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Ford Madox Ford's Unusual War: Ongoing Worry and Modernity

Nur Karatas 

Department of English, College of Arts and Sciences, Loyola University Chicago, Chicago, IL 60660, USA; nkaratas@luc.edu

Abstract: In *Parade's End*, Ford Madox Ford approaches the experience of trauma in an unusual way—it is no longer just past experiences, but the expectancy of dismal events that become as traumatic. Ford chooses worry for such rendering. In order to make the correlation between suffering and sensibility, he places worry in the lives of his characters, which reflects on Ford's own life. This discussion will introduce the idea that worry is going to be a major component of Ford's psychologising of war. I explore this worry-driven sensibility and the ways it is reflected, especially in the characters' obsession with the anticipation of death and face-forward mourning. Within this loss-filled atmosphere, worry over being killed dominates the narrative and continually feeds the sentiment of mournfulness. The Great War transforms into a Greater War, seeping into the societal realm, where it amplifies the private emotional battles of the characters, centred around worry. Consequently, the narrative highlights the coexistence of these personal and public conflicts, ultimately resulting in both physical and psychological losses throughout the story.

Keywords: World War One; ongoing worry; mourning; trauma; Ford Madox Ford; *Parade's End*

1. Introduction

Ford, unlike his contemporaries, chooses to render war by focusing on “worry”. This is what feeds suffering and mourning in *Parade's End*. Ford conveys worry—not fear, nor horror, and not merely death. This is because such elements would all terminate in finding rest in the end. On the other hand, worry feeds on itself and, in the end, so destroys the morale less than a grasshopper becomes a burden. It is without predictable terms; it is as menacing as the eye of a serpent; it causes unspeakable fatigue even as, remorselessly, it banishes rest (Ford 2007, p. 206).

Before the Victorian period, worry existed in the English language, yet rather it “referred to the act of choking or strangling, later of distressing, human beings or animals. It was about acts of physical harassment, sometimes leading to death” (O’Gorman 2015, p. 30). As Francis O’Gorman has shown, in the Victorian period, the concept of worry was beginning to gain a new meaning. Literary texts of the era were among the crucial markers of this transformation. The emergence of the concept of “Victorian anxiety” confirms this conversion. O’Gorman refers to the texts that were written towards the end of the 19th century as “worry novels” (O’Gorman 2015, p. 31).

The nature of worry changes dramatically at the start of the twentieth century. The writers of this period start to see worry not as an individual's specific trouble, but as a collective problem, where it becomes, as George Lincoln Walton has stated, the “disease of the age” (Walton 1908, p. 22). In 1908, Walton argues that the disease of worry is a cultural phenomenon caused by the twentieth century. In *Worry: The Disease of the Age*, C. W. Saleeby shares similar insights, asserting that worry is a disease of the twentieth-century (Saleeby 1909, pp. 9–10). Ford Madox Ford's handling of worry in *Parade's End* demonstrates his keen observations of worry's transformation as a disorder of the modern era.

The transformation of an individual's domestic or financial worry into a notion that impacts on an age reveals the problematic nature of modernity.¹ The 1900s saw the inca-



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pability of individuals to adjust to a new way of life due to the detrimental changes in industry and technology.

2. Modernity

Malcolm Bradbury asserts that “there is the new era, but not the new man, or the new hope. The traditional into the modern is enacted, and the modern self-initiated, dispossessed of older meanings” (Bradbury 1992, p. xviii). He sees a dismal consequence: “This produces not hope but disillusion, futility, disenchantment, a sense of living between disaster and disaster” (Bradbury 1992, p. xviii).

In *Parade’s End*, this uncertain atmosphere leaves no choice for individuals but to worry. Their concerns are not limited to earning a living, nor maintaining a peaceful marriage; in the insecure climate of modernity, there is worry over the dissolution of traditional values, the loss of common values, and the debasement of ideals that gave life meaning. Focusing on this dark side of modernity brings the undeniable cause-and-effect between modernised urban life and worry. In *Worry, the Disease of the Age*, C. W. Saleeby makes a rather radical claim about this disorder, and asserts that “every access of civilisation increases the importance of this malady. Printing must have multiplied it a hundredfold; cities, with their pace and their competition and their foul air, have done the like—and we are all becoming citi-fied, if not civilised to-day” (Saleeby 1909, p. 9). Saleeby’s reflections on the ills of “becoming citi-fied” are consistent with Ford’s attitude toward the urbanization in London. Ford’s pre-war text, *The Soul of London* (Ford 1905), demonstrates comparable insights. He is preoccupied with the notion of “the death of the Spirit of Place”. Ford sees the lost soul of London and is melancholic over that. Along with the lost values and civilization, Ford is disturbed by the effects of modernity. For him “that is indeed the problem which is set before London—the apotheosis of modern life.” (Ford 1905, p. 173). Demonstration of the changing values and the way in which they are reflected in London become the main concern of Ford’s book. For him,

London has become a mere bazaar, a mere market. Its associations have gone; its humanity has gone; it is uninhabitable for its atmosphere, for its inhuman solitude, for its indifference to architecture, for its pulling down of old courts. So, in this image, London, an immense galleon, drifts down the tideway of ages, threatened imminently by those black and sulphurous clouds, Neurasthenia, Decay, and the waters of the Earth. (Ford 1905, p. 168)

Ford’s choice of the word “neurasthenia” in this quotation is significant, and becomes crucial in relation to worry. In *Shattered Nerves’: Doctors, Patients, and Depression in Victorian England*, Janet Oppenheim discusses the idea that this term, which came into use toward the end of the 19th century, was referred to as “shattered nerves” or “broken health” by the Victorians (Oppenheim 1991, p. 5). Oppenheim refers to the neurologist George Miller Beard, who from 1869 to 1883 tried to raise awareness of the reality of neurasthenia (93). She mentions the fact that he was facing difficulties while defining this notion, as Beard did not want to limit his list of definitive factors; so, he came up with more than fifty signs, such as:

. . .profound anxiety, despair, and fear, various phobias, fretfulness, insomnia and nightmares, indecisiveness and inattention, extreme weakness and fatigue, migraine, dilated pupils, frequent blushing, heart palpitations, cramps, dental decay, indigestion, neuralgia, rapid changes in body temperature, sexual impotence, backache, and the fidgets (Oppenheim 1991, p. 93).

Beard argues that the 19th century gave rise to neurasthenia due to factors such as “rapid transportation and communication, great advance in scientific learning, and the widespread education of women”; with these developments taking place, he thinks that “repose” became implausible (Oppenheim 1991, p. 93). He acknowledges the existence of nervous disorders in previous centuries too, but claims that these were never experienced in the way they were experienced with modernity (93). In “Modernity as the Cultural Crucible of Trauma”, Karolyn Steffens also refers to Beard and German social critic Max

Nordau's focus on drawing a close connection between neurosis and modernity. Nordau talks about the "language of degeneracy", and he observes the ways in which "steam and electricity have turned the customs of life of every member of the civilized nations upside down" (Steffens 2018, p. 40). They both blame the "present conditions of civilized life" as causing "our brains' wear and tear" (40). In other words, this can be seen as increasing the sensitivity of individuals amidst the "vertigo and whirl of our frenzied life" (Steffens 2018, p. 40). With neurasthenia, Ford is able to embrace various factors of the sad state of nerve weakness and sensibility, along with the critical rendering of modernity.

The epistemological history of nerves and nervousness is discussed by Laura Salisbury and Andrew Shail in the introduction to *Neurology and Modernity: A Cultural History of Nervous Systems, 1800–1950*. In 1691, the translation of Ambroise Pare's 1575 collection of works defines nerves as "the substance of an organ which dilates and contracts"; this contractility would designate a "strength" in the early modern period (Salisbury and Shail 2010). Salisbury and Shail also discuss the definition of nerves and refer to Edward Philip's 1658 dictionary of difficult words, which defines "nerve" as "a sinew, also by metaphor, force or strength of body"; they stress the fact that, in 1735, "nervous" was still defined in the same way (Salisbury and Shail 2010). Only in Samuel Johnson's 1755 *Dictionary* can a change be observed in the way in which this word is defined. Along with the common definition, Johnson adds the notion of "having weak or diseased nerves" (Salisbury and Shail 2010). Salisbury and Shail point out that this new meaning did not find acceptance, as it was not even included in John Walker's dictionary of 1775. Towards the mid-1800s, this new meaning began to be embraced in new dictionaries. Joseph Worcester's American dictionary of 1859 included a comprehensive explanation of "nervous" as "Having a weak or diseased nerves; easily agitated or excited; irritable; timid; fearful" (Salisbury and Shail 2010, p. 27). The editors make a comparison between the attributed meanings of nerves and nervous both before and after the 1840s. They argue that, after those years, the new meaning was incorporated, and thus there was a switch from "the temporary state of having one's nerves agitated" to a "permanent state of liability to such temporary agitation" (Salisbury and Shail 2010, p. 28). They observe the transformation of these concepts occurring especially with modernity.

While Ford's emphasis on worry is related to turn-of-the-century discourses on degeneration, neurasthenia, and nerves or nervousness, he frames the problem differently. Instead of focusing on a term that is mostly associated with a medical context, he wants to deploy a sentiment that every single person is experiencing continuously on a daily basis. In *'Shattered Nerves': Doctors, Patients, and Depression in Victorian England*, Oppenheim discusses the way in which nerves started to be understood to be beyond the limitations of health and illness:

The nerves and their disorders were inextricably interwoven with nineteenth-century British assumptions about more than health and illness, or normalcy and deviance; they were interlaced with attitudes toward success and failure, civilization and barbarism, order and chaos, masculinity and femininity. Just as nerves pervaded the physical body, so did they permeate the images with which the Victorians evoked their society. Nerves existed physiologically and metaphorically, conjuring up complicated and sometimes contradictory associations. Occasionally conveying an idea of courage and vigor, they more often stood for fragility and weakness. They suggested sensitivity, sympathy, and, above all, suffering that frequently defied medical knowledge and curative skill (Oppenheim 1991, p. 3).

This understanding reflects Ford's rendering of the discussion around the notion of nerves and its related terms. For Ford, the medical context is too limiting; he rather sees and regards nerves within the context discussed above, and sees how this idea is still prevalent in modernity. His choice to focus on worry in the tetralogy instead of other sentiments, or the choice of this word, can be understood along these lines.

In *A View of the Nervous Temperament*, Thomas Trotter also links nervous disorders to the British in the 19th century (Trotter 1808).

This disposition to nerve-wracking conditions, or the 18th century perspective of sensibility (emotional catharsis), finds a continuum in the medium of suffering in Ford's writings, especially *Parade's End* (Haslam 2014). Critics have noted the importance of the 18th century to Ford, and particularly to Tietjens and *Parade's End*.²

Ford's focus on 18th century sensibilities and the discussion of worry go along with each other. Oppenheim discusses the inseparability of 19th century British attitudes to nervous conditions. This connection sheds light on the way in which Ford draws heavily on the invisible line between the "somatic functions of the nerves" and "their psychological, or emotional, manifestations", as discussed by Oppenheim:

Victorian and Edwardian theorizing about the nervous system depended heavily on metaphor to span the gulf between the somatic functions of the nerves and their psychological, or emotional, manifestations. [. . .] Every term used to describe and explain the operations of the nervous system—tension, sympathy, excitability, irritability, sensibility, and depression—at once denoted a bodily state and connoted an emotional one. Signifying a somatic condition, each word also carried a heavy psychological cargo, and the line separating the two was virtually invisible (Oppenheim 1991, p. 86).

In a similar way, Ford has psychological pain causing seizures or physical pain for his characters, making his characters feel like a knife is stabbing them when they encounter unbearably dismal situations. We witness an instance of this mental wound overtaking the physical body when Tietjens loses himself over tormenting flashbacks while having breakfast with Sylvia and Sylvia's mother, Mrs. Satterthwaite. In that scene, Sylvia is getting bored and starting to break the plates and talking "cruelly, with maddening inaccuracy, and with wicked penetration", causing Tietjens a great deal of "pressure in his forehead" (Ford 2010, p. 152). He loses himself in thought over his defeat against her physical attraction, and the possibility of having the child by another man. He starts to have catastrophic thoughts: "'By God! I've had a stroke!' and he got out of his chair to test his legs. . . But he had not had a stroke. It must then, he thought, be that the pain of his last consideration must be too great for his mind to register, as certain great physical pains go unperceived" (Ford 2010, p. 153). Testing his legs demonstrates the power of his imagination to alter his perspective on reality. He cannot differentiate whether he is still well and healthy or teetering on death and paralysis. Ford draws a shadowy line between the liminal states of great pain and numbness. The hallucinatory stroke can also be observed as an echo of his traumatized inner life and mind filled with worry.

Similar descriptions persist in the second volume of the tetralogy: "Heavy depression" settles on Tietjens; "the distrust of the home Cabinet" becomes "like physical pain" (Ford 2011b, p. 16). And psychological pain becomes manifest in Tietjens' physical appearance. This becomes apparent when the general is discussing Tietjens' problematic marriage. Tietjens' face, "beginning with the edges round the nostrils, go chalk white", it becomes "colourless", and his eyes "of porcelain-blue" protrude "extraordinarily". The general thinks how ugly he looks, as "his face is all crooked" (Ford 2011b, p. 245). Such physical deterioration is punctuated by the "mournful cadences" in their voices (Ford 2011b, p. 245). The General's thoughts note Tietjens' troubled life: "'This fellow's mother died of a broken heart in 1912. The father committed suicide five years after. He had not spoken to the son's wife for four or five years! That takes us back to 1912. . . Then, when I strafed him in Rye, the wife was in France with Perowne'" (Ford 2011b, p. 245). When reminded of the troubles in his life, Tietjens' face almost turns into a "Cubist painting", detached from reality. Tietjens' detachment helps him to cope with his psychological pain. His persona is shaped by losses, both physical and psychological—joined to his "identity by a black cord" (Ford 2011b, p. 86).

Similarly, in *No Enemy*, Gringoire is struck by the motionless trees, and the feelings aroused by the melancholic setting are so powerful that he vividly recalls his suffering:

“I remember it still as a pain. Nay, in the remembrance, I feel it so strongly that it is still a pain, like that of an old, deep cicatrized wound” (Ford 2002, p. 15). These tormenting memories become like physical wounds that leave a scar on his consciousness. Ford blurs the line between physical and psychological wounds by focusing on worry.

3. Worrying and Forward-Facing Mourning

Suffering is not only observed in Ford’s writings, but also in his anguished life. Ford’s traumatised persona is exacerbated by his incessant worrying about forthcoming events. While Ford accepts the reality of war, his anticipation of it becomes a mode of suffering. A similar pattern is also observed in the life of Tietjens.

Worry and forward-facing mourning has a strong presence in Ford’s life. Even before The Great War, Ford demonstrates that a powerful sense of gloominess dooms him to nervous breakdowns.³ His mournfulness can be traced back to the 1880s, coinciding with the First Boer War, which plays a crucial role in shaping his melancholic persona. He sees the Second Boer War as the beginning of a “loss of values, a confusion of standards, and the shock of alienation” (Gasiorek and Moore 2008, p. 5). More than the physical loss, he is taken aback by the moral and spiritual loss caused by the war. In a sense, Ford equates the outcome of these wars with the effects caused by modernity. Modernity and the Boer War seem to be interchangeable sources for the cause of his mournfulness. The “iron door between the past and the present” is torn down with the war, and the painful transitory period begins to unsettle the traditional past, heralding in the new, ambiguous, modern present (Saunders 2013, p. 175). Saunders questions why the Boer War creates such a catastrophic effect on Ford—as he is surrounded with “the apocalyptic sense of war as bringing things to an end” (Saunders 2013, p. 134). He notes the possible reasons for the war’s ruinous influence on Ford. Saunders argues that Ford was pro-Boer and felt vulnerable to jingoistic mobs harassing people like him expressing what they saw as anti-patriotic (i.e., anti-imperialist) feelings (Saunders 2013, pp. 134–35). He argues that “though technically an eventual British victory, the British had for the first time since the Norman conquest felt in peril of defeat” (Saunders 2013, p. 134). The Second Anglo–Boer War is very destructive for Ford; he worries about the threat of losing the war.

Along with Ford’s prevalent hysteria, his receptiveness toward a plausible war is enough to make him an ongoing worrier. Wyndham Lewis’ *Blasting and Bombardiering*, sheds light onto Ford’s awareness of the upcoming European war. Lewis’ memories of himself, Ford, Ford’s partner Violet Hunt, and Mary Borden Turner being together in Berwickshire in 1914, reveal Ford’s decisiveness over England joining the war. Regardless of Mrs. Turner’s certainty that England will not be joining the war, Ford insists that, since there is a Liberal government in power, it will declare war:

‘I don’t agree’, Ford answered, in his faintest voice, with consummate indifference, ‘because it has always been the Liberals who have gone to war. It is *because* it is a Liberal Government that it *will* declare war’. And of course, as we all know, a Liberal Government *did* declare it. Within a few days of the period of those country house conversations Great Britain was at war, within a year so Britain had become so many Heartbreak Houses; and the British Empire, covered in blood, was gasping its way through an immense and disastrous war, upon which it should have never entered” (Lewis 1967, p. 57-8-9).

Unlike Lewis’ observations on Ford seeming “bored”, rather Ford’s forward-facing mourning can be detected. He does not simply worry about the upcoming war; for him, the war has already begun, and he is mourning for the future losses already. Expectancy towards such a catastrophic event would make keeping calm highly unlikely. Yet, worry does not disappear with the ending of the war. Francis O’Gorman’s insights confirm this, as worry becomes “well established in the West” after the Great War (O’Gorman 2015, p. 38). The dominant worry becomes evident in both spheres of the war: the battle and the home. Soldiers worry over their lives and the lives of their comrades. The war is much harder for the worrisome Tietjens. “The lonely buffalo outside the herd” becomes a comrade

of his fellow men. Sylvia expresses her astonishment at observing this change: “She had never seen Tietjens put his head together with any soul before: he was the lonely buffalo. . . . Now! Anyone: any fatuous staff-officer, whom at home he would never so much as have spoken to: any trustworthy beer-sodden sergeant, any street urchin dressed up as orderly. . . .” (Ford 2011b, p. 178). Tietjens, the isolated individual who is beset with worry about his personal life and the future of his nation, is now confined to the trenches. He is in close contact with other individuals—something not experienced in his life-time—but now becomes worried about his fellow soldiers. Sylvia observes his concern: “They had only to appear and all his mind went into close-headed conference over some ignoble point in the child’s game: the laundry, the chiropody, the religions, the bastards. . . .of millions of the indistinguishable. . . . Or their deaths as well!” (Ford 2011b, p. 178). An incredible transformation takes place, in which Tietjens becomes this sociable companion who cares about the troubles of his fellow soldiers. Tietjens seizes the worry in his fellow soldiers’ faces, and it is compared to a cloud of dust in the narrative: “Like dust: like a cloud of dust that would approach and overwhelm a landscape: every one with preposterous troubles and anxieties, even if they did not overwhelm you personally with them. . . . Brown dust. . . .” (Ford 2011b, p. 43). Ford usually uses cloud imagery as in the “cloud of the dead”. The choice to use an expression of death along with worry signals the inseparable connection between them. Within this loss-filled atmosphere, worry over being killed dominates the narrative and continually feeds the sentiment of losses.

This hard-to-express, not-easily-communicated worry booms after the Great War and rises to the surface. The emergence of self-help books for overcoming worry in post-war Britain confirms that society was trying to get to grips with its anxiety. O’Gorman argues that “as worry began to appear on the book shelves, it was ironically clear that it was here to stay” (O’Gorman 2015, p. 33). So once worry—“a part of our underground life”—is brought to surface, it captures the mind of the individual even more (O’Gorman 2015, p. 10). Ford seems to be aware of this paradoxical predicament. Ford, a worrier himself, is not concerned with finding a solution to overcoming worry, but he knows the best possible way of dealing with it, and this is what he reflects in *Parade’s End*. He chooses to represent worry discreetly, not openly. Even though worry seems to be easy to talk about, or to notice as more of a conscious face of anxiety, it still requires an effort to bring it to the surface from the hidden corners of the mind. O’Gorman argues that “Worry’s a part of individuality, a feature of the inner life, about which we hardly dare talk. [. . .] The inner life of worry is one of discomfort, awkwardness, a loss of focus, a sense of dislocation, and an inability to accept the logic of the ‘most likely’ in the eddies of faith in the improbable” (xvii). Ford is aware that “to think about worry is to look beneath often polished surfaces and probe layers of camouflage” (O’Gorman 2015, p. 49). His characters in the tetralogy reflect this awareness. O’Gorman discusses the ways in which worry is experienced, especially in the time period between the two World Wars, yet not analysed accordingly. Ford, in a way, undertakes this task of attempting to “recover the histories of ordinary mental pain that aren’t lost but occluded” (O’Gorman 2015, p. 49).

Ruminations on why Ford chooses the word worry over anxiety make more sense when viewed in the light of Clayton’s observations on the anxiety of modernist writers. Anxiety becomes a force trapping the individual into melancholia. For Ford to combine different expressions of grief, he needs to have a feeling that would focus on not only undefinable loss but something that would relate to specific losses as well. Anxiety becomes a reaction to an incomprehensible sense of loss. Clayton argues in a similar way while addressing the anxiety of modern writers and defines it as the “experience of being a fragile or empty self in an empty world” (Clayton 1991, p. 6). He argues that their art is a response to this anxiety, and shapes their “gesture of healing” (Clayton 1991, p. 6). We can list a number of reasons for worry within the tetralogy: war, death, sufferings, marital troubles, and social changes. Ford does not deny the inexplicable angst caused in relation to modernity, but relates this rather to melancholia. With mournfulness, he picks worry, as there are specific things to be sad about.

4. Theoretical Texts

Theoretical texts on worry help us to investigate the possible reasons for Ford's choice of the word worry instead of similar terms, like anxiety or nervousness. In the preface to *Worry and Its Psychological Disorders: Theory, Assessment and Treatment*, Graham C.L. Davey and Adrian Wells discuss the everydayness of worry experienced by every individual to some degree (Holaway et al. 2006, p. xv). Examining the "normality of worry", that can transform into a "pervasive daily activity" and grow into "a source of extreme emotional discomfort", the authors explain that worry can be directed towards "major life issues" and "minor day-to-day issues", and is "uncontrollable" (Holaway et al. 2006, p. xv). It is this quality of worry that Ford deploys to represent the daily and general troubling incidents of his characters. Furthermore, Davey and Wells see the nature of worry as the "cardinal diagnostic feature of generalised anxiety disorder", which is seen to be the main factor for many anxiety disorders, such as "phobias, obsessive compulsive disorder, panic disorder, and PTSD" (Holaway et al. 2006, p. xv). Holaway, Rodebaugh, and Heimberg state that worry's crucial feature is the "anxious apprehension for future, negative events", which coincides with Ford's main triggering effect of the unending sufferings (Holaway et al. 2006, p. 3).⁴ A lot of which can be traced back to his own life, as he says, "I have suffered much, and shall probably continue to suffer much", which demonstrates a faculty for expecting the worst, which is present in his characters (Ford 1907, p. 144). He demonstrates his characters' anxiety for the future, which is mostly associated with a nervousness angst related to death. In *A Man Could Stand Up*—, the awaited strafe impacts Tietjens physically and psychologically. When sounds are heard they are taken as a signal for the artillery: "Tietjens' heart stopped; his skin on the nape of the neck began to prickle: his hands were cold" (Ford 2011a, p. 100). His mouth fills "with a dreadful salty flavour", the back of his tongue becomes dry, and his chest and heart "labours heavily" (Ford 2011a, p. 130). The fear increases to such an extent that it blocks his capability to think, and he worries about losing his reason (Ford 2011a, p. 100). He imagines himself to be hearing "the wings of the angel of death" (Ford 2011a, p. 101).

The anticipation of death asserts itself in this third volume more as Tietjens is seen constantly calculating his chances of being hit by a shell in the trenches as if solving an ordinary mathematics problem. No feelings are attached to his discussion on death; it is simply numerical and logical: "Still, the chances against a hit by a rifle-bullet were eighty thousand to one in a deep gravel trench like that. And he had had poor Jimmy Johns killed beside him by a bullet like that. So that gave him, say, 140,000 chances to one against. He wished his mind would not go on and on figuring" (Ford 2011a, p. 73). He cannot control his mind from pondering death; he compares his mind to a dog that you leave in a room and tell to stay in a corner, but then it moves elsewhere. Along with his calculations, he recalls the death of a fellow soldier, his logical thinking containing little emotion. In the same way that he calculates his chances of being shot, Tietjens also looks around him and speculates which of the soldiers will be killed: "Ghostly! Well, they had all been killed: and more on to that" (Ford 2011a, p. 71). Not only fixated on imagining the slaughter of his fellow soldiers, he is also obsessed with his own condition. Tietjens is certain that he will be wounded, and this certainty is to such a degree that he speculates on the exact spot of the wound, "behind the collar-bone" (Ford 2011a, p. 73) Tietjens is so obsessed with this imagined physical wound and worrying over this that he neglects his existing psychological wounds.

The other characters are also fighting a battle against worry in this third volume of the book. Ford uses them to demonstrate a range of worries, stemming from monetary to war-related reasons. Mackenzie displays anxieties over various money-related troubles. He would feel much better if "he had only his pay and an extravagant wife to keep" (Ford 2011a, p. 44). Yet, he refers to his complicated situation as his "funeral" (Ford 2011a, p. 44). Later, we encounter Levin, whose worry reaches a peak in this section due to the fear of getting killed: "Colonel Levin let air lispily out between his teeth. 'No. 16 Draft not off yet... Dear, dear! Dear, dear!... We shall be strafed to hell by First Army...'"

(Ford 2011a, p. 48). He becomes the doomsayer, announcing the likely deaths of them all. Levin internalises his worries too deeply, such that his physical features are read as reflecting his troubled self by his fellows: “And here was Levin with the familiar feminine-agonized wrinkle on his bronzed-alabaster brow. . .” (Ford 2011a, p. 50). He becomes fully immersed in this anxious mood, both physically and psychologically. Levin triggers the suppressed worries of Tietjens, and “consternation” rushed upon them, “the weight upon the mind” becomes like “a weight upon the brows” (Ford 2011a, p. 51). Levin’s reactions dig out Tietjens’ buried anxieties and bring them to the surface. With the waiting for the upcoming strafe and the fear of death, Ford introduces mist again, which purports mournfulness. The characters experience the expected strafe and death as if they were taking place before they actually do, due to high levels of worry. Thus, suffering conquers the characters mentally and physically, causing them to mourn in advance.

Sylvia becomes another victim of worry. She is at the war zone to torment Tietjens, but instead of being the torturer, she becomes the tortured—she is in near panic as the bombardment occurs near the hotel. Seizing the worry in which Tietjens is involved affects her too, so she exclaims in “sudden and complete despair” that Tietjens’ lack of intention to live at Groby means that he intends on getting himself killed (Ford 2011a, p. 170). This realisation startles her, yet she gives a sadistic Sylvian reaction to this and warns Tietjens that, if he is killed, she will cut down the Groby tree (Ford 2011a, p. 170). She is suppressing her worries over Tietjens’ being killed in her own sadistic way. Yet, seeing Tietjens’ reaction to that, “He winced: he certainly winced at that”, she regrets torturing someone who is already under a lot of pressure (Ford 2011a, p. 170). By disclosing the worries of various characters, Ford demonstrates the commonness of this feeling, and the dominance it has in the overall tetralogy.

Unlike anxiety, in “Worry and Rumination: Styles of Persistent Negative Thinking in Anxiety and Depression”, Costas Papageorgiou explains that worry is a “common mental activity in both clinical and non-clinical populations” (Papageorgiou 2006, p. 21). As Purdon and Harrington explain, worry “typically concerns negative future events and is an attempt to avoid negative outcomes or prepare for the worst” (Purdon and Harrington 2006, p. 41). Worry is “a closely associated consequence of anxious apprehension” (Papageorgiou 2006, p. 41).

In *Worry and Nervousness or The Science of Self-Mastery*, William S. Sadler discusses worry in relation to the paradigms of “forethought” and “fearthought”. He sees forethought as being very useful for the smooth running of daily events (Sadler 1914, p. 52). However, he defines the latter as “nothing more or less than a process of borrowing trouble from the future for the purpose of augmenting our present sorrows”, stating that it “harasses the mind, tortures the soul, while it so effectively dissipates the mental energies and weakens the nervous forces” (Sadler 1914, p. 52). Ford’s texts borrow troubles from the past and future to combine them with today’s distresses. His way of handling thinking, as observed in his characters, does not present a healthy forethinking, it is always fearthinking, regardless of being fixated on the past, present, or future. His way of handling thinking generates a blurred line between forethinking and fearthinking. Thoughts about the future trigger worrisome contemplations. The characters’ cynicism is not always pessimism; however, the line between those is never clear.

5. On Trauma

In *Worlds of Hurt*, Kali Tal discusses the alteration of the meaning of signs related to individual traumatic experiences (Tal 1996, p. 16). She examines how words like “blood, terror, agony and madness” are defined differently by trauma survivors. These words seem to mean the same thing to people who have not experienced trauma, but for traumatized individuals, they have different connotations. These meanings are only discovered through the cry of survivors whose “words can only evoke the incomprehensible” (Tal 1996, p. 16). For them, for example, “hunger, thirst, fear, humiliation, waiting, death” carry “different realities” (Tal 1996, p. 16). This can be seen as “the ultimate tragedy of the victims” (Tal 1996, p. 16).

Ford observes fear as the core emotion in war writing, which authors draw on to narrate trauma. Fear is associated more with danger; what Ford wants to put at stake in his trauma narrative is more the expectation that worse things might happen. By switching fear for worry, he does show that there is a continuous feeling that bothers the soldiers and from which recovery is very hard, as it does not come to an end with the ending of the war.

The *Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry* selects feelings of “intense fear, helplessness, loss of control, and threat of annihilation” as the shared factors of psychological trauma (Herman 1992, p. 33). Trevor Dodman regards the telling of trauma in relation to World War I as a struggle of naming and describing (Dodman 2015, p. 52). He lists various ways of naming the trauma, as follows:

Insanity. Madness. Lunacy. Cowardice. Desertion. Funk. Epilepsy. Effort Syndrome. DAH (Disordered Action of the Heart). GPI (General Paralysis of the Insane). GOK (God Only Knows). Hysteria. Neurasthenia. Psychasthenia. Wounds of Consciousness. Dementia Praecox. Soldier’s Heart. Malingering. Skrim-Shanking. Skulking. NYDN (Not Yet Diagnosed Nervous). Traumatic Neurosis. Psychoneurosis. Anxiety Neurosis. War Neurosis. Battle Strain. Battle Shock. Commotional Shock. Emotional Shock. Shell Shock (Sickness). Shell Shock (Wounded). Shock, Shell. Shell-shock. Shell Shock. (Dodman 2015, p. 52).

Dodman argues that *Parade’s End* becomes a unique novel pursuing “these definitional crises, these debates over naming, these twists and turns in the ‘evolution’ of shell shock discourses” like no other World War I novel (Dodman 2015, p. 52). Ford’s methodology of addressing trauma brings a different perspective to Dodman’s list of naming trauma: exposing the inner shock of the mind; addressing the repressed nature of the tortured souls and their struggles to find a medium to speak their sufferings.

Ford sees the narration of war as a “delicate task”. Being aware of this, he is cautious not to exaggerate the level of horror in his narration as that would in fact undermine the effect on the reader. Ford applies the same treatment to braveries; overstressing them would create a contrary effect on the reader (Ford 2011b, p. 4). A plethora of war scenes with brutal descriptions would diminish the effect he wants to create. This makes Ford’s war narration different from many war writings, in which the brutality of the war zone is explicitly described. Instead of showing the horrors in the battlefield, Ford discloses the horrors within the mind: the disastrous mind-set. Anxiety and suffering are seldom far from the minds of his characters. In a dedicatory letter to William Augustus Bird, the founder of the Three Mountains Press in Paris, while describing a base camp in France, Ford writes,

We were oppressed, ordered, counter-ordered, commanded, countermanded, harassed, strafed, denounced—and, above all, dreadfully worried. The never-ending sense of worry, in fact, far surpassed any of the ‘exigencies of troops actually in contact with enemy forces,’ and that applied not merely to the bases, but to the whole field of military operations. Unceasing worry! (Ford 2011b, pp. 3–4).

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Notes

- ¹ Peter Childs lists the birth pains of the new century: “The emergence of the New Woman [—like *Parade’s End’s* Valentine], the peak and downturn of the British Empire, unprecedented technological change, the rise of the Labour Party, the appearance of factory-line mass production, war in Africa, Europe and elsewhere” (15).
- ² Haslam discusses the importance of the 18th century for Ford in “From Conversation to Humiliation: *Parade’s End* and the Eighteenth Century” (Haslam 2014, p. 39).
- ³ “Ford’s interest in the instabilities and uncertainties of modernity as well as in psychological responses to that very sense of insecurity began well before 1914. He suffered the first of a number of nervous breakdowns in 1904 and was treated in a series of sanatoria in Austria”. (Chantler and Hawkes 2015, p. 5).

- ⁴ “One of the first attempts to define worry” was provided by Borkovec, Robinson, Pruzinsky and DePree in the following way: “Worry is a chain of thoughts and images, negatively affect-laden and relatively uncontrollable; it represents an attempt to engage in mental problem-solving on an issue whose outcome is uncertain but contains the possibility of one or more negative outcomes; consequently, worry relates closely to the fear process” (Borkovec et al. 1983, p. 9).

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