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Anthem in Manuscript: Finding the Words

Shoshana Milgram

> There is some error, one frightful error, in the thinking of men. What is that error? We do not know, but the knowledge struggles within us, struggles to be born.
>
> Today, the Golden One stopped suddenly and said:
>
> "We love you."
>
> But then they frowned and shook their head and looked at us helplessly.
>
> "No," they whispered, "that is not what we wished to say."
>
> They were silent, then they spoke slowly, and their words were halting, like the words of a child learning to speak for the first time:
>
> "We are one . . . alone . . . and only . . . and we love you who are one . . . alone . . . and only."
>
> We looked into each other's eyes and we knew that the breath of a miracle had touched us, and fled, and left us groping vainly.
>
> And we felt torn, torn for some word we could not find. (86–87)

Two young lovers walk through the Uncharted Forest, knowing intensely the horror they have escaped but not yet conceptually aware of its cause or its cure. The Golden One tries to express her love for the man she has named "The Unconquered," but discovers that she cannot do so adequately without the singular pronouns designed to name unique individuals. As Howard Roark tells Dominique Francon in *The Fountainhead*, "To say 'I love you' one must know first how to say the 'I'."[1] Lacking the prerequisite, the Golden One cannot say "I love you." And being able to say "I love you" is indeed important. For complete

understanding, one needs "that full, luminous finality which is a thought named in words."[2]

Long before composing the book, Ayn Rand had grasped the main concept of *Anthem*—the role of individualism in human life. During the weeks of composition she was not groping vainly for the substance behind the breath of that miracle. She wrote this work quickly, from a one-page outline, with the aim of immediate magazine publication. There are fewer large differences (in total, and even in proportion) between the manuscript and the published version than was the case for any of the full-length novels.[3] Whereas, for example, the manuscript of *We the Living* has traces of an affair between Victor Dunaev and Rita Eksler, and the manuscript of *The Fountainhead* includes a long, philosophical conversation between Ellsworth Toohey and Roark, the manuscript of *Anthem* contains no episodes that were not ultimately included in the text (with the minor and partial exception of the hero's memories of events from the time before the opening of the narrative proper).

The manuscript, however, shows numerous smaller-scale changes (and Ayn Rand was to make additional small-scale changes in revising the 1938 text for the second edition in 1946). The differences include revisions that are apparent directly on the page (cross-outs and additions) as well as those that can be inferred from a comparison of the manuscript with the published text. In writing *Anthem*, Ayn Rand made continual revisions in vocabulary, syntax, and details.

Why did she make so many small-scale changes, by contrast with the paucity of large-scale changes? She did not need to make large-scale changes because she knew her theme well, and because she had had in mind, for more than a decade, the basic idea: a future world that has lost the use of the singular pronouns. But she found herself needing to make numerous small-scale changes partly because, as she said, "the attempt to have that semi-archaic style was very difficult," and she did not always know how to achieve her desired effect.[4] Not yet fully confident in her command of English, she was endeavoring to write in two additional foreign languages: not only English, but also the language of the collectivist society of *Anthem*, and, later, the language of the hero after he has discovered the word and concept he had been missing.

Not only that, but she was attempting to present the first-person perspective (in her only first-person fictional work of any length) of a noble soul whose conscious convictions are false and at war with the principles by which he lives. What he *says* is not always what *is*—and even he knows it. In the passage above, he is "torn for some word we could not find" (and it is not even clear if

the "we" refers to one person or two). It is not surprising that his author, writing about him in multiple foreign languages, also looks for words she does not immediately find, and that the manuscript shows that search.

Why did Ayn Rand initially include numerous narrative and descriptive details that she eventually omitted? Perhaps she intended from the beginning to write more than she needed. The draft, in fact, is approximately twice as long as the length she stated in her outline. In the case of *The Fountainhead*, she said that she intentionally wrote more than she expected to retain, and she made the decisions about what was to be cut only after its completion.[5] With that novel, her cuts led to omissions of entire episodes and even characters. With *Anthem*, by contrast, her cuts do not affect the story line. The omitted passages are, for the most part, appropriate for *Anthem*, and appear to be omitted in the spirit of "less is more." In a few cases, though, the omissions or modifications of details show her eliminating a possibly confusing implication or guiding the reader firmly to a powerful realization.

By examining the manuscript, we observe the alternatives she considered, the difficulties she encountered, and the decisions she made.

She began with a one-page, hand-written outline:

<u>Plan</u>

I. We are sinners. We should not write, but we cannot help it. It is a crime to write. [*crossed-out*: Only writers and secretaries can do it.] Where we are. What he is doing and why. How he gets there. His day. How he missed his career. [*crossed-out*: his sins and his plan of redemption. It is bad to feel so always]

II. Liberty 5–3000. Who she is, where he saw her. First incident of her interest in him. His guilt. About the mating. About his friend smiling.

III. The general vague fear in the House and his joy in the tunnel. He was reprimanded for singing. His sin of joy. The Saint of the [*crossed out*: Unspeakable] Unmentionable Word.

IV. Incident with [crossed out: Liberty] the Golden One. (the names)

V. The Light. Pride of self. His [matchless?] value. Plans about the Council.

VI. He is caught. The torture. His waiting for the Council.

VII. In the forest. Account of Council meeting.

VIII. His days in the forest. Hunger. Hunting. The brook and the wreath.

IX. The Golden One joins him. Love scene. His doubt about the truth of others. [Pride]

X. They find the abandoned mansion. He will read the books.

XI. His new philosophy. [*crossed-out*: Their new worries.]

XII. Gives new names. Laws for the future. Their child. The crowd will gather. What they will fight for. History. We shall all die, but we shall be glad to die. The word that will never die.

[*crossed-out*: 5 typewritten pages per entry. (about 7 written) About 50 pages (12,500 words).]

She followed the essence of this outline: the journal written in the tunnel, the two values (love and the light), the threat to the light, the escape, the union with the beloved, the discovery of the house and the word, the dedication to fight for the future of Man. The only substantial change in order is that in the outline, a second encounter with Liberty followed the memory of the Saint, whereas in the text, the memory of the Saint is followed by the account of the discovery of the light.

She modified subtly the atmosphere of the conclusion. She intended to write about the couple's "new worries," but removed that concern from her plan. Perhaps in a similar spirit, she intended to have her hero expect to die (as did Kira Argounova in *We the Living*) physically defeated but spiritually triumphant; later, she removed that expectation as well. In the text, Prometheus is confident of ultimate victory.

She did not follow her projected restrictions on length: in the novel itself, the chapters were not equal in length, and the total length exceeded her estimate. Nor does the actual content of each chapter correspond to the content indicated in the outline: for example, the hero was originally supposed to remember the death of the Saint in the third chapter—rather than in the second.

The hand-written manuscript itself is in two parts, chapters 1–5 and chapters 6–12. Part 1 concludes with page 72, and the pagination starts again with part 2, which concludes with page 66. (For clarity, I identify pages in the first part with the page number plus A, and pages in the second part with page number plus B.) There are no gaps in the text, but there is evidence of missing pages. For example, there was once another page between 14A and the following page (on which the number has been changed from 16 to 15). Judging from the crossed-out lines on the top of page 15, the missing material had to do with Council elections. The

manuscript is longer than the version published in 1938 (which itself is longer than the edition published in 1946), and it includes passages that are crossed out on the page and others that were omitted before publication. In editing, Ayn Rand did much more cutting than expanding. (The only substantial addition to the manuscript—a passage that appears in the 1938 edition and has no equivalent in the manuscript—is the description of the alleged achievements of the Council. This passage, which appears on pages 14–15 of the 1938 edition, was not included in the 1946 text.)

The handwriting is often very hard to read, especially when the words have been crossed out. Looking at the changes, though, is worth the effort. What Leonard Peikoff wrote about the changes from one edition to the next applies as well to the changes in the manuscript: "If (ignoring the concrete issue of biblical style) you study her changes and ask 'Why?' as you proceed, there is virtually no limit to what you can learn about writing—Ayn Rand's or your own."[6]

One can begin with the editing for vocabulary and syntax, where the meaning appears substantially the same. A purposeful change in wording is the substitution of "toil" for "work" in the phrase "to lighten the burden of their toil, to do their toil for them" (A68). The word "work" emphasizes the goal, the purpose, the productiveness; the word "toil" emphasizes the strain, the effort, the pain (and, accordingly, "toil" is the word used repeatedly in the text). The expression "to do their work" is the ordinary mode of expression; to write instead "to do their toil" is to call attention to the oddness of the language and the corresponding oddness of the world. The entire sentence, originally included in what is now the central paragraph on p. 75 of the 1938 edition, was ultimately dropped, but the book retains the emphasis on the drudgery of "toil."

A more significant purposeful change pertains to the sacred word "I." Originally, the crime of the Saint of the Pyre was that he knew and invoked the "Unmentionable Word" (A53), a locution analogous to the term "Unmentionable Times" (which denotes the unchronicled and dimly remembered time period before the world's decline). But using the same adjective for both the word and the times did not allow Ayn Rand to highlight the significance of the word "Ego" itself, which denotes the concept of the self. The erasure of historical facts is bad, but the loss of a concept (especially that particular concept) is much worse, and much more important. For "Unmentionable Word" (which she crossed out) she substituted "Unspeakable Word," which she had at first written in the outline, and which not only makes a distinction between the word and the times but coheres with the religious network of

images. The "unspeakable word" in some religious traditions (e.g., the Tetragrammaton in Judaism) is the name of God, and so it is here. When the hero finally learns and speaks the unspeakable word, he identifies it, clearly and repeatedly, as a god:

> And now I see the face of god, and I raise this god over the earth, this god whom men have sought since men came into being, this god who will grant them joy and peace and pride.
>
> This god, this one word:
>
> "I." (97)

A change from active to passive voice increases the emphasis on the passivity of the denizens of the degraded world. The adult men and women were originally said to "go to the City Palaces of Mating"; this phrase was crossed out. Instead, they "are sent there" (A41). The change in voice enhances the meaning.

But the manuscript shows, in addition to this sort of editorial improvement (i.e., making the writing clearer and stronger), evidence of a struggle with language that is more severe than anything in the existing drafts of the other novels. For example, Ayn Rand wrote a line between "we" and "against" (B8) and later filled in the word "lunged." She wrote extremely awkward sentences, which she eventually omitted, e.g., "We have done these things, and they give us no shudder" (A32) and "We were not a thing which lived, but only a thing which ran" (B18). She chose, then rejected, awkward words. In the manuscript, a Council member calls the hero "You scum and filth of the swines" (B14), which in the published 1938 text became "You scum of the swines" (p. 92) and which was omitted entirely from the 1946 text.

The manuscript also shows her deliberations about adopting the style of the King James Bible. On the one hand, she frequently uses archaic syntax, and she makes changes on the page to increase this use: for example, "we do not think" becomes "we think not," and "do not frighten us" becomes "frighten us not" (both on A40). Several archaisms, as Robert Mayhew observes, were dropped for the 1946 text.[7] But the manuscript also shows that she wrote, and then omitted, some phrases that referenced not only the style of the Bible, but actual Biblical phrases. For example, she initially wrote (as the creed of the collectivist world): "Ours is the power and the glory and the truth forever" (A3), which was replaced by "one, indivisible and forever." The reference is to Matthew 6:13. (John Galt refers to the same Biblical verse in his speech: "They had known that theirs was the power. I taught them that theirs was the glory."[8]) She wrote, and removed, the statement (as part of the society's beliefs) that "there is no will on earth save good will to all men" (A46), which refers to Luke

2:14. She occasionally used a Biblical phrase such as “pass understanding” (Philippians 4:7), which appears in the description of the Saint: “there was a pride in them and a calm which pass understanding” (p. 58 in the 1938 edition). In the 1946 edition, though, she removed this phrase, and she generally avoided the specific quotation of a recognizable Biblical formulation.

The manuscript shows, finally, that she had to correct herself to avoid inadvertent singulars. She wrote “body” instead of “bodies” (A12), “The will of my [instead of “our”] brothers be done” (A17), “There is [instead of “are”] Fraternity 2–5503” (A49), and (in an error re-introduced into the fiftieth anniversary edition, 50), “they led him [instead of “them”] to the Pyre” (A53). Much as, in her outline, she wrote “he” rather than “they” or “we” for her hero, she wrote in the manuscript, at several points, the correct singular word rather than the plural mandated by the language of the Damned.

There is some evidence that she deliberated about the setting or action appropriate to the characters. On the very first page, for example, there was “wind in the tunnel, coming from we know not where. Perhaps it is [rushing?] to some city lost under the earth,” and, because of the wind, “The candle trembles in the wind” (A1). But she crossed out the passage about the wind, along with the hint of the lost city. She wrote instead, on the same page: “It is dark here. The flame of the candle stands still in the air. Nothing moves here. We are alone under the earth.” This version emphasizes the speaker’s aloneness. In a silent world, only he speaks. In a static world, only he moves.

Another example is the response of the Golden One when the hero calls her “our dearest one.” Ayn Rand initially wrote: “Then the Golden One laughed suddenly, and shook [*crossed-out*: her] their head, and looked away from us, as if to hide some fear of their own, and their laughter was troubled. And they spoke fast, as if they wished words to conceal things rather than reveal them” (A63). This version shows that she is nervous, knowing that there is no place in their world for the emotion they experience. This, of course, is nothing new, and her nervous behavior makes the reader a bit uncomfortable. In the revised version, she replies with an implicit expression of love. Silent, with her palms open in submission, she looks at the hero, and then brings him water.

Numerous other changes, on the level of sentences and paragraphs, involved the selection or modification of narrative or descriptive details. Many of the revisions concern passages that are appropriate, but were ultimately deemed superfluous. For example, the hero, in the manuscript, describes as follows the House of the Infants:

> [*crossed-out*: It was the tallest building of the City, for it had six floors. Each year was different to us, for each year we were moved to live one storey higher, while new babies came to the first floor the fall of each year.] The sleeping halls there were white and clean and bare of all things save one hundred beds. [*crossed-out*: As we moved higher, the beds grew larger and we could see more roofs from our windows. In all else there was no change.] (A6)

Of this description, only the sentence about the sleeping halls was retained; the rest was cut.

Similarly omitted were the circumstances under which he fought with the other children: "We kicked them when they came to be in our way, standing in line for the swimming pools and when they [pushed ahead?] of us in the line for supper" (A6). This information does not add to the basic fact (that he fought with the others, and was the only one to commit such a "transgression"). Although his fighting appears to be motivated by a desire to protect his rights and his privacy, to ward off interference, the incidents, as described, might even weaken the characterization by implying that he was impulsive or impatient.

In the manuscript, he recalls that he yawned when hearing the history of the Councils, and would have been lashed if a "kindly spirit" had not kept him from being seen (A13). In the published text, he says only that he did not listen well to that history. Although mentioning the yawning adds some sensory detail to the passage, sensory detail is in fact not a prominent factor in the first part of *Anthem* (with the major exceptions of the descriptions of the Golden One, the light, and the torture). In the second part, after his escape from the City of the Damned, the world is more worth seeing, and he describes it in more detail. It is possible, too, that Ayn Rand wanted to omit his mystical belief in a "kindly spirit" (a mysticism that on p. 17 of the 1938 edition is suggested by the reference to "demons," which was dropped for the 1946 edition).

The manuscript contained additional information about the reports of the Councils of Trades. Crossed out, for example, was the following passage:

> Then the Councils of the houses of the other Trades mount the pulpit to tell us about their Trades, for all the workers must know about all the work of the world. So they tell us about the work of the Plumbers, and how they do it, or the work of the Tailors, or the work of the Musicians. And two of

> our Council of Street Cleaners are away, telling at the Houses of those other Trades about Street Cleaning. (A21–22)

Originally the program of Social Recreation, which in the published text consisted of plays, included songs and stories as well:

> [*crossed-out*: The chorus from the House of the Musicians sings the hymns for us on the stage. Then the Readers come onto the stage and read to us, together in one voice, a chapter from the latest story written by the House of the Authors. The stories are about the different trades and the good work they do.]

There follows a brief description of the plays, as in the published versions. Later, Ayn Rand decided that the plays were enough to describe the program of Social Recreation, and she cut from the description of the plays the following sentences:

> Sometimes evil men are shown in the plays. The evil are always alone and they wear black tunics with scarlet horns on their head. They have committed the crimes of laziness or preference, in that they [illegible] to like one brother more than the others. For that they are always punished and the two great choruses turn their backs upon them in scorn. The plays are good and teach us to know what we must not do. (A22)

She originally had her hero recall the time limit of his "education."

> [*crossed-out*: We had not learned all that is prescribed for us to learn when we came to the age of fifteen. This was because there were too many children in our class who could not learn very fast. This is the law: if a class is not fast, it cannot stay in the House of the Students longer than [illegibly crossed out]. Ten years is the time allowed for learning, not one day more and not one day less. If a class is not fast, we all leave the House of the Students with our program unfinished. They cannot remain there longer, for they must make room for the new students who come each spring, and they must go to work when their work is needed. Otherwise, it would impede the plans of the Central

> Council of World Planning and the world would come to an end.] (A11)

This passage makes the specific point that the good students are held back by the slow learners, and that the schedule of completion is considered more important than the acquisition of knowledge. But, given the nature of what the hero learns, it is possible that Ayn Rand omitted the description not only because we already know that collectivism is bad for learning, but because the passage might remind readers of the old joke: "The food in this restaurant is simply awful. Not only that, but the portions are too small."

In editing the manuscript, Ayn Rand also removed a passage emphasizing the prohibition against preference in studies, and the statement that toil for the State is the universal goal:

> Each morning, as we came into the classroom, the Teachers said to us: "Now begin the day, our children, and give equal care to each art and science you learn. For all the arts and sciences were prescribed for you by the Council of Education, and are of equal importance, so that should you show a preference for one over another, you would be rebelling against the wisdom of the Council of Education." Furthermore, it is evil to show preference for any one man, beast or thing on earth, for all things are equal." That did the Teachers tell us, and also this: "You are not learning here because it pleases you. You are learning so that you may become useful toilers of your State." (A12)

Both of these points (the sin of preference and the ideal of service) are made elsewhere, in numbing repetition, and hence could be omitted here without loss.

Ayn Rand initially included (but crossed out on the page) information about vigorous physical activity, e.g., "Then we run around a track, and we jump over wooden barriers, and we throw a big ball to one another" (A21); the 1938 text (pp. 22–23) includes only the more moderate exercise of standing in rows and stretching (and even this exercise was removed for the 1946 edition). Why these cuts? Possibly because running and jumping are signs of health, and health—even if it is said to be for the purpose of working for the collective—is a value incompatible with the diseased metaphysics of the world of the Damned.

In recounting his memories, Equality 7–2521 reported, in the original text, on two particularly horrifying aspects of his

society, both of which are no more than hints in the published version. The first has to do with the List of the Damned:

> It was when we had come to our twelfth year that we, Equality 7–2521, began to fear the List of the Damned. When a class ends its learning, at the age of fifteen, the Council of the Teachers meets and composes the List of the Damned. No men know who the Damned are or why. Only the Teachers know. It is said that the Damned are those who are not like their brothers and who will never be like their brothers. So that they have to be destroyed. There is a great iron cellar under the Temple of the World Council and in the spring of each year all the men and all the children of the City gather in the great square of the Temple of the World Council. Then the Damned are led down to the cellar and the iron door is closed. There is a great fire in the cellar and two small barred windows. We all of the City stand and watch the smoke rising from the windows. It is a blue smoke

The text cuts off here, on A9, and A10 is missing. The next page, A11, continues: "Solidarity 2-3650 was not dismissed from their post and we were not put down on the List of the Damned" on the missing page. Apparently, Equality recounts an incident in which he came close to being placed on the List.

If Ayn Rand had removed the burning of the Damned in between the first and second editions, one might assume that she was trying to avoid the implication of a specific reference to the Nazi concentration camps. But she removed this passage in 1937, while writing (and left only the reference, earlier in the text, to being locked in a Dark Place, A7). Maybe the reason is that physical force is not the primary agent of control. Perhaps, too, this episode was removed in order to reserve the term "the Damned" for those who are truly damned.

It is possible, too, that the idea of the List of the Damned was introduced in order to set up an episode with Solidarity 2-3650 (an episode described on a page that has not been preserved), and that, when Ayn Rand decided to cut the episode, she omitted the List as well. One might imagine, finally, that if there were a list of those who are different from their brothers, Equality's name would certainly be on it, and that would be the end of the story. There would be no plausible explanation of how he managed to avoid being burned in the cellar; he cannot blend, no matter how he tries.

Another painful passage, written in the manuscript but crossed out, concerns the Madness:

> And as we all undress at night, in the dim glow of the candles, our brothers do not look into one another's eyes, for they all fear the Madness. It is whispered that the Madness is a new disease, for it came into being since the Great Rebirth. It strikes as lightning, without warning. And they whom it has stricken, scream of a sudden, and gnash their teeth, and froth runs from their mouth, and their face is no human face, but only a mangled, howling face of raw hatred, and it is hatred with their brothers. They leap upon the men around them and they kill as many as they can reach. Then they must be seized and put to death, for nothing can (cuts off here, on A49).

This is followed by what appears to be an alternative version, also crossed out:

> We have seen the Madness once in our sleeping hall. It struck Solidarity 3–2294, who were the gentlest lad in the House, shy and devoid of all harm. We have heard the scream, and we wish to forget it. We have seen their face, and it was no human face, but only a mangled, shapeless thing of raw hatred. And it was hatred for all their brother men. We saw them choke three men in the hall, with their bare hands upon their throats, they, Solidarity 3–2294, who had been feeble and fragile. And we saw them, as the guards carried them away, bite the hands of the guards and howl like a beast. (the text cuts off here, on A50.)

The description of the Madness—the transformation of even the meek into savage beasts who attack their "brothers"—is, in the text, reduced to the statement that people scream in the night. Possibly the scream is enough to convey the psychological trauma of life under collectivism. Possibly, too, Ayn Rand reconsidered the implications of having people become stronger through illness and hatred.

The hero's observations in the tunnel were originally conveyed with more detail—probably cut for space. For example: "[*crossed-out*: And there were braided cords running along the walls, but they were not cords, for they felt soft and gummy under our fingers and like no substance we had ever touched]" (A28). Later:

> [*crossed-out*: Then we looked about us, at the tunnel, and at the walls of the tunnel, and suddenly

> we understood. Those glass bulbs on the wall. . . . The men who had built the tunnel must have had light under the ground, yet we found no candles and no torches and no places to hold torches, but those glass bulbs were spaced in such manner that they would have lit the tunnel, had they given light. And now we knew. They had given light. And the light had been carried to them by the copper wires. And it had been the light of the power of the sky, the same light which glowed before us.
>
> We know not how this was done, nor whence their power came. But what matters it! We know that it was done. We can do it again.] (A67)

This passage may have been cut for space, or for the statement that not knowing how the bulbs worked does not matter, or for the implied over-confidence in his belief that he can make light bulbs even though he does not know how. The following, too, may have been cut for over-confidence.

> [*crossed-out*: We shall wait for the World Council of Scholars. The Scholars will understand.] Just one last month. Then our road will be open to us. Our road without end. Our road to be traveled with the power of the sky lighting the way. Nothing can stop us now. Nothing is impossible to us. (A71)

The manuscript has a paragraph, crossed out, about the hero's reception on his return to his House:

> The Council of the House were waiting for us in the entrance hall. There was no light in the windows. The House slept, and all those in the House, but not the Council. We stood before them, and they had been looking at the door when we entered, and so their eyes did not move, nor their faces. And then the oldest of the Council asked us, without moving:
>
> "Where have you been?" (B1-2)

This passage may have been edited out for space, or for the implication that the House Council members are good at their job, i.e., are purposefully watchful.

In the following sequence, in which the hero, despite being tortured, refuses to say where he has been, the manuscript included gruesome sensory metaphors of torture. Ayn Rand commented that she had some "concern with torture," and she speculated that it may have begun when she read in Maurice Champagne's *The Mysterious Valley* (1914) about Cyrus's defiance in the face of the

threat of torture.[9] The climax of *Atlas Shrugged* was her final fictional torture scene; this scene in *Anthem* is the first. Among the phrases written, and crossed out, are: "And we felt we were being ground through a red grill" (B4) and "And two thin needles whirred in our ears, whirling and grinding and burrowing deeper into our brain, and we wondered when they would meet" (B5). The command that Equality shall be lashed "till the pulp of their body is fit to feed to the hogs" is crossed out and replaced by "until there is nothing left under the lashes" (B14). In revising the torture sequence for the 1946 edition, Ayn Rand removed still more of the gory details.

Also crossed out is a passage in which a judge expresses amazement at the hero's tenacity in maintaining his silence:

> The three greatest judges of the City came and stood looking upon us as if they could not believe the sight of their eyes.
>
> "Wretch," the oldest said to us, "had we not been Judges and known that as such we cannot be stricken with madness, we would think now that our senses have gone from us. For no creature such as you has ever been beheld by men, nor is possible. To defy the will of the Councils and to refuse them is not a thing to be uttered in words, yet you have done this thing. What will can be holding your tongue, wretch, when there is no will on earth save the will of our brothers?"
>
> "We know not," we answered, "but we cannot speak." (B7)

This scene, while not necessary for the story, is emotionally powerful. Perhaps it was cut because the judge is admitting puzzlement. To do so is implicitly to acknowledge the value of understanding, i.e., of the mind. But the leaders of the world of the Damned depend on denying the mind its role in existence. The speech of the oldest judge, moreover, contains an explicit singular, i.e., "no creature such as you has." The hero's defiance comes close to triggering the return of the language (and the concept) of the singular person.

The sequences following his escape contain several passages that were cut for the first published version, and some of these were shortened still further for the second edition. In the manuscript, for example, the hero describes as follows the first time he saw his own image:

> We sat still and we held our breath not to frighten the picture away. [*crossed-out*: Then we moved our

> hand, and the hand in the water moved also, and we knew that it was our face and our body before us.] [The rest of the paragraph continues as on p. 104 of the 1938 text. Following this paragraph:]
>
> [*crossed-out*: We forgot to drink for a long time. Then we drank, and sat still again, waiting for our picture to return. And we looked and looked upon it, and our thirst for it was greater than for water. We knew how evil it is for men to have concern for their own bodies, and we said so to ourselves. But the lips on the face in the stream were smiling.] (B24–25)

The material crossed out in the manuscript has no equivalent in the text; possibly the passage crossed the line from pride to self-absorption. In the manuscript and in the 1938 version, there follows a paragraph, dropped for the 1946 edition, in which the hero adorns himself with a wreath.

Here is another post-escape passage that appears only in the manuscript—with some sentences crossed out on the page, and others excluded later. The hero celebrates the experience of freedom.

> [*crossed-out*: We walked till we were tired, and we rested when we wished, and we walked again. We gathered wild berries on our way, ripe and bursting with juice. We ate when we were hungry. We drank when we were thirsty. We stopped to look upon each other, when our happiness seemed too great to bear and made us doubt the truth of what had befallen us; then we stopped to be certain, to let our eyes tell us that we were still together.] And as we walked, our heart would not believe that we were now free to look upon the Golden One whenever we wished, to speak to them aloud and not whisper, to touch their body and have no fear. [*crossed-out*: and no one to stop us. We know we had no right to this. But our heart laughed at all rights.] (B31)

The entire paragraph is cut (probably for space) in the published text, which proceeds directly—and with good reason—to the couple's first night together.

Here are two more omitted passages, similarly positive in spirit:

> [*crossed-out*: For this life and the joy of this life pass all understanding, and the mind which was our mind in the City would not have believed nor

> conceived of it. We have always thought without questions that to live was to feel pain, and to be weary, and to hate, and to obey. But we have found that this is not true. We have found that joy is not a word that means only less pain, but that it is a thing real and true and possible.] (B33)

> [*crossed-out*: We have found that the earth is beautiful, and the air of the earth is sweet. We awaken in the morning and we wish that our day would not end. We fall asleep at night, and we wish for the morning to come. We have learned to be strong, to be proud, to be free. We are free. Now we have written it. It is a strange word which keeps coming to us, again and again, as a call, as a portent. There is some secret in this word, which we can not fathom.] (B34)

In editing, Ayn Rand also omitted description of the closets and rugs in the house from the Unmentionable Times. Closets, as a luxury feature, are unknown to the hero, who has lived only in a time when there was no need for a place to store an individual's clothes. "We opened doors which opened upon holes cut in the wall" (B40). Similarly unfamiliar are the rugs:

> And there were great pieces of velvet upon the floors, soft and sinking under our feet, and we both laughed at this, for it seemed that they had been put there for no reason save to make men's steps a pleasure, which could not be, for men do not do things for a reason such as this. (B39)

To indicate how unfamiliar the hero is with rugs, Ayn Rand has him use one of them as a blanket or bedspread. After the Golden One falls asleep and he carries her to bed:

> [*crossed out:* We put the strange light covers of the bed over their body, but we wished them to be warm, so we took the velvet piece from the floor and added it to the covers.] (B43)

This incident also shows his tenderness toward the woman he loves. Nonetheless, the prospect of placing a rug (even a velvet rug) over the body of the beloved is a bit incongruous, and cutting it avoids unintentional humor.

The description of the details of the house, to be sure, is significant. This passage about beauty is itself beautiful, and coheres well with the theme of *Anthem*. The hero identifies

pleasure as the purpose of these strange objects, and the contrast between his pleasureless world (because, after all, pleasure is an individual experience, and his world does not recognize the individual) and the world of the past is an important one. In a passage crossed out in the manuscript, he infers that the house itself is evidence of the will that formed it.

> [*crossed-out*: But the great wonder is that this house had been made beautiful. It did not happen to be so, it had been made so. It was not accident, it was a will which had made these rooms, for the joy of the eyes of men, and for the comfort of their bodies. Never had we known that a house could be beautiful or comforting to men.] (B40)

His explicit statement is not only an acknowledgment of beauty and comfort as implicit in the old world and as absent in his, but a non-mystical version of the Argument from Design, which states that the existence of a divine creator can be inferred from the order of the universe. Here, the hero infers from the nature of the house the existence—and the values—of the man or men who built it.

There are two small changes in detail after the hero discovers the concept "I." The first is that in the manuscript, he originally communicated his discovery immediately to his beloved; one can see on the page, though, that Ayn Rand added in the sentence: "Then I read many books for many days" (B56). The phrase "many days" may be a dramatic exaggeration. (What was the Golden One doing, during those days? If she didn't see him, wouldn't she have wondered where he was? And if they did see each other, how could he have held his tongue?) Nonetheless, the point is that his thirst for knowledge and understanding—especially at the time of the great discovery—exceeds even his love for the Golden One, and that this was an important point to make. In a similar spirit, Roark tells Gail Wynand that what he feels when he walks through a building is much greater than being in love.[10]

The second small change is the way the hero thinks of his fight against the world of the Damned. In the manuscript and in the published text, he speaks of returning to the City for the friends he left behind, and of building a protective barrier of wires: he intends, in other words, to give sanctuary to those who share his values, and to prevent intrusion by those who do not. In the manuscript, though, he also speaks of new weapons: "And strange weapons shall I build for myself, and strange new engines of power" (B59). It is, of course, true that he would be capable of constructing weapons far more effective than any the Council of Scholars is likely to devise, but mentioning military ammunition is

anticlimactic in the context of the greater issues and the fiercest battle ahead.

In addition to the passages analyzed so far, all of which reveal Ayn Rand's purpose and purposefulness, there are some passages of particular philosophical interest, in that the changes show her avoiding philosophically confusing implications. Most of these occur in the final chapters, after the discovery of "ego," but one earlier passage, from the description of education, is as follows:

> And we learned about the bones of men, and the fur of beasts and the wings of the birds. And we learned not to believe the Old Ones in the House of the Useless, when they whisper that in the Unmentionable Times before the Great Rebirth men could fly like the birds. We know that this cannot be. (A14)

The hero acquires knowledge of objective reality—the physical make-up and capacity of the human body—that contradicts the true but vague statements of the Old Ones. But there are, in reality, no contradictions. The truth is that—as he eventually learns—men could fly, but not by their unaided bodies, only in the machines they built. But this passage, by itself, might suggest that knowledge is a negative, and is thus misleading.

Another possibly misleading passage occurs when he speaks, in the first part, of his "curse," including his "cursed" preference of a particular woman:

> [*crossed-out*: It is the curse in us which whispers in our heart and teaches us to say 'Yes' and 'No' to all things. But men may say nothing save 'Yes,' for all must agree with all.] (A39–40)

This passage is, I believe, related to a later passage in *Anthem*: "All things come to my judgment, and I weigh all things, and I seal upon them my 'Yes' or my 'No'" (p. 128 in the 1938 edition; as Robert Mayhew points out, this passage is reminiscent of Nietzsche's style and was excluded from the 1946 edition[11]). The passage is crossed out in the manuscript, perhaps, because it does not make literal sense. People in the City of the Damned obviously do say "No." The point was that people were forbidden to have individual preferences and judgments, but the point is made elsewhere more clearly.

The most extensive philosophically significant changes and cuts in the manuscript occur, as one would expect, in the final two chapters. In the first of these chapters, the hero speaks of his discovery of the concept "I" and, in general terms, of its meaning

to him and to his life. In the second, he addresses his plans for the future struggle, i.e., the specific existential consequences of his discovery.

Among the passages omitted from Chapter XI is the following:

> [*crossed-out*: It is shameful for man to have a master. But the shame is multiplied ten thousand fold if he has ten thousand masters. It is agony for man to have his desires commanded unto him by another man. But the agony is multiplied ten thousand fold if his desires are at the mercy of ten thousand other men. It is a disgrace to man if his thoughts are received by him second-hand from the mind of another man. But the disgrace is multiplied ten thousand fold if his thoughts are received by him ten-thousand-hand from ten thousand other minds.] (B52–53)

This passage may have been cut because it is an exaggeration and because it appears to emphasize numbers as such. Its implications are not clear. Granted, collectivism is monstrous—but second-handedness itself is evil in principle regardless of the numbers involved.

Another omitted passage, also confusing in its implications, appears to undercut objective truth:

> [*crossed-out*: There is no Truth for all, and no eyes to see nor a voice to speak the Truth for all. There is only the Truth of the one and his Truth for each one. I am the guardian of my truth.] (B47)

In a later passage (also eventually omitted), the hero states that truth is individual in the way that joy, values, and choice are individual.

> I am. I think. I will. I am, for I know joy in living. But there is no joy for all, and no [way?] to know joy for all. There is only the joy of the one, and his joy for each one. But if the joy of the one is forbidden, then all joy is forbidden on earth.
>
> I think, for I judge and I choose my truth. But there is no Truth for all, [*crossed out:* and no eyes to see for all,] nor a mind to judge for all. There is only the Truth of the one, and his Truth for each one [*crossed out:* if he is such as can fathom this word of Truth]. But if the thought of the one is forbidden, then all thought is forbidden on earth.

> [*crossed-out*: I live, for I think. But there is no brain which thinks for all.]
>
> I will, for I know my desires, and I am free in that which I desire. But there is no will for all, and no heart to desire for all, and no hand to [reach?] the desired. There is only the will of the one, and his will for each one. But if the will of the one is forbidden, then all will is forbidden on earth. (B53–54)

In the 1938 text, some of these implications survive in the hero's statement that he is the beginning and end of all Truth (128); the 1946 edition removes the confusing implication that one can choose one's own truth.

Another philosophically significant revision concerns the statement, crossed out and omitted from the same chapter, that he came to understand "why my body knew the truth which my mind had been taught not to grasp" (B56). There follows a statement retained in the 1938 text: "For there is truth in my body, and no centuries of chains and lashes can kill this truth in the body of man" (136–37). (The 1946 edition eliminated the reference to the body.) The hero appears to be saying that there is a clash between the mind and the body. What Ayn Rand meant to imply, I believe, is that there was a conflict between his healthy, rational sense-of-life (or preconceptual grasp) and the mistaken conscious convictions he had adopted as a result of his education. Describing the subconscious/conscious conflict as a mind/body split is a stylistic device that may reflect Nietzsche's style, as Robert Mayhew points out;[12] it is clearly problematic, though, in view of Ayn Rand's eventual formulation of mind/body integration (which, as I will shortly point out, she was already approaching in this text).

A related passage is found in the first part of *The Fountainhead*:

> He felt at times as if the beams and girders were shaping themselves not into a house, but into a barricade to stop him; and the few steps on the sidewalk that separated him from the wooden fence enclosing the construction were the steps he would never be able to take. It was pain, but it was a blunted, unpenetrating pain. It's true, he would tell himself; it's not, his body would answer, the strange, untouchable healthiness of his body.[13]

Even if the mind/body split is a misleading way to describe the situation, the situation can exist: sometimes the subconscious is

right and the conscious mind wrong. But the misleading implication does not mean that Prometheus or Ayn Rand failed to recognize the crucial value of reason. The hero understands that the mind is his means of survival, and the cause of the victory he anticipates over the world of the Damned. The manuscript in fact shows the explicit identification. Initially, his discovery is "I am. I live. I will." But, right on the page, the discovery becomes: "I am. I think. I will" (B46).

My final topic, in examining the manuscript in the light of the outline, is the matter of the hero's willingness to suffer and die, and his expectation that he will do so. The outline stated: "We shall all die, but we shall be glad to die." But this is not the last word on the subject.

Along the way, the author progressively removes the emphasis on possible martyrdom. Consider, for example, a passage cut from the first part:

> [*crossed-out*: We have lost all fear of the laws. The Council may take our body, and they may have it broken and they may have it torn apart till our blood runs onto the earth. But something will be left to us, unbroken and untouched. That thing is our curse, our evil curse which we are blessing.] (A41–42)

He sounds like Rostand's Cyrano de Bergerac, proud to cherish and brandish his *panache* even as he loses all else, including life. He sounds like Kira in *We the Living*, holding on to her vision of life as her life's blood drains from her body. But the hero of *Anthem* is not Cyrano or Kira.

In the manuscript, he initially makes a distinction between his body and his discovery of the light, as if the body is nothing and the light is everything. He states: "We care not about our body, but our Light is above all things to us" (A71) and "[*crossed-out*: We cared not about our body and the punishment which awaited our body, but we could not betray the tunnel]" (B1). In the published text, there is a crucial change:

> We care not about our body, but our Light is . . .
>
> Yes, we do care. For the first time do we care about our body. For this wire is as a part of our body, as a vein torn from us, glowing with our blood. Are we proud of this thread of metal, or of our hands which made it, or is there a line to divide these two? (p. 77 of the 1938 edition)

The mind and the body are a unit; his work is an expression of his self. The work should live, and so should the man who did it.

The 1938 version, to be sure, includes some statements (omitted for the 1946 version) that indicate a willingness to die if necessary. He believes that he "may not be here to see" the final victory (146), and he says that he and his chosen friends "may fail" and "may perish" (147), as the first have perished in the past. But, even in the manuscript, he emphasizes the glory and nobility of the very moment he has reached, along with the glorious future he expects.

> [*crossed-out*: I have read many books, and I have learned much, and I know that I shall learn much more as I read and work. The earth and the story of the earth are re-born in me. It is a great story, though it had its dark places, its sins and its sorrows. But it is the story of man's spirit and of the great struggle of man's spirit. Then a black abyss opened before man and swallowed the story. I stand on the other shore and I am ready to carry it on. These books are the bridge over the abyss of the dark ages behind me.] (B57–58)
>
> Then here, upon this mountain top, with the world below me and nothing above me save the sun, I shall live my own truth. As a challenge to the lies of my brothers will it be, this life of mine—and as a reproach. [*crossed-out*: My home will be the haven of all those who are strong, who are proud, who are free among men. My home will be the beginning of the world's re-birth and the coming of a new race of men.] (B59–60)
>
> [*crossed-out*: And the years which unrolled slowly behind men taught them but one lesson: that all their good, and all their wisdom had come drop by drop from the spirit of one, from some man, some one man who appeared here and there through the ages; that all their evil and all their folly had come as floods from the many, the many men who knew no thought and no power save in their numbers. For all truth comes from one. And all evil comes from the many. And those who stood alone brought their light to the world, but the many fought against all light, be it the light of an artist or the light of the scholar. And those who stood alone suffered and perished at the hands of the many. But their light and their truth did not perish, for even in their defeat and in the death of their bodies they were the

> winners and the conquerors. And with each victory they won, mankind took a step forward in spite of itself. This is what the old books call civilization. It was the work of the few. The many contributed nothing to it, save the impediments. But the few moved forward, and the human race moved with them. [Then come the sentences, included in the 1938 text on p. 141, explaining what freedom is.] And dimly men saw that their goal and the road to their happiness was in setting man free, each man free of all chains, that the best of them may fulfill their destiny, and the others may gain by the gifts of their betters in spirit. And so man fought the battle of freedom through the ages.] (B61–62)

The paragraphs above were cut from the manuscript, possibly for space, possibly because the explicit discussion of the issues was more appropriate for the scale of Roark's speech (which is anticipated here). But the ideas in these paragraphs are the ideas that inspire the hero, who faces his battle in the spirit conveyed by the statement: "anyone who fights for the future, lives in it today."[14]

Ayn Rand decided to conclude *Anthem* in a spirit not of martyrdom and anxiety, but with the hero's solemn, self-dedicated nobility, suspended between the heroism of Kira's death in action and the heroism of Roark's and Galt's triumphs. Prometheus would have been willing to die, but he expects to live, as a man. And the manuscript ends, as does the published work, with the sacred word "Ego." Like Roark and Galt, he stands, after much struggle, with the woman he loves, and at a height.

In examining the manuscript of *Anthem*, we observe fewer philosophically significant changes than is the case for the full-length novels. Not surprisingly, the author's philosophical grasp of the issues did not change in the time between writing the first page of the manuscript in the late summer of 1937 and publishing the first edition in 1938. She did, however, wrestle with matters of language, and we see on the pages the marks of that struggle. Her hero struggled, too—and not only because he lacked the word and the concept of the ego, but because he had been taught that it "is a sin to write this," i.e., that it was wrong to write for himself alone, and that it was wrong to live for his own sake. She also carefully pared down the narrative and descriptive details; it was, as she told Rose Wilder Lane, a poem.[15] Poems are characterized by concise, distilled, emotional intensity.

Small in length, *Anthem* is not small in subject. Even in a work designed for magazine publication, Ayn Rand was not capable of writing anything trivial, or of giving her ideas less than

her best and fiercest efforts. This book presented distinct challenges that she labored to meet. It had, as she wrote to Paul Winans, "the same theme and spirit [as *The Fountainhead*], though in an entirely different form. In relation to THE FOUNTAINHEAD, ANTHEM is like one of those preliminary sketches that artists draw for their future large canvases."[16]

Why did Ayn Rand decide, during the writing, to emphasize her hero's confidence in his eventual triumph rather than his willingness to die in battle? She did not say, and I do not know. She was, in her larger project, trying to solve her plot problem with *The Fountainhead* in order to be able to conclude the novel with Roark's complete and ultimate triumph rather than with Toohey's temporary victory, i.e., the Stoddard Temple, the destruction of which Roark accepts (much as Prometheus would have accepted a valiant death). She was several months away from devising the episode of the Cortlandt explosion, which allowed her to show Roark winning over everyone and everything—but, even without the specific means of showing his victory, she knew that victory was the only possible outcome for *The Fountainhead.* And if that is true for a novel set in a real time and place, how much more so for a story set in a universe invented by her. Prometheus could and should win, and he could and should know it. It was surely no sin to write that.

And, having written *Anthem*, Ayn Rand went on to plan and compose *The Fountainhead.* Not far from the end of that novel, she wrote, for Wynand, a paragraph that speaks for the hero of *Anthem* and for its author as well:

> He thought—while his hand moved rapidly—what a power there was in words; later, for those who heard them, but first for the one who found them: a healing power, a solution, like the breaking of a barrier. He thought, perhaps the basic secret the scientists have never discovered, the first fount of life, is that which happens when a thought takes shape in words.[17]

NOTES

1. Ayn Rand, *The Fountainhead* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1943; Signet fiftieth anniversary paperback edition, 1993), 376.

2. Ayn Rand, *Atlas Shrugged* (New York: Random House, 1957; Signet thirty-fifth anniversary paperback edition, 1992), 347.

3. The manuscript and outline of *Anthem* are found in the Ayn Rand Papers at the Library of Congress. I have made use of the bound

volume of the photocopies of the papers, at the Ayn Rand Archives. For pages A52–55 and A61–65, the copies of which were entirely dark, Fred Bauman of the Library of Congress made copies for me of the originals.

4. Leonard Peikoff, introduction to the fiftieth anniversary American edition of *Anthem*, by Ayn Rand (New York: Signet, 1995), x.

5. Biographical interviews (Ayn Rand Archives), and Ayn Rand, *The Art of Nonfiction: A Guide for Writers and Readers*, ed. Robert Mayhew (New York: Plume, 2001), 162–63.

6. Peikoff, introduction, xi.

7. Robert Mayhew, "*Anthem*: '38 & '46," in the present volume, pp. 33–37.

8. Rand, *Atlas Shrugged*, 967.

9. Biographical interviews (Ayn Rand Archives).

10. Rand, *Fountainhead*, 550–51.

11. Mayhew, "*Anthem*: '38 & '46," p. 39.

12. Mayhew, "*Anthem*: '38 & '46," p. 39.

13. Rand, *Fountainhead*, 175–76.

14. Ayn Rand, "Introduction," *The Romantic Manifesto: A Philosophy of Literature*, revised edition (New York: Signet, 1975), viii.

15. Michael S. Berliner, *Letters of Ayn Rand* (New York: Dutton, 1995), 293.

16. Ayn Rand Papers (unpublished), September 9, 1946, Ayn Rand Archives.

17. Rand, *Fountainhead*, 642.