

Sara Monahan

**“His Notebook Grew Orchids and Weeds”:
Language, Burial, and Recovery in Anne Michaels’s
*Fugitive Pieces***

Abstract

*Through the critical lens of trauma theory, this article explores Anne Michaels's recurrent imagery of archaeological and geological excavations; burial, drowning, and uncovering; and the inconsistencies, repetitions, and ruptures in language and memory prevalent in Holocaust narratives. By focusing on the image of the buried journal as a kind of grave and unearthing its layered narratives, this article argues for *Fugitive Pieces* as an excavation of language and memory, and that it functions as a unique type of Holocaust narrative that seeks healing through reinterpreted ideas of place, geography, the body, absence, and displacement.*

Résumé

*À travers le prisme critique de la théorie du traumatisme, cet article explore l'imagerie récurrente d'Anne Michaels des fouilles archéologiques et géologiques, de l'enfouissement, de la noyade et de la mise au jour, ainsi que les incohérences, les répétitions et les ruptures dans le langage et la mémoire qui prévalent dans les récits de l'Holocauste. En se concentrant sur l'image du journal enterré comme une sorte de tombe et en déterrants ses récits superposés, cet article soutient que *Fugitive Pieces* est une excavation du langage et de la mémoire, et qu'il fonctionne comme un type unique de récit de l'Holocauste qui cherche à guérir à travers des idées réinterprétées de lieu, de géographie, de corps, d'absence et de déplacement.*

A writer buried his testimony in the garden, black type in black soil
trusting that someday earth would speak.
All those years of war and uncertainty after,
no one knew the power of his incantation,
calling quietly from its dark envelope.
From his notebook grew orchids and weeds.

—Anne Michaels, *What the Light Teaches*

“Language has unmistakably made plain that memory is not an instrument for exploring the past but its theater. It is the medium for past experience, just as the earth is the medium in which dead cities lie interred. He who seeks to approach his own buried past must conduct himself like a man digging. This confers the tone and bearing of genuine reminiscences. He must not be afraid to return again and again to the same matter; to scatter it as one scatters earth, to turn it over as one turns over soil.”

—Walter Benjamin, *A Berlin Chronicle*

“We’re in the right place, koumbaros. . . How do I know? Because it’s gone.”

—Jakob Beer

The opening image of Anne Michaels’s *Fugitive Pieces* is of “countless manuscripts—diaries, memoirs, eyewitness accounts” that were lost, buried, or destroyed all over Europe during the Holocaust. In an unpaginated preface, Michaels writes: “some of these narratives were deliberately hidden—buried in back gardens, tucked into walls and under floors—by those who did not live to retrieve them. Other stories are concealed in memory, neither written nor spoken.”¹ Through the critical lens of trauma theory, this article explores Michaels’s recurrent imagery of archaeological and geological excavations; burial, drowning, and uncovering; as well as the inconsistencies, repetitions, and ruptures in language and memory prevalent in Holocaust narratives.² By focusing on the image of the buried journal as a kind of grave, I argue that *Fugitive Pieces* is itself an excavation of language and memory, and that it functions as a type of Holocaust narrative that seeks to reinterpret ideas of place, geography, the body, absence, and displacement in its characters’ attempt to heal themselves. By extension, the novel becomes part of a larger narrative of the possibility of healing for its readers.

The narrative itself opens with the startling image of young Jakob Beer emerging from the mud of Biskupin, Poland. The reader learns that it is the very acts of hiding and burial that have saved the eight-year-old narrator’s life from the Nazis not once but twice. When his home is invaded and his parents killed and his sister taken, Jakob hides in a cupboard and is spared; upon leaving the house, he buries himself in the ground in the bog during the day to avoid detection by soldiers. Athos, the man who rescues him and ultimately becomes his guardian, is a geologist and archaeologist. His job, literally, is the excavation, recovery, and interpretation of buried objects—to make sense of the past by the traces it leaves behind in the earth. Throughout the rest of his life, this also becomes his task with Jakob, in a different but nevertheless very real way. Together, the two men use their passions for history, archaeology, geology, language, and poetry to attempt to process, and recover from, the traumas of the Holocaust.

The first part of the novel unfolds as a memoir of trauma and resilience, as Athos takes Jakob back with him to Zakynthos, Greece, by hiding him in his coat. After the war, the two immigrate to Toronto, where Jakob becomes a translator and poet informed by Athos’s intellectual sensibilities. Through this career choice, Jakob struggles to make sense of his life: a failed first marriage and the traumas of his childhood. Part two emerges late in the novel as the story of Ben whose parents, survivors of the Holocaust, have passed their generational traumas down to their son. Ben, too, struggles to make sense of his personal history through Jakob’s poetry. After Jakob’s

death he travels to Greece to find Jakob's hidden journals in an attempt to heal himself and his own floundering marriage.

Bella Brodzki describes the traumatic experience as "an inconclusive constellation of effects . . . invol[ing] intense fear, helplessness, loss of control, and threat of annihilation such that the organism's protective shield has been broken"³ in her discussion of its relation to textual analysis, in particular Holocaust literature. One of the fundamental effects of trauma is what is known as belated temporality, or "belatedness," in which the human psyche is essentially unable to process the immediate traumatic experience. What then happens is that over time, the traumatic event that remains in the human consciousness and memory begins to resurface, often through dreams, flashbacks, or other forms of persistent repetition. Many scholars of trauma studies refer to this process as a sort of rupture in time, wherein the traumatic past repeatedly intrudes on the present. Indications of trauma in a text, according to Brodzki, include "omission, negation, deflection, contradiction, circularity, displacement, even linguistic excess."⁴ Michaels employs all of these and more in the voice of Jakob Beer as he narrates the first two-thirds of the novel, and in both Ben's voice and Jakob's echoed poetry from the past as Ben assumes the voice of the narrator in the second part of the text.

This use of dual narration in and of itself constitutes both a temporal and linguistic layering as it functions in representations of trauma. Michaels's skillful interweaving of multilayered narratives is further punctuated by Jakob's recurrent dreams of his sister Bella, as well as his insistence that "every moment is two moments."⁵ Jakob also struggles to protect his psyche from his traumatic past through the use of foreign languages learned from Athos: "I tried to bury images, to cover them over with Greek and English words, with Athos's stories, with all the geologic eras. . . . But at night, my mother, my father, Bella, Mones, simply rose, shook the earth from their clothes, and waited."⁶ These images of continued burial, excavation and resurfacing, and reburial run as a constant thematic undercurrent throughout the novel. Beginning with the very first image, the novel continually describes the traumatic and deliberate burial of Jewish identity, both by Nazi soldiers and Jews themselves. The difference, of course, being that the Jewish burial of identities, manuscripts, bodies, and artifacts serves to preserve these things, while German burial is to obliterate all traces of them. So, too, the resurfacing and unburial is often deliberate, though just as often it is a traumatic interruption into the present. Each moment becomes two moments: the traumatic past over which Jakob has no control, and the present over which he is trying to gain control.

Athos, who makes himself Jakob's *koumbaros*, or godfather, teaches young Jakob not just languages but also his own love—what Ben later calls "lyric geology."⁷ Jakob becomes fascinated by the scope of time and the manner in which it is expressed by

geologic and archaeological study: “I was transfixed by the way time buckled, met itself in pleats and folds . . . To go back a year or two was impossible, absurd. To go back millennia—ah! that was . . . nothing.”⁸ This buckling of time is apparent in different ways. In geology, it is visible as the strata of rock and fossil records within a vertical slice of the earth; in archaeology, the double moment becomes evident as artifacts from past civilizations are unearthed and studied in the present. In *Fugitive Pieces*, it is evident in the lyrically poetic way that Michaels weaves various elements into her dual narrative. Within its many metaphors and images, the earth itself becomes a text that must be translated if we are to understand the past.

Donna Coffey refers to *Fugitive Pieces* as a “traumatic pastoral” and maintains that the novel’s recurring images of loss, nostalgia, and memory—set as they are among a specific set of landscapes—constitute a form of pastoral elegy.⁹ States Coffey:

in some ways, the pastoral has always been traumatic. The temporal and spatial displacements of the pastoral manifest the repression, latency, and projection characteristic of trauma. Pastoral is never written by people living in a golden age, in harmony with nature. It is written by people who attempt to recreate what they have lost.¹⁰

For Jakob, however, this loss is not simply of his family, but also of Biskupin itself. Even Jakob’s childhood home is layered in history; the clearest images Michaels gives the reader of Biskupin are not of the present-day village overrun by Nazis, but of the Iron Age settlement submerged until the 1930s in a silty lake. It is the peat bogs of this lake in which young Jakob hides himself after the murder of his family. When the Nazis arrived, Jakob recalls, “with delighted strides, they roamed the magnificent timber city, once home to a hundred families. Then the soldiers buried Biskupin in sand.”¹¹ This burial was not simply the filling in of an archaeological site; rather, it was also the burial of truth. After the destruction of both the townspeople and the archaeological dig site, the Nazi soldiers shot the remaining archaeologists and revised the archaeological record to indicate that Biskupin was Germanic in origin, rather than Slavic, in order to bolster both Aryan supremacy and the justification of Germany’s invasion of Poland.¹² “When a town is erased, its citizens murdered, their objects confiscated, and its buildings decimated, what happens to the memory of the place that is no more?” asks Shelly Hornstein.¹³ In *Fugitive Pieces*, Michaels seems to suggest that one answer to this question is that it lies buried in the memories of the survivors, waiting, until someone discovers it and begins the painstaking process of excavating it in order to re-member the truth that has been buried.

This process of excavating memory, for Jakob, is done at first through listening to Athos’s stories. These “poetic interpretations of geology, archaeology, and history shape Jakob’s consciousness”—and by extension his response to the trauma he ex-

perienced at Biskupin—perhaps as much as the elements of the trauma itself.¹⁴ Peta Mitchell suggests that Jakob is driven by “his genetic and historical burden of remembering the dead, and . . . the way in which these stories, maps, and rocks lay bare to him that memory cannot be separated from landscape.”¹⁵ As Simon Schama adds in *Landscape and Memory*, “in our mind’s eye, we are accustomed to think of the Holocaust as having no landscape.” He goes on to remind us, however, that the horrors of the ghettos, death camps, and mass burials were emplaced in a very particular way across the landscape of Europe.¹⁶ So, too, for Dalia Kandiyoti, “Michaels’s spatialization of Holocaust experiences alters both dominant notions of place and the notion of placelessness often associated with Holocaust literature.”¹⁷ Victims of the Holocaust, survivor or no, were consciously and systematically deprived of their physical geography by displacement—whether to concentration camps, ghettos, resettlements, or unmarked mass graves—or exile. It is only through their collective geographical memory that they are able to reconstruct some semblance of what was lost in that process.

But what does locating geography in memory rather than physical space do to place? Doreen Massey reconceptualizes “place” as an outgrowth of physical space based on “the particular set of social relations which interact at a particular location,”¹⁸ arguing that “social interrelations will be wider than and go beyond the area being referred to . . . The identity of a place . . . derives, in large part, precisely from the specificity of its interactions” with other spaces.¹⁹ Michaels’s novel, then, doubles place and placelessness not just geographically but psychologically. The result is that although, as Dori Laub writes, “the *presence* of Jews in Europe is marked mostly by an *absence*, by a *lack of place*,”²⁰ through the formation of even limited attachments to other places Jakob is able to partially reconstruct a personal geographic memory of place uncoupled from the physical site of his trauma.

As were the victims of the Holocaust, so too were the Iron Age inhabitants of Biskupin robbed posthumously by the alteration of the archaeological record by the SS—*Ahnenerbe*, causing Jakob to mourn that the Nazi policy of *Lebensraum* “devoured time as well as space.”²¹ Mitchell reminds us that

the only means by which Jakob (and Michaels) can convey this complex interpenetration of history, geography, memory, and landscape is through metaphor, a mode “annihilated” by the German language, which turned “humans into objects” (143) . . . His anthology, aptly titled *Groundwork*, documents his childhood experiences and “recounts the geology of the mass graves” (209)—in one move contradicting Theodor Adorno’s injunction that to write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric and providing a corrective to Simon Schama’s observation . . . Indeed, Jakob’s choice to become a poet suggests how vital poetry is to his task of reconnecting history and geography.²²

In order for Jakob to come to terms with the atrocity and horror he has witnessed, heard, and lived through, he must discard the old ways of language and learn instead a new way of speaking and writing. He must become what Hayden White calls “the writer who writes – himself.”²³ Jakob muses, “I already knew the power of language to destroy, to omit, to obliterate. But poetry, the power of language to restore: this was what both Athos and Kostas were trying to teach me.”²⁴

His growing reliance on, and transition into, the Greek and English languages as a means of expression, however, leave Jakob with mixed feelings: “The English language was food. I shoved it into my mouth, hungry for it. A gush of warmth spread through my body, but also panic, for with each mouthful the past was further silenced.”²⁵ His volumes of poetry are written in English, the language of his adult life in Toronto, “an alphabet without memory” that offers protection from the pain of the trauma.²⁶ He writes in his journals of his attempts to find healing precisely by expressing the void in language:

I felt this was my truth. That my life could not be stored in any language but only in silence . . . But I did not know how to seek by way of silence . . . I thought of writing poems this way, in code, every letter askew, so that loss would wreck the language, become the language . . . English was a sonar, a microscope, through which I listened and observed, waiting to capture elusive meanings buried in facts. I wanted a line in a poem to be the hollow ney of the dervish orchestra whose plaintive wail is a call to God. But all I achieved was awkward shrieking.²⁷

In her memoir *Auschwitz and After*, Charlotte Delbo speaks of a kind of doubling in language for Holocaust survivors, so that those who knew thirst and hunger in the camps could never use those words to mean the simple, everyday desire for food and drink.²⁸ In response, Kandiyoti supposes that “every moment is two moments; every word is two words; and, I suggest, every place is two places (or more) for the survivor for whom predisaster and exilic places are superimposed upon another.”²⁹ Even Zakynthos is a site of burial and loss. Just before the clearing of the ghetto there, Jakob writes, “the Spanish silver siddur with hinges in the spine, the tallith and candlesticks are being buried in the earth under the kitchen floor. Letters to absent children, photos, are buried . . . All across Europe there’s such buried treasure. A scrap of lace, a bowl. Ghetto diaries that have never been found.”³⁰

As Jakob grows to adulthood and settles into a semblance of a stable life in Toronto, a transition takes place in his consciousness, especially after Athos’s death. The site of burial, Jakob comes to realize, is not just the earth, but his own body. Michaels uses persistently repetitive images of buried or hidden bodies to represent this link. In speaking of his days in hiding on Zakynthos, he remembers that “while [he] hid in the luxury of a room, thousands were stuffed into baking stoves, sewers, garbage bins . . .

Jews were filling the corners and cracks of Europe, every available space. They buried themselves in strange graves, any space that would fit their bodies, absorbing more room than was allotted them in the world."³¹ Michaels also returns to this vision later in the text, as the discovery of prehistoric cave paintings by four French teenagers is chillingly juxtaposed against the creation of mass graves in Eastern Europe:

While Jews were crammed into the earth then covered with a dusting of soil, men crawled into the startled darkness of Lascaux. Animals woke from their sleep underground. Twenty-six feet below they burst to life in lamplight . . . Everywhere the earth was upturned, revealing both animals and men . . . At Delphi, the oracle proclaimed from a grotto. In the holy ground of the mass graves, the earth blistered and spoke.³²

Through these repetitive images, then, Jakob begins to realize that the text he must translate is also not simply earth but his own body. While the site of burial is crucial to translation and understanding — "it's as if we hear the earth speak," Ben says of Jakob's *Groundwork* poems³³—the language itself is the buried body, so that the body acted-upon becomes the body speaking, through the act of translation as a sort of unburial.

On the night he meets Michaela, his second wife, Jakob speaks of his body as a text reduced to the traumas inflicted upon him: "I know if she touches me, my shame will be exposed, she'll see my ugliness, my thinning hair, the teeth that aren't my own. She'll see in my body the terrible things that have marked me."³⁴ Later, however, as they become lovers, the opposite occurs, and he feels his body becoming unburied: "After years, at any moment, our bodies are ready to remember us."³⁵ As their love and trust deepen, he becomes able to tell Michaela what happened to his family, to Bella, and he is able to finally testify to the truth of the horrors he was unable to see, but nevertheless witnessed, through his presence on the other side of the wall—for hearing, too, is a kind of witness.

Here it may be useful to return to discussions of trauma theory, and bear in mind that Freud's original question, "*What does it mean for life to bear witness to death?* . . . is linked to another question, *what kind of witness is a creative act?*"³⁶ Put another way, "the act of witnessing and the act of testifying . . . are not coincident,"³⁷ and the very belatedness integral to trauma theory is what allows this transformation from witnessing into testimony to take place. That is, to transfer the burden of text from the ground to the body. Jakob describes this transformation as a physical translation of the body: "every cell in my body has been replaced, suffused with peace."³⁸

For Ben, the excavation of his own past is done through the process of searching for and reading Jakob's notebooks. Here Michaels again utilizes the image of the buried journal, as Ben addresses the dead Jakob:

In the end, when it was clear I wouldn't find your notebooks easily, I began to imagine you'd hidden them outside among the rocks, like the paper brigade which saved precious books during the war by burying them in the grounds around Vilna's Strashoun Library. Like all the letters of witness buried under the floorboards of houses in Warsaw, Lodz, Cracow. I even considered digging in your garden and in the sparse patches of stony soil surrounding the house. I imagined breaking apart the walls.³⁹

Here again is a continual burial and excavation of documents, bodies, and memory. Jakob recounts the posthumous transmission of memory from the bodies of genocide victims to the prisoners forced to exhume the corpses for more efficient disposal:

When the prisoners were forced to dig up the mass graves, the dead entered them through their pores and were carried through their bloodstreams to their brains and hearts. And through their blood into another generation. Their arms were into death up to the elbows . . . As they felt another man's and another's blood-soaked hair through their fingers, the diggers begged forgiveness. And those lost lives made molecular passage into their hands.⁴⁰

Just as Jakob tells the story of the exhumation of murdered Holocaust victims, so does Ben. Ben's recounting, however, takes on personal horror as the reader realizes that one of the prisoners assigned to the grisly task was his own father:

The remaining Jews and Soviet prisoners were forced to reopen the seeping pits and cremate the eighty thousand dead. *They dug the bodies out of the ground. They put their bare hands not only into death, not only into the syrups and bacteria of the body, but into emotions, beliefs, confessions. One man's memories, then another's, thousands whose lives it was their duty to imagine. . . .*⁴¹

These parallel narratives again illustrate how the processing of trauma in each of these cases occurred only belatedly, and then primarily through the stories or poems of an older man whose influence guides each narrator in some way. In Jakob's case, Athos takes the place of his dead father. In Ben's, Jakob's stories and poems supplement the stories of his own father, and at times replace the latter's silence.

This silence and broken narrative, so indicative of trauma, is also an indication of what Caruth calls "the incomprehensible imperative to live."⁴² The very belatedness that renders trauma survivors unable to immediately process their experience is also the key to beginning to heal from it. What seems like the sickness is also its own cure. While trauma is uncontrollable, excavation is deliberate. It is a regaining of this control over the sanctity of one's body and one's memories. Therefore, says Caruth,

"trauma is not simply an effect of destruction but also, fundamentally, an enigma of survival."⁴³ What this means for the survivor of trauma is that the repetition and temporal intrusions of the past into the present are not signs of death, but signs of life.

For Caruth, repetition "is not simply the attempt to grasp that one has almost died but, more fundamentally and enigmatically, the very attempt to *claim one's own survival*."⁴⁴ For Holocaust survivors, in particular, what this means is that the very memory that "stubbornly persists in bearing witness to some forgotten wound"⁴⁵ is crucial to their continued survival from the original trauma. "For the survivors of the Holocaust, simply to tell their story is a restitution, however inadequate . . . To remember forward—to transmit a personal story to children and grandchildren and all who should hear it—affirms a desegregation and the survivors' reentry into the human family. The story that links us to their past also links them to our future."⁴⁶ Even if this memory, or its narration and repetition, remains fragmented and partly buried, as with Ben's father, it is still a reentry, one that is to be carried out through his son, the one whose future was once so precarious that he could not even be named and was simply called *ben*, "son of."

Just as Jakob continues Athos's life work—not just of writing but of the proximal healing that comes from it—so he passes that life's work on to Ben, whose healing can only begin once he mourns the trauma sustained by his parents, which he learns after their deaths included the loss of two young children in the Holocaust, siblings Ben never knew existed. The final words written in the journals are addressed to Jakob's unconceived yet conceived-of child, whom he would have named after the sister whose memory sustained him in the bogs of Biskupin. Unlike Ben's parents, who were afraid to name him lest he be noticed by the angel of death,⁴⁷ Jakob has already named the children he will never have. Unbeknownst to him, Michaela is, in fact, pregnant. The afternoon they are killed by a passing car, she has left him a note echoing the unread words in his journal: "If she's a girl: Bella. If he's a boy: Bela."⁴⁸ Though there are no children born of the marriage, Michaels's positioning of Athos as Jakob's *koumbaros* allows for a doubling of lineage and kinship ties.⁴⁹ Through that same doubling, then, Ben and Naomi are able to form a similar bond with Jakob.

As Jakob says, "There's no absence, if there remains even the memory of an absence. Memory dies unless it's given a use. Or as Athos might have said: If one no longer has land but has the memory of land, then one can make a map."⁵⁰ In the retelling or transmission of traumatic memory, use is found. This is why, Jakob tells us, "it's Hebrew tradition that forefathers are referred to as 'we,' not 'they.' 'When we were delivered from Egypt. . . .' This encourages sympathy and a responsibility to the past, but, more important, it collapses time. The Jew is forever leaving Egypt."⁵¹ Similarly, by continued retelling and unearthing of what has been buried, the Jew is forever

leaving Auschwitz, even though he is also forever entering its gates. This incomprehensible simultaneous reliving and re-leaving of the traumatic event, Caruth suggests, is the impossibility that lies at the heart of trauma. “The repetitions of the traumatic event . . . thus suggest a larger relation to the event that extends beyond what can simply be seen or what can be known, and is inextricably tied up with the belatedness and incomprehensibility that remain at the heart of this repetitive seeing.”⁵² This historical linking through retelling is also evident in the saying of the Kaddish, the Hebrew prayer of mourning. “Kaddish connects not only son and father, but the mourner and all of the previous generations of Jews.”⁵³ The fact that in *Fugitive Pieces* it is Ben’s wife Naomi who says Kaddish for Ben’s parents, Coffey says, not only illustrates the “vertical time” but the “severing of the continuity of generations as a result of the Shoah.”⁵⁴ Memory has become a map, but the map yet remains incomplete. The Jew is still leaving Egypt.

The poetic weaving of the layers of Michaels’s text attempts to represent the Holocaust by “explor[ing] the possibility of a faithful history in the very indirectness of its telling”⁵⁵ and untangle history via “the unruly compulsions of poetry.”⁵⁶ In the end, her narrative, of necessity, remains unresolved. She cannot offer healing or salvation. The most a single author can do is perhaps best represented by the images Athos and Jakob confront as they trek across Greece, their own version of wandering in the desert after being led out of Egypt: “In the middle of a field of freshly ploughed earth, nothing anywhere, you’ll find someone has put up a sign: ‘This was Kanados.’ ‘This was Skines.’ All that remains of villages.”⁵⁷ Through the persistence of memory, even traumatic memory, absence becomes presence. Words, once written, even though they are buried, cannot be unwritten. This re-acknowledged presence, the absence-as-presence, the reabsorption of another’s text onto our own bodies—this, finally, is the only way to begin to rediscover the possibility of healing. This, in the end, is how Jakob’s journals represent both the burial of his traumatic past and his own and Ben’s rebirth. As with the trauma, the process of healing is ongoing and passed down through generations.

- 1**
Anne Michaels, *Fugitive Pieces* (New York: Vintage, 1996).
- 2**
Freud describes trauma as an organism's response to stimuli too great for the organism to handle, writing, "I think one may venture (tentatively) to regard the ordinary traumatic neurosis as the result of an extensive rupture of the barrier against stimuli." Rather than a physical stimulus, however, Freud asserts that the organism is responding to "the fright and the menace to life." Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, trans. C.J.M. Hubback (London: International Psycho-Analytical Press, 1922), 36.
- 3**
Bella Brodzki, "Teaching Trauma and Transmission," in *Teaching Representations of the Holocaust*, ed. Marianne Hirsch and Irene Kacandes (New York: Modern Language Association, 2004), 125.
- 4**
Brodzki, 128.
- 5**
Michaels, 140, 143, 161.
- 6**
Michaels, 93.
- 7**
Michaels, 209.
- 8**
Michaels, 30.
- 9**
Coffey refers to Athos's relationship to the prehistoric as "functioning as an alternative golden age" in her description of the traumatic pastoral she sees in *Fugitive Pieces*. Though geographic strata and archaeological sites generally produce a sort of scientific and historical narrative, Athos's elegiac descriptions are closer to the poetic form of a lyric – of which pastoral and elegy are types – rather than a narrative poem, which is more concerned with the story of events. Similarly, I would argue that the language produced by trauma, as it often cannot form a coherent narrative but instead focuses on imagery, impression, emotion, and sensation, might be closer to the lyric. Donna Coffey, "Blood and Soil in Anne Michaels's *Fugitive Pieces*: The Pastoral in Holocaust Literature," *Modern Fiction Studies* 53, no. 1 (Spring 2007): 43.
- 10**
Coffey, 33.
- 11**
Michaels, 6.
- 12**
Anne Whitehead, *Trauma Fiction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 70.
- 13**
Shelley Hornstein, "Fugitive Places," *Art Journal* 59, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 45.
- 14**
Coffey, 29.
- 15**
Peta Mitchell, "'The Stratified Record upon Which We Set Our Feet': The Spatial Turn and the Multilayering of History, Geography, and Geology," in *GeoHumanities: Art, History, and Text at the Edge of Place*, ed. Michael Dear, Jim Ketchum, Sarah Luria, and Doug Richardson (New York: Routledge, 2011), 76.
- 16**
Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (New York: Knopf, 1995), 26.
- 17**
Dalia Kandiyoti, "'Our Foothold in Buried Worlds': Place in Holocaust Consciousness and Anne Michaels's *Fugitive Pieces*," *Contemporary Literature* 45, no. 2 (2004): 304.
- 18**
Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 168.
- 19**
Massey, 169.
- 20**
Dori Laub, with Marjorie Allard, "History, Memory, and Truth: Defining the Place of the Survivor," in *The Holocaust and History: The Known, the Unknown, the Disputed, and the Reexamined*, ed. Michael Berenbaum and Abraham J. Peck (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 801.
- 21**
Michaels, 104.

22

Mitchell, 76.

23

Hayden White, "Historical Emplotment and the Problem of Truth," in *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the "Final Solution,"* ed. Saul Friedlander (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 48.

24

Michaels, 79.

25

Michaels, 92.

26

Michaels, 101.

27

Michaels, 111-12.

28

Charlotte Delbo, *Auschwitz and After*, trans. Rosette C. Lamont (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 264-65.

29

Kandiyoti, 315. For more on Delbo's doubling, see Lawrence Langer, *Holocaust Testimonies: The Ruins of Memory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991) and Michael Rothberg, *Traumatic Realism: The Demands of Holocaust Representation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

30

Michaels, 39-40.

31

Michaels, 45.

32

Michaels, 143.

33

Michaels, 209.

34

Michaels, 179.

35

Michaels, 181.

36

Cathy Caruth, "Parting Words: Trauma, Silence, and Survival," in *Acts of Narrative*, ed. Carol Jacobs and Henry Sussman (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 48-49.

37

Michael Bernard-Donals, "Seeing Atrocity: *Night* and the Limits of Witnessing," in *Approaches to Teaching Elie Wiesel's Night*, ed. Alan Rosen (New York: Modern Language Association, 2007), 100.

38

Michaels, 182.

39

Michaels, 262-63.

40

Michaels, 52.

41

Michaels, 279. Emphasis in original.

42

Caruth, "Parting Words," 50.

43

Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 58.

44

Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience*, 64.

45

Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience*, 5.

46

Geoffrey Hartman, "The Book of Destruction," in *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the "Final Solution,"* ed. Saul Friedlander (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 324-25.

47

Michaels, 253.

48

Michaels, 279.

49

Barbara Estrin points out that the importance Nazis placed on biological blood ties and family is "subverted" by Athos and Jakob's relationship. They form an alternative bond of kinship that is nevertheless a real family. Barbara L. Estrin, "Ending in the Middle: Revisioning Adoption in Benjamin Wilkomirski's *Fragments* and Anne Michaels' *Fugitive Pieces*," *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 21, no. 2 (2002): 288.

50

Michaels, 193.

51

Michaels, 159.

52

Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience*, 97.

53

Coffey, 35.

54

Coffey, 35.

55

Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience*, 27.

56

Méira Cook, "At the Membrane of Language and Silence: Metaphor and Memory in *Fugitive Pieces*," *Canadian Literature* 164 (2000): 29.

57

Michaels, 70.