

**LIFE'S A MUTHA!: MOTHERHOOD, MELANCHOLIA, AND THE LOSS
OF THE SELF IN *ANN VERONICA* BY H. G. WELLS AND *ALIEN
RESURRECTION* BY JEAN PIERRE JEUNET¹**

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Every story that begins with original innocence and privileges the return to wholeness imagines the drama of life to be individuation, separation, the birth of the self, the tragedy of autonomy. [...] These plots are ruled by a reproductive politics [...]. In this plot women are imagined either better or worse off, but all agree they have less selfhood, weaker individuation, more fusion to the oral, to Mother, less at stake than masculine autonomy but there is another route to having less at stake in masculine autonomy. [...] It passes through women and present-tense, illegitimate cyborgs, not of Woman born, who refuse the ideological resources of victimization so as to have a real life.²

This paper will explore the themes of motherhood and melancholia as they are seen in the novel *Ann Veronica* by H. G. Wells and the film *Alien Resurrection* (1997) by Jean-Pierre Jeunet and show that although the texts are separated by almost ninety years there are some surprising similarities between them.³ Further to this I want to show how the differing natures of the concluding melancholic states of both of the main characters, Ann Veronica and Ellen Ripley respectively, are predicated on the acceptance or refusal of the socially proscribed role of Mother. The understanding of melancholia I shall begin with is based on that posited by Sigmund Freud in his paper *Mourning and Melancholia* and where he sees this state specifically as the loss of a love object which 'drains the ego to the point of complete impoverishment'.⁴ However I shall then contrast, or extend, this definition with a consideration of Judith Butler's work that sees such loss as a 'not

¹ This conflates the central role of Motherhood within the two texts and the colloquial derogatory usage of the term 'Mutha Fucka!' to denote someone or something in a negative aspect.

² Donna Haraway, 'A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century', in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (London: Free Association, 1991), 128.

³ Here the notion of a text is seen not just as one of the written word but in the sense postulated by Ferdinand Saussure, see *Writings in General Linguistics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006) and further developed by Roland Barthes in *Mythologies* (London: Vintage Classic, 2000), where it is a form of 'collective representation' as sign-systems (9). As such all, and any, cultural expression can constitute a 'text' though my usage here is also predicated upon a progressive and accumulative structure of meaning as put forward by Mieke Bal in *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), where a fundamental narrative structure underpins in form of story telling regardless of medium; *Alien Resurrection*, dir. Jean Pierre Jeunet (20th Century Fox; 1997).

⁴ Sigmund Freud, 'Mourning and Melancholia', in *The Penguin Freud Reader* (London: Penguin Books, 2006), 319-20.

knowing' that creates an indeterminacy that produces a melancholic space of negotiation.⁵

Whilst *Ann Veronica* and *Alien Resurrection* are seemingly disparate texts, with one being set at the turn of the twentieth century and the other in the distant future, the central characters of each participate in similar journeys of self-discovery but also in the possible creation of a unique identity against the acceptable role of women as predicated by the societies within which they live. *Ann Veronica* achieves this through the undertaking of various acts of rebellion against the strictures of expected late Victorian/early Edwardian feminine behaviour. These are deemed as decidedly unseemly for a young woman by both her Father and her Aunt, who act as symbols of wider society at large, and culminate with her affair with a married man and their eventual marriage. Similarly Ellen Ripley, whom I shall call Ripley8 from now on as she is in fact the eighth clone of the original Ripley, inverts normalised hegemonic roles of the patriarchal society that created her, and becomes more 'manly' than the men that surround her, and subsequently discovers her true self in opposition to the strictures of the male society that previously defined her.⁶

Appropriately enough the pivotal points in both texts come right at the end acting as 'punctums' that focus and change the meaning of all that has gone before and all that will happen in the future.⁷ As such the texts have the impression of the end that leaves you hanging, an anticipatory desire towards a further, or final, instalment which configures something of a potentialised state leaving the protagonists final character and identity open to negotiation. Wells, however, subsequently collapses such expectations in his book *Marriage* from 1912, where we see a mature Ann appearing as Mrs. Godwin Capes, 'the dark haired, quiet mannered wife of the dramatist, a woman of impulsive speech and long silences, who had subsided from an early romance [...] into a markedly correct and exclusive mother of daughters'.⁸ Ripley8, in contrast, disappears without a trace, beyond the radar of humanity, monsters, and the continuing *Alien* franchise seemingly outside any normalised narrative framework that would try to define her.⁹ However, before endings there are beginnings and to see what both Ann and

⁵ Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (Verso, London, 2004), 22.

⁶ Within the film gender is constructed somewhat one dimensionally with women being shown as both sexual or silently passive objects and men as being highly 'macho' and physically active. Ripley8 configures a category beyond both of these.

⁷ For a fuller explanation of a punctum see Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000).

⁸ H. G. Wells, *Marriage* (New York: Duffield, 1914), 417.

⁹ There is continuing speculation that the rumours of Ripley's death are greatly exaggerated and that Sigourney Weaver can be tempted to 'resurrect' the intrepid lieutenant just one more time.

Ripley⁸ undergo before reaching the dénouements of their respective developments I shall now turn to where each story starts.

Miss Ann Veronica Stanley comes from a very typical turn of the century 'Home Counties' suburban setting, constructed of tea parties and badminton rackets which exemplifies both the suffocating strictures of tradition and the desires it necessarily represses and disavows. As observed by Margaret Drabble in the introduction to the 2005 Penguin Edition of the novel, 'it is the very pleasantness of life in the Avenue that stifles Ann [...] and from which she is obliged to escape. She is not portrayed as one of nature's rebels. She is a 'nice' girl: when a nice girl transgresses, the shock is greater.'¹⁰ This reveals some of Wells's intention in showing Ann as a prototype 'New Woman' but one who is driven by instinct rather than intellect.¹¹ As she exclaims to Gordon Capes, her married lover, when he asks her if she sees sex 'as belonging to our Higher Nature or our Lower,' she replies 'I don't deal in Higher things, I tell you' (*AV*, 246). In fact, her subsequent story is driven by such innate desires; unafraid of her own sexuality she possesses it and herself in ways that were taboo to woman at the beginning of the twentieth century. Whereas sexual equality and universal suffrage were largely contested on intellectual grounds, Wells, unlike many of his contemporaries, saw it as an obvious evolutionary progression. It is further noted by Drabble that '[Ann] inhabits a world of Darwinian speculation and what we now call socio-biology, where the destiny of women is only one of the many mysteries to be explored.'¹² Even upon being indecently accosted by 'a lustful Ramage' she

¹⁰ H. G. Wells, *Ann Veronica*, ed. Sita A. Schütt (London: Penguin, 2005), xiii-xxxiii (xix). This view of her humdrum background and surprising transformation is seen in a review of the period in *The New York Times* from 22 October 1909 where it states 'Ann Veronica is a young woman of respectably dull parentage [...] she is wholesome [and] charming in the clear eyed fashion of modern college girls.' Which contrasts sharply with her later development which is depicted, by another reviewer in *The North American Review*, 190 (1909), thus 'of traditional maidenliness there is no whit left, and Ann Veronica, with her course in jiu-jitsu, her advanced work in a biological laboratory is well able to look after herself, choose her mate and defy the world' (837-8).

¹¹ The concept of the 'New Woman' was a feminist ideal that appeared in the late nineteenth century and which saw women push against the societal constraints that had previously been imposed upon them. Feminist writer Winnifred Harper Cooley, in *The New Womanhood* (New York: Broadway, 1904), wrote that 'the finest achievement of the new woman has been personal liberty' (31) – a view which Wells reinforces in *Ann Veronica*, which in turn is seen as a novel of the New Woman movement; here Ann's feminism is more instinctual than knowingly political; for *The New York Times* (see above), she is 'a very marvellous creature, compelling admiration mixed with a sort of intellectual awe, by the audacity of her acceptance of the primitive things away from which man... had spent so many centuries in training her.'

¹² Margaret Drabble, 'Introduction', *Ann Veronica* (London: Penguin, 2005), xiii-xxxiii (xxix). Wells himself, in a rather essentialist evolutionary reading, saw women's unique function as being the producers of the next generation of the species. This should privilege them to a level of independence from men. As noted by William J. Hyde, in 'The Socialism of H. G. Wells in the Early Twentieth Century', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 17 (1956), 217-34, Wells's political stance saw that 'The mother and children are released from all economic dependence on the father [...] [and] the mother is freed from the dire conditions of having children in her 'spare time' while

is more excited by his desire than scared for her own well being. Her subsequent liaison, as a biology student at Imperial College, with her brilliant tutor Capes, is almost an evolutionary inevitability. Ann's transgression is to take matters into her own hands and decide for herself what she wants to be rather than wait for the society of the new century to decide for her. As described by her friend, Hetty Widgett, in the appropriately titled chapter 'Ann Veronica Gathers Points of View,' the role of women and the New Woman in particular, is held in stasis:

They used to marry us off at seventeen [...]. They don't now [...] we have to hang about in the interval [...] nobody's got any plans what to do with us. So the world is choked with waste and waiting daughters. Hanging about! And they start thinking and asking questions, and begin to be neither on thing or the other. We're partly human beings and partly females in suspense. (*AV*, 35)

This expresses Wells's belief 'that the difficulties experienced by women stemmed from their being at a point of transition between Victorian patriarchy and emancipation.'¹³ Ann, though, is not prepared to wait for such outside pronouncements and so acts as she feels instinctually led. However, the greatest transgression comes in the fact that there is no divine judgement cast upon her actions, as explained by Jane Lewis: 'Ann Veronica initiates a sexual relationship with an older man; she feels it perfectly natural to do so and has fun doing it. Furthermore, she is not punished.'¹⁴

Whilst eliding such 'punishment' Ann does inevitably face choices, as will Ripley⁸ later, and these come with great personal consequences. This dénouement comes four years and four months after the protagonists escape to Switzerland and Ann and Capes are now married. Within the duration of the trip she has changed from a 'new woman' into 'a' woman and as described in the book:

Ann Veronica was nearly half an inch taller; her face was at once stronger and softer, her neck firmer and rounder, and her carriage definitely more womanly than it had been in the days of her rebellion. She was a woman now to the tips of her fingers. (*AV*, 282)

earning a living, and her main function in society is recognized with full pay' (222). This function is, of course, childbirth. However, Wells's personal inclinations, though not antithetical to this, were towards the necessity of sexual relations to sustain a successful and productive work ethic. Nancy Steffen-Fluhr, in 'Paper Tiger: Women and H. G. Wells,' in *Science Fiction Studies*, 12 (1985), 311-29, quotes Wells from *H. G. Wells in Love: Postscript to an Experiment in Autobiography* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1984), 'To make love periodically [...] seems to be, for most of us, a necessary condition to efficient working' 315-6.

¹³ Jane Lewis, 'Intimate Relations between Men and Women: The Case of H. G. Wells and Amber Pember Reeves', in *History Workshop*, 37, (1994), 76-98 (89). See also Hyde, and Philip Coupland, 'H. G. Wells's "Liberal Fascism"', in *Journal of Contemporary History*, 35 (2000), 541-58.

¹⁴ Lewis, 77.

The evolutionary quest for equality and individual expression that took place in the earlier stages of the novel would appear to have been completed, thus accomplishing the goals of the Wellsian Utopia, as noted by Jane Lewis:

Female utopians were to be offered a measure of economic independence via a state scheme for mothers' endowment, but not sexual freedom. Marriage contracts would still insist on the wife's fidelity (but not the husbands) for the sake of race and nation, although women would be allowed to initiate divorce. Female Samurai, Wells's 'voluntary nobility' in the new state, would have to bear children.¹⁵

Although originally centred upon constructing her own sense of self, ultimately the Darwinian imperative as envisioned by Wells is bound to, not only the continuance of the species, but the nation state. Ann's maturation then becomes a finding of herself through re-integration. This is shown through her acceptance back into her family, and society as a whole, and is further signified by her being pregnant, which explicitly requires her to take on the roles of both wife and Mother above and beyond any other expressions of self or individuality. This acceptance though is not total and the vestiges of her earlier instincts of personal expression linger. As Drabble notes, 'she fears she is about to dwindle into a mother [and that] her maternal role will subsume her identity' (*AV*, xxx).¹⁶ The anxiety she feels at such a possible loss of selfhood is born out by Ann's overly emphatic declaration, 'I'm greedy, I'm greedy! I want children like the mountains and life like the sky.' That this sudden outburst of maternal longing is strangely off kilter is emphasized by the preceding lines where she says: 'I suppose all *is* well that ends well. Somehow tonight – I don't know [...] I've been wanting to cry all evening... Silly woman...I've never had these crying fits before' (*AV*, 292). Ann cannot suppress her innate feeling of loss in her acceptance of motherhood, and as a consequence the sense of identity and self that she created through her period of rebellion is going to be subsumed by her fulfilling the 'woman's role' which, according to Richard Costa, 'is still what the Victorians decreed; a biological one.'¹⁷ As such Ann even doubts the assurances of the author himself where Wells sees voluntary subjugation as not 'incompatible with freedom and equality'.¹⁸ She would seem to be at odds with both the outcome of her journey of self discovery and with the

¹⁵ Lewis, 79, see also Hyde.

¹⁶ See also John Huntington, 'Utopian and Anti-Utopian Logic: H. G. Wells and His Successors (Logique utopique et anti-utopique; H. G. Wells et sa descendance)' in *Science Fiction Studies*, 9: Utopia and Anti-Utopia (1982), 122-46, where he quotes Wells's *A Modern Utopia*, London: Chapman & Hall, 1905, as proposing 'the treatment of motherhood as a service to the state' (142). As a consequence, this makes it something of a collective imperative rather than the prerogative of the individual.

¹⁷ Richard Hauer Costa, *H. G. Wells* (New York: Twayne, 1967), 93.

¹⁸ Lewis, 92.

words that come out of her mouth. In finding her Wellsian, evolutionary self she has lost her individual self.

It is this loss of self which creates the melancholic state at the end of *Ann Veronica*. Her unique identity, which can be configured as equivalent to the Freudian ‘love object,’ is lost and seemingly gone forever. This is a presentiment that is born out by her reappearance in *Marriage* three years later, where she returns, as mentioned earlier, as ‘a markedly correct and exclusive mother of daughters’ (*Marriage*, 417). In *Mourning and Melancholia* Freud sees melancholia as being created by the loss of the love object, a state that can only be dispelled by its being replaced by another love object. This possibility is intimated here by Wells, as the loss of Ann’s individual self will subsequently be replaced by motherhood, a reading encouraged by Liem Limanta in ‘The Feminism and Femininity of Ann Veronica’ where he says that ‘marriage and maternity do not become slavery for [Ann Veronica] but her fulfilment as a free, mature, balanced adult female.’¹⁹ However, it is at this point that Ann feels the ‘punctum,’ or ‘prick’ of a future that she will never have, that disavows any such replacement. The loss she feels at this juncture negates the possibility of it being totally filled by any other object and so she cannot escape what Freud sees as the ‘complex of melancholia [that] behaves like an open wound drawing investment energies to itself from all sides’ (‘Mourning’, 319-20), a void of loss that will never be fully filled and will only ever make less all that gets drawn into it. By taking up the role of mother Ann Veronica loses the love object of her unique individual identity, one that cannot be replaced by accepting the proscribed role of motherhood. In allowing her self to be defined only by her biological function, and a Wellsian evolutionary imperative, she enters a wound of melancholia that will never allow her to leave.

Alien Resurrection was released in 1997 and is the fourth, and, so far, final encounter between Lieutenant Ellen Ripley and the Alien. Although it primarily takes place on the spaceships *The Auriga* and *The Betty*, its *mise-en-scène*, from the womb-like craft to the culminating ruined body of Mother Earth, is in fact the sexualised feminine body. As mentioned earlier Ripley8 is in reality the eighth clone of the original Lieutenant Ellen Ripley that first appeared in Ridley Scott’s *Alien* of 1979. She has been grown from recovered DNA, from the Ripley who died in a vat of molten lead, mid Alien birth, at the end of *Alien 3* and has only been created so that United Systems Military can harvest the Queen Alien that was incubating inside her at the time of her death.²⁰ As such Ripley8 is born of the male

¹⁹ Liem Satya Limanta, ‘The Feminism and Femininity of Ann Veronica in H. G. Wells’ *Ann Veronica*’, *Keta*, 4 (2002), 16.

²⁰ *Alien*, dir. Ridley Scott (20th Century Fox: 1979), *Alien 3*, dir. David Fincher (20th Century Fox: 1992).

society that created her, and indeed the scene, early in the film, of them removing the baby Alien from her chest looks like a flaccid penis being removed, an attempt to ‘emasculate’ the domineering Ripley of the earlier films.²¹ This scene is inverted later in the film when Ripley8 repossess both her ‘balls’ and her own identity by taking control of the Auriga, which is also known as ‘Father’. This sense of self-ownership that Ripley8 develops during the course of the narrative leaves her in a curiously motherless state, not unlike that of Ann Veronica who is seen to be motherless. Thus it produces a strange limbo state where she effectively becomes her own mother. This positioning is configured as equivalent to that of the Alien Queen that was shown to share the same DNA as her and so, even though engineered by men (the medical crew of the Auriga are shown to be predominately male), she can be seen, on some level, to be her own creation. Indeed this informs a large part of the film, as Ripley8 continually strives to learn who she is. As noted by Ximena Gallardo and Jason C. Smith, on emerging from the chrysalis from which she is born the ‘clone [Ripley8] does not seem to know herself and looks up, as if the answer to her identity lies somewhere above her cell.’²² This constructs her, not unlike Ann Veronica, as a predominately instinctual being, led by her ‘lower’ drives, or what Patricia Meltzer sees as ‘mindless striving which associates the alien [and subsequently Ripley8] with nature [...] a perfect organism, designed to survive’.²³ As such both women can be seen as involved in an almost Wellsian Utopianism and a process of evolutionary self discovery and development.²⁴ However, what Ripley8 proceeds to learn is that she is far superior to both the humans and the Aliens which both surround and try to define her.

As noted before, like Ann Veronica, it is not until the end of the narrative that Ripley8 has her decisive or ‘punctal’ moment. Whilst Ripley8 has inherited many characteristics of the Alien Queen, as shown by her increased strength, heightened senses and acid for blood, the reverse has also happened to the Alien Queen. The consequence of this is the integration of a human womb into the alien creature so that rather than producing eggs, as previously seen in the earlier films, she now gives birth to a fully formed Alien/human hybrid baby. This monstrous offspring, known as the ‘Newborn,’ is configured as both child and sibling to Ripley8. Its connectedness to her is shown, as noted by Catherine Constable, by its emerging

²¹ Whilst there is a sense here of the ‘emasculatation’ of second wave feminism as put forward by Imelda Whelehan in *Modern Feminist Thought from the 2nd wave to Post-Feminism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), within the film it is also predicated on a large dose of self-awareness by the French director and a knowing pastiche of the earlier configurations of Lt. Ripley in the film’s prequels.

²² Ximena Gallardo C. and Jason Smith, *Alien Woman: The Making of Lt. Ellen Ripley* (New York: Continuum, 2004), 166.

²³ Patricia Meltzer, *Alien Constructions: Science Fiction and Feminist Thought* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 116

²⁴ This sees both Ann Veronica and Ripley8 as sharing what Patrick Parminder in his article ‘Utopia and Meta-Utopia in H. G. Wells’, *Science Fiction Studies*, 12 (1985), sees as ‘Wells’s own understanding of man’s place in the cosmos,’ (126).

from the glutinous womb of the Alien Queen in a ‘translucent layer of mucus,’ establishing a mirroring to Ripley8’s earlier emergence from the membrane of the

chrysalis signalling her own birthing into the world.²⁵ The ‘Newborn’ subsequently spurns its birth parent, as did Ripley8 with the medical staff of the Auriga, and through smell identifies her as its true evolutionary, or natural, mother. Despite its monstrosity, and its alien otherness, Ripley8 also recognises the connection between them which consequently brings her to a similar dilemma as Ann Veronica: should she embrace the role of motherhood that is required of her or not?

However, the particular role offered to Ripley8 is somewhat more complicated than that which was offered to Ann. If she accepts the role of motherhood she would, by embracing such a monstrous child, seem to separate herself from humanity. She would, in fact, conform to the already existing hegemonic role of the monstrous female Other, as identified by Barbara Creed within the film ‘the monster as fetish-object of and for the mother. But it is the archaic mother, the reproductive/generative mother, who haunts the *mise-en-scène*.’²⁶ Catherine Belling further identifies this: ‘The monstrous in Alien [and the series] is maternal...which reveals the fundamental paradox of women’s relationship to patriarchal culture.’²⁷ As such the act that would in and of itself exclude her from humanity in general, and patriarchy in particular, would also see her conform to the hegemonic patriarchal proscription of her as inherently monstrous. In this way her proposed exclusion is actually its reverse, an act of inclusion that forces her into a proscribed role, rather than allowing for her own individual expression. Ripley8 resolves this by opening up a melancholic wound in the abject act of destroying her own child. This is achieved by her purposively cutting her hand on the creature’s teeth and using the resultant blood as the means of its termination: effectively using her own monstrous blood to destroy the product of her own monstrous blood, as configured in the ‘Newborn’. Upon embracing her child, she flicks her acid-blood on the window of the space craft they are in, which then eats through the glass creating a vacuum that sucks the creature out into space. This enacts a purposeful abortion of the child from the ‘womb-like’ craft, allowing Ripley8 to configure herself on her own terms.

²⁵ Catherine Constable, ‘Becoming the Monster’s Mother: Morphologies of Identity in the Alien Series,’ in *Alien Zone II: The Spaces of Science Fiction Cinema*, ed. Annette Kuhn (New York: Verso, 1999), 195.

²⁶ Barbara Creed, ‘Alien and the Monstrous Feminine.’ in *Alien Zone: Cultural Theory and Contemporary Science Fiction Cinema*, ed. Annette Kuhn (New York: Verso, 1990), 128.

²⁷ Catherine Belling, “‘Where Meaning Collapses’: Alien and the Outlawing of the Female Hero”, *Liberator*, 13 (1992), 39-40.

This act is twofold: firstly, it is an acceptance by Ripley8 of her innate Otherness, but as incorporation rather than introjection, where she recognises that she and the Monstrous/Alien Other are one.²⁸ This destabilizes the second part of

the act which is one of melancholic loss. If we can view Ann Veronica's loss as known and proscribed, then Ripley8's, in denying the inevitability of her future, becomes unknown and indeterminate. Such a state is described by Judith Butler where 'mourning would be maintained by its enigmatic dimension, by the experience of not knowing incited by losing what we cannot fully fathom.'²⁹ The punctum of Ripley8's loss, unlike Ann's, is not fully recognisable or realised in that moment and so the melancholic wound that is opened up becomes a space of negotiation rather than negation, where identity is continually reconfigured in relation to the past rather than eternally fixed by it.

In conclusion, I have argued that there are parallels between the characters of Ann Veronica and Ripley8 from their motherless beginnings to their 'mothered' conclusions; and that their ensuing melancholic states can be seen to be a result of loss enacted through the experience of either accepting or refusing the societally proscribed role of mother. Both have constructed identities that are predicated on an instinctual desire towards individuality and self expression that can be configured in relation to an evolutionary imperative or a Wellsian Utopia. However, the conflation of these two terms produces biological materialism that overrides intellectual feminine identity with a maternal default that is more patriarchal determinism than natural selection. As a result of this, both can be seen to open up a melancholic wound predicated on that society's view of maternity and femininity, but their respective contexts dictate possible parameters of such a fissure. For Ann, the predicament is determined by the notion that women are first and foremost defined by their sex; this is seen both in her appearance in *Ann Veronica's* sequel, *Marriage*, where, as mentioned before, she is described as the 'exclusive mother of daughters' but also in Wells's own political views of women which, as explained by William J. Hyde, sees 'motherhood...[as] a public service.'³⁰ In the nature of hegemonic modernism women cannot escape the inevitability of their proscribed roles. Hence, for Ann, the wound is one that, whilst open, is fully realised allowing only for psychic energies to be drawn in creating a situation of stasis and reification.

Conversely, Ripley8 is specifically configured to invert societal conventions. Her disavowal of the system that created her means she becomes as much her own invention as that of the society of 'fathers' around her. By aborting her baby she goes beyond social proscription turning her loss into, not so much a wound but, a

²⁸ For a fuller description of the differences between incorporation and introjection see Christopher Lane, 'The Testament of the Other: Abraham and Torok's Failed Expiation of Ghosts', *Diacritics* 27 (1997), 3-29.

²⁹ Butler, 22.

³⁰ Hyde, 222.

melancholic 'womb' which creates a space of negotiation and possibility, rather than negating any potential for change; where the present is being continually reconfigured in relation to the past and possible futures. As such, then, Ann's future is set and the book of her future is written; but Ripley8's is fluid and malleable; she writes each word anew as she develops and changes. This is confirmed for Ann in Wells's later book *Marriage* where all her melancholic

presentiment is realised. In contrast, the indeterminacy and potential of Ripley8's future is shown in the last scene of *Alien Resurrection*. The Auriga has crashed into the surface of the Earth, destroying not only the crew and Aliens still on board but also a vast part of the 'home' world. We see Call, an android, and Ripley8 sitting on a hill overlooking the ruins of Paris. Call turns to Ripley8 and quizzically asks 'what happens now?' to which Ripley8 replies 'I don't know? ... I'm a stranger here myself!'