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The Novelist as Magus: John Fowles and the Function of Narrative

It is difficult to trap John Fowles the writer under conceptual nets. Having announced his intention not "to walk into the cage labelled 'novelist,'"¹ he has published, in addition to his best-selling novels, a volume of poems, a philosophical tract, and discursive prose on such subjects as Stonehenge, the Scilly Isles, trees, cricket, and Thomas Hardy. When we restrict our attention to his fiction, he is equally hard to classify unambiguously. His aesthetic has been called "conservative and traditional,"² and yet John Barth includes Fowles, along with himself, in a group of avant-garde novelists who have been tagged postmodernist.³ On the one hand, Fowles has championed realism,⁴ repudiated art which exalts technique and style at the expense of human content,⁵ endorsed the ancient dictum that the function of art is to entertain and instruct,⁶ and announced a didactic intention to "improve society at large."⁷ To some extent, his novels do realize these traditional aims. They usually create an intense illusion that real human dramas are being played out before the reader's eyes. Each of these dramas is a didactic exemplum of Fowles's belief in the value of freedom.⁸ On the other hand, though, Fowles has affirmed the reality of the crisis often said to have made the contemporary novel problematic.⁹ This awareness has rendered his fictions self-referential in ways that cast doubt upon their mimetic capacity. His narratives frequently expose themselves as arbitrary, decentred, and inconclusive structures of words cut loose from any legitimating origin or transcendent authority.

Is it possible to reconcile these seemingly contradictory features of Fowles's work? I am prepared to argue that it is. I hope eventually to show in this paper that the postmodernist uncertainties about the relationship between fiction and life paradoxically serve Fowles's traditional ends and buttress his optimism about the novel's possibili-

ties.¹⁰ The alienating devices prominent in his work bespeak the imprisonment of the imagination within textuality, but ultimately Fowles's narratives celebrate their own redemptive powers of liberation. Before we can clearly see how this paradoxical shift takes place, though, we need a detailed understanding of what troubles Fowles as a novelist and how it affects his work.

"Who is Sarah?" asks the until-this-point omniscient narrator of *The French Lieutenant's Woman* at the end of Chapter 12. "I do not know," he answers.

This story I am telling is all imagination. These characters I create never existed outside my own mind. If I have pretended until now to know my characters' thoughts, it is because I am writing in . . . a convention universally accepted at the time of my story: that the novelist stands next to God. . . . But I live in the age of Alain Robbe-Grillet and Roland Barthes; if this is a novel, it cannot be a novel in the modern sense of the word.¹¹

At this particular point, however, *The French Lieutenant's Woman* is very much "a novel in the modern sense of the word." Having invoked the documentary tradition of the novel in creating a densely particularized Victorian world with historical accuracy, Fowles breaks the illusion which he has painstakingly built up. This insecure undermining of mimetic authority is repeated later in the novel when, during the second of two brief appearances as a dramatized character, the narrator depicts himself, not as a godlike Victorian sage, but as a flashy impresario orchestrating the baseless illusions of the text.¹² His subsequent act of revoking the novel's happy ending and ordaining Sarah Woodrugh's rejection of Charles Smithson is thus denigrated as theatrical sleight-of-hand rather than validated as real and significant.

In other works Fowles exhibits the same self-conscious tendency to dissolve the reader's sense of the solidity of his fictions and in the process to call into question the worth of his enterprise. Indeed, Maurice Conchis, the surrogate novelist within the fictional world of *The Magus*,¹³ openly denounces the novel as an art form and claims to have burnt every novel that he ever possessed.¹⁴ Conchis resembles the narrator of *The French Lieutenant's Woman* in being a figure of seeming wisdom who is shown to traffic in deceptions and fabrications. Fowles enhances the stature of both proxies only to diminish it. He thereby breeds doubt about his own capacity as a novelist to reveal anything which is unambiguously true. "Every truth in his world was a sort of lie," Urfe says of Conchis, "and every lie a sort of truth."¹⁵ In much the same self-deprecatory vein are the following words of *Man-*

tissa's writer-within-the-story, Miles Green, here addressing the muse Erato:

"You know perfectly well why you were landed with fiction. It was nothing to do with picking the short straw. It's just that you could always lie ten times better than all the rest of your sisters put together."¹⁶

The novel, then, is at best "first cousin to a lie," as Fowles says in the preface to his volume of poems. He goes on to state that

this uneasy consciousness of lying is why in the great majority of novels the novelist apes reality so assiduously; and is why giving the game away—making the lie, the fictitiousness of the process, explicit in the text—has become such a feature of the contemporary novel. Committed to invention, to people that never existed, to events that never happened, the novelist wants either to sound 'true' or to come clean.¹⁷

This uneasy sense that, however "true" they sound, novels are never the real thing is, according to Fowles, the primary cause of the so-called "crisis of the novel."¹⁸ Novelists are "all so self-conscious these days," he once said in an interview. "We can't believe in our own fiction," he added. "Only the Victorians believed in their own fiction. The distancing is symptomatic of a crisis of faith that's happening in the novel as it already has in religion."¹⁹

What does it mean not to believe in fiction, though? It surely goes beyond the worry that novels necessarily employ artificial conventions or that imagined stories deviate from historical reality. Presumably, the great Victorian novelists no more believed in the literal reality of their fictions than modern ones do. Yet this unbelief did not trouble them. They could easily answer, as Elizabeth Bowen does, the charge that novelists are liars: "The novel lies, in saying that something happened that did not. It must, therefore, contain uncontradictable truth, to warrant the original lie."²⁰ Fictions, in other words, play fast and loose with reality in the interests of a higher truth. But it is this very artistic truth itself of which Fowles seems suspicious. This worry seems to issue from a more general epistemological scepticism concerning man's ability to know reality objectively. In writing the kind of fiction which nervously flaunts its own status as fiction, then, he only seems to suggest that his work dishonestly misrepresents life's reality. What he actually implies is that we have no direct access to reality and that all interpretations of it, even seemingly empirical ones, are falsifications. "The 'real' reality," Fowles states in *The Aristos*,

is a meaningless particularity, a total incoherence, a ubiquitous isolation, a universal disconnection. . . . Our interpretations of reality are not

'the' reality, any more than the blankness of the paper is the drawing. Our drawings, our equations, are ultimately pseudo-realities, but those are the only realities that concern us.²¹

The qualifying "but" in the last clause suggests that Fowles sees something paradoxically heartening in the unsettling state of affairs he outlines here, and this is an issue to which I will return later in this paper. For now the point to be stressed is that for Fowles, as for Laurence Sterne before him, the structuring operations of human consciousness have no necessary connection to an independent reality. All knowledge by which we orient ourselves in and explain the world is thus humanly created, fictional in a word. Fowles holds that even "the most precise scientific description of an object or movement is a tissue of metaphors."²²

Recent French thought has accustomed us to the idea that our images of the self and the world are merely the products of differential relations within arbitrary systems of signs. Nevertheless, there is something radically destabilizing about the idea that humankind is adrift in a phenomenological world of its own making, and Fowles's novels reflect this distress. In view of the precariousness of life and the inevitability of death, how can the mere products of the human imagination, whether individual or collective, supply stability or direction or consolation? As an atheist greatly influenced by the Sartrean view that no essence or transcendent design underpins existence, Fowles is sensitive to this dilemma. Many of his fictions operate at once on two levels to suggest that the same intimations of nothingness which haunt his protagonists also dissolve the reality of the fictional worlds which they inhabit. For example, *The Magus* incorporates an awareness that both personal identity and the power of language to create meaningful structures are menaced by apocalypse. This recognition is expressed in Urfe's dismissal of both the idealism of Conchis's old Society for Reason pamphlet and the nihilism of the monosyllabic postscript to it, the word "Merde":

Both text and comment, in view of what had happened since 1920, seemed to me pathetic. . . . Words had lost their power, either for good or for evil; still hung, like a mist, over the reality of action, distorting, misleading, castrating; but at least since Hitler and Hiroshima they were seen to be a mist, a flimsy superstructure.²³

One of the stories in *The Ebony Tower*, "Poor Koko," suggests even more dramatically that literature is powerless to serve a redemptive function in the face of life's depredations. Terrorized by a thief, the

elderly narrator is forced to watch in horror as the nearly-completed manuscript he has been laboring over is fed page by page into a fire. All attempts to impose stabilizing structures on life pale into unreality in view of the imminence of extinction, as *The French Lieutenant's Woman's* Charles Smithson sees in a moment of epiphany:

In a vivid insight, in a flash of black lightning, he saw that all life was parallel: that evolution was not vertical, ascending to perfection, but horizontal. Time was the great fallacy; existence was without history, was always now, was always this being caught in the same fiendish machine. All those painted screens erected by man to shut out reality—history, religion, duty, social position, all were illusions, mere opium fantasies.²⁴

An irony clearly not lost on Fowles here is that fiction in general and *The French Lieutenant's Woman* in particular could be added to this list of mere "opium fantasies."

As well as being conveyed thematically, this anxiety about the efficacy of fictions is, as one would expect, reflected in the shapes of Fowles's narratives. Plots, we have been told, are relics of an age when people believed that human behaviour had some intelligible and necessary relation to the purpose of the cosmos. Plots belong to a time when people believed in destiny, in a uniform, unalterable divine plot in which all would ultimately be resolved for the best. This is the metaphysical assumption upon which rests the traditional analogy of the novelist as a god, the analogy Fowles disparaged as anachronistic in that passage which I quoted earlier from *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. This divine plot is the model on which the plots of realistic fiction are sometimes said to be based. According to Alain Robbe-Grillet, such plots, in conjunction with the other elements of realistic fiction, "tended to impose the image of a stable, coherent, continuous, unequivocal, entirely decipherable universe."²⁵ But now, since that comforting world view has been shattered, to "tell a story has become strictly impossible."²⁶ But of course stories are still told, even, perhaps, by Robbe-Grillet. The problem for writers who accept his views becomes that such stories can only be told in bad faith. By imposing imaginative designs on the world, the novelist necessarily plays god, even if, like Fowles, he would rather not. "The novelist is still a god," says his narrator in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, "since he creates (and not even the most aleatory avant-garde modern novel has managed to extirpate its author completely)."²⁷

Fowles's quandary here is obvious. The need to "come clean" motivates him to break into, deform, truncate, or dissolve the plots which

the need to "sound true" has caused him to fashion. This predicament is similar to the one discussed by Frank Kermode in relation to Sartre's *La Nausée*. Kermode argues that Sartre's attempt to write a novel about the overwhelming power of what is intractable and contingent entails a basic paradox, since the novel form is "in so far as it succeeds, the destroyer of contingency. The novel has, for all that may be said in theory against such a possibility, *a priori* limitations."²⁸ The result of this problem in novels such as *The Magus* and *Mantissa* is that plots disappear, sometimes with little warning, only to be succeeded by new plots which give way in turn to others. The result is a vertiginous proliferation of plots, all of which identify themselves as arbitrary, ephemeral, without necessity. The master plotter within *The Magus*, Conchis, deliberately incorporates as much hazard as is consistent with staging for Urfe and then dissipating the series of illusions involving Julie, June, and the other actors in his company. The consequent sense of instability has been increased by Fowles's widely publicized revisions of *The Magus*. However minor, they upset the presumption that the text is a fixed entity. In other words, what Conchis does *in* the book Fowles has done *to* the book. He has thereby given the reader a truer image of the creative process, which is far less certain and stable than the final product usually reveals. "Literary students know the text as a printed, immutable thing," Fowles stated in a recent interview. It "is very different in the writing," he went on to say,

when it is as much in the head as on the page. All situations are haunted by their opposite, and all characters, the same. Only writers can know all that their fictions might have been but are not, and the countless quarrels that lie behind even the easiest, smoothest text.²⁹

Mantissa dramatizes these quarrels overtly. Each of its several plots is arrested at an embryonic stage owing to the incessant bickering and lack of cooperation between the writer and his muse. Plots are initiated only to be aborted after heated discussions of various means of achieving complication, peripeteia, and dénouement. Midway through the book Erato proposes that everything before that point be regarded as "a kind of surrealist preamble—if you like a reversal of normal narrative development—to a very different kind of relationship between us in a much more realistic external context."³⁰ Such a stabilizing context is never created, and the entire novel may be regarded as a "surrealist preamble" to a main narrative line that never takes shape. The sense of futility enveloping the obsessively repeated false starts corroborates Fowles's view of the writer as a neurotic hopelessly

trying to overcome his separation from his mother. He asked in an interview,

Why is it that you're never satisfied? Why do you go on trying, trying, trying again? Obviously what you're trying to do is . . . to achieve some primal state of perfection and total happiness, which you're doomed never to experience because you'll never be one year old again.³¹

In conjunction with this idea of psychopathology, it is no accident that in the scenario with which the novel opens and closes Green is an amnesiac confined to the padded cell of a mental hospital and his muse is a doctor charged with effecting a cure. But Green never does discover who he is, and the novel leaves us with the image of the novelist endlessly spinning botched stories in a vain attempt to fill the void of the self.

Because Fowles holds that narrative plots are inevitably defective as modes of self-discovery and self-realization, they are often figured in his work as limiting and constricting. It is a paradox that such fragile, evanescent constructions can be experienced as formidably enclosing. Listen, for instance, to the thoughts of Fowles's eponymous Daniel Martin on the confining nature of the identity which his own past has plotted for him:

he was approaching a fork, the kind of situation some modern novelists met by writing both roads. For days now he had been split . . . between a known past and an unknown future. That was where his disturbing feeling of not being his own master, of being a character in someone else's play, came from. The past wrote him.³²

Here are paradoxes of a kind familiar to Fowles's readers. Fowles is himself one of those modern novelists who has at times "written both roads." And Martin is in fact a character in a book, not a real person capable of being his own master. The effect of this self-reflexive passage is to equate the plot of the novel until this point with the plots scripted for Martin by both himself and society. In other words, Fowles's own plotting becomes an image of the coercive narratives routinely imposed upon us all in everyday life.³³ Just how oppressive such control can be is revealed in his detective story with a difference, "The Enigma," where Fielding, the central character, has on one level defied his society and on another his author by vanishing without a trace. Although never confirmed, Isobel's theory about Fielding's disappearance supplies an ominous response to the question of whether binding narrative patterns can be thrown off. She speculates

that the only means by which the ultra-conventional Fielding could have escaped ensnaring social and familial roles was suicide.

However confining, then, fictions are necessary to life. To do without them is to plunge into chaos, as the fate of Catherine in Fowles's story "The Cloud" shows. There is a strong hint that, like Fielding, she takes her own life. The difference between the two characters is that until his disappearance Fielding had accepted, as if they were inevitable facts of nature, the stultifying narrative designs imposed on him by his social class, whereas Catherine is pathologically sensitive to the baselessness of all the fictions which structure life. As a result, she is cut off from the continuity of her own experience, and her identity unravels:

So now everything became little islands, without communication, without farther islands to which this that one was on was a stepping stone, a point with point, a necessary stage. Little islands set in their own limitless sea, one crossed them in a minute, in five at most, then it was a different island but the same: the same voices, the same masks, the same emptiness behind the words.³⁴

At the story's finish, with the storm impending and the others ready to leave, Catherine has still not returned from the forest. The plot of "The Cloud," then, is suspended without resolution at exactly the same point as is the plot of Catherine's life. This convergence is foreshadowed earlier in the story when she broods that she is "given to theories of language, of fiction, of illusion; and also to silly fancies. Like dreaming one is a book without its last chapters, suddenly: one is left forever on that last incomplete page."³⁵

The indeterminacies of "The Enigma" and "The Cloud" corroborate Peter Conradi's assertion that Fowles views closure as one of the least palatable aspects of realism, that "quintessentially inauthentic mode."³⁶ To resolve narratives unequivocally is to impose finality and thereby falsify life, which, this side of the grave, is always ongoing. As Kermode argues in *The Sense of an Ending*, humankind, lacking certain knowledge of its purpose, seeks "fictive concords with origins and ends, such as give meaning to lives . . ."³⁷ But, given their fictiveness, such meanings might have no ultimate validity, and therefore Fowles has most often denied himself and us their comfort. The open ending of *The Magus* and the multiple ones of *The French Lieutenant's Woman* testify equally to his unwillingness to enforce definitive resolutions on the flux of experience. His commitment to uncertainty is also apparent in his most recent novel, *A Maggot*. What is the status of Rebecca Lee's claim that she has ascended to a heavenly city in the sort

of spacecraft commonly found in science fiction? Are we meant to interpret her story as a fabrication, a hallucination, a mystical vision, or an encounter with beings from another planet? Fowles will not dispel the mystery.

Having demonstrated how Fowles's work reflects the uncertainties which bedevil the writing of much contemporary fiction, I want now, not belatedly I hope, to make good on my promise to show how he turns the ambiance of crisis to constructive uses. I mentioned earlier that for the novelist there was something potentially affirmative in Fowles's remark that our pseudo-realities, our "equations" or interpretations of the world, are the only realities which concern us. What is tonic is that, if narrative fictions are untrue, they are no less true than any other mode of signification, including the scientific. Indeed, their focus on the human scene in all of its complexity and living detail might make them superior pseudo-realities. Moreover, if all of our structures of perception and knowledge, like fiction, have no literal or objective reality, then all have at least the potential to be invested with the beauty, power, and importance of good novels. Novels, then, can serve as models of how the imagination can be used to enrich life.

But is life itself not fundamentally absurd owing to the existential situation which confronts mankind? And does not this certainty of meaningless extinction negate the consolations of all fictions, including those of selfhood? Fowles's answer is a resounding "No!" In *The Aristos* he holds that vulnerability to hazard and contingency is "the best of all possible situations for mankind" and in addition that death has a positive function. He asserts that the "more absolute death seems, the more authentic life becomes."³⁸ He also argues that the "anti-ego" or "nemo" (terms which he coins along Freudian lines to signify "the state of being nobody") are essential to human growth.³⁹ This is not to say that all individuals will necessarily surmount the dangers; some will inevitably suffer the fate of Catherine in "The Cloud." Despite such tragedies, though, Fowles does not believe that a centering metaphysical essence is needed to authenticate human identity. This point is illustrated in *The Magus* when Urfe is under the influence of the hallucinogenic drug administered by Conchis. Like Catherine's, Urfe's sense of a unique, objectively verifiable identity is submerged under a flood of ever-changing sensations which lack solidity or concreteness. Sensitized to the fictional nature of his perceptions, which are inescapably filtered through the fabrications of language, he refers to the "metaphorality" of his experience.

I knew words were like chains, they held me back; and like walls with holes in them. Reality kept rushing through; and yet I could not get out to fully exist in it. This is interpreting what I struggled to remember feeling; the act of description taints the description.⁴⁰

Although no longer able to believe in the reality of a discrete self, Urfe does not feel endangered, for what impresses him is the inter-relatedness of all things, not chaos or a sense of loss. Self and world merge in a process of "endless interaction" which, for all its lack of stability, is felt to be "infinitely significant."⁴¹ For Fowles, we may infer, existence is its own end and justification.

If the forces which seem to drain life of meaning are at least potentially beneficial, it follows that the threat which they pose to the novelist's task might be more apparent than real. In fact, the atmosphere of crisis seems more an incentive than an impediment to Fowles, inasmuch as it fuels the energy of opposition. He tends to build into his narratives the circumstances which are inimical to their creation, thereby giving linguistic form to the very conditions which would vitiate it. As a mere construction of words powerless to alter the atrocities of our century, *The Magus* may brand itself "a mist" and "a flimsy superstructure," but it recreates those horrors within itself and makes them serve a humane end. Conchis's war experiences are re-enacted for Urfe's benefit in the godgame, which is a reflexive image of the novel as a whole. The threat of annihilation becomes a necessary aspect of the process by which Urfe moves toward enlightenment. Clegg's abduction of Miranda in *The Collector* has a similar effect, although she does not survive to act on her personal growth. And in "Poor Koko," the narrator's calamity forces him to assess his basic values and fosters his development. The book-burning with which the narrative climaxes may be a self-conscious admission that literary activity exists under a sentence of death, but it also promotes the writing of fiction. Driven to make sense of his disaster, the formerly smug and self-satisfied narrator embodies his new wisdom in a story which is undoubtedly superior to the presumably rather stuffy critical work destroyed by the thief.

In view of the foregoing, the narrative disturbances previously explained as manifestations of anxiety and despair might be better interpreted as features which paradoxically affirm the importance of fictions. From one perspective, the constant thwarting of the literary efforts of writer and muse in *Mantissa* and their obsessive need to begin anew suggest frustration and failure. But let us acknowledge that each seems to enjoy being at loggerheads with the other, so much so

that at one point Green actually praises Erato for the quality of her uncooperativeness.⁴² Their relationship is, after all, a love affair, one that seems all the more vital for being tempestuous. And in *The Magus* the multiplication of plots does not reduce the godgame to insignificance for Urfe. On the contrary, its chimerical nature seems to increase his sense of its magical possibilities. Rather than signalling the futility of Conchis's experiment, the constant puncturing of illusion is part of the plan by which he hopes to lead Urfe to self-knowledge. It is precisely by flaunting the artificial character of his enterprise that Conchis shows him that his formulations of reality have been too stale, partial, rigid, and compartmentalized. By making the boundaries of the godgame as fluid as possible and by confronting Urfe with radically diverse means of structuring experience, Conchis challenges him to broaden his vision. He jolts Urfe out of his programmatically jaded habit of mind and teaches him that even quotidian experience can offer the compelling wonder of life at his villa.

Such expansion and integration of consciousness is Fowles's goal for the readers of his fictions as well as for some of the characters in them. In this respect, too, the postmodernist violations of realism can be interpreted in a positive light. They are the means by which Fowles attempts to divest readers of complacent assumptions and prod them into a more creative use of imagination. Consider, for instance, what the effects are when the apparently solid base of Victorian reality disintegrates in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. Rather than destroying the significance of the Victorian story, the disruptions actually increase it because they narrow the historical gap between the characters and readers. As Dwight Eddins well puts it, the "closed book of the past is reopened as the vital, contingent situation that it was before the potential narrowed to the actual."⁴³ Fowles achieves this end by sensitizing the reader to the potency of his novel as a fiction in a world of fictions. "I have disgracefully broken the illusion?" his narrator asks. "No. My characters still exist, and in a reality no less, or no more, real than the one I have just broken. Fiction is woven into all."⁴⁴ The point of the metafictional commentary, then, is finally illusionist, not anti-illusionist. "You are not the 'I' who breaks into the illusion, but the 'I' who is part of it," Fowles reminded himself in the notes he made while writing *The French Lieutenant's Woman*.⁴⁵ The illusion created is that Charles and Sarah are not quaintly exotic Victorians but proto-existentialists on an equal ontological footing with the reader, who shares the same living present, the same hazardous future. The processes by which Charles and the reader are brought

to this point run parallel. As Charles painfully learns to free himself from some of the iron mores and thought patterns of his age, so the reader is liberated from what Fowles sees to be the correspondingly rigid conventions of the Victorian novel.

But how is this emphasis on freedom compatible with the previously discussed theme that narratives are inevitably entrapping? And does it not seem highly paradoxical, at the very least, that in steering the protagonists towards freedom some of Fowles's surrogates within the novels exert godlike control over them? The answer is that the control is exercised only to incite a desire for its opposite. Despite their pose of omnipotence, Fowles's proxies actually suggest that there are degrees of control and freedom and that, if narratives are always confining, they are less confining when their fictive status is acknowledged. The characters who are most enslaved by society's plots are those such as Fielding and Clegg who do not recognize their fabricated nature or those such as David Williams in "The Ebony Tower" who cling to them because they lack the courage to brave the unknown. They serve as negative exempla for the reader. The characters who are capable of growth move beyond society's ready-made plots and use their imaginations to negotiate the vital uncertainty of the present moment without becoming paralyzed. Such freedom is never absolute, never unmediated by fictions which distort even as they give shape to experience. To do without what the narrator of *The French Lieutenant's Woman* calls "the painted screens" of fiction is untenable, as the predicament of Catherine in "The Cloud" shows.

I hope it is evident by now that the very features which seem to undermine the authority of Fowles's fiction become paradoxical means of establishing it. The ostensibly meaningless endings, for example, which parade their arbitrariness and inconclusiveness, are actually meant to involve the reader actively in the creative process. Such endings enact Fowles's belief that "energy is in the ill-defined"⁴⁶ and leave space in which the reader's imagination can work. The main function of the endings, and of the other techniques of postmodernism discernible in his books, is to remind the reader of the great extent to which our perceptions of reality are self-created. In this respect, his fictions are all the more true for exposing their own contrivances. The self-conscious displays of artifice exist in his work to testify that freedom can be approached only when the fictions which structure life are recognized as humanly created. His narratives ultimately offer

themselves as paradigms of the imaginatively rich fictions through which such an approach to freedom can be made.

NOTES

1. John Fowles, *The Aristos*, rev. ed. (New York: New American Library, 1970), 7.
2. Kerry McSweeney, *Four Contemporary Novelists: Angus Wilson, Brian Moore, John Fowles, V. S. Naipaul* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens UP, 1983), 104.
3. John Barth, "The Literature of Replenishment: Postmodernist Fiction," *The Atlantic*, January 1980, 66.
4. Roy Newquist, "John Fowles," *Counterpoint*, ed. Roy Newquist (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1964), 220, 223.
5. Fowles, *Aristos*, 202-203.
6. *Ibid.*, 154.
7. John Fowles, "My Recollections of Kafka," in *The Novel and Its Changing Form*, ed. R. G. Collins (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1972), 183.
8. See Daniel Halpern, "A Sort of Exile in Lyme Regis," *London Magazine* (March, 1971), 45.
9. See Laurence O'Toole, "Fowles' Maddening Books an Escape from an Ugly World," *Globe and Mail* [Toronto], 1 Oct. 1977, 44.
10. See Halpern, "Exile in Lyme Regis," 45-46, and John Fowles, "Notes on an Unfinished Novel," reprinted in *The Novel Today: Contemporary Writers on Modern Fiction*, ed. Malcolm Bradbury (London: Fontana, 1977), 142.
11. John Fowles, *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (New York: Signet, 1969), 80.
12. *Ibid.*, 362.
13. See Malcolm Bradbury, *Possibilities: Essays on the State of the Novel* (London: Oxford UP, 1973), 264.
14. John Fowles, *The Magus: A Revised Version* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1977), 96.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 294.
16. John Fowles, *Mantissa* (Toronto: Collins, 1982), 84.
17. John Fowles, Foreword to *Poems* (New York: Ecco Press, 1973), vii.
18. *Ibid.*
19. O'Toole, "Fowles' Maddening Books," 44.
20. Elizabeth Bowen, *Collected Impressions* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1950), 249.
21. Fowles, *Aristos*, 154.
22. Fowles, "Notes," 139.
23. Fowles, *Magus*, 190.
24. Fowles, *French Lieutenant's Woman*, 165.
25. Alain Robbe-Grillet, *For a New Novel: Essays on Fiction*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Grove Press, 1965), 32.
26. *Ibid.*, 33.
27. Fowles, *French Lieutenant's Woman*, 82.
28. Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction* (New York: Oxford UP, 1967), 137.
29. Carol M. Barnum, "An Interview with John Fowles," *Modern Fiction Studies*, 31 (1985), 200.
30. Fowles, *Mantissa*, 101.
31. Raman K. Singh, "An Encounter with John Fowles," *Journal of Modern Literature*, 8 (1981), 200.
32. John Fowles, *Daniel Martin* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1977), 542.
33. See Peter Conradi, *John Fowles* (London: Methuen, 1982), 24-25.
34. John Fowles, "The Cloud," *The Ebony Tower* (Scarborough: New American Library of Canada, 1974), 229.
35. *Ibid.*, 224.
36. Conradi, *John Fowles*, 20.

37. Kermode, *Sense of an Ending*, 7.
38. Fowles, *Aristos*, 17, 34.
39. *Ibid.*, 47, 57-58.
40. Fowles, *Magus*, 239.
41. *Ibid.*, 240.
42. Fowles, *Mantissa*, 167.
43. Dwight Eddins, "John Fowles: Existence as Authorship," *Contemporary Literature*, 17 (1976), 219.
44. Fowles, *French Lieutenant's Woman*, 82.
45. Fowles, "Notes," 142.
46. Robert Robinson, "Giving the Reader a Choice—a Conversation with John Fowles," *Listener*, 92 (31 Oct. 1974), 584, col. 1.