BEYOND DIALOGUE. DIFFERENT LITERARY AND ARTISTIC STRATEGIES TO
REPRESENT THE UNSPEAKABLE IN THREE FRANCOPHONE PLAYS: WAJDI
MOUAWAD'S *INCENDIES*, GROUPOV'S *RWANDA 94*, AND MILO RAU'S *HATE
RADIO*

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ALYSSA SMITH

Dr. Rangira Béa Gallimore, Dissertation Supervisor

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The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School, have examined the dissertation entitled

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RADIO*

presented by Alyssa Smith,

a candidate for the degree of doctor of philosophy,

and hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

Professor Rangira Béa Gallimore

Professor Suzanne Burgoyne

Professor Mary Jo Muratore

Professor Carol Lazzaro-Weis

This work would not have been possible without my family. I will be forever grateful for their invaluable and immeasurable support and encouragement.

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Introduction

The Shoah. The bombing of Hiroshima. Chernobyl. The 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. These instances are just a few examples of momentous events that define the 20th century, a period marked by disastrous occurrences including war and genocide. Such collective events, as well as instances of individual trauma, may be termed “limit events”, instances that challenge the limits of comprehension and are often characterized as “unspeakable”. They contain the possibility to alter world views and have prompted the creation of works that attempt to develop their representation. However, this resultant production has not occurred without sparking debate regarding the possibility and means of the representation of such events.

While some declare an acceptable depiction impossible due to the extremity and resultant potential incomprehensibility of the extreme events, still others contend that representation is not out of reach. This debate prompts the question driving this study: can artistic representation successfully represent the unspeakable? The three plays that constitute the focus of this study, Wajdi Mouawad’s *Incendies*, Groupov’s *Rwanda 94*, and Milo Rau’s *Hate Radio*, attempt to do so.

PLOT SUMMARIES AND HISTORICAL CONTEXTUALIZATION

The complex plot of *Incendies* develops a suspenseful investigation of the mysterious personal tragedy of the main character Nawal by a reworking of the Oedipus myth within a fictionalized historical framework. Although she falls silent under the burden of a double unspeakable of war and rape, Nawal imposes a quest upon twins Jeanne and Simon to find their brother and father, a task that leads them to discover their

mother's past and the truth of their origins. Scenes from Nawal's past in an unnamed country that resembles Lebanon overlap with scenes that feature the twins' efforts in the present, in Canada and later in the same unnamed country. Mouawad's use of poetic and symbolic representation within this context engenders the spectators' gradual apprehension of the double unspeakable. In this way, spectators learn of Nawal's forced abandonment of her son, separation from her love, and her involvement in a bloody civil war (inspired by events from the Lebanese civil war of the 1970s) that led to her imprisonment, torture, and incestuous rape that paralyzed her speech. As the play closes, all learn that Nawal's discovery that her torturer was her son and the father of the twins prompted her mutism. The unveiling of this information finally breaks the silence and concludes the quest for truth.

Rwanda 94 and *Hate Radio*, the other plays examined in this study, both represent the unspeakable of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. To understand the analysis of these plays, a historical overview of the genocide is necessary. Due to the fact that neither play contains a true plot, but rather a series of tableaux, it proves difficult to provide an effective summary. The historical background will permit an understanding of the ideas that are discussed, and questions that are raised, within the works to enlighten the descriptions of the plays that follow.

Historical Contextualization of the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi

On April 6, 1994, Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana's plane was shot down near the airport in Kigali. This instance initiated the country's genocide. Alison Des Forges explains:

Within hours, military, administrative and political authorities ordered the killing of leading members of parties opposed to Hutu Power and of Tutsi. Under the guidance of Colonel Bagosora and other Hutu Power officers and officials, a new interim government was installed. It included political leaders ready to implement a 'self-defence' plan that included widespread killing of Tutsi civilians. (47)

As Des Forges reveals, the government immediately set to undertake "ethnic cleansing" to eliminate the Tutsi and moderate Hutu. The directive was also diffused through various government-controlled forms of media such as newspaper and radio, the latter calling "on all Hutu to 'rise up as a single man' to defend their country in what was said to be the 'final' war" (Des Forges 48). In only three months, the Hutu majority killed almost 1,000,000 Tutsi. Gérard Prunier positions the staggering results of genocide within another perspective: "If we consider that probably around 800,000 people were slaughtered during that short period . . . the daily killing rate was at least five times that of the Nazi death camps" (261).

While Western media and the Rwandan government portrayed the genocide as a sudden and unforeseen event, numerous researchers have shown that its occurrence resulted from a long period of conditioning based upon ideas established by the colonial powers. Indeed, the tension between the Hutu and Tutsi that led to the 1994 genocide has its roots in the European presence in Rwanda during the pre-colonial and colonial era. The increasing disdain originated in large part due to the European anthropologists who developed certain classifications to label Rwandans as either Tutsi, Hutu, or Twa. These three terms were in use prior to their arrival, but their meaning differed. The original distinction between Tutsi and Hutu was not conceived in terms of ethnicity, but rather as

an indication of “*social castes*, based on material wealth” (Jones 348, emphasis in original). Although the Tutsi generally raised cattle and the Hutu worked as farmers, these social classes were “fluid” (Jones 348). In stark contrast, the Europeans used these classifications as indications of ethnicity. Their categorizations, founded upon physical description and personality indicators of the groups, posited the superiority of the Tutsi (Prunier 6).

The Hutu/Tutsi division was further deepened by the Europeans’ promulgation of inaccurate Rwandan history through their espousal of the Hamitic myth, the view that “depicted the Hutus as offspring of Ham, the black son of Noah, cursed by God and destined forever to serve as ‘hewers of wood and drawers of water’; and, by noble contrast, the Tutsi caste, descended from the Nilotic civilization of classical Egypt” (Jones 349). This belief claimed that the perceived superiority of the Tutsi population resulted from their origination outside Rwanda, and thus branded the Tutsi as foreigners (Prunier 7). The Church’s control over the education system permitted the propagation of the Westerners’ theory through Rwandan school lessons. (Caplan 20).

Gérard Prunier identifies the significance of the division of society and falsification of history upon the policies of the colonial administration and the Rwandans themselves. The views “ended by inflating the Tutsi cultural ego inordinately” and among the Hutu, it prompted “an aggressively resentful inferiority complex” (9) that, when placed alongside their minimal political power, led them to view themselves as inferior and as a result “hate *all* Tutsi” (39 emphasis in original). Indeed, we see the longstanding influence of the European categorization of Tutsi, Hutu, and Twa among colonizers and Rwandans as Belgian colonizers instituted the use of identity cards with

these classifications.¹ These cards later served as a means of identification of those to be eliminated during the genocide (Jones 350).

The fostering of differences and feelings of inequality generated hostility that led to the expression of violence launched against the Tutsi long before the genocide of 1994. As the Belgian colonial administration noticed that the Tutsis “moved to the forefront of the various anti-colonial initiatives” after World War II, it shifted its support from the Tutsis to the “less-educated, less-threatening” Hutu population, and the Catholic Church did the same (Jones 350). This change “unleashed pent-up Hutu frustrations, and led to the first proto-genocidal massacres of Tutsis” (Jones 350). Attacks on the Tutsi population took place in 1959, 1963, 1973, and 1992. These attacks took place “in total impunity” (Dauge-Roth 15), and it is perhaps this repeated toleration of bloodshed which contributed to the magnitude of violence exercised during the genocide.

Members of the Tutsi population left Rwanda in large numbers as a result of these massacres. Many fled to Uganda where a contingent formed the Front patriotique rwandais (FPR), or Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) in 1987 and “launched a military invasion of Rwanda” three years later (Jones 350). Adam Jones explains the undesirable results:

First, it brought immediate outside assistance to prop up the Habyarimana regime— from France, a country that had constructed its post-colonial role in Africa around support for *La Francophonie*, the network of French-speaking countries that Paris viewed as a bulwark against the “Anglo” influence typified by Uganda. French

¹ The Twa were traditionally forest dwellers and constituted a very small proportion of the population, around one percent (Twagilimana 219). They are rarely referenced in discussions on the 1994 genocide, but it has been noted that they participated in killing Tutsi (Twagilimana 220).

forces succeeded in stalling the RPF invasion, and they remained to train and advise the Hutu military and militias that would implement the 1994 genocide. Second, military conflict exacerbated the economic crisis in Rwanda. . . . Third, the invasion, with its abuses and atrocities against Hutu civilians, contributed to a growing climate of fear among ordinary Hutus, already deeply anxious after genocidal massacres of Hutus in next-door Burundi by the Tutsi-dominated armed forces there. (350-351)

The FPR invasion sparked additional “ethnic” tensions, as Gerald Caplan highlights when he notes that “[b]oth physical and rhetorical violence against the Tutsi continued to escalate” from that point forward (23).

Pro-Hutu propaganda efforts aimed at denigrating the Tutsi and eventually prompting attempts at their elimination included claims that they were of “foreign origin” (resulting from the influence of the Europeans), suggestions of their supposed unfair possession of wealth, and the assertion that they posed a dangerous threat to the Hutu population (Des Forges 45). These views endured through the formidable power of the nation’s radio personalities at the popular radio station Radio-Télévision Libre des Milles Collines (RTLM), pro-Hutu groups (i.e. Hutu power, the Interahamwe paramilitary forces) and even the publication of the “Hutu Ten Commandments”, a work of propaganda that outlined ways that the Hutu population should interact with the Tutsi population, with one notable claim being that the Tutsi “are dishonest in their business dealings. They are only seeking the supremacy of their own ethnic group” (S. Brown 468). The radio station RTLM exhibited an intensification of efforts to call for the removal of the Tutsi in the first few months of 1994 (Dallaire 18). Then, on April 6,

1994, the downing of Rwandan President Habyarimana's plane incited country-wide efforts to eliminate the Tutsi and moderate Hutu, the former declared to be responsible for his death.

For three months, those targeted for elimination were listed and systematically hunted down to be killed. Locations such as churches, which served as safe havens during the attacks prior to 1994, functioned instead as a center for killing (Jones 355). They no longer provided sanctuary but instead facilitated elimination given the concentration of individuals within one space during the genocide. Many members of the Catholic Church were also accomplices in the killing of Tutsi who took refuge in the church, and the Catholic Church as an institution was guilty for its silence.

Other major powers from the Western world, responsible for fostering the division between Tutsi and Hutu that led to the genocide, also influenced the extent of the event. Although individuals such as UN commander Major General Roméo Dallaire sought to inform his supervisors of the preparations for genocide and despite the fact that United States leaders (with an influential role in UN actions) were abreast of the events, adequate action was not taken (Caplan 25-26). Toward the end of the genocide, French authorities launched the mission "Operation Turquoise" in an effort to create a safe-zone amidst the violence, but its insufficiencies, including its assistance to the *génocidaires* (Caplan 29), have often been cited.

As the play *Rwanda 94* seeks to communicate, genocide is a crime against humanity and as such involves all of humanity. The lack of sufficient action by those in power therefore suggests responsibility in the events. As Caplan has explained, "a small number of major actors could have prevented, halted or reduced the slaughter" (29). This

intolerable reality influenced the creators of *Rwanda 94*, who aim to instruct Western spectators of the role of Western powers in the genocide. The removal of peacekeeping forces and a lack of international assistance contributed to the killing of between 800,000 and 1,000,000 Tutsi and moderate Hutu. The military forces of the FPR brought an end to genocidal killing with their victory in July 1994.

Since that time, many have adopted the term “1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda” to designate these events. Its use in published texts reflects the specificity of the situation. The acts of genocide were not leveled against all Rwandans. Rather, the aim was to eliminate a specific group amongst the population of all Rwandans, the Tutsi. The term has been accepted by the National Commission for the Fight against Genocide (Commission Nationale de Lutte contre le Génocide [CNLG]) and is used in this study.

Rwanda 94 Une tentative de réparation symbolique envers les morts, à l’usage des vivants (an attempt at symbolic reparation to the dead for use by the living) is a collective work created by Marie-France Collard, Jacques Delcuvellerie, Tharcisse Kalisa Rugano, Yolande Mukagasana, Jean-Marie Piemme, Dorcy Rugamba, and Mathias Simons. It is presented by the Belgian collective Groupov and directed by Jacques Delcuvellerie. The play is not driven by plot and resists classification by genre given its approach and composition. Through a mixture of media, techniques, and genres including testimony, poetry, music, fictional narrative, and historical lesson, the actors employ presentational acting (i.e. constantly facing and questioning the audience) so that spectators may learn of the truth of the event and questions that remain. The play’s experimental, polyphonic effort aims to accomplish the goal noted in its subtitle, “an

attempt at symbolic reparation to the dead for use by the living”. This driving force necessitates the act of remembering and subsequent memorialization which makes of the play as a whole a work of testimony about the genocide. The focus on reparation concomitantly imparts a Brechtian political dimension to the play that will be examined in Chapter 2, as Groupov aims to provide justice for victims and survivors. With this goal in mind, *Rwanda 94* fills the stage with Europeans and Rwandans, the latter both living and dead. As the dead intervene through various forms of media used during the performance, they rectify the (past) dissemination of inaccurate information and reclaim justice, incorporating humanity as an important element.

Radio and Genocidal Instigation

The last play considered in this study, Milo Rau’s *Hate Radio*, demonstrates the immense role played by the radio station Radio-Télévision Libre des Milles Collines (RTLM) as a machine of genocide during the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. For, as explained by the character of the journalist in *Hate Radio*, “a radio station in Rwanda is the voice of authority” (3). Given the number of Rwandans who could not read, many turned to the radio for news, contributing to its prevalence and usage both prior to and during the genocide. Indeed, it is estimated that there were between 400,000 and 500,000 receivers throughout the country at the time of the genocide on which station programming could be heard (Chalk).

Radio Rwanda, owned by the government, was one such station. In her essay “Call to Genocide: Radio in Rwanda, 1994”, Alison Des Forges explains that the use of radio to incite genocide began prior to the events of 1994. For instance, while telling

listeners that Tutsis would attack in Bugesera in 1992, Radio Rwanda called for listeners to preemptively defend themselves by attacking Tutsis.

While Radio Rwanda incited genocide, it was not the only station that commanded the airwaves. With the signing of the Arusha Accords in 1993, Radio Rwanda was forbidden from spreading propaganda. However, this led to the creation of another station, Radio-Télévision Libre des Milles Collines (RTLM) after the FPR initiated an opposition war that same year. Its name translates to “Thousand Hills Free Radio and Television”, referencing to the many hills that make up Rwanda. Although the incorporation of the term “free” (“libre”) suggests its existence as an independent station, it received financial assistance from the government-sponsored Radio Rwanda. RTLM began broadcasting on July 8, 1993 and continued to do so until July 3, 1994 (McDoom 138-139).

RTLM played an immense role as a machine of genocide in 1994 due in large part to what Des Forges terms its “populist approach” (44). She explains:

RTLM was also meant to reach out to the ordinary citizen in its programming. It aired the latest music, especially popular Congolese songs, while Radio Rwanda was still broadcasting old standard tunes. Unlike the official Radio Rwanda, which spoke in the ponderous tones of state officials, RTLM was informal and lively. (44)

These characteristics make the popularity of the station, and thus its massive influence in inciting the acts of genocide, understandable. Tension between the Tutsis and the Hutus existed prior to 1994, but when the presidential plane was shot down on April 6, the genocide against the Tutsis began.

Programming led by extremist pro-Hutu radio broadcasters, notably Valérie Bemeriki, Kantano Habimana, and Georges Ruggiu included national news and news from the front in addition to popular music. The hosts generated ethnic hostility by disseminating anti-Tutsi propaganda and employing various tactics frequently made against the Tutsi minority and moderate Hutus to support the pro-Hutu/anti-Tutsi ideology. The station “repeatedly and forcefully underlined many of the themes developed for years by the extremist written press, including the inherent differences between Hutu and Tutsi, the foreign origin of Tutsi and, hence, their lack of rights to claim to be Rwandan, the disproportionate share of wealth and power held by Tutsi and the horrors of past Tutsi rule” (Des Forges 45). They employed disinformation while providing historical justification for fighting and defamed the Tutsi population to contend the vital need for self-defense. In addition, they sought to dehumanize their victims through broadcast content. Broadcasters encouraged pro-Hutu fighting while concurrently identifying locations of those individuals they sought to kill and making an overall call for their elimination. The station’s pernicious tie to genocide gave rise to its nickname, “Radio Machete” (McDoom 139).

There were some who lobbied for the jamming of the station waves, but to no avail. Romeo Dallaire, Major-General of UNAMIR, explained: “I repeatedly asked for the capability to jam RTLM, but the request was denied. The argument was that this would amount to a violation of state sovereignty and that there was also a very high cost attached to maintaining jamming equipment” (18). The United States and the United Nations also discussed jamming RTLM airwaves, but never did so. RTLM ceased broadcasting in July 1994.

Milo Rau's *Hate Radio*, much like *Rwanda 94*, is not driven by plot. Instead, it stages a hyperrealistic simulation of RTLM programming broadcast over the airwaves in 1994 as spectators wearing headphones listen to (and view) the radio broadcast. The program is framed by video projections of post-genocide interviews with actors playing the role of survivors, journalists, and RTLM hosts, permitting Rau to go beyond representation to enable spectators to apprehend the unspeakable harm that the station caused.

These three plays are chosen for this study because they are all driven by unspeakable experiences: *Incendies* is built upon the double unspeakable of war and rape, while *Rwanda 94* and *Hate Radio* explore the unspeakable of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. As such, the theatrical representations all contend with the limitations that the unspeakable places upon dialogue. Despite this commonality, dialogue manifests itself in different ways across the three works. *Incendies* is the only play that exhibits consistent use of classic dialogue between two actors on stage. However, much like Racine's *Phèdre* who fears the repercussions that would result from the revelation of her secret, the main character Nawal's speech is paralyzed by the unspeakable. She cannot speak the truth of her experiences during the war that resulted in her rape (by her torturer, who unbeknownst to both was also her son) because the revelation of incest could prove detrimental. As a result, the dialogue is broken between Nawal and her two youngest children who were born of that rape. Nawal employs the one method that will allow her to retain her silence and bring the truth to light. Through her

last wishes, she imposes a voyage of initiation upon her two children that requires them to find their father and brother to discover the truth of their origins. As they attempt to uncover the mystery, it is only by the use of poetic and symbolic representation that the unspeakable may be grasped.

Classic dialogue is nearly absent from both *Rwanda 94* and *Hate Radio*. *Rwanda 94* only makes use of dialogue between actors during scenes of the play which feature the fictional journalist Madame Bee Bee Bee who undertakes a quest to discover the truth of the genocide. In all other scenes such as those involving survivor testimony, the litany of questions, the history lesson, the cantata, etc., the actors direct their speech at the audience itself. To support the dialogue, Groupov incorporates elements from African total spectacle and Brecht's Epic theater.

Hate Radio also forgoes classic dialogue to maintain contact with the audience in all three sections of the play: the video projection of testimony on screens that constitutes the first and third portions of the play and the second portion in which Rau simulates an RTLM radio broadcast. Indeed, the video projection of individuals who provide testimony at the beginning and end of the play look at and speak directly to the audience. In the simulated RTLM broadcast, the radio hosts address a radio audience that includes the spectators in the theater, but receive no response (with the rare exception of brief dialogue between the hosts and an individual when the latter calls in to the station). Playwright Milo Rau aims to make this dialogue more effective by infusing the scenario with hyperrealism through techniques that enable the RTLM broadcast simulation to surpass the "real", original broadcast in an effort to allow spectators to grasp the unspeakable of genocide.

We can see that these three plays do not simply rely upon dialogue to permit spectators to grasp the unspeakable. Instead, their representational efforts extend beyond dialogue. This acknowledgement inspires the title to this study, “Beyond Dialogue. Different Literary and Artistic Strategies to Represent the Unspeakable in Three Francophone Plays: Wajdi Mouawad’s *Incendies*, Groupov’s *Rwanda 94*, and Milo Rau’s *Hate Radio*”. These playwrights all incorporate artistic and theatrical strategies of representation in order to allow spectators to grasp the unspeakable. The literary analysis in this dissertation aims to examine the manner by which theatrical performances may represent the unspeakable through such techniques. It will highlight the manner by which *Incendies* represents the unspeakable of war and rape through poetic and symbolic representation, *Rwanda 94* supplements dialogue on the unspeakable truth of genocide with elements of African total spectacle and Brechtian Epic theater, and *Hate Radio* employs hyperrealism to reveal the unspeakable harm of genocide caused by the RTLM radio broadcasts.

This thesis will be divided into three chapters. The first chapter is titled “Poetic and Symbolic Representation of the Double Unspeakable of Incestuous Rape and War in Wajdi Mouawad’s *Incendies*”. The second is “Groupov’s *Rwanda 94*: Total Spectacle, Heterogeneous Dramaturgy, and Political Drama to Represent the Unspeakable of the Genocide Against the Tutsi”, and the third is titled “Milo Rau’s *Hate Radio*: Beyond Representation (Simulacrum), in Favor of Simulation through the Use of Hyperrealistic Techniques to Address the Unspeakable Trauma of the Genocide Against the Tutsi”.

RATIONALE OF THIS STUDY: THE CHOICE OF THE THREE PLAYS

The Choice of Theatrical Representation

When individuals decide to represent an unspeakable experience, they do so in spite of the fact that those who did not experience the limit event can never fully understand the experience. They also acknowledge that “no simulation of past reality grants full presence to what it represents” (Weissman 208), as an *exact* replication of all factors cannot be achieved for any experience, whether issuing from the everyday or of an extreme nature. With the acknowledgement of these criteria, they must select a genre to communicate the desired message as effectively as possible. Individuals may adopt various means of reacting from literary production to historical documentation to the creation of visual arts.

There are even those who find a single genre insufficient and choose instead to join two or more to lend full force to their expression. Marianne Hirsch has explored this reaction by the use of mixed media productions in her work *The Generation of Postmemory*, a study which treats the Shoah and its resultant “postmemory”. Such is the case for Miso Vogel, who seeks to express experiences via “photographic writing” (inscribing written testimony on photographs) to document the event.

Numerous survivors feel a personal and pressing need to testify, to engage another individual in dialogue to share their experiences. As Dr. Dori Laub explains, “[t]he survivor did not only need to survive so that they could tell their story; they also needed to tell their story in order to survive. There is, in each survivor, an imperative need to *tell* and thus to come to *know* one’s story. . .” (“An Event” 78, emphasis in original). The theater may serve as a vehicle for this dialogue. Charlotte Delbo credits

theater for helping her to survive Auschwitz, by permitting the representation of her experiences and expression of the seeming futility of trying to explain the reality of the lives of the prisoners (Kaplan 39). Robert Skloot has also declared theater's "ability to extend the limits of our language and imagination" (9), suggesting its value for the representation of the unspeakable.

As Skloot notes in his introduction to a collection of plays treating the issue of genocide,

The theatre in particular possesses the capacity to assist in raising awareness of the scourge of genocide and in engaging emotional responses that can both offer images that provoke empathy for peoples whose lives are vulnerable and endangered and bring audiences closer to understanding the historical and cultural forces that create the lethal conditions for mass murder. (19)

This consideration suggests ways in which theater may address aforementioned concerns regarding the unspeakable. The potential of theater to engage spectators helps to maintain their focus on the representation. Although interactive theater which encourages spectator intervention does exist, in a majority of plays the audience does not speak, meaning that they will refrain from breaking off the description of events that becomes difficult to bear. Given that their attendance at the theater is a choice as well as the fact that most pay to attend also encourages them to refrain from doing so.

In addition to its ability to engage the emotions of spectators, theater can provide the historical exactitude sought by those opposed to the incorporation of figurative elements in representation. This capability can be seen, for example, in the use of

documentary theater. In such works, playwrights develop their text by the use of historical documents, often quoting extensively from those documents.

Since theatrical representation is chosen as the focus of this study, it is important to consider the manner by which it represents. We can elucidate this consideration by differentiating it from the novel (not to say that theater represents better than the novel, but that it does so differently). The plot/narrative serves as one example. In this respect, the playwright faces greater limitations than the novelist due to restrictions on duration. While a novel may be of considerable length since the reader generally interacts with its content multiple times over an extended period, the entirety of a play's performance takes place on one occasion, commonly within a few hours. Consequently, as Jay B. Hubbell and John O. Beaty explain, "The novelist may present a large number of scenes; the dramatist is limited to a very few. He can seldom stage the whole story; he must limit himself to certain specific episodes that lead to a climax" (3). However, "a good play is more compact, better unified than most good novels" (Hubbell and Beaty 3).

Variation may also exist in terms of reactions to the content. Michel Viegnes points out that the effect that the two may generate from a single line or scene may differ due to their audiences. He explains that while the act of reading a novel tends to be a solitary experience, attendance of a play is a collective pursuit, a fact that strengthens the impact of humor, fear, the tragic, and the poignant. (106). Therefore, we may note a difference in representation in that the novelist would likely provide additional description of a situation to generate an equivalent impact. For example, in the analysis on *Incendies*, we will consider a sorrowful scene in which two dear friends are separated. The playwright knows he only needs to include minimal dialogue as the collective nature

of the performance will enhance the impact of the scene. A novelist, on the other hand, would likely lengthen the dialogue (i.e. to reminisce about past experiences, etc.) if he or she aimed to generate an equivalent impact in terms of sadness.

It is true that theatrical performance often issues from a written text and that both theater and the novel may utilize the same elements, such as dialogue, in their attempts at representation. However, the performance before the theatrical audience involves additional dimensions of expression with the use of visual and sonorous language such as gestures and music. Whereas the novelist presents the reader with (sometimes lengthy and detailed) descriptions of his characters, their actions, and the world they live in, the playwright shows them. The visual may be addressed through description within a novel, but printed images seldom appear within its pages (with the exception of the two-dimensional images in the graphic novel).

In a novel, the characters' feelings may be indicated through express notation and ascertained by a description of their actions. In the theater, the visual language of gestures and other elements is accompanied by the sonorous dynamic. Tone and volume utilized in the delivery of lines alongside gesture may aid representation since, as Vera Mowry Roberts contends, "[t]he words of a play are set down to be spoken, are the stuff of speaking, and the dramatist must ever deal with his vocabulary in its *audible* aspect" (39-40, emphasis in original). While a novel may describe visual and sonorous aspects, their inclusion "puts the burden on the reader to supply both multiplicity and simultaneity of appeals" as it takes place within the reader's mind and his or her senses are not engaged with the content in the same manner. (Roberts 26). Theatrical representation generally involves nearly constant simultaneous appeal to both the sight and sound.

Representation by image and sound does not reside solely within the theater. It also finds its use in the cinema. However, there is an essential factor of theatrical representation that demarcates its distinction from film, the novel, and other forms of literary expression: theater offers the physical presence of the actors in a spectacle created at that moment in time. The power of this presence has been highlighted by Michel Viegnes who notes that “[w]hat moderately affects us on a movie screen is much more ‘real’ on a stage” (“Ce qui nous impressionne moyennement sur un écran de cinéma est beaucoup plus ‘réel’ sur une scène”) (100). A novelist’s descriptions may allow readers to visualize content, but the performance of a play need not be imagined. Given the elements of theatrical representation, “[n]o other art-form comes closer to being an actual representation of life” (Hubbell and Beaty 3). Theatrical representation is chosen as the focus of this dissertation because of this impact produced through physical presence and its incorporation of the visual and spoken.

Originality of this Study

The literary analyses of the three chosen plays in this dissertation will fill gaps in previous studies. Publications centered on the work of Wajdi Mouawad involve both his overall theatrical efforts and specific plays. In the former category, we can locate efforts such as Yana Meerzon’s outlining of Mouawad’s writing process in “Searching for Poetry: On Collective Collaboration in Wajdi Mouawad’s Theatre”. F. Elizabeth Dahab has compared the first three plays in the tetralogy to which *Incendies* belongs to discern their similarities and differences. In her examination of *Incendies*, she demonstrates that the play’s motifs of the importance of promises and the breaking/maintaining of silence

drive the narrative. Other publications regarding the play draw comparisons of the piece and its cinematic adaptation to consider the manifestation of violence in the two (Dominique D. Fisher) and the role of memory in each (Yana Meerzon, “Staging Memory”). In spite of the fact that researchers such as Yana Meerzon identify Mouawad’s focus on a “theatre of poetry” (“Searching for Poetry” 30), they do not undertake an overall examination of the significance of the method of representation. This study delves deeply into the frequently-noted, but minimally explored observation of the role of poetic expression in the play as a means to represent the unspeakable.

Research on *Rwanda 94* generally focuses on audience interaction with the performance. Alexandre Dauge-Roth has examined the important dynamic of audience interaction with the message of *Rwanda 94* in an effort to share the truth of the genocide despite the fact that it is “culturally excluded” (48). This dissertation differs from Dauge-Roth’s work given my focus on the accomplishment of the play’s subtitle, “an attempt at symbolic reparation to the dead for use by the living”. Scholar Mounira Chatti has analyzed survivor Yolande Mukagasana’s act of testimony within *Rwanda 94* and her published narrative testimony, *La mort ne veut pas de moi*. In the former, she highlights its importance within the play in efforts to counter the unspeakable and contribute to reparation. This study supplements Chatti’s efforts by considering additional manners by which Mukagasana’s performance of testimony represents the unspeakable and places her contribution alongside other efforts at representation within the play. In addition, Christian Biet has discussed the experimental nature common to many theatrical efforts to represent genocide and has provided an overview of this approach in *Rwanda 94*. Biet’s considerations offer a glimpse at the overall effect of techniques within the play

and place less emphasis on how they function. My elucidation of specific techniques used to represent the unspeakable within this study therefore builds upon this work.

General information regarding *Hate Radio* can be found in the press kit which elucidates details regarding the research undertaken to create the play, as well as its staging. A documentary directed by Lennart Laberenz also provides insight into the same research and offers viewers a glimpse of the performance of various portions of the work (IIPM). Although *Hate Radio* has been performed in French and Kinyarwanda (with subtitles in the local language) throughout the world, the play has only been published in German. To my knowledge, this is the first literary study of *Hate Radio*.

The originality and contribution of this study stems from its focus on the representation of the unspeakable. While scholarly work on the chosen plays may occasionally highlight the communicative difficulties in the plays, none of them place their focus solely upon the unspeakable as this thesis does. Further, previous studies have not analyzed the representational approaches within the plays that are explored in this thesis: poetic and symbolic representation in *Incendies*, Brechtian Epic theater and African total spectacle in *Rwanda 94*, and hyperrealism in *Hate Radio*. As such, the analyses will serve to fill a gap in research and supplement existing scholarly work.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THIS STUDY

The Unspeakable and the Difficulties Posed to Communication

Mirna Velcic-Canivez explains the emergence of the unspeakable in her work on testimonial literature, *Prendre à témoin: Une étude linguistique*: “Human language is

often inadequate, notably when used to explain extreme experiences. Those experiences, whether historical or strictly personal – personal tragedies, deportations, civil wars, catastrophes, sickness, etc. – reveal the *unspeakable*” (“Le langage humain serait souvent inadéquat, notamment lorsqu’il s’agit de rendre compte des expériences extrêmes. Ces expériences, qu’elles soient historiques ou strictement individuelles – tragédies personnelles, déportations, guerres civiles, catastrophes, maladies, etc. – relèveraient de l’*indicible*.”) (5, emphasis in original).² The consideration evidences an attempt at locating the cause of silence in the survivors’ substantial difficulty of finding the words to share an experience. This limitation of language prompts a silence identified by the French term *indicible*.

When providing the translation of the term *indicible*, dictionaries commonly offer the English substantive “unspeakable” as an equivalent. However, this counterpart falls short in expressing its full meaning. Indeed, the *indicible* encompasses not only unspeakability, but also inexpressibility, indescribability, and ineffability, demonstrating the extent of difficulty that shapes not only speech, but any type of expression. The *Larousse* dictionary, while not providing an entry for the substantive form of the term, does contain an entry for the adjectival form of “*indicible*”. It notes that the adjective “*indicible*” indicates the characteristic of an object or instance which “extends beyond all expression” (“dépasse toute expression”) and, as such, connotes this extremity of limits.

As Michael Rinn has explained, the association of an event with the *indicible* indicates that language exists to describe the event, but that it is inadequate to

² Cited quotations originally written in French are translated into English and then followed by the original French version in parentheses. Unless otherwise noted, all translations within this study are mine.

communicate the full effect of the experiences (24). This may be the case for positive experiences such as the contemplation of intense beauty as well as those of a disastrous nature. In the latter case, survivors may wish to speak, and may do so, but face silence because of the inexistence of adequate words in any given language to say what they wish. Unlike the case of self-imposed mutism, it is not the reception that causes the silence, but rather the insufficiency of established language forms.

Buchenwald survivor Jorge Semprun hints at this limitation of language that defines *l'indicible* while reflecting upon the discussion of his experiences with others who did not experience the limit event. After he comments that the smoke from the crematoria will no longer pervade the surroundings, he perceives a reaction of discomfort on the part of his addressees, suggesting some apprehension of the events, but he remains troubled by the knowledge that “they cannot truly understand” (“ils ne peuvent pas vraiment comprendre”) (22). Indeed, “[t]hey grasped the sense of the words, probably. Smoke: one knows what that is, one believes to know. In living memory, there are smoking chimneys” (“Ils ont saisi le sens des mots, probablement. Fumée: on sait ce que c’est, on croit savoir. Dans toutes les mémoires d’homme, il y a des cheminées qui fument.”) (22).

Nonetheless, language is inadequate. He continues: “This smoke, however, they do not know it. And they will never truly know it” (“Cette fumée-ci, pourtant, ils ne savent pas. Et ils ne sauront jamais vraiment.”) (22). With this consideration, Semprun suggests the dilemma of the *indicible* faced by survivors of limit experiences. Words from established language forms that are used for everyday experiences, such as “smoke”, cannot connote the limit experiences that do not issue from the everyday. This

insufficiency of language exhibited by words' duplicitous connotations has been expressed by other survivors including Primo Levi and Charlotte Delbo (Langer 8), as well as many genocide survivors in Rwanda (Gallimore "Témoigner au féminin" 128). Indeed, it is one of the most common difficulties that must be overcome by survivors who aim to communicate their experiences through some form of representation.

We can see where the difficulties posed by the unspeakable reside by considering theorist Roman Jakobson's description of communication. He outlines what occurs during an instance of communication:

The ADDRESSER sends a MESSAGE to the ADDRESSEE. To be operative, the message requires a CONTEXT referred to ("referent" in another, somewhat ambiguous, nomenclature), seizable by the addressee, and either verbal or capable of being verbalized; a CODE fully, or at least partially, common to the addresser and addressee (or in other words, to the encoder and decoder of the message); and, finally, a CONTACT, a physical channel and psychological connection between the addresser and the addressee, enabling both of them to enter and stay in communication. (353, emphasis in original)

The six terms appearing in capital letters above constitute Jakobson's factors of communication, the six elements that are involved in a communicative act. In the case of the unspeakable, the primary difficulty in communication resides with the "code". The addresser and addressee may enter into communication with a shared code, a language that they both understand, but the code itself cannot adequately describe the content in the message concerning the unspeakable event. In addition, the intensity of the unspeakable event described in the message may cause the addressee to sever the

“contact”, to break off communication when he or she feels that the description is too intense.

Jakobson’s theory can also highlight the rationale behind attempts at communication. When individuals speak, they place their primary focus upon one of Jakobson’s factors. The focus upon the chosen factor reveals the “function” of the verbal act, highlighting what the addresser aims to do by speaking. When the message is centered upon the addresser, upon his or her feelings, it engages the emotive function. Attention upon the addressee, with an attempt to influence his or her actions, involves the conative function. The phatic function concerns the establishment, maintenance, or closure of the contact. Focus upon the code used in the message itself involves the metalingual function, while a message emphasizing the context fulfills the referential function. Lastly, the poetic function is used when attention is placed upon the form of the message.

The aim of this dissertation is to analyze attempts to represent the unspeakable. As I examine the strategies used for representation, I will indicate the Jakobsonian functions that these strategies serve. I note these functions because the emphasis on a specific function demonstrates the manner by which the chosen representational strategy operates in order to contend with the difficulties posed by the unspeakable. This consideration will therefore contribute to the understanding of the representational efforts. We will see an emphasis on the poetic function in the examination of *Incendies* and the dominance of the phatic function in both *Rwanda 94* and *Hate Radio*.

Theory of Representation

The recurrent concept in all three of the chapters of this thesis is that of “Representation”. Therefore, I plan to discuss and answer the following questions in the thesis: What is representation? Why and how is the concept of representation applied (or not applicable) to the study of these three plays that constitute the object of analysis? What are the difficulties and the controversies in general and what are the controversies in representing the unspeakable in the respective plays chosen for this study?

The concept of representation is an ancient one, and as such it has acquired multiple meanings throughout time. *The Columbia Dictionary of Modern Literary and Cultural Criticism* provides a general explanation:

In its simplest sense *representation* refers to the act of standing for or taking the place of an entity that either is not present or is unable to stand for itself. The concept of representation is one of the oldest in Western thought, having been the subject of extensive reflection for both Plato, who viewed it with suspicion, and Aristotle, who was the first in a long line of philosophers to see it as the activity most characteristic of human beings. (“Representation” 260, emphasis in original).

Plato notably expounded his concerns regarding the representation of reality within his *Republic*. He described elements in the physical world as imitations of their ideal “Form”, meaning that reality is not a model, but a copy of the model. In that sense, the act of imitation, “mimesis”, only generates a copy of a copy, a representation “thrice removed from the truth” (310). Plato illustrated his stance by describing a painting of a bed, explaining that while God created the bed, and a carpenter produced a copy of that idea, a painting of the carpenter’s copy becomes a copy of a copy. We can also apply this

notion to Plato's famous allegory of the Cave in which the shadows created by the puppets are synonymous with artistic imitations. Just as art is a copy of an aspect from the physical world that itself is a copy of an Ideal, the shadows are a copy of the puppets which are also copies of elements from the world. For Plato, therefore, imitation is not a reliable means of presenting the truth. Aristotle takes an opposing stance in his *Poetics*. He "argued that mimesis is a fundamental human instinct and that it is not a counterfeiting of reality but a representation of universals", elements of "everyday experience" ("Mimesis" 188). Aristotle pointed to the role of literary plot as an example of this practice in his view of imitation as a representation of reality.

Historicism

An understanding of the manner by which historicists regard the representation of reality can be gleaned by an examination of the views Erich Auerbach. He was a historicist (Zakai 109), tying literary representation of reality to the historical period in which the work was created (110), and, like Aristotle, he believed that imitation could represent reality (Zakai 106). His views can be seen within his well-known work *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* in which he outlines the evolution toward modern realism in Western literature, "focus[ing] on the way imaginative literature imitates and reflects reality, including the culture in which it was written" (Schwarz 607). Auerbach's method of "citing for every epoch a number of texts and using these as test cases" involves his examination and tracing of the "style" employed in Western literature from Homer to that produced by writers from various

centuries including Chrétien de Troyes, Shakespeare, Racine, and Voltaire that led to the modern realism of authors such as Flaubert and Virginia Woolf (Auerbach 556).

Postmodernism

The question of representation has also been taken up by postmodernists such as Jean Baudrillard. In *Simulacra and Simulation*, Baudrillard reflects upon the two terms in the title and their association with what he terms “hyperreality”. The simulacra refer to images to represent the “real” while simulation refers to imitation through a collection of signs. While the two seem innocuous, their use constitutes a noteworthy phenomenon, as Baudrillard indicates when he explains that simulation in particular “is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal” (1).

We can see that Baudrillard’s hyperrealism is more than just the inability to distinguish between the real and the simulation. It is an indication that reality has been destroyed, and that it can no longer serve as a model for representation. This assertion clarifies his differentiation between representation and simulation: “Representation stems from the principle of the equivalence of the sign and of the real . . . Simulation, on the contrary, stems from the utopia of the principle of equivalence, *from the radical negation of the sign as value*, from the sign as the reversion and death sentence of every reference” (Baudrillard 6, emphasis in original). The real is replaced by simulacra and simulations so that “[i]t is no longer a question of imitation, nor duplication, nor even parody. It is a question of substituting the signs of the real for the real” (2). Hyperrealism becomes more and more prevalent in today’s society where electronics impact the representation

of reality, from the addition of computer generated images in film to the ubiquity of “reality” television.

Hyperrealism is the focus of the third chapter of this dissertation, in which I analyze theatrical representation in Milo Rau’s *Hate Radio*. As noted above, Rau simulates an RTLM broadcast within the play to illustrate the unspeakable harm of genocide caused by the station’s programs. As we will see, painstaking attention to factual accuracy was taken so that the re-creation would resemble the original broadcast as closely as possible. However, the analysis in the chapter will show that the simulated experience of the theatrical broadcast is composed of certain “signs” that did not all actually exist, but allow the simulation to surpass the real and increase the likelihood of spectator apprehension of the unspeakable. For instance, we will see that although the content was heavily based off of archived transcripts from actual broadcasts, their content does not match the “real” in its entirety. The simulation therefore presents an experience that never existed, a hyperreal experience.

Poststructuralism and Postcolonialism

Another meaning attributed to representation important to this study is that of postcolonial representation, an approach that will be used in Chapter 2 in order to examine the representation of the unspeakable of genocide in Gropov’s *Rwanda 94*. Although it is not often noted, this form of representation stems from the postmodernist crisis of representation. While the age of enlightenment led individuals to reject pre-conceived and authoritative ideas and employ reason, it contributed to the belief that the West held the monopoly of Knowledge. Within this context, poststructuralists such as

Michel Foucault came to consider that the representation of an idea or a certain reality involves the exercise of a certain power that can impact our lives and relations with others.

Foucault examined representation through what he called discourse, statements that refer to “language *and* practice” (Hall 44, emphasis in original). Within his discursive approach, discourse/representation creates knowledge that is itself bound to power. Stuart Hall explains the linkage: “Foucault argued that not only is knowledge always a form of power, but power is implicated in the questions of whether and in what circumstances knowledge is to be applied or not” (48). For Foucault, this power “circulates” so that it involves everyone (49).

An individual, the “subject”, also occupies a specific role within the discursive representation. He or she does not create the representation. Rather, since discourse itself creates knowledge, the subject “operat[es] within the limits of the *episteme*, the *discursive formation*, the *regime of truth*” so that he or she is “*produced within discourse*” and “must submit to its rules and conventions, to its dispositions of power/knowledge (Hall 55, emphasis in original). Foucault’s discussion suggests that those in power impact representation.

The combination of knowledge, power, and representation highlighted by Foucault is linked to concerns regarding postcolonial representation. If we consider the genocide against the Tutsi, for instance, we have noted above that it stemmed from the colonial power of representation of the two ethnic groups of Hutu and Tutsi that was later used in the post-colonial (post-independence) period to drive the genocide. This issue of the interweaving of knowledge, power, and representation has been raised by

postcolonial theorists such as Edward Said who explores the concept in his seminal work *Orientalism*. Therein, he describes the manner by which representations of the East appearing in Western literary and scholarly work served as knowledge that was applied to colonial power structures (Moosavinia, Niazi, and Ghaforian 104). Said contends that these representations do not merely misrepresent the actual Orient. They also establish the Orient as the “Other” in relation to the West (“self”), thus instituting a “binary opposition of the self and the other which posits the former in the privileged position that permits himself to define, describe and articulate the Orient as she [*sic*] wishes, and the former [*sic*] in the position of a silent, disabled object of study” (Moosavinia, Niazi, and Ghaforian 106). Herein resides the issue of representing the unspeakable in the two plays regarding the genocide against Tutsi in Rwanda as Western playwrights are choosing to represent the experiences of the Rwandans. Before discussing this issue, I would first like to outline briefly the artistic representation of the unspeakable and the controversies surrounding it in the field of genocide studies.

Difficulties and Controversies of the Artistic Representation of the Unspeakable in General

The three plays examined in this study aim to represent the unspeakable. However, even the most earnest desire to represent an unspeakable extreme limit experience does not make the task a simple one. Any such attempt must confront an important issue: Representation aims to reproduce a certain reality, but in the case of these unspeakable extreme limit events, can one create a faithful representation?

Giorgio Agamben offers a response to this question in his study of Shoah testimony, *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive*. Therein, he identifies three categories of witnesses of the event: 1. the individual who perished, 2. the silent *Muselmann* (“Muslim”), and 3. the *superstes* who is capable of speech.³ Agamben denies the possibility of a faithful representation due to limitations on speech among these groups. He draws upon discussion of the “true witness” provided by Shoah survivor Primo Levi to elucidate this issue:

I must repeat: we, the survivors, are not the true witnesses. This is an uncomfortable notion of which I have become conscious little by little, reading the memoirs of others and reading mine at a distance of years. We survivors are not only an exiguous but also an anomalous minority: we are those who by their prevarications or abilities or good luck did not touch bottom. Those who did so, those who saw the Gorgon, have not returned to tell about it or have returned mute, but they are the “Muslims,” the submerged, the complete witnesses, the ones whose deposition would have a general significance. They are the rule, we are the exception. (Levi 83-84)

Agamben therefore notes that the only individuals who experienced the full truth of the experience, the individuals who “touched bottom” and perished or returned but are incapable of speech, cannot speak about it. Since only they could provide a faithful account of the complete event, faithful representation of that event is impossible.

³ “The so-called *Muselmann*, as the camp language termed the prisoner who was giving up and was given up by his comrades, no longer had room in his consciousness for the contrasts good or bad, noble or base, intellectual or unintellectual. He was a staggering corpse, a bundle of physical functions in its last convulsions” Jean Améry qtd. in Agamben 41

For an account of the experience, we must turn to a survivor-witness capable of speech, which Agamben terms the *superstes*. This designation identifies that the individual has lived through some experience and as such may provide testimony regarding it (17). If he or she provides testimony within the framework of legal proceedings, the *superstes* becomes a *testis* (17). The speaking witness may paint a picture of the experiences through testimony, but it is inevitably one that cannot account for the full extent of the event and thus cannot prove entirely faithful.

In spite of these issues, individuals seek to represent limit experiences such as genocide and other disastrous events. However, they pose a challenge to representation since, by their very nature, they surpass comprehension. When individuals decide to represent an unspeakable event, they must decide how to do so. This choice provokes consideration of the role of art and the question of whether art can enable a faithful representation of the disastrous reality of extreme limit events. There are numerous arguments both for and against the use of art in such representations.

The magnitude of the situation has led some to propose the exclusion of artistic rendering. The literal approach constitutes the representation of choice for individuals such as Berel Lang. Although accepting of representation through written output, Lang disapproves of the use of fiction and instead proposes the use of chronicle (White 44). He promotes the strict use of fact in responses to the Shoah as opposed to the incorporation of figurative elements. Lang's unease regarding the incorporation of figurative elements stems from the fact that their use "not only turns or swerves away from literalness of expression, but also deflects attention from the states of affairs about which it pretends to speak. Any figurative expression, he argues, *adds* to the representation of the object to

which it refers” by limiting presentation of the event and shifting some focus away from the event to the writer (White 44, emphasis in original). His restrictions on representation, that it is only acceptable when presenting the event in a “factual and literalist manner” (White 46), work against these concerns to establish a true representation of the event.

Additional concerns regarding representation appear in Brett Ashley Kaplan’s introduction to his study on the presence of beauty in literary, artistic, and architectural responses to the Shoah. He enumerates three main reasons that some have stood vehemently opposed to the use of beauty in representation:

First, because a certain kind of beauty was exploited by the Nazi regime, the very concept of beauty has been tainted by its association with fascism. Second, because of his fear of reproducing the horror of the Holocaust and a profound skepticism of the culture industry, in 1949 Theodor Adorno famously claimed that it was barbaric to write poetry after Auschwitz. Consequently, many Holocaust writers and artists have feared the ethical implications of rendering the Shoah in beautiful forms . . . Third, because the Shoah has often been seen as historically unique, cultural theorists and survivors have clamored for an equally unique aesthetic—one devoid of beauty—that avoids the representational strategies used to depict other historical crises. (2-3)

This passage underscores the complex question of representation. It also references the famous declaration of Theodor Adorno, a declaration cited in numerous discussions on the production of works in response to the Holocaust. Due to the ubiquity of his interdiction in these discussions and its continued relevance to responses to various types of limit events, this declaration is pertinent to this study.

German-born Theodor Adorno is well-known as a critical theorist. The quote referenced above appeared in “Cultural Criticism and Society” within *Prisms*, in which he wrote that “to write a poem after Auschwitz is barbaric” (34). He suggests that the extremity of the events resulted in the elimination of possible representations of the events of which it was composed. Kaplan explains that Theodor Adorno’s controversial statement stems from the fear that the use of beauty could contribute to an act of “sacrilege” (21). That is to say that representations focused upon aesthetic content could lead readers or spectators to in some way enjoy the suffering at the heart of the representation.

Adorno’s declaration prompted much discussion and opposition which led him to later revise his statement. Many reference two other citations that pertain to his famous dictum. Adorno helped elucidate the concern expressed in the original statement in 1962. In “Commitment”, he stated that “The so-called artistic representation of the sheer physical pain of people beaten to the ground by rifle-butts contains, however remotely, the power to elicit enjoyment out of it” (189). This statement confirms his concern with literary responses to the Holocaust and their possibility of betraying the experiences of those involved.

Four years later, in 1966, he again revisited his statement in *Negative Dialectics*. Not wishing to retract his statement and still believing in the conflict that beauty posed, he explained: “Perennial suffering has as much right to expression as a tortured man has to scream” (362). He thus seems to allow that expression can be a useful response for survivors. Nevertheless, he stands firm in his belief that such events should not be represented through aesthetic forms.

Concern regarding the representation of genocide through fiction also appears in regards to cinema. The American film *Hotel Rwanda*, which tells the story of Hutu hotel manager Paul Rusesabagina whose efforts are said to have saved the lives of a number of refugees during genocidal violence, serves as one example. In spite of the fact that the movie enjoyed commercial success and promoted more widespread recognition of the occurrence of the genocide, it received significant negative feedback. Much of this debate centered on the portrayal of heroism, as the situation depicted is but an exception within the reality of the genocide. Alexandre Dauge-Roth explains the danger in this depiction: “What makes these uncommon characters attractive—and thus, the danger that Schindler and Rusesabagina represent—rests in their ability to eclipse the murderous and heinous behaviors of the majority, to eclipse even to a larger degree a reflection on the conditions that made the genocide possible and summoned the population’s massive participation” (185). In addition, although *Hotel Rwanda* is advertised as a film that was inspired by true events, some researchers have questioned its basis in fact and identified artistic techniques that make the movie “more palpable” and “generate comfortable audience positions that find their balance in easy and simplified—if not downright erroneous—understanding” (Defraeye 84).

This reticence toward artistic representation can also be seen regarding literature focused on the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. After the events, a commemorative project titled *Rwanda: Écrire par devoir de mémoire* was created. Ten African authors from eight nations created texts in response to the genocide in an effort to demonstrate solidarity as well as to “break the African intellectuals’ law of silence regarding the genocide” (“rompre la loi du silence des intellectuels africains sur ce

génocide”) (Small 122). Since most of the writers involved in the project knew little of the 1994 genocide, a visit to Rwanda was organized, during which the authors were able to meet with survivors. During the meetings, the survivors specifically asked the writers to refrain from creating fictional works as they were living human beings, not literary characters (Small 129). Their request demonstrates hesitation as regards artistic representation.

In spite of the survivors’ concern, Audrey Small has noted that only a small number of the writers avoided fiction. Small considers the example of author Abdourahmani Waberi who expressed hesitation in the use of fiction for his text *Moisson de crânes*. The applicable considerations are those that have also been mentioned in the discussion of responses to other disasters. For instance, his reticence to fictional incorporation arises from the concern that the use of fiction may mask the truth of the events and/or discount the suffering of survivors and those who perished (Small 127). It is also worth noting that the two Rwandan authors, Vénuste Kayimahe and Jean-Marie Vianney Rurangwa, refused the use of fiction in favor of writing narrative testimony and an essay, respectively.

Most writers involved in the project, therefore, settled upon the use of fiction in their works by choosing other forms such as the novel and poetry. The choice may stem from the involvement of a “suspension d’incrédulité” within novels, the engagement with a text despite the acknowledgement that its elements arise from fiction (Small 128). Given the acknowledgement that fiction stands at a certain distance from reality, factual events which seem to extend beyond the boundaries of the believable and thus provoke responses of doubt as to their veracity may be viewed with a more open mind. This

possibility lies in the inherent attributes of fiction that permit the acceptance of unknown worlds and scenarios.

We also see the belief in these possibilities regarding artistic representation in the writings of author Jorge Semprun. He has declared promise in the use of fiction as an effective means of representation and subsequent communication. He considers the possibility of the representation of Shoah experiences in *L'Ecriture ou la vie*, inspired by his time in Buchenwald. For Semprun, although discussion of the events challenges comprehension given their extraordinary nature, an expression of any event is not impossible because “One can always say everything, language contains everything” (“On peut toujours tout dire, le langage contient tout”) (26).

However, he imposes certain restrictions upon the audience’s successful apprehension of these events. Semprun purports that it is only by means of “l’artifice” provided by artistic creation that the extremity of the situation may be communicated (26). A discussion with other prisoners leads to the suggestion that while works of historical reconstruction may be composed solely of truthful elements of the experience, they may lack “the essential truth” (“l’essentielle vérité”). To counter this limitation, the addition of artifice in literature may contain “the essential truth of the experience” (“la vérité essentielle de l’expérience”) so as to permit the desired successful communication (167).

The Issue of Representation: Misrepresentation

The ideas of the postcolonial Indian scholar Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak extend the discussion on this issue of representation and misrepresentation as well as the

silencing of the “Other”. She raises these issues in her essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?” in which she considers the silencing of the subaltern, a marginalized individual of society. In the essay, Spivak applies the term to those individuals within third-world countries that constitute the Other to the Western subject. As she describes these individuals, she shows that representations “are intimately linked to positioning: socioeconomic, gendered, cultural, geographic, historical, and institutional” (Salazar 173).

Noel B. Salazar explains that “the crux of Spivak’s argument is that the representations of the developing world conflate two related but discontinuous meanings of representation” (173). This double meaning of representation is firmly entrenched in postcolonial theory. Spivak notes that the first form of representation, *Vertretung*, is “‘speaking for,’ as in politics”, whereas the second, *Darstellung*, refers to “representation as ‘re-presentation,’ as in art or philosophy” (“Can the Subaltern Speak?” 275). She goes on to illustrate the difference between the two terms like that concerning “a proxy and a portrait” (276). Spivak later elaborated more on these terms during an interview published in *The Post-Colonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies, Dialogues*, where she associated the former as “stepping in someone’s place”, as “political representation” and the latter as “placing there” (given its descriptive function) (108).

As we would imagine, political representation, by which individuals serve as “proxy” to represent themselves as well as their constituency (Spivak, *The Post-Colonial Critic* 108), raises major concerns regarding misrepresentation since the proxy imposes his/her own view while speaking for the silent constituency. Spivak explains that “this question of representation, self-representation, representing others, is a problem” (*The*

Post-Colonial Critic 63). This issue of determining who should represent an experience was linked to the unspeakability of the genocide by Giorgio Agamben in the aforementioned *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive* wherein he considers who may represent the unspeakable of the Shoah. As noted above, he explained that the “true witnesses”, the individuals who bore the complete experience of the genocide, cannot speak of it. As a result, the survivors “speak in their stead, by proxy, as pseudo-witnesses” (34). In forms of representation such as the plays considered in this dissertation, the question becomes who can serve as proxy for the survivor, the “pseudo-witness”.

We turn to this postcolonial issue of representation and misrepresentation in the second chapter of this dissertation. In the analysis of Groupov’s *Rwanda 94*, we see that the play exhibits the double meaning of representation. It is an artistic “re-presentation” as it is a theatrical representation of the genocide. When we consider the impact of the play’s goal and subtitle, “an attempt at the symbolic reparation to the dead, for use by the living”, it is clear that it is also “political representation” as its creators position themselves as proxies while they “re-present” the experience of the many regarding the genocide (including the dead and survivors who cannot speak to the Western audience due to the trauma and their inability to reach the Western audience as Groupov does). In my analysis of the ways by which the play achieves this goal, I will show that Delcuvellerie and his cast make a conscious effort to avoid misrepresentation of the reality of the genocide by employing different mechanisms within the play so that Rwandans can speak for themselves regarding their experiences.

CONCLUSION: OUTLINE OF ANALYSIS

The aim of this literary analysis is to consider the manner by which the unspeakable/*indicable* is represented in the three selected plays. I will examine the representation by considering the various artistic and theatrical strategies and devices that are utilized by the playwrights to overcome the difficulties and the controversies surrounding the representation of the unspeakable. Throughout the analysis, I will also reference the employment of Roman Jakobson's functions of communication to provide greater insight into the operation of the representational efforts.

In Chapter 1, I focus on Lebanese-Canadian playwright Wajdi Mouawad's *Incendies*. The play serves as the point of departure for this study for two reasons. First, the various manifestations of silence within the play permit an important analysis of attempts at communication through representation. The consideration of instances of the forms of unspeakable silence, *self-imposed mutism* and the *indicable*, demonstrates the manner by which poetry may be utilized to overcome a wide range of communicative obstacles. The continued debate involving the use of beauty in response to tragic circumstances considered above and the prevalence of poetry within *Incendies* constitute an additional advantage to beginning this study with this play. The debate has invited consideration of expression through various genres including poetry, a common recourse of survivors of disastrous events. Nonetheless, the question of appropriate response continues to exist as a source of controversy.

Within this chapter, I will analyze the theatrical representation of the double unspeakable of incestuous rape and war in *Incendies*. Focus will be placed upon Mouawad's use of poetry to represent the unspeakable. We will see that he incorporates

not only aesthetic poetry as representation (such as metaphor and anaphora), but also makes use of symbolic representation (through symbols such as Jeanne's repeated reference to a hexagon in order to describe her situation and the semiotic use of space on stage).

In Chapter 2, I will analyze the representation of the unspeakable of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda within Groupov's *Rwanda 94*. As I take the play's subtitle, "symbolic reparation to the dead for use by the living" (to "give victims a voice and face but also to question the motives and process of their assassination"), as the goal driving their efforts, I will examine representation both on an aesthetic and political level. To do so, I will consider the manner by which the play employs characteristics of Brechtian political drama, a didactic piece that seeks to present an argument regarding social and political issues (Brecht, "Modern Theatre" 37). As we will see, Groupov mirrors Brecht's aims to encourage spectators to respond critically to what they see on stage through the use of specific techniques, such as breaking the fourth wall (Brecht, "Short Description" 136) and the division of the play in scenes that can stand alone (Brecht, "Modern Theatre" 37). I will also study the way by which the components of the political drama are supported by elements of what I refer to as "African total spectacle" for the purposes of this study, representation that includes a multiplicity of genres such as dance, song, and speech (Zenenga 236), a lack of separation between performers and audience (Schipper 128), and audience engagement (Moro 18). Within that process, I will also show different mechanisms used in the play to permit Rwandans to speak for themselves, such as the intervention of the dead through media. This consideration will demonstrate attempts at avoiding misrepresentation of the reality of the genocide.

In Chapter 3, I will explore the representation of the unspeakable harm caused by the radio station RTLM during the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda in Milo Rau's *Hate Radio*. I will investigate Rau's choice of hyperrealism for representation by indicating various elements that surpass the original experience. We will see that these elements serve to improve chances of apprehending the unspeakable while also ensuring that it does not reproduce the same harm.

This literary study, as it is presented in the preceding pages, will allow me to respond to the main question of this dissertation that is indirectly contained within its title: What are the different and important literary and artistic strategies that are used in the three respective plays to overcome the unspeakable? The task will be accomplished in the chapters that follow.

Chapter 1:

Poetic and Symbolic Representation of the Double Unspeakable of Incestuous Rape and War in Wajdi Mouawad's *Incendies*

The difficulty in speaking that accompanies works focused on disastrous events may involve both self-imposed mutism, a silence chosen due to concern regarding the reception of the message and the *indisible* (the unsayable, the unspeakable). In Lebanese-Canadian playwright Wajdi Mouawad's play, *Incendies*, these two types of silence result from a double unspeakable of war and rape that breaks down the dialogue. However, by the extensive use of poetry and symbolic representation, a transmission of this double unspeakable is made possible. This chapter provides an examination of the way by which the poetic elements and symbolic representation in *Incendies* are used in the theatrical context to do so.

Although Wajdi Mouawad was born in Lebanon, the country's civil war prompted his family's move to Paris when he was still young before they later settled in Montreal (Dahab 137). Since obtaining his degree from l'École nationale de théâtre du Canada, he has created companies, acted as theater director, and also served as artistic director at various theaters such as the Théâtre français du Centre National des Arts d'Ottawa ("Biographie"). He has received several prestigious awards, among them the Académie française's Prix du théâtre (Mouawad back cover). The success of Mouawad's varied efforts (working as actor, playwright, and director) has earned him global renown. Since April 2016, he has served as director of the Théâtre National de la Colline ("Biographie"). Mouawad's plays often showcase issues involving identity, family

relations, war, and exile. The striking application of these themes in *Incendies* has led to the play's performance throughout the world, elevating it to the status of one of the playwright's best known works. It was first produced in 2003 and received great acclaim. It occupies the second position in his tetralogy focusing on origins titled "Le Sang des promesses". Others works in the tetralogy include *Littoral* (1999), *Forêts* (2006), and *Ciels* (2009). Although each of these plays concerns origins and identity, their plot lines do not connect in the manner common to many series, and each involves its own set of characters (Dahab 139-140). *Incendies* is chosen for this study because of its exhibition of diverse viewpoints as reaction to difficulties regarding silence and its innovative means of representing silencing experiences through space and time.

The play's complexity makes a more thorough summary useful. Within the play, a reworking of the Oedipus myth causes the personal tragedy of the main character Nawal, who, after five years of mysterious self-imposed mutism, a consequence of an incestuous rape, momentarily breaks her silence on her children's birthday to declare "Maintenant que nous sommes ensemble ça va mieux" (24) ("Now that we're together, everything feels better" [15]) not long before she passes away.⁴ The play opens with the reading of her will in notary Hermile Lebel's office whereupon her twin children, Jeanne and Simon not only discover the existence of a brother they have never known, but also find their world indelibly shaken when discovering that their father, supposedly deceased, is in fact alive. In addition to being shocked by such revelations, Jeanne and Simon are tasked with finding and delivering letters to their father and brother, respectively. Despite their reluctance, Jeanne begins the search, and the same is also later true of her brother.

⁴ Since an English version of the play has also been published under the title *Scorched*, citations from the original French text are followed by translator Linda Gaboriau's English translation.

Jeanne's decision to find their father triggers the first of many temporal overlaps wherein the present-day dealings of Jeanne and Simon coincide with past events that composed Nawal's life. This historical polyphony results in the overlapping of separate conversations and the simultaneous sharing of the stage by these characters despite their separation in time. In the first section of the play, the use of this technique results in special focus upon significant events in young Nawal's life so that audiences learn of her young love Wahab, their forbidden love since he is a Palestinian refugee living in "her Christian village" (Meerzon, "Staging Memory" 21), the revelation that she is carrying his child (named Nihad) whom she is later forced to give up, and her separation from Wahab.

Jeanne's efforts lead her to speak with her mother's former nurse, a man who (driven by curiosity to know whether Nawal spoke when she was completely alone) created audio recordings of Nawal's silence during her period of mutism. He provides Jeanne with these cassettes. During scenes whose primary focus falls upon the enactment of Nawal's past, spectators often spot Jeanne on stage, equipped with her Walkman as she literally listens to her mother's silence in search of answers to her past. Although spectators view scenes of Nawal's past at these times, Jeanne learns nothing from the silence. While Jeanne continues her pursuit, the young 19-year-old Nawal initiates a search of her own. She undertakes a journey to find her son, accompanied by another woman named Sawda. Their overlapping searches advance, as Nawal and Sawda travel village to village and Jeanne studies a photo and considers stories regarding her mother for answers before boarding a plane to extend her search to her mother's homeland.

We later find 40-year-old Nawal and Sawda involved in a civil war.⁵ The pair and Jeanne both travel toward the village of Kfar Rayat in their respective time periods. Although Nawal and Sawda's search does not yield the desired results, Jeanne makes progress. While visiting the former prison, she learns of Nawal's assassination of the paramilitary leader that led to her imprisonment, torture, rape, and the resultant birth of Jeanne and Simon.

In the final section of the play, Simon decides to find his brother, accompanied by Hermile. His journey to his mother's homeland leads to a meeting with a spiritual leader during which he discovers that his father and brother are one and the same. Meanwhile (in the past) Nawal attends the trial of her rapist at the International Criminal Tribunal during which she discovers the cruel truth that her rapist is her own son. From that moment, she retreats into a total mutism that triggers the search driving the play. The twins then deliver their mother's letters to their father/brother to break the silence and reveal the truth before receiving their own letters from their mother. Together, they listen to her recorded silence as the play draws to a close.

Within *Incendies*, Mouawad depicts events resembling those of the Lebanese civil war. However, he refrains from naming the country and provides somewhat veiled references to the historical elements of the destructive conflict. This choice provides a more universal applicability to the scenario and gives rise to "a mythical representation of his homeland, while not distracting his audience with indictments of any particular party" (Rubin 8). While the plot of *Incendies* displays the destructive power of war, it is not its sole focus, employed in an effort to endow the entire play with an overt anti-war

⁵ Three different actresses are used to portray Nawal at three different ages of her life (as a teenager, as a woman in her 40s, and as a woman in her 60s).

message. As F. Elizabeth Dahab has explained, the motif of war is incorporated into the play to serve rather as a canvas upon which the narrative may be painted (153). Placed in this role, it functions as one of the devices used to help fuel the play's strong dramatic force.

The refusal to name the unspeakable rape and the lack of naming that engenders an epic, mythical dimension softens political "indictments" and thus eliminates the presence of an overall message in the sense of a critique. Instead it maintains spectators' focus upon the mystery that touches every element of the play in some manner. In lieu of serving exclusively as a vehicle for transmitting a political or social message, the play becomes a workshop in which the playwright may question identity and explore aspects such as complex human relations and emotions through a complex puzzle of poetic images such as metaphors, symbols, etc.

This study adopts the revelation of Jeanne and Simon's true origins as the goal of *Incendies*. Each scene in some way contributes to their discovery irrespective of the appearance or absence of the twins on stage. For instance, scenes from Nawal's past depict joyful and disastrous experiences that eventually lead to her meeting with the twins' father and their birth. The analysis in this chapter will demonstrate the manner by which the use of poetic and symbolic representation within the theater reveals the double unspeakable and thus the twins' origins.

THE REPRESENTATIONAL POWER OF POETRY

Many cultures have long turned to poets for their contemplation of various aspects of life, whether poets do so "to bear witness, or to represent the times to people too

immersed in them to be able to see clearly how things are” (Satyamurti 37). The genre has facilitated the exploration of the human experience by means of elements such as metaphor and imagery to provide unique and powerful ways of understanding. As individuals experience emotions, poetic means permit them to express these emotions in new ways by establishing unexpected connections.

When Theodor Adorno famously challenged the production of poetry after the Shoah, insisting that “to write a poem after Auschwitz is barbaric”, he prompted a debate that would have lasting effects. Although he later acknowledged the possibilities afforded by art, he wished to avoid and forbid the aesthetization of pain and thus the potential joy that could be experienced in an artistic work, with such a result discounting the suffering and pain inflicted upon victims and those who died as a result of a disastrous situation. Others have shared concern, especially regarding the use of metaphor in response to genocide. In addition to minimizing the extent of the crime and rendering it commonplace, the use of metaphor risks concealing the truth and therefore constituting a component of negationist discourse that seeks to deny the truthful occurrence of the events.

The scope of Adorno’s interdiction is large, applying to all disastrous events that follow the end of the Second World War. It provokes questions regarding the possibility and the appropriate response and representation of such events. Despite his intentions, such an interdiction did not dissuade many from expression through poetry. When they sought to communicate their experiences, many survivors of the Shoah have turned to poetry.

In the face of self-imposed mutism, communication may be encouraged within the boundaries of poetic representation. Indeed, by means of the creative power of poetry, some survivors have summoned their voice, despite the silencing effects of disaster. The choice is understandable as such an act can bring with it ameliorating effects for individuals who attempt to work through their trauma. In her study *Poetry after Auschwitz*, Susan Gubar highlights the benefits of poetry: “Like symptoms in the aftermath of trauma, literal utterance often announces itself as an involuntary return to intense feelings about an incomprehensible moment. But recollected in relative safety, if not tranquility, such a moment rendered in writing allows authors and readers to grapple with the consequences of traumatic pain without being silenced by it” (8).

This idea seems to be echoed by Christina Bracegirdle, who in the *Journal of Poetry Therapy* shared her personal story of how poetry helped her to recover from trauma after the murder of her sister. Although such an experience is subjective, Bracegirdle explains the existence of commonalities between counselling and the act of poetic creation, suggesting poetic work as a possible reaction to traumatic events. The publication of journals such as the *Journal of Poetry Therapy* and the existence of organizations such as the National Association for Poetry Therapy (NAPT), a member of the National Coalition of Creative Arts Therapies Associations (NCCATA), demonstrate the representational power of poetry.

Poetry in the Face of Silence

In addition to encouraging the survivor-addresser’s communication of experiences, poetry can assist the addressee who attempts to comprehend the message

despite the difficulties that accompany its reception. In his work *Why Poetry Matters*, Jay Parini highlights two elements that Aristotle identifies as reasons why individuals create poetry: “There is first the instinct for imitation: we naturally wish to reproduce things observed or felt. This is what separates us from other living creatures. Second, we have an instinctive love of harmony and rhythm, which is why we perk up when we hear a drumbeat in the distance, why our foot begins to tap when a catchy tune is struck” (4-5). While these considerations may not hold true for every person or every poetic utterance, the reaction evoked by melodic poetry that is sketched in the previous sentence suggests a tacit tie that may exist between listeners and poetic language. It in turn suggests an inherent quality within certain poetic speech that prompts the striking of a chord among listeners and a subsequent connection with the content they hear. Here we may locate a very real and substantial possibility in poetry that may engender and facilitate a more complete or deeper apprehension of incomprehensible limit events.

As language struggles to describe disastrous events adequately, and despite the “unsharable” nature of experiences, the work of poets can present, in the words of Susan Gubar, “spurts of vision, moments of truth, baffling but nevertheless powerful pictures of scenes unassimilated into an explanatory plot” (7). The concentrated nature of poetic speech may intensify the message to strike the individual who receives it in such a way that everyday language cannot, an idea seconded by the poet-critic Annie Finch: “The paradox seems clear: what cannot be contained in words is contained in words. The power of this paradox is that the commonplace words that we use in speech everyday change as poetry makes them powerful” (qtd. in *Bracegirdle* 83). By means of poetic tools, they may thus provide the readers and listeners with images and descriptions that

can increase the possibility of making disastrous, incomprehensible, and sometimes inexpressible events more graspable to those who have not lived through them. One such element of poetry includes the use of metaphor.

Metaphor

As one of the most ubiquitously used tools at the poet's disposal, metaphor, the device which in Owen Barfield's words "attempts to arouse cognition of the unknown by suggestion from the known" (110), provides great possibility for an individual to speak the unspeakable and for his or her interlocutor to grasp that which resists understanding. For the purpose of this study, metaphor will be examined, following Gérard Genette, as literary device. The use of metaphor in order to grasp some truth has been purported for some time in the study of psychoanalysis, whose methods draw often-cited comparisons with the act of writing poetry given the attention that both focus meticulously upon language and the multiple meanings that may exist therein. The analyst's investigation searches for the hidden meaning buried within the patient's speech in much the same way that we may search for deeper meaning within the contents of poetic speech through its incorporation of metaphor and other devices.

In a discussion on ways that the unspeakable may be spoken, Donna M. Orange references what she terms "emotional memory", "referring to the enduring felt quality of a process of interaction" (195). Differentiating it from "procedural memory", she notes the difficulty of the expression of "emotional memory" in denotative terms and its potential for greater success when expressed in an artistic manner. This challenge holds

true especially for situations of trauma. Along those lines, Orange proposes the use of a “dialogue of metaphor”.

Although she acknowledges that psychoanalysts differ in their suggestions for discovering what remains unspoken, she notes the vital importance of the metaphor in psychoanalysis as a patient attempts to make known his or her feelings and experiences while the psychoanalyst seeks to understand those “unsharable” components. Both individuals may lean upon the power of the metaphor as Orange concludes:

Thus, I imagine, psychoanalysts of every stripe resort to metaphor in speaking with patients—metaphor with its peculiar capacity to connect or to fail to connect with emotional experience. Often, patients then engage metaphor in their almost desperate attempts to help us to understand them. ‘I swallowed a knife,’ announced my long-term patient. ‘Yes, you did,’ I responded, ‘and it causes you more damage as we try to extract it, doesn’t it?’ ‘Yes, and I can’t believe you get it,’ she replied. (199-200)

Metaphor may thus facilitate communication on the part of both the speaker and his or her interlocutor. In this case, despite the patient’s doubt in another’s comprehension of her situation, we see that it is metaphor that provides a means for apprehension as opposed to the adoption of self-imposed mutism. Its use may also encourage reception by concealing components in situations where retaliation after speaking may be a concern.

Metaphor “allows for the impossible, a world in which one thing is another thing, and so ‘Juliet is the sun’”, explains Jay Parini, who later describes metaphor as metamorphosis (77). These unexpected connections forged by metaphor may allow spectators to grasp extreme experiences in new ways by enhancing the message. Indeed,

they connect extreme elements of testimony that are difficult to imagine to other elements that may be unexpected, evoking new feelings within the interlocutor or unveiling a new perspective that adds additional dimension to his or her apprehension of the survivor's suffering. Such a connection may thus equip spectators to make the requisite figurative leap to bridge the gap to a certain degree between the event and what can be known. Although the interlocutor can never fully bear the events in the same way as the survivor, metaphor may aid in bringing the outsider much closer to the experience.

Repetition

The repetition of a phrase or sentence, and anaphora, the repetition and building upon an established structure of words, are two additional common poetic tools. These devices may carry a sonorous quality, capturing the attention of the interlocutor's ear while also serving to emphasize an idea of importance. Repetition can assist spectators in gaining a deeper grasp of the emotions and motivations of characters by identifying the thoughts that occupy the minds of these individuals. For the speaker, it can act as an integral mnemonic device for damaged memory. The use of anaphora may also demonstrate a speaker's attempts to counter the unspeakable since it indicates his or her progression of efforts to make the message more precise.

Lastly, the enhancement of the message through repetition can minimize doubt of veracity in truthful statements regarding disastrous experiences whose shocking nature may seem difficult to believe. Disastrous events can surpass comprehension, instilling doubt in the minds of listeners that such terrible events could have truly taken place. A thought akin to "Surely this could not have happened, it could not have been that terrible"

that dismisses reality on the part of the addressee is dangerous while listening to testimony, as it may permit termination of the contact, a closure of the door to the truth. It may also lead survivors to choose mutism. Such situations prompt the concomitant need for assistance in belief and understanding of the actual situation.

Despite the difficulty of comprehending these events and despite the fact it may be difficult to believe that such unfortunate situations could have come to pass, repetition provides an insistence that they did indeed occur. As proposed by the technique of ad nauseum, the more times a phrase is heard, the easier it may be to accept it as truth. This insistence can thus support the testimony and prompt a stronger belief therein. We will see this case, for example, in the analysis of *Incendies* when the main character reiterates that she loves her son in spite of the fact that he tortured and raped her. Although it is difficult to imagine that she would retain that love, the use of repetition reinforces affirmation and thus creates belief.

THE FOCUS OF ANALYSIS

By defining poetry in a broad sense as visual or spoken language which contains within it poetic figures of speech such as repetition and metaphor, as well as tools including rhythm and an emphasis on emotion, I will explore the way in which Mouawad uses poetic and symbolic representation in *Incendies* to help spectators grasp the unspeakable. The elements of poetic representation are those that carry an aesthetic dimension, such as repetition. Symbolic representation involves elements used throughout the play that stand as a sign for some character, truth, or situation, such as the semiotic use of a polygon that symbolizes a character's knowledge regarding the

existence of members of her family. I will show that the devices primarily engage Jakobson's poetic and emotive functions to draw attention to the form of the message and the emotions of the addresser, respectively.⁶ We will see that these choices combat the unsharable nature of unspeakable experiences to support representation by enabling the addresser to formulate descriptions that may in turn be better understood by the addressees.

This study will proceed sequentially in terms of the appearance of scenes throughout the piece by examining each "incendie" of which it is composed. Such a process will permit the analysis of the poetic and symbolic elements of the text, many of which gain greater significance as the story advances and they repeat and interact with one another in new ways. The procedure will also retain the effects of the achronological nature of the text with the eventual expression of the truth of the trauma and its process of illumination. Further, beginning with the "Incendie de Nawal" ("Nawal's Fire"), the first of the play, permits an understanding of the nature of, and tension between, poetic expression and silence that pervades the entire text. This duality problematizes the power of language in the face of silencing events, an issue forever relevant to the present as various disastrous experiences continue to occur and challenge understanding.

Before I begin an examination of the representational strategies in the play, it is first worth noting that Mouawad employs symbolic representation even at the structural level of *Incendies*. The omission of an article and plural form of the title gesture toward

⁶ As noted in the introduction, Jakobson outlined six functions of communication: the emotive is tied to the addresser, the conative to the addressee, the phatic to the contact, the metalingual to the code, the referential to the context, and the poetic to the message.

its polysemous nature in the play. As will be shown, the title makes reference to both the incendiary messages that characters must face (that reveal as they destroy) as well as the various symbolic and literal fires within the text. Named after the term for a substantial fire, *Incendies* is itself divided into four distinct *incendies*: “Incendie de Nawal”, “Incendie de l’Enfance”, “Incendie de Jannaane”, and “Incendie de Sarwane” (“Nawal’s Fire”, “Childhood on Fire”, “Jannaane’s Fire”, Sarwane’s Fire”).

Employed in a symbolic sense, each *incendie* identifies key players or elements of the work, as well as its composite storylines. Fire, a powerful element, demonstrates the driving force for each character’s quest. Although viewed as a trigger of progress, bringing to mind survival through warmth, protection from wild creatures that lurk in the darkness of night, and a means of preparing sustenance, within the play, the author often calls upon its alternate associations. Indeed, spectators witness the powerful evocation of the fire that, in all of its intensity, erases as it consumes. The separate fires that compose the play destroy the silence which masks the true history and bring to light new revelations, creating the possibility of a new beginning. As each *incendie* that comprises the play comes to an end, so too another aspect of silence is erased, devoured by the flames of truth, but not without the painful burn brought by that truth. Echoes to fire throughout the play each harken back to the title and thus the important value it carries.

Incendie de Nawal (Nawal’s Fire): Solving the Mystery behind Nawal’s Silence through Symbols

In the scenes that begin the play, the twins deal with the revelations of their mother’s will. As Nawal uses the conative function given her attempt to influence Jeanne

and Simon by assigning them tasks, her posthumous words establish the trajectory for the action for the play. Indeed, each scene is in some way tied to their respective searches for their father and brother to establish the truth of their origins.

The reading of the will informs spectators of Nawal's extended silence prior to her death. While it becomes a heavy presence that provokes doubt and tension in *Incendies*, Nawal's mysterious silence hides the truth behind the origins and life of previous generations. As is the case for others who have been faced with limited speech, silence, far from being empty, exists rather as a muted plenitude.

In addition to the creation of the semblance of realism, the use of silence within literature can also be used for dramatic effect, as a sort of declaration of the inability to speak of the experiences which is common after limit events. This effect was shown, for example, by Simon P. Sibelman who analyzed the use of silence in the works of Elie Wiesel. Although in *Incendies*, Nawal is capable of facing her aggressor and providing testimony against him, her motives for falling silent make of silence likewise a dramatic tool and a means of displaying the weight of her situation.

When the revelation of the existence of an unknown brother and father is considered alongside Nawal's mutism and the equally mysterious breaking of her silence, which occurs on the twins' birthday when she enigmatically declares "Maintenant que nous sommes ensemble ça va mieux" (24) ("Now that we're together, everything feels better" [15]), we find employment of Jakobson's phatic function. Indeed, the mystery established by her silence within the first scenes of the play creates a situation of suspense that assists the maintenance of the Jakobsonian contact as it aims to attract the attention of the audience. Spectators may begin to ask questions regarding the cause of

the two situations, but answers remain uncertain as the source and content of the silence (war and rape committed by her son) must be discovered throughout the entirety of the play.

Nawal's will appears as the first of a collection of incendiary messages within the play. This message does not merely spark the progression of fires that compose the piece. It also consumes the previously established world-view of both children.

Their professions prove indicative of the manner by which they perceive and respond to the world and thus their reactions to the situation, exhibited first by Simon's tirade comprised of a verbal landslide of expletives and frustration. A world away from expression through poetic elements, which focus upon the form of the message, Simon's response makes use of Jakobson's emotive function by making his emotions the focus of the message. The boxer, driven by emotion, releases a barrage of words governed by anger and sprinkled with foul language, informing spectators of his feelings regarding the revelations and his strained relationship with his mother. Such an action parallels his attempts to throw verbal punches to gain control of the situation after having taken a hit.

Simon's extreme emotion stands in stark contrast to Jeanne's measured analytical silence. The latter will lean upon mathematical grammar in an attempt to structure the difficult situation in a way that she may process. The twins' opposing behaviors towards the unexpected should be kept in mind as they manifest themselves poetically throughout the play in ways pertinent to this study.

The news shared, the two go on their own way, Jeanne to teach and Simon to train for an upcoming fight. This separation is presented via overlapping conversations which again differentiate their reactions based on profession. Jeanne finds herself in her

classroom where she presents an important mathematical structure, symbolic of her situation, that she will revisit as she struggles to understand. While projecting a polygon onto a screen, she explains to her students that all individuals belong to a polygon in which individual family members are placed at each side, from which point they possess the ability to view other family members. Simon, for his part, trains at a gym where his trainer, Ralph, explains Simon's recent struggles: "T'es aveugle! Tu ne vois pas les jeux de jambes du gars qui est en face de toi! Tu ne vois pas sa garde... On appelle ça un problème de vision périphérique" (28) ("You're blind! You don't see the footwork of the guy in front of you. You don't see his defence.... That's what we call a peripheral vision problem" [18]). In the situation with his mother, as with his boxing bouts, Simon is blind to integral components found therein, components capable of destabilizing his equilibrium.

Within this overlapping of experiences, the symbolic representation of vision by means of visual elements plagues both of the twins in their respective domains. This use of Jakobson's poetic function, initiated with the focus on the form of the message, provides multiple manners of viewing the unusual situation for both spectators and characters, thus promoting wider attempts at apprehension. These semiotic representations demonstrate the difficulty to deal with that which is hidden and potentially unknown. Such an idea mirrors the issue of silence, specifically that of Nawal, which hides the truth.

This scene demonstrates how theater may present various points of view through the use of multiple characters, as a novel may do. While a novel-based version of the play could provide readers with a keen sense of the twins' vision problem by providing even

the most infinitesimal details of the polygon Jeanne projects on the screen (or including the diagram) and the elements that Simon does and does not see during his training, the theatrical representation addresses both sight and sound simultaneously. The visual image of the polygon facilitates apprehension of Jeanne's explanation in the same manner that Simon's movements depict the description provided by his trainer. This combination thus permits theatrical representation to intensify dialogue and promote spectator apprehension of the situation.

The importance of the polygon becomes more evident as Jeanne accepts her mother's request and obtains the envelope to deliver. Hermile's question regarding her belief in the existence of her father leads to Jeanne's re-adoption of the aforementioned symbol, in an effort at symbolic representation:

Je croyais connaître ma place à l'intérieur du polygone auquel j'appartiens. Je croyais être ce point qui ne voit que son frère Simon et sa mère Nawal.

Aujourd'hui, j'apprends qu'il est possible que du point de vue que j'occupe, je puisse voir aussi mon père ; j'apprends aussi qu'il existe un autre membre à ce polygone, un autre frère. Le graphe de visibilité que j'ai toujours tracé est faux.

Quelle est ma place dans le polygone ? Pour trouver, il me faut résoudre une conjecture. Mon père est mort. Ça, c'est la conjecture. Tout porte à croire qu'elle est vraie. Mais rien ne la prouve. Je n'ai pas vu son cadavre, pas vu sa tombe. Il se peut, donc, entre 1 et l'infini, que mon père soit vivant. (30-31)

("I thought I knew my place in the polygon I belong to. I thought I was the point that only sees her brother Simon and her mother Nawal. Today, I found out that, from the position I hold, it is also possible for me to see my father; and I learned

that there is another member of this polygon, another brother. The visibility graph I've always drawn is wrong. Where do I stand in the polygon? To find out, I have to prove a hypothesis. My father is dead. That is the hypothesis. Everything leads us to believe this is true. But nothing proves it. I never saw his body or his grave.

It is therefore possible, between 1 and infinity, that my father is still alive" [21])

In a manner similar to that of Simon, Jeanne has been blind to a component of her reality, a fact rendering her unaware of the hidden truth. This polygon does more than simply illustrate the way in which Jeanne processes the difficult situation in which she finds herself. The symbol also serves the poetic function by placing focus on the form of the message, providing spectators with another manner of viewing that situation and therefore increasing the possibility of grasping the addresser's message. The mathematical conjecture demonstrates that the supposed truth exists in stark contrast from what Jeanne has always believed to be true. The mathematic principles that structure her view of life will continue to do so, as evidenced by Jeanne's consideration of a new conjecture and potential results.

At the end of this scene, spectators witness the first of many breaks in the linearity of events that results in the overlapping of time periods. In this scene, Hermile the notary calls Jeanne who has just left his office. These efforts are intermixed via telescoping with the voices of Nawal and her love Wahab who call for one another.

Unlike a novel wherein the author would likely employ a narrator to facilitate the breaks in linearity and elucidate the connection between the past and the present (since it proves difficult to simultaneously describe the action occurring in two different time periods and because the overlapping of two sets of dialogue proves difficult to follow

given the inability to visually recognize the speaker), theater may use space to do so. For the production of the play at Tarragon Theatre (2008), set design involved “a wall around the back of the theatre, made of various plastic and latex materials, that is reminiscent of a burnt-out or bombed-out building” (Lamb *et al.* 8). Minimal elements of décor, such as Hermile’s desk, were placed upon sand that was poured across the dimensions of the stage (8). In this scene that overlaps the conversation between Hermile and Jeanne alongside that of Nawal and Wahab, the individuals from separate time periods position themselves at different places on the same stage. Their separation from one another facilitates audience understanding of the crossover. These two sets of characters do not acknowledge one another or interact. However, the brief, overlapping exclamations build intensity of emotion as this use of space and time by representation within the same space on stage symbolizes the influence of the past upon the present.

This introduction of the overlapping of past and present advances into the meeting of Nawal and Wahab in scene five that follows. When considered in conjunction with scene seven, these scenes construct the heart of the play, serving as the locus for the events that will follow. Further, they are composed of numerous integral poetic elements which the author takes up repeatedly throughout this work. A close examination of scenes five and seven will prove beneficial as it will thus permit the elucidation of major themes that follow and allow a more complete analysis of their tie to poetic and symbolic representation.

Scene Five. Poetic Speech in the Face of Extreme Emotion and Danger

In the fifth scene of the play, titled “Ce qui est là” (“Something is There”), the audience finds 14 year-old Nawal and her love, Wahab, in the forest at dawn, meeting at what they later call “the place of their childhood”, a rock surrounded by white trees. The natural setting, often appearing in poetry, is also poetic in its simplicity. In his work, *Why Poetry Matters*, Jay Parini explains that poetry “matters because of the way it evokes the natural world” (xiii). He continues:

Entire books have been written about poetry and nature, a tradition that stretches from the pastoral poets of classical Greece and Rome to Robert Frost and beyond. Poets approach nature in highly individual ways, and few of them exhibit the same attitudes. But there is considerable agreement among them that poetic language is intimately connected to natural objects. Poets have always returned to nature for inspiration... (xiii)

This dream-like setting adds dimension to the love story that will become a legend throughout the play while the elemental state of nature in which they express their feelings and discuss their dangerous situation parallels the purity of their deep love for one another. Further, the mention of dawn, common in poetic tradition, signifies the situation of the two who find themselves at the metaphorical dawn of a new phase of life. It is here in this natural setting that Nawal tells Wahab that she is carrying his child. This news brings joy, but also possible death, prompting the need for innovative ways of explanation afforded by poetic speech.

The beginning of the scene carries importance as it establishes the silence/sound opposition that underlies much of the text. Nawal begins the scene by commanding Wahab’s silence, noting that if he says a single word, he could “kill her”. This extreme

assertion enlightens the audience as to the intensity of Nawal's emotions. Further, it suggests the gravity of their situation. To speak of the news constitutes the communication of an incendiary message that could also bring about danger and death for both because of their forbidden love, highlighted by her subsequent declaration: "Wahab, j'ai l'impression qu'à partir du moment où je vais laisser échapper les mots qui vont sortir de ma bouche, tu vas mourir toi aussi" (32) ("Wahab, I feel like the minute I release the words about to come out of my mouth, you will die too" [23]).

This proposed silence exists therefore as self-imposed mutism, made not because of the limitation of language, but rather due to concern for reception of the message. Silence becomes analogous to survival, suggesting the importance of keeping the truth secret, as the sound of words becomes analogous to danger. These factors intimate the need to find a way to represent through language that is different from the everyday in an effort to counter the unspeakability of events and subjectivity of emotion.

Although her article "Staging Memory in Wajdi Mouawad's *Incendies*: Archaeological Site or Poetic Venue?" does not seek to provide close examination of the play's elements of poetry, Yana Meerzon acknowledges that Mouawad's "dramatic and theatrical texts are based on . . . principles of poetic composition, such as verbal and visual onomatopoeia, thematic and structural repetitions, dramatic and spatial metaphors, rhythmical pattering and tropes [sic] variations" ("Staging Memory" 15). We begin to see this observation more clearly as this scene in *Incendies* continues and various techniques aid in explaining the news of their child as well as the extremity of Nawal and Wahab's love. The descriptions of both challenge expression due to the emotional intensity involved and the danger they pose, but language does exist to provide it, unlike the lack

of vocabulary to explain the *indicible*. Nawal's adoption of poetry after momentary mutism reflects the possibility provided by poetry as an attempt to overcome the difficulty of expression.

When she regains her speech after the request for Wahab's silence, and her own actual silence, she profits from the use of anaphora in her following remark: "Je voulais le hurler pour que tout le village l'entende, pour que les arbres l'entendent, que la nuit l'entende, pour que la lune et les étoiles l'entendent. Mais je ne pouvais pas. Je dois te le dire à l'oreille, Wahab..." (33) ("I wanted to shout it so the whole village would hear, so the trees would hear, so the night and the moon and the stars would hear. But I couldn't. I have to whisper it in your ear, Wahab . . . [23]). Here, the theatrical simultaneity of visual and spoken language can again serve to enhance representation. Vera Mowry Roberts's reminder of the noteworthy effect of tone and intensity of the voice made possible in theatrical representation becomes especially pertinent in this scene (39). If the actress portraying Nawal adopts a smile and an intensely joyful tone to pronounce the lines from "I wanted" ("Je voulais") to "stars would hear" ("étoiles l'entendent"), spectators could gain a sense of her excitement regarding the news she will share. The impact of the joyful tone is bolstered by Nawal's declared wish to share her message by shouting as well as the fact that Nawal's proposed audience expands in size concomitantly with her desire to share the news.

These indications accompany the use of Jakobson's poetic function. In this scene, the function is marked by the focus on the form of the message through anaphoric repetition and the use of the subjunctive to ensure the same pronunciation of the verb "entende(nt)" despite changes in the subject pronoun. The form of repetition results not

only in a sound and rhythm to capture the attention of the listener, but also insists upon her desire to share the news. These elements provide the audience with a better grasp of the overwhelming sense of joy their child inspires. It is also by means of poetry that Nawal finds the words to express her elation. Indeed, anaphora demonstrates her struggle against unspeakability by her progressive attempts to find the correct words to represent her feelings. In this instance, therefore, the poetic function enables a secondary function, the emotive, and even increases the impact of the expression of Nawal's feelings by repetition.

In spite of the joy, the news also brings danger, calling to mind the aforementioned silence/speech opposition where chosen silence serves as a response to danger. With the last two lines of the quote, the tone changes. Nawal notes that she cannot shout, but must instead resort to whispering in the ear of Wahab, reflecting the threat and her refusal of silence by coming as close as possible to silence while still producing unintelligible sound. A corresponding refusal to look Wahab in the face combined with a decrease in volume and a tone of despair would break dramatically from the previous joy to highlight the difficulty and intensity of the situation.

As Nawal continues, she finally shares the news that she carries a child. Despite the fact that the child is a result of the strong love between them, it also threatens to cause harm. We find that such news and the extremity of the situation are reflected in her poetic considerations. An anaphoric string of rhetorical questions from Nawal demonstrate her attempt at understanding her own emotions regarding the situation: "C'est un vertige, n'est-ce pas? C'est magnifique et horrible, n'est-ce pas ? C'est un gouffre et c'est comme la liberté aux oiseaux sauvages, n'est-ce pas ?" (33) ("Isn't it amazing? It's magnificent

and horrible, isn't it? It's an abyss, and it's like freedom to wild birds, isn't it?" [24]).

While the first oppositions reflect adjectives to describe the situation, the second turns to metaphors of a universal nature, suggested by "gouffre" and "la liberté aux oiseaux sauvages", drawing minds to the opposition of earth and sky, low and high.

These oppositions represent the expanse of her emotions of joy and fear, as well as the danger involved and thus the difficulty that she has in understanding her emotions. Jay Parini's claim that one advantage to poetry is that it can aid people "by opening up their minds to fresh ways of thinking" (20) becomes evident in the poetic function of these enunciations where the addition of poetry permits description of the situation in more concrete and varied ways. For spectators, Nawal's use of oppositions and comparisons in her questions can result in increased apprehension as it presents the content in a different manner to highlight aspects that may have otherwise gone unnoticed. The use of the poetic tools demonstrates and compounds Nawal's attempts to overcome challenges to expression in order to explain her feelings by tying them to a variety of other seemingly dissimilar oppositions. Thus, we see another instance in which the poetic function enables the emotive function since expression through the poetic again allows spectators to gain a sense of the character's feelings.

After processing the situation and attempting to express it in words through rhetorical questions, Nawal's exclamation of her understanding that "il n'y a plus de mots!" (33) ("there are no more words" [24]) demonstrates a moment at which finding adequate expression proves a challenge, common in such situations of extreme emotion or those of distress. Here, she struggles to find the words to express the intended meaning of her message in the face of such a situation. However, despite such issues, Nawal

refuses silence by expression through metaphor, a hallmark of poetry and a tool that can attempt to explain that which resists explanation: “Quand j’ai entendu la vieille Elhame me le dire, un océan a éclaté dans ma tête. Une brûlure” (33) (“When I heard old Elhame tell me, an ocean exploded in my head. Seared.” [24]). The metaphor provides spectators with another manner of viewing the situation. Indeed, this ocean brings to mind an attempt to signify the flood of ideas that burst forth in her mind upon hearing such serious news, with her varied emotions and a glimpse into future concerns.

The reference to the tactile sense by the idea of a burn may be slightly more difficult to grasp, but carries with it a clear indication of the pain that results when the weight of the ocean of ideas is felt. Further, it may stand as a subtle reference to the “incendies” within the title and structure, a mention that begins to forge its association with the pain it may cause and with her child. The statements also develop yet another opposition between two powerful forces, water and fire. These elements can be difficult to control and make great destruction possible, much like the potential results of sharing the news of their child. Further, fire can consume the way that fear or sorrow does. These acknowledgements afforded by metaphor become present in Nawal’s statements which give spectators a glimpse into her mind and provide new insight into her experience.

The two continue with a brief discussion of the danger that they could both be killed when others discover their secret. Indeed, after Wahab questions Nawal about the object of her fear and she responds “Tu n’as pas peur, toi ?” (34) (“Aren’t you afraid?” [25]), the author suggests the grip that fear holds on the character. In such circumstances, expression can be difficult. We can locate Nawal’s struggle to find the words to explain the complexity of the situation in its entirety in another of her rhetorical questions,

“Qu’est-ce que c’est ?” (34) (“What is it?” [25]). Her subsequent explanation through the poetic function demonstrates her effort to understand: “Je ne sais pas si c’est la colère, je ne sais pas si c’est la peur, je ne sais pas si c’est le bonheur” (34) (“I don’t know if it’s anger, I don’t know if it’s fear, I don’t know if it’s happiness” [25]). The disparity of her feelings, demonstrated through this poetic anaphoric construction and combined with the alliteration found in the repeated “Je ne sais pas si c’est”, creates insistence upon her lack of understanding and thus connotes to the audience and her interlocutor the confusion which reigns over Nawal’s thoughts and the difficulty faced by the character. Use of the poetic function therefore enlightens the emotive function.

Wahab’s effort to comfort his love includes not only the metaphorical association of their time together that night as “a gift”, but also proposes the germ of the idea that the two will remain together throughout all upcoming tribulations, notably the injurious attacks of others. He explains the resultant effects: “. . . il restera toi, moi et un enfant de toi et de moi. Ton visage, mon visage dans le même visage” (34) (“. . . you and I will remain, you and I and our child, yours and mine. Your face and my face in the same face” [25]). This idea is important in that it prompts Nawal to declare the very aphorism that we previously learned served to momentarily break her silence, “Maintenant que nous sommes ensemble, ça va mieux” (35) (“Now that we’re together, everything feels better” [25]), a phrase that will be many times repeated and serves as a refrain throughout the entire play. After affirming that they will “always be together”, Wahab too adopts Nawal’s declaration. I view this sentence in each of its enunciations as inextricably tied to this moment, to their expression of love for one another and their promise that no matter what, Nawal and Wahab will always remain together. What is more, Nawal will

continue to employ this phrase, which will serve as a touchstone to the memory of her love while at the same time functioning as a refrain to unify the text for the audience.

Scene Seven. Voicing Intense Emotions: From Love to Consuming Sorrow

After the sixth scene in which Nawal is told that she must either give away her child or leave home, we find the extremely regretful 15 year-old alone in her room repeating the aforementioned aphorism “Maintenant que nous sommes ensemble, ça va mieux” (37) (“Now that we’re together, everything feels better” [28]) not once, but three times to herself. It now becomes a refrain, making clear to the audience that it is a trope that carries an importance in the play. Indeed, as F. Elizabeth Dahab explained while bearing its repetition in mind, this statement contributes to one of the major themes of the work. Here, we witness the link between repetition and the accessing of memory. The iteration of the phrase serves a different purpose than it did in the previous scene: the infiltration of the past into the present manifests itself as a counter to extreme sadness, serving as a means of bearing such a burden.

Joel Beckerman, who specializes in sonic branding, explains the importance of the repetition of “sonic patterns” as they appear in cinema: “If you hear them later, even decades later, they transport you back to the time and place where you first saw the film and call to mind all the senses and emotions you experienced then” (32). A comparable event is at play in this scene. By repeating the phrase, Nawal’s mind is transported to the memory of her love, wherein she can attempt to find solace. This effect is true in this moment and will hold true as the years pass. In a moment reminiscent of Shakespearean tragic love, Wahab’s voice is soon heard at the window. However, spectators only hear

his voice as he is hidden from view. This choice serves in a way as the visual foreshadowing of his impending forced separation from his love. The visual language of his physical absence among the physical presence of others that is made possible by theatrical representation therefore provides an additional dimension to the representation of the heart-rending circumstances.

Wahab explains that he has just returned from the “rocher aux arbres blancs” (38) (“the rock where the white trees stand” [29]), what he calls the “lieu de mon enfance” (“scene of my childhood”) that served as the setting for the scene we have just considered. He ties this now symbolic place to an important metaphor repeated by Nawal throughout the play as he reflects: “l’enfance est un couteau que l’on vient de me planter dans la gorge” (38) (“childhood is a knife they’ve stuck in my throat” [29]). This phrase first appeared in the reading of Nawal’s will in the second scene. It read:

À Jeanne et Simon, Simon et Jeanne.

L’enfance est un couteau planté dans la gorge.

On ne le retire pas facilement. (18)

(To Janine and Simon, Simon and Janine.

Childhood is a knife stuck in the throat.

It can’t be easily removed. [8])

However, it finds its origin at this meeting due to the play’s achronological nature that results in historical polyphony.⁷

It is because of the fact that he is being sent away that Wahab shares such an idea. One can interpret the fatal action of this metaphor as the death of his childhood, his life

⁷ The English translation uses the name “Janine” in place of “Jeanne”.

up to this point. Here again, metaphor's poetic function allows new possibilities for understanding as in the words of Jay Parini: "A whole world becomes available to readers that was not there before" (24). The violence involved, as well as the mention that it was put there not by Wahab himself, but by another, assists his attempt of expression as they allow him to suggest his feelings of powerlessness and despair that result from his impending separation from Nawal. This shocking and tragic metaphor thus helps addressees to consider the situation in a new way.

His description of extreme actions continues as he employs hyperbolic language to demonstrate the intensity of his love through the emotive function: "Je voulais te dire que cette nuit, mon cœur est plein d'amour, il va exploser. Partout, on me dit que je t'aime trop" (38) ("I wanted to tell you that tonight, my heart is full of love, it's going to explode. Everyone keeps telling me I love you too much" [29]). Such violent expression suggests that he has too much love for his heart to contain, that the only possible result is the destruction of its vessel. This declaration echoes the intensity described through poetic comparisons put forth by Nawal in the previous scene, who likened her feelings to the breaking forth of an ocean or a burn. Further, it is also bolstered by his use of the poetic function with anaphoric construction in the following sentence ". . . je ne sais pas ce que ça veut dire aimer trop, je ne sais pas ce que ça veut dire être loin de toi, je ne sais pas ce que ça veut dire quand tu n'es pas là. Je devrais réapprendre à vivre sans toi" (38-39) (" . . . I don't know what that means, to love too much, I don't know what it means to be far from you, what it means not to have you with me. I will have to learn to live without you" [29]). Anaphora underlines the intensity of what he says while it also emphasizes the increasing intensity of his feelings. These poetic qualities clarify the

strength of their emotions as well as the loss that the couple will feel and the uncertain state in which they will find themselves. Such poetic elements help us to grasp the extent of Wahab's undeniably powerful love for Nawal, as they previously aided the representation of Nawal's love for Wahab. In addition, they work in tandem to show how important they have become to one another and make the upcoming separation more painful for the audience.

With the difficult news of forced separation, the characters revisit a discussion first taken up in the aforementioned scene, that of the antithesis of remaining together despite separation. It is by poetic speech that the lovers deal with the given news, surveying possibilities of overcoming the setback. Poetry makes the seemingly impossible possible as it invites the idea of the connection through mind despite physical separation that can permit the two to remain together through both space and time. Wahab explains: "Mais partout où je serais, tu y seras. Nous rêvions de regarder l'océan ensemble. Eh bien, Nawal, je te le dis, je te le jure, le jour où je le verrai, le mot océan explosera dans ta tête et tu éclateras en sanglots car tu sauras alors que je pense à toi. Peu importe où je serai, nous serons ensemble. Il n'y a rien de plus beau que d'être ensemble" (39) ("But wherever I am, you will be there. We dreamed of seeing the ocean together. Listen, Nawal, I'm telling you, listen, the day I see the ocean, the word ocean will explode in your head, it will explode and you will burst into tears because you will know that I'm thinking of you. No matter where I am, we will be together. There is nothing more beautiful than being together" [30]). Wahab's confirmation of perpetual togetherness through another evocation of the ocean thus involves not only the idea of

carrying his love with himself, but also being so connected to her that his actions will be felt by Nawal, despite their separation by distance.

The sentence, “Il n’y a rien de plus beau que d’être ensemble” (“There is nothing more beautiful than being together”), echoes the sentiment from the fifth scene, “Maintenant que nous sommes ensemble ça va mieux” (“Now that we’re together, everything feels better”), that was taken up again at the start of this scene. Indeed, this sentence that rests at the heart of the storyline will serve as another refrain, repeated several times throughout the play. The ideas outlined by Wahab reaffirm the depth of their love for one another, promising that the tie that unites them will remain unbreakable.

At the end of the scene, upon the supplication of Wahab that Nawal tell their child of his love, she promises that she will explain “Quoiqu’il arrive, je t’aimerai toujours” (39) (“No matter what happens, I will always love you” [30]), a promise that Nawal will later repeat. She explains that, just like Wahab, she too will return to the “rocher aux arbres blancs” and she notes “. . . je dirai, moi aussi, au revoir à l’enfance, et l’enfance sera un couteau que je me planterai dans la gorge” (39) (“. . . I’ll say goodbye to childhood, too. And my childhood will be a knife stuck in my throat” [30]). By her own hands, her childhood will find its end through symbolic gesture as both accept their fate and entry into the next stage of their lives.

In the first scenes of the achronological play, spectators learn of Nawal’s mysteriously self-imposed silence, although they will have to wait until the end of the play to discover that it results from incest. Nonetheless, as first became evident in the scene “Ce qui est là”, intense experiences such as the joy of a first love and danger can

often challenge representation, sending those involved in pursuit of words to describe their reality. In scenes that follow, spectators find that extreme loss and sadness, in this case based on a legendary love and the forced relinquishing of her child, can have the same effect. Nawal sends away her baby with a red clown's nose given to her by Wahab whose color, often linked with love, may symbolize not only the love between the two young people, but also the love between mother and son. Although she has not been completely silenced by such events, silence does begin to make its presence more pronounced in the life of Nawal, as a girl who now, in the words of her grandmother, Nazira, "ne dit plus rien, qui se tait et qui erre" (40) ("no longer speaks, she wanders about in silence" [31]). This period of chosen mutism towards others understandably results from frustration and pain.

In the last scene of this section, after the death of Nazira and Nawal's burial, Nawal's nurse, Antoine, presents Jeanne with a set of cassettes on which he recorded her mother's silence during her time in the hospital. We will see that the physical presence of the cassettes as an element of décor may be viewed as symbol of her otherwise invisible self-imposed silence. Although this silence is not empty, but filled with the knowledge of the disastrous events of Nawal's life, it requires special means to be translated and understood by her children.

Incendie de l'enfance (Childhood on Fire): Presenting the Indicible of War

Nawal fulfills a promise to her grandmother in the first scene of this section before conversing with Sawda, a refugee who wishes to learn to read and write while accompanying Nawal on her quest to find her lost son, in the second scene. Mouawad

evokes poetic rhythm through syllabic configuration at the beginning of Sawda's explanation to Nawal, before the poetic silence/speech opposition is again taken up. Words come to represent rays of hope that pierce through the darkness of the silence that accompanies the denial of truth and danger in a parallel interplay of light and darkness: "On m'indique le monde et le monde est muet. Et la vie passe et tout est opaque. J'ai vu les lettres que tu as gravées et j'ai pensé : voici un prénom. Comme si la pierre était devenue transparente. Un mot et tout s'éclaire" (52-53) ("People show me the world but the world is mute. And life goes by and everything is murky. I saw the letters you engraved and I thought: that is a woman's name. As if the stone had become transparent. One word and everything lights up" [45]).

Sawda locates silence regarding past experiences with her parents who refuse to answer her questions and declare dedication to the act of forgetting terrible past events. Perhaps their silence is self-imposed to protect their children, caused by fear due to continued attacks or the desire not to relive the jarring events, to put an end to intergenerational trauma which can be devastating. On the other hand, they may choose to remain silent due to the *indicible*, burdened by an inadequate vocabulary to accurately describe the horror of the events. The text never elucidates the cause. In spite of the lack of indication, Sawda refuses silence as she recalls the events.

Unlike her parents, Sawda positions herself on the side of speech and memory, refusing to forget the burning of her family's home by those who chased them out. Although we may view the previous representation of fire at the structural level of the play as positive by its contribution to the revelation of the truth, this evocation of fire is far from beneficial. Consciously set, this fire threatens lives as it destroys homes which

typically provide protection from the outside world and offer a space within which families may join together. Here, fire finds malicious employment, serving as a tool for violence, threatening life itself and deracinating innocent villagers.

Although she does not recount the details of the unspeakable events, possibly because she finds herself struggling against the *indicible*, Sawda leans upon language's poetic function to voice the destructive force of war that she has witnessed. She sees through the denial of impending events espoused by her parents, proposing instead what will become a recurrent metaphor for their inevitable entrapment in the war: "Ils disent: 'Ici, la guerre ne nous rattrapera pas.' Je répons: 'Elle nous rattrapera. La terre est blessée par un loup rouge qui la dévore'" (52) ("They say, 'The war won't catch up with us.' I answer, 'Yes, it will. The earth is being destroyed by a red wolf.'" [46]). This metaphorical wolf representing war within the message, much like the fire, has as its goal irreparable destruction.

Most importantly for this study, the actions of such a creature/event provoke feelings that may be better understood by addressees through metaphor. The helplessness in the face of such strength and destruction, in addition to the pain prompted by war, are seen in a new way by its manifestation in the form of a wild animal. The evocation of the wolf is not uncommon in literature, spanning from its menacing presence in popular fairy tales and nursery rhyme to longer works such as novels and plays. The wolf, a fierce hunter, intimidates as it flashes its sharp teeth and emits growls to declare its strength and dominance. In this predator-prey relationship, as the wolf harms its prey, so too does war inflict pain upon its victims.

Described as red, a recurrent color throughout the play, the wolf is further tied to the blood it spills from its victims and the fury that it unleashes. While the symbolism of color varies based on culture and time period, John Gage, in his study *Color and Meaning*, remarks the ubiquitous association of the color red with blood. This symbolism contributed to the use of red in primitive rites and ceremonies of the Christian tradition, where it was also linked to Pentecostal fire (70). Further, red has been tied to fire in general, a significant element within the piece, as well as war and crime (de Vries 383).

Numerous studies have focused upon the role of color in situations from consumer behavior to physiology wherein is mentioned, for instance, the flushing of the face resulting from aggression in hostile situations (Elliot and Maier 99). This link may explain the additional common connections with red including both anger and passion, associations equally connected to the intensity and actions of war described within the piece. When paired together, these elements permit spectators to better imagine the full force of the fear of such upcoming events as well as Sawda's decision to leave and desire to find hope in reading and writing. It is important to keep the wolf in mind as its representation and effect will be further developed as the play continues.

The play then focuses upon Simon, who visits Jeanne due to concerns involving her curious behavior, provoked by her mother's news. As Jeanne convinces her brother to share her earphones and listen to their mother's recorded silence on one of the cassettes, Mouawad's creative techniques merge past and present. The twins' conversation in the present time is interrupted by a conversation between Nawal and Sawda from the past:

JEANNE. On l'entend respirer.

SIMON. Tu écoutes du silence!...

JEANNE. C'est son silence.

Nawal (19 ans) apprend à Sawda l'alphabet arabe.

NAWAL. Aleph, bé, tâ, szâ, jîm, hâ, khâ... (54)

(JANINE. You can hear her breathing. You can hear her move.

SIMON. You're listening to silence!

JANINE. It's her silence.

Nawal (age nineteen) is teaching Sawda the Arabic alphabet.

NAWAL. Aleph, bé, tâ, szâ, jîm, hâ, khâ... [48])

Spectators hear the portion of the twins' conversation, followed by Sawda's alphabet lesson. Although all four of these individuals share the same stage, Jeanne and Simon do not interact with Nawal and Sawda. The overlapping creates dramatic irony that heightens the tragic dimension of the piece. It permits spectators to discover Nawal's perseverance and capacity for love to compound the sorrowful impact of the discovery that the son whom she so loved and longed to find constituted the worst component of her life (her torture/rape). However, not even the spectators know the truth of her silence until the final scenes of the play.

We noted above that unlike a novel, theater may use space to physically represent the interplay between past and present. This scene provides another example of that manner of representation. Here, we note the semiotic use of both space and time. Indeed, the lack of interaction despite physical proximity exists as symbolic representation as it symbolizes the barrier to the knowledge of Nawal's past that she established with her chosen silence. In spite of the fact that the twins share the stage with Nawal, they do not learn of this memory from their mother's life.

I suggested above that we can view Nawal's recorded silence as a composition of the past events of her life of which she never speaks. When we consider the content and the specific moment of alternation between these two separate conversations (from two different time periods), we can view Nawal's conversation as a representation and a speaking of the contents of that silence. First, Jeanne and Simon's conversation revolves solely around the fact that they are listening to their mother's silence. Then, the immediacy of Nawal's speaking after Jeanne's utterance suggests that this very silence contains these unspoken past events which are then enacted on stage.

This idea is additionally supported by the remainder of the scene as it continues to bounce between the two different conversations. The representation of Sawda's alphabet lesson in the quotation above ends abruptly as a frustrated Simon quits listening to the silence and recommences his conversation with Jeanne. The twins argue (without any interruption from Nawal and Sawda) and Simon leaves. At this moment, the focus on stage shifts back to Nawal and Sawda who resume the alphabet lesson while Jeanne returns to the cassettes of her mother's silence. The performance of Nawal's conversation whenever the headphones are worn, and the conversation's termination when they are removed, therefore suggests that events in Nawal's past compose the cassettes of her recorded silence.

The effect of the representation of the silence is compounded by poetic elements at the end of the scene. After Simon leaves and the alphabet lesson briefly recommences, Jeanne resumes listening to the cassette to probe the recorded silence in her attempt to understand her mother's past. When the lesson ends, however, Jeanne's lack of success proves frustrating. As Jeanne stands alone on stage, the scene concludes with her

substantial poetic apostrophe to her deceased (and absent) mother. In it, she references Nawal's time in the hospital prior to her death (during which the nurse Antoine recorded Nawal's silence on the set of cassette tapes he gave Jeanne):

Pourquoi tu n'as rien dit? Dis quelque chose, parle-moi. Tu es seule. Antoine n'est pas avec toi. Tu sais qu'il t'enregistre. Tu sais qu'il n'écouterà rien. Tu sais qu'il nous donnera les cassettes. Tu sais. Tu as tout compris. Alors parle !

Pourquoi tu ne me dis rien ? Pourquoi tu ne me dis rien?

Jeanne lance son Walkman. (56)

(Why didn't you say anything? Speak to me. Say something [sic] You're alone. Antoine isn't with you. You know that he's recording you. You know that he won't listen to anything. You know that he'll give us the cassettes. You know. You've figured it all out. You know. So speak. Why won't you say something to me? Why won't you say something to me?

JANINE smashes her Walkman on the ground. [51])

As a popular poetic tool, the poetic function of apostrophe highlights the absence of its target, here prompting a secondary function, Jakobson's emotive function, by emphasizing the confusion, despair, and frustration of Jeanne for the spectators. Further intensified by the use of poetic means with the anaphora of "Tu sais" and the repetition of "Pourquoi tu ne me dis rien?", this evocation comes to an end with a sputtering exhaustion of feeling that perfectly explains Jeanne's frustration and reasoning for subsequently throwing her Walkman. Poetic speech thus aids by representation through visual language.

The impact of this poetic apostrophe also intensifies the effect of the boundaries between the twins and the knowledge of their mother's life in the preceding quote (that featured the conversation between Jeanne and Simon and Sawda's alphabet lesson). In the beginning of the scene, Simon highlights those boundaries by deeming the act of listening to Nawal's silence a useless pursuit. The aforementioned Jeanne/Simon Nawal/Sawda division does the same.

Although the twins listen to the recorded silence, they do not push their efforts for comprehension to the full extent. However, frustration and desire drive Jeanne to do so. She does not simply listen, but instead attempts to provoke a response with the direct address of her apostrophe to her mother. Nonetheless, neither study nor speech can overcome the boundaries of silence for the twins. These considerations thus demonstrate the representational power of the aforementioned use of space in theatrical representation that may suggest something visually without the need for direct explanation via a narrator. In addition to the spoken understanding that Nawal's life remains a mystery to Jeanne and Simon due to her mutism, the fact that Nawal and Sawda do not interact with Jeanne and Simon, and their physical division by conversation groups on stage, provides a visual representation of this reality. Paired with the voice of the actress and corresponding gesture of throwing the Walkman, the despair prompted by the unyielding silence heightens the dramatic element of the piece.

Despite Jeanne's outburst, she quickly returns to the tapes in the next scene. In this very brief scene, Nawal and Sawda continue their journey to find Nawal's son. Sawda's acquisition of the alphabet coincides with their arrival at a village where they will inquire about her son. That moment concludes their dialogue, but two important lines

of didascalia indicate movement that occurs before the close of the scene: “*Elles croisent Jeanne. / Jeanne écoute le silence*” (57) (“*They pass JANINE. / JANINE is listening to silence*” [52]). These directions indicate yet another overlap of time periods. However, Jeanne never speaks. This overlap arises not from the oscillation between different conversations, but instead by physical proximity on stage. Yet again, Mouawad suggests that the silence recorded on the cassettes to which Jeanne listens is expressed for the audience through the visual and spoken representation of Nawal’s memories on stage.

As the section progresses, Jeanne continues her search by considering her mother’s attendance of trials at the International Criminal Tribunal and examining a photo of her for clues to understanding her silence and past. In Nawal’s main timeline, success in finding her son proves elusive as Nawal and Sawda arrive at the empty orphanage of Kfar Rayat. Yet again, the alternation between conversations from different moments in time generates special meaning.

To facilitate understanding of the interplay of the various time periods involved, I have highlighted the text so that those lines which appear in the same color occur within the same time period. The red lines occur in the village of Kfar Rayat within Nawal’s main timeline (at 19 years old), while the green text reflects the instance when 64 year-old Nawal temporarily broke her silence during her time at the hospital (shortly before her death). While red and green text indicate moments from the past, lines appearing in blue represent the present. The blue text indicates Jeanne’s present-day search for her mother as she ponders the photo of Nawal and remembers the fact that Nawal temporarily broke her silence in the hospital. As we saw in previous scenes of overlap, the characters from separate time periods do not interact. Instead, the characters from the three time

periods form three distinct groups on stage. The following excerpt begins with Nawal's visit to the orphanage:

NAWAL. Et les enfants, où dormaient-ils?

LE MEDECIN. Dans cette salle.

NAWAL. Où es-tu ? Où es-tu ?

JEANNE. Qu'est-ce que tu regardes, maman ?

NAWAL. Maintenant que nous sommes ensemble, ça va mieux.

JEANNE. Qu'est-ce que tu as voulu dire par là ?

NAWAL. Maintenant que nous sommes ensemble, ça va mieux.

JEANNE. Maintenant que nous sommes ensemble, ça va mieux.

Nuit. Hôpital. Antoine arrive en courant.

ANTOINE. Quoi ? Quoi?? Nawal! Nawal!

SAWDA. Nawal!

ANTOINE. Qu'est-ce que vous avez dit? Nawal !

Antoine ramasse un enregistreur aux pieds de Nawal (64 ans).

NAWAL. Si je pouvais reculer le temps, il serait dans mes bras...

SAWDA. Où vas-tu ?

ANTOINE. Mademoiselle Jeanne Marwan ?

NAWAL. Au sud.

ANTOINE. Antoine Ducharme, infirmier de votre mère.

SAWDA. Attends ! Attends! Nawal, attends!

ANTOINE. Elle a parlé, votre mère a parlé. (63-64)

(NAWAL. Where did the children sleep?)

THE DOCTOR. In this ward.

NAWAL. Where are you? Where are you?

JANINE. Mama, what are you looking at?

NAWAL. Now that we're together, everything feels better.

JANINE. What did you mean by that?

NAWAL. Now that we're together, everything feels better.

JANINE. Now that we're together, everything feels better.

Night. Hospital. ANTOINE comes running in.

ANTOINE. What? What? Nawal? Nawal!

SAWDA. Nawal!

ANTOINE. What did you say? Nawal!

ANTOINE picks a tape recorder up off the floor beside NAWAL (age sixty-four).

NAWAL. If I could turn back the clock, he would still be in my arms...

SAWDA. Where are you going? Where are you going?

ANTOINE picks up the phone and dials a number.

ANTOINE. Janine Marwan...?

NAWAL. South.

ANTOINE. Antoine Ducharme, your mother's nurse.

SAWDA. Wait! Nawal, wait!

ANTOINE. She just spoke. Nawal just spoke. [57-59])

This important portion of the scene again demonstrates the complex visual and sonorous ballet of the interweaving of time periods and telescoping upon the stage created by Mouawad.

Whereas previous instances of overlapping featured two conversations, this scene contains three conversations which would likely necessitate division by chapters if appearing in novel form. Although its representation remains complex within the theater, certain techniques assist with efforts at comprehension. The aforementioned visual separation in conversation groups is one such example. In addition, since Nawal appears in two time periods (at age 19 and 64), the fact that two different actresses play the role of the character in this scene helps spectators to distinguish between the conversations. In Tarragon Theatre's production, lighting was used "primarily in boxes", a choice that functioned "to compartmentalize the stage area, drawing attention to specific actors" (Lamb *et al.* 8). This decision also served as an attempt to assist spectators by differentiating between the three conversations while retaining the impact of tension created by their overlapping.

The repetition of "Maintenant que nous sommes ensemble, ça va mieux" ("Now that we're together, everything feels better") reveals its influence on both Nawal and Jeanne. Its reappearance within the three time periods demonstrates its overarching importance and further unifies the text as refrain. As previously discussed, repetition can reinforce and build belief in the truth of the phrase as well as access memory. Here, the poetic function is tied to the emotive as its reprise demonstrates Nawal's use of the phrase as touchstone in her efforts to combat sadness to recall the happiness of her love. Its placement within telescopic dialogue exemplifies her sadness in the difficulty of finding her son, revealed in the repeated apostrophe "Où es-tu ? Où es-tu ?" ("Where are you? Where are you?"), a question that she knows her son will not answer. The issue of togetherness proves important by its role in her repeated sentence, as well as by the fact

that her quest to find her son is driven by her desire for the togetherness through their reunion. Further, it perpetuates the mystery (and contact of the phatic function), as the significance of the date on which Nawal broke her silence to utter the sentence remains uncertain to both Jeanne and spectators. The latter may therefore remain engaged with the content as they question the use of the repeated sentence.⁸

Despite this mystery, a greater understanding of the photograph in question comes to life via another instance of the succession of time periods on the same stage in the scene that follows. Jeanne finds no answer to the rhetorical question addressed to her mother. However, an enlargement of the photo at last pinpoints a location that will permit her to travel to her mother's homeland in further pursuit of the truth.

“Les pelouses de banlieue” (“Lawns in the Suburbs”), the penultimate scene of “Incendie de l'enfance” (“Childhood on Fire”), engages the poetic function as it showcases visual poetry that, combined with the rhythm and content of the dialogue, aims to provoke a powerful effect on spectators as it pushes the message to new levels of intensity. Jeanne and Simon appear at the home of the notary, Hermile, to sign necessary papers relating to their mother's will. Whereas Mouawad previously incorporated an overlap in two different conversations and two separate times within the same physical space, within this scene, an individualized element serves to represent two different concepts in two different time periods.

As Hermile ushers the twins outside, he turns on the sprinklers and calls attention to the construction underway in the neighborhood, evidenced from the outset of the scene

⁸ Just as the sentence served as a counter to extreme sadness in scene seven (by shifting Nawal's thoughts from her pain to her cherished memory with Wahab), its repetition in the hospital on the twins' birthday transports her thoughts away from the painful reminder of her torture and rape from which the twins were born.

by the sound of jackhammers. This sound intermittently returns, continuing throughout the provocation of Simon's anger upon discovering that his sister agreed to attempt their mother's request as well as throughout Hermile's recounting of his limited knowledge of an event which prompted Nawal's phobia of buses. It is not long before the voices from the past begin to overlap into the present as well, as Sawda begins crying out for Nawal between the enunciations of other characters:

JEANNE. Qu'est-ce qu'elle vous a dit?

SAWDA (*hurlant*). Nawal!

SIMON. Laisse tomber l'autobus et réponds-moi! Tu vas le trouver où?

Bruit de marteaux-piqueurs.

JEANNE. Qu'est-ce qu'elle vous a raconté?

SAWDA. Nawal!

HERMILE LEBEL. Elle m'a raconté qu'elle venait d'arriver dans une ville...

SAWDA (*à Jeanne*). Vous n'avez pas vu une jeune fille qui s'appelle Nawal?

HERMILE LEBEL. Un autobus est passé devant elle...

SAWDA. Nawal!

HERMILE LEBEL. Bondé de monde!

SAWDA. Nawal!!

HERMILE LEBEL. Des hommes sont arrivés en courant, ils ont bloqué l'autobus, ils l'ont aspergé d'essence et puis d'autres hommes sont arrivés avec des mitraillettes et...

Longue séquence de bruits de marteaux-piqueurs qui couvrent entièrement la voix d'Hermile Lebel. Les arrosoirs crachent du sang et inondent tout. Jeanne s'en va.

(71-72)

(JANINE. What did she say?

SAWDA (*screaming*) Nawal!

SIMON. Forget about the bus and answer me! Where are you going to find him?

Sound of jackhammers.

JANINE. What did she tell you?

SAWDA. (*screaming*) Nawal!

ALPHONSE LEBEL.⁹ She told me she had just arrived in a town...

SAWDA (*to JANINE*). Have you seen a girl named Nawal?

ALPHONSE LEBEL. Travelling on a bus...

SAWDA. (*screaming*) Nawal!

ALPHONSE LEBEL. Packed with people.

SAWDA. (*screaming*) Nawal!

ALPHONSE LEBEL. Some men came running up, they blocked the way of the bus, doused it with gasoline and then some others arrived with machine guns and...

Long sequence of jackhammer noise that entirely drowns the sound of

ALPHONSE LEBEL's voice. The sprinklers spray blood and flood everything.

JANINE *exits*. [67-68])

⁹ The English version substitutes the name Alphonse Lebel for Hermile Lebel.

Elements of sonorous language build intensity toward the utilization of poetic visual language and trigger indications of emotions with the emotive function. Sawda's repetitive despair-laden exclamation comes to serve as a sort of refrain within this scene and, as evidenced by the punctuation, her interruptions become more frequent and more urgent, creating a sense of anxiety. Further, the telescoping dialogue, with the repetition of Jeanne's "Qu'est-ce qu'elle vous. . ." ("What did she. . .") and Sawda's distressed "Nawal", alongside the remarks of Hermile that become more fragmented and resist the completion of a sentence, fosters urgency and heightens tension.

The didascalia that immediately follow these tense exchanges explain the use of significant symbolic visual language. As Hermile never completes his sentence, the visual language speaks in place of words, reaching spectators in a way infinitely different and more striking than could a simple description of the facts. The employment of the poetic function through the infusion of symbolism may therefore more effectively permit spectators to apprehend the horrific limit event that could be categorized as *indisible*. Although the interspersed sound of jackhammers initially seems a commonplace aspect of the scene, they begin to assume a secondary, powerful significance. The sound of jackhammers becomes synonymous with gunfire while water becomes transfigured into blood. In their secondary sense, referring to the events from Nawal's past, these elements evoke the unspeakable violence and casualty inherent in the world of war.

The evocation of blood demonstrating the spilled blood of the victims of war provides yet another renewal of the color red. While the color red first found brief mention in the red nose left with Nawal's son as she gave him away, the use of red acquired greater force in the metaphor of the red wolf. In the latter case, the color evoked

the danger, intensity, and savage quality of war. This connotation carries over into the effects of the crimson spouting sprinklers. The notation that the action of the sprinklers “inondent tout” (“flood everything”) exemplifies the power and importance Mouawad assigns to this element whose effect covers all, as well as the devastating level of loss of human life that results from such an event.

This scene brings to mind what sonic branding consultant Joel Beckerman terms a “boom moment”, “the moment when sound pulls emotional triggers, the instant when sound sets off reactions not just in the parts of your brain that handle auditory stimuli but in the sections associated with memories, fear, joy, and even visual perception and physical sensations or movement” (9). The poetic rhythm of the characters’ enunciations triggers the emotional responses of apprehension and potentially despair, further intensified by the sound of jackhammers that evoke an unexpected representation of gunfire. If these elements of sound do not trigger the visual perception Beckerman notes, the blood from the sprinklers may step in to do so.

These boom moments are especially important in sonic branding as well as this study because of their contribution towards eliciting emotions among members of their intended audience. As in previous scenes, the conversations between past and present overlap. However, in this instance when paired with poetry through rhythm and visual and sonorous symbolism, visual and spoken language allow them to attain a new apogee. The representation attempts to affect spectators on a deeper level in an effort to counter the unspeakable of the traumatic event.

After such a powerful moment, spectators hear Nawal’s own testimony of the event, as she narrowly escaped from the bus set ablaze. Nonetheless, she did not escape

the witnessing of such a terrible event. Here again, the text evokes fire. This time Mouawad evokes a literal fire, and as before, it carries with it destruction and death, bringing an end to the lives of not only men and women, but innocent children. Nawal explains:

Une femme essayait de sortir par la fenêtre, mais les soldats lui ont tiré dessus, et elle est restée comme ça, à cheval sur le bord de la fenêtre, son enfant dans ses bras au milieu du feu et sa peau a fondu, et la peau de l'enfant a fondu et tout a fondu et tout le monde a brûlé ! Il n'y a plus de temps, Sawda. Il n'y a plus de temps. Le temps est une poule à qui on a tranché la tête, le temps court comme un fou, à droite et à gauche, et de son cou décapité, le sang nous inonde et nous noie. (73)

(One woman tried to escape through a window, but the soldiers shot her, and she died there, straddling the window with her child in her arms in the middle of the blaze, her skin melted, her child's skin melted, everything melted and everyone burned to death. There is no time left, Sawda. Time is like a chicken with its head cut off, racing around madly, every which way. Blood is flowing from its decapitated neck, and we're drowning in blood, Sawda, drowning. [68])

This exceptionally horrific death by being burned alive constitutes the *indicible* as it resists comprehension with its existence outside the realm of common events. This obstacle to communication finds its illustration in Nawal's expression by her use of sputtering clauses which break the fluidity of her phrases as well as her use of repetition's poetic function. Choked by disbelief, these numerous repetitions emphasize the

unbelievable events within the hearts of the spectators and demonstrate Nawal's doubt as though she spins in circles, trying to escape the pull of the vortex of dreadful events.

War, and its accompanying horrors, in effect wounds time, here finding its existence in the metaphor of a chicken running without its head and thus without sense. This poetic imagery through another description of violence and pain allows Nawal to find expression in her efforts to counter the *indicible* and provokes the visual in the minds of spectators, giving life to the effects of the war in an unexpected way. Not surprisingly it is located in a description which finds its end in the evocation of death and blood that inundates, echoing the action of the sprinklers from minutes before.

In the last scene of the section, "Le coeur même du polygone" ("The Very Heart of the Polygon"), Simon prepares for his boxing match as Jeanne calls him on the telephone. He never speaks, but instead simply listens to his sister's plans to travel to their mother's homeland. Jeanne utilizes the poetic function as she renews her visual symbol of the polygon to explain life events via mathematical theory. First introduced at the onset of the play, its importance is reinforced by its use in the scene's title and content. Accepting her loss of control, Jeanne reifies the unknown as she explains her decision to "tomber" into the "gouffre" (74) ("tumble" into the "hole" [69]) of her mother's silence, a dark abyss in which she seeks the light of truth. Although he says nothing, Simon demonstrates the impact of his sister's choice and the overall situation upon him by weeping as she speaks.

As the brief phone call ends, Simon's boxing match immediately follows. It becomes a visual representation of the effect of the events and their power over him. Their influence is symbolized when Simon is knocked out during his bout. This symbolic

action could appear in description form in a novel. However, as Michel Viegnes explained, the physical presence of an actor makes the action feel more real (100). In that way, Simon's reaction in the theater prompts a powerful impression among the audience.

Focus then shifts back to Jeanne whose rhetorical question to her mother, "Où m'entraînes-tu maman?" (74) ("Where are you leading me, Mama?" [69]) in this instance triggers a response: "Au coeur même du polygone, Jeanne, au coeur même du polygone" (74) ("To the very heart of the polygon, Janine, to the very heart of the polygon" [69]). The reappearance of the semiotic polygon as symbolic representation again brings to the forefront the utility of the symbol in her attempts to process her new worldview. It also advances the action by serving as a means of transition for the section that follows in which she will figuratively seek out the location of her other brother and father within the polygon by visiting her mother's homeland.

Incendie de Jannaane (Jannaane's Fire): Silence by War and Shock of Discovery

As the play continues, Nawal and Sawda discuss their participation in the civil war, as well as the events of that war, including the kidnapping of individuals, the burning of others while still alive, and the immolation of the printing press and houses. Fire continues to appear, here standing in again as a deadly weapon of war to cause suffering and destruction.

Jeanne continues her search for her mother's existential footprint after arriving in Nawal's village by engaging in conversation with Abdessamad, a keeper of the history of the village. Although unsure of the Nawal in Jeanne's photo, he explains the existence of

a legendary woman named Nawal who left the village with another woman named Sawda. Abdessamad repeats the idea of the legend which swirls around Nawal and various aspects of her life, including her separation from Wahab, several times.

Abdessamad suggests the perpetuation of the legend that continues to circulate amongst those in the village, tied into poetic aspects that have already been considered: “On dit que si on tarde trop dans les forêts, autour du rocher aux arbres blancs, on entend leurs rires” (78) (“They say that if you linger too long in the woods, near the rock where the white trees stand, you’ll hear their laughter” [76]). Such a remark strengthens the notion of their intense feelings as a legendary love while at the same time providing a transition for the enactment of a scene at that very location, the aforementioned site of their love. It is in this reappearance of the location that spectators see Wahab who gives Nawal a red clown’s nose, obtained from a travelling circus that Nawal greatly enjoyed. The object serves not only as symbolic representation of that happy time together. In the spectators’ minds, it also connects to the moment that Nawal must give away the couple’s child, at which time she sends him away with the clown’s nose. This marker of identity demonstrates the significance an object can carry within the story, as will be shown in the last section of the play.

As the section proceeds, spectators learn that Nawal and Sawda have become sought by the enemy. When a frightening militiaman stops them, he explains the initial difficulty of harming another in a civil war: “Le couteau, on ne sait pas où le planter. On ne sait pas. Le plus difficile n’est pas de planter le couteau, c’est de le retirer, parce que tous les muscles se contractent et agrippent le couteau. Les muscles savent que la vie est là. Autour du couteau” (80) (“And you don’t know where to stab your knife. You don’t

know. The worst isn't stabbing the knife, it's pulling it out, because all the muscles contract and hold on to the knife. The muscles know that's where life is. Around the knife" [79]). Spectators remark a certain semblance between this declaration and Nawal's comment in her will, as well as Wahab's metaphoric "l'enfance est un couteau que l'on vient de me planter dans la gorge" ("childhood is a knife they've stuck in my throat") at the moment of his separation from Nawal. As was true before, the renewed description establishes the act of termination of life, but in a different context.

The new evocation of the knife demonstrates the pain incurred in war and the repetition of the same concept ties it to the previously explained pain of separation. This usage thus deepens its meaning and chance for spectator apprehension. Further, the militiaman's declaration shares common ground with Wahab's metaphor at the same time it shares features with recurrent poetic aspects including fire and the red wolf. All of these elements thus involve new attempts to explain the pain and horrors of war and tragic aspects of life. It becomes more evident that each of these forms of poetic expression continues to grow in importance, meaning, and significance at each evocation, with the creation of new conduits through which new levels of apprehension of messages that are difficult to explain and understand are possible.

Jeanne continues her search, visiting Kfar Rayat prison, while Nawal and Sawda become further embroiled in and afflicted by the realities of the civil war. Building upon the horror of the bus incident, the *indicible* formed from the collective disaster of war is again brought into view with the incorporation of additional unspeakable instances of the atrocity of war. The accumulation of unsettling episodes troubles Sawda, who describes recent terror and murder committed by the militiamen. Characterizing the militiamen as

“des fous furieux” (84) (“madmen” [83]), she employs the poetic function with a simile to instill in her addressee the horror that permeates the entirety of her account. Sawda conjures images of burning fire and the loss of blood on a large scale by the spilling of blood that travels not in streams, but by waves. It is in this recounting that a soldier forces a woman “incapable de parole” (85) (“[u]nable to speak” [84]) to choose which of her three children to save.

Instances of repetition in Sawda’s account such as “Tout brûlait autour, Nawal, tout brûlait, tout cramait!” (85) (“Everything was on fire, Nawal, everything was on fire, everything went up in flames” [83]) engage the poetic function to represent the episode’s unspeakable nature, and therefore her efforts to refuse silence by speaking, while they also emphasize the event for the audience. In addition, the unbelievable quality of this event does not escape Sawda who, in a manner similar to those who provide testimony of instances of the *indicible*, feels compelled to dispel doubt and confirm the veracity of her words. She pleads: “Nawal, écoute-moi, je ne te raconte pas une histoire. Je te raconte une douleur qui est tombée à mes pieds” (85) (“Listen to me, Nawal, I’m not making this up. I’m telling you the pain that fell at my feet” [84]).

Nawal formulates a course of action in response to the violence, but it is one that will separate the two friends. The sorrowful impending separation, prompted by a plan to assassinate a military leader, leads to another description of togetherness despite separation, reminiscent of that witnessed during Nawal and Wahab’s separation scene:

SAWDA. Comment je ferai pour vivre sans toi?

NAWAL. Et moi et moi comment je ferai pour vivre sans toi? Rappelle-toi le poème appris il y a longtemps, nous étions encore jeunes. Je pensais encore

retrouver mon fils. (*Elles récitent le poème Al Atlal en arabe.*) Récite-le chaque fois que je te manquerai, et quand tu auras besoin de courage, tu réciteras l'alphabet. Et moi, quand j'aurai besoin de courage, je chanterai, je chanterai, Sawda, comme tu m'as appris à le faire. Et ma voix sera ta voix et ta voix sera ma voix. Comme ça, on restera ensemble. Il n'y a rien de plus beau que d'être ensemble. (91-92)

(SAWDA. How can I go on living without you?

NAWAL. And how can I go on living without you? Remember the poem we learned a long time ago, when we were still young. When I still thought I would find my son. (*They recite the poem "Al Atlal" in Arabic.*) Recite it every time you miss me, and when your courage fails, you can recite the alphabet. And when my courage fails, I'll sing. I'll sing, Sawda, the way you taught me to. And my voice will be your voice and your voice will be my voice. That's how we can stay together. There is nothing more beautiful than being together. [90])

Here, we locate an explicit proposal of the power of poetry with suggestion of a specific poem. The poem's activation of the poetic function leads to the rare usage of the conative function as Nawal employs the imperative in her advice to Sawda. It permits Nawal to assist Sawda and demonstrates to spectators how much she cares for her dear friend.

The sonorous quality of language through poetic repetition may again access memory to serve as a touchstone to happier times, a means of steadfastness against the storm of loneliness, sadness, and trepidation. These actions provoke a situation so that Nawal promises "ma voix sera ta voix et ta voix sera ma voix" ("my voice will be your voice and your voice will be my voice"), a declaration that serves the poetic function as it

attains a soothing quality by the combination of the *consonne liquide* m and the *consonnes sourdes* v and s. The use of poetic elements may appear in various genres, but the delivery of these poetic lines in theater represents them in a manner that silently reading them on a page cannot. Indeed, the soothing quality of Nawal's spoken lines parallels the soothing effect that the actions she suggests can create.

The chiasmus found in the line and assonance through the rhyme imbue Nawal's assertion with a poetic sweetness evoking sadness among spectators through the tenderness of what will be one of the dear friends' last moments together. The amalgamation of voices that results demonstrates their perpetual togetherness while culminating in the selfsame refrain "Il n'y a rien de plus beau que d'être ensemble" ("There is nothing more beautiful than being together") so dear to Nawal. This phrase, as others have done, provides unification of the text while also bringing with each enunciation additional sadness as Nawal continues to lose those whom she loves most in the world.

The physical presence of the actors on stage makes the heartbreaking situation, and thus the feelings expressed therein, seem more real to spectators (as we observed when Simon was knocked out in the previous section). At the same time, the ability of theatrical performance to intensify the impact of the tragic upon spectators via its communal nature (Viegnes 106) compounds this effect. Nawal's life is presented as an accumulation of tragic experiences. She has lost Wahab and her son, but the depth of loss will now include her dearest friend. Although a novel may extend Nawal and Sawda's dialogue, provide detailed description of accompanying gestures, and/or remind readers

of the depth of their friendship in attempts to achieve an equally potent effect, the play represents the tragedy through visual and spoken language.

While Jeanne works to piece together her mother's story and learns that Nawal was imprisoned and tortured, she encourages Simon to begin his task. As Simon finally yields to the wishes of his sister (and mother), he opens the red notebook to read its pages filled with Nawal's written testimony given before the tribunal. It is then that spectators hear Nawal's voice which seeks to overcome the *indicible* caused by torture to directly address her torturer. Within this testimony the spectators again discover the actions and resultant atrocities of war as well as the use of the recurrent metaphor of the red wolf.

Faced with inadequate vocabulary to describe the extent of the horrific experiences she endured, Nawal turns to poetic function by metaphor in an effort to represent the unspeakable. While addressing her torturer, she explains her objectification during her horrific experience, telling him that her body “n’était pour vous qu’un territoire qu’il fallait massacrer peu à peu” (102) (“which you treated as a territory to be massacred, bit by bit” [100]). In this reference, the woman's body becomes a battleground as she creates a parallel between his devastating actions toward her and the actions of war that harm the land. Such a comparison elucidates Sawda's previous description of the world of war wherein “La terre est blessée par un loup rouge qui la dévore” (“The earth is being destroyed by a red wolf”). The use of poetic expression demonstrates to spectators his lack of feeling for her as a human being and indifference to her suffering and immense physical and psychological pain.

As her testimony continues, she explains that although she was able to voice her catastrophic experiences, some silence still occupied a role in her life: “Vous m’obligez à

ne plus aimer les enfants, à me battre, à les élever dans le chagrin et dans le silence. Comment leur parler de vous, leur parler de leur père, leur parler de la vérité . . . ?” (103) (“You made it impossible for me to love the children. Because of you, I struggled to raise them in grief and in silence. How could I tell them about you, tell them about their father, tell them the truth . . . ? [101]). This partial silence differs from her later overall silence. Here, the extremity of the truth of her experience evades expression and communication, denoting the *indisible*, while concern over reception of the truth suggests self-imposed silence as it relates to that truth. Both of these factors result in a desired establishment of distance through chosen silence between Nawal and the twins. While her life is characterized by silence and distance, it is not until her discovery that her torturer is also her son that Nawal chooses a complete self-imposed silence.

Simon accepts his task after Hermile’s encouragement to do so and promise to assist him. He then remains on stage, now accompanied by Nawal. A brief interchange between the two follows, one that again deepens the significance of the symbolic red wolf when Simon reflects upon the upcoming results of the task he has chosen to undertake. He explains : “C’est comme un loup qui va venir. Il est rouge. Il y a du sang dans sa bouche” (106) (“It feels like a wolf... it’s coming closer. He’s red. And there’s blood on his jaws” [104]). As confirmed by the visual language of his tears, the presence of the symbolic red wolf is unfavorable and indicates Simon’s fear, serving the emotive function. The wolf’s agency is indicated by his coming regardless of Simon’s wishes. Not only does it appear in red, the color of the anger it can express by its ferocious attacks, but it carries blood within its mouth, demonstrating its thirst for blood and the previous attacks it has committed that resulted in the slaying of its prey. These elements are further

linked to the last line of the section with which Nawal urges that Simon find his “frère du sang” (106) (“blood brother” [105]). We will see that the reference to blood is far from insignificant when considered in the context of the final section.

Within this scene, F. Elizabeth Dahab notes the combination of elements pertinent to this study whose connection we have noted, but which come together in this moment to suggest something of great importance. These elements include “war, blood, red wolves, fear, fists, finding out, and *breaking the silence*, a lexical field suggesting semantically that forcefully breaking the silence and unveiling the truth, a way of bearing witness on more than one level, *personal and collective*, may free one of one’s fears and provide the courage to confront those fears, real and imagined” (151, emphasis in original). She contends that such an event permits the ability to move forward, as may be seen in “Incendie de Sarwane” (“Sarwane’s Fire”), the final section of the play.

Incendie de Sarwane (Sarwane’s Fire): Destroying the Silence

The final section focuses upon Simon’s quest. In an interesting twist, during a conversation with Jeanne after learning the truth about his brother, the emotionally-driven boxer becomes the one to summon mathematics to his aid in an effort to understand a complex and unbelievable reality. After his inquiry regarding whether the outcome of one plus one can ever equal one, his sister explains:

Il y a une conjecture très étrange en mathématiques. Une conjecture qui n’a jamais encore été démontrée. Tu vas me donner un chiffre, n’importe lequel. Si le chiffre est pair, on le divise par deux. S’il est impair, on le multiplie par trois et on

rajoute un. On fait la même chose avec le chiffre qu'on obtient. Cette conjecture affirme que peu importe le chiffre de départ, on arrive toujours à un. (121)

(There's a strange hypothesis in math. A hypothesis that's never been proven.

You can give me a figure, any figure. If it's an even number, you divide it by two.

If it's uneven, you multiply it by three and you add one. You do the same thing with the figure you get. This theory posits that no matter what number you start with, you'll always end up with one. [124])

In an effort to understand the truth, Simon turns to his sister for assistance. As we have observed, Simon and Jeanne contend with their mother's vexing posthumous message in distinctly different ways that are reflective of their chosen occupations. However, Simon's application of mathematics indicates that neither mode of reaction is sufficient on its own in attempts to successfully reveal and comprehend the truth. It is rather the combination of efforts that leads to their success through the unveiling of the complete truth.

While silence was previously symbolized by the physical presence of the tapes, a discovery of the truth brings silence for Jeanne that Simon reifies by comparison with a natural element: "Tu te tais. Comme je me suis tu quand j'ai compris. J'étais dans la tente de Chamseddine, et dans sa tente j'ai vu le silence venir tout noyer" (122) ("You've stopped talking. The way I stopped talking when I understood. I was in Chamseddine's tent, and in that tent I saw silence come and drown everything" [125]). This short-term silence caused by shock does not constitute the *indicible*, but nonetheless carries great impact. Here, through the poetic function, it moves detectably as water, inundating all within its path and suffocating all possibility of speech. This evocation of a natural

element aids in voicing and grasping the powerlessness felt in the face of truth and its weight upon those involved.

Simon's recent meeting with Chamseddine is then evoked and acted out on stage in front of spectators as they learn that the father and son are one and the same. This fact is also confirmed shortly thereafter by the actions of Nawal's torturer at the tribunal as he puts on a red clown's nose during his comments. The visual language via this symbolic object of decor means that this marker of identity triggers heartrending recognition for Nawal as it plays a key role in the crux of the story and its crisis. Such truth also triggers the multiplied presence of Nawal on stage (by the three actresses who portray the character during the piece): that of Nawal giving birth to her first son, that of Nawal giving birth to Jeanne and Simon, and that of Nawal realizing the truth after providing her testimony at the tribunal. This visual representation made manifest in the combination of those three time periods demonstrates the linking and significance of the discovery of her eldest son's identity.

The final three scenes of the play are composed of Nawal's letters to her children and to the father of the twins. In each case, the recipient stares at the paper (as though reading) while Nawal reads aloud the contents of the letter. The lack of interaction on stage between Nawal and the recipient suggests the importance awarded to the message itself and its spoken quality that is highlighted through the actor's voice in theatrical representation.

Jeanne presents the first letter to the father. The introductory line of the letter "Je vous écrit en tremblant" (126) ("I am trembling as I write to you" [129]) engages the

emotive function as Nawal demonstrates the difficulty and extremity of the situation. As Nawal explains to “the father”, the letter

...n’est là que pour vous dire voilà:

Votre fille et votre fils sont en face de vous. (126)

(Its only purpose is to tell you: Look:

Your daughter and your son are facing you. [129])

The letter concludes with another mention of silence. This silence that he will face is imposed by the shock of the difficult truth, a truth that will likely remain veiled by silence throughout their lives even after the shock subsides due to the taboo and private nature that often surrounds incest. This news (the likes of which Simon expresses near the end of the previous section) again reinforces that difficulty and suggests the potential importance of finding other means such as poetry to facilitate representation.

After the brief letter to the father, Simon gives the letter to his brother, composed of words whose placement also resembles a poem. As she refuses to be silenced by pain, it begins with Nawal’s assertion that she searched everywhere for her son, which she then proves by the repetition of “Je t’ai cherché” (“I looked/searched for you” [130-131]) seven times in the first 18 lines (127). Each is followed by a different location. This poetic repetition helps to show the depth of her love for her son (triggering the emotive function) despite the difficult truth, as well as the extensiveness of her search, notably by verses replete with oppositions including sun/rain, valleys/mountains, south/north/east/west, earth and sky. Mouawad’s incorporation of natural elements has

already been noted,¹⁰ and here they are easily tied to the metaphor that follows by which her son is equated to a bird:

Je t'ai cherché en regardant le ciel,
Je t'ai cherché au milieu des nuées d'oiseaux
Car tu étais un oiseau.
Et qu'y a-t-il de plus beau qu'un oiseau,
Qu'un oiseau plein d'une inflation solaire?
Qu'y-a-t-il de plus seul qu'un oiseau,
Qu'un oiseau seul au milieu des tempêtes
Portant aux confins du jour son étrange destin? (127-128)
(I searched for you while looking at the sky
I searched for you amidst a flock of birds
For you were a bird.
And what is more beautiful than a bird,
The fiery flight of a bird in the sunlight?
What is more alone than a bird,
Than a bird alone amidst the storm clouds,
Winging its strange destiny to the end of day? [131])

The repetition which envelops the metaphor adds a beauty and musical quality to her claims that demonstrate her love for her son and consequently intensify the tragedy of her heartbreaking situation.

¹⁰ In “Des ciels, il peut y en avoir plusieurs, je commence à le comprendre”: Entretien avec Wajdi Mouawad”, Francesca Torchi also notes that the titles of the four plays of the tetralogy to which *Incendies* belongs each evoke one of the four elements of nature.

This demonstrated love becomes bound to an aforementioned maxim as Nawal references her time in the prison cell. She explains:

Dans ma cellule,
Je te racontais ton père.
Je te racontais son visage,
Je te racontais ma promesse faite au jour de ta naissance.
Quoi qu'il arrive je t'aimerai toujours,
Quoi qu'il arrive je t'aimerai toujours . . . (128)
(In my cell,
I told you about your father.
I told you about his face,
I told you about the promise I made the day of your birth:
No matter what happens, I will always love you.
No matter what happens, I will always love you. [131])

The present iteration of this line that falls at the base of anaphoric construction (with “Je te racontais” (“I told you”)) confirms Nawal’s perpetual consideration of her son and the keeping of her promise (by choosing mutism). The choice to repeat the refrain not once, but twice, may act as an effort to assuage any doubt that she does not love her son because of the difficulty of doing so, or perhaps she seeks to emphasize the sentence to show the depth of her love and dedication to the promise. This refrain serves to unify the text while at the same time leading to greater believability of this promise despite the difficulty of keeping it, as previously noted.

Her adherence to the promise of maintaining her love for her son, Nihad, is confirmed as Nawal explains the reason for her silence, undertaken because “[u]ne louve défend toujours ses petits” (129) (“[a] she-wolf always defends her young” [132]). Her adoption of comparison to maintain her promise serves the poetic function and entwines pertinent components of the action through poetry. These components include the use of repeated phrases that structure her life and touch the lives of others that ultimately become elevated to the status of refrains as well as the metaphor of the red wolf with its tie to war and death through destruction and fire. In its final evocation, the red wolf now becomes tied to an individual (her son) by Nawal herself. She has accepted her role as a self-proclaimed “she-wolf” who defends her wolf pup.

We must recall that in the preceding section, Simon prophetically expressed his view of the approach of a red wolf with blood in his mouth prior to his departure to find his brother, his “frère du sang” (“blood brother”). The significance of these elements comes into full view upon realization that Nawal is the mother of this red wolf. The attribution of animal characteristics through the use of zoomorphism describes the savage characteristics of this psychopathic man who heartlessly killed so many.

The eldest son’s existence as wolf pup figures an associative connection when considering the previous association of the red wolf with the destruction of war. Here, the understanding of one element can facilitate apprehension of the other elements. The linking of Nihad’s actions to those of the red wolf with the blood of its victims in its mouth, which are in turn linked to the wounding of the land committed by the actions of the civil war, then tie Nihad to the reality of civil war. He may be viewed as the human

embodiment of the civil war, providing the audience with another context to grasp its savagery and the destruction that it may produce.

At the close of the letter, Nawal shares her advice to her son:

Sois patient.

Au-delà du silence,

Il y a le bonheur d'être ensemble.

Rien n'est plus beau que d'être ensemble. (129)

(Be patient.

Beyond silence,

There is the happiness of being together.

Nothing is more beautiful than being together. [132])

In so doing, she builds upon the promised recompense of silence that follows the discovery of truth that she noted in the letter to the father, and takes up yet another refrain. In her last words to her son, Nawal seeks as mother to comfort her child. She gives him hope through the pain that they will always be together, just as Wahab is always with her.

In the final scene, Nawal reads her letter to Jeanne and Simon, addressing each in turn, starting with Simon. As was true with the two previous letters, Nawal's final words also appear in poetic structure. In her address to Simon, Nawal focuses on his task, reworking a familiar phrase:

L'enfance est un couteau planté dans la gorge

Et tu as su le retirer. (130)

(Childhood is a knife stuck in the throat

And you managed to remove it. [133])

First appearing in the will and then employed by Nawal and Wahab during their scene of separation, the use of the knife again comes to signify an advancement. While his mother and Wahab adopt the expression to signify an end to their childhood, Simon's life becomes forever altered by the discovery of the truth signified by his removal of the knife. As discussed by the militiaman, the removal of the knife is the most difficult when using it as a weapon. In much the same way, the undertaking and achievement of Simon's difficult search for the truth also stands as a laudable achievement expressed by his mother in her letter.

Nawal seeks to advise Simon in much the same way that she counselled her eldest son. She continues her letter by explaining Simon's new task:

À présent, il faut réapprendre à avaler sa salive.

C'est un geste parfois très courageux.

Avaler sa salive.

À présent, il faut reconstruire l'histoire.

L'histoire est en miettes.

Doucement

Consoler chaque morceau

Doucement

Guérir chaque souvenir

Doucement

Bercer chaque image. (130-131)

(Now you must learn to swallow your saliva again.

Sometimes this is a very courageous act.

Swallowing your saliva.

Now, history must be reconstructed.

History is in ruins.

Gently

Console every shred

Gently

Cure every moment

Gently

Rock every image. [133-134])

The soundscape of these lines in her message generates euphony made possible by theater's spoken language. The repetition of the *consonne sourde* s (sa, saliva, c'est, l'histoire, doucement, morceau, souvenir, bercer) resembles a mother's attempts at consoling her child as Nawal encourages Simon to follow her advice. The repetition of the two-syllabled "doucement" ("gently") slows the rhythm as does the brevity of phrases. At the same time, the words "consoler" ("console") and "bercer" ("rock") reflect those same actions figuratively undertaken by Nawal through her expression. These poetic efforts therefore engage the emotive function as she attempts to express her love.

In her address to Jeanne, Nawal likewise imparts a task for her life, that of the necessity of breaking the web of anger between the women in the family. In the last portion of the letter, Nawal discusses the location of origins with both her children, leaving them by providing the task of establishing her grave marker now that her promise has been kept. With the end of the piece, the collection of fires that unveiled the truth are

finally devoid of the secrets that served as kindling. They are poetically and markedly extinguished by torrential rain that serves as symbolic cleansing after exposing the truth, while Jeanne grants Simon's request that the two listen to their mother's recorded silence.

Just as Jeanne and Simon may now translate their mother's silence upon discovery of the truth, so too may the audience. Indeed, this analysis has shown that it is by poetic and symbolic representation that the double unspeakable of war and rape may be resisted in *Incendies*. The consideration of Mouawad's representation demonstrated its primary use of Jakobson's poetic and emotive functions (with the focus upon the message form and addresser's emotions, respectively). It also identified the manner by which Mouawad's employment of poetic and symbolic elements calls upon the theater's use of visual and spoken language.

Rwanda 94, the next work considered in this study, builds upon the use of poetry seen in *Incendies* by expanding its possibility through its compounded utility with other genres. The examination in the next chapter will highlight its mixing with other genres as a marker of the representational approach of African total theater that supports the Brechtian political drama. These representational strategies work toward providing the spectators with a grasp of the unspeakable of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.

Chapter 2:

Groupov's *Rwanda 94*: Total Spectacle, Heterogeneous Dramaturgy, and Political Drama to Represent the Unspeakable of the Genocide against the Tutsi

The value of poetic and symbolic expression for the neutralization of unspeakability extends beyond the self-imposed mutism and *indicible* of war shown in *Incendies*. Indeed, the employment of poetic tools has also been used to challenge the *indicible* of genocide. The play *Rwanda 94*, subject of this chapter, is one such example.

Rwanda 94 focuses upon the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, an event that resulted in the killing of between 800,000 and 1,000,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus in approximately three months. Like the Shoah before it, the scale of the atrocities involved and the systematic elimination of a staggering number of individuals constitutes a limit event, posing difficulty to its communication and comprehension. An effort to represent the *indicible* of genocide demands, in the words of Christian Biet, “all types of performances and every kind of representation” (1048). This view seems to be shared by Groupov, the collective responsible for the creation of *Rwanda 94*. These individuals chose to build upon the power of poetry by combining the genre among others in a polyvocal multi-genre approach of political theater.

Rwanda 94 is the resultant product of the collaborative effort of Marie-France Collard, Jacques Delcuvellerie, Tharcisse Kalisa Rugano, Yolande Mukagasana, Jean-Marie Piemme, Dorcy Rugamba, and Mathias Simons, and is presented by the Belgian collective Groupov. Unlike many plays, it does not provide audiences with a linear thread

throughout the entirety of its performance. Rather, it represents a series of five parts that function as “tableaux” and contain a fusion of diverse elements. The first part, “Itsembabwoko” (“Genocide”), is initiated by survivor testimony. The conclusion of this testimony brings with it the introduction of instrumental music and song as well as the subsequent arrival of a chorus of the dead whose members share accounts of the events regarding their death. The second part of the play, “Mwaramutse” (the morning greeting “As-tu passé la nuit?” [“Did you make it through the night?”]), introduces a fictional news program presented by fictional journalist Bee Bee Bee. The dead interrupt the news media to question the truth of media reporting and lead Bee Bee Bee to undertake an investigation to uncover the truth of the genocide. This critique of media reporting, and other issues related to the genocide, are further developed through the chorus’s poetic litany of questions in the third section titled “La litanie des questions” (“The litany of questions”). The penultimate section, “Ubwoko” (the Rwandan word for “clan”, used by the colonists to indicate “ethnicity”) features Bee Bee Bee’s investigation to serve a didactic purpose. She (and the spectators) attend a conference that provides a greater grasp of the genocide before she presents the news segment that she has created to reveal the truth, a segment composed solely of shocking recorded images of genocide displayed in near silence. The play closes with “La Cantate de Bisesero”, an epic cantata that provides an account of heroic, but ultimately unsuccessful, resistance on the hills of Bisesero.

Rwanda 94 was created from frustration regarding the anonymity of the dead, the inaccurate discussion of the genocide diffused by the media, and a desire to investigate the occurrence of such an event (Groupov 6-7). In order to create the play, Groupov

undertook a thorough investigation of the events. Its collaborators met with individuals of authoritative knowledge of the genocide (such as historians, journalists, and survivors) in their efforts to craft a piece reflective of the events and their subsequent aftermath (Groupov 6-7). As a result, the play is accorded a consequential subtitle that highlights its goal. It is “une tentative de réparation symbolique envers les morts, à l’usage des vivants” (“an attempt at symbolic reparation to the dead for use by the living”) with the aim to “rendre voix et visage aux victimes mais aussi d’interroger les motifs et le processus de leur assassinat” (“give victims a voice and face but also to question the motives and process of their assassination”) (Groupov 7-8).

The objective to give a voice to the victims and survivors links the effort to the issue of the double meaning of representation in postcolonial theory highlighted by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Representation in the play functions on two levels: the aesthetic (through *Darstellung*, the re-presentation of the genocide through artistic form) and the political (through *Vertretung*, speaking as “proxy” for the Rwandans). The issue of political representation is especially complex given Rwanda’s colonial past. We noted in the introduction that the European anthropologists’ misrepresentation of Rwandans and the actions and inaction of colonial powers contributed to the genocide. The fact that *Rwanda 94* was created by Belgian individuals, those from the former colonial power, is therefore problematic. Indeed, these individuals are speaking for Rwandans from a country affiliated with the misrepresentation that led to the disastrous event in the first place.

As we will see, Delcuvellerie strove to find a way to represent the genocide through the voice of survivors and victims in *Rwanda 94*. He aimed to speak for these

individuals, but to do so without appropriating their voice and misrepresenting the reality of genocide and the Rwandans. Although many Westerners contributed to the creation of the play, various devices were incorporated to enable Rwandans to speak instead of simply speaking for them. I will consider how these mechanisms, such as the use of a chorus of the dead who testify as regards their own death, contribute to the achievement of the play's goal through the course of my analysis.

The play's creators, representatives of different countries who specialize in various disciplines, combined their diverse skills to construct *Rwanda 94*. They embraced an experimental approach in their attempts to develop a form of representation intended for a Western audience that would meet their goals without prompting pathos or trivialization of the genocide. The creation of *Rwanda 94* spanned four years (Groupov 166).

The collective presented select portions of the play for feedback during the process of creation (Groupov 166). The first instance occurred at the Festival d'Avignon in July 1997 where "Marie-France Collard rea[d] [a] text called 'The Hills of Silence'" (RWANDA 14). Then, it was not until 1999 that specific portions appeared before a chosen public. In January of that year, select parts were presented for audience input (RWANDA 14). At that point, the work had developed into a five-hour "work in progress" that Groupov staged at the Théâtre de la Place in Liège (Groupov 166). Three months later, the Cantate de Bisesero (the closing portion of the play) was presented in Brussels as part of the commemorative efforts regarding the genocide (RWANDA 14). Select portions of the play, and the "work in progress", continued to be presented throughout

1999 in Brussels and Avignon (RWANDA 14). The final, completed form of *Rwanda 94* then premiered in 2000, before its publication in 2002 (Dauge-Roth 35).

The successful play toured various countries for more than four years and received several awards (“Rwanda 94”). While the play was created for a Western audience, positive reception led to the performance of the play in Rwanda (Biet 1050-1051). The change of venue added a new dimension to the play’s representational goals, as its reception before a Rwandan audience extended beyond the establishment of truth and justice to include a restorative component to contribute to memorialization and healing. This variation is especially significant since performances in Butare, Kigali, and Bisesero took place in April 2004 during the ten year commemoration of the genocide (RWANDA 15). While the complete play was staged in Butare and Kigali, in Bisesero, the collective performed only the final portion of the play, the Cantate de Bisesero, among the hills in which the resistance that inspired its content took place (Biet 1052). Marie-France Collard (one of the play’s contributors) created a film based on the performances of *Rwanda 94* in Rwanda. The documentary, titled *Rwanda. A Travers Nous, L’Humanité*, features portions of the play in addition to reactions of the Rwandan spectators (Biet 1051). The film enables the play to reach a larger audience while it also provides another example of the effort made to give Rwandans a voice.

The effort to satisfy the goals results in an inventive theatrical form that assembles testimony, instrumental music, song, a history conference, poetry, and video recorded images. The use of classical dialogue between actors is minimized so that dialogue is instead undertaken directly with the audience. Although spectators do not speak to the actors, actors attempt to engage them in dialogue. *Rwanda 94* resists

classification since it bears the mark of various theatrical genres. However, as Christian Biet explains, it “is not reflective of a project of mourning, or a simple testimony, or a simple theatrical documentary, or even a historical record, but an ethical and political action” (1049). The primacy it places upon political motivation thus aligns it with Brechtian political theater.

BRECHT’S EPIC THEATER

Bertolt Brecht is not the only writer or theorist of political drama, but he is one of the most well-known. He developed his theory of “Epic theater” in the first half of the 20th century. In these works, the playwright adopted a didactic position as he sought to communicate an argument regarding social and political issues (Brecht, “Modern Theatre” 37). The emphasis in Brecht’s conception of epic theater is placed upon narrative instead of plot (Brecht, “Modern Theatre” 37). His chief focus involved urging the spectators to react critically to what they saw on stage.

Brecht suggested the employment of certain techniques to prompt this reflection. The “alienation effect” plays a key role. It “consists in turning the object of which one is to be made aware, to which one’s attention is to be drawn, from something ordinary, familiar, immediately accessible, into something peculiar, striking and unexpected” (Brecht, “Short Description” 143) so that it breaks the theatrical illusion and permits the spectator to “adopt an attitude of inquiry and criticism in his approach to the incident” (Brecht, “Short Description” 136). Along these lines, Brecht suggests the value of the spectators’ emotional involvement that is then broken off to prompt critical distance as he proposes that emotion be tied to reason (Brecht, “Short Description” 145). Brecht’s other

suggestions to achieve his desired effect include the presentational acting technique of breaking of the fourth wall, the invisible barrier between the actors and audience, as may be done with direct address to the spectators (Brecht, “Short Description” 136), and the division of the play in scenes that can stand alone rather than being interdependent (Brecht, “Modern Theatre” 37). He also proposed the use of song that is not seamlessly integrated into the text, but rather separated by the addition of a title or variation of lighting (Brecht, “A Short Organum” 203), as well as placement of the lighting apparatus so that it may be seen by spectators (Brecht, “Short Description” 141). While many of these characteristics may appear in his plays, they may not all be located within every play of Brecht’s Epic theater.

Rwanda 94 reflects Brecht’s political drama through its method of creation considered above. The process highlights the development of a political argument to guide the play, to provide “symbolic reparation to the dead for use by the living”, to “give victims a voice and face but also to question the motives and process of their assassination”. As the dead speak, their dignity may be restored, and inaccurate information regarding the truth of the genocide is rectified through didactic efforts. As we will see during the analysis in this chapter, *Rwanda 94* displays Brechtian characteristics such as the breaking of the fourth wall and is divided into independent parts (without a continuous narrative thread). We will see that in its attempts to represent the unspeakable, the political drama is supported by elements of African total spectacle.

AFRICAN TOTAL SPECTACLE

The origins of what I am calling “African total spectacle” lie in the pre-colonial period during which African oral literature featured song, music, and dance to engage “active” audience participation (Schipper 125), and theatrical performances included an integration of speech, dance, and music (Zenenga 243). In spite of the establishment of these forms, the suppression of aspects of African society and culture in the colonial era did not exempt African theater. Indeed, the colonial École Normale de William Ponty in Senegal, for instance, instituted theatrical practice in Africa based upon the European model with its emphasis on the verbal element (dialogue) (Schipper 123). The conception discounted other elements such as dance and music that served as integral components of traditional African theater and oral literature.

It comes as no surprise that African writers sought to break from this model. At this time, key movements such as negritude and surrealism prompted new means of expression. In the theatrical realm, Antonin Artaud’s conception of a total spectacle expressed in *Le Théâtre et son double* resonated among African writers. Artaud bemoaned the primacy afforded to dialogue within European theater at the expense of other theatrical elements: “How does it happen that in the theater, at least in the theater as we know it in Europe, or better in the Occident, everything specifically theatrical, i.e., everything that cannot be expressed in speech, in words, or, if you prefer, everything that is not contained in dialogue . . . is left in the background?” (37). His criticism of the emphasis of dialogue and suggestion of the importance of other elements of theater appealed to African writers. They turned to traditional African theater in their efforts to break from the European model (Moro 17).

The resultant contemporary form of theater displays a notable mixing of tradition and modernity. Souleymane Koli's staging of the *Kotéba* with modifications to reflect contemporary elements and Werewere Liking and Marie-José Hourantier's incorporation of traditional ritual to solve present-day issues serve as two examples (Moro 18-19). These plays contain a mixture of elements common to traditional African theater such as speech, dance, and song. As Mineke Schipper has explained, the African oral tradition also influences contemporary productions (134).

Some scholars, such as Praise Zenenga, categorize this form of theater as "African total theater", while others such as Adriana Moro reference the works in terms of "spectacles". As I bear these differences in mind and aim to distinguish the form from the Western conception of "total theater", I employ the term "African total spectacle" within this study to indicate these theatrical works. Although not every present-day play may be defined as African total spectacle, the characteristics are found in many African theatrical works.

These plays may alternate between the real and unreal and contain a combination of representational elements such as "movement, speech, song, poetry, gesture, games, and improvisation" (Zenenga 236). There is also minimal separation between actors and spectators (Schipper 128). The face-to-face element and direct address in these performances is very important since audience engagement is desired. This dynamic encourages a certain degree of participation from the latter (Moro 18). Although one may locate several of these elements within a performance, they need not all be present to constitute the genre. As Praise Zenenga explains, this form of theater "does not necessarily adhere to any formulaic structure" (241).

FOCUS OF ANALYSIS

In this chapter, I will examine the manner by which *Rwanda 94* represents the unspeakable as a work of Brechtian-inspired political drama supported by elements of African total spectacle. In order to do so, I will consider how the techniques involved in these representational approaches are used to allow Rwandans to speak for themselves (to avoid misrepresentation) and address the politically-motivated goal in the subtitle, to provide “symbolic reparation to the dead for use by the living” to “give victims a voice and face but also to question the motives and process of their assassination”. We will see that this goal is attempted by the use of various mechanisms within multiple genres. Reparation is achieved by techniques that reveal the truth of the event as genocide, return dignity to the victims, promote justice, etc. In the case of the performances in Rwanda, reparation is also signified by the healing process to which those revelations contribute. Analysis will reveal the dominance of Jakobson’s phatic function that arises from the deliberate dialogic engagement of the audience, a key element in the attempt to produce reparation regarding an event that challenges comprehension.

The play’s creators integrated multiple attempts at engaging the spectators in dialogue into the performance of *Rwanda 94* in an effort to represent the reality of the genocide and address their goals. Theatrical works on genocide are well-received in Rwanda because the post-genocide society is based upon the search for dialogue to find common ground and prompt reconciliation. Given the search for dialogue in post-genocide Rwanda, and its role in shaping numerous modes of post-genocide responses, the attempt to engage the audience in dialogue within the play comes as no surprise. An

overview of the emergence and prevalence of post-genocide dialogue will be outlined before undertaking the analysis in this chapter in order to facilitate an understanding of its role in the play.

THE SEARCH FOR DIALOGUE FOR COMMON GROUND IN THE POST-GENOCIDE SOCIETY

The search for a listener through dialogue was very important for survivors of genocide in Rwanda. Dialogue has manifested itself in various forms and involved various mechanisms. We begin to see the exercise and utility of dialogue within six months after the genocide. Silenced after the event, survivors found assembly to discuss their experiences to be a step towards post-genocide recovery. One such organization is AVEGA (Association des Veuves du Génocide d'Avril), a survivors' group founded in January 1995 by women who became widows due to the genocide (AVEGA). In addition to the medical, economic, and advocacy-based support they now provide, the reason for their initial assembly soon after the events of 1994 was to provide an opportunity to speak of their experiences (Mujawayo and Belhaddad 77). The survivors' afflicting need to testify that was first noted in the introduction again comes into view through AVEGA. Indeed, survivor Esther Mujawayo credits the organization as the means by which the women were "saved from insanity" ("sauvés de la folie") by permitting this dialogue for survivors who were otherwise silenced (75).

Reporting for written historical documentation began just after the genocide, and documentaries soon followed. Alexandre Dauge-Roth notes the creation of "major" films, but they did not appear until in or after 2001 (27). In 1997, Yolande Mukagasana became

the first survivor to publish a testimonial work with *La mort ne veut pas de moi* (not a play, but a work of narrative testimony). Although she did not participate in the dialogues through AVEGA, she founds her testimony on use of the dialogic form.

Any written or spoken testimony functions as a form that is rather that of a *récit dialogué*, an account of events presented in dialogic form with a listener (who is tacit or explicit) in mind. However, this work exhibits a unique dialogic dynamic. In the paratext, Mukagasana explains the process undertaken to provide her testimony: she chose to recount her experiences aloud to author Patrick May who, in turn, documented them in written form. The scenario creates a form of dialogic *mise en abyme*. Mukagasana's account establishes a dialogue with May. Since he records her experiences for the purpose of publication, Mukagasana simultaneously testifies to a larger audience, that which is composed of her future readership (when the work is published). While the dialogic relationship between the two individuals played a large role in construction of the testimony, the presence of May is essentially hidden throughout the work since the text lacks notations indicating moments at which Mukagasana directly addresses him. Indeed, if readers were unaware of May's involvement, they would assume the text were written solely by Mukagasana.

With her testimony, Mukagasana provided the first of many manifestations of dialogic form for representation of the events. Four years later, literary works produced in response to the genocide remained scarce (Kopf 66). A desire to fill this lacuna of silence served as one of the chief motives of the aforementioned 1998 project *Rwanda: Écrire par devoir de mémoire*, which brought together African writers to create literary works to do so. The majority of works resulting from the project were published in 2000 and 2001.

By that time, there were two additional and notable published works, American Philip Gourevitch's nonfiction work *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families: Stories from Rwanda* in 1998 and a second testimonial work by Yolande Mukagasana, *N'aie pas peur de savoir*, in 1999.

Dialogue continued to grow in importance as it appeared as a common characteristic among literary works that strive to communicate the *indicible* of genocide. Beyond the literary realm, dialogue played an important role in the judicial proceedings of the *gacaca* courts, which were in use from 2001-2012. Faced with the inability to try the extensive number of suspects of genocidal acts within a reasonable time period through the courts that were already in operation, the Rwandan government instituted the use of *Gacaca* Tribunals throughout the country. These courts were based off of *gacaca* courts of Rwandan tradition that had been used in the past to resolve simple conflicts for societal reconciliation.

Although it was based off of the *gacaca* of the past that functioned at the community level, the new institution of *gacaca* differed from its traditional predecessor in that it was more formal, "incorporating a contemporary legislative framework derived from Rwanda's Penal Code, as well as international conventions" like the Geneva Conventions (Mibenge 413). The most obvious difference applies to the nature of the cases tried. Whereas the post-genocide system was used to deliver justice by punishing individuals involved in genocide-related actions, the traditional *gacaca* was informal and resolved social issues such as "property rights, livestock, marriage, succession, attacks on personal integrity, etc." (Mibenge 413).

Despite these differences, it also shares similarities in that, as Leo C. Nwoye explains, it “focuses on justice, truth and reconciliation among Rwandans through communal participation” (183). This consideration also highlights an important aspect of its impact on literary creation, the use of dialogue through communal participation. During the proceedings, both survivors and perpetrators assembled for the sharing of testimony. Nwoye explains the dialogic process of the tribunals during which the judges “typically read-out the case file, comprised of depositions from the accusers. The judges and community members then hear from the accused, from any accusers, or any other person who wishes to speak. The panel of judges then ‘deliberate among themselves and pronounce the verdict in public’” (184).

The courts encouraged communication through the incorporation of plea agreements which offered perpetrators the opportunity for a reduction of sentences if they provided “an accurate and complete confession, a plea of guilty to the crimes committed, and an apology to the victims” (416 Mibenge). Participation through communication was mandatory for all (Dauge-Roth 254). The dialogic process did not simply occur between judges and the accused or the accusers. Rather, the audience also included the community at large as well as the survivor(s) of the accused’s actions who had to be directly addressed if the accused wished to obtain a sentence reduction. Further, on certain occasions, other individuals within the audience also supplemented the accuser’s testimony (de Brouwer and Ruvebana 946).

Although the *gacaca* courts were not without certain concerns and criticism, survivors have also identified a positive product of the dialogue afforded by the hearings. During the hearing, the accused (suspects) provide an account of their actions during the

genocide. The accounts that were provided by perpetrators enabled some survivors to discover the location of the remains of their loved ones killed during the genocide (de Brouwer and Ruwebana 946), assisting in the process of mourning. The opportunity to share their experiences, sometimes supported by others in the audience, permitted survivors to contribute to the establishment and documentation of truth related to the events (de Brouwer and Ruwebana 946). While some survivors expressed fear of reprisals after sharing testimony that implicated the killers, this concern subsided with an increase in security forces and confirmation of the truth of testimonies as use of *gacaca* continued (de Brouwer and Ruwebana 953).

It is difficult to gauge the specific impact of the prevalence of dialogue in both the aforementioned literary endeavors and the *gacaca* proceedings in terms of subsequent efforts at dialogue. However, it is interesting to note that a large number of publications grounded in dialogue began to appear after the establishment of the proceedings. *Rwanda 94*, subject of Chapter 2, was published in 2002, while seven notable narrative testimonies by Esther Mujawayo, Annick Kayitesi, Jean-Marie Vianney Rurangwa, Révérien Rurangwa, and Berthe Kayitesi were published between 2004 and 2009.

AVEGA member Esther Mujawayo's narrative testimonial work, *SurVivantes* (2004), displays a case of dialogic mise en abyme similar to that established in Yolande Mukagasana's *La mort ne veut pas de moi*. Influenced and likely encouraged by her experience with dialogue through AVEGA, she chose to create the work with co-author Souâd Belhaddad. The text represents Mujawayo's process of sharing her oral testimony with Belhaddad, who then recorded it. In the preface, the latter explained that she "retained the oral tone" ("laissé le ton de l'oral") of their dialogic interaction (10), which

is highlighted in the text by the inclusion of Mujawayo's interpellations to her addressee. In this respect, the explicit presence and involvement of Belhaddad in *Survivantes* differs from the testimony of Mukagasana wherein the presence of her interlocutor Patrick May in the communicative process, although equally important, is not made apparent.

The retention of conversational indicators through the notation of elements such as Mujawayo's interpellations to Belhaddad, instances of silence, and changes in manner of speaking clarifies the role of both individuals. The survivor's act of sharing her experiences with her co-author establish one level of dialogue, but with the intent on publication of the testimony, Mujawayo's audience doubles (Gallimore "Souffrances individuelles" 22). Her work also functions as a dialogue between the survivor and those who read her testimony. The positive renown of the work, created through the process of the written recording of an oral account, suggests the communicative utility of both oral and written dialogic form.

Survivors have also employed the visualization of an image in an effort to initiate and remain in dialogue with their addressees through narration. Révérien Rurangwa is one such example. In his narrative testimony, *Génocidé* (2006), he surmounts obstacles to representation by means of a family photograph. His act of describing the image permits the maintenance of requisite contact with his interlocutors and he is consequently able to share his testimony (Gallimore "Représentation Picturale" 49). At moments, contemplation of the photo becomes difficult to bear, causing a brief halt in his recounting and generating pathos (50). The use of an image, therefore, may also be used as another attempt to create dialogue.

In addition to survivor groups created soon after 1994, other organizations have implemented the use of dialogue between all citizens. For instance, after dialogue-driven focus groups to investigate past and future unity, the Kigali-based Institute of Research and Dialogue (IRDP) began to bring together individuals in “dialogue clubs” (V. Brown 49-50). Within these clubs, which began in 2003, facilitators lead discussion between perpetrators and survivors as they undertake topics to foster reconciliation and hope for future unity through consideration of genocide as well as social issues (Lewis and Miller-Lewis). Vanessa Noël Brown also notes the presence of “public dialogue initiatives” which likewise encourage discussion on social issues (52).

Similar groups have been created by other organizations. In 2010, USAID contributed to the establishment of “Dialogue Clubs for Peace”, bringing citizens together to promote and stimulate healing and reconciliation through dialogue. It is reported that over 60 clubs have been established throughout Rwanda, each of which is “led by a local facilitator trained in conflict management and trauma counseling, and is comprised of approximately 30 people from a mix of the four target groups-survivors, ex-prisoners, ex-combatants and youth” (Schommer and Mutesi). The organization Never Again Rwanda (NAR) also instituted their own “participant-driven dialogue groups” in 2015 as part of their “Societal Healing and Participatory Governance for Peace in Rwanda” project (Kwibuka).

This continued appearance of dialogic efforts over time, be they judicial, societal, or literary, testifies to the importance of dialogue after unspeakable experiences. Dialogue is critical regardless of whether the message itself is “perfect” as it permits the act of listening by engaging the interlocutor. As we saw, various forms of dialogue may

use different mechanisms in order to engage the attention of the addressee, such as Rurangwa's use of a photo. *Rwanda 94* begins with survivor testimony that serves to create a significant dialogic form of direct address between the survivor and audience.

RWANDA 94. PREMIERE PARTIE: "ITSEMBABWOKO" ("GENOCIDE")

Testimony: The Voice of the Survivor

The multi-genre-based play begins with, and finds its anchor in, the use of testimony. The effective choice to begin with testimony provides an introduction to the horror of the event itself for those spectators whose knowledge of the disaster may be limited. As such, it provides insight into the needed genesis of the play as a reaction to the genocide and gives a sense of the weight of the event.

Groupov addresses the concerns regarding the potential for misrepresentation through their political representation (*Vertretung*) from the outset of the play by placing their immediate focus upon survivor testimony. Instead of recounting the survivor's experiences they allow her to share them herself. In this way, although Groupov's play "speaks for" Rwandans by representing the genocide, it does so by also allowing the Rwandans themselves to have a voice. We will see that the incorporation of survivor testimony is the first of many mechanisms employed by Groupov to allow Rwandans to tell their own story instead of simply speaking for them.

In her work on the witness and the Shoah, *L'ère du témoin*, Annette Wieviorka explains the importance assigned to testimony that began with the Eichmann trial:

Whereas Nuremberg sought to cast light on the perpetrators and on the mechanisms that generated the war, and sought to criminalize war and its instigators—to cast them as war criminals—the spotlight was now exclusively on the victims. Whereas Nuremberg sought to intervene in history by establishing the principle that political actors can be judged and by attempting to create a new basis for international law, the Eichmann trial undertook to create a memory rich in lessons for the present and the future. The functions assigned to testimony at the Eichmann trial, clearly articulated by the Israeli prosecutor, persist to this day . . . (88-89)

The shift from focus upon the elements of war to focus upon the victims and the enduring importance placed upon testimony support the notion of the value of the information that can be gleaned therein. While historians may express reluctance to depend upon the genre due to concerns with facticity of the events shared, Wieviorka contends that testimony involves “extraordinary riches: an encounter with the voice of someone who has lived through a piece of history; and, in oblique fashion, not factual truth, but the more subtle and just as indispensable truth of an epoch and of an experience” (132). She highlights the knowledge that can be gained from survivors who share their experience in an attempt to communicate the atrocity they endured.

The valuable “truth of an experience” produced by testimony as it relates to *Rwanda 94* is initiated as survivor Yolande Mukagasana appears before the audience. She finds her seat on stage as the concomitant entry of the orchestra suggests the mix of genres to come and sets the emotional tone. With the conclusion of the musical piece, Mukagasana, under a spotlight on a stage filled with minimal décor, begins her

testimony. She explains her role at the onset of her account: “Je ne suis pas comédienne, je suis une survivante du génocide au Rwanda, tout simplement” (“I am not an actress, I am simply a survivor of the genocide in Rwanda”) (15). Although she is not Primo Levi’s “true witness”, her role as survivor establishes her authority to speak of the event because of her integration in the experience.

Mukagasana’s self-distinction from actors is of significance given the play’s Brechtian influence. As Brecht aimed to break the illusion in theatrical performances so that spectators could respond critically to what they saw on stage, Mukagasana’s declaration dispels a certain degree of artifice. Indeed, if she is not a “comédienne”, the audience member “is not a spectator, he is not in the theater” (“n’est pas spectateur, il n’est pas au théâtre”) (Chatti 165). Her role prevents the perception of her involvement as a sort of theatrical illusion and therefore, in Brechtian fashion, encourages spectators to reflect upon the truth of her description that will follow.

The relationship that develops with Mukagasana’s solitary, seated presence before the audience contrasts with classic dialogue among actors. After introducing herself to her addressees, Mukagasana begins to recount her experience during the horror of the genocide by directly facing and addressing her audience: “Ce que je vais vous raconter, c’est seulement ma vie de six semaines pendant le génocide” (15). Her direct address to spectators bears the mark of African total spectacle that uses the technique to engage the audience in dialogue (often to initiate participation), as well as Brechtian theater that breaks the fourth wall to promote audience reflection. The technique creates a link between spectators and Mukagasana, drawing upon Jakobson’s phatic function, as it aims to prevent her addressees from being passive bystanders. The establishment of the

connection is of great importance given the aforementioned difficulties in communicating the unspeakable (such as the potential desire to sever the Jakobsonian contact when feeling that the intense content is “just too much”) and the need to foster the spectators’ apprehension of the material if they are to reflect upon what they hear so that the goal of reparation may be accomplished. The phrase also helps spectators to anticipate what is to come, thus facilitating their grasp of her account.

While facts such as the staggering number of individuals slain may accurately describe events to demonstrate their immensity, the impersonality of these “cold facts” may have less of an impact than the recounted experience of a survivor. A genocide is difficult to represent and fathom, but in the face of the unspeakable reality, the elements such as the speaker’s voice and physical presence that contribute to theatrical representation can make the genocide “less abstract” (Chatti 166). This benefit assists the spectators’ apprehension of Mukagasana’s recounting of her experiences, an account developed into a specific form, but left unwritten to retain its authentic emotional dimension (Groupov 15). It begins with an unsettling phone call from her husband urging her to return home from work. As her story progresses, spectators learn of the harrowing events. From the prevalence of tears among family members and the powerless feeling of having few choices but to wait for one’s death, to hiding in the bush for a week without food and telephoning various individuals for help to no avail, spectators get a sense of the crushing despair that reigned over the experience. The spectators’ knowledge of the mass casualties of genocide may raise anticipation of upsetting events soon to be recounted.

As Mukagasana describes the days that follow, spectators get a better sense of the change that swept the country as the genocide began. She speaks of a neighbor required

by “official order” to kill all Tutsis who cries upon seeing her family because he does not want to do so as well as the dehumanizing names used against the Tutsis such as “cancrelats” and “serpents”. However, it is when she speaks of her lost family members that Mukagasana employs the emotive function as she becomes especially emotional.

For example, the heightened emotion becomes evident to those viewing the recording of the performance of the play in Liège as Mukagasana is momentarily overcome by tears and excuses herself while describing the death of her brother (Undercoverbes, “Rwanda94 1-4 Itsembabwoko (génocide) – Groupov”). It is a mark of oral testimony described by Lawrence L. Langer who, in *Holocaust Testimonies: The Ruins of Memory*, examined videotaped testimony of survivors of the Shoah and considered their difference from written testimony. He explains that oral testimony “includes gesture, a periodic silence whose effect cannot be duplicated on the printed page, and above all a freedom from the legacy of literary form and precedent to which anyone attempting a written narrative on any subject is indebted” (41). As Langer suggests, Mukagasana’s emotions would be represented in a different manner within written narrative testimony or a novel. We noted in the introduction, for instance, the manner by which survivor Esther Mujawayo’s narrative testimony retained elements that evidence the dialogic process involved in writing the testimony by notations in parentheses of her actions and silences while providing testimony.

As Mukagasana continues her testimony, she recounts her separation from her children, her husband’s self-sacrifice for the family, and her brief reunion with her children. Her act of sharing such experiences demonstrates to spectators the difficulty of working through an intense and always-present disaster. The horrific event may manifest

itself in various ways. For instance, a survivor may oscillate between time periods within testimonial narrative. Within both the published text as well as the performance at Liège one notes the continued alternation of past and present tense used by Mukagasana. It is as though the experiences are relived in the telling, demonstrating the disaster's unceasing grip on survivors.

The reliving of the event through its recounting and its persistence in the present are also explicitly acknowledged at moments. For instance, after noting her separation from her children and husband in an effort to survive, Mukagasana explains: "J'entends encore des coups de tambours, des sifflets, comme si la foudre s'abattait dans mes oreilles; c'était les assassins qui arrivaient et j'ai couru sans savoir où j'allais" (20).

These elements demonstrate the manner by which the end of a genocide does not bring an end to the suffering. Not only does trauma induce flashback of the disastrous events, but the very act of testimony requires survivors to relive the described incident (LaCapra 217). The continued infiltration of the genocide into the present demonstrates the intense nature of the catastrophe and therefore speaks to its potential emotional impact and resistance to representation.

In the last portion of her recounting, Mukagasana details how she was hidden and was able to find safety, only to learn that her children were killed. Although she describes the events that led to her survival, she ends her chronicling of events abruptly with the appropriation of her niece's voice who recounts the death of her children. While her children were extremely important to her and she still carries guilt, feeling like a "mère indigne, qui a abandonné ses enfants devant la mort" (22), one might expect her testimony of events to close with a discussion of events in her life from that moment to

the present, the mention of what is to come in the future, or a similar form of closure. However, such resolution does not arrive.

This fact parallels Langer's discovery that unlike the closure offered by written narratives, many oral Shoah testimonies do not end with a discussion of the survivor's liberation (57). In fact, while Mukagasana's written narrative testimony in *La mort ne veut pas de moi* ends with such closure, her account within *Rwanda 94* does not. Unlike the narrative structure inherent in most written testimony, "[o]ral testimony violates our own need for conclusions, thereby imposing on us an angle of vision wrenching us from familiar assumptions that govern our response to normal narratives" (Langer 57). But it is perhaps this break from "normal narratives" that serves to represent more effectively the extraordinary nature of the unspeakable events to the addressees. The challenge imposed upon the interlocutors' traditional framework may suggest to them that the message be processed in some manner different from that used for those messages not related to extreme limit events. The lack of closure could therefore prompt an intensified reflection on the part of the spectator, encouraging critical consideration of the message as desired in Brechtian Theater. Consequently, it also triggers Jakobson's phatic function by assisting with maintenance of the contact.

When addressees listen to any account of trauma-based testimony, they often "feel the bewilderment, injury, confusion, dread and conflicts that the trauma victim feels" (Laub, "Bearing Witness" 57-58). This consideration and the emotional moments during Mukagasana's testimony demonstrate efforts to prompt Brecht's alienation effect. The emotional content seeks to prompt spectator involvement which is then broken off to

enable them to react critically to the play as the survivor expressly distances her testimony and herself from the audience with her final words and actions.

After the end of her testimonial account, emotion is pushed aside to establish distance and thus reflection on the political argument as she reinforces the phatic function by rising from her chair and approaching the audience. As Mukagasana raises her hand, she addresses the spectators directly. In this interaction between “actor” and audience common to African total spectacle and proposed as a distancing technique in Brechtian Epic theater, she suggests the weight of what she has just shared: “Que ce qui n’auront pas la volonté d’entendre cela, se dénoncent comme complices du génocide au Rwanda. Moi, Yolande Mukagasana, je déclare devant vous et en face de l’humanité que quiconque ne veut prendre connaissance du calvaire du peuple rwandais est complice des bourreaux” (25).

At this moment, Mukagasana transforms from Agamben’s *superstes* witness, the survivor-witness, to the *testis*, the witness who provides testimony in a legal context. By raising her hand before spectators, it is as though she has testified before the jury within the context of the *gacaca* courts. She has presented the facts before the spectators, who subsequently become the jury. This jury of spectators may therefore reflect upon what they have heard.

As part of its goal to achieve symbolic reparation, the play aims to present the truth of the genocide to counter and rectify inaccurate and inadequate reporting of the genocide that was disseminated in large part by media outlets that refused to use the word “genocide” and portrayed the event instead as spontaneous violence. Mukagasana’s account serves as a means of establishing memory (Chatti 167), and thus this truth. The

judicial parallel undertaken by the survivor suggests the veracity of her account, as court proceedings are driven by fact and recorded to contribute to historical memory. This Brechtian-inspired didactic focus serves as reparation to the dead, and the Rwandan survivors, by declaring the truth of the event, a genocide, before Western spectators who generally know little about the 1994 genocide. Mukagasana's description of the genocide, including the killings, is used as an attempt to educate spectators regarding the reality of the disaster and reminds them of the lives lost.

The use of testimony also contributes to the goal to "give victims a voice and face but also to question the motives and process of their assassination". Director Jacques Delcuvellerie has termed Mukagasana's testimony at the beginning of the play "essential" (Delcuvellerie). He explains that her testimony is important not only because it serves as the spectators' initial interaction with the play and "prefigures" the symbolic reparation achieved by the final portion of the play. It is also symbolic representation because it provides "la voix, le corps, la parole d'une morte vivante; une personne infiniment singulière pour un million de victimes sans nom et sans visage" ("the voice, the body, the speech of a being who is of the living-dead; a single person for a million victims without a name or face") (Groupov 167). Through testimony, Mukagasana shares the story of those who perished (and were thus silenced) as well as her own. As Mounira Chatti has remarked, her testimony contributes to the play's political effort of symbolic reparation by reminding spectators that the individuals affected by the genocide were not an anonymous group, but instead human beings with a "face and a name" (167). Indeed, Mukagasana herself hints at the reparative quality of her words within her act of

testimony when she highlights that it benefits the dead: "C'est la seule chose que je peux faire pour les miens et pour l'humanité" (22).

The testimony may also prove useful for the Rwandan audience. Christian Biet explains that for these spectators, Mukagasana's "testimony instills pathos, sorrow, and sighs, as the audience remembers the history: Memory and history, emotion and reflection, are thus invoked" (1052). Although these remarks demonstrate the difficulties faced in attending the performance, it also suggests that it may aid in the healing process. Listening to Mukagasana's account could prove distressing for survivors as it may trigger their recall of their own painful memories from that time, but they may also find comfort in unity, as we noted in the introduction regarding organizations such as AVEGA that enable survivors to come together and share their experiences. Further, by symbolically speaking for all those involved, including the dead, Mukagasana's efforts contribute to reparation for the dead and the survivors.

Yolande Mukagasana's testimony is only the first step in efforts to achieve the play's goals. Spectators hear additional testimonial accounts and the incorporation of music as the section continues. These elements provide additional opportunities for Rwandans themselves to speak about the reality of the genocide.

Giving a Voice to the Dead: Music and Testimony

As Mukagasana reclaims her seat on stage, Rwandan musician Jean-Marie Muyango begins his interpretation of a musical piece sung in Kinyarwanda that finds its inspiration in the 1959 pogroms against the Tutsis. His performance continues around two minutes before it overlaps the testimony from members of the Choeur des Morts,

demonstrating a polyphonic intertwining and the multi-genre approach of African total spectacle that resides at the heart of the work. The integration of music presents itself as another form used in the representation of the unspeakable.

The Power of Music

Music plays a role in most cultures throughout the world and contains the ability to affect individuals in different ways. From a music-induced trance to an emotional pop music song on the radio that brings a young child to tears to a pitch-perfect note held by a soloist that induces chills among members of the audience, various types of music would seem to have an ability to move listeners. A brief consideration of specific characteristics of music will aid understanding of the manner by which its use within *Rwanda 94* may improve the spectators' apprehension of the generally incomprehensible disaster.

The way by which a piece of music influences a listener is highly individualized. The outcome is based upon various factors such as "personality, background, life situation and other factors", as well as the culture to which the individual belongs (Bicknell 55). That is to say that although one spectator may experience goosebumps when the change in tempo and volume lead to crescendo during a performance of the prélude from Unaccompanied Cello Suite No. 1 in G Major, the same is unlikely to hold true even among members of his or her party. The impact of a piece of music on an individual may even change from one instance of listening to the next (Bicknell 87). Despite these variables in the experiencing of music, studies such as Hevner (1936) have shown that when asked which emotion a specific piece of music seems to suggest (i.e.

happiness, sadness), there exists consensus among respondents (Tan, Pfordresher, and Harré 263).

Viewpoints on the power of music as regards emotion evade consensus, and they tend to fall into two camps. As Tan explains, “The idea that music expresses or represents emotions but does not elicit real emotions is consistent with the *cognitivist* position, while the view that music induces emotions in listeners has been characterized as the *emotivist* position (Kivy, 1990)” (268, emphasis in original). For the purposes of this study, we need not choose one over the other. Instead, it suffices to note that the prevalence of this base in scholarly work, as well as the results of the aforementioned studies, demonstrate the ubiquity of the belief that music is tied to emotion and that it carries within it a certain potential to create meaningful connections with listeners.

Several researchers have noted the effect of music on the listener. Some seek to establish a link between music and emotion. John Sloboda (2005), for example, aimed to identify elements of music that cause strong physical responses, such as tears (Tan, Pfordresher, and Harré 268-269). Others have measured the physiological effects of music upon listeners. Tan, Pfordresher, and Harré explain the results of one such study:

. . . music appears to have an impact on the brain’s reward centers. For instance, evidence from an fMRI study suggests that *consonant* musical intervals (which are pleasant and harmonious to the ear) stimulate a region of the orbitofrontal cortex . . . which is associated with reward and reinforcement (Blood, Zatorre, Bermudez, & Evans, 1999). . .” while “*dissonant* intervals increase activity in the parahippocampal gyrus, a region that has intricate connections to the amygdala, the brain’s ‘warning center’”. (272, emphasis in original)

In another study, researchers have used PET scans to study the amount of blood flow to areas of the brain while listening to music (Bicknell 103). These studies, just a few examples of many such investigations, demonstrate evidence to confirm the very real effect that music may have on those who hear it. Further, the results suggest that the inclusion of music in genres such as theater may enhance the experience of its elements like dramatic dialogue. In the case of the representation of disaster, it may even heighten the efficacy of the representational power of the content.

Eckart Altenmüller, director of the Institute of Music Physiology and Musicians' Medicine at the Hanover University of Music, Drama and Media, studies neurophysiology and neuropsychology as it relates to music. In the realm of therapy, he has described the use of music for recovery in individuals who have suffered a stroke (Unterstell 22). Neurologist Oliver Sacks recounts the success in the use of certain music for ailments such as Parkinson's or Tourette's (2529). These considerations intimate that music affects not only the emotion of its listeners, but that it may in fact influence bodily processes in an involuntary manner. Sacks notes:

We turn to music, we need it, because of its ability to move us, to induce feelings and moods, states of mind. Therapeutically, this power can be very striking in people with autism or frontal lobe syndromes, who may otherwise have little access to strong emotional states. And the evocative power of music can also be of immense value in people with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias, who may have become unable to understand or respond to language, but can still be profoundly moved—and often regain their cognitive focus, at least for a while—when exposed to music, especially familiar music that may evoke for them

memories of earlier events, encounters or states of mind that cannot be called up in any other way. (2529)

The overall declaration of the need for music demonstrates its importance in everyday life. Further its ability to move listeners while transcending the need for words shows a particular value in music for events such as genocide which evade representation through a Jakobsonian code composed of everyday vocabulary. The implication of these ideas is seen especially as it relates to the Choeur des Morts in *Rwanda* 94.

Choeur des Morts

Shortly after Muyango begins singing, the six “dead” who compose the Choeur des Morts appear, suggesting the influence of African total spectacle with its mix of the real and unreal. The chorus contributes to the epic narration in the play that is used instead of a dramatic plot that extends from the beginning to end of the piece. Members of the Choeur enter the theater from behind the audience, each finding his or her own place in the aisles among the seated spectators instead of proceeding directly to the stage alongside Muyango. It is from that spot that each narrates the harrowing account of his or her personal death. As we will see, the actions of the chorus attempt to generate a Brechtian alienation effect, as was Brecht’s aim when he incorporated a chorus in a work of epic theater (Brecht, “Alienation Effects” 96).

The introduction to this study included discussion on what Primo Levi calls the “true witness”, designating those killed during the Shoah or the mute individuals termed *Muselmann*. Holocaust scholar Giorgio Agamben parallels this thought. As he contends, “The Shoah is an event without witnesses in the double sense that it is impossible to bear

witness to it from the inside – since no one can bear witness from the inside of death, and there is no voice for the disappearance of voice – and from the outside – since the ‘outsider’ is by definition excluded from the event” (35). Although developed in response to another disaster, that of the Shoah, these ideas hold true for other genocides, including the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsis in Rwanda.

The incorporation of the dead through the Choeur des Morts addresses this issue in a certain manner. The fact that these “dead” individuals who constitute “the submerged, the complete witnesses, the ones whose deposition would have a general significance” (Levi 84) share the manner by which they were killed brings weight to their testimony. Further, the delivery of the created testimony rooted in truth works to resolve the issue that “un témoin n’est pas témoin”, that a single testimony of an event is not sufficient to communicate the entirety of the experience. Rather, the cumulative effect of the series of testimonies from the choir, which share certain commonalities at the same time that they introduce disparate elements of the experience, work together to expand and fill the space of testimony.

The use of the Choeur des Morts serves as another mechanism used by Groupov as the play’s creators strive to avoid misrepresentation of the genocide despite political representation (*Vertretung*) by allowing Rwandans to speak for themselves. In this case, the silenced dead are not only given a voice via the Rwandan actors that compose the chorus, but the experiences of death that are recounted were written by Rwandan actors and based on deaths suffered by real Rwandans they knew (Groupov 33). In this way, the play uncovers genuine voices that were silenced. Through the use of the chorus, Groupov works toward achieving the goal of symbolic reparation by representing these individuals

by providing them with a face and a voice. As we observed with the presence of Yolande Mukagasana, the presence of these individuals continues to make the genocide less “abstract”. It also creates symbolic reparation by informing spectators that those killed were not an anonymous mass, but rather human beings who each possessed their own identity and story.

Polyphony through Music and Testimony of the Dead

The sharing of testimony achieves greater impact through its simultaneous mixing with Muyango’s musical interpretation. Music is also incorporated in Brecht’s Epic theater. Brecht suggested the demarcation of music from other elements of the representation and explained that its addition should “not ‘accompany’ except in the form of comment” as “music must strongly resist the smooth incorporation which is generally expected of it and turns it into an unthinking slavey” (Brecht “A Short Organum” 203). Although music and speech merge at times within *Rwanda 94*, we will see that they are accompanied by techniques which promote critical thinking regarding the play’s political message, thus resisting the passivity against which Brecht cautioned.

We have already considered ways by which listening to a piece of music may act upon individuals. These reactions may occur during Muyango’s interpretation. However, the combination of music with other genres, such as the testimony of the Choeur des Morts, suggests the power of the multi-genre approach in African total spectacle.

Studies on such combinations suggest the noteworthy impact that the mixing may produce. In their discussion on the use of music in film, Tan, Pfordresher, and Harré highlight a quality that also applies to music in theatrical works. They share the idea that

it “places the viewer *in the center* of the experience, rather than as a spectator” (273, emphasis in original). This suggestion presents an important component in the representation of unspeakable events as the ability to position spectators within the experience can serve the phatic function by helping to maintain the Jakobsonian contact and thus increase chances for apprehension of the message. Tan, Pfordresher, and Harré continue by noting studies that demonstrate ways in which music paired with image influences spectators at the physiological level (Thayer and Levenson [1983]) and affects the interpretation of what is seen (Bolivar, Cohen, and Fentress [1994]) (273). The belief in the power of music’s ability to express and/or induce emotions and influence the reception of other media suggests that the performance of Muyango’s song may influence spectators’ reception of the testimonial messages of the Choeur des Morts. Consideration of the impact of this simultaneity follows.

Since the performance of Muyango’s interpretation follows Mukagasana’s weighty, unfortunate testimony and is found within a play concerning genocide, spectators may anticipate the sadness that the song inspires. Although the Rwandan audience would understand the Kinyarwanda used in Muyango’s interpretation of the song focusing on the 1959 pogroms against the Tutsis (and may reflect upon the past violence and suffering), it is unlikely that most of the play’s spectators would do so. However, the presence of additional markers such as his seating behind a traditional Rwandan drum identify him as a Rwandan citizen with knowledge and authority to speak on the genocide. These indicators inspire reverence for efforts to represent the distressing occurrences in a country little known by the (predominantly foreign) spectators. Further, the accompaniment provided by the instrumental music of the European orchestra aids in

the representational efforts in spite of the potential language barrier. The orchestra draws largely upon the rich expression of stringed instruments that emit drawn out tones, transcending verbal language to suggest the solemn and serious situation that is described by the staid singer and reflected in his voice. All the while, the European instruments (notably) do not smother the Rwandan Muyango's voice, but rather serve to support it.

Muyango's continued interpretation blends into the introduction of the Choeur des Morts, allowing Rwandans themselves to speak about their history and their experiences during the genocide by the use of song and testimony, French and Kinyarwanda. Although his performance continues in the same manner, there are slight modifications in the orchestra. The drawn out tones of the stringed instruments continue as before but find themselves intermittently punctuated by staccato notes from the piano and other instruments as well as the brief incorporation of women's singing in echo. This combination may produce a sense of anxiety and maintains a sorrowful tone as members of the Choeur des Morts find their place among spectators and recount their experiences.

Muyango's use of Kinyarwanda in the song alongside the testimonies in French allows for dualistic expression in a way that does not contradict or nullify the stories of testimony through cacophony. The appearance of the members of the Choeur des Morts shifts the visual focus from Muyango to the individuals in the choir due to their proximity to spectators. However, the fact that the musical elements are diffused at identical volume as the testimonial accounts maintains and transfers the sense of solemnity and sorrow established with the music to the testimonial accounts. Further, in the same manner that music in film may "heighten the audience's attention to onscreen events" (Tan,

Pfordresher, and Harré 273), the addition of music may aid the “contact” by increasing spectator focus upon the testimonials.

The musical elements may influence reception of the testimonial accounts. The sense of sorrow and that of anxiety initiated by the changes in instrumental music frame anticipation and reception of these accounts as music influenced the interpretation of what was seen in film in the study noted above. This impact is confirmed by the content of the messages of the Choeur, filled with descriptions of horrific killings that involve elements such as rape and amputation.

The incorporation of music intensifies the content of the message as it may at the same time increase the likelihood of message reception. Jeanette Bicknell explains in her study on music’s effect on its listeners, “We have evidence from a number of sources that music affects the brain directly. Music brings about a variety of measurable physical responses in listeners, including heightened awareness, alertness and excitement” (101). Music carries a social quality that brings together individuals and in so doing may forge “deep cultural bonds” (Unterstell 22). In the play, it contributes to the attempts to help the European audience apprehend the truth of the genocide.

The music also lends greater force to the explanations of the “dead” by the intensity of sound that gradually builds with the introduction of the Choeur. The instrumental music and singing of Muyango are joined by the sound of recorded voices and the staggered commencement of the six testimonies. The recorded voices whisper phrases to unsettle spectators alongside the accounts of the “dead”. While the genres are mixed, the division between actors and audience also remains minimal, as is common in African total spectacle. Indeed, the dead do not simply share their testimony on stage, but

instead position themselves among the audience to do so. As they recount their experiences, members of the chorus break the fourth wall, a technique common in both Brecht's Epic theater and African total spectacle, as they "se répètent à plusieurs groupes de spectateurs différents" (28). In this way, spectators become surrounded and inundated by the expression of pain and suffering. Their actions therefore aim to attract and engage the attention of spectators, reflecting the employment of the phatic function by maintaining the Jakobsonian contact in an effort to permit consideration of the representation.

Sound grows as subsequent individuals share their stories with the audience. This accumulation may engender a sense of anxiety as each strives to be heard, a creative choice that can serve to remind the audience of the magnitude of the event that resulted in numerous victims. Given the multiplicity of voices, it becomes impossible for spectators to process each word of every account simultaneously. However, that does not mean that their testimony is not heard. The technique aims to draw spectators' focus to the testimony of the "dead" closest to them. Pauses during these acts of recounting permit spectators to hear other members of the Choeur while they recount their stories. Further, given the staggering of testimonies, some testimonial accounts reach their end while others continue so that volume is gradually reduced and others may be heard.

The content of each testimony, based upon accounts of actual deaths in the actors' families, serves to reinforce the preceding testimony of Yolande Mukagasana. Not only may spectators note the repetition of certain elements of the experience from her testimony within those of the Choeur des Morts, but they also find echoes among the members of the chorus. Such topics include the extreme cruelty of the génocidaires, their

attempt to maximize the suffering of those they sought to kill, the occurrence of rape, the victims' recollections of surprisingly friendly past relations with those who attempted to kill them and attempts to find safety by hiding in the bush. This repetition thus serves to reinforce and confirm the veracity of these incomprehensible occurrences expressed in the message.

The binding of the Choeur des Morts and Mukagasana is not limited to content of testimony. After Mukagasana shares her testimony, she remains seated on the stage and watches Muyango and the chorus. As members of the Choeur des Morts close their testimonies, they assemble on stage, finding their place alongside Mukagasana. Her continued presence and position among them suggest the tie and value of reinforcement between her survivor testimony and those of the dead. As we noted, with her act of testimony, Mukagasana speaks for those who died. The final position of the "dead" of the Choeur on stage next to the survivor suggest their acceptance of her account as truth and the value of her efforts. The testimony provided by Rwandans themselves, both living and dead, works toward the achievement of the play's goal of symbolic reparation as it contributes to the establishment of truth of the genocide and attempt to generate recognition of the horrific actions committed therein.

The emotional content of music and testimonies that aims to draw in spectators is followed by an attempt at distancing with a distinct message with political impact, reinforcing the desire of the play's creators that the audience think critically about the performance. With the close of the testimonies, each of the dead stands on stage and directly speaks to the audience while expressing the same declaration in Kinyarwanda, followed by the French equivalent:

Je suis mort, ils m'ont tué.

Je ne dors pas, je ne suis pas en paix. (33)

The repeated acknowledgement of a lack of peace that troubles the dead suggests a significant issue that must be addressed, the issue of justice driving the play. Due to the staggered timing of the testimonies, these final lines repeat one after another in echo, as an unsettling wave that passes over the audience. It provides the declaration with impressive force, as it aims to resonate among spectators and suggests the need for symbolic reparation.

DEUXIEME PARTIE: “MWARAMUTSE” (“DID YOU MAKE IT THROUGH THE NIGHT?”)

Fictional Reporting and des Fantômes Electroniques

The echo of the chilling lines “Je ne dors pas, je ne suis pas en paix” subsides to bring the first “part” of the play to an end. The entirety of the second part will contend with another representation of the dead, this time appearing as “fantômes électroniques”. Here, the dead appear as the focus of a television news program. It is not long before spectators may realize that the portions of *Rwanda 94* may each stand alone as a mini-play in the manner of epic theater as it was outlined by Brecht in “The Modern Theatre is the Epic Theatre” (37).

At the beginning of part two, a large wall on stage opens up to unveil a screen. On this screen, spectators begin to view disparate, unremarkable scenes from around the world, reported via different languages such as clips from a table tennis match and a

speech given by François Mitterrand. However, these scenes are each unexpectedly interrupted by the image of actors playing the role of dead Rwandans, the *fantômes*, whose incorporation provides additional voices and faces to suggest those killed in the genocide in the effort to generate symbolic reparation. It is significant that the dead themselves interrupt the news media that contributed to their anonymity and silence that the play seeks to counter.

These dead seek to communicate by means of what is called in the didascalía “une langue incompréhensible”, Kinyarwanda (37). While the use of local languages is common in francophone literature, the incorporation of Kinyarwanda (despite the fact that it is unlikely to be understood by Western spectators) serves multiple functions. First, it allows Rwandans another opportunity to speak for themselves, in their own language. Second, it contributes to the dramatic effect as the demonstration of the breakdown in the Jakobsonian communicative chain by the use of an incomprehensible code may be seen as a gesture that mirrors the divide between the Western world and the events themselves.

The express use of Kinyarwanda could also promote the critical thinking that the play strives to trigger. The language may engender Brecht’s alienation effect by distancing spectators from the *fantômes*. Although the voices carry messages of meaning and may technically be heard in terms of sound waves, the literal words mean nothing to an audience who cannot decipher the code. Instead, the meaning lies in this overall inability to understand the truth concerning what happened and the process of education that the messages aim to prompt in an effort to achieve the play’s goal of reparation. Along with this recognition, as Alexandre Dauge-Roth explains, the voices initiate action towards apprehension: “Facing a language that escapes our understanding, we are forced

to estrange ourselves from our ordinary frames of reference in order to be able to listen to an ‘ob-scene’ experience or we will never be able to decode what we hear” (53).

In addition, the spectators’ inability to understand their messages alongside the sudden appearance of the fantômes at unexpected moments is not without significance. The audience’s focus on the message without understanding its content may stir a desire to understand. The presence of the fantômes électroniques, as explained during the programming led by the fictitious reporter Madame Bee Bee Bee, began to appear mysteriously on April 7, 1995 (a year after the commencement of the genocide) through various media worldwide. The pairing of the use of Kinyarwanda with the surprise elicited by unanticipated intervention of the faces promotes the use of the unexpected. These choices support the phatic function as they may keep spectators involved by maintaining their interest and thus the Jakobsonian contact. In much the same way as a twist ending in a movie, play, or novel may heighten involvement as spectators/readers work to reconsider past actions that led to the unforeseen moment and/or reformulate their understanding of the scenario, these elements in the play may provoke curiosity as spectators question the significance of their inclusion and seek to understand what is to come.

Despite the eventual translation of the messages from Kinyarwanda to French, their message remains enigmatic and must be interpreted with the help of specialists. Through the discussion on stage, spectators discover the anger felt by their addressers who therefore draw upon the emotive function. This frustration thus reinforces the “Je ne dors pas, je ne suis pas en paix” declaration made by the Choeur des Morts. It becomes clear that the dead seek something through their intervention.

During discussion, characters note the anger that has already been expressed by these fantômes. However, the live broadcast permits spectators to witness a new example. While the first instances, those mentioned above, have already been transmitted prior to the television broadcast and are instead being presented in a retrospective, collective sense, Bee Bee Bee's live use of the term "la tragédie rwandaise" provokes the arrival of a new fantôme (43). The startling sound of static interference prompts the interruption of a young girl who appears and speaks in Kinyarwanda before the reporter can finish expressing her thought. She continues to stare at the spectators in silence after the sharing of her message so that the intensity and attention of spectators may be heightened. As she refuses to look away from the audience, she urges spectators to question the contents of her message and attempts to make it difficult for them to redirect their gaze as well.

It is via the commentary of Colette Bagimont, another reporter, that spectators understand the driving force behind these interruptions. She explains:

Et je crois que les morts, je croyais devoir le démontrer difficilement ce soir, je crois que les morts, entre autres choses, ne supportent plus ce langage indéfini, sans victimes et sans bourreaux. Une "tragédie", vous voyez ? Qui dit tragédie dit fatalité, destin inéluctable. L'apparition vient d'insister fortement sur la définition du crime : un génocide. (45)

It is precisely because Madame Bee Bee Bee uses the term "tragedy" that the young girl intervenes in her desire to insist that the event was not just an incident caused by fate or chance, but instead a genocide. We see that the voice of the dead is employed in this instance to question the role of the media, whose journalists, such as Bee Bee Bee, minimized the event by refusing to acknowledge that it was indeed a genocide.

The desire to encourage spectators to think critically about the content of the performance is reinforced by the incorporation of a short silence immediately following Bagimont's explanation for reflection, identified by the notation of "Un temps, bref mais intense" in the didascalia (45). The elucidation of these concerns begins a process of questioning that has as its goal the spectator's consideration of the truth regarding the genocide and its causes in an effort to establish restorative justice.

The suggestion of the causes of genocide is also taken up by the dead. Indeed, the presence of this new fantôme marks a change when considering the grouping of the appearances:

Celui que votre émission vient de provoquer ressemble aux plus récents. Ils sont plus revendicatifs. Vous aurez peut-être remarqué que la jeune fille n'a pas seulement défini à sa façon le génocide: hommes, femmes, enfants, bébés, elle a aussi demandé: Pourquoi ont-ils péri? Oui, j'estime que ces manifestations doivent nous pousser à réfléchir sur les causes et à en tirer les conséquences. Et cela concerne l'humanité entière, pas seulement le Rwanda. La justice? Oui, d'abord, tout de suite, c'est le minimum vital. Mais si l'on veut que le célèbre slogan : **Plus jamais ça**, ne reste pas un mot creux, il nous faut aussi réfléchir au mot de la jeune fille : **Pourquoi?** (46-47, emphasis in original)

Bagimont's interpretation echoes the play's reparative goal which includes the attempt to "répondre à la question: Pourquoi? Pourquoi est-ce arrivé? Pourquoi cette haine, pourquoi ces morts, pourquoi cette indifférence devant le génocide, pourquoi ces complicités avec les assassins?" (7). The reference to the post-Shoah declaration, a hope

shown to be unrealized given the occurrence of the more recent genocide, demonstrates the need to react in some way.

Spectators play a role in these issues. Indeed, Bee Bee Bee's understanding that these voices "NOUS parlent" suggests the implication of the spectators and news reporters as well as those on stage (45, emphasis in original). Further, as Bagimont clarifies, "ils exigent de nous, je veux dire de l'humanité tout entière 'quelque chose'" (45). As with Yolande Mukagasana's direct address to the audience, this declaration of required reaction on the part of humanity intimates the necessity of action by the contention that there is something at stake. As such, its employment of the phatic function prolongs the Jakobsonian contact through its attempt to engage the vested interest and involvement of the spectators, all the while urging Brechtian-inspired resultant action on their part.

The integral question "Pourquoi?" echoes from the voice of Bagimont to that of Bee Bee Bee in her promise that closes the second part of the play. Just as Mukagasana spoke directly to spectators at the close of the "first part" of the play, Bee Bee Bee also speaks directly to the spectators (as often occurs in Brecht's Epic theater and African total spectacle) to engage them in dialogue, even though they are not expected to respond:

Mesdames et Messieurs, je suis extrêmement troublée,
et je suis sûre que vous l'êtes avec moi. (47)

She explains:

Ils attendent de nous
de moi

un engagement ferme.

Cet engagement, je le prends aujourd'hui devant vous. (47)

With this declaration, she adopts a promise to undertake a search for the truth regarding the genocide. The reverence for the dead would seem to hold promise for reparation. At the same time, the use of the pronouns “vous” and “nous” bind the spectators to Bee Bee Bee in a significant manner. Both witnessed the same disconcerting experience, and Bee Bee Bee's compelling desire to engage in the revelation of truth arises from feelings that she declares her audience likely to feel as well. This suggests that the spectators may likewise share her interest in engagement. What is more, her indication that the dead await not only a response from her, but from “us”, aims to retain attention as it implicates them within her subsequent search for truth and thus the work of the play itself.

It is through her search for truth that they too may gain a deeper apprehension of the genocide. Bee Bee Bee stands in for the audience as a proxy who also seeks to understand what happened. Her use of questioning through the investigation creates a process of education that may be followed by spectators. It may thus increase the likelihood of spectator apprehension of the events, the details of which are, in large part, unknown to the Western audience. The reflective questioning that began in this portion of the play is extended in the following section where it can assist reparation by paving the way for truth and justice.

TROISIEME PARTIE: “LA LITANIE DES QUESTIONS” (“THE LITANY OF QUESTIONS”): POETIC VOICE AND HISTORICAL UNDERSTANDING

With the opening of the third section, the voices of the dead in the Choeur des Morts, representations of the “true witnesses”, serve again to educate. The chorus’ seating of Bee Bee Bee before the audience as well as their placement behind her to face the public make it clear that the upcoming dialogue led by Rwandans is directed towards the (generally) Western audience itself. The presentational acting through the re-initiation of direct dialogue between spectators and those on stage intimates the sharing of information the audience will soon receive. Instrumental music and Muyango’s singing fill the space as members of the Choeur des Morts begin their questioning of the role of various aspects of significance to the genocide.

The Choeur des Morts structure their litany of questions around seven subjects: Radio Télévision libre des Milles Collines (RTLM), the United Nations, the pogroms of 1959, the impact of colonizers, pre-colonial Rwanda, the Church and mourning. These topics directly address the goal associated with the play’s subtitle to “give victims a voice and face but also to question the motives and process of their assassination” by considering the manner by which the subjects above contributed to the genocide. With the introduction of each subject, the chorus takes up the same refrain in its employment of the Jakobsonian conative function, initiated by the attempt to influence the addressees. Through its use of the imperative, the direct address to the spectators encapsulates a warning (“soyez sur vos gardes”, “méfiez-vous”, “soyez vigilants”) (51, 55, 58, 60-61, 66, 67, 71), proposing the untrustworthiness of sources and the need for critical reflection upon the topic being addressed to discern the truth of the genocide.

After the introduction of each subject, a new string of rhetorical questions begins. Members of the chorus continue to utilize narration (common to Epic theater) as they

recount the role played by the various subjects in the genocide through their queries. Members of the chorus take turns posing questions on the same subject, according more weight to the accusation by suggesting agreement on the truth behind these issues. The rhetorical questions indirectly interrogate the audience, serving the phatic function by involving the spectators in dialogue in the manner of the African total spectacle, so that the dead attempt to oblige the audience members to hear their message. At the same time, the queries are posed to provoke Brechtian critical reflection upon the content so that spectators question the lack of action taken to prevent genocide in spite of such an accumulation of substantial evidence as well as what they previously knew about the genocide from the news media. Indeed, as Alexandre Dauge-Roth explains, “the chorus invites us not to trust blindly the various sources of information on which we, the living, depend as we seek to understand this genocide and address the issue of justice” (66).

The questions allow the dead to underline causes of the genocide and accuse those who were responsible in an effort to deliver justice. The members of the chorus do not attempt to produce an empathetic reaction to their message. Instead, they keep the spectators at a certain distance to disseminate truth, adding to efforts of symbolic reparation.

The actors’ continual alternation between “Diront-ils” and “Parleront-ils” to begin their questions offers a poetic dimension to the content that aids the representation. This structural choice is reminiscent of anaphora, suggesting a secondary poetic function that enables the actors to build tension and reinforce their messages, but does not overshadow or equal the impact of the phatic function. The significant use of futur simple in the repetitions intimates the continued relevance of the issues at the present time and into the

future. Further, it suggests the perpetual presence of the genocide in the lives of those involved.

The orchestra plays and a small group of women sing throughout the litany, with melodic changes that often punctuate the time between which individuals of the chorus speak. This mixing of genres through the addition of music may be viewed as an attempt to heighten tension as it did in the previous section with the Choeur des Morts, but it does not build on emotion since the focus of the section is the consideration of factual causes of the genocide. The unsettling message presented in poetic structure and accompanying music prompts a cumulative effect that attempts to present the situation as increasingly upsetting as the considerations build.

At certain moments, the Choeur speaks together. In the same way, this technique makes an effort to draw attention to and reinforce the content of the message. For example, when speaking about the role played by the colonizers who divided the population, the words of Mort 2 are followed by the chorus as a whole:

Nous parlions la même langue

Nous célébrions le même dieu

Nous partagions la même culture. (63)

Further strengthened by the poetic function through its anaphoric structure, the emphasis placed upon the message by the assemblage of voices suggests to spectators the significance of the expressed idea. In this instance where there is no question, the combination of voices and accompanying volume endeavors to prompt critical reflection upon the idea. In this case it provides further contemplation regarding the inception of the

genocide, referring back to Bagimont and Bee Bee Bee's question "Pourquoi" that also reflects the play's goal, as noted above.

With the last subject taken up by the chorus, "Deuil", the dead demonstrate the aforementioned unrest that was also shared by the fantômes. They explain the lack of funerals that resulted in the breaking of cultural tradition as well as the lack of dignity toward the corpses after killing (cut into pieces, thrown in communal ditches, left to be eaten by animals). The issues demonstrate disrespect for the dead and also posed difficulties to the mourning process of the survivors.

With the acts of genocide, individuals were largely unable to mourn and honor the dead in the normal manner. Instead of being able to honor the deceased through the use of rituals and individual funerals, survivors faced difficulty because "corpses of the victims were strewn across the hillside or buried in shallow mass graves" (Ibreck 334). This inability is a major concern, as Déogratias Bagilishya explains: "The loss of a relative under circumstances where mourning is not possible is an absolute nightmare for members of the family. The intensity of psychological distress (complete loss of control) created by a death that is not associated with any traditional means of protection is so crushing that any Rwandan might well suffer a traumatic reaction" (347). Rachel Ibreck explains that the situation led to the creation of local memorials which may also serve as a work of mourning: "Survivors united around a shared experience and as a practical necessity, because the normal social arrangements surrounding bereavement had collapsed" (336). Many individuals were unable to provide their dead with a "decent burial" which would have contributed to the mourning process and honored the dead, but the play may serve as an additional means for such goals.

In her study *Ritual and Symbol in Peacekeeping*, Lisa Schirch contends the importance of rituals in structuring life in every culture throughout the world (24). It is through the power of ritual that individuals may express emotion as well as, “the values and structures that create a sense of community” and viewpoints may be changed (23). However, the act of genocide destroyed not only expression through language, but also the rituals that structure lives (Kalisa 517). Marie-Chantal Kalisa and others have proposed the utility of theater in recovery after such events.

The death of a loved one prompts traditional rituals in Rwanda. For instance, Déogratias Bagilishya outlines the ritual of *gupfunya* during which someone arranges the dying individual’s body into a fetal position to prepare the latter for his or her rebirth after death. The ritual of separation through speeches of farewell pronounced by the living then follows. The funeral takes place during an eight-day ritual of mourning during which “neighbors, friends and family remain gathered around the body at all times” (345). This process is also for use of the living, as a means of working through the pain of losing a loved one. At the end of this period, a gathering takes place to celebrate the rebirth of the dead. These actions demonstrate not only aid for the surviving individuals, but also respect and care for the deceased.

The inability to complete these acts of mourning, in situations without the body for example, can prove very difficult: “Under these conditions, the mourning period offers no solace. We all fear these deaths for which funeral rites and formal mourning practices are not possible because, in Rwandan tradition, these deaths are to blame for unleashing all sorts of ills, troubles and misfortunes” (346-347). This scenario finds its application in the results of the genocide.

The genocide stripped victims of their dignity and complicated the act of mourning, but the play aims to offer solace. Indeed, the symbolic structure of the *Litanie des questions* finds its inspiration in a traditional ritual of mourning (Dauge-Roth 68). Marie-France Collard, one of the play's creators, has explained that the seven sections of the play's litany of questions represent the first seven days of the traditional Rwandan act of mourning, while the play itself stands as symbolic representation of the eighth and final day (Dauge-Roth 68). Further, she notes the necessity of justice in the process of mourning, an effort made within the *Litanie* via its act of questioning and accusation (Dauge-Roth 68). In this way, the litany (in which Rwandans are allowed to speak for themselves and victims are given a face and a name), provides symbolic reparation. It provides justice for the dead as well as the living (including the Rwandan spectators). Therefore, the play also contributes to the healing process.

The series of questions comes to an end after these considerations regarding the possibilities for mourning. However, the message of the dead is not yet complete. With the remarks that close the section, the message of the Choeur des Morts arrives at its zenith through the declaration of Mort 2:

Nous sommes ce million de cris suspendus

Au-dessus des collines du Rwanda

Nous sommes ce nuage accusateur

Nous attendons de vous réparation

Pour nous les morts

Et pour tous les survivants

Pour tous les Rwandais

Pour tous les hommes de la Terre. (72)

Although speaking as an individual, Mort 2 becomes a spokesperson, harnessing all voices of the dead and highlighting the goal of the piece. Represented by the “*cris suspendus*”, the figurative presence of the dead tarries as they look down upon those to whom they speak. The direct address with the subject pronoun “vous” draws upon the phatic function, reinforcing the contact. It provokes the need for a form of action while its accompaniment with the insistence upon culpability serves as a tool to prompt the spectators’ recognition of the necessity of reparation. The secondary poetic function, initiated through the use of anaphora as well as alliteration (*sommes, ce, suspendus*), emphasizes and maintains attention to the content of the message.

The need for reparation is then suggested again by another member of the Choeur des Morts:

À travers nous,

L’humanité vous regarde tristement.

Qu’attendez-vous? (72)

The direct address indicates that it is the moment for action and that the genocide concerns humanity as a whole. It has been made very clear to the audience why the dead would not be “at peace”. The reinforcement of this fact appears with the Choeur’s adaptation of the previously discussed “*je ne suis pas en paix*”. At the end of the litany of questions, the members of the chorus express this unrest by declaring “*Nous ne sommes pas en paix*” one after the other (72-73).

The strength of their voices, here joined together in solidarity to claim reparation and encourage swift action from the guilty, has a powerful and emotional effect on

Madame Bee Bee Bee. Indeed, her apprehension of the truth causes her to shed tears of shame. As Groupov's play is driven by a political component, we have seen that they are careful not to generate too much pathos, and that they use specific techniques to create a Brechtian alienation effect at those emotional instances. In this portion of the play, her tearful moment is followed by the continued presence of the dead, who stand silently on stage and stare at spectators. Their presence serves as an attempt to revert spectator focus from the emotional component and back to the political dimension of the play expressed by the dead as the "troisième partie" ends.

QUATRIEME PARTIE: "UBWOKO" ("CLAN"/ "ETHNICITY")

The fourth section of *Rwanda 94* opens with a prelude during which a member of the Choeur des Morts reminds spectators of Bee Bee Bee's task and explains that the concept of *ubwoko* (clan/ethnicity) played an important role in the genocide. From this scene onward, the dead remain on stage to observe and intervene in the journalist's search. Although they speak less than in previous scenes, their presence and occasional interactions offer them a chance to intervene so that they are not silenced.

This section focuses upon the fictional storyline of Bee Bee Bee's search for the truth regarding the genocide. A new character, Jacob, a Holocaust survivor, sits at a table in a hotel bar. As light music plays, he presents himself directly to the audience. Via a conversational manner of speaking, he narrates his interaction with Bee Bee Bee at the same time that it is acted out on stage. Their discussion revolves around Bee Bee Bee's desire to discover the truth of the genocide. In spite of the difficulty of understanding inherent in such an undertaking (that is expressed by Jacob and suggested through the

reprise of the refrain from the *Litanie des Questions*), she stands determined to undertake the quest for truth and disseminate her findings to large numbers through her television program. It is this undertaking that will draw into question, in the words of Alexandre Dauge-Roth, “the cultural and ideological function of the media and their invitation to forget” (78).

Spectators immediately observe this contention with the onset of her quest. Through the presentation of archival footage of a news program that aired on France 2 in 1993, Bee Bee Bee offers evidence of the knowledge of the likelihood of genocide prior to the events. Despite the insistence of Jean Carbonare, the program’s guest, that an effort could and must be made at that point in time, the play’s audience is well aware that this action was not taken. This evidence bolsters content from the *Litanie des Questions* which also implicated the international community with numerous indications of the precursors to the events of 1994.

Mixing Fact and Fiction

The mixing of genres is mirrored by another form of overlapping, the placement of fact within a fictionalized framework. As we noted in the introduction, the question of the use of fiction in texts related to limit events such as genocide generates great debate. Although the play has included fictional elements up to this point, they have been grounded in truth, such as the factually based testimony of the Choeur des Morts and the factual causes of genocide elucidated in the *Litanie des questions*. However, Bee Bee’s storyline is purely fictional.

Such fictionalization need not cause concern as Bee Bee Bee herself is not attempting to speak of the genocide, but rather to learn about the truth, in large part from Rwandans themselves. In this case, the fictional framework allows the incorporation of fact and the educative process that the spectators may undergo to achieve the goals of the play. Therefore, the fictionalized Bee Bee Bee storyline stands as a convention to allow the passage of fact and contribute toward the goal of reparation through the mediation of truth.

As the play proceeds, Bee Bee Bee convinces Jacob to join her in her quest to discover the truth about the genocide, and the two attend a historical conference on the question of *ubwoko*, “ethnicity”. As explained in the didascalia, “Jacob et Bee Bee Bee s’assoient sur le côté, dos au public à l’extrême avant-scène, presque comme s’ils faisaient partie des spectateurs” (86). This positioning is used to draw the attention of spectators not to the two characters, but instead to the speaker of the conference, thereby permitting audience members to assume the role of student in the sharing of knowledge to come.

During the conference, spectators are reminded at various intervals that they are attending a theatrical performance. For instance, the speaker at the conference addresses the audience in his greeting, informs Bee Bee Bee that the complexity of the subject of ethnicity means that “[c]e n’est donc pas dans le cadre d’un spectacle dont vous êtes les protagonistes que nous pourrions épuiser le sujet. . .” (86), and, when mentioning the term *ubwoko*, he calls it “le mot-clé de cette partie du spectacle où nous sommes” (87). This insistence on the theatrical performance supports Brecht’s model by breaking any

illusion. Instead, it permits the audience members to remain aware of the fact that they are attending a performance and may therefore react critically to the play.

The didactic element, a mark of Brecht's Epic theater, further enlightens spectators as to the causes of genocide and the responsibility of the Western world in the event, addressing one of the stated aspects involved in the goal of reparation (which has also been posed by Bee Bee Bee). The speaker explains the complexity of the question of *ubwoko*, the term for "clan" that was used by the Europeans to indicate "ethnicity". He references the three divisions of ethnicity (Tutsi, Hutu, and Twa) and manners of distinguishing between them that were used by the Europeans, as well as the fact that they are not truly ethnicities since they all share the same land, language, religion, and culture.

The conference leader, a European himself, also highlights the responsibility of the Europeans in the genocide through their organization of society by two "racial identities" between which they instilled a "haine durable" by supporting the Tutsi and then the Hutu (98). His declaration "Mais nous, madame Bee Bee Bee, Européens, devons aussi examiner le rôle que nous avons joué et quelles sont nos responsabilités dans la genèse de cette horreur" suggests an effort at reparation through the acknowledgement of responsibility and truth towards those killed and survivors who live constantly in its shadow (97). The inclusion of the spectators by his use of the pronouns "nous" and "vous" serves the phatic function by suggesting the engagement of the members of the European audience in dialogue and ties them to the facts presented by the speaker, maintaining the pernicious effect of the colonizers on the situation.

Historical Polyphony

Both the Shoah and the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsis in Rwanda function within the play as the parallel is drawn between the two through the integration of Holocaust survivor Jacob into the fictional storyline with Bee Bee Bee. Although both are unique events, it is not uncommon for the two to be grouped together given the extremity of genocidal acts involved in both. This commonality permits the application of theoretical questions centering on topics such as testimony, silence and representation in both cases.

Similarities do exist between the Shoah and the genocide of the Tutsis such as the fact that the use of propaganda led to each genocide (Small 124). Martina Kopf explains that the means by which one may react after the destruction resulting from extreme disaster may also be comparable:

Looking at the memory of the Holocaust can help to approach the history and memory of the genocide in Rwanda, since no other context in recent history produced such a wide-reaching critical debate and awareness on the problems of art and representation in the face of unspeakable experience. (70)

In spite of these similarities, Kopf warns against conflation of the two namely because the two disasters arose due to different circumstances. Further, “the reference to Holocaust literature bears the risk to turn a deaf ear to the efforts of survivors and post-genocide generations to come to their own terms with their history” (70).

This concern is not at issue within the play. Rather, the main focus is placed upon the causes and implementation of the genocide of the Tutsis. Discussion is not placed upon the descriptions of the Shoah with the exception of the small dialogue in which

Jacob tells the story of his brother's death. The evocation of the Shoah through the use of Jacob provides the spectators a framework with which they are more familiar to express the intensity of suffering and the massive casualties, but never suggests that one is equivalent to the other.

The integration of both genocides finds its concrete representation on stage between Jacob and the Choeur des Morts as he shares his personal story. After a member of the Choeur follows Jacob across the stage, spectators view the placement of the dead's hand upon his shoulder in support. This solidarity of suffering visually demonstrates the link as well as the weight of the experience.

While the enormity of suffering at the heart of Shoah experiences evades communication as well, the association of an event with which the spectators are already familiar may make the 1994 genocide of the Tutsis more understandable. It may conjure memories of past literature they have read or documentaries they have watched which demonstrate, to some degree, unspeakable suffering on a grand scale. One finds, for example, the reference to the Tutsis, as "les Juifs de l'Afrique" during the *Litanie des questions* (62).

Through Bee Bee Bee's continued involvement with Jacob, spectators watch as the real and unreal again combine as she refuses the falsity of three "hyenas" that sing to dissuade her from the truth and explains how her quest for truth prompts three visions that are acted out on stage. The incorporation of these visions permits the questioning of integral elements within the discussion of genocide including religion, the United Nations, and France. Her questions and the periodic interrogation by the Choeur des

Morts push ever closer to the truth, arriving ultimately at Bee Bee Bee's final product, her creation of a program to share the truth.

Voicing Silence through Recorded Image

The last scene focusing upon Bee Bee Bee's quest involves her upcoming program wherein she intends to present what she has learned. It reinitiates the critique of the media first established with the appearance of the fantômes électroniques. Spectators view a meeting with her coworker and her superior, Monsieur UER, regarding the largely silent showing of eight minutes of authentic recorded images of the genocide that are to serve as the introduction to the program. The intent to present the collection of images leads to a discussion on the incommunicability of the events, especially as regards the audience's understanding. While truth is important, the extreme truth of the events can often lead interlocutors to terminate communication, declaring that the content is "too much". One locates this concern in the hesitation and insistence of Monsieur UER: "Les gens se mettent à table. Dans leur assiette que trouvent-ils? Ça! Huit minutes de ça ! Pardonnez-moi, c'est un peu indigeste. Trop, c'est trop" (128).

The situation inaugurates consideration of the role of the media in deciding what is shown to the public and how it is presented. The images put together by Bee Bee Bee reflect the truth of the genocide laid bare, in its full impact. However, her co-worker expresses the same concern as her superior, and suggests to modify its impact through the use of music: "Si on y met un rythme soutenu, rapide, je suis sûr que ça aura un tout autre impact. On aura dit la même chose, l'essentiel sans agresser le téléspectateur" (129). When considered alongside the discussion on the power of music found above, it

becomes clear that its addition may influence the representation of the genocide. In this case, the music would be added in an effort to attenuate the potency to make it more palatable to the viewing audience. However, it would also therefore minimize the truth of the event, just like the media's use of the word "tragedy" to refer to the genocide. As such, Madame Bee Bee Bee strongly opposes this modification.

In spite of the concerns for the television audience, spectators view the images as they are shown to Monsieur UER. The intensity of the images, shown in silence, with the exception of a recorded excerpt from RTLM programming, results in "un coup de poing à l'estomac", to quote UER (128). Further, Bee Bee Bee hints at the power of images and thus their importance: "Si je dis un million de morts, vous ne sursautez pas. Si je montre quelques dizaines de corps, vous voilà révolté" (129). The shock of the images cannot be denied. The viewing of killers alongside those left dead and dying reminds that the disaster resulted in the loss of human life. In a way that cold facts cannot communicate, the reminder that these were fellow human beings who were killed makes the genocide all the more unfortunate. The goal of symbolic reparation to demonstrate that the dead were not an anonymous mass is addressed with the visual acknowledgement of casualties made all the more impactful as the spectators have been able to come to gain a sense of the horror of the genocide and their responsibility throughout the course of the performance.

Director Jacques Delcuvellerie has noted that the role of the images is not to confirm the veracity of the play, especially since images can be falsified. While it is possible that the images may nonetheless be viewed by the spectators as authenticating support for the horror described through testimony, they are intended to act as "just that

of which one cannot speak” (“juste ce dont on ne peut pas parler”) (Delcuvellerie). The silent depiction of images thus becomes a concrete representation of the unspeakability of genocide. Although the acts of genocide may literally be seen by survivors through witnessing or by documentation, the disaster leaves speech insufficient to describe it. It is through the viewing of atrocious images and the lack of speech that the spectators may come to realize how its extent, in fact, cannot be fully spoken.

In the scene that follows, the Chœur des Morts addresses the audience for the final time. They face the public as Jacob explains that Bee Bee Bee’s video contribution never makes it to air. The remark may serve to prompt the desired spectator reflection upon the play’s message as spectators again consider the control of the media in the dissemination of truth, since they choose what is seen and influence the effect of the information. The questioning of what they previously knew via media diffusion may prompt continued recognition of what they did not know.

As the chorus stands before spectators, Mort 2 reprises lines previously expressed, reinforcing the message and leaving no doubt regarding the accusations being made. Reiterating the focus upon the spectators they address, the variations demonstrate the continued responsibility and desired atonement:

Nous sommes ce million de cris suspendus
au-dessus des collines du Rwanda.

Nous sommes, à jamais, ce nuage accusateur.

Nous redirons à jamais l’exigence,
parlant au nom de ceux qui ne sont plus
et au nom de ceux qui sont encore ;

nous qui avons plus de force qu'à l'heure où nous étions vivants,
car vivants nous n'avions qu'une courte vie pour témoigner.

Morts, c'est pour l'éternité que nous réclamons notre dû. 132

The repetition of "nous" at the beginning of various lines gives force and endeavors to draw attention to the significant message. Further, the addition and repetition of "à jamais" underlines the insistence on the necessity of reparation, establishing the need for, at the very least, a greater acknowledgement and understanding of their desire for justice.

The presence and message of the dead confers an air of gravitas to the work as a whole. It suggests the impact of both the content and performance of the play in general. The individual echoes in Kinyarwanda and French "Je suis mort, ils m'ont tué, je ne dors pas, je ne suis pas en paix" eerily close the section (132), highlighting the unrest that still remains and suggesting the long road to reparation.

LA CANTATE DE BISESERO: AN EPIC POLYPHONIC CONCLUSION

The fifth and final section, *La Cantate de Bisesero*, closes the play with the epic narration of the heroic, but unsuccessful, resistance undertaken in Bisesero during the genocide. The cantata, defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as "a lyric drama set to music" ("Cantata"), features the alternation of a narrator who chronicles the progression of the events and descriptions from witnesses, as well as a chorus composed of African and European actors. During the cantata, spectators learn of the resistance of those in Bisesero through the evolution of events: from the exodus toward Bisesero in search of refuge, acts of resistance, the eventual massacre led by the génocidaires, the role played

by French soldiers, and finally the post-genocide state of Bisesero. These events are represented by epic narration, displaying the influence of Brecht's Epic theater.

Throughout this study, the attempts at representation through the polyvocal efforts of mixed genres have been examined. From the first moments of the play, a connection is established between those on stage and the spectators. The essential maintenance of the connection continues throughout the piece through several uses of testimony, direct address to the audience, and the incorporation of a fictional guide. The use of disparate genres speaks the truth of the genocide in different manners which, when brought together, create a more complete portrait of the limit event.

The cantata serves as a potent culmination of all that came before it. Its representation of heroism brings together the mutually reinforcing aforementioned genres that compose the piece in epic form. Within this section, the use of instrumental music and chorus, with their powerful tie to emotion, function alongside the narration of poetically based historical fact and testimony. All serve to reinforce one another and the preceding sections, strengthening the message. Through the description of courage, suffering, and resistance, the writers honor the brave individuals killed at Bisesero as well as the small number of survivors.

Movement through the history of the event arrives in the present time, all the while intimating that the past is forever felt within the present. The refrain indicates that there,

Vivaient avant le génocide

De nombreux hommes forts". (158)

However, circumstances have changed. Now,

Reste une poignée d'hommes

Qui maintenant meurent de chagrin" (158).

The indication of the resultant devastation among survivors left with nothing and incomplete justice for the acts of the perpetrators suggests the need for reparation.

The progression of the epic cantata finds its end with an epilogue that also closes the play as a whole. Spectators may be moved by the cantata, but the judicial content of the epilogue serves as another example of an instance in which the play's creators seek to establish critical distance by attempting to engender emotional involvement and then breaking it off, in Brechtian fashion. Indeed, spectators learn of the arrest of the specific individuals who organized and committed genocidal acts at Bisesero as well as their appearance and judgment at the Tribunal international des Nations Unies. This information contributes to reparation for both survivors and victims by the acknowledgment of the application of justice.

In a similar instance, the reading of the name, age and profession of those killed in the acts of resistance brings the piece to an end. Indeed, the listing serves as evidence of the killings. The recognition of individualized identities of the deceased also provides symbolic reparation to the dead by highlighting the loss of human life that should not be minimized with anonymous representation by impersonal statistics. The emotion and justice also permit reparation toward the living by according the play a restorative dimension so that it contributes to the process of healing for survivors who view the play and those who attended the presentation of the Cantata during its performance in Bisesero during the April 2004 commemoration of the genocide. The lowering of the lights and

voices signal the spectators exit from the theater while the Cantata's musically-driven refrain and the play's content may continue to traverse their minds.

In this chapter, we saw that *Rwanda 94* uses elements of Brecht's Epic theater and African total spectacle to represent the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda and permit attempts to provide "symbolic reparation to the dead for use by the living" to "give victims a voice and face but also to question the motives and process of their assassination". These elements also merge with Groupov's efforts to allow Rwandans to speak during the play so as to prevent misrepresentation of the reality of genocide despite the fact that with the play they are "speaking for" the Rwandans. The emphasis on Jakobson's phatic function enables actors to engage the audience in dialogue despite the unspeakable nature of the events and, in this way, permits opportunities for spectator reflection upon the content and realization that the genocide engages humanity as a whole.

The dialogic configuration that provides force to representation in *Rwanda 94* may also be found in a different form in *Hate Radio*, the final play examined in this study. As it heightened audience involvement in the former play, so too will it strive to draw in and retain spectators' attention in the latter. An examination of the use of hyperrealism in *Hate Radio* will demonstrate the manner by which Milo Rau attempts to go beyond representation to permit spectators to apprehend the unspeakable harm caused by RTLM.

Chapter 3:

Milo Rau's *Hate Radio*: Beyond Representation (Simulacrum), in Favor of Simulation through the Use of Hyperrealistic Techniques to Address the Unspeakable Trauma of the Genocide Against the Tutsi

As noted in the introduction, radio played an integral part in the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. Its role takes center stage within Milo Rau's play *Hate Radio*, a work of documentary theater based on extensive research. *Hate Radio* forgoes classical dialogue in favor of the performance of testimony and hyperrealistic simulation of a radio broadcast to consider the promulgation of ideas through the radio during that time. This chapter will include examination of the manner by which Rau utilizes hyperrealism, defined in this study as the technique of involving elements that surpass the "real", original experience or object which they represent, in his RTLM re-enactment alongside testimony in an effort to represent the unspeakable (*indicible*) consequences of the radio programming.

Hate Radio examines the impact of radio programming from the popular station Radio-Télévision Libre des Milles Collines (RTLM) on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. When spectators arrive at the theater, they are provided with a radio headset through which they will hear the play. The piece begins with a brief presentation of historical facts for contextualization projected on "boards". It is then followed by video projections of post-genocide interviews with actors playing the role of RTLM broadcasters Bemeriki, Habimana and Ruggiu and testimony from actors playing the roles of survivors and journalists. After the final testimonial account is shared, the boards

are raised to reveal the radio studio that is used in the second portion of the play. Within the studio, Rau represents a condensed version of the type of RTLM programming broadcast over the airwaves in 1994 that “remains faithful to the original” (“Press Kit Hate Radio” 4). Spectators continue wearing headphones as they listen to (and view) the simulation of a radio broadcast. The program is composed of a mix of news from the front, contemporary and traditional music, national and international news, and calls made by listeners. As the radio program ends, additional post-genocide interviews regarding efforts at justice and questions that remain are projected.

Hate Radio achieved success since its first appearance in 2011. Thereafter, it toured the world, staging performances in over fifteen countries including Switzerland, Rwanda, South Africa, Greece, Germany, and Canada (“Milo Rau: Onassis Cultural Centre”). The play also garnered critical praise. Rau notably received the “Hörspielpreis der Kriegsblinden” for the play in 2014 (“Press Kit Milo Rau english” 4).

The goal driving the play contributes to its success within multiple countries. In terms of a goal, Rau seeks to highlight the correlation between RTLM programming and the *indicible* of the 1994 genocide. He does not aim to inspire the audience to embrace the same hateful anti-Tutsi ideology to which the Hutu extremist radio hosts subscribed. Rather, he insists that the play’s simulation of an RTLM broadcast reflect “the deeply unsettling atmosphere – a combination of serene authority, murderous rage and relaxing entertainment – disseminated every day” in the original program (“Press Kit Hate Radio” 8) so that it provides insight into “[h]ow racism functions, how human beings are ‘talked out of’ their humanity” (“Press Kit Hate Radio” 4).

Although one cannot know how an audience will react, the theater audience's reaction to the broadcast will be different from that of the historical audience given a certain distance imposed between the theater audience and the broadcast due to the spectator's nationality and passage of time. First, the 1994 broadcast content drew its impact from longstanding efforts to denigrate the Tutsi population within an "ethnically"-charged society. The play's Western spectators are generally outsiders regarding this situation. They weren't conditioned to believe the views expressed by the broadcasters, so it is unlikely that they would respond in the same manner.

In 1994, the RTLM broadcast possessed a performative power in that its messages contributed to the destructive actions of genocide. Its power no longer exists since the station no longer exists. Further, the disastrous impact of the events explained by testimony in the first portion of the play prepares spectators to be wary of the broadcast content. While the original broadcast fanned the flames of genocide in 1994, we will see that the play's present-day re-creation enables spectators to experience its unsettling impact through hyperrealism.

In this chapter, I will examine Rau's employment of hyperrealistic elements within a documentary theater framework to meet his goal. We will see that this approach may help to maintain audience attention and promote apprehension to enable reflection upon the action with the emphasis on Jakobson's phatic and referential functions. At the same time, the use of hyperrealism in the simulation of the RTLM program reminds spectators that the play's representation is not the original broadcast, but instead a reconfiguration of that reality. The technique thus permits a truthful representation while aiming to prevent pathos and trivialization of the events and ensuring that it does not

prompt the same effects as the original. The combination of hyperrealistic RTLM simulation and interviews and testimony regarding the genocide (projected on screens before and after the broadcast) reveals the RTLM's detrimental impact, the resultant "unspeakable" harm of genocide.

COMMUNICATING TRUTHFULNESS THROUGH A DOCUMENTARY FRAMEWORK

Swiss-born dramatist Milo Rau studied in Paris, Zurich, and Berlin before founding the International Institute of Political Murder (IIPM) in 2007 ("Press Kit Milo Rau english" 3). Each play produced by the IIPM, including *Hate Radio*, results from extensive research. Joost Ramaer has characterized Rau's works by noting that "[t]hey are all ambitious, multimedia and multipartner undertakings, based on exhaustive research, often staged in historically and politically charged places, and the actors always bring personal ties to the subject matter".

Several individuals have noted the echoes to documentary theater within Rau's works, including *Hate Radio*. The term "documentary theater" is in itself problematic, as various definitions exist. For example, some consider a play an example of documentary theater when it simply possesses a basis in research while others may categorize works as such when the entire piece is composed solely of verbatim quoting from sources.

Despite such variance, Carol Martin provides an inclusive description of the genre: "In the interest of differentiating documentary theatre from other forms of theatre, especially historical fiction, it is useful to understand it as created from a specific body of archived material: interviews, documents, hearings, records, video, film, photographs,

etc.” (9). Gary Fisher Dawson, in his consideration of documentary theater, even suggests that incorporation of findings from even one primary source (i.e. an interview) within the piece is enough to classify it within the genre (18). *Hate Radio* meets these criteria.

In order to create the piece, Rau completed extensive research for more than two years, including time spent on-site in Rwanda (“Contemporary Literature Series”). He consulted sources such as archived transcripts of RTLM broadcasts and conducted numerous interviews with survivors, génocidaires, Valérie Berimiki, and specialists in domains such as media theory and linguistics (“Press Kit Hate Radio” 6-7). Rau utilized these primary resources in an attempt to re-create a truthful sense of the nature of the programming. Further, the original cast included survivors of the 1994 genocide, with notable examples including those playing the roles of the broadcasters Habimana and Bemeriki (“Press Kit Hate Radio” 10-11). Although spectators may be unaware of this fact, those actors who witnessed the role and content of RTLM broadcasting may draw from their experiences to bring an especially profound dimension of authenticity to the piece.

Significance of Documentary Theater and “Truthfulness”

The association with documentary theater bears mentioning as the hyperrealistic elements that will be examined exist within the documentary framework. In addition, and most importantly, it is pertinent in terms of spectator apprehension of the disaster. In his study on documentary theater, Gary Fisher Dawson suggests the necessity of “mental awakeness” among spectators who must process a great deal of information during documentary plays (xii). Further, the lack of answers generally offered by plays of the

genre tends to trigger reflection among spectators (Dawson xii). The sense of authenticity imbued by this framework thus employs the phatic function as it maintains the Jakobsonian contact between the performance, actors, and spectators that has previously been noted as important when attempting to communicate a disaster. Indeed, within the press kit for *Hate Radio*, the desired impact of the documentary aspect is highlighted as it is noted that “the piece has been made as authentic as possible, but its documentary quality also renders the stage performance more intense” (“Press Kit Hate Radio” 8).

Although Rau draws largely from transcripts such as the nearly word-for-word appearance of news from the front and international news stories from the July 3, 1994 broadcast, the entire play is not verbatim. However, that is not to say that the simulation lacks truth. Indeed, as noted in the press kit, “In its artistic re-enactments, the IIPM pays utmost attention to factual accuracy” (“Press Kit Hate Radio” 5). Rau further elucidates his aim when he explains “there is always a fabrication of fiction in my work, but I am in search of a certain truth, a truth of human memory as opposed to a scientific truth” (“il y a toujours une véritable fabrication de fiction dans mon travail, mais je suis à la recherche d’une certaine vérité, la vérité de la mémoire humaine, par opposition à la vérité scientifique”) (Couture). For instance, he continues by explaining the manner by which he “modernized” the re-enacted dialogue broadcast by RTLM although the content is based upon extensive study of the transcripts and testimony.

In spite of the marginal invention used by Rau during the simulation, it nonetheless maintains an air of authenticity and is driven by fact. In his continued quest for truthfulness, Rau has often profited from the use of re-enactment, a technique Ramaer even terms “a Rau specialty”. As is common in documentary theater, in lieu of analysis

of events represented, he focuses instead upon their presentation which renders it “possible for people to experience something very remote from their own lives in a fashion that is highly complex, although it appears quite naïve, and reveals directly how we are totally involved in events, making it clear history is not a thing of the past” (qtd. in “Contemporary Literature Series”).

HATE RADIO PART I: INVESTIGATORY FRAMEWORK

For this study, examination of the play will be tied to its three divisions: 1) the opening investigation and contextualization through testimony, 2) the RTLM broadcast, and 3) testimonial closure. Such an analysis not only follows the progression of the piece itself, but also permits the elucidation of the interaction of these three divisions, as the first and third become bookends for the second. In so doing, it allows a clear identification and understanding of the functions of the documentary-based and hyperrealistic attempts at representation of the disaster.

The play opens with the use of boards that provide contextual basis for the proceeding elements and serve to establish a veracious air from the onset of the piece. Rau employs Jakobson’s referential function, with its focus on the context, by presenting factual evidence regarding the extent of the genocide and the integral role played by the radio as well as RTLM’s hosts. The technological capability of the boards enables the appearance of historical information in typed form on the screen that then fades out and is replaced by additional facts. Unlike a novel whose print is necessarily immobile on the page, this technique made possible through theatrical representation provides additional

support of the phatic function as the movement of typed content may command spectator attention and necessitates focus so that it may be grasped.

The presentation of information begins with the explanation of events on April 6, 1994, the day that marks the beginning of the genocidal killings, as well as the duration of the genocide and the number murdered. It continues with notation of RTLM's tie to the genocide and identification of three key RTLM hosts (Habimana, Bemeriki, and Ruggiu), those individuals whose representations will subsequently appear on stage. The series of facts concludes with a board that alludes to elements of the *mise-en-scène* that will follow: "On 23 October 2000 the 'International Criminal Tribunal of Rwanda' in Arusha, Tanzania opened proceedings against RTLM. It was the first and, to-date, only trial of its kind" (1).¹¹

After spectators learn of these historical details, individuals begin materializing on the boards via video projection to discuss RTLM. The content of their explanations stems from the multitude of interviews conducted by Rau during his research (Press Kit Hate Radio" 8). The video projections of the actor playing radio host Georges Ruggiu and an investigator are the first to appear and suggest examination of the witness during the trial noted above. The latter begins to interrogate Ruggiu over his significant involvement with RTLM and the genocide. After several exchanges, the two fade and are replaced by a similar interview with host Valérie Bemeriki. The question and answer format supports the phatic function as it may draw spectators (who do not know what the answers will be) into the situation.

¹¹ While the play is only published in German, I received an English manuscript from actor Diogène (Atome) Ntarindwa. This study is based off of the English manuscript.

The materialization of these individuals on the boards also signals the phatic function provided by the visual dimension of theater that a novel cannot offer. Instead of facing one another, the former radio hosts and the investigator all stare directly at the audience to make the spectators captives of the discussion. The individuals continue to fade in and out while also appearing in different places on the screens as spectators listen to the interviews that alternate between the two hosts. As the movement of typed facts regarding the genocide considered above can engage spectator attention, so too may the alteration of character placement on the screens. At the same time, the reference to the trial and subsequent interview process perpetuate the impression of facticity with the audience's acknowledgement of the historical truth that the Tribunal did indeed take place. It is further bolstered by the understanding that an interrogation, such as the one performed on stage, has as its basis the search for truth.

The discussion of the role of the radio and the visual introduction of these hosts establishes the framing for the radio broadcast that will follow and reinforces the impact and ramifications of what listeners will soon hear. The retrospective glance adopted by the radio hosts in their description of events, by which they provide acknowledgement of their own wrongdoing, can heighten the tension and prompt anticipation of the upcoming broadcast. Indeed, Valérie even describes the radio studio that spectators will soon see on stage: "The studio had a very simple setup: There were three microphones and three chairs. There was a picture of the President hanging on the wall along with a large clock. Behind a large window was the technician who took care of the music" (1).

The final portion of the introductory bookend that frames the radio broadcast continues to suggest the presentation of truth by eyewitness accounts from several

individuals. Bemeriki shares information divorced of any questions posed by an interviewer. Overlapping testimony is then provided by a journalist who speaks on the popularity and role of radio in Rwanda, the accounts of an exile and survivors, and interspersion of commentary from Bemeriki and Ruggiu.

In the previous chapter, we noted that the use of testimony has become an important contributor to the construction of memory and apprehension of the unspeakable. This importance stems not only from its ability to offer an “indispensable truth of an epoch and of an experience” (Wieviorka 132), but also because its performance seeks to establish a dialogue between the addresser and his or her addressee. The characters that share their testimony in *Hate Radio* strengthen the conception of dialogue by attempting to develop a relationship with the audience, establishing spectators as interlocutors. While a character in a novel may engage the reader by speaking to him or her directly, dialogue directed at the theater audience may be established through the character’s words as well as his or her visual presence. Indeed, as individuals in *Hate Radio* share their experiences, they face and speak directly to the audience via video projection (just as Bemeriki and Ruggiu did during their interrogations). At certain moments, these individuals even remain on the screen, continuing to blink and gaze out into the audience, while other individuals reveal their story. The sharing of testimonial accounts by these theatrically-enabled techniques therefore serves the phatic function by seeking to establish and maintain the connection between addressers and addressees. The emphasis on the visual dimension may transform spectators into captive addressees connected to addressers who, by their unrelenting gaze, refuse to relinquish the contact even when allowing others to speak. With the video

projection of testimony spoken by individuals who stand directly facing the public, this attempt at dialogue with the audience members may allow them to, in the words of one spectator, “become sympathetic witnesses of the destructive and indelible consequences” of the broadcast (JT Communication Solutions, “Can words kill?”).

The first accounts of testimony focus on the popularity of RTLM and its anti-Tutsi content prior to the downing of the President’s plane while the second half indicate radicalization of RTLM broadcasts after the crash and survivor testimony during the resultant genocidal action. The accounts primarily trigger the referential function by drawing attention to the context as witnesses provide facts regarding their situation. For instance, the journalist describes the presence of UN soldiers and RTLM broadcast content and survivors recount the major events they experienced during the genocidal acts (i.e. hiding in a school, playing dead). However, a small degree of emotion (engaging the emotive function) is also communicated by these individuals, such as the surprise communicated by the tone of “the journalist” when noting the modification of history in RTLM broadcasting: “They told stories of heroes I remembered from my youth, but the strange thing was that they made them into Hutus, even though, according to legend, they didn’t have any ethnicity. It was breathtaking” (4). Though emotion accompanies the description, the main focus is the delivery of truth regarding RTLM’s goals. In these testimonial accounts, the emotive function occupies a secondary role in which it does not overshadow the overriding referential function.

As was true for the boards and investigation portion, these accounts involve the use of exact dates while also demonstrating a familiarity and knowledge with the situational lexicon. The individuals mention key elements likely foreign to many

audiences such as the terms FPR, Arusha Peace Accords, and UNAMIR. This possession of specialized knowledge suggests the incorporation of research and parallels other testimonies given by survivors, including that of Yolande Mukagasana examined within *Rwanda 94*. It confirms the historical truth that drives the play. For the spectators, this increasingly profound aura of veracity suggests a continual maintenance of the Jakobsonian contact that concomitantly maintains the chance for spectator apprehension and belief in the truth and importance of the message.

The efforts to establish spectator involvement as well as the opening of a dialogue between actors and audience members prepares the latter for the broadcast to come. The discussion focusing upon the content, interactive nature, and the role of the RTLM radio station as “the voice of authority”, as well as the events and atrocities tied to the genocide, equip them with contextual background useful to follow the rest of the piece. The establishment of an air of authenticity and realism via the use of the boards, investigatory dialogue, and testimonials prefigure the upcoming radio broadcast content and set the scene for the hyperrealistic elements that dominate the main portion of the play.

HATE RADIO PART II: HYPERREALISM WITHIN A SIMULATED RTLM BROADCAST

The simulated diffusion of an RTLM radio broadcast that composes the second portion of the play serves as a sort of analepsis, a flashback. The program provides news updates on genocidal fighting, music, calls from listeners, national and international

news, and a history quiz. As we will see, these subjects are intertwined with propaganda and calls for the elimination of the Tutsi.

The broadcast perpetuates the impression of truth since the results of the event are already known, while its placement within the previously discussed veracity-driven framework extends an air of facticity and realism to the truth-based broadcast. Given the nature of the broadcast, its re-creation is not simply bound within the confines of realism, but instead expands to a hyperrealistic dimension that constitutes an effort at more effective overall representation of the disaster and denotes a difference between the original broadcast and the play to ensure it will not generate the same harm. The approach promotes apprehension of the content of the broadcast itself and also enhances the impact of the testimony and interviews that serve to frame it.

Defining Hyperrealism

An understanding of hyperrealism differs across disciplines and among theorists. For this study, the application of hyperrealism will be based upon the writings of two of its most notable theorists, Umberto Eco and Jean Baudrillard. It is thus important to first consider their thoughts upon the subject in order to arrive at an understanding of the way by which it will be defined and applied to *Hate Radio*.

Within *Travels in Hyperreality*, Umberto Eco discusses his travels throughout the United States in order to explore situations that demonstrate that “the American imagination demands the real thing and, to attain it, must fabricate the absolute fake” (8). Locations such as wax museums, ghost towns, and Disneyland offer visitors experiences that collapse distinctions between the real and the representation of the real. For instance,

Eco identifies a hyperrealistic experience while reflecting upon the western town within Knott's Berry Farm in Los Angeles. While the buildings within the park usher in realism, it becomes hyperreal as employees don period-specific garb and the "customer finds himself participating in the fantasy", namely via purchasing power (42). Further, reality is blurred as the park's inaccessible areas resembling 19th century shops suggest the possibility of entry and those initially perceived as inaccessible facades, such as the general store, exist as souvenir shops. In fact, within this hyperreal experience, the author recounts overhearing another visitor who inquires whether children within the schoolhouse are visitors or "fake" (42).

Taking the re-creation of the Oval Office within the Lyndon B. Johnson Library (constructed of the same materials as the original, but "with everything obviously more polished, shinier, protected against deterioration") as an example (7), Eco explains the shattering of the distinction between real and representation in his consideration of hyperrealism:

To speak of things that one wants to connote as real, these things must seem real.

The "completely real" becomes identified with the "completely fake." Absolute unreality is offered as real presence. The aim of the reconstructed Oval Office is to supply a "sign" that will then be forgotten as such: The sign aims to be the thing, to abolish the distinction of the reference, the mechanism of replacement.

Not the image of the thing, but its plaster cast. (7)

Re-creation can thus serve as hyperrealism that stands in for the real. Nonetheless, this replacement may extend beyond the real.

The fact that the re-creation of the Oval Office surpasses the actual Oval Office by existing as an entity that is “more polished, shinier, protected against deterioration” demonstrates that the hyperreal fake may come to be preferred over the real. As he continues descriptions of his hyperrealistic findings, Eco offers the example of animatronic animal use at Disneyland. Given their “perfection” as representation, the animatronics may be more satisfying for viewers as compared to live animals that do not always behave ideally. While the real animals may not always be in plain view of spectators, the animatronics can be displayed at the best angle in the best location to provide the ideal experience for visitors (44).

The merging of the real and the representation of the real also dominates Jean Baudrillard’s consideration of hyperrealism. Within *Simulacra and Simulation*, he considers the replacement of the real by simulacra and simulations. While both terms apply to the hyperreal, the former focuses upon the image itself, and the latter concerns the act of imitation. This simulation is more than mere representation “in terms of the accuracy and power of its imitation”, and instead results in the demolition of the original referent (Sandoz). Baudrillard positions our postmodern world as one in which the difference between real and representation cannot be separated. Michael Greaney explains this situation:

For Baudrillard, ‘reality’ in the age of mechanical, electronic and digital reproduction has somehow been absorbed by its own hi-tech self-representations. Saturation media coverage of ‘current affairs’, fly-on-the-wall documentaries, pollsters’ guides to the fluctuations of ‘public opinion’, museums stocked with

flawless replicas – in each case the gap between original and copy, reality and representation, dissolves before your eyes. (140-141)

This change results in a reality in which “what counts as ‘real’ is never more than a ‘simulacral’ by-product of endless copies, fakes, replicas and media illusions” (Greaney 141).

For Baudrillard, the simulation replaces the real, resulting in the presence of hyperrealism in our everyday lives. One such example can be found in the entertainment industry, namely in the realm of reality television. As Jason Latouche explains, such programming “deals with the issue of the real vs. the hyperreal with its construction of authentically hyperreal ‘reality.’ Indeed, the rise of reality television could serve as one marker of the increasing comfort with and appeal of hyperreality among the public” (3). This consideration gestures toward its pervasive presence in our lives.

Despite differences, both Eco and Baudrillard view hyperrealism as “a situation in which the conventional categories of the real and fake have lost their coherence, resulting in a viral interfusion of artifice into the cellular structure of reality, and of reality into that of artifice” (Laist 39). It is within this amalgamation of the original and invention that *Hate Radio* arrives at a representation that results in an improvement of the real in terms of an enhancement of communicative efforts. I will apply their views of hyperrealism as they relate to the elements of the play that stand in for the real to discern their influence on representation of the disaster. We will see that the simulation presents a hyperreal experience by providing of certain “signs” that did not all actually exist, but allow the simulation to surpass the real. I do not contend that the content of the play adheres to every aspect of hyperreality described by these individuals. Rather, elements will be

viewed as hyperrealistic when they surpass the “real”, original experience or object which they represent.

While hyperrealism is often employed by theorists as a negative phenomenon, within this play its use functions in a positive manner. Indeed, the use of the hyperreal adds a new dimension to the efforts of the representation of the disastrous events as it simultaneously serves to intensify the documentary aspect in an effort to provide spectators with a better sense of the events and truthfully represent the original without confusing one for the other. Such a choice facilitates the spectators’ apprehension of the mentality of RTLM hosts and thus the role of the radio as a catalyst of genocide. As a result, it also supports the first and third sections of the play which serve as bookends which then reciprocally support the broadcast portion. The following sections will consider hyperrealistic elements at the level of the visual and situational *mise-en-scène*, followed by those regarding the content of the simulated broadcast.

Hyperrealistic Visual and Situational *Mise-en-scène*

Communication via Headphones

The hyperrealistic dimension is enacted even before the commencement of the piece. Indeed, the distribution of headsets to spectators upon their entry into the theater suggests the forthcoming heightened interaction between spectators and the sonorous content. Spectators wear these headphones throughout the performance, resulting in a hyperrealistic experience.

The use of headphones within theatrical performances is not completely foreign as shown by the existence of what Caroline Wake terms “audio cued performance”.

Under this genre, Wake enumerates “headphone verbatim theatre”, for which actors wear headphones through which they hear and subsequently repeat the recorded script as closely as possible. She also notes other theatrical experiences wherein only spectators (and not the actors) wear headphones, as well as those where both spectators and actors wear headphones (84).

Within *Hate Radio*, both broadcasters and spectators wear headphones. Therefore, it belongs within the third category. Although the play differs from those in that category referenced by Wake (for which performative space is not restricted to a building, but instead expands as spectators, each of whom wears a Walkman, move throughout a city space as the play progresses) (Balme 121), the use of headphones in both establishes the involvement of the spectators.

In his seminal essay, “The Walkman Effect”, Shuhei Hosokawa discusses the role of the Walkman and the ways by which an individual listening to a Walkman interacts with those around himself or herself. The separation that arises between the two revolves around secrecy made inherent by the use of the headphones. Indeed, the Walkman wearer “seems to cut the auditory contact with the outer world where he really lives” (167). Further, he or she is seen to possess a secret to which those without headphones have no access (118). In the play, the use of headphones does not separate broadcasters from spectators, but instead ties them to one another in a dialogic relationship. This dynamic is of importance as it enables the phatic function. As spectators and actors both share in the information, the “contact” is established between them.

While the transmission of sound through headphones establishes a realistic context, the incorporation of headphones builds upon the usual reality of radio broadcast

to initiate a hyperreal scenario. Their use provides an improvement upon the original, real experience of listening to the radio broadcast on a household radio during which the radio audience may deal with auxiliary noise: the voices of other individuals that cover the broadcast, sound issuing from environmental factors, signal interference, etc. Indeed, the use of headphones minimizes the possibility or intensity of distraction by making outside noise less apparent.

The use and importance of headphones is suggested by the contention made by Kari Kallinen and Niklas Ravaja (2007) during their study on the differences in impact when listening to news programming via computer speakers and while wearing headphones. The two discuss the manner by which wearing headphones serves to diminish the effect of outside noise, leading them to contend that:

. . . conditions that isolate the subjects from the outside world more efficiently should increase the feeling of involvement, immersion, and presence (see Witmer & Singer, 1998). A more involving and immersive experience may lead to higher attention and arousal and a more positive experience of the media object. (305)

The implications of minimized outside noise thus build upon the usual (original) dialogic relationship. Indeed, this hyperrealistic use of headphones engages the phatic function by permitting higher levels of attention to and involvement with the content that results in increased potential for spectator apprehension. At the same time, since headphones also indicate deviation from the original experience, they remind spectators that the broadcast is a simulation.

The reduction of distractions and resultant increased attention to the spoken broadcast can also develop more of a one-on-one relationship between the spectator and

the characters. Although we have noted that a theatrical performance generally differs from the novel in that the former tends to be communal and the latter a solitary activity, with the use of headphones, the spectator's experience of *Hate Radio* becomes solitary as well. Nevertheless, as we will see when considering the glass walls of the reproduced studio in the next section, the visual and sonorous dimensions unique to theatrical representation allow the play to present the same message in a different manner. This hyperrealistically enhanced relationship between addressers and addressees may increase the impact of the broadcast as it serves the phatic function by maintaining the Jakobsonian contact so vital to communicative attempts.

Hyperrealism via the Reconstructed Studio

Another hyperrealistic element of *mise-en-scène* involves the re-creation of the RTLM studio. The importance of the studio will be examined in terms of its qualities and the opportunities it provides for representation through the broadcast. Both of these considerations heighten the sense of authenticity and concomitantly increase the chances of effective communication through the representation.

Studio Duplication

After the accounts of events from the survivors and exile within the play's opening section, the screens are raised to reveal a re-creation of the RTLM studio. Historical fidelity played an important role in its re-construction. Indeed, it is noted in the press kit that "As emphasis has been on historical accuracy with regards to the reconstruction of the radio studio and the hosts' equipment, the piece has been made as

authentic as possible” (“Press Kit Hate Radio” 8). Encased within the glass walls, this studio also matches the aforementioned description given by Bemmerli during her interrogation at the start of the play. Spectators note three chairs and microphones, a picture of the President, and the presence of the technician through the window. The match between the description and what is seen on stage implies a continued focus on veracity throughout the upcoming actions on stage.

Performances of *Hate Radio* use glass to enclose the reconstructed RTLTM studio in which the radio hosts re-enact the broadcast. The installation serves multiple purposes. It functions as a projection screen during the opening and closing testimonial portions of the piece. Rau explains that the glass also works to “render the performance space simultaneously opened to and closed from the audience’s space. In turn, this will also highlight the exhibition character of HATE RADIO” (“Press Kit Hate Radio” 8, emphasis in original). The use of glass encasement within the veracity-driven context of the play further intensifies the sense of authenticity and truth espoused by the piece. This intensification is accomplished by the creation of a “fly on the wall” dynamic, the “exhibition character” that also distances spectators from the broadcast to suggest its distinction from the “real”. While the play’s lack of visual acknowledgement between broadcasters and audience represents a marker of realism (since a radio audience does not generally watch a broadcast), the walls also contribute to the addition of hyperrealism as the spectator’s ability to view the studio during the play’s performance allows the experience to surpass the original.

The Performative Dimension

The reconstructed studio also contributes to hyperrealism by showcasing the performative dimension of the RTLM broadcast. Since the historic RTLM radio broadcast was composed solely of the sonorous component, the addition of visual language through theatrical representation allows the simulation to differentiate itself from and surpass the “real” radio broadcast. In so doing, this theatrical performance draws upon hyperrealism that can permit more effective communication to the spectators.

The addition of visual language within the glass walls of the studio duplication provides deeper grasp of the spoken content. This benefit for representation is made evident, for instance, by Bemmeri while she claims the occurrence of atrocious actions performed by the Tutsi population such as raping children and viciously removing and killing fetuses in front of the mothers. At this moment, the rise in tone and speed of her remarks culminate in the call to genocide, as she declares that, “The atrocities of the cockroaches can only be undone by their complete annihilation, by killing them all, by their absolute destruction” (15) and accompanying gestures that would be unseen without the hyperreal visual dimension. Indeed, as Valérie reaches such a state of distress, she is seen to take off and toss her headphones down onto the table in front of her before leaning back in her chair as though overcome. The blending of visual and spoken language highlights her emotion and demonstrates the depth of the radio host’s belief in the propaganda she helps disseminate.

We also see this enhancement of representation in more general situations. For instance, in addition to the broadcasters’ declarations of their desire to smoke, spectators view the radio hosts in the process of smoking and drinking. The combination of the broadcasters’ occasional dancing and movement throughout the studio, coupled with

popular music and laughter, depict a disquieting, casual air in which spectators hear destructive, hateful comments regarding the Tutsi such as “Yes, they are a depraved race. These people who need to be exterminated. There is no other way than destroying them and throwing them in the rivers. Let the fish govern them!” (19). At another moment, the host reads the names of “cursed cockroach rebels” killed while fighting (22). Lighthearted comments such as “bye bye Steve” after an individual’s name and “Ha! The list goes on and on” indicate the pleasure he takes in their death (22).

This veracious juxtaposition of levity and hate, often expressed through visual and spoken language, is felt as especially striking and disturbing by spectators. It is an aspect of the programming upon which Milo Rau has reflected and strove to depict within the play:

At RTL, the propaganda was presented in an, if I can say, innovative manner. It did not borrow from the classic tone of Nazi or Stalinist propaganda. The choice of words was without equal, it was at certain moments very explicit, but it was mixed with laughter, a joyful tone, jokes, festive music. It was an enjoyable, young, cool racism. (Couture)

(À la RTL, la propagande se déroulait d’une façon, si je puis dire, innovante. Elle n’a pas emprunté le ton classique de la propagande nazie ou staliniste. Le choix des mots était sans équivoque, c’était par moments très explicite, mais c’était mélangé avec le rire, le ton joyeux, les blagues, la musique festive. C’était un racisme sympa, jeune, cool.)

Although it may seem shocking to outsiders, the effectiveness of this method of dissemination is evidenced by the genocidal results of its broadcast. Therefore, it is a

significant element of the program whose presence proves integral to demonstrate the influence of RTLM.

These visual cues made possible in theatrical representation thus assist in intensifying the role of the aforementioned pro-Hutu ideology proliferated by the radio station, an ideology of which Rau seeks to inform audiences. Consequently, the hyperrealistic duplication functions as an aid to the apprehension and representation of the disaster. Indeed, one of the common and pressing questions posed during and after genocide is the question “Why?” This query is expressed as a driving force for the undertaking of the play *Rwanda 94*, as well as *Hate Radio* for which the IIPM seeks to locate “the origins of the unimaginable Rwandan genocide and explore the conditions of its emergence” (“Lectures: Hate Radio”). In spite of the difficulty associated with comprehending the machinations of the genocide against the Tutsi, the studio assists in the elucidation of the issue. It permits spectators to obtain a better sense of the level of hate and intense belief in the anti-Tutsi/pro-Hutu ideology alongside the manner by which it was disseminated throughout the country to lead to participation in the acts of genocide.

Hyperrealism at the level of radio broadcast

In addition to the visual component of the studio reproduction and use of headphones to construct a hyperrealistic experience that attempts to assist spectators in gaining a closer understanding of the situation, the content of the radio broadcast itself also carries with it hyperrealistic implications. While considering the integration of hyperrealism in television, Jason Latouche identifies specific techniques used:

From its earliest beginnings, television producers have attempted to foster these feelings of intimacy by trading on elements of hyperreality. Directors have used camera production techniques to convince viewers of the verisimilitude of their creations. Television plotlines have been sowed with elements of real political and social issues to make them seem relevant and thus more real. (1)

Although indicators of realism, Latouche's considerations highlight the manner by which meaningful elements of realism foster intimacy between spectators and content and lead to hyperrealistic experiences. The use of language and the passage of time, as well as the current events incorporated into the radio broadcast, establish additional elements of realism that lead to the hyperreal interaction.

One aspect of "verisimilitude" that leads to hyperrealism appears at the level of language. Historic RTLM broadcasts included a mix of French and Kinyarwanda. The extended use of a foreign language proves difficult in a novel, but is managed in the theatrical production. Although the play toured many countries throughout the world, each performance is given in a mixture of French and Kinyarwanda with translation in the local language(s) appearing in subtitles (serving the phatic function by maintaining the contact despite the use of foreign language). Theatergoer Anita Rákóczy notes that this decision "got much critical feedback during [the] Theatertreffen Festival, with some critics claiming that the language barrier made the piece less graspable for the audience". The use of these languages reflects the norm in RTLM programming and thus develops realism, contributing an air of authenticity felt by the spectators regardless of their origins and/or ability to understand the languages. Further, it meets the goal of the creation of aforementioned "truthfulness" that drives Rau's work.

In addition, spectators find that the broadcast content is “sowed with elements of real political and social issues”. These elements pertain not only to those that sparked genocide that are acknowledged via the retrospective view on which the play is built, but also by the incorporation of international current events at the time of the broadcast. For instance, near the end of the broadcast, listeners learn of Yasser Arafat’s visit to Gaza, fighting in Yemen, a plane crash in the United States, and the result of sporting events including specific World Cup matches and the Tour de France, stories which match portions of the July 3, 1994 broadcast. Even if spectators cannot associate the events with the specific time period depicted, their incorporation creates historical legitimacy since the accumulation of events (that seem as though they are real, that they could have taken place) make the broadcast seem more real. In addition to the previously discussed elements of *mise-en-scène*, Rau deepens the realistic feeling in the play on which he may construct new levels of hyperrealism through interaction.

Hyperrealistic Interaction

While Latouche examines a new form of television hyperrealism he references the important role of involvement between the actors and audience by use of the internet interface “in which viewers do not just consume hyperreality, but rather they actively work to fashion it” (4). Indeed, for the television program he considers, the real-life existence of a webpage mentioned regularly in the television program allows viewers to both interact with and find videos from the television program. This concept of interaction was also mentioned above by hyperrealistic theorist Umberto Eco in his description of Knott’s Berry Farm. Although visitors know that they have not stepped

back in time, the believable scenario established through the realistic buildings, period-specific garb of workers, visitors' chance to participate in the illusion, and the blurring of a division between where this interaction can and cannot take place initiates a hyperrealistic scenario. While not a necessary criterion for hyperrealism, its presence in works such as *Hate Radio* can contribute to the hyperreal aesthetic.

The real RTLM programming contained an interactive component. Although viewing the piece is less interactive and does not extend beyond the theater (unlike the internet interface in Latouche's example), a certain hyperrealistic interaction is nonetheless intimated in *Hate Radio*. However, just as elements of the play suggest the possibility that the audience may participate in the illusion, other factors also remind spectators of the impossibility of doing so. This suggestion-impossibility dynamic in regards to spectator interaction highlights the function of hyperrealism. The presence of elements that suggest potential for interaction reflect an important characteristic found in the original broadcast (producing an authenticity) and help to maintain a connection between the radio hosts and listeners. However, although audience participation is intimated, it is clear that spectators cannot actually interact with the content. This realization creates the distinction between the real RTLM content and the play's simulation to prevent creation of the same harm done. In order to examine the impact, we will consider the passage of broadcast time, the use of inclusive subject pronouns and the listeners' ability to call in to the program. We will see that the spectators' acknowledgement of the proposal of listener interaction and their inability to participate in these three circumstances can trigger reflection of the impact of RTLM interaction on the historical radio audience, maintaining the contact (initiating the phatic function).

The suggestion of interaction and intimacy is contextualized within the broadcast time frame. As occurs with any radio station, the re-created broadcast begins by time and station identification: “You’re listening to Radio-Télévision Libre des Mille Collines. We’re broadcasting from Kigali, it’s 9 O’clock in our studios” (8). This line serves as transition from the initial testimony-based portion of the play, while also providing contextualization for the broadcast. As the piece continues, broadcasters continue to note the passage of time. Indeed, listeners hear phrases such as “It is now 9:15 in Kigali” (12), “Dear listeners, it is now 9:25 in Kigali” (14), and “It is 9:35 and I’ll hand over the mic to Valérie for the history quiz” (17). The same usage is found throughout RTLM transcripts, such as that of April 7, 1994. Within that broadcast, for example, listeners hear “It is now 10:21 here in Kigali” (“RTLM Transcripts: 7 April 1994 (French)” 5) (“Il est maintenant 10 heures et vingt et une minutes ici à Kigali”) and “10:40 in our studios” (“RTLM Transcripts: 7 April 1994 (French)” 8) (“10 heures 40 minutes dans nos studios”). The incorporation of the notation of time therefore reflects Rau’s efforts to imbue his play with authenticity.

References to the passage of time confer an air of reality to the reconstructed broadcast. The number of minutes of performance from one notation of time to the next seems to mirror the passage of time noted in the script. That is to say that it takes the actors around fifteen minutes to perform their lines between the instance in which they mention that it is 9:00 and when they state that it is 9:15. Consequently, it may feel as though the broadcast is occurring live so that spectators could therefore interact with the content. Nevertheless, an aspect of the notation of time reminds spectators that it is not a

real broadcast: the exact hour noted in the broadcast time does not coincide with the time of the performance.

The use of inclusive subject pronouns constitutes another element that could foster hyperrealistic interaction. It is seen in both the original RTLM transcripts and the play itself and serves the same function in both cases. The pronunciation of these inclusive terms in theater generates greater impact than would occur with its silent reading. In so doing they seek to establish a dialogue not only with their imagined radio listeners, but also with the theater audience by extension.

The prevalence of this confirmation of dialogue between hosts and their audience is initiated from the very outset of the play's broadcast. Within the opening lines, spectators hear their inclusion into the conversation: "Yes indeed, you're listening to Radio RTLM, Radio Sympa, the voice of the people, the radio that speaks the truth, the whole truth and even divulges a few secrets here and there. To all our listeners: Courage!" (8). Kantano's subsequent introduction repeats and thus emphasizes this dialogue: "Yes, Radio RTLM speaks to you!", soon followed by "Because this station belongs to all Rwandans and all foreigners who have purchased shares in RTLM, in short, this station belongs to everyone" (8).

Coupled with addresses such as "Dear listeners" (10, 17), the use of the conative function with the imperative, seen in commands such as "Yes, watch them and drive them out!" (11), builds this intimacy between the hosts and their audience while also suggesting possible interaction on the part of the latter. Its impact is additionally heightened by the occasional use of the pronoun "we" and possessive adjectives as seen in phraseology such as, "They have murdered our children, killed our president and have

even killed our babies in Kigali, in Butare, in Byumba, in Kibungo, everywhere” (11). Since spectators also listen to the re-created broadcast, they experience the hosts’ direct address to listeners that suggests involvement and may consequently serve the phatic function for the play’s audience. However the need to read subtitles (to translate the hosts’ use of French and Kinyarwanda), and the exhibitionist quality generated by their hyperrealistic observation of the broadcast from beyond the glass walls, remind them that they are not part of the broadcast. It allows them to consider how the repeated suggestions of inclusivity contributed to the station’s success in inciting acts of genocide by its generation of group mentality.

The dialogic interaction is further heightened through the radio listeners’ suggested ability to call in and speak with the hosts, an important interactive aspect of the authentic broadcasts. At various moments in the play’s re-creation, the hosts receive calls from listeners who call to report where Tutsi individuals may be hiding, express their support for the hosts’ assistance in efforts to eliminate the Tutsi, and request that they play a particular song. When listeners call in, their voice is slightly muffled to simulate the real-life experience and distinguish the caller from the radio host.

The fact that the radio hosts remain visible on stage while the individuals who call in are never seen by hosts or spectators may suggest that spectators could also phone in. Still, other factors confirm that they cannot do so. In terms of broadcast content, listeners are never provided with a phone number to call. Further, the theater audience’s placement beyond the glass walls serves again as a reminder of their exclusion from the program’s content. The division permits spectators to consider the radio’s impact on genocide via this interactive approach. Indeed, the calls demonstrate widespread support for the radical

ideas diffused by the hosts and the relationship between hosts and listeners (fostered by the opportunity for interaction) through which killing was supposedly legitimized, encouraged, and performed.

In addition to hyperrealism established via simulated involvement, hyperrealism is also created through the re-creation of the radio transcripts in terms of subject matter. As previously noted, Milo Rau completed extensive research in order to create *Hate Radio*, examining radio transcripts as well as speaking with broadcasters and listeners. It is therefore no surprise to find manifold echoes from the original radio broadcasts. A consideration of elements which compose the original broadcasts and those found in the play itself will aid in understanding the realistic portrayal of the programming as well as the ways in which it reaches the level of hyperreality in order to represent the unspeakable.

RTL M Transcripts

Certain integral elements of the RTL M broadcasts were first elucidated in the introductory portion of the play by the survivors and exile. These core elements include: evocation of history, the use of scare tactics to promote defense killing, dehumanization to promote and facilitate killing, and radio programming as a tool to not only call and encourage individuals to murder, but also as a means to “zero in” on the location of those deemed targets to expedite their execution. In the context of the hosts’ radio broadcast, these elements trigger the conative function since each is employed to encourage listeners to eliminate the Tutsi population. When one considers Rau’s re-creation, they serve a

referential function given the focus on the context, presenting spectators with a factual representation of the original broadcasts to grasp the radio's impact on the genocide.

These components appear not only in the play, but also within post-genocide works and testimonials, demonstrating their importance as subjects. Thus, it is no surprise that they also serve as pillars of veracious representation within the piece itself. An examination of the ways that these topics parallel RTLM transcripts will permit a subsequent discussion on the manner by which they also surpass the original to become hyperrealistic within *Hate Radio*.

Evocation of History

In an attempt to justify their efforts against the Tutsis, one commonly used tactic in the RTLM's radio programming involved the evocation and manipulation of past events during which the broadcasters identify a rationale for uniting against the Tutsi population. For example, during a history discussion on colonial times, a journalist discusses education, claiming that the:

superiority complex of the Batutsis has existed for a long time. Thus schools were created including . . . the school of the preferred of Nyanza at Nyabisindu not for everyone, especially not for the Hutus who were enslaved for centuries . . . and did not have access to that . . . to that school whose students, according to the feudal-colonial legend, were born to govern. Thus, the Tutsis students [were] considered the most intelligent. ("RTLM Transcripts: 22 April 1994 (English)" 12)

(complexe de superiorité des Batutsis date de très longtemps. Ainsi, les écoles ont été créés dont . . . l'école des préférés de Nyanza à Nyabisindu non pa[s] pour tout le monde, encore moins pour les Hutus qui étaient asservis depuis les siècles...et n'avaient accès à cet...à cette école que ceux-là qui, selon la légende féodo-coloniale, n'étaient nés que pour gouverner. Donc, les enfants Tutsis [étaient] considérés comme les plus intelligents.)

He then continues by explaining the lasting existence of such a “superiority complex” among the Tutsis. These moments served to denigrate those that they desired to make an enemy.

The evocation of history aims to justify the call to genocide, so it is no surprise that it also finds its reflection within the play itself. The broadcasters within the play acknowledge the frequency with which they speak of the history of Rwanda at the onset of a “history quiz”. Bemeriki outlines the version of history broadcast by the station in an effort to encourage killing. She notes that, “At the start when they were only called Tutsis, they invaded Rwanda and ousted our Hutu kings, the sons of Sebahizi, and set up the feudal system”, but that the Hutu majority resisted so that the king and Tutsis went into exile where a rebel army was formed (18). This use of history unifies the Hutus and identifies them as victims of unjust actions taken by the Tutsis. However, Bemeriki’s use of history has not yet come to an end as she is equipped with additional fodder to characterize the Tutsi population negatively.

She continues by claiming that the rebel Tutsi army “perfected the art of killing and mounted attacks against us again and again, 1961, 63, 65, 68 – and most recently 1990 – because the Tutsis want to seize power for themselves” (18). She contends that

although the Hutu fought back, the Tutsis “remained dissatisfied” and killed the president. Therefore, “It was they who provoked the ethnic conflict (even if they like to say that the Europeans were responsible), it was they who could never forget that they were ‘a superior race’, who could never accept that Rwanda belongs to the Rwandans and not to a small clique of cockroaches” (18). The sowing of the idea that the Hutu have been wronged alongside the vilification of the Tutsi (by their aggression and the idea of superiority also expressed in the previously noted RTLM transcripts) serves as a motivator for killing while concomitantly justifying those actions.

Scare Tactics and Call for Self-Defense

RTLM also found other efforts to incite the acts of genocide, including the professed need for self-defense against a Tutsi population that was allegedly prepared to attack Hutus. For example, on March 23, 1994, after being told that Tutsis enjoyed killing Hutus, RTLM broadcasters warned listeners: “Up to today, the Tutsis retain their thirst for blood. In fact, they are accustomed to spilling blood and continue to do so. Today, if they want to stage a coup d’état, it is that they still want to spill blood, but this time on a large scale” (“RTLM Transcripts: 23 March 1994 (French)” 5-6) (“Jusqu’aujourd’hui, les Tutsis restent sur leur soif de sang. En effet, ils sont habitués à verser le sang et ils continuent à le faire. Aujourd’hui, s’ils veulent faire un coup d’Etat c’est qu’ils veulent encore verser du sang, mais cette fois-ci à grande échelle”). Additional attempts made to cultivate fear of a Tutsi attack on the Hutu population include instances in which pro-Hutu RTLM broadcasters referred to the Tutsi as those “who will exterminate us” (“RTLM Transcripts: 6 April 1994 (English)” 1) and their explanation during the July 3,

1994 broadcast that “A security zone is due to be set up in Butare and Gikongoro for the purpose, it is said, of providing a safe haven for the Hutus fleeing Tutsi terrorists, madmen who are threatening to massacre them” (“RTLM Transcripts: 3 July 1994 I (English)” 3). The attempt to instill fear within the hearts of listeners in each of these examples encourages the need for action in self-defense.

Within the play itself, viewers find no dearth of attempted motivation for genocide through efforts to scare listeners. For instance, spectators hear phrases such as, “But if we’re not quick, they will eradicate us first” (21), “But some of them are still here! They have murdered our children, killed our president and have even killed our babies in Kigali, in Butare, in Byumba, in Kibungo, everywhere” (11), and “They raped your wives, they raped your children. And now, with the help of the Americans and the Belgians, they’re planning to wipe us out once and for all” (14). We see that the broadcasters utilize these tactics to justify genocidal acts just as they did through the evocation of history.

Dehumanization

The broadcasters also encouraged the killing with efforts on an onomastic level. Employing the term “serpent”, as well as “inyenzi” and “cafards” to equate the Tutsi with cockroaches, they propagated hatred toward the group while concurrently dehumanizing these individuals. The repetition of such thoughts over an extended time led to this dehumanization, a common tactic adopted to identify and denigrate an enemy. Since the victims were seen less as human beings and more as problematic insects that needed to be eradicated, the *génocidaires* experienced fewer qualms when commanded to kill their

former friends and neighbors. The frequent usage of the terms can be found throughout transcripts, as seen by the phrase “Today, the Inyenzi are flowing in all directions countrywide” (“RTLM Transcripts: 23 May 1994 (English)” 16) and its addition likewise in the play by imperatives such as “Keep a good eye on the gutters so that no cockroach escapes you” (17).

Zeroing in on Targets

Broadcasters also employed the airwaves to identify those they desired to eliminate. At certain times, they even provided a location for the Interhamwe militia to seek them out, calling for the elimination of not only the Tutsi population, but also moderate Hutus. Consider, for example, the imperatives diffused on April 22, 1994: “I have just learned . . . a few minutes ago that four Inkotanyi are heading toward Kimisagara . . . Be vigilant and search the paths to see if any Inkyotanyi have passed through, then follow their tracks and try to find their hiding place”. (“RTLM Transcripts: 22 April 1994 (English)” 5-6) (“Je viens d’apprendre...il y a quelques instants que quatre Inkotanyi se dirigent vers Kimisagara...Soyez vigilants et ratissez ces sentiers pour voir si aucun Inkotanyi n’est passé par là, suivez ensuite leur traces et essayez de trouver leur cachette”). Alongside the evocation of the supposedly menacing threats of Tutsis, broadcasters repeatedly encouraged their listeners to continue the fight against the Tutsis, ordering that they be “vigilant” and stand firm against the opposition. Such remarks thus helped to fuel the fighting.

Rau recreates this reality within the play via a young listener who calls in to report the movement and location of a small group of “rebels”. With this information,

broadcasters issue a command, declaring, “The neighbours of this boy, who lives at Sishoboye Bernard’s home, should find out from him where they parted company with him. Hunt them down!” (16). Such a message suggests the degree to which the killing was systematic. It becomes apparent that the declared, dehumanized enemy becomes prey hunted by the Hutu killers. Although these hateful efforts may shock spectators and seem difficult to believe, the pronunciation of the words by individuals with a physical presence on stage makes it seem more real.

Hyperrealistic Dialogue

It is thus clear that the radio programming within the play has extensive basis in actual broadcasts to create the desired realistic and factually-based representation. However, there are specific ways by which the broadcasting attains the hyperreal to facilitate communication of Rau’s message. This phenomenon is seen notably by the nature of the broadcast content as well as the manner of speaking within the broadcast.

Broadcast Content

Hate Radio’s RTLM re-enactment is based primarily on transcripts of the original broadcast (JT Communication Solutions, “Rwandan Genocide Remembered”). However, the play was necessarily a condensation of content from the RTLM transcripts. Rau explains: “Although the live performance is admittedly orientated on the original broadcast in every detail, it does not depict a particular transmission date. Rather, it is a condensation of the transcripts: I have created one hour out of one thousand, and then further compressed and rhythmized it in the course of working with the actors”

(Rákóczy). The immensity of research material would require condensation for use in any artistic representation. However, the length of text (script) in theatrical representation imposes a much tighter constraint than in other forms such as the novel. While the latter may be experienced by the reader over several sittings, theatrical performance must consider time constraints inherent in a single performance.

We see this issue in *Hate Radio* during the international news portion of the simulation, a section that mirrors the July 3, 1994 RTLM broadcast transcript almost word-for-word. The host who shared this news during the original broadcast does not appear in the play. However, the absence of this additional broadcaster is not surprising when one considers that the play focuses upon the three chief hosts who contributed to the promulgation of genocidal propaganda. The play does not lose truthfulness as this news is unrelated to Rwanda and carries no genocidal repercussions.

Rau did not incorporate this section of the transcripts in its entirety. He includes information regarding issues in Angola, Yasser Arafat's visit to Gaza, a plane crash in the United States, fighting in Yemen, the World Cup, and the Tour de France. However, he opted to exclude the discussion on fighting in Uganda and a coup d'état in Cambodia that appeared in the original broadcast. Though he added discussion of the World Cup, he eliminated a few sentences regarding upcoming matches. These modifications do not detract from the truthfulness of the simulation as the multiple news stories provide sufficient content by giving a sense of the time period and the type of information included in the broadcasts.

In many cases, the condensation of action and information necessitated by the aforementioned theatrical constraints becomes advantageous for communication. The

limit to duration engages the phatic function as it helps to maintain the focus of the spectators. The concentration of action does the same by resulting in the exclusion of certain elements such as a broadcaster's listing of conditions for candidacy voted on by a political party ("RTLM Transcripts: 3 July 1994 I (English)" 10). This addition to the play may have caused spectator attention to wane if the details would be of little significance or interest to them. In this case, the re-enactment becomes hyperrealistic simulation as it surpasses the communicative effectiveness of the original broadcast for spectators.

Modification can also be found in terms of reorganization of the original broadcast content, as we see in the first portion of the RTLM simulation during which broadcasters provide "news from the front". In this case, Rau reorders the brief portions of news regarding fighting in different regions of Rwanda. Whereas the original broadcast first highlighted events in Kigali before considering fighting in regions beyond the capital, the play operates in reverse. Words of encouragement appear in both the transcripts and simulation after this discussion. However, although the news segment of the RTLM transcript begins with an attempt at discrediting Radio France Internationale's report that the FPR surrounded the Rwandan army and blocked the transport routes and a music break before news from various regions ("RTLM Transcripts: 3 July 1994 II (English)" 6), within the play it finds its place at the end of the discussion on the fighting (with no addition of music).

Rau's reorganization in *Hate Radio* surpasses the original to become hyperreal as it facilitates the spectators' ability to grasp the unspeakable (as compared to the "real"). Indeed, while the music interrupts audience focus upon the news events in the original

program to a certain degree, its absence within the portion of the play ensures unremitting attention on the unfinished discussion of the subject matter (reflecting consideration of the phatic function). The reversal of order regarding instances of fighting maintains clarity since similar locations remain grouped together (fighting in more distant regions versus fighting around Kigali). Rau's placement of words of encouragement proves equally effective as it did in the original by providing a smooth transition into to the Radio France Internationale argument, which aims likewise to maintain the spirits of those fighting. Lastly, with regards to the play, the repositioning of the Radio France Internationale comments functions more effectively since its mention evolves into a subsequent discussion on misinformation (that is not continued in the original broadcast on July 3).

While it is true that the creation of the radio program finds its anchor within the extensive study of transcripts from RTLM broadcasts available through archives, the content is not solely based upon these transcripts. As noted above, Rau conducted numerous interviews to create his play and consulted other sources, such as a press conference during which the United Nations reported on the events of the genocide (Ramaer). It proves impossible to pinpoint specific instances where portions of the material were incorporated into the play without access to them. However, the confirmation that these sources all impact the piece implies their influence in the final product.

Though they cannot be consulted, we can still discern their significance. Whereas RTLM broadcast transcripts only present the point of view of the hosts, Rau's interviews with survivors and génocidaires revealed the point of view of those directly impacted by

the programming. As such, it provided him with a deeper sense of the radio's contribution to genocidal acts. It is even likely that he asked *génocidaires* interviewees what it was specifically about the programming that influenced their actions. The amalgamation of perspectives permits a more complete picture of the events that may not translate as efficiently if the play were based solely upon radio broadcasts. It therefore reflects hyperrealism through the improvement upon the real in an effort to represent the radio's impact on the genocide.

Fictional creation also played a role in the simulation. The play features pro-Hutu singer Simon Bikindi's song "Nanga Abahutu" ("I Hate Hutus") that was frequently played on RTLM, as well as zouk music to reflect the mix of songs that were heard on the airwaves. However, Rau explained a degree of artistic license taken with his incorporation of Nirvana's song "Rape Me" within the play: "I don't know if the real RTLM ever aired their songs, I use them because for me, Nirvana's music is synonymous with the after-1990, where-are-we-now generation" (Ramaer).

Although the song may have been absent from the RTLM airwaves during that time period, its incorporation nonetheless carries with it an air of authenticity. The song commands attention by its hard rock influence. The prevalent use of drums and guitar intensifies the expression of defiance and aggression in its lyrics. These characteristics mirror the radio hosts' attitude toward those with whom they disagree. Therefore, the song fits well within the broadcast. In addition, it contributes to the aforementioned "truthfulness" espoused by the playwright and in no way eliminates the factual accuracy that he seeks to represent in his plays. If it was absent from the original RTLM programming, the song's incorporation within the play thus surpasses the original.

Similar to the hyperrealistic viewpoint regarding wax statues described by Umberto Eco at the Palace of Living Arts in Los Angeles that are “more real because they are in color whereas the originals were in marble and hence all white and lifeless” (20), the incorporation of Nirvana adds another dimension to the broadcast that provides spectators with a greater sense of the mentality of the individuals represented on stage.

Manner of Speaking

One final hyperrealistic element under consideration concerns the manner of speaking during the broadcast. Alongside the modernization of the dialogue, the general perfection inherent in the memorized theatrical dialogue also constructs a dimension of hyperreality as compared to the original RTLM broadcasts, or indeed those of most radio broadcasts. Familiar with the rhythm of radio after extensive examination of transcripts, Rau maintains naturalistic dialogue by re-creating repetitions and adding pauses (marked by ellipses) common to radio broadcasts. For instance, during the July 3, 1994 broadcast listeners heard, “Outside the city, despite the fact that we do not have an update on the situation at the front, the *Inyenzi* are in a difficult situation. They are in a difficult situation” (“RTLM Transcripts: 3 July 1994 I (English)” 23, emphasis in original). Similar repetitive phrasing in the play, such as “The cockroaches shot a grenade into a civilian area close to Gitarama...” followed immediately by the repeated structure “Yes, the cockroaches shot a grenade into Gitarama and only managed to hit three dogs” (9), mirrors those in transcripts where short pauses for speech and repetition for thought formulation prove common.

However, when one examines RTLM transcripts, the improvisational imperfection of live broadcasting becomes apparent in instances such as difficulties in hearing a caller and unplanned speaking. On April 7, 1994, for example, Noël Hitimana finishes sharing news by noting, “I am turning it over to Valérie so that she might tell you something during this period of sorrow” (“Je donne la parole à Valérie, pour qu’elle vous dise peut-être quelque chose au cours de cette période de chagrin”), to which Valérie replies, “Uh...I do not have anything special to say to our listeners, I would simply like to first tell them hello” (“Euh . . . Je n’ai rien de spécial à dire à nos auditeurs, j’aimerais simplement les saluer d’abord...””) (“RTLM Transcripts: 7 April 1994 (French)” 5). The lack of prepared communication demonstrated by the use of “Uh” and delay indicate the imperfection that may arise during a live broadcast. The play’s simulation does not include similar instances of confusion.

Since Rau added repetitions and pauses to provide his dialogue with a sense of authenticity, the absence of moments of improvisational imperfection within the play in no way destroys its rhythm, factual accuracy, or truthful air. Instead, much like Eco’s highlighting of Disney’s animatronic crocodiles whose ideal representation comes to be preferred over the “real thing”, the truthful perfection of speech in set theatrical dialogue ensures that the intended message and environment is represented on stage. This hyperreal element proves beneficial by eliminating unnecessary confusion with the phatic function and thus providing an improved chance at spectator apprehension of the intended message.

HATE RADIO PART III: TESTIMONIAL CLOSURE

With the overview of the final international news story, the radio broadcast comes to a close. As Joe Dassin's "Le Dernier Slow" plays and the blinds slowly lower to conceal the studio once again, broadcasters remove their headphones and Ruggiu approaches the glass to look into the distance, as though it is a window offering a view of the street outside. The epilogue then begins, continuing the attention to factual accuracy that drives the work of Milo Rau and the IIPM.

Although significantly shorter than the introductory bookend that begins the piece, this final bookend is structured and undertaken in the same manner as the introductory portion. Video projections of interrogations of both Ruggiu and Bemmerli begin this third and final portion as they discuss their experiences after the final RTLM broadcast. They are briefly followed by the appearance of text on screen that explains the lives of the radio hosts after the genocide. In the final portion of the section, video projections of the closing simulated testimony of the journalist, exile, and survivors appear on the glass walls. This group of witnesses informs spectators of post-genocide events and reflect upon questions that remain, closing the play with consideration of the lasting effects of the event. Each of these elements function as they did in the first section of the play so that the visual dynamic again engages the phatic function and the sharing of truth highlights the use of the referential. Just as the hyperrealistic elements created a distance between the RTLM's propaganda and its depiction in the play, this portion reminds spectators that the broadcast to which they just listened was not the original, but a re-creation. The description of consequences presented by the closing testimony leaves no doubt as to the fact that RTLM contributed, at least in part, to the acts of genocide in 1994.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we examined Milo Rau's decision to utilize hyperrealism in *Hate Radio* to manage the concerns of trivialization and pathos that accompany the representation of limit events. The analysis of the play demonstrated the manner by which his incorporation of hyperrealism within a documentary theater framework functions beyond representation by simulating a real that never quite existed to meet his goal of communicating RTLM's contribution to the unspeakable harm of genocide. This harm became clear through the framing of the hyperrealistic simulation of an RTLM broadcast by sections providing testimony.

The first and last portions of the play showcased investigation and testimony regarding RTLM programming. We saw that they emphasize the phatic function to connect speakers and spectators so that the latter may gain a sense of the broadcast as well as the horrific experiences of genocide. The referential function served by these sections also provides contextualization to enable audience members to reflect upon the radio's impact before, during, and after the hyperrealistic re-creation of an RTLM broadcast in the second portion of the play.

The analysis in the second portion of the play included consideration of the impact of hyperrealistic elements that enable the re-creation to in some way surpass the experience of the original broadcast, such as the performative dimension offered by the play and the general perfection of memorized dialogue. It showed that despite the fact that hyperrealistic elements in the play often trigger the phatic function to strengthen the connection between broadcaster and spectator and keep the spectator engaged with the

broadcast content, the elements also promoted audience acknowledgement that the broadcast was a reconfiguration of reality and not the real thing. We saw that the two most apparent hyperrealistic elements, the use of headphones and the exhibitionist quality achieved by the glass walls of the studio, impact every aspect of the broadcast to remind spectators of this fact throughout the program's entirety. Consequently, spectators were permitted to reflect upon the nature and function of broadcasters' propaganda to consider the unspeakable harm it caused by contributing to genocidal action.

Conclusion

While Theodor Adorno brought the use of any representation into question when he declared that to write poetry after Auschwitz is “barbaric”, the impressive number of literary and artistic responses by survivors of the Shoah and other limit events exhibits formidable defiance. These works display diversity in form and approach, highlighting the complexity inherent in communication as well as the pressing need to testify felt by many survivors. Indeed, we discovered the varied selection of modes including film, poetry, documentary, and mixed media. Some stand resolute against any artistic rendering. Others, such as Jorge Semprun, insist upon the use of artifice in the creation of successful responses.

The ongoing debate that surrounds the ability to represent the unspeakable prompted this study. The three plays that constitute the focus of the thesis, Wajdi Mouawad’s *Incendies*, Groupov’s *Rwanda 94*, and Milo Rau’s *Hate Radio*, were chosen because they are all driven by the unspeakable. Indeed, we noted that *Incendies* is built upon the double unspeakable of incestuous rape and war and *Rwanda 94* and *Hate Radio* both treat the unspeakable of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.

The designation of “unspeakable” accorded to the events in this study raises the question of their representation. This study has shown that although representation of the unspeakable may be deemed impossible, individuals attempt representation nonetheless. My focus was to examine the manner by which specific literary and artistic strategies have been employed within the chosen plays in the efforts at representation in spite of its difficulties.

The resultant examination in this literary study responded to the three questions posed in the introduction: 1. What is representation? 2. Why and how is the concept of representation applied (or not applicable) to the study of these three plays that constitute the object of analysis? and 3. What are the difficulties and the controversies in general and what are the controversies in representing the unspeakable in the respective plays chosen for this study? I adopted the definition of representation as “the act of standing for or taking the place of an entity that either is not present or is unable to stand for itself” (“Representation” 260), and I found that the three playwrights embraced three different approaches in their attempt to represent the unspeakable, from poetic and symbolic representation in *Incendies* to Brechtian political theater supported by African total spectacle in *Rwanda 94* to hyperrealism in *Hate Radio*. It was shown that these approaches were used in response to the general difficulties and controversies of the loss of the “true witness” and the use of artistic forms that surround the representation of the unspeakable, as well as the specific issue of misrepresentation in *Rwanda 94*. It also provided consideration of significant Jakobsonian functions of communication that are used within the representational framework to provide insight into the manner by which the chosen representational strategy contends with the difficulties posed by the unspeakable.

In Chapter 1, the analysis focused upon the poetic and symbolic representation of the unspeakable within Lebanese-Canadian Wajdi Mouawad’s *Incendies*. We noted the failure of dialogue at communicating the message due to its unspeakability. We also saw that it was through poetic and symbolic elements that the unspeakable could be grasped. The aesthetic use of metaphor, for instance, provided more concrete and varied ways of

viewing the circumstances and thus increasing the potential of their reception. Elements of symbolic representation, such as Jeanne's adoption of a hexagon to explain her situation, also promoted communication through representation despite difficulties. The emphasis on Jakobson's poetic function confirmed this focus on the form of the message in efforts to represent the unspeakable.

In Chapter 2, I examined the representational effort of Brechtian political drama and African total spectacle in Groupov's *Rwanda 94* as the collective aimed to provide "symbolic reparation to the dead for use by the living" in an attempt to "give victims a voice and face but also to question the motives and process of their assassination". The recurrent use of Jakobson's phatic function demonstrated attempts to engage the audience in dialogue with the actors, even though audience members are not expected to respond, so as to promote the desired reflection upon the political dimension of the play. We also saw that the collective actively sought to give Rwandans a voice within the play in efforts to prevent misrepresentation.

The dialogue initiated from the outset of *Rwanda 94* mirrors the prevalence of the dialogic dynamic in post-genocide Rwanda. Given its role, as well as the responsive use of dialogue in the quest for establishing the truth of any event, it is logical to find its extensive presence throughout the third play, Milo Rau's *Hate Radio*. Although these two plays happen to be driven by the same unspeakable event, the approach to representation used in each differs. Indeed, *Rwanda 94* does not exhibit the hyperrealistic approach used in *Hate Radio*. As a result, spectators of *Rwanda 94* apprehend the genocide by education for reparation with a retrospective view of the event while *Hate Radio*'s spectators may

grasp the unspeakable by a simulated experience set during the genocide as though it is currently happening.

In the third and final chapter, we saw how Rau pushed the performance of *Hate Radio* beyond representation to this hyperrealistic simulation. Efforts aimed at speaking the limit event were examined through the representational lens of hyperrealism, an approach revealed in this study by the presence of elements that surpass the real, original experience or object represented. A consideration of its use at both the level of situational *mise-en-scène* and that of the radio broadcast revealed that the hyperrealistic elements provided increased opportunities for reception of the message while avoiding trivialization of the genocide and a reproduction of the same harm that resulted from the original broadcast.

Paired with the communicative benefits of documentary theater which was described as a form that encourages the “mental awakeness” of spectators and may trigger their reflection upon the play’s content (Dawson xii), the wearing of headphones by spectators was shown to draw upon Jakobson’s phatic function. The identification and analysis of other hyperrealistic elements, namely the use of glass to establish the walls of the radio station, as well as the modification to the “real” transcripts, indicated manners by which the approach achieved hyperreal status. As a result, spectators are presented with a simulated experience composed of “signs” that never really existed.

The findings in this dissertation contribute to the collection of previous scholarly work that has been undertaken in regards to the chosen plays. As previous studies on the plays do not examine the representational approaches highlighted in this study or focus solely upon the unspeakable as this dissertation does, the analyses fill a gap in research

and supplement existing scholarly work. The study also makes a noteworthy impact in regards to the individual plays. Given the prevalence of poetic expression across Mouawad's theatrical oeuvre, the exploration of the characteristic element may also provide additional insight into his other works. *Rwanda 94* and *Hate Radio* both serve as examples of theater of genocide. While the existence and breadth of Holocaust studies (including literature) are well-known, the lesser-known number of publications focusing upon the events in Rwanda continues to grow. The analysis in this study contributes to that growth. In addition, as this is the first literary study of *Hate Radio* to my knowledge, and since the play is only published in German, the dissertation brings Milo Rau's *Hate Radio* to a larger audience. These considerations demonstrate that this study makes a significant contribution to scholarly work.

The study has highlighted efforts at theatrical representation of the unspeakable made in spite of the belief that such representation is impossible. These representations can prove valuable, whether to help survivors, to give a voice to the voiceless, or to contribute in a historical sense by educating or communicating some version of the experience. The unfortunate and likely inevitable continued appearance of unspeakable events, be they natural or man-made, individual or collective, makes an exploration of the representational possibilities of theater a pertinent and beneficial endeavor for years to come.

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VITA

Alyssa Smith is from St. Joseph, Missouri. She completed her undergraduate studies at Missouri Western State University, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in French and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree in Marketing. She then received her Master of Arts with an emphasis in French Literature and Doctorate in French at the University of Missouri.