

# A History of the Lie of Innocence in Literature



# A History of the Lie of Innocence in Literature:

*Sons Who Become Orphans*

By

Rodney David Le Cudennec

Cambridge  
Scholars  
Publishing



A History of the Lie of Innocence in Literature:  
Sons Who Become Orphans

By Rodney David Le Cudenec

This book first published 2017

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data  
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Copyright © 2017 by Rodney David Le Cudenec

All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN (10): 1-4438-7286-5

ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-7286-7

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements .....	vi
Abstract .....	vii
Introduction .....	1
Chapter One.....	13
The Bible: Etymology, Changes across Time and Translations	
Chapter Two .....	30
William Blake: From Irony to the Sublime	
Chapter Three .....	45
Moby Dick: Innocence as Punishment and Profit	
Chapter Four.....	73
Billy Budd: The Sacrificial Lamb	
Chapter Five .....	99
<i>Light in August</i> : Secular Reinventions of the Lie of Innocence	
Chapter Six .....	131
Graham Greene as ‘Militant’ Writer	
Chapter Seven.....	168
From <i>The Quiet American</i> to <i>The Road</i>	
Conclusion .....	196
Bibliography .....	202
Notes.....	213
Bible Comparison Table.....	222

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to a number of people. To Professor Ann McCulloch: anything I say about your support, insight, trust, wisdom and expertise will not do justice to my experience. Thank you.

I am grateful to my wife, Michelle Malone for her unwavering love, belief and sacrifice. This book has grown over many different places and contexts. When we started, we had no children, were living on a tropical island and couldn't imagine the journey ahead. Yet despite the challenges we have faced, we have made it. I love you. To my sons, Gabriel and Emmanuel, thank you for being so patient and at times, putting up with a grumpy, or at times absent dad. Now we can play trains whenever you want.

I am grateful to my mother, Glenys Le Cudennec, for creating the space for me to produce this work, countless cups of tea and sustaining home-cooked meals. I think I'd be speaking for us both if I said "I'm just so glad it's over!"

I am grateful to my friend Robert William Fredrick Leckie House. Robert and I contemplated the mysteries of the universe on rooftops throughout Melbourne for the last 25 years. These discussions were in many ways the genesis of the work that appears today.

# ABSTRACT

This book deals with a history of the lie of innocence, its inception in biblical representation and its development in literary representations from the eighteenth century to contemporary times. The aim is to disclose the way the lie functioned across time both in Christian societies and in the secular ones in their wake. In identifying the place of “innocence” in Christian dogma as an ideal unrealized state, this work will disclose not only the source of the lies that replaced the sublime archetype (after “The Fall”) but also how the lie has been sustained across time to service the law. In this book the law will be seen as a patriarchal state presented by writers in father figures. The lie in being exposed by the “sons”, who, in disowning the law of the father, become orphans and rebels and subsequently hold the potential to embody what Nietzsche, termed the “innocence of becoming” and which Deleuze, incorporated into his concept of “becoming”.

An analysis of the selected texts by William Blake, Herman Melville, William Faulkner, Graham Greene and Cormac McCarthy will trace the ways in which biblical stories/myths/parables/symbols survive in literary works for philosophical rather than religious reasons. It will show how “the lie of innocence” was seen as a necessary trope both in societies where economic, political and religious forces were inextricably fused (particularly in protestant environments as analysed by Max Weber) and in societies, that although secular, nevertheless give expression of the “affects” of those old certainties in the process of losing validity, and how they harboured the “lie of innocence”. It is argued that the plane of transcendence continues in the cypher of what Deleuze would refer to as the plane of immanence and that it is the nature of politics in its secular dealings to justify its expedient and duplicitous polemics by lies that were once but are no longer universally justifiable in terms of a transcendent order.





## INTRODUCTION

The origins of the concept of innocence—as represented in a selection of western literary texts by William Blake, Herman Melville, William Faulkner, Graham Greene and Cormac McCarthy—lay in the biblical legend of The Fall. This work will demonstrate the ambiguous nature of the concept itself. The biblical narrative that included the dominance of the “Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil” over the “Tree of Life” in the “Garden of Eden” will be identified as being prophetic of the “law” upon which humanity has constructed its concept of innocence. Human beings’ fixation upon “law” and its projections of “good” and “evil” has served to distract interpretations of the Bible that might have acknowledged the forgotten presence of the “Tree of Life”. The image of the “Tree of Life” will be employed in this work as a symbol for a perception or vision of life that may be characterized by a freedom of imagination and a veracity that manifests in compassion and a determination to preserve life. Such a vision is represented in characters that assume orphan status and who create new values that replace older laws of patriarchy. There exists in the literature examined an emerging “knowledge of life” (the “Tree of Life”) that was mostly subsumed and repressed in institutionalized religion prior to the eighteenth century and the emergence of the period known as Romanticism. Accordingly, philosophies and literary texts reflected more in their discourse, symbolic structures and language questioning the rigidity of absolute values. Later manifestations in selected modernist and postmodernist texts increasingly created characters that represented in orphan form what Nietzsche referred to as the “innocence of becoming”

Symbols inherent in biblical legend continue to emerge in literature across time. The Genesis text, foundational to the Christian tradition and the source upon which its claims to authenticity rests is drawn on in order to determine its understanding of the concept of innocence and its contemporary significance. For example the Genesis narrative of the “Garden of Eden” juxtaposes two trees, the “Tree of Life” and the “Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil” from which man is prohibited from eating (Genesis 2:8-9; 17).<sup>1</sup> Having tasted the fruit of this forbidden tree humanity is subsequently banished from the “Garden” and hence alienated from the “Tree of Life”. Christian theology has identified Adam’s trespass

against this prohibition as a defining breach of moral law that ushered “sin” into the world, concealing humanity’s potential to choose an authentic pathway. Although not overtly developed as a metaphor in the Bible, I argue that in the dominant Christian presentation of the Genesis narrative the “Tree of Life” is subsumed by The Fall. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify in biblical stories a continuing vision of the “Tree of Life”, represented in those characters who despite the prohibitions of “law” and the threat of punishment, act with fidelity to others in order to preserve life.<sup>2</sup> The Arts, specifically literary art, reveals that there are always human representations that carry the seed from the “Tree of Life”; history will show that these characters are those who transgress the law subverting the will of the Father. I term these characters as “Orphans”. Literature may represent them, depending at what point they emerge, as tragic heroes/heroines/victims, rebels or outsiders.

We believe that we know what “innocence” means. There is a general consensus that it has particular meaning and that it has a moral value. However, when one tries to access the basis of a moral origin it becomes impossible to find. It does not exist. In seeking the genealogy of the history of the concept of innocence, I began my research with the biblical text in that it is a source that will become integral to the symbolic worlds of Western art, literary art and social expression up to the present day. The aim was to follow its pathway and ascertain the extent to which its iconography of “good” and “evil” permeates aesthetic constructions of culture both during the period of secularization (Enlightenment period to Modernism) and post secularization (late Modernism and Postmodernism). To do so it was necessary to examine how the concept of innocence, bred in the certainties of biblical ethics, evolved over time in literary symbolic constructions. This analysis hopes that by pinpointing the ambiguities and contradictory aspects of its biblical construction one might trace an historical development of the “lie” that has served politics and religion alike.

The idea of innocence as represented in Western literary texts finds its roots in Judeo Christian religion and its meaning has continued to evolve through ever changing social, economic and political realities. The literary and philosophical texts discussed in this work expose the concept of innocence—as represented by the will of the Father—as a lie. Although the legend of The Fall presented in Genesis as depicts the concept of innocence as being unrealizable, the term is nonetheless used throughout the Bible as if it were. According to the biblical interpretation, Adam and Eve’s eating from the forbidden tree negated the possibility of innocence.

This book demonstrates that, ironically, it is only when secularized forces are in play that the “Tree of Life” as envisaged in the Bible is represented as relevant once more. An analysis of its relevance will focus on selected texts from 1790-2007. The focus will be on the representations of relationships between fathers and sons, the points of tension between them and the point in which the son becomes an orphan and as such, becomes liberated from a Christian theology that deemed humankind as imbued with original sin. It will be explained how the idea of the Father is to be understood within a larger metaphorical frame of patriarchy and how this has changed from pre-secularization to contemporary times. Ideas of the Father, for example, may refer to the role of the church; the impact of science; enlightenment thinking and gender relations amongst others. This “lie of innocence” is shown to be the resultant creation of patriarchal power, employed by the Father to portray a benevolent image in order to serve social, cultural and political seats of power.

This inquiry into the history of the “lie of innocence” commenced with an examination of the translations of the terms “innocence” and “innocent” in selected English versions of the Bible. Starting with the *King James Version* (1611), each occurrence of these terms was correlated with the Hebrew (Old Testament) or Greek (New Testament) word from which it was originally translated. This same process was continued across four subsequent versions of the Bible in order to identify the contexts in which the concept of innocence was employed and to highlight changes in the translation of “innocence”. A Bible Comparison Table (Appendix A) presents these findings and assists in ascertaining whether such changes reflect a hermeneutical shift in the interpretation of the concept of innocence in contemporary times.

Friedrich Nietzsche’s philosophical writings provide this with an alternative concept of innocence that is neither subject to notions of a transcendent moral order or humanistic claims made in relation to the knowledge of “good” and “evil”. While the term “innocence of becoming” appears in a collection of his essays published in 1906 as *Will to Power*, Nietzsche explicated the concept in his parable “Of The Three Metamorphoses” in *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (1892), in which the idea of “becoming” is poetically realized. In *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1987), Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari further developed this concept of “becoming” by representing it in many guises such as “becoming animal”, “becoming woman” and “becoming imperceptible”. Nietzsche’s *The Gay Science* (1882) argued that human

knowledge (science) had been constructed upon error: An idea further emphasized in *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886) and served to explicate the ways in which knowledge is provisional—changing in relation to economic political, ethical, cultural and scientific needs of society across time and place. His theory of perspectivism expounded in *Beyond Good and Evil* has been instrumental in the representation of the metaphorical Orphan in this work, as has his concepts of the “Noble Man” and the “Will to Power” (also presented in this work), which are identified as defining characteristics of one who through strength of will create their own values. Employing the symbolism of the camel, lion and child Nietzsche’s novel *Thus Spake Zarathustra* portrays the way for humanity to return to the “meaning of the earth”, a homecoming that restores a vision of life previously obscured by misplaced faith in the veracity of our accumulated knowledge.

Max Weber’s seminal essay “The Protestant Work Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism” (1906) is drawn upon to identify the historical influences that contributed to the rationalization of Protestant Christianity for Capitalist ends. Weber’s identification that the notion of a “calling” to work was fundamental to the theology of the Calvinist applied categories of the “elect” and the “damned”, provides a framework for the discussion of innocence in relation to the Protestant Work Ethic as presented in the novels: Herman Melville’s *Moby Dick* and William Faulkner’s *Light in August*. Weber’s observations that the Protestant “elect” demonstrate their ontological innocence through dedication to work and the denial of human emotions such as doubt, compassion and empathy are critical to my analysis of the function of the concept of innocence in the service of Capitalism.

Jacques Derrida’s essay “The History of the Lie” (2001) considers how the “lie” is difficult to extract when history itself might be seen as a story of lies (Derrida 2001: 71).<sup>3</sup> Just as the concept of the “lie” has a history and culture that Derrida suggests, “has and continues to have, an effect on how one lies and the presentation of the lie”, so it is argued that the concept of innocence has a history that mirrors the lie (Derrida 2001: 69). Derrida refers to the “internal historicity” of the lie and examines the influences upon its transformation and the possibility of “ruptures” within the Western tradition (Derrida 2001: 69). The concept of the lie is problematic because one cannot prove someone is lying even if it can be demonstrated that what is said is not true. The traditional understanding of the lie is concerned with the conscious and intentional desire to deceive

another, rather than erroneous statements or a state of being that defines one as a liar.<sup>4</sup> If one speaks in error but does so in belief that what they have said is true, they do not lie, while one can lie even by saying what is true if they do so with the intention to deceive. Derrida suggests that any concept of a “history of the lie” would be determined by “culture, a religious or moral tradition, perhaps more than one legacy (and) a multiplicity of languages” (Derrida 2001: 69). Furthermore he contends that cultural aspects such as “the practice of the lie, manners, motivations, techniques, means, and effects of the lie” would need to be considered (Derrida 2001: 69).<sup>5</sup> Derrida’s writings are crucial to the argument of this work that such multi-dimensional, complex and multi-layered constructions of the lie are exposed by irony that looks beyond presupposed contexts, disrupting prior suppositions and assumed coherence. For example, Derrida’s insights assisted in the approach taken to Blake’s poetry in Chapter Two where Blake’s subversion of Christian ideas of innocence and experience are deployed by irony, as is the concept of innocence supposedly embodied in Melville’s *Billy Budd* in Chapter Four. Claire Colebrook was also an important critic in this investigation into the concept of innocence. Her discussion of Deleuze’s theory on the relationship between innocence and desire in *Irony: The New Critical Idiom* (2004) was employed to elaborate upon Blake’s use of irony. Her contention that irony is foremost experienced in the body of the subject rather than evoking a heightened consciousness of an objective reality was influential in my analysis of Melville’s representation of innocence in *Billy Budd*.

The literary texts selected for this study were analysed primarily through the theoretical and philosophical frames provided by the above writers. Dialogue with other writers and poets was of significance in the unfolding of my quest: The ways Blake’s poetry exposes the limitations of empiricism, rationality and religious ideology and the ways in which it was employed to justify the concept of innocence without the necessity of recourse to some alternative moral value or transcendent order. Peter Ackroyd’s work *Blake* (2005) was influential when contextualising Blake’s poetry in eighteenth century English society and in particular highlighting the social ills experienced by the child. Nicholas Marsh’s analysis of Blake’s poetry in *William Blake: The Poems* (2001) identified the significance of Blake’s presentation of the interdependence of innocence and experience and the possibility of envisaging a third state. James Sambrook’s *The Intellectual and Cultural Context of English Literature 1700-1789* elaborates on the eighteenth century debate between

the Enlightenment emphasis on rationality as the pathway to truth and the Romantic focus on divine immanence in nature and its revelatory powers (Sambrook 1993).

Given that one of the tenets of this work involved exploring the concept of vengeance in *Moby Dick* and *Billy Budd*, the discussion of Robert Solomon's views on vengeance in Arindan Chakrabarti's essay "A Critique of Pure Revenge: Response by Robert C Solomon" (2012) was significant in that it identifies the lack of recourse to legal process to address perceived injustices as the motivation for vengeance, rather than issues of power or moral judgement. In that Herman Melville's work demonstrates that judgements concerning idealized moral states—such as innocence—are in fact determined by economic and political imperatives the interpretive frame was primarily Weberian. However, Melville's use of the "White Whale" as a metaphor identified the multiplicity of possible meanings white has across time, place and culture. Furthermore, the "White Whale" representing that, which is unrepresentable and cannot be rationalized nor defined according to religious, political or ideological paradigms, is not unlike Nietzsche's representation of the sublime in nature. It was developed further by Robert Solomon's treatment of sublime beauty as experienced bodily and as not dependent upon transcendent meaning.

Cleanth Brooks who wrote extensively on Faulkner's fiction and in particular his 1963 essay "William Faulkner, Vision of Good and Evil" (Brooks 1973) provided a critique of the social context which informed Faulkner's *Light in August* (1932) identifying the religious heritage that continued to impact upon and inform the racial prejudice and economic inequality represented in the novel. Lawrence Bowling's work "William Faulkner, The Importance of Love" (1973), further elaborated on this critique of Protestantism, emphasising the importance of "love" in Faulkner's writings and its significance in revealing the divisive legacy of Christianity in America's south.

Symbolism and allegory are identified as instrumental in exposing the "lie of innocence". Hope Hodgkins' discussion of the sublime in relation to Greene's apophatic theology and his use of symbolism alluded to the possibility of a concept of innocence that was neither subject to, or determined by morality or religious conformity (Hodgkins 2006). Graham Holderness' essay "Knight-Errant of Faith? Monsignor Quixote as Catholic Fiction" (1993) was important in exploring the concept of innocence in

relation to Greene's political views on revolutionary action undertaken to alleviate human suffering and the possibility of collaboration between Communism and Christianity to achieve social and political ends. In his Marxist analysis of *Brighton Rock*, Trevor Williams' contention that the characters are primarily presented with political choices rather than theological ones helped to define my argument that for Greene political choices are conversely theological concerns. (Williams 1992).

My analysis of Cormac McCarthy's post-modern novel *The Road* was influenced by the writings of Alain Badiou and in particular his work *Infinite Thought: Truth and the Return to Philosophy* (2003), providing an insight into the representation of the subject in literature and how *fidelity* in the moment as a determinate of truth is characteristic of Nietzsche's "innocence of becoming".

The idea of the Orphan will be introduced as a symbolic construction to represent one who acts authentically in relation to his/her own will and in doing so, implicitly rejects the will of the Father, thus forfeiting his place among the "innocent" as defined by the Father. The metaphor of the Orphan is representative of one who refuses to engage in the paradigm in which fathers and sons struggle for power. The idea of the Orphan will refer to the son as, for example, the marginalized; the rebel; the alienated; the law- breaker and what Alain Badiou would call "the militant thinker" (Badiou 2007). Concepts will inevitably change over time; however, it will be shown that consistently the Father, according to his concept of obedience and conformity, dictates "innocence". It will be argued that the application of this concept of innocence can be seen as one of deliberate inaction, a stasis that disempowers those who acquiesce to the Father, as represented in selected literary texts.

Using Gilles Deleuze and Friedrich Nietzsche as interpretive frames I will examine selected literary texts by Herman Melville, William Faulkner, Graham Greene and Cormac McCarthy; it will seek to take their thinking to a plane of immanence. Nevertheless the folds of the past continue to capture the human imagination in positions of restraint. "Transcendent" images have been discarded, but human consciousness, still employs them when making sense of its own immanence.

In exposing the "lie of innocence" the selected literary authors affirm another concept of innocence, that Friedrich Nietzsche termed "innocence of becoming". Nietzsche's "innocence of becoming" is a critical response

to the Western—largely Judeo-Christian—world’s philosophical and religious belief that humanity is endemically morally flawed or spiritually corrupted by “original sin”. The belief in this sin entails a need of redemption according to transcendent absolution or historical redress and transformation. Nietzsche asserted that in the absence of a God or transcendent order such moral judgments were meaningless, leaving humanity no alternative but to affirm life (its pleasures along with its woes) despite the absence of the promises of infinite life. Such life-affirmation must be experienced and acknowledged in the moment as all prior goals and ends are rendered as futile in the face of an on-going process of the re-valuation of values. This re-valuation of values is the “innocence of becoming” where there would be a rejection of all prior axioms of truth and value judgments and in this absence, despite initial loss and disenchantment, freedom to create new “meaning” that was not reliant on the redemptive myth. According to Nietzsche such creative freedom is contingent upon the “absolute necessity of a total liberation from ends....Only the innocence of becoming gives us the *greatest courage* and the *greatest freedom!*” (Nietzsche 2001, §787).

Gilles Deleuze draws a clear distinction between morality and ethics contending that morality is formed according to transcendent notions of “good” and “evil” and represented in a restraining set of rules that judge action and intention. Deleuze argues that as there are no transcendent values by which life can be measured that what is left is an affirmation of the world as living given that it cannot be said to be “true” nor “real”. Hence an ethics of “becoming” requires a creative response to assess the ways we exist in the world, evaluating the possibilities of life according to its own immanent ethics. It is perhaps not a mere co-incidence that the Bible chose the symbol of “trees” to explicate the pathway of existence and that Deleuze utilized the image to show both “fixedity” (aborescent) and “becoming” (rhizomic). The idea of an aborescent or tree-like schema is Deleuze’s (1987) counterpoint to his model of the rhizome, which he used to challenge tendencies in thinking and to suggest ways of “rehabitating” thought as a creative and dynamic enterprise (Deleuze 2003, 293).<sup>6</sup> Borrowing from Deleuze’s idea of becoming, I employ the term “becoming orphan” to celebrate moments of rupture against unexamined premises based on rationalized concepts of “good”.<sup>7</sup> This is further informed by the Deleuzian view that representations and concepts do not respond to anything in reality. This Deleuzian perspective is explained by James Williams who contends that this disjuncture between representations and reality is because “all things are connected to



multiplicities, that is, to unaccountable and unidentifiable process of becoming, rather than existing as fixed beings with identifiable and limited predicates or essences” (Williams 2005, 125).

I will examine how protagonists took flight from a psychoanalytical impasse, and embraced an “orphan state”, a line of flight away from the Father, and into a world that allowed a new set of connections, and from a perspective, that did not rely on former patterns of thought or former criterion that dictated how one was to interpret the world. Hence the only time the concept of innocence “assumes” a reality is when it is ratified by allegory, that is when the story is understood within the closed system of the law employed, for example in Herman Melville’s *Billy Budd*. On all other occasions the Orphan figure will be seen in a state of flight and becoming. The innocence of the Orphan is an “innocence of becoming” validated by one who acts in fidelity to their own thoughts, values and experience. A common repulsion to violence and a desire to preserve life will be shown to be characteristic of “innocence of becoming” and can be located in the presentation of the Orphan—presented both philosophically as metaphor and/or as a fictional character—in each novel considered.

If as Nietzsche contends in *Beyond Good and Evil* that humanity’s only credible perception of that which is “real” or “true” is derived by the senses (Nietzsche 1990, 100), all subsequent judgments, although inevitably false, are yet absolutely necessary if they are “life-advancing, life-preserving, species preserving, perhaps even species- breeding” (Nietzsche 1990, 35). Nietzsche, despite his rejection of Christianity, saw it as life-enhancing. Recognizing that one can’t decide to believe in what is life-preserving, Nietzsche suggests it is the “will to power incarnate” that determines one’s judgments, evaluations and logic. This “will to power” wants to grow, “expand, draw to itself, gain ascendancy—not out of any morality or immorality, but because it *lives*, and because life *is* will to power” (Nietzsche 1990, 194). One can observe in nature a necessary and calculable course because it obeys no prevailing laws, for as Nietzsche contends, “every power draws its ultimate consequences every moment” (Nietzsche 1990, 53). The “will to power” of which Nietzsche writes can be perceived as a human expression of the indifference of nature, an immanent, organic response to life that is symbolized by the “Tree of Life”. As the “will to power” is other than morality and does not conform to a normative reading, it cannot be represented through logic but may be presented in art. Nietzsche’s imagery of the transfiguring power of art conveys a “sublime” sense of a moment in which the world is once again

reconciled with the “will to power”.

I could imagine a music whose rarest magic would consist in this, that it no longer knew anything of good and evil, except that perhaps some sailor’s homesickness, some golden shadow and delicate weakness would now and then flit across it: an art that would see fleeing towards it from a great distance the colours of a declining, now almost incomprehensible *moral* world, and would be hospitable and deep enough to receive such late fugitives (Nietzsche 1990, 188).

I will identify within the literature examined, sublime moments such as described by Nietzsche which, given their power to transfigure one’s vision of life, may be considered to be “Tree of Life” moments.

In contemporary societies in which the spheres of life are increasing subjected to rational analysis, planning and manipulation in the pursuit of worldly goals, the possibility that one’s vision of life may be transfigured by the sublime is significantly diminished. Weber argued that the relentless pursuit of wealth had stripped life of its religious and ethical meaning leaving humanity disenchanted with the world and preoccupied with “purely mundane passions” (Weber 2002, 124). The irony of course is that magical and religious forces and ethical ideas of duty were not only abandoned but were transfigured to serve economic means (as Weber argues). Traits that once represented a dutiful Protestant (hardworking and alienated due to their refusal to acknowledge loneliness, guilt, doubt or sexual desire) became ones that “ordained” the capitalist spirit. In analysing Melville’s and Faulkner’s texts one sees states of disassociation as man and woman sought worldly goals whilst tormented by shadows of a religious past that was enchanted, mystical and promised eternal redemption. In these environments the paternal Orphans in flight have an ambivalent attitude towards two worldviews in tension.

In inter-connecting innocence, secularization and “becoming orphan”—new thinking takes place. Innocence is a state of being possible only prior rationalist concepts of “good” and “evil”. It became a rational idealist state within Christian milieus at The Fall. Post The Fall it’s “meaning” was created by political, social, and religious institutions in order to justify a law—it received a function on the basis that it became a workable applicable concept rather than one that envisaged a utopian state. This not only was seen to be the case in literary representations in Christian and post Christian eras but it is also evident in the stories of the Bible. Subsequently on one level I will look at narratives that portray this history

of the “lie of innocence” that are exemplars of when the idea of innocence is being used for political or economic ends. The most prevalent biblical stories or symbolism identified as disclosing the lie from the Bible are: Representations of Jesus as the “Good Shepherd”, “Dove” of peace, “Man of Sorrows”, “Sacrificial Lamb” and the crucifixion; “God the Father” terrible in wrath and vengeance; Jonah the disobedient; Judas the betrayer; Jezebel the harlot; The transfiguration of Saul; The faith of Abraham and the sacrifice of Isaac; Wisdom of the Serpent and the sin of Cain. Dogmas related to the Roman Catholic Church also considered for similar purposes such as the concepts of: Faith; Miracles; Prayer; Eucharist; Confession; Heaven; Suffering; The love of God and Hell.

In understanding concepts like innocence, secularization and “becoming orphan” within historical periods in which they emerge and change, one can see how these connections relate and create new relations and opportunities to re-imagine the genesis, the violence and the rupture of thinking pertaining to the supposed condition of innocence. In analysing literary texts this writer is aware that it is the “affects” that are being identified in the art. The aim is to see how these literary writers attempted in art to release the ideological control from the potential to imagine. Protagonists in escaping the “law of the Father”, in becoming Orphans ask “what if?” of the world they live in. “What if” Greene asks, if a Whiskey Priest commits sins but is seen to remain “holy?” “What if” Faulkner asks, a half-breed is conceived as a Christ figure? “What if?” McCarthy asks, a father and son were placed in a world after the apocalypse? “What if” one returns to Nietzsche’s “All too Human” and seeks there a different explanation of why these authors have made “holy” that which is deemed by the societies in which the stories are enacted as “unholy”.

In keeping with the overall intention outlined an interest will be sustained in the extent to which literary texts, continue to engage with motifs, symbols and structures drawn from the Bible or Christian tradition. Perhaps in order to understand what is a backward glance through time it becomes instructive to firstly look at a literary text that deals with our worst fears wrought by human desire for power, which has been projected into the future from our contemporary perspective. Cormac McCarthy’s *The Road* (2007) is such a text.

Cormac McCarthy’s novel *The Road* is set against a backdrop of nuclear laden ash where nothing grows or survives apart from man. Amidst this barren and violent landscape McCarthy narrates the gripping

journey of a father and his young son as they struggle for life in a dying world. With the human population decimated and ever decreasing, humanity is portrayed as having regressed to its hunter-gatherer origins as the starving scour the land for the last meagre stores of food or descended into systematic, efficient and ruthless cannibalism. Religion, moral and legal codes are rendered meaningless in the world of *The Road*, as are wealth and possessions: Only that which contributes to survival is of importance. The very fact of the father and son's continual existence makes a lie of the view that life is sacred or a precious gift, their very survival is a rational improbability. All references to chronological time have become irrelevant in an apocalyptic world that exposes the foolishness of the expectations and presumptions that accompany our ideas of the future.

McCarthy presents a grey "barren, silent, godless" earth suffocated by ash, in which life had been extinguished and with it the creator (McCarthy 2007, 2). Over the half dozen years since this holocaust all religious, philosophers and guru's had perished, their messages of God's wrathful vengeance consumed by ash and hungry men (McCarthy 2007, 32). The pitiful remnants of humanity serve as testimony to an old vagrant's proclamation: "There is no God and we are his prophets" (McCarthy 2007, 181). There is a sense that much of the father's bitter anger with God is directed at his own self-deception and complicity in the lie that a just and compassionate divinity would intervene in world affairs and prevent the apocalypse.

It will be argued that humanity's failure to prevent the catastrophe of nuclear destruction portrayed in *The Road* can be seen to be the inevitable culmination of the violence employed to legitimize the "law." This work is designed to exemplify through analysis of selected literary texts, often within cross-disciplinary context, the "evil" that brought man to the apocalypse, which also shows how religious and political sanctions made violence on earth necessary. At the core of this analysis is the refrain: The "lie of innocence" has a history that found its source in the Bible and its development in political and social expediency. As each selected text moves further away from a society rationalized and ordained by Christianity, writers continue to draw on religious symbolism, whether to capture old myths of divine immanence/transcendence or to ironically recall that which has become redundant. As the old prophet in *The Road* proclaims, 150 years after first voiced by Nietzsche, "God is Dead".

# CHAPTER ONE

## THE BIBLE: ETYMOLOGY, CHANGES ACROSS TIME AND TRANSLATIONS

### *The Argument*

*Chapter One will examine the Bible as a source of metaphors and symbolic stories. Using a Nietzschean perspective this chapter will show the origin of “innocence” to lie in its becoming, an “innocence of becoming”, that has been banished by the nature of human choice brought about by the knowledge of “good and evil.” It will be argued that the “lie of innocence” constructed upon notions of “good” and “evil” was legitimized by the “majoritive” theology that characterize much of the Bible and came to some extent to characterize aspects of the Christian tradition. Through an analysis of the Hebrew and Greek words translated as “innocence” or “innocent” in the Bible, it will be demonstrated that the concept of innocence is derived from an assortment of terms, represented in multiple contexts across a diverse range of texts. From this analysis it will be proposed that “innocence” as presented in the Bible has no clearly definable meaning. Changes in biblical translation of the word “innocence” over the past century reveal a two-fold increase in the use of the term in contemporary versions of the Bible. These changes reflect a disassociation of “innocence” from the social, political and religious contexts of earlier translations of the Bible. It will be argued that these contemporary translations represent a concept of innocence that evokes a sacrosanct idealism shown to be questionable.*

*It will be further shown that there is a marked difference between the presentation of “innocence” in biblical narrative and the pronouncements of legal and prophetic texts. These narratives depict innocence as inconsequential to the conflicting demands of wealth, the law, ethnicity and religious observance. It will be proposed that the significant discrepancy between the Christian tradition’s presentation of innocence*

*and the plight of the “innocent” as portrayed in biblical narrative, has its roots in the Church’s misrepresentation of The Fall legend. An alternative reading of The Fall will identify humanity’s fixation with the knowledge of “good” “and evil” as the manifestation of “original sin”, upon which the “lie of innocence” is constructed. It is my contention that this “original sin” blinds humanity to the vision of the “Tree of Life”—a living principle, which I liken to Nietzsche’s concept of the “innocence of becoming”.*

Increasingly over the past century, the concept of innocence has referred to the ontological “state” or “essence” of a person, rather than being associated with one’s actions. Indeed, Henry Giroux contends that one of the myths of “innocence” is that of “childhood innocence” which consists of a natural state, “one that is beyond the dictates of history, society and politics” (Giroux 2000, p. 2). There are numerous examples in contemporary translations of the Bible where the words “innocence” and “innocent” have been employed rather than religious terms such as righteous and pure or litigious language including guiltless, acquitted, justified or blameless used in earlier translations. In these contemporary versions of the Bible, the concept of innocence has is disassociated from any social, political or moral criteria by which it may be scrutinized. No longer are the “innocent” subject to the critique of their actions, rather they are by degree “innocent” because of who they are (powerful); “innocent” because of what they represent (ideology); innocent due to who they belong to (ethnicity) and “innocent” because of what they deny (sexuality).

The words “innocence” and “innocent” appear in multiple contexts across a diverse range of texts and genres in the Bible making it difficult to associate the terms with any clearly definable meaning. It will be argued that translations of “innocence” in contemporary versions of the Bible have further obscured its meaning. The first English translation of the Bible to gain wide spread acceptance was the *King James Version (KJV)*, published in 1611. The *KJV* became the foremost translation of the Bible for almost three centuries until the advent of the *American Standard Version (ASV)*. First released in 1901 the *ASV* became popular in the United States with those keen to distance themselves from their anglicised roots. In truth, the variations in translation between these works are minimal in comparison with the latest versions of the Bible. Similarly, the variations in the translation of “innocence” in the *ASV* from the Greek and Hebrew texts are relatively few despite the span of years. The *ASV* makes reference to the word “innocency” on five occasions and “innocent(s)” 36 times, whereas the *KJV* makes a further three references to “innocent(s)”.<sup>8</sup> The Hebrew words

translated as “innocence” in the *ASV* are; *niqqayown* (4); *zakuw* (1); while “innocent(s)” is translated from *naqiy* (29); *naqah* (2); *chaph* (1); *chinnam* (1).<sup>9</sup> The *ASV* makes no reference to innocence in the New Testament; however, the Greek *athoos* is translated as “innocent” on two occasions and *akakos* on another.

Since the publication of the *ASV*, there has been an exponential increase in the number of Bible translations with more than 30 versions currently in circulation. In 2005, Zondervan Publishing, in partnership with the International Bible Society, released *Today's New International Version (TNIV)*: A revised edition of the *New International Version* (1978), currently the largest selling Bible version with over 251 million copies in print according to International Bible Society estimates. The accumulation of Bible versions over the twentieth century has seen a corresponding significant increase in the frequency of translation of the words “innocence” and “innocent”. With nine references to “innocence” and 76 uses of the term “innocent”, *TNIV* has more than doubled the *ASV*'s translation of “innocence” and its derivatives in a century. These changes will be examined according to the root Hebrew and Greek words from which “innocence” has been translated to ascertain the context of these variations and their implications for the evolution of the concept of innocence.

When comparing *TNIV* with the *ASV*, we find the original Hebrew translated as “innocence”—as opposed to the *ASV*'s “innocency”—an additional four times; *tsadaq* (5); *niqqayown* (2); *tsedaqah* (1); *yasher* (1). The *TNIV* translates the word “innocent” from the Hebrew on 30 more occasion than the *ASV*; *naqiy* (1); *naqah* (4); *tsadaq* (4); *tsaddiyq* (15); *chinnam* (1); *asham* (1); *cheleka* (1); *tam* (1); *tom* (1); *zak* (1). Both versions of the Bible translate the Hebrew *niqqayown*, as “innocence” with *TNIV* also using the terms “clean” and “purity”. This resonates with the derivative term *naqiy* which appears in the Hebrew Old Testament on 43 occasions, of which 30 are translated in *TNIV* as “innocent”: The *ASV* differs on one occasion when it refers to the “guiltless”. Similarly, *TNIV* translates another derivative, *naqah*, as “innocent” six times from 44 references in the Old Testament, whereas the *ASV* offers alternatives such as “iniquity”, “guiltless” and “clear”, which are more common translations of the Hebrew. “Unpunished” is the most frequent translation of *naqah* with eleven references.

The greatest variation in the translation of “innocence” between the *ASV* and the *TNIV* is to be found in the Hebrew *tsadaq* and its derivatives

*tsaddiyq* and *tsedaqah*. This grouping appears on 24 occasions in *TNIV*, of which six are translated as “innocence” and eighteen as “innocent”. The *ASV* on the other hand makes no reference to “innocence” or “innocent” in the corresponding verses, most frequently translating the Hebrew as “righteous” (15), or “righteousness” (3), as well as “just” (3); “justified” (1); “clear” (1); and “pure” (1). The Hebrew *chinnam* appears 32 times throughout the Old Testament, the most common interpretations being “cause” (16) and nought (6), which relate to specific actions, judged according to moral codes. In *TNIV* *chinnam* is translated as “innocent” on two occasions, while the *ASV* makes reference to “innocent” and “cause”. On only one occasion does the *ASV* translate the Hebrew as “innocent” when the *TNIV* uses another term: *Chaph* is translated as “clean”. The remaining differences in the translation of “innocence” and “innocent” consist of single examples from a cross range of root terms. The *ASV* translates these terms as follows: *asham* (guilty); *cheleka* (helpless); *tam* (perfect); *tom* (simplicity); *yasher* (righteous) and *zak* (pure). Amongst this assortment of translations, language that represents powerlessness and naivety in the *ASV* is translated as “innocence” in *TNIV*. From this examination of the changes made in translation of the Hebrew word “innocence” (and its derivatives) in the Old Testament over the past century, it can be seen that terminology, which previously indicated either a legal context or matters of religious purity or orthodoxy had been subsumed by the concept of innocence. Subsequently this two-fold increase in translation of “innocence” in biblical texts has severed prior legal, social and religious frameworks of interpretation and deduction.

Neither *TNIV* nor the *ASV* refers to “innocence” in the New Testament, however, the *TNIV* translates the Greek as “innocent” on twelve occasions. The two *ASV* references to “innocent” in the New Testament correspond to *TNIV*’s translation of *athoos*. *Akakos* is translated as “naïve” in *TNIV*, as opposed to “innocent” in the *ASV*. In four other instances *TNIV* translates “innocent” from words that are relatively common in the New Testament; *dikaïos* (2) (*ASV* righteous); *katharos* (2) (*ASV* pure; clean). The Greek *dikaïos* is found 86 times in the New Testament, 44 of which are translated in the *ASV* as “righteous” and a further 35 as “just”. *Katharos* appears 28 times in the New Testament, most frequently translated in the *ASV* as “pure” (17) and “clean” (10). The translations of these Greek words as “innocent” in *TNIV* are an exception and divorced from the religious implications of “righteousness” and the legal connotations of “justice” that are otherwise associated with these terms. The remaining six references to “innocent” in *TNIV* translate from Greek words that rarely occur in the



New Testament: Once again, the *ASV* employs a range of alternative terms. The *ASV*'s translation of *akeraios* (2) adopts terminology that suggests powerlessness and naivety such as the words “harmless” and “simple”. With the exception of the religious term *hagnos* (1), interpreted as “pure” in the *ASV*, the remaining three references suggest a legal context: *Anaitios* (2) “guiltless”; *dikaioō* (1) “justified”. This analysis of the translation of the words “innocence” and “innocent” from Hebrew and Greek biblical texts in *TNIV*, has identified variations from the *ASV* which range from religious notions of righteousness and purity, legal terminology constructed upon moral codes and language that suggests naivety and helplessness. These changes reflect a transition from language previously imbedded in social, religious and political contexts, to a concept of innocence that is detached from history. In order to explore the implications of these changes in translation it is necessary to consider the contexts in which these references to “innocence” and “innocent” appear in *TNIV* of the Bible.

In the majority of instances, the 85 references to “innocence” and “innocent” in *TNIV* lend themselves to three categories. Within each of these categories the innocence of a particular group or individual is determined by their submission to the legitimacy, authority and interests of those in power—ones that legitimize the Father or the patriarchal institution: Innocence and the Powerful; Innocence and Religious Observance; Innocence and the Law. The following will analyse the variations in translation from the *ASV* to *TNIV* in relation to these categories, identifying the possible criteria by which innocence is determined. It will be argued that these changes are representative of the evolution of the concept of innocence from a term primarily associated with action judged according to moral codes, to the moral “state” of an individual, group or nation, removed from rational critique or accountability.

## Innocence and Patriarchy

In *TNIV* of the Bible, there are 24 references to the concept of “innocence” that are principally concerned with “power”, fourteen of which vary from the parallel texts in the *ASV*. These variations represents a range of terms including: “guilty” (1); “guiltless” (2); “righteousness” (1); “simplicity” (1); “righteous” (5); “harmless” (1); “cleanse” (1); “helpless” (1); “perfect” (1). Typically such narratives of “power” address the tension between the will of the father and the son who pursues his own will and

ambition despite opposition from patriarchal institutions often also embodied in actual fathers. In the majority of these narratives the Father responds ruthlessly to dissension, punishing those who fail to comply with the constraints and expectations imposed upon them. The proliferation of translations of “innocence” in *TNIV* has come at the expense of legal concepts such as “guiltless” and religious appeals to “righteousness.” The substitution of the term “innocent” within contexts primarily concerned with power has removed frameworks of critique. The significance of these changes are most apparent when terms such as “simplicity” and “harmlessness” are replaced, often enveloping the plight of the powerless within the meaningless sentiment of “innocence.”

On 34 occasions in *TNIV* “innocence” is imputed as the moral “state” of those who participate in and conform to the dictates of “religious observance.” Faithfulness and obedience to “religious observance” is a prominent theme throughout the “Books of Wisdom.” That these texts often express lament for the suffering of the innocent and make supplication to God on their behalf suggests a concession that obedience to “religious observance” does not prevent the innocent from suffering at the hands of the powerful.<sup>10</sup> This admission is further emphasized in prophetic writings that repeatedly condemn the arrogant and proud while exalting the meek. Such humility is measured by one’s devotion to social and political expectations of “religious observance”. Within contexts chiefly pertaining to “religious observance”, *TNIV* introduces fifteen translations of “innocence” that differ from the *ASV*, which translates the Hebrew as righteous (5); righteousness (3); justified (1); justify (1); clean (2); pure (1); just (2). These changes are mostly reflected in texts concerned with concepts of religious purity such as “righteous” although legal terms that had previously addressed matters of justice have also been subsumed by “innocence.”

There are 27 examples of the words “innocence” or “innocent” in *TNIV* that primarily relate to matters of moral “law.” Predominantly found in the “Books of Law”, these texts typically take the form of a legal imperative followed by a decree denouncing the betrayal of the “innocent”.<sup>11</sup> The book of Exodus provides an example of such an imperative: “Have nothing to do with a false charge and do not put an innocent or honest person to death, for I will not acquit the guilty” (Ex 23.7). The determination of innocence or guilt is subject to moral codes that judge the action of a society or individual. Justice for the “innocent” is also a consistent theme throughout the prophetic writings. Repeatedly these texts

pronounce impending judgment that awaits those who abuse the “innocent”, however, the corresponding promise of deliverance for the oppressed is deferred to an eschatological hope of a just afterlife. The most frequent discrepancy in translation of the words “innocence” and “innocent” from the *ASV* to the *TNIV* are related to “law” these nineteen variations include: Righteous (9); clear (1); iniquity (1); pure (2); just (2); guiltless (2); simple (1); justified (1). The earlier observations in regards to *TNIV*’s negation of legal terminology when translating “innocence” in relation to “power” and “religious observance” are amplified in contexts that are primarily associated with “law.” Subsequently the relationship between innocence and the legal context of these passages is unclear and lacks any definable criteria that would afford critical evaluation.

### **Innocence in Biblical Narrative**

Perhaps it is in the narrative texts of the Bible that the ambiguity of the concept of innocence is most conspicuous due in part to the relative brevity of references. Within these stories innocence is shown to be dependent upon the society of its emergence, qualified in terms of “power”, the demands of “religious observance” and the “law”. There are fourteen examples of biblical narrative that explicitly refers to “innocent” in *TNIV* version, ten of which are concerned with “power”, two are centred upon “religious observance” and two focus on “law”.<sup>12</sup> Examples of each of these categories will be examined to determine how innocence functions within the context of the story.

In the closing chapters of the book of Judges, a story unfolds concerning the rape and death of a concubine offered by her master to appease a violent gathering of men in the Benjaminite town of Gibeah. In response to this crime, the “Children of Israel” (consisting of warriors from the other eleven Israelite tribes) demand that the culprits are brought to justice. The subsequent refusal of the Benjaminites to turn over the offenders for judgment triggers a political crisis that escalates into a devastating battle in which all the women and children of the tribe are killed and four hundred surviving Benjaminite troops flee into the hills. The “Children of Israel” fear for the future of their chastened “brothers” given that they had previously taken an oath not to intermarry with the tribe of Benjamin due to their disobedience. A solution is devised:

When the girls of Shiloh come out to join in the dancing, then rush from the vineyards and each of you seize a wife from the girls of Shiloh and go

to the land of Benjamin. When their fathers or brothers complain to us, we will say to them, "Do us a kindness by helping them, because we did not get wives for them during the war, and you are innocent (*asham*) since you did not give your daughters to them." So that is what the Benjamites did. While the girls were dancing, each man caught one and carried her off to be his wife. Then they returned to their inheritance and rebuilt the towns and settled in them (Judges 21:21-23).

If there is a moral to be learned from this story it would appear to be that when deemed necessary those in power may sanction the kidnapping of women to make amends for their previous slaughter of wives and children. The implication that the fathers and brothers are "innocent" of breaking their oath because they did not give their consent to the abduction of their daughters, testifies to a conscious abuse of power inflicted upon the women and their families. In a context where conspiracy to kidnap women is planned and executed in full knowledge of the impact this action would have upon the victims, the suggestion that these families could find consolation in their ignorance illuminates the cynicism of the powerful in relation to innocence.

The book of Jonah is a story in which the figure of the patriarch unwilling to tolerate dissent employs violence to ensure that his designs are enforced. Jonah is commanded to travel to the city of Nineveh where he is to deliver a prophetic message of repentance, lest the people be destroyed by God's wrath. Concerned for his welfare Jonah has other ideas and flees from the assignment to distant lands beyond the Mediterranean. During his flight across the sea the "Lord" foils Jonah's will through the violence of a tempest, which endangers the lives of the prophet and ship's crew. As the ship founders the desperate crew struggle with the religious and moral implications of killing an innocent man to appease an angry God and hence save their lives.

Instead, the men did their best to row back to land. But they could not, for the sea grew even wilder than before. Then they cried to the Lord, "O Lord, please do not let us die for taking this man's life. Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent (*naqiy*) man, for you, O Lord, have done as you pleased." Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging sea grew calm (Jonah 1:13-15).

As the story continues, Jonah is swallowed by a great fish in which he remains for three days before being regurgitated upon dry land in order to take up God's initial commission. Although the crew of the ship regard Jonah as "innocent" of any crime committed against them, the narrative

explicitly presents Jonah as a liability due to his disobedience to God's command. The violence, fear and moral conundrum experienced by the crew and in particular the "innocent" Jonah, are shown to be irrelevant before the dictates of "religious observance".

The vulnerability of innocence in relation to the "law" is brought to the fore in the story of King Abimelech of Gerar and Sarah, Abraham's wife. Upon entering the lands of Gerar, the Hebrew Patriarch Abraham tells Abimelech that he and Sarah are siblings. Free from any moral laws that would dictate otherwise Abimelech takes Sarah as his wife, only to find the union to be fraught with fatal consequences.

God came to Abimelech in a dream one night and said to him, "You are as good as dead because of the woman you have taken; she is a married woman." Now Abimelech had not gone near her, so he said, "Lord, will you destroy an innocent (*tsaddiq*) nation? Did he not say to me, "She is my sister," and didn't she also say, "He is my brother?" I have done this with a clear conscience and clean hands (Gen. 20:3-5).

As Abimelech had been deceived the narrative presents God as willing to spare the life of the King and his people if Sarah is returned to Abraham with due compensation. When confronted by an exasperated Abimelech, Abraham justifies his actions as a necessary response to the fear that foreigners may kill him to take Sarah, if it were known that they were married. It is apparent that Abimelech's innocence matters little in this narrative: The law serving as a tool to bring the will of the Father—in this case Abraham's God—to fruition. Through deception and the use of his wife as collateral Abraham is granted political favour and substantially increases his wealth at the expense of a King forced to comply under the imminent threat of death. This story demonstrates that innocence has no currency before the designs of the Father who claiming justification under the "law" employs violence to establish political power and financial gain.

## **The Function of Patriarchy in Old Testament Narrative**

This chapter will now consider examples of biblical narrative in which the will of the patriarchal Father—incorporating the competing demands of the law, ethnicity, sexuality and religious observance—is imposed upon the literary and metaphorical Son. While not explicitly referring to "innocence", the story of King Saul and his acrimonious relationship with his son Jonathon shows how the "law" of the Father demands unconditional obedience. During a skirmish between the Israelite and

Philistine armies King Saul had bound the people under an oath: “Cursed be any man who eats food before evening comes, before I have avenged myself on my enemies!” (1 Sam. 14:24). During a respite in the battle Jonathon reflects: “My father has made trouble for the country. See how my eyes brightened when I tasted a little of this honey. How much better it would have been if the men had eaten today some of the plunder they took from their enemies.” Summoned to give an account of his disobedience a clearly bemused Jonathon responds to his Father: “I merely tasted a little honey with the end of my staff. And now I must die?” Saul’s judgement is unequivocal: “May God deal with me, be it ever so severely, if you do not die, Jonathon” (1 Sam. 14:29-30). In biblical narratives, the father responds to dissent in one of two ways: Either the son is abandoned and assumes the plight of the orphan or he is killed. The son who by refusing to comply with, or acknowledge the law of the father, is symbolic of the Orphan who rebels against unjust impositions of power, yet refuses to resort to the violence upon which such power is established. The son who refuses to collude or comply with the will of the father is never pronounced “innocent”.

Faithfulness to religious devotion is sorely tested in the book of Job where the protagonist is abandoned to endure extreme suffering by a god who seeks to counter accusations of favouritism levelled by the Satan. At the onset of Job’s ordeal, a “friend” poses the following rhetorical question: “Consider now: Who, being innocent, has ever perished? Where were the upright ever destroyed?” (Job 4:7). By implication, this question suggests that the “innocent” are sheltered from unjust suffering, however, this conclusion is not supported by biblical narrative. On numerous occasions in the Bible, “ethnicity” is shown to be the mitigating factor in the wilful destruction of innocence, most starkly captured in narrative that speaks of divinely sanctioned genocide, acts of ethnic cleansing referred to as the “Holy Ban” in contemporary Christian theology. One such story features the prophet Samuel commissioning King Saul to act on behalf of the Israelite God:

This is what the Lord Almighty says....Now go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy everything that belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants (1 Sam. 15:2a, 3).

King Saul is duty bound to annihilate a people as punishment for their wickedness, dispensing wholesale slaughter because of the victim’s ethnicity. This story brings into question the conclusion deduced from Job that the “innocent” are spared from destruction, as children and infants are