does not seem aware of the failed pregnancy, Richardson allows the reader to dislike Hypo even more, as he comes across as having not picked up on Miriam's news and therefore does not care enough to take in her words. In neither edition does Hypo Wilson come across positively however, as Miriam is already at this point in the narrative attempting to separate herself from their relationship.

Not only does Hypo repeatedly draw attention to Miriam's fertility and yet fail to understand her important pregnancy news, she also notes that he makes lewd remarks about his sexual prowess, claiming that "'Writers," he had said, ages ago, "have an immense pull when it comes to love-making. They are articulate and can put their goods alluringly in the window"' (*CH*, p. 177). Wilson is almost certainly referring only to male writers here, yet while Richardson cannot be accused of writing anything particularly erotic or private about her sexual experiences in *Pilgrimage*, intimate moments are mentioned and as such she is perhaps reacting against a common belief, here voiced by Hypo Wilson, that female writers do not have the freedom to discuss their sexuality in their work. Thus, Hypo Wilson, due to his overwhelming misogyny, can easily be made an example of. It is clear then that by *Clear Horizon* Miriam is no longer as interested as she once was in any sort of relationship with Hypo, even with the possibility of sharing a child with him. Furthering Miriam's displeasure with Hypo, he also speaks negatively on the subject of women's suffrage campaigners despite her telling him of Amabel's interest in the campaign:

"All you young women," came Hypo's summarizing voice, deliberately glowing, deliberately familiar, "in a long, eloquent, traffic-confounding crocodile of a procession. Yes."

So he had begun at once on suffrage, and had remembered being told, weeks ago, about Amabel's passion for the campaign. (*CH*, p. 103)

However, Miriam herself is not especially interested in the campaign for the vote. She attends a meeting with Amabel, but finds pleasure in pleasing Amabel rather than the meeting itself:

It was she herself who had offered her tickets for a meeting, rejoicing in having something to offer and feeling that she might be entertained

and feeling at the same time a shamed sense of her own lack of interest in a meeting composed entirely of women. (*CH*, p. 140)

Amabel, however, is entirely devoted to the cause, with Miriam describing Amabel's speaking on the subject of Charlotte Despard, a real-life Women's Social and Political Union member, 'with devout adoration' (*CH*, p. 141). Amabel devotes her life to the campaign, taking part in militant action that suggests she was a suffragette - a member of the Pankhursts' WSPU - rather than the more pacifist suffragists, who were members of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies and focused on peaceful protest. Amabel's taking part in militant protest leads to her being arrested and imprisoned, with Miriam attending the prison to visit her:

"I wanted to come," said Miriam, wondering with the available edge of her mind what kind of truth lay behind her words, whether she had wanted most to see Amabel or, most, to achieve the experience of visiting an imprisoned suffragist. (*CH*, p. 166)

This portrays a conflict of feelings for Miriam, where she does want to see her close friend but also sees the value in gaining the unusual 'experience of visiting an imprisoned suffragist.' Finding a usefulness in unusual experiences as material for writing is an idea that Hypo Wilson frequently promotes to Miriam and as such it is entirely possible that what is on Miriam's mind when she visits Amabel is how she will write the experience. Hypo also, as I have noted in the third chapter, points Miriam towards writing on her experience as a dental secretary:

"You know, Miretta, if you really *are* going away, you ought to write the first dental novel. Or there's a good short story in your Mrs Smith's adventure - which, by the way, must be unique in the history of mankind." (*CH*, p. 232)

This Mrs Smith's adventure is not articulated in *Pilgrimage* and as such it must have not had as much value to Miriam and to Richardson as the story of her dental career, which does get written in as *The Tunnel*. Hypo also discusses with Miriam how her varied experiences as a working woman at the beginning of the twentieth century might provide writing inspiration:

"Angles of vision. Yes. You know you've been extraordinarily lucky. You've had an extraordinarily rich life in that Wimpole Street of yours. You have in your hands the material for a novel, a dental novel, a human novel and, as a background, a complete period, a period of unprecedented expansion in all sorts of direction. You've seen the growth of dentistry from a form of crude torture to a highly-elaborate



and scientific and almost painless process. And in your outer world you've seen an almost ceaseless transformation, from the beginning of the safety bicycle to the arrival of the motor car and the aeroplane. With the comings of flying, that period is ended and another begins. You ought to document your period." (*CH*, pp. 233-234)

Here, Hypo neatly summarises the many and varied experiences which Richardson has put into *Pilgrimage*, providing almost a blurb for the life-writing Miriam will go on to produce. This also once again reinforces the idea of the double temporality of the novel sequence, with Miriam several decades behind Richardson, by highlighting moments of historical significance such as the invention of the airplane to remind readers that *Clear Horizon* is not set in the year of its publication.

Miriam does seem to take onboard some of Hypo Wilson's advice and turns to writing professionally, as she discusses submitting an article for an editor:

And her article must be posted in the morning. Copied before breakfast, with morning clarity to discover ill-knit passages. But it lay there, alive, with its mysterious separate being. The editor would approve. Hypo would approve. (*CH*, pp. 161-162)

Even in this example of writing, where Miriam is working on a commercial piece rather than her own life-writing, she appears preoccupied with minute details, as she has been throughout her development as a writer, often discussing individual words and sounds - in this example searching for 'ill-knit passages' to correct. This shows that Miriam takes all kinds of writing seriously and is therefore dedicated to forging a career in the world of writing. What is also illustrated here is that, despite their romantic separation, Miriam still relies upon Hypo Wilson's approval to feel she has achieved something with her work, suggesting that she has not yet gained the necessary confidence in her writing to truly make it her vocation.

Miriam's deep interest in the small details of language and of her own writing is also discussed when she reflects on putting down spoken words into written language:

Some kind of calculation is at work, a sort of spiritual metronome, imperceptible save when something goes wrong. It operates, too, upon sentences. A syllable too many or a syllable too few brings discomfort, forcing one to make an alteration; even if the words already written are satisfactory. Perhaps every one has a definite

thought-rhythm and speech-rhythm, which cannot be violated without producing self-consciousness and discomfort? (*CH*, pp. 154-155)

Here, breaking language down as far as the syllable, Miriam thoughtfully deliberates on the difficulties in translating 'speech-rhythm' into 'thought-rhythm' or indeed writing, which shows that Miriam is extremely aware of even the smallest detail of her own writing. As well as a focus on the intricacies of language, Miriam also returns to her interest in how authors can be found within their own work, as I have discussed in chapter three when in *Honeycomb* Miriam claims to read novels as 'a psychological study of the author.'<sup>48</sup> This comes up once again in *Clear Horizon*:

To open the book is to begin life anew, with eternity in hand. But very soon, perhaps with its opening phrase, invariably during the course of the first half-page, one is aware of the author, self-described in turns of phrase and his use of epithet and metaphor, and, for a while, oblivious of the underlying meaning in the interest of tracing the portrait, and therefore reluctant to read carefully and to write about the substance of the book rather than to paint a portrait of the author and leave his produce to be inferred. [...] Nothing to hold but a half-accepted doctrine: that the reviewer should treat a book as a universe, crediting each author with a certain uniqueness rather than seeking, or devising, relationships and derivations. (*CH*, pp. 155-156)

Noting that authors are 'self-described' and use their writing as a method of portraiture, Miriam appears to be once again confirming that there is something of herself to be found in her own writing in the same way that there is much of Richardson in *Pilgrimage*. Also apparent in this scene, as can be found throughout the *Pilgrimage* novel sequence, is Miriam's absolute passion for literature, where she is not only a writer herself but evidently a voracious reader, who picks up books with frequency to 'begin life anew' and escape from her life as a dental secretary in London. Personal development is picked up once again when Miriam thinks on the process of improving oneself:

Being versus becoming. Becoming versus being. Look after the being and the becoming will look after itself. Look after the becoming and the being will look after itself? Not so certain. Therefore it is certain that becoming depends upon being. Man carries his bourne within himself and is there already, or he would not even know that he exists.

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<sup>48</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Honeycomb* (London: Duckworth, 1917), p. 67

Why, instead of writing whatever it was she had written, had she not just sent a statement of that sort, upon a post card? (*CH*: pp. 171-172)

This doubt as to her writing, reconsidering what she has already noted down, suggests once more that Miriam is not yet confident enough in her style to consider herself professionally a writer. Indeed, this rewriting and swithering over exact phrasing perfectly illustrates just what Miriam is philosophising over here, the being versus the becoming, where she concludes that the process is as important as the result. Shiv K. Kumar has written on the idea of 'being versus becoming' in a very early example of criticism on Richardson from 1959, although the date of publication of his work means that it does not include *March Moonlight* which was not published until 1967. Kumar does seem to acknowledge this, stating: 'and yet it may be remembered that even *Dimple Hill* with its inconsequential character is not an ending (how could there be any conclusion in a real process of becoming?) but only a phase in the stream of life that flows on indefinite.'<sup>49</sup> Kumar calls Miriam's discussion of being versus becoming 'definitive and assertive'<sup>50</sup> and sees it as indicative of Richardson's attempts to 'present in explicit terms some of the fundamental aesthetic and philosophical aspects of the stream of consciousness method.'<sup>51</sup> This conclusion one again suggests Richardson and Miriam's focus on the small details of writing, where Kumar sees Richardson as making the effort to exemplify the stream of consciousness method, acting as some sort of exemplary text to be studied in the future.

The Miriam and Richardson of *Clear Horizon* then are both dealing with new developments in their literary lives. For Richardson, this comes in the form of a move to a new publisher and, as Shiv K. Kumar has noted, a continuation of her work to forge an aesthetic and philosophical path in literature unlike anything which has come before, although Richardson would disagree with his use of the stream of consciousness term for this experimentation. Miriam, meanwhile, continues to view writing as her profession, taking it even more seriously as she deals with difficult autobiographical subjects such as the loss of a pregnancy.

*Oberland*, *Dawn's Left Hand* and *Clear Horizon* illustrate the moment in Miriam Henderson's life when she is on the cusp of being able to consider herself a

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<sup>49</sup> Shiv K. Kumar, 'Dorothy Richardson and the Dilemma of "Being versus Becoming"' *Modern Language Notes* (Vol. 76, No. 6, 1959), pp. 494-501 (p. 496)

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 498

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 494

professional writer. Richardson uses the tangled web of Miriam's relationships - Hypo, Shatov, Amabel - to provide her protagonist with material for her writing. The experiences that Miriam encounters in these chapter-volumes range from the joyous and fulfilling, like her relationship with Amabel, to emotionally troubling, such as the apparent loss of her pregnancy. Writing on trauma and testimony, Leigh Gilmore discusses the processing of traumatic experiences through writing. Gilmore notes that many writers who have suffered trauma turn to fiction to explore their emotions without naming it as their own narrative. She writes: 'at the same time language about trauma is theorized as an impossibility, language is pressed forward as that which can heal the survivor of trauma.'<sup>52</sup> Thus, the traumatic experiences that Richardson writes into *Pilgrimage* not only give Miriam material to write upon but can potentially have aided her in Miriam and Richardson in their emotional and social development. In these three chapter-volumes, then, the experimentation can be found in the narrative style presented to the reader, as well as in the mind of Miriam Henderson.

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<sup>52</sup> Leigh Gilmore, *The Limits of Autobiography: Trauma and Testimony* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), p. 6

Chapter 6  
 'Seeking light amongst recorded thoughts':  
*Dimple Hill and March Moonlight*

The penultimate and final chapter-volumes of Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage* novel sequence, *Dimple Hill* (1938) and *March Moonlight*, published posthumously in 1967, both by J. M. Dent, differ from the eleven chapter-volumes which precede them in that they have only ever been published as part of a collected edition, and were never intended to be released individually. It was Richardson herself who pushed for *Pilgrimage* to be published as a collection by J. M. Dent, writing to Richard Church, a poet and representative of her publishers, that 'I was counting upon the sales of these sets to help me produce the concluding volumes more quickly than their predecessors. Failing such help, the possibility of finishing Pilgrimage becomes remote.'<sup>1</sup> However, Richardson's argument, that without the financial aid of republishing her work in a different format to attract new readers she would not have been able to afford to continue writing the sequence, was not enough for her publishers who were convinced that a collected edition was not the best course of action. Church had previously suggested completing the sequence before attempting to produce a collected edition, noting: 'how important for us all will be the fact that the great book has been drawn to a conclusion. With the rounded whole to work on, we shall have good material for publicity, and a strong reason for demanding a place in the sun.'<sup>2</sup> This push by Dent for Richardson to finish *Pilgrimage* is also evidenced by a letter from the author to her friend S.S. Koteliensky:

The plain evidence for their [Dent's] belief as to Clear Horizon - that it was the final volume of Pilgrimage - is furnished by the "blurb" submitted to me by Richard Church just before he went away for his holiday. It rejoiced in the "completion of Pilgrimage" & the "opportunity thus given" & so forth, spoke of the narrative coming full circle & the portrait of the heroine rounded off. I wrote explaining the situation & sketching out a fresh blurb - which they used.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'To Richard Church, 14 April 1936' *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson*, ed. Gloria G. Fromm (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), pp. 307-308 (p. 308)

<sup>2</sup> Richard Church, 'From Richard Church to Dorothy Richardson, 12 March 1936' *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson*, ed. Gloria G. Fromm (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), pp. 306-307 (p. 306)

<sup>3</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'To Koteliensky, 18 April 1936' *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson*, ed. Gloria G. Fromm (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), p. 311

The letter from Richardson states that Church, and by extension her publishers Dent, believed *Pilgrimage* to be over with *Clear Horizon* and would therefore see no reason to publish *Dimple Hill* and *March Moonlight* if they saw the sequence as having reached a neat conclusion. Renée Stanton, writing on the long and complex publishing history of *Pilgrimage*, also proposes that the 1938 publication of a collection of the chapter-volumes including *Dimple Hill* for the first time suggested completion: 'in 1938 the first twelve chapter volumes were published by J. M. Dent in a four volume omnibus set, as if complete.'<sup>4</sup> Indeed, to many readers of Richardson in the first half of the twentieth century, this omnibus edition of the first twelve chapter-volumes was to be all they would see of *Pilgrimage*. The thirteenth and final chapter-volume, *March Moonlight*, was not released until 1967, a full decade after Richardson's death, and may never have been intended to be published. Richardson's sister-in-law Rose Odle, sister of her husband Alan Odle, writes in her 1972 memoir 'after Alan's death [in 1948] she never finished a book again. Every year I saw the same page of *March Moonlight* on her table gathering dust,'<sup>5</sup> reinforcing that the *March Moonlight* available today is not in its finished condition, having never been fully completed. Although *Dimple Hill* and *March Moonlight* were published decades apart, Richardson seems to have begun the latter in relatively quick succession to its predecessor, writing to Bryher in late 1937 to tell her about 'a vignette occurring in *March Moonlight*,'<sup>6</sup> having 'finally finish[ed] my book [*Dimple Hill*] amidst many disturbances'<sup>7</sup> earlier that year. These concluding chapter-volumes, although not necessarily planned by Richardson to be the conclusion of Miriam Henderson's story, do see Richardson's protagonist make tentative steps towards making writing her career and fulfilling the Künstlerroman journey of the chapter-volumes, and it is this shared theme, alongside the close proximity of their writing, which truly links them. As Joanne Winning has noted, *March Moonlight* is the only chapter-volume in which the events of Miriam's life differ significantly from Richardson's, with Richardson even writing in the character of

<sup>4</sup> Renée Stanton, 'Genette, Paratexts and Dorothy Richardson' *Pilgrimages: A Journal of Dorothy Richardson Studies* (No.5, 2012), pp. 82-109 (p. 83)

<sup>5</sup> Rose Odle, *Salt of Our Youth* (Cornwall: Wardens, 1972), p. 128

<sup>6</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'To Bryher, December 1937' *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson*, ed. Gloria G. Fromm (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), pp. 340-341 (p. 340)

<sup>7</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'To John Cowper Powys, 3 March 1937' *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson*, ed. Gloria G. Fromm (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), pp. 327-328 (p. 328)

Jean who appears to have no real-life counterpart: 'since she has no biographical parallel, Jean represents a pivotal figure in the text of *Pilgrimage*.'<sup>8</sup> Thus, the final chapter-volume can be seen as the point in which *Pilgrimage* stops being doubly autobiographical - with both Richardson and Miriam writing their lives - and becomes fully Miriam's fictional autobiographical writing, as if transcribed by Richardson.

#### 'The "margin" of consciousness': Miriam, Writing, and Religion

The penultimate chapter-volume, *Dimple Hill*, sees Miriam find a new interest in religion, renting a room from a Quaker family, the Roscorlas, and joining them in their faith, an interest which then continues into *March Moonlight* when she returns to the home of the Roscorlas. This is in direct contrast to Miriam's previous lack of interest in religion, which she displays in *The Tunnel* with the assertion that religion is just words and that 'the meaning of words change with people's thoughts,'<sup>9</sup> showing a lack of belief. She then goes on to state her lack of religious belief more directly, separating herself specifically from the Christians she disapproves of:

So the Bible is not true; it is a culture. Religion is wrong in making word-dogmas out of it. Christ was something. But Christianity which calls Him divine and so on is false. It clings to words which get more and more wrong . . . then there's nothing to be afraid of and nothing to be quite sure of rejoicing about. The Christians are irritating and frightened.<sup>10</sup>

Miriam's lack of interest in religion continues into *Deadlock* where she states, when questioned on her beliefs "'I don't know. I was brought up in the Anglican Church.'"<sup>11</sup> This then indicates a shifting relationship with religion, where Miriam does not deny having spiritual beliefs but rather appears unsure as to what they might be, and opens up the possibility of a deeper connection with religious thought as she grows older. *Dimple Hill*, then, opens with the idea of religion, as Miriam notes a cathedral welcoming her to the town of Dimple Hill: 'why pounce upon the cathedral? There it stood, amidst its town, awaiting them,'<sup>12</sup> perhaps

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<sup>8</sup> Joanne Winning, *The Pilgrimage of Dorothy Richardson* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2000), p. 145

<sup>9</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *The Tunnel* (London: Duckworth: 1919), p. 97

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Deadlock* (London: Duckworth, 1921), p. 304

<sup>12</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'Dimple Hill' *Pilgrimage IV*, hereafter cited as *DH* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons and The Cresset Press, 1938), pp. 401-552 (p. 403)

showing a more mature Miriam, who can accept the faith of others and is interested in exploring her own beliefs, seeing the cathedral as awaiting her arrival rather than excluding her in any way. Miriam does indeed go on to explore religion more deeply than she had cared to previously in *Dimple Hill* and *March Moonlight* with her growing connection to those in the Quaker faith. Thus, by opening with the image of a cathedral, although not giving a clear indication to the reader of her intention to explore religion, Richardson sets the scene from the very start for Miriam's coming to religion.

Richardson was herself interested in the Quaker religion as a scholar and historian of the faith, writing two books on the subject: a historical reading of the religion and its impact, *The Quakers Past and Present*, and *Gleanings from the Works of George Fox*, both published in 1914. While *Gleanings from the Works of George Fox* consists of various excerpts from the writings of Fox, the founder of the Religious Society of Friends or Quakers as they are better known, *The Quakers Past and Present* gives an insight into Richardson's views on the religion, as well as exploring the founding of the Christian subsect and how it continued to operate in Richardson's contemporary setting of the early twentieth century. Richardson describes Quakerism extremely positively, calling it 'the most flexible of all religious organizations'<sup>13</sup> and going on to explore in some depth how the Quakers worked on a 'revising of accepted notions as to the status of women,'<sup>14</sup> which perhaps goes some way to explaining how her interest in the freedoms of women intersected with her Quaker values. Discussing the exclusion of women from leadership roles in most religions, she notes how this differs within the Religious Society of Friends:

Quakerism stands as the first form of Christian belief, which has, even in reaching its doctrinized and institutionized levels, escaped regarding woman as primarily an appendage to be controlled, guided; and managed by man. This escape was the result, not of any kind of feminism, any sort of special solicitude for or belief in women as a class. Nor was it the result of a protest against any definitely recognized existing attitude. Such unstable and fluctuating emotions could not have carried through the Quaker reformation of the relations of the sexes. The recognition of the public ministry of

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<sup>13</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *The Quakers Past and Present* (New York: Dodge, 1914), p. 32

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22



women was an act of faith. It was a step that followed from a central belief in the universality of the inner light.<sup>15</sup>

Here, Richardson seems to suggest that women are treated as equals within the Quaker religion not because they fought to be considered as such but purely because the sexes have always been thought by the founders of the Quaker faith to be equally committed to religion, with all humans being spiritually equal. It is notable also that Richardson is so insistent that the Quaker tradition of female inclusion in the ministry was not a result of 'any kind of feminism' which once again reinforces her ambivalent attitude to the advancement of women's rights, as has been explored in reference to Richardson's writing of Miriam as opposed to - or at the very least unsure about - women's suffrage. Richardson herself did not consider her protagonist to be a supporter of feminist thought, writing to S. S. Koteliensky in 1935 that 'a wood-louse could see'<sup>16</sup> that Miriam is not a feminist, in response to a male literary reviewer who she believed was unfairly critiquing her writing due to an assumed association with feminism of herself and of her protagonist. In the letter to Koteliensky, Richardson's aversion to feminism stems from a worry over being treated differently, which links with her insistence that the Quaker leaders saw no difference between male and female members of their faith, rather than the high number of female participants being due to action taken to encourage women. Avrom Fleishman discusses Richardson's attitude to feminist thought in *Figures of Autobiography*, stating that she is 'staunchly combative in her version of feminism',<sup>17</sup> noting that her dismissal of the movement is a product of an argumentative urge to be seen as no different to her male peers. Fleishman's phrasing of this also suggests that he still views Richardson as a feminist despite her claims otherwise, and her decision to highlight the aspects of the Quaker faith which relate to women is further evidence of this being the case.

Richardson's collection of George Fox's writings also features a section on his words on women, with Richardson selecting quotations to illustrate that Fox was relatively open to progressive thought, such as his claim that men and women

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., pp. 72-73

<sup>16</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'To Koteliensky, 1 November 1935' *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson*, ed. Gloria G. Fromm (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), pp. 299-300 (p. 299)

<sup>17</sup> Avrom Fleishman, *Figures of Autobiography: The Language of Self-Writing in Victorian and Modern England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), p. 428

are equal in that they 'were both to have dominion over all that God made.'<sup>18</sup> Overall, Richardson observes for herself that women within the Quaker faith are considered to have contributed positively and significantly to the religion, an idea which is now widely accepted, as Pink Dandelion has noted in his introductory text to Quakerism which explains the very beginnings of the faith in the seventeenth century: 'the ministry of women, who made up 45% of the early Quaker movement, was significant for its time, and critical to the success of Quakerism.'<sup>19</sup> Richardson also names various nineteenth and twentieth century women Friends who have also been noteworthy for reasons outside of their religion, such as Anne Knight who Richardson notes worked on 'pioneering female suffrage in England, founding the first political association for women.'<sup>20</sup> Richardson's paying of particular attention to successful women within the Quaker faith then resonates with her own aim to document her life in *Pilgrimage*, as well as with her protagonist's interest in the potential of women's life-writing: 'if women had been the recorders of things from the beginning it would all have been the other way round . . .'<sup>21</sup> Another resonance between Richardson's own attitude to work and to writing and her observations of the Quaker religion can be found in her description of the Religious Society of Friends founder George Fox as 'untrammelled by tradition, fearless in inexperience.'<sup>22</sup> Richardson could also be said to be untrammelled or unrestricted by tradition in her writing, where she is influenced by Victorian writers such as Charlotte Brontë but uses their style only where it suits her, allowing herself - 'fearless in inexperience' - to set the rules for her writing.

Richardson's non-fiction books on the Quakers are of course written in a very different style from much of *Pilgrimage*, giving focus to fact and readability over the artistic experimentation of *Pilgrimage*, but Richardson does return to the idea of artists and their art several times. A key element of the Quaker faith is a commitment to silent worship, which Richardson discusses in relation to art and consciousness:

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<sup>18</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Gleanings from the Works of George Fox* (London: Headley Brothers, 1914), p. 86

<sup>19</sup> Pink Dandelion, *The Quakers: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 11

<sup>20</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *The Quakers Past and Present*, p. 80

<sup>21</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *The Tunnel*, p. 267

<sup>22</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *The Quakers Past and Present*, p. 15

We are told, for instance, that when in everyday life our attention is arrested by something standing out from the cinematograph show of our accustomed surroundings, we fix upon this one point, and everything else fades away to the "margin" of consciousness. The "thing" which has had the power of so arresting us, of making a breach in the normal, unnoticed rhythm of the senses, allows our "real self" — our larger and deeper being, to which so many names have been given — to flow up and flood the whole field of the surface intelligence. The typical instances of this phenomenon are, of course, the effect upon the individual of beauty on all its levels—the experience known as falling in love and the experience of "conversion." With most of us, beyond these more or less universal experiences, the times of illumination are intermittent, fluctuating, imperfectly accountable, and uncontrollable. The "artist" lives to a greater or less degree in a perpetual state of illumination, in perpetual communication with his larger self. But he remains within the universe constructed for him by his senses, whose rhythm he never fully transcends.<sup>23</sup>

Here, in this long and complex explanation, Richardson claims that while the average person experiences occurrences outside of normal experience such as falling in love only occasionally, letting everything else in their life fall away to "'margin' of consciousness' only in these instances, people of an artistic nature live in this state permanently. If, as Richardson suggests, experiencing these phenomena are how one achieves 'illumination' then the artist has access to this state of illumination at all times, suggesting this must be how the inspiration to create art is perpetuated. Rebecca Bowler sees Miriam as functioning in a similar way, emphasising her writerly nature and which works within Richardson's awareness of her own method. Bowler writes:

Miriam wanders the world with her eyes wide open, delivers to us her perceptions and delivers to us too her reflection upon those perceptions: she then retrospectively orders these impressions through memory.<sup>24</sup>

In noting how Miriam observes the world around her, leaving nothing on the "'margin' of consciousness,' Bowler then reconfirms the close link between author and protagonist, with Miriam perceiving the world in the way in which Richardson claims that artists do. By connecting this with the state of silent worship achieved by those in the Quaker faith in the passage from *The Quakers Past and Present* quoted above, Richardson then suggests that the silence allows

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., pp. 33-34

<sup>24</sup> Rebecca Bowler, *Literary Impressionism: Vision and Memory in Dorothy Richardson, Ford Madox Ford, H.D. and May Sinclair* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), p. 5

Quakers access to a state of consciousness usually only achieved by artists or by those experiencing a significant moment in their life. In her biography of Richardson, Gloria G. Fromm has also commented on the author's affinity for those within the Quaker faith, focusing on the achievement of a focused mental state through silent worship. Fromm notes that 'because they [Richardson's Quaker friends] were more detached, they were also more observant. She admired the combination.'<sup>25</sup> This sense of detachment that Fromm picks up in Richardson's descriptions of her acquaintances and their religion is rooted in the silence of their meetings but more notable is the link between the silence and being observant, which suggests that Richardson and Miriam, neither of whom are particularly religious, use the Quaker silences not for spiritual reasons but as a time to observe and reflect on their lives, to be written down later.

As ever, there are close similarities between Richardson's thoughts on the Quakers and those of her protagonist. As Richardson has done in her non-fiction writing, Miriam focuses on the silence of Quaker worship in relation to the Roscorla family from whom she rents a room in *Dimple Hill*, noting the absence of a 'Quakerly pause' (*DH*, p. 461) in conversation and attributing this to a lack of thoughtfulness. Miriam also discusses the silence specifically of the worship meetings but, rather than notice the solitude of silence, she sees it as a shared experience: 'but what now lay ahead was a Quaker Sunday, the culmination of days punctuated by moments of silently shared recognition' (*DH*, p. 488). This idea of sharing the silence highlights that what Miriam likes in the Quaker community she has come to be a part of is a sense of belonging to a group, to a family. Moreover, the way she describes the lead up to worshipping on a Sunday as days punctuated by silence recalls Richardson's own experiments in ellipses which have been such a feature of the earlier chapter-volumes of the *Pilgrimage* sequence; Miriam's days have been punctuated by the silence of what is left unsaid. Eva Tucker has written on Richardson's engagement with the Quaker faith and silence and, as critics often do, she equates Richardson's experiences with Miriam's. Tucker notes that Richardson found philosophical enjoyment in the silent aspect of Quaker worship - 'in the shared silence she was relieved of

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<sup>25</sup> Gloria G. Fromm, *Dorothy Richardson: A Biography* (Urbana and London: University of Illinois Press, 1977), p. 61

the tension between inner and outer self<sup>26</sup> – and also suggests that she was drawn to the familial community of the faith: 'though in the Quaker week, each day is of equal value, the Sunday Meeting is nevertheless the nucleus from which the community draws its energy. Dorothy Richardson's life had lacked such a nucleus.'<sup>27</sup> Tucker views Miriam and Richardson as 'obverse and reverse of the same coin'<sup>28</sup> as such argues that a great deal of Richardson's life appears autobiographically as Miriam's. Thus, Richardson's delight in finding a community and a rhythm to her life, as Tucker explores, is written into Miriam's experience of the Quakers. The community aspect of the religion of Miriam's new friends, despite the silence, is one again highlighted when Miriam observes them praying before a meal: 'inexperienced in this form of grace before meat, she raised first her eyes to discover whether the heads were still bent and found them all, as if with one consent, recovering the upright' (*DH*, p. 469). Here, Miriam believes she has broken from the prayer early due to being new to the faith, as of course there is no speaking of religious words to guide her, but instead discovers that the others have risen from prayer as one, again despite the lack of aural cues. This then underpins the sense of belonging that Miriam has begun to find in the community of Quakers she has met, where she sees herself beginning to find her place within these believers who instinctively act unanimously, although she has some way to go to be able to instinctively raise her head simultaneously as the others do. Thus, Miriam appears to have a positive reaction to the silence of the Quaker religion and views it as a communal and collaborative activity despite the lack of speech which she so often reinforces. She even uses a memory of her silent worship to banish thoughts of loneliness: 'she sought relief from her uneasy solitude in the memory of her one visit to a Quaker meeting, recalling the sense of release and of home-coming in the unanimous unembarrassed stillness' (*DH*, p. 422). Her viewing of the meetings as a homecoming truly highlights her sense of connectedness to the Quaker faith, whether or not she has indeed committed to it.

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<sup>26</sup> Eva Tucker, 'Dorothy Richardson and the Quakers' *Pilgrimages: The Journal of Dorothy of Dorothy Richardson Studies* (No. 1, 2008), pp. 145-152 (p. 145)

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 148

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146

Miriam's interest in the religion of the Quakers continues into *March Moonlight*, with Richardson's protagonist claiming that she 'was more or less of a Quaker'<sup>29</sup> and continuing to both live with the Roscorlas and attend their meetings as a friend and as a fellow believer; a Friend. The Religious Society of Friends is a very open religion that allows anyone to attend their sessions of worship, meaning that Miriam's appearance at the meetings does not necessarily mean that she had committed herself to their religion. However, Miriam's indecisive attitude of being 'more or less of a Quaker' rather than committing herself to the faith is indicative of her uncertain nature which runs throughout all of the novel sequence, such as her aforementioned ambivalent attitude to religion, as well as her contradictory attitudes to feminism, where she disapproves of the women's suffrage campaigners - referring to them as 'the shrieking sisterhood' (*DH*, p. 425) - and calls feminists 'an insult to womanhood'<sup>30</sup> and yet also names men 'stupid complacent idiots'<sup>31</sup> and advocates for women to write their lives and histories, seeing doing so as being desperately needed: 'if women had been the recorders of things from the beginning it would all have been the other way round . . .'<sup>32</sup> Feminism and the advancement of women's rights is Miriam's clearest contradiction throughout the *Pilgrimage* sequence - "'I want an oat *and* a vote. . . . No. I don't want a vote. I want to have one and not use it. Taking sides simply annihilates me.'"<sup>33</sup> Her refusal to pick a side can also be found in her partial engagement with religion and spirituality, as is indicated in *March Moonlight*.

#### 'Both secure and unfathomable': Miriam and Memory

Miriam's introduction to Quakerism not only provides spiritual enlightenment of a sort but also allows her the opportunity for life experiences on which to write. Miriam notes, while describing Quaker practises to Hypo Wilson, that: 'the picture she was composing from material brimming in her mind' (*DH*, p. 549). The use of 'material' here suggests that the experiences described will eventually be written by Miriam and are simply being trialled on Wilson before she commits them to the page. The trying out and rewriting of material runs throughout

<sup>29</sup> Dorothy Richardson, 'March Moonlight' *Pilgrimage IV*, hereafter cited as *MM* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1967), pp. 553-658 (p. 561)

<sup>30</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Deadlock*, p. 294

<sup>31</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *The Tunnel*, p. 105

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 267

<sup>33</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *Revolving Lights* (London: Duckworth, 1923), p. 252

*Dimple Hill* and *March Moonlight*, such as when Miriam remembers her past friendship with Mag and Jan and notes that her present work came from her time spent with the women 'in whose presence the words [Miriam is writing] had first been put together' (*DH*, p. 408). This is a significant statement, as many of Miriam's moments of inspiration and decisions to write had previously been credited by her to the encouragement of Hypo Wilson. However, Wilson, while encouraging Miriam to write, often suggests that she focus on what he sees as traditionally female forms of writing, such as translating and producing articles, and pushes her to consider making having children her main life focus and simply writing on the side, as has been discussed in the previous chapter. If Mag and Jan, independent women living and working in London when Miriam befriended them during her time as a dental secretary narrated in *The Tunnel*, were able to foster an environment in which Miriam could see herself as a professional writer, that would strengthen the idea of both Richardson and Miriam's writing as being a force of change for women, with less of an association with the misogynistic Hypo Wilson and H.G. Wells. As I have discussed in chapter three, the younger Miriam of *The Tunnel* who spends time with Mag and Jan has low confidence in her abilities as a writer and takes to heart her friends' dismissal of the idea that they - Mag, Jan or Miriam - could write. Miriam is easily influenced by the women at this stage, noting 'she felt that a personal decision was going to be affected by Jan's reason'<sup>34</sup> not to write. Indeed, Jan states that she does not write "'because I am perfectly convinced that anything I might write would be mediocre,"<sup>35</sup> which Miriam then views as even more of a reason not to write herself as she believes her friends to be her intellectual superiors. However, as I have explored in chapter three, Miriam thoroughly enjoys the time she spends in Mag and Jan's home, specifically noting the cultural items in their home such as books and paintings. She also appears to be in awe of the women and keen to learn from them, complimenting Jan's 'wit and experience,'<sup>36</sup> which suggests that the time spent with Mag and Jan has an impact, despite their negativity. That Miriam returns to reflecting on her time with Mag and Jan in *Dimple Hill* then suggests that the older and more mature Miriam of *Dimple Hill* can see that the inexperienced and suggestible Miriam of *The Tunnel* was too easily swayed by

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<sup>34</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *The Tunnel*, p. 170

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

the opinions of her friends. Instead, Miriam can now see past Mag and Jan's lack of outright encouragement to see that they provided her with life experiences to write about, as well as a safe and comfortable environment to expand her intellectual curiosity.

This process of returning to past thoughts, words and experiences to create new writing is further enacted with a phrase which is repeated from *Dimple Hill* into *March Moonlight*. In Richardson's twelfth chapter-volume, Miriam describes an event of weather in extremely poetic language:

Tumult, wild from the sea, sweeping headlong, gigantic, seizing the house with a yell, shaking it, sending around it the roaring of fierce flames. Rattling the windows, bellowing down the chimney. Rejoicing in its prey.

The wind, is the best lover. (*DH*, p. 539)

This description of the path of the wind through the land and into the house ends with the unusual notion of the wind as a lover. In Richardson's thirteenth chapter-volume, then, Miriam ponders on her friendship with the Russian Olga Feodorova, based on Richardson's real-life acquaintance Olga Sokoloff, who Miriam has recently been informed has killed herself. Wondering why Olga favoured a specific sketch of hers, Miriam reveals that she had used the phrasing of the wind being 'the best lover' in a published piece of writing:

What does she find in me? Why, among all my sketches for the *Friday*, did she single out the one about the wind heard murmuring far off along the shore, gradually approaching, with varying voice, across the marshes, reaching the near meadows to hum within their dense hedgerows on its way to thunder at last upon the walls of the house, squeal through every crevice, roar down the chimney, reach the unsleeping listener, who greets it with laughter as "the best lover."  
(*MM*, p. 636)

Here it is clear that Miriam has taken a thought which she had during the narrative of *Dimple Hill* and, by the time of the events of *March Moonlight* which is set two years later, has translated this thought into a piece of prose published in a literary magazine; a favourite piece of Olga Feodorova. George H. Thomson, describing the events of this scene in *March Moonlight*, notes the similarities to a sketch of Richardson's called 'The Wind', published in literary magazine *The Saturday Review*:



The closing description of the wind as "the best lover" does not appear in "The Wind," *Saturday Review* 108 (4 December 1909), 691.

Richardson, writing in 1951, may have forgot this detail, or the sentence may have been included in the original sketch read by Olga [Sokoloff] in [manuscript form], but may have been deleted by the editor of the *Saturday Review*.<sup>37</sup>

Although the similarities that Thomson alludes to between Richardson's real sketch and Miriam's fictional one are clear, he fails to acknowledge that this exact phrasing of wind as the best lover can be found in an earlier chapter-volume, instead focusing on how it is missing from Richardson's real piece of writing. Once again, then, Thomson sees Richardson as entirely interchangeable with her protagonist, and cannot separate Miriam's writing from that of Richardson. Indeed, in his notes on the weather section of *Dimple Hill* he states only that 'the text here often parallels Richardson's sketch "The Wind,"'<sup>38</sup> failing to mention that the words are repeated later in the novel sequence and in fact appear in Miriam's writing, not in Richardson's sketch. This repeated phrase of the wind as 'the best lover' is exemplary of Miriam's writing process, indicating that her dream of becoming a professional writer, which she has been tentatively reaching for since early in the *Pilgrimage* sequence, has become a reality. In allowing her protagonist to become a professional writer in the same way that she herself has done, Richardson also strengthens the autobiographical links between herself and her protagonist, which in turn furthers the suggestion that Miriam too will write on the subject of her own life.

As discussed in chapter one, autobiographical fiction is a valid form of autobiography, particularly due to what Sidonie Smith names 'the difficulty of fixing the boundary between fiction and autobiography,'<sup>39</sup> which is often apparent in the recurring theoretical approach which sees even pure autobiography as subject to fluctuating memory and fictionalising, whether conscious or unconscious. Shari Benstock also discusses the blurred boundaries in autobiographical writing, appearing very open to including more than the standard autobiography in her definition of life writing:

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<sup>37</sup> George H. Thomson, *Notes on Pilgrimage: Dorothy Richardson Annotated* (Greensboro: ELT Press, 1999), p. 271

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 259

<sup>39</sup> Sidonie Smith, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), p. 259

What do we then do with letters, memoirs, diaries? Are these merely notes on the way to autobiography, an interim stage of a process?<sup>40</sup>

Then recalls Miriam's turn to writing letters to friends and family as a first step towards accepting writing as her profession, such as when in *The Tunnel*, a chapter-volume dominated by the question of professional fulfilment, she finds creative joy in composing letters:

At intervals she worked with a swiftness and ease that astonished her, making no mistakes, devising small changes and adjustments that would make for the smoother working of the practice, dashing off notes to friends in easy expressive phrases that came with thought.<sup>41</sup>

The slow process of coming to writing, learning her craft through small acts of putting down words in 'easy expressive' ways in notes to friends, therefore fulfils both the Künstlerroman of *Pilgrimage* and, as Shari Benstock has indicated, reinforces Miriam's writing as autobiographical.

Miriam also works on her writing process in *Dimple Hill* by reflecting on what she likes and dislikes in the writing of others. For example, when she turns once more to the works of Ralph Waldo Emerson, she conflates his work with that of other male writers:

Turning back towards the pages to discover the author's name, she became aware of her surroundings and of herself once more peering forgetfully into a book, seeking light amongst recorded thoughts. Yet those bringing her the greatest happiness, the most blissfully reassuring confirmations, had been found in the books of men who, professing thought and its expression to be secondary activities, had nevertheless spent their lives thinking and setting down their thoughts. Precipitating doctrine. If they really believed what they so marvellously expressed, would they go on turning out elegant books? (*DH*, p. 419)

Miriam seems here to be caught between a disdain for male writers, who can devote their time to 'setting down their thoughts' and yet claim writing is not their primary focus, and a contradictory pleasure she still finds in reading the work of these male writers, such as Emerson who she so admires. Furthermore, her insistence that these male writers see 'professing thought and its expression to be secondary activities' despite dedicating their life to such acts suggests that

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<sup>40</sup> Shari Benstock, 'The Female Self Engendered: Autobiographical Writing and Theories of Selfhood' *Women and Autobiography*, ed. Martine Watson Brownley and Allison B. Kimmich (Wilmington: SR Books, 1999), pp. 3-13 (p. 7)

<sup>41</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *The Tunnel*, p. 140

Miriam is aware that these male writers are not being entirely truthful in their claims of treating thinking and writing as secondary activities. This could then be Miriam and Richardson suggesting that the male writers mentioned, none of whom Miriam names beyond Emerson, instead referring obliquely to 'books of men,' are subject to the same moments of low confidence in their writing abilities as she is but hide it beneath an outward projection of confidence to protect themselves from possible failure. This may then be what Miriam identifies with in the male writers who she finds at times to be superficial - as evidenced by 'if they really believed what they so marvellously expressed' which in one phrase compliments the writers and marks them out as untruthful. The struggle to reconcile her opinions on the writers who have been influential, but she now finds to be lacking is a way for Miriam to find her own narrative voice and place within the literary canon, particularly as she has had to struggle to achieve her true vocation in a way that some male writers would not have had to.

Another evocative moment of Miriam's journey to becoming a professional writer can be found in her ode to the writing desks of her past and present, which she describes at length and in detail:

Here, amidst the dust-filmed ivy leaves and the odour of damp, decaying wood, was the centre of her life. The rickety little table was one now with its predecessors, the ink-stained table under the attic roof at Tansley Street, first made sacred by the experience of setting marginal commentaries upon Lahitte's bombastic outpourings; and the little proud new bureau at Flaxman's, joy for her eyes from the moment of its installation, new joy each day when morning burnished its brass candlesticks and cast upon its surface reflected pools of light; and, later, depth, an enveloping presence in whose company alone, with an article for George Thomas being written on the extended flap, she could escape both the unanswerable challenge of the strident court and the pervading presence of Selina, and becoming when it went back with her to Tansley Street, the permanent reminder amongst easy and fluctuating felicities, of one that remained, so long as its prices were faithfully paid, both secure and unfathomable. (*DH*, pp. 523-524)

The ownership of a desk or table on which to write seems to be the only constant in Miriam's life of constantly changing employment and living quarters. This 'secure' and 'sacred' place in which to work her way up from writing reviews and translations to the point of creating her own personal writing provides

Miriam with an 'escape' from her potentially dreary current surroundings while also allowing for a 'permanent reminder' as to how far she has come as a writer. Indeed, the tables and desks that she remembers do feature in the previous chapter-volumes of *Pilgrimage*, reinforcing their importance throughout her life as they were mentioned even before Miriam had decided on writing as her vocation. In *The Tunnel* (1919), for example, Miriam 'withdrew the coloured cover and set her spirit lamp on the inkstained table'<sup>42</sup> in her room in the Tansley Street boarding house, the same ink-stain on the same table which is then remembered years later in *Dimple Hill*. The 'little proud new bureau' recollected in *Dimple Hill* has also featured in an earlier chapter-volume, being written into Miriam's moving in with Selina Holland in *The Trap* (1925):

The new furniture peopled the room with clear reflections. The daylight was dimmed by the street, but it came in generously through the wide high window. And upon the polished surfaces of the little bureau, set down with its back to the curtain, and upon its image, filling the lower part of the full-length strip of mirror hung opposite against the wall, were bright plaques of sky.

The bureau was experience; seen from any angle it was complete. Added to life and independent of it. A little thing that would keep its power through all accidents of mood and circumstance. The inlaid design enclosing the lock of the sloping lid formed a triangle with the small brass candlesticks at either end of the level top, and the brass handles of the three drawers hung below on either side, garlands, completing the decoration.<sup>43</sup>

This writing surface is obviously important to Miriam, both in hindsight of *Dimple Hill* and in *The Trap*, and Miriam appears to anticipate this longstanding relationship with the bureau by noting that it will 'keep its power' as it is used. That Miriam authors *Pilgrimage* at least in part is then suggested by the doubling of this bureau, with Miriam remembering it fondly in *Dimple Hill* and writing it into her earlier life in *The Trap*. This then suggests that Miriam is not only looking back fondly on the writing surfaces of her past but is in fact beginning to write the story of her life, focusing on the elements - such as desks - which have led to her choosing to become a writer. The recurrence of the desks also emphasises the craft of Richardson's writing, where she has planned her

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<sup>42</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *The Tunnel*, p. 13

<sup>43</sup> Dorothy Richardson, *The Trap* (London: Duckworth, 1925), pp. 30-31

narrative closely enough so as to be able to recall a small detail from her vast narrative and include it again over a decade later.

In these final chapter-volumes then Miriam appears to have fought through her previous lack of confidence in her writing abilities and now has the drive and ambition to make it her profession. Although Miriam dwells on the past in *Dimple Hill* and *March Moonlight*, remembering old friends and rethinking past literary interests, these concluding chapter-volumes also portray Richardson's protagonist as looking to the future in her life and in her career, negotiating how she will write her history into her future endeavours, truly making writing her vocation.

#### 'Pause for enjoyable laughter': Miriam and Style

Indeed in *March Moonlight* Miriam is direct in her intention to write and to do so professionally: 'I've come to stay where I can live on almost nothing and am going to write' (MM, p. 613). This then sees her move into more concrete descriptions of writing and narrative style, indicating that Miriam has now begun to write the narrative of her own life and is no longer as interested in drafting or trying out but rather is sitting down, at the table she has described in so much detail, to write her narrative:

But the best and, for me, the most searching moment of the afternoon was the sudden perception of what lies behind the "simple" person's inability to summarize, behind the obvious deep enjoyment, particularly remarkable in women, of the utmost possible elaboration of a narrative, of what is evoked in the speaker's mind, while in torment one waits for the emergent data: "Well now, let me think. It couldn't have been a *Thursday* because I've been out working every Thursday this month, owing to Mrs Jones being ill and sorry I am though I don't deny the extra bit came in handy with the prices going up like they are." Hopeful question. "Yes, it *might* have been a Wednesday. I'd set my iron to reheat just as I heard the click of the gate. My big iron, it was, to press Joe's trousers for him to go to the sale. What am I *telling* you?" Pause for enjoyable laughter. (MM, p. 569)

This long explanation, in first person narrative, as to how some people - women in particular - fail to get to the point of a story quickly enough, becoming bogged down in extraneous detail, is a clear indication of Miriam really beginning to think about how to craft her own writing and stories well to avoid such unreadability. Indeed, the imagined dialogue followed by the commentary

of 'hopeful question and 'pause for laughter' bring to mind stage directions interspersing a theatrical script, suggesting that Miriam is not only considering the content of her creative work but the medium too. Furthermore, Richardson's use of inverted commas around 'simple' force the reader to question just who has labelled the people being discussed as simple - Richardson, Miriam, or some other person they are disagreeing with? In creating this question and confusion, along with the very length of it, the passage is then put forth as an example of just the kind of storytelling that Miriam is against, with the reader left searching for the important information. Richardson's protagonist's dislike of somewhat extraneous information in storytelling is ironic then, as Richardson's own writing style is often loaded with information that, to a first-time reader at least, does not appear to be essential for the narrative to progress, such as her detailed descriptions of desks discussed above. These moments of what may seem like excessively descriptive writing, noting every mark on a used piece of furniture, do become vital to the narrative however, as I have shown, as they are the moments in which one can see Miriam's development as a writer as she returns to the past to write for her future. Thus, Miriam cannot possibly find being told the 'utmost possible elaboration of a narrative' to be 'torment' and therefore one must conclude that her negativity towards this style of storytelling is to be taken in jest.

Miriam appears to agree with the writing style of her creator in relation to describing people in contrast to describing objects or locations. Miriam notes:

Imagination means holding an image in your mind. When it comes up of itself, or is summoned by something. Then it is not outside, but within you. And if you hold it, steadily, for long enough, you could write about it for ever.

"If you can describe people as well as you describe scenes, you should be able to write a novel." But it is just that stopping, by the author, to describe people, that spoils so many novels? (MM, pp. 613-614)

Miriam's opinion that stopping to give full descriptions of characters ruins novels is clearly one that has parallels in Richardson's own style. She provides such little detail about who characters are that George H. Thomson has compiled a directory of characters in his *A Reader's Guide to Dorothy Richardson's Pilgrimage*, where he notes that the novel sequence contains 'more than 600

[characters], many captured in small vignettes, then heard of no more,'<sup>44</sup> thus greatly benefitting from further recording and explanation by the critic.

However, Miriam does not only ponder on narrative style or imagine what might be written; she moves on to actually writing down her experiences. An example can be found in her creation of a 'sample story' for her sister:

Davenport's exploit had made a good sample story for Sally; really holding her attention. To almost everything else she had listened with indifference. Patiently at first, buoyed up by the expectation of hearing at any moment something that would serve as a basis for hope. But always in the end revealing her disappointment in the smile that plainly said, as she bustled away to labours piled up while she had sat listening: this is all very well but leads nowhere. (MM, p. 575)

This exploit by Davenport, which is not elaborated on, is then tried out on Miriam's sister Sally and is not treated with 'indifference' like everything else, suggesting that Miriam has been rehearsing her storytelling abilities on her sister for some time, by way of written correspondence. Although it is perfectly common for Miriam to write to her sister to detail the events of her life, that she names this as a 'sample story' gives an air of professionalism to the endeavour, suggesting that these stories which are sent to Sally will eventually appear in a piece of Miriam's writing.

This is not the only scene in *March Moonlight* in which Miriam thinks about the content of her writing and works towards crafting a successful piece of writing. Taking advice from a friend, Miriam begins to write:

It was while I was recalling what Susan told me about that man who wrote, every week, about something he had seen: "Any old fmg. Someone buying a bunch of flowers, or boarding a bus," that the auction in the thirty-acre show into my mind and got me to my feet. But on the way to the table, freshly aware of the presence, outside my shuttered room, of the Swiss night and its promise for tomorrow, there came that moment of warning, of regret for having involved myself, unwillingness to spend of my diminishing store of evenings in oblivion.

And when near midnight the sheaf of filled pages lay before me, and confidently I saw it arriving, unsolicited, under the eye of the editor, saw him held forgetful of all else, as I, while writing had been held, heard him tell himself how much better it was than Hewar's, I still could have wished it away and my evening restored. There it lay, part

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<sup>44</sup> George H. Thomson, *A Reader's Guide to Dorothy Richardson's Pilgrimage* (Greensboro: ELT Press, 1996), p. 1

of me, yet now independent. And then came that knock at the door, gathering me back to listen into the house I had deserted; and to speculate. And then the door was ajar, and Jean's tired voice murmuring that she was not coming in, murmuring good night. Did she notice how startled and over-emphatic was my response, how it proclaimed my forgetfulness of her very existence? Her light footsteps died away down the corridor, leaving me alone with the realization of a bond, closer than any other, between myself and what I had written. (MM, pp. 610-611)

This long section from late in the final chapter-volume of *Pilgrimage* is highly revealing in its suggestion, taken at Susan's recommendation, to write about anything and everything; mirroring Richardson's own decision to write on every element of her life, including the dull elements, such as the everyday tasks of her working life found in *The Tunnel*. This first person account by Miriam of a decision to write long into the night - finishing a presumably lengthy 'sheaf of filled pages' at midnight - shows a real desire to write, composing her words in an unstoppable rush. The momentousness of Miriam's personal journey from the nervous and unhappy pupil-teacher to a self-assured writer is particularly evident here, with Miriam feeling 'confident' for an editor to read her work in a marked change from her initial worry that she could never write well enough to do so professionally. Miriam notes that her writing is 'part of me, yet now independent,' illustrating the autobiography of what she has decided to write, mirroring once more Richardson's project in the novel sequence. In this moment Miriam is truly the author of *Pilgrimage*.

Miriam's journey - her pilgrimage, perhaps - to becoming a writer has thus been a lengthy one, taking in thirteen chapter-volumes and with a publication history that runs from 1915 until 1967. Miriam, too, grows and matures, over the course of the novel sequence, opening as a nervous young woman leaving home for the first time to work as a teacher and closing *Pilgrimage* as a confident woman who has decided on writing as her vocation. Tracing the narrative shifts, as well as Richardson's changeable use of ellipses and other punctuation irregularities, throughout the novel sequence, with a particular focus on the first editions of all chapter-volumes to source editorial changes, then not only allows for a pattern to be found in Miriam's growing confidence in her writing but also in Richardson doing the same. Both have been on a journey to make writing their profession, Miriam is just some years behind her creator. It becomes clear as the novel



sequence progresses that it is of autobiographical origins, with Richardson writing herself into Miriam. The double autobiography occurs, however, when it becomes possible that Miriam then turns to writing herself into her own narrative. Doubling, of course, is not an unheard-of phenomenon in life writing, as Georgia Johnston has been shown to demonstrate in her work on Virginia Woolf's autobiographical sketch, as discussed in chapter one. Indeed, Laura Marcus also sees this relationship between the writer and the writing, noting that 'the autobiographical "I" both writes and is written, is the knower and the known.'<sup>45</sup> The innovation of Richardson's writing though, which comes to fruition in the final chapter-volume of *Pilgrimage*, is the doubling of this doubling, with her protagonist coming to write herself into her writing as she has already done, completing the cycle.

Joanne Winning notes how neatly *March Moonlight* and thus the *Pilgrimage* novel sequence ends despite it never being overtly planned as an ending, stating:

To all intents and purposes, Miriam's turn to writing at the "end" of the *Pilgrimage* series presents a certain composed and satisfying closure. It evokes most powerfully the auto/biographical model of Richardson's own life, suggesting that her literary endeavor was to write a neat and encapsulated fictional account of her own coming to writing.<sup>46</sup>

Winning too believes that Miriam will follow Richardson in writing on every aspect of her life. More than this, however, this passage from *March Moonlight* is revealing in Miriam's realisation that she shares 'a bond, closer than any other' with the text she has just written. This bond between Miriam, an author, and her text brings Richardson close once more to the text of *Pilgrimage* whose narrative so closely follows that of her own life. In allowing her protagonist to feel this same way, Richardson suggests that Miriam too will write an autobiographical narrative.

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<sup>45</sup> Laura Marcus, *Auto/biographical Discourses: Theory, Criticism, Practice* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1994), p. 11

<sup>46</sup> Joanne Winning, *The Pilgrimage of Dorothy Richardson*, p. 170

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