

University of Huddersfield, UK
School of Human and Health Sciences

Centre for Constructions and Identities

“Bring Your Own Subtext”:
SOCIAL LIFE, HUMAN EXPERIENCE AND THE WORKS OF JOSS WHEDON

29th June-1st July 2005

Keynote Address:

Apocalypse Now and Again: Hero myths in Buffy the Vampire Slayer¹

“The horror! The horror” (Joseph Conrad, “Heart of Darkness”)

‘Winning does not tempt that man.

This is how he grows: by being defeated, decisively, by constantly greater beings.’
(Rilke, “The Man Watching”)

Zoë-Jane Playdon

Head of Education

Kent, Surrey and Sussex Postgraduate Medical and Dental Education

University of London

The Descent of Inanna

From the Great Above she opened her ear to the Great Below.
From the Great Above the goddess opened her ear to the Great Below .
From the Great Above Inanna opened her ear to the Great Below.

My Lady abandoned earth and heaven to descend to the underworld.
Inanna abandoned earth and heaven to descend to the underworld.
She abandoned her office of holy priestess to descend to the underworld.²

The words are the opening of the Sumerian hymn to the Moon-goddess, Inanna, recorded about 1750 BCE. Inanna determines to visit her dark sister, Ereshkigal, who rules the underworld and as she arrives, Ereshkigal has her stripped naked, then strikes her, so that:

Inanna was turned into a corpse,
A piece of rotting meat,
And was hung from a hook on the wall.

There she stays, for three days and three nights, until she is rescued by the *kurgarra* and *galatur*, tiny creatures ‘neither male nor female,’ who sprinkle ‘the food of life’ and ‘the water of life’ on the corpse, so that Inanna rises again, transformed. Thus, we are given imaginatively, our Moon that we see in the sky at its fullest, turning its

'ear to the great below' as it begins to wane, and going into darkness for three nights, before rising again as a New Moon, with the terms, 'Moon' and 'New' indicating that it is both the same as it was before and yet somehow different, that what has taken place is not a repetition but a renewal, a transformation.

Lunar myths, which occur everywhere that stories are told, give us life and death, our beginning and our end, as a unity that leads to transformation: the Moon, as reality and symbol, shows us how to hold both our start and our end in one vision. The story of Inanna, written in Sumeria four thousand years ago, exemplifies this pattern, typical of the lunar hero who, like Rilke's *Man Watching*, seeks growth, not triumph.

A millennium later, however, life and death became understood as an opposition to each other, through a colonisation of creation myth, exemplified in the third century BCE by the Judaeo-Christian Septuagint, which posited a solar god, a tragic life, a gendered identity, an oppositional morality, and a voiceless, subaltern feminine. The hero became a solar hero, transcendent, militaristic and solitary. He [rarely she] was above ordinary men, leaving their society to fight alone against overwhelming odds, in a decisive battle – Moses against Pharaoh, Beowulf against Grendel, George against the Dragon – which they win and through which they save a community. Rather than becoming emancipated, however, those communities then become subjects of the powerful solar hero.

Buffy the Vampire Slayer, I advance, both resists and invokes that later solar sensibility, in a process which seeks to reconcile its opposition with the earlier, lunar consciousness. For example, the opening of each episode of *Buffy* sets up our expectation of a solar-hero in the tradition of the last four thousand years: 'In every generation there is a Chosen One. She alone will stand against the vampires, the demons and the forces of darkness. She is the Slayer.' Here, in this imperious declamation, we have the pattern of the solar hero, who is 'heroically independent of his origins', who 'slays the dragon of darkness with the lance of his burning rays,' who is 'unvanquished and unmoved.'³ However, the intellectual and emotional excitement of the series lies in the way the content of its episodes unremittingly undercuts those sonorous, implacable values. This is firmly established in the opening episode of the series, which introduces Buffy, not a military figure, but as a sweet but difficult teenager 'afraid that I was gonna be behind in all my classes, that I wouldn't make any friends, that I would have last month's hair,' but who decisively rejects Giles's assumed authority over her as Watcher and Cordelia's power over her as school bully. Buffy's resistance and search for a different way of thinking and being is then extended throughout the series: by humour; by asserting a different set of values; by investigating and re-interpreting the history of the First Slayer; by drawing on the alternative power source of witchcraft; by finding support within the community of the Scooby gang; by their serial confrontation with Apocalypse (at least one at the end of each of the seven seasons); and above all, by Buffy's death and re-birth, which takes place twice at a literal level and finally at a symbolic level, when she releases her Slayer-power, thus transforming both the world and herself, so that 'From now on, every girl in the world who might be a Slayer, will be a Slayer. Every girl who could have the power, will have the power', while she becomes 'not the one and only Chosen anymore. Just gotta live like a person.' (Chosen 7.22)

My argument is that the *Buffy* series operates through an exercise of the imagination that reaches back to a lunar hero tradition, and that furthermore, rather than advancing that tradition in opposition to the more familiar solar-hero tradition, it seeks to reconcile the two perspectives, to create a new sensibility. In this paper, therefore, I should like to do two things:

- establish the ideas and mythological background that informs the lunar sensibility and give examples to support my view that the lunar hero myth informs the overall apocalyptic pattern of *Buffy* and makes sense of her frequent deaths and resurrections.
- through that myth, link *Buffy* into a wider literature and set of understandings, represented here by Joseph Conrad's short novel, *Heart of Darkness*, and Francis Ford Coppola's film *Apocalypse Now*.

Proto-myths: relationality and survival

The earliest lunar myths we have in Western Europe are communicated by art made twenty thousand years ago, in the Palaeolithic period, cave paintings of animals and sculptures of small, naked, often heavily pregnant women. Taken together, they form the myth of the goddess, an idea of relationality, symbolised most powerfully by the Goddess of Laussel: a woman points to her pregnant belly with one hand and gazes at the other, which holds aloft a crescent-shaped bison horn, incised with the thirteen days of the waxing Moon and the thirteen months of the lunar year. As above, so below, the figure indicates, as the Moon waxes, wanes and is born anew, again and again, so is all life in the human, animal, earthly and heavenly orders. Here, we have life as eternity, the immense, ever-changing, never-changing universal force which the Greeks termed '*zoe*,' as in 'zoology.'

By contrast, in the caves at Lascaux, and at Les Trois Frères, paintings of animals dying from being hunted by man depict life in time, the daily need for survival, expressed as the myth of the hunter. In one notable scene, a speared bison dies, while a rhinoceros shits the manure of new life, and the shaman-hunter dreams their mutual interdependence.⁴ This is the Greek '*bios*,' of 'biology,' a life in time, where death is a finality, the taking of life is thus an enormity, and, if we forget the existence of *zoe*, life is potentially tragic, nasty, brutish and short. Palaeolithic art, however, suggests a lunar sensibility, in which both the urgency of life and the inevitability of death are seen together, New Moon and Dark Moon.

The sculptures provide us with life in eternity, where death is a process of transformation: the paintings provide us with life in time, and its need for survival. If we read the myth of the hunter through the myth of the goddess, the paintings through the sculpture, then we understand both the enormity, and the necessity, of taking life in order to survive, and the paintings become an ethical act, in which the permission of the animal is sought for its death. The frozen bleakness of life in time is redeemed by the movement of life in eternity: *zoe* contains *bios* as the lunar myth of the goddess contains and reconciles the solar myth of the hunter. In the Buffyverse, this is the time when people lived in a world without demons and vampires, and the time before the First Slayer.

Without the myth of the goddess, without the lunar transformation, we are left with the myth of the hunter on its own, a degraded, Darwinian imperative, only to survive – which is, in any case doomed to failure – and a selfish gene which lives a desperate, tragic life. Enter the Shadowmen.

The Great Reversal

The point at which the Shadowmen created the First Slayer, by chaining her fast so she could be raped by the demon, is identifiable both mythologically and historically, and is known as the Great Reversal.⁵ For millennia, the myth of the goddess contained the myth of the hunter, as two stories that were both essential to human experience. Then, from the fourth millennium BCE onwards, a politics of violence entered, as Indo-European tribes increasingly forced their way across Old Europe. This period, termed ‘the Great Reversal,’ engendered relationships based on opposition, not relationality, enforced by military power, producing a fear of death and an alienation that was both social and spiritual. In Sumerian literature, this point is marked by a change in the identity of Inanna, from ‘Queen of Heaven . . . shining bright and dancing’⁶ to ‘lady of sorrow and of battles’.⁷ That this is the point, in the Buffyverse, at which the Shadowmen created the First Slayer, is indicated both by their ethic of survival at a cost which violently destroys any idea of relationality, humanity or compassion, and by the existence of Sumerian text accompanying the Shadowcaster which takes Buffy back to the Shadowmen:

XANDER: When did you get so good at Sumerian?

DAWN: It's not in Sumerian anymore. [the words on the pages of the book are magically changing into English] (Get It Done 7.15)

The Great Reversal brought about a shift in consciousness: the solar myth of the hunter now dominated and elided the lunar myth of the goddess. Where formerly the two had been held as a unity, so that need for survival in time had been contained by an imperative for relationality, expressed as an eternal, necessary ethic of compassion, now survival alone ruled. The First Slayer sums up the new sensibility succinctly in ‘Restless’ (4.22): ‘No friends. Just the kill. We are alone.’ Contemporary Sumerian literature clarifies this ideology, so that, for example, in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, the hero Gilgamesh kills gratuitously the being who lives in the forest, Humbaba, ignoring his pleas for mercy, and justifies his actions by his wish for fame – ‘I will set up my name in the place where the names of famous men are written’ – and consequently by claiming, without any evidence, that Humbaba exerts an evil influence on Sumeria – ‘Because of the evil that is in the land we will go to the forest and destroy the evil.’⁸

Solar thinking submerged but could not destroy the previous twenty millennia of the lunar imagination, so that a lunar pattern continues as an ever present sub-text to solar narratives. One indication of this transculturation is the three days or nights for which the Moon goes into darkness, and appears to ‘die’ from our world. So, the lunar origins of solar heroes becomes apparent when, for example, we consider that: Jesus rose from the dead on the third day; Jonah spends three days in the belly of the whale; mourning rites for Adonis took place over three days; Cuchulainn fought in defence of Ulster then collapsed and slept for three days and three nights; and that Horus’s

Left Eye, blinded like Xander's, was reassembled by Thoth over three nights.⁹ Medieval alchemy was concerned explicitly to unite solar and lunar qualities, and in particular the culminating episode of *Buffy* provides an immediate source of correlations with the 'alchemical wedding.'

The Alchemical Wedding

For the medieval alchemists, the reconciliation of solar and lunar qualities was the focus of their search, culminating in the sacred marriage between masculine and feminine, earth and sky, time and eternity, the *coniunctio* of Sol and Luna which provided 'a structure of transformation in which the individual dies to the old self and is reborn into a new mode of being.' It is this alchemical culmination, a reconciliation of apparently antithetical, really interdependent, qualities, which provides much of the psychological drama of the culminating episodes of *Buffy*. Sacred marriage takes place between Faith and Wood as sexual coupling and subsequent friendly banter; between Angel and Buffy, when they kiss and she 'basks' in his presence; between Willow and Kennedy as their continued relationship; between Buffy and Faith, when Buffy gives Faith the scythe and Faith returns it; between Andrew and Anya when he tells her 'you are the perfect woman' and they wheelchair-fight; between solar-Giles and the Moon when he bites into a Jaffa Cake, in reference to the TV advert which makes the lunar-Jaffa analogy;¹⁰ between solar-Anya and the Moon through her hatred of 'bunnies,' since the 'rabbit in the Moon' is flung there in punishment in many myths; between solar-Xander and the Moon, through his blinded, Horus-like 'Wedjat Eye', restored as Full Moon by Thoth, guardian of time and timelessness; and crucially, between Sol-Spike, who bursts with burning brightness and Luna-Buffy, as she and he reconcile their troubled physical relationship through love at the emotional, symbolic level – 'I love you.' 'No you don't. But thanks for saying it.'

The Wasteland and the Grail

The alchemical search for the imaginative transformation of life, brought about by seeing at once life in time and life in eternity, *bios* and *zoe* together, was symbolised, and later literalised, as the search to transmute base metal into gold, or the search for the elixir of life. A similar medieval preoccupation was with the Grail Quest, understood here not in the literal terms of Indiana Jones or Dan Brown, but as a symbol for the search for personal authenticity. Wolfram von Essenbach's *Parzival* describes how Parzival is taught to honour the knightly code and above all, not to ask ill-mannered questions.¹¹ So it is that, when he reaches the Grail Castle, meets the wounded Fisher King and sees the Grail, he makes no comment, fails in his quest, and returns filled with despair. What is more, the rules say that every knight can have only one attempt to find the Grail. But like Buffy, Parzival has learned to ignore the rules in favour of his own compassion, which will not be deflected, and so he sets his path into the most difficult part of the Wasteland, abjuring God and all other social conventions. This time, when he finds the Grail Castle, he asks the simple human question of the Fisher King – 'what ails you?'¹² – and the quest is ended, the king healed, the Wasteland restored.

Here again, is the lunar-hero engaged in the task of regeneration, of bringing new life to the dead land, and this motif provides the constant structuring device of the *Buffy* series as a whole. Each of its seven seasons ends with an impending apocalypse, and the near-despair in which Buffy finds herself each time. Often, the received opinion of ancient, authoritative texts is that there is no way out of the situation.

Mythologically, the location they occupy is that of the Wasteland, the death and destruction of life, and in search of a solution, in quest of the Grail that will bring new life. Symbolically, the Grail is the Moon, either the new Moon when it is represented as a cup, or the full Moon when it is represented as a stone or a platter. For Jules Cashford, citing Joseph Campbell, the Wasteland is simply ‘the inauthentic life, a state of being which is barren of the truth of who you are . . . it belongs to any age or person who lives a life handed down by society.’¹³ Psychologically, then, the Grail is authenticity, agency, individuation, life lived on the terms of one’s own heart, not according to received wisdom. It is in these terms that Buffy’s personal search for a whole identity is mutually interdependent with her role as Slayer and the larger responsibility which that carries, of facing and living through the Apocalypse. This refusal of rules handed down by society is exemplified amusingly at the end of *Prophecy Girl* (1.12):

Master: You're dead!

Buffy: I may be dead, but I'm still pretty. Which is more than I can say for you.

Master: You were destined to die! It was written!

Buffy: What can I say? I flunked the written.

In the lunar sensibility, finding the Grail, the movement from the Wasteland’s desolation of the heart, to a new life, is reflected by the cycle of the Moon, from waning, through the three days of darkness, to the birth of the New Moon. The apocalypses which (almost) end each series of *Buffy* are thus transparent to ‘the idea of archaic apocalypses, such as flood or deluge, where the old is obliterated to make way for the new, [that] can be traced to the lunar model of cyclical renewal which gives meaning to catastrophe . . . It is an optimistic vision because, just as the disappearance of the Moon is not final, so the disappearance of human beings is not final either, neither individually nor as a race: they have a history beyond time.’ Buffy survives the seven seasons of Apocalypse, as the Sumerian Utnapishtim and, later, Noah, lived through the Flood, and each time she pushes through to a new sensibility.

This idea is communicated most forcibly in the conclusions of seasons 1, 5 and 7. At the end of Season 1, Buffy is bitten by the Master, falls into a pool of water, dies and is revived by Xander. In the scene, she is wearing a black coat over her prom dress, that is, she is the Moon in darkness – about to disappear from visible life. As the Master pulls her towards him with the mysterious magnetism emanating from his hand, so he pulls her coat off, revealing Buffy’s white dress, showing her potential as the New Moon. He bites her, and lets her fall into the pool of water: when Xander and Angel find her, there is a momentary shot of Buffy, reflected in the water where she lies, like the many images and stories of the Moon in water, scattered across world art and mythology. Xander gives her the kiss of life, and like the new Moon, she rises again. At the end of Season 5, Buffy leaps from the tower into the portal, to

close it, to save Dawn and to save the world. She dies, and the season closes with a shot of her tombstone, which includes her usually hidden middle name, Anne. That name links her back to the St Anne, traditionally mother of the Virgin Mary, bearer of the Christ sun/son and both translucent to Inanna and to the myth of the Goddess.¹⁴ The inscription on the tombstone, ‘She saved the world a lot,’ the realisation of the message of the spirit guide she met earlier (Intervention 5.18) that she is filled with love, and that death is her gift. Again, Buffy as Dark Moon disappears from this world, and again, at the start of the next series, she comes back to life again, a resurrection made possible because hers has been a mystical death – like the mystical deaths of other lunar heroes, whether Jesus, Odysseus, or King Arthur, the once and future king.¹⁵ Finally, as well as the alchemical weddings of Sol and Luna that take place at the end of Season 7, the lunar sensibility is alluded to continuously. For example, the first shadow-caster used in Get it Done (7.15) places the crescent Moon above a rocky earth, as ‘Creation’, and in the series finale, Buffy draws from a stone a mystic scythe, wavy edged with the crescents of both New and Waning Moons - a lunar analogue for eternity conquering time, used by Druids before orthodox Christianity turned Death’s sickle into a metaphor for fear rather than a symbol of transformation. Buffy as Moon-goddess Artemis – sharing the root of the name, *Art*, with the hero Arthur and ‘King Arthuring’ the scythe from the stone – appears here in her aspect as ‘the gentle Bear Mother who guards her young [the Potential Slayers] with the ferocity of a hunter’ and in so doing, from the same etymological root, bears, gives birth to, a new order. The Potentials are ‘some thirty-odd pimply girls,’ the number of days in the Moon’s cycle and its marked face, while Dark Willow, who has experienced ‘the darkest place that I’ve ever been’ and fears that ‘what lies beyond that’ may be deeper darkness, is transformed. Beyond the Dark Moon lies the New Moon, and her spell to ‘use the essence of this scythe to change our destiny’ suffuses her with Moonlight, as White Willow, in a moving image of personal redemption.

Wholeness and participation

The Moon offers a symbol of absence and presence together, which cannot be seen until the Dark Moon completes the lunar cycle: so it is that, without the Wasteland there can be no Grail, or, to revert to an earlier way of being, that the idea of relationality contains – both holds and makes safe - the need for survival, that life in eternity redeems, rather than elides, life in time. This wholeness has to be held in mind, saved by the imagination, which can push beyond the temporal to envision new possibilities. This is not an easy feat since, as the theoretical physicist David Bohm points out, in *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*, the Western mind-set of the last two thousand years has been one of fragmenting our experience of the world.¹⁶ Or, to take a ready analogy from *Buffy*, as soon as we realise that Glory and Ben are the same person, we forget it, and have to begin the whole difficult conceptualisation again, because our time-factored, linear world-view pushes us towards their fragmentation. Only Spike, living the vampire’s timeless life, can see the relationship and he, living in an unredeemed eternity, has the frustrating, humorous fate of the solar hero of having to try to explain it again and again.

Bohm argues that this fragmentation was necessary in the first instance, to give rein to the imagination:

man's first realization that he was not identical with nature was also a crucial step, because it made possible a kind of autonomy in his thinking, which allowed him to go beyond the immediately given limits of nature, first in his imagination and ultimately in his practical work.¹⁷

However, he believes that this necessary first separation between people and their world has now led to a separation between experience and knowledge, which needs rectification. He says 'it is useful to emphasize experience and knowledge are one process, rather than to think that our knowledge is *about* some sort of separate experience.'¹⁸ Similarly, the philosopher Owen Barfield posits that at the earliest stages of history, humanity had an immediate and direct apprehension of the sacred as the world, which he calls 'original participation.'¹⁹ This gave way to a period in which the sense of the sacred shifted from the immediate world to an invisible world, a time of 'withdrawal of participation', in which the world became composed of 'objects wholly extrinsic to man, with an origin and evolution of their own independent of man's origin and evolution.'²⁰ Both Bohm and Barfield see fragmentation and separation as necessary, allowing humanity to reflect on itself and its locations, to engage in speculation that produces social and personal development. However, for both of them, this is only a staging point on a longer journey, towards a new wholeness. Barfield calls that stage 'final participation,' a potential to return to the original participation, but in a different way, in which both the separation and the connection are understood and acknowledged. Bohm is clear that:

wholeness is what is real, and that fragmentation is the response of this whole to man's action, guided by illusory perception, which is shaped by fragmentary thought . . . What is called for is not an *integration* of thought, or a kind of imposed unity, for any such imposed point of view would itself be merely another fragment. Rather, all our different ways of thinking are to be considered as different ways of looking at the one reality.²¹

To return to lunar thinking and the Buffyverse, this is the sensibility of completeness, perceived movingly by Anya, the millenia-old Vengeance Demon turned mortal, who says, after Joyce's funeral (Forever 5.17):

Anya: Well, she got me thinking ... about ... how people die all the time, and ... how they get born too, and how you kind of need one so you can have the other. When I think about it that way, it ... makes death a little less sad, and ... sex a little more exciting . . . I'm not ready to make life with you, but I could. *We* could. Life could come out of our love and our smooshing, and that's beautiful. (Xander looks relieved) It all makes me feel like I'm part of something bigger. Like I'm more awake somehow. (smiles) You know?

Buffy's own search is for personal wholeness, an integration of every aspect of her life, and a refusal of her imposed identity as a solar-hero Slayer. This resistance begins in the 'first-ever' episode of the first Season, when she rejects Giles's easy assumption that she has come to the Library looking for books on vampires, since her existence is limited to the role that has been chosen for her. It continues with some memorable rejections of male authoritarians throughout the series – the Master, the Council, the Shadowmen - until the final episode, when at last she can listen to her

own need, beyond the immediacies of ‘the work I have to do’ (The Gift 5.22), and beyond the demands anyone, Angel included, might make on her (Chosen 7.22):

I’m cookie dough. I’m not done baking. I’m not finished becoming whoever the hell it is I’m going to turn out to be. I make it through this and the next thing and the next thing and maybe one day I turn around and realize I’m ready.

Heart of Darkness

‘For “solar thinking”, a thing *is* or it *is not*: where light is, darkness is not. “Lunar thinking”, on the other hand, points to the fluidity and evanescence of forms: like a candle in the dark or the play of a mask, it allows something to be and not be at the same time.’²² Similarly, the unseen narrator in Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* tells us that for his protagonist, Marlow:

‘the meaning of an episode was not inside like a kernel but outside, enveloping the tale which brought it out only as a glow brings out a haze, in the likeness of one of these misty halos that sometimes are made visible by the spectral illumination of moonshine.’²³

Conrad’s novel opens at evening, with a group of friends – a Director, a Lawyer, an Accountant, Marlow and the nameless narrator - on a yacht on the Thames, waiting for the flood tide, with London spread out in the background, when Marlow suddenly declares ‘And this, also . . . has been one of the dark places of the earth.’²⁴ He then goes on to narrate a journey he took once, along a river into the heart of ‘a place of darkness . . . a vast country’²⁵ to meet Mr Kurtz, the head of a trading station for the ‘over-sea empire’ of a foreign Company which intended to ‘make no end of coin by trade’²⁶ Kurtz is described to Marlow as ‘a very remarkable person,’ ‘an exceptional man’ and a ‘universal genius’²⁷ so that Marlow’s desire to hear him speak increases as the surrounding jungle grew deeper. When they meet, however, Marlow realises that Kurtz has been taken over by ‘forgotten and brutal instincts, by the memory of gratified and monstrous passions’ which had ‘echoed loudly within him because he was hollow at the core’²⁸ Kurtz dies with the words ‘the horror, the horror’ on his lips and after struggling against an almost fatal condition, Marlow returns to the city where the Company has its headquarters. There he meets the woman whom Kurtz was to have married, his Intended, who is desolate at Kurtz’s death and who asks Marlow, what were Kurtz’s final words.

In Conrad’s novel, Marlow enters a void, where there is no ultimate sanction for moral action, no quality that is absolutely proof from dissolution. This is not an existential nothingness, nor a principle of evil which opposes another principle of good: Conrad’s void is the basic stuff of the universe, that which remains, horrifyingly, when everything is gone. In *Heart of Darkness*, it is ‘the earliest beginnings of the world . . . a great silence, an impenetrable forest . . . an implacable force brooding over an inscrutable intention [which] looked at you with a vengeful aspect.’²⁹ Marlow’s is an archetypal journey, in which, like Inanna, he is stripped of the outward appearances through which he defines himself and is defined by the world. Progressively, Conrad ironically dismisses the comforting ideas that devotion

to work is a saving grace; that brutality can be explained as an accidental physical superiority; and that the idealist can see into and so lighten the darkness of the void.³⁰ In the end, through Kurtz as proxy, Marlow sees into the void, 'a thing monstrous and free'³¹ and understands that there are no absolute moral structures, that he is isolated and fragile, but at least, self-conscious. It is this same point of understanding that Buffy returns to, time and again in the series, as she is equally stripped of people and things that are precious to her – Jenny, Angel, Riley, her mother, her career, her life. Buffy's Kurtz is, variously, Dracula, who tells her she is a killer, not a Slayer; Faith, who abuses her power; and the First Slayer, who believes only in the kill. For Buffy, the void is not so much represented by the vampires, who are a metaphor for an instinctive evil which can be opposed by a deliberate good. Rather, it is represented by Buffy's own heart of darkness: the paralysing fear at the end of Series 1 which allows the Master to kill her; her drugging by the Council and her later concern to pass their tests; her subordination by the Council; the coma she deliberately enters rather than fight Glory; her retreat to a childish cry of 'Mommy!' when she finds Joyce dead; her frozen horror at the hordes the Shadowmen tell her she must fight alone; and her loneliness at her inability to develop a lasting, intimate relationship.

Both Marlow and Buffy have to struggle to accept the truth of their own sensations. They are left with only fidelity to their own being, a struggle to experience the void within and yet to retain something of whom they discover themselves, in that moment, to be. For Marlow, the struggle comes when he meets Kurtz's Intended, the woman who still loves and believes in the talented idealist Kurtz was, when he set out to try to make his fortune with the Company. At that point, Marlow is agonised by seeing 'her sorrow in the very moment of his death. Do you understand? I saw them together – I heard them together.'³² He holds, for an instant, both the primal qualities, the bleakness of the void, and a fidelity to an essence, the inner truth of vision or imagination, which is equally as archetypal and immanent as the void. This knowledge of truth is an obligation and so, in a conscious act of compassion, Marlow extends to the Intended a 'great and saving illusion'³³ that Kurtz's last words were her name. This is a conscious rejection of social ideas of truth and justice, like Parzival's rejection of the rules of knightly conduct: for Marlow, the rules of social etiquette are 'too dark- too dark altogether.'³⁴ Marlow realises that he must hold within himself his memory of Kurtz, living alone with the knowledge of the real that renders the ideal false. However, in Conrad, as in von Essenbach, self-knowledge is never a state of mind attained once and for all, but a tenuous moment of vision which must be continually won by a courageous act of imagination. So the journey through the self must be lived and relived, as Marlow re-lives his journey through telling Kurtz's, the unseen narrator relives it through Marlow's telling, and the reader lives it through the agency of literature.

This necessary recurrence is a major structuring element in *Buffy*, where Buffy's personally redemptive journeys literally save the world, as well as bringing herself new realisations. In *Buffy*, Marlow's holding together of the void and inner truth is literalised, as, for example, in when Buffy has used the magical Troll hammer to batter the evil god Glory unconscious, and Glory's body morphs into that of Ben, the good doctor (The Gift 5.22) or again, when Willow's despair at Tara's murder turns her into Black Willow, ready to destroy the world because all she can see is 'rage and power and vengeance' (Grave 6.22) counterpointed by Xander who represents love, 'the true essence of magic.' Just as Marlow's new insights prevent him from telling

Kurtz's literal last words to the Intended, so Buffy refuses to give way to despair and provides hope for those who rely on her, even when their circumstances are impossible, since the ethical insights she brings to her role as Slayer are an obligation. Marlow relives his journey through the self by Conrad's narrative devices, as Buffy relives her journey through the self via her mystical deaths and regenerations. Buffy dies twice to resist the overwhelming darkness, while for Marlow 'my heart stood still, stopped dead . . . it seemed to me that . . . the heavens would fall on my head.'³⁵ Loss is experienced by all involved: the Intended gives a 'cry of inconceivable triumph and of unspeakable pain' at Marlow's news, and *Buffy* ends with the death of Anya and Spike. But Dark Moon has given way to New Moon, in lunar terms, the tide has turned for Conrad's travellers on their yacht, and even though there's another hell-mouth in Cleveland, Buffy smiles with the satisfaction of now no longer being 'the one and only Chosen.'

Apocalypse Now

It is in this vital respect that Buffy's Apocalypses differ from the eponymous one of Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*. The film has a similar fluidity and evanescence of forms as Conrad's novel, on which it is loosely based, through its sometimes surreal images and montage - as Wilmington says:

At the center of *Apocalypse Now*, symbolized by Kurtz's face, shining in the shadows, there's a certain moral confusion, an irresolute wavering, a mistiness, a philosophical intangibility.³⁶

However, Willard's journey has a specific historical and geographical location, the USA's attempt to conquer Vietnam in the 1960s, rather than in the dream landscape of Conrad, with its archetypal Company and place of darkness. Both Marlow and Willard are sceptical of their masters, but both are drawn by a curiosity to meet Mr and Colonel Kurtz respectively. As Dorall points out, 'it is at the climax, when Marlow and Willard confront Kurtz, that *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now* part company and develop differently.'³⁷ Conrad deliberately avoids specifying what it was that Mr Kurtz had done, referring simply to him presiding at 'certain midnight dances ending with unspeakable rites, which . . . were offered up to him,'³⁸ obliging the reader to take an imaginative leap into all the possible depths of personal horror. Coppola is more specific, as Dorall points out, insisting on Colonel Kurtz's elimination 'of all human feeling in favour of total ruthlessness,' epitomized by his admiration of the Vietcong's amputation of the arms of children who had been inoculated by US forces.³⁹ Crucially, though it is the differing responses of Marlow and Willard that matter.

Apocalypse Now is an epic of defeat, final, utter, unredeemed. Willard leaves without belief in the rightness of his cause, the integrity of his masters, and without any future: he has survived physically, that is all, and has left behind Colonel Kurtz dead and perhaps everyone else about to die in an air-strike that may have been ordered on his command. Willard's physical isolation parallels the spiritual isolation of Colonel Kurtz, who has read Frazer's *Golden Bough*⁴⁰ and Jessie Weston's *From Ritual to Romance*⁴¹ but has been unable to make the imaginative leap from their accounts of archetypal myths of death and rebirth, to his own human condition. That this is so, is

underlined by his voice-over, reading from T. S. Eliot's *The Hollow Men*, leaving unspoken, but still understood, the poem's opening epigram, borrowed from *Heart of Darkness*, 'Mistah Kurtz he dead.' The fidelity of Kurtz's Intended is what allowed Marlow his redemptive insight, in which he could see Kurtz as he had started and as he had ended, and thus as a unity. But Coppola has no equivalent for the Intended, who is given to us in a lunar image, 'a pale head, floating towards me in the dusk.'⁴² Marlow has his audience on the yacht, and through his narration he can relive his journey through the self, reflect on his experience, and thus grasp again the tenuous moment of vision. Willard, however, is left with an immediate and unreflective experience of the void, and the closing shots reiterate the finality of his descent into darkness, as his face gives way to the implacable face of stone and the voiceover repeats again Colonel Kurtz's deathly judgement on life, 'the horror, the horror.'

The only hint of concession that Coppola makes is that Willard takes with him Lance, who is seen haloed against the boat's white searchlight, and who is given, throughout the film, an identity separate from that of the war. He is a champion surfer, respected by Colonel Kilgore for that reason, but refusing to surf because he is an artist, and can't surf in poor conditions. While Willard is imprisoned by Kurtz, and waits to slay him, Lance integrates with the local population, and has to be taken by the hand by Willard and led to the boat. Perhaps this character, named for the Lancelot, who in legend, glimpsed the Grail and sired Galahad, who eventually found it, possessed of a different sensibility to Willard, represents hope in the film: but it a slender hope, and one that in visual terms, is submerged by the images of helicopters ('choppers,' if we wish to make the connection with the death of Kurtz and the cow), fire, and Willard's desperate face fading to endless stone.

Marlow attempts to save Mr Kurtz's life, ultimately failing on the physical level although succeeding at an imaginative, compassionate one. By contrast, Willard kills Colonel Kurtz as the scapegoat for a hypocritical military intelligence, as the villagers sacrifice a cow outside. Willard exemplifies the solar hero, becoming like the Priest-King at Nemi – the myth that introduces Frazer's *Golden Bough* - who killed his predecessor to take his power. Willard refuses to replace Kurtz as a warlord-demi-god but is unable to leave the emotional void he has entered, caught in his obedience to masters whom he doesn't respect, pursuing a vision in which he has no faith, and dominated by the world-view of the man he has just killed. Colonel Kurtz tells Willard:

I worry that my son might not understand what I have tried to be, and if I were to be killed, Willard, I would want someone to go to my house and tell my son everything, everything I did, everything you saw, because there's nothing I detest more than the stench of lies.

Marlow, too, says 'there is a taint of death, a flavour of mortality in lies – which is exactly what I hate and detest in the world – what I want to forget.'⁴³ But his story is of the immensity of a truth that holds the void and the ideal both together, so that out of compassion he creates his 'saving illusion,' as Dr Relling, in Ibsen's *The Wild Duck* prescribes 'the saving lie' to 'keep the life going' in those who would otherwise sink into despair.⁴⁴ Coppola allows us to believe that Willard will perhaps do as Kurtz asks, will go to his house and find his son, but we are left not knowing whether Willard will have the same moving vision as Marlow, whether he will perceive the

fidelity to an ideal that the child represents, in conjunction with ‘the horror,’ and thereby act compassionately. Similarly, Coppola does not say whether Chef radioed through the air strike before he was killed, whether the voice on the boat’s radio is seeking or giving confirmation of that action, whether the chopper and fire overlaying Willard’s face are in his mind or in the world.

What is at stake here, is the imagination. Kurtz lives in the void and can see only ‘the horror;’ Marlow’s own episode after Kurtz’s death finds him fighting ‘a vision of greyness without form filled with physical pain,’⁴⁵ and we might compare this with the experience of Tara and those whose mind Glory feeds off. The quality which Glory feeds off is the imagination, leaving her victims unable to find ways of the darkness, the void, the horror: as Tara says (The Gift 5.22) ‘I got so lost.’ This, too, is the psychological level at which all the big bads operate in *Buffy* – the Master, the Mayor, the Triad, the Preacher, the First Evil – all of them intend to dominate the world of everyone else, to remove their potential for individual action, to elide the possibility of conceiving of a world ordered differently. The achievement of Buffy and the Scoobies is to use their creative consciousness to produce new, inspired solutions, outside the orthodox order of how things are supposed to be. The fundamental importance of this is asserted by Conrad: when Marlow returns to the city, in poor health, he says ‘It was not my strength that wanted nursing, it was my imagination that wanted soothing,’⁴⁶ the same position occupied by contemporary war reporter Philip Gourevitch, who took this description of Marlow’s condition as his starting point when investigating the Rwandan genocide.⁴⁷ It is only when Marlow meets the Intended that his imagination, actuated by compassion, can make the creative leap to the ‘saving illusion’ and reject the dominant ideology of what constitutes truth, as ‘too dark – too dark altogether.’⁴⁸

As far as the redeeming imagination is concerned, Coppola appears to leave us with ambiguities only. However, I should like to suggest that he may also leave us with the possible sub-text that it is us, the viewer, reader, critic, who will take on the multiple roles of narrator, which allows the redemptive vision to come to light, to be re-discovered in Marlow’s case, and discovered in Willard’s case.

Vico’s ‘ricorso’

Finally, I should like briefly to relate these ideas to the language of *Buffy*, which, as Michael Adams demonstrates in *Slayer Slang*, is highly idiomatic, full of neologisms, and ‘central to the show’s appeal.’⁴⁹ The eighteenth century Italian philosopher Giambattista Vico,⁵⁰ who propounded the idea that language can be treated as a source of historical insight, and that it may be linked to the distinct stages through which social order develops, is, as Northrop Frye points out, ‘the first person in the modern world to think seriously about such matters.’⁵¹

Vico identified tree cycles in history. In the first age, humans thought in mythical terms, *universali fantastici*, with a poetic language, in which the word and the thing itself are linked by a common energy or being. In this first age, subject and object are not separated, so that to name a thing is to call it into presence or being. In the world at large, and in the Buffyverse, this is the language of magic, the words of power

spoken especially by Willow and Giles, imaginatively to call into being a hidden energy or power.

The second age is a hieratic one, in which social institutions are formed, heroes come into being to inspire the moral virtues espoused by organised society, and language becomes verbal abstraction. A division is made between subject and object, words are no longer the things themselves but symbols of them, and language may now be used politically, as an agency of powerful hierarchies, to limit imaginative possibilities, to define boundaries and to legislate for them. In the world at large, and in the Buffyverse, this often appears as the sonorous language of the Law, whether civil or canonical, written authoritatively and pronounced with finality. So, for example, The Master reads from The Book of Aurelius (Never Kill a Boy on the First Date 1.):

There will come a time of crisis, of worlds hanging in the balance. And in this time shall come the Anointed, the Master's great warrior. The Slayer will not know him, will not stop him. And he will lead her to hell. As it is written, so shall it be. Five will die and from their ashes the Anointed One shall rise. The Order of Aurelius shall greet him and usher him to his immortal destiny. As it is written, so shall it be.

Vico's third age is the age of rationality, an age of the people, and of language of the people, a demotic which describes an objective natural order, while remaining separate from it. Appearances are deceptive –the world looks flat, and the sun seems to be at the centre of the universe – and objective truth can only be found through rational scientific investigation. The price to pay for the benefits of the astounding scientific revolution which has taken place from the sixteenth century to the present day, is an increasing loss of subjectivity, of imaginative potential, of authenticity: the fragmentation that David Bohm describes, the Wasteland inhabited by Parzival. In the Buffyverse, this is epitomised by the inhumanity of those in charge of its academic institutions, the small-minded Principals of Sunnydale High and the evil psychology professor who leads the Initiative. However, this third age shifts into a *ricorso*, a return to the beginning of the cycle, and Northrop Frye suggests that it is in the present time that 'we are about to go around the cycle again, as we seem now to be confronted once again with an energy common to subject and object,' since, for example:

Einstein is the great symbol for a new realization that matter, which up to the twentieth century had been the great bastion of the objectivity of the world, was an illusion of energy. With this, however, the sense of the clear separation of subject and object, which was so marked a feature of the scientific attitude up to that point, overreached itself and began to come to an end.⁵²

The processes Vico outlines as a cultural history of language are clearly analogous in feeling and structure to Barfield's ideas of original participation, separation and a new participation, and to Bohm's charting of an original perception of the world as a wholeness, followed by a necessary fragmentation, now producing a need for a new understanding of wholeness. Vico's *ricorso*, therefore, is not a simple return to a cycle of repetition, but a shift into a new way of thinking, a return to an earlier

sensibility which is now seen with a different eye, innocence redeemed (not regained) through experience, to use William Blake's terms, growth through inevitable defeat, to use Rilke's terms. Past language, ideas, and institutions are not dismissed or ignored, but are brought into active consciousness, are considered and drawn on, to create a new set of meanings, a new language and a new way of being. In the Buffyverse, this cyclical movement and growth of a new consciousness is epitomised by Buffy's deliberate, active learning from earlier Slayers: her early, inarticulate confrontations with the First Slayer; her insistence that Spike describe the mistakes made by the Slayers he killed; her consideration of the methods used by Kendra and Faith; her teaching to the Potentials; and the use she makes of the Shadowcaster and her journey back to the Shadowmen, through which she understands the formative experience of the First Slayer. Through the movement from her initial experience of the First Slayer, who appears, like myth archetypes, in her dreams, to her willed return to the site of the First Slayer's rape, she restates the terms of her engagement with the world, bringing together both mythic language – Willow's incantation – hieratic language – the Sumerian text from which Dawn reads – and demotic language – 'can stand up, will stand up' (Chosen 7.22).

Writing about the language of the series, Michael Adams adopts the definition of jargon as 'the terminology of some profession, occupation or pursuit,' commenting that 'jargon is allied to mystery: it expresses the uniqueness of a profession . . . only those who follow the profession or pursuit will know the language of the guild.'⁵³ Here we see Vico's second age of hieratic language, based on the mystery of his first age of mythical language, the secret knowledge that will call into being the restricted exercise of a closed craft. Adams shows how jargon of this kind has been taken over and turned into a demotic, Vico's third age, by fans on *Buffy* websites, who use the language of the scripts to create their own, similar language. Finally, all three of these identities of jargon in the series blend together and merge, to form the 'Slayerslang' that provides the verbal fun in *Buffy* – 'what's the sitch?,' 'got the wiggins,' 'Undead-American,' 'five-by-five,' 'vague that up for me,' and of course, 'slayage' and dozens of other neologisms and verbal gymnastics.

Slayerslang provides a combination of Vico's three stages of language, and a restatement of them in a new and different form: the *recurso*, the point at which newness arises, when all three different phases can be seen together, understood as a whole, and something new arise out of them. Here, again, we see the transformative lunar consciousness at work. This newness is achieved through a series of processes that are as much political as they are linguistic, as much mythological as they are psychological. Vico's first age, the poetic language of myth, is invoked through a process of reclaiming language and thereby finding identity, as Willow learns magic, becomes a witch and a lesbian, goes into darkness and is reborn as White Willow, transitions through 'crayon-breaky Willow and . . . scary, veiny Willow,' (The Grave 6.). The hieratic age, the language of social institutions and their Law, are particularly represented by the rules that should surround *Buffy*, expressed in the Slayer's Handbook (which Kendra follows religiously but *Buffy* didn't know existed) and in the rules of the Council, which they fail to make *Buffy* follow. Explicitly, this order of language is appropriated by *Buffy* and the Scoobies, embodied in their appropriation of Giles, into their community of practice, well before he is officially disowned by the Council. The constant reminder of this appropriation is the verbal interplay between the formality and understatement of Giles's register and the slangy,

casual register of the Scoobies. That this is not just a caricature of Britishness is made clear by Wesley, who is precisely that caricature. Demotic language, Vico's third age of rationalism, is the language of ordinary Sunnydale society; it is the language through which the Scoobies communicate with that world of school and parents, as in Cordelia's satirisation of her parents' pop-psychology, when she tells Buffy 'Whatever is causing the Joan Collins 'tude, deal with it. Embrace the pain, spank your inner moppet, whatever, but get over it' (When She Was Bad).

It is into this world that Slayerslang enters, through the process which post-colonial studies calls 'abrogation,' in which the register of the Scoobies hybridises with that of the rest of Sunnydale, the language of magic, and hieratic pronouncement, to produce a *recorso* that is playful, imaginative, and irreverent, which we might call their 'slanguage.' This new form has the quality of what Northrop Frye calls '*kerygma*,' 'a mixture of the metaphorical and the existential . . . the vehicle of what is traditionally called revelation.'⁵⁴ It is particularly evident at points at which the Apocalypse has been averted, when a solar narrative would provide a rhetoric of triumph and glory. So, for example, the final scene of the final episode of the final series (Chosen 7.22):

Faith, Giles, Dawn, Willow and Xander all gather around Buffy on the edge of the crater.

FAITH: Looks like the Hellmouth is officially closed for business.

GILES: There's another one in Cleveland. Not to spoil the moment.

XANDER: We saved the world.

WILLOW: We changed the world. I can feel them, Buffy. All over. Slayers are awakening everywhere.

DAWN: We'll have to find them.

WILLOW: We will.

GILES: Yes, because the mall was actually in Sunnydale so there's no hope of going there tomorrow.

DAWN: We destroyed the mall? I fought on the wrong side.

XANDER: All those shops, gone. The Gap, Starbucks, Toy R Us... who will remember all those landmarks unless we tell the world of them?

GILES: We have a lot of work ahead of us.

FAITH: *(to others)* Can I push him in?

WILLOW: You've got my vote.

Faith playfully shoves Giles.

FAITH: I just want to sleep, yo. For like a week!

DAWN: I guess we all could. If we wanted to.

WILLOW: Yeah, The First is scrunched so... what do you think we should do, Buffy?

FAITH: Yeah, you're not the one and only Chosen anymore. Just gotta live like a person. How's that feel?

DAWN: Yeah, Buffy. What are we going to do now?

Buffy Anne Summers looks off into the future, a satisfied smile spreading across her face.

This fusion of Vico's three phases of language and culture, to create a *ricorso* into a new consciousness, is the linguistic agency through which *Buffy* offers a lunar consciousness as a discourse of renewal, rather than victory, of collective growth

rather than solitary triumph, of transformation, rather than repetition. In doing this, I believe, it provides a point of *kairos* for its audience, a crucial moment in time at which new possibilities, a different sensibility, an opening of imagination, becomes available. For as Conrad would have us understand, and as this paper on *Buffy* claims, it is in the relating of stories that they come alive, providing the act of reflection that can take us again to self-knowledge, and renewing our tenuous moment of vision, the courageous act of imagination through which, like Buffy, like the Moon, we rise again.

¹ An edited version of this paper was published as Z J Playdon, 'Lunar myths of transformation,' in *Reading the Slayer*, ed. R Kaveney, 2nd edition (London: Tauris Books, 2003).

² Wolkstein, D. a. K., S. N., (1983). *Inanna: Queen of Earth and Heaven*. New York, Harper and Row. p. 52.

³ Cashford, J. (2003). *The Moon: Myth and Image*. London, Cassell. p. 172.

⁴ Baring A. & Cashford J. (1991). *The Myth of the Goddess: Evolution of an Image*. London, Viking. pp. 3-45.

⁵ Campbell, J. (1962). *The Masks of God: Oriental Mythology*. New York, Viking Penguin. p. 36.

⁶ Wolkstein, D. a. K., S. N., (1983). *Inanna: Queen of Earth and Heaven*. New York, Harper and Row. p. 41.

⁷ Sandars, N. (1960). *The Epic of Gilgamesh*. Harmondsworth, Penguin Books. p. 26.

⁸ Sandars, p. 68-9.

⁹ Cashford, p. 352-4.

¹⁰ Equally playfully, we might note that Giles's intention to reconcile his taught, solar self with an instinctive, lunar imagination, is symbolised by the car he drives at the start of the series, the Citroen DS19 nicknamed 'the Goddess.' More seriously, at the end of series six, Giles's fusion of his power with that of the English Wicca, and his battle with Willow which he expects her to lose, indicate his repeated *coniuntios*.

¹¹ Eschenbach, Wolfram von ([c. 1200] 1980). *Parzival*. Harmondsworth, Penguin.

¹² *ibid.* p. 395.

¹³ Cashford J. (2002). Joseph Campbell and the Grail Myth. *At the Table of the Grail*. J. Matthews. London, Watkins: 291-309, p. 294.

¹⁴ Bayley, H. (1912). *The Lost Language of Symbolism*. London, Williams and Norgate. connects 'san' (holy) with 'tan' (fire) to produce 'santan,' Christianized into Saint Anne [ii, 160] and further links the name to the folk-story of loss and regeneration, Cinderella, since 'one of the titles of Cinderella is ANNEMOR = Anna-mother = Anna-darling [256] and then links that identity to the liturgical title, 'Star of the Sea.' As Baring, A. & Cashford, J (1991) *The Myth of the Goddess: evolution of an image*, p. 568 point out, 'Mary, with the twelve stars circling her head like a halo of light is like Inanna-Ishtar, who, as mood goddess, wore as her crown the twelve constellations.'

¹⁵ See Lord Raglan. (1936). *The Hero*. London, Methuen.

¹⁶ Bohm, D. (1980). *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*. London, Routledge.

¹⁷ Bohm. p. 2.

¹⁸ Bohm p. 6.

¹⁹ Barfield, O. (1957). *Saving the Appearances*. London, Faber and Faber.

²⁰ Barfield p. 65.

²¹ Bohm p. 7-8.

²² Moon p. 172.

²³ Conrad, J. ([1899] 1988). *Heart of Darkness*. London, Norton. p. 9.

²⁴ *ibid.* p. 9.

²⁵ *ibid.* p. 12.

²⁶ *ibid.* p. 13.

²⁷ *ibid.* pp. 22, 25, 30.

²⁸ *ibid.* pp. 65, 57-58.

²⁹ *ibid.* pp. 35, 36.

³⁰ These three false 'saving graces' are successively epitomised by the Chief Accountant; the manager of the Central Station; and Kurtz.

³¹ *ibid.* p. 37.

-
- ³² *ibid.* p. 73.
- ³³ *ibid.* p. 74.
- ³⁴ *ibid.* p. 76.
- ³⁵ *ibid.* p. 76.
- ³⁶ Wilmington, M. ([1979] 1988). 'Worth the Wait: Apocalypse Now.' *Heart of Darkness*. R. Kimborough. London, Norton. p. 286.
- ³⁷ Dorall E N ([1980] 1988). 'Conrad and Coppola: Different Centres of Darkness'. *Heart of Darkness*. R. Kimborough. London, Norton. p. 305.
- ³⁸ *Heart of Darkness* p.50.
- ³⁹ *Conrad and Coppola* p. 306.
- ⁴⁰ Frazer, J. (1906-15). *The Golden Bough*. London, Macmillan.
- ⁴¹ Weston, J. (1920). *From Ritual to Romance*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- ⁴² *Heart of Darkness* p. 72-3.
- ⁴³ *ibid.* p. 29.
- ⁴⁴ Ibsen, H. ([1884] 1950). 'The Wild Duck.' *Three Plays*. Harmondsworth, Penguin. p. 243.
- ⁴⁵ *ibid.* p. 69.
- ⁴⁶ *ibid.* p. 70.
- ⁴⁷ Gourevitch, P. (2000). *We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with all our families*. London, Picador. p. 7.
- ⁴⁸ *Heart of Darkness* p. 76.
- ⁴⁹ Adams, M. (2003). *Slayer Slang: A Buffy the Vampire Slayer Lexicon*. New York, Oxford University Press. p. 8.
- ⁵⁰ Giambattista Vico or Giovanni Battista Vico, 1668-1744. The pioneer of ethnology, Vico suggested mythology and language as methods for investigating history. His major work is the *New Science* [*Scienza Nuova*] published in 1725. His ideas notably influenced Karl Marx, James Joyce and Edward W. Said.
- ⁵¹ Frye, N. (1982). *The Great Code*. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- ⁵² *Ibid.* p. 14-15.
- ⁵³ Adams p. 11.
- ⁵⁴ Frye p. 29.