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Editor
James Potts

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Editor's Notes and Acknowledgments

We were fortunate again to have an outstanding scholar as keynote speaker. Thomas Bonner, of Xavier University-Louisiana spoke on the varied and inevitably complex literary history of New Orleans. Erudite, enlightening and funny (assuming we can use that word in academia), his address was a highlight of the conference. We are all grateful for the generosity of such scholars to the association.

The conference has reached the point where we host many papers that wind up in high profile journals. Typically we are thrilled to land the ones we get for POMPA, and in the case of presentations such as Professor Bonner's, which will be in *Mississippi Quarterly*, and Noel Polk's, which will be in *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* or other times when a paper clearly deserves a larger audience than we can provide, we (with my apologies for this semi-imperial "we") are excited when it gets one, and grateful for getting to showcase it and to hear it first at the MPA conference.

The conference, despite its moniker, happily continues to draw from a wide geographical area (from Texas to Delaware). The conference for 2010 will move to the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, then to Jackson State University. The specialized interests of the conference seem to be both shifting (no Shakespeare papers last year?) and widening; partially the geographical movements of the conference and the various budget crises of this extraordinary year have brought this about; we hope the next two conferences help us to maintain our base but to add new members. Again, the administrators at Mississippi College provided additional financial assistance for putting on the conference, so special thanks are due to Dean Gary Mayfield and Vice President of Academic Affairs Ron Howard, as well as to my colleagues in the English Department at Mississippi College.

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Fiction

James Fowler

University of Central Arkansas

History

The Jaycees are in trouble. They've already spent their mulligan on that medieval question and haven't a clue whose administration gave rise to the Teapot Dome scandal. Rather than admit ignorance, they shoot off wild guesses like rank amateurs in a duck blind. It's Randy Polk's turn to represent, so he steps up to the mike and tries to buy a little time.

"Well, your Honor, it's like this . . ."

He gets his general laugh, and even an official smile from the bench, consisting of the county judge, police chief, and mayor. The last, still a little sore from this mattress king's successful campaign against the proposed millage hike, replies half jokingly, "No cushion for you. Ten seconds."

A hard question demands an obscure answer, so Polk squares his shoulders and nominates Weatherford D. Hayes, that middle initial an expression of bluff confidence.

In reply the county judge rings the brass bell loaned by the fire department. A groan goes up from the Jaycee cheering section. Polk's nemesis Ollie Sharp calls out, "It's Grant, you idiot."

At this moment the hapless mattress vendor notices the figure of Griff Rhodes shambling among the tables with what is likely a spiked lemonade in hand. The "damn it all" muttered under his breath is picked up and amplified by the sound system. That veteran newsman's squint and cocked head may suggest dulled senses, but as any number of citizens in Opal Spring and its surroundings have learned, his eyes, ears, and nose in particular work just fine still. Polk can already picture the readership of *The Buckstaff County Register* having a guffaw at his expense. Not that many of them could come up with the right answer, but that won't stop them from making Weatherford D. Hayes jokes at him for the next year, until some other poor sap steals the history-bee spotlight with an even bigger stumble.

Griff has indeed recorded Polk's public misstep in the long version of the article even now taking shape in his head. The pillow-top man's fate however hinges on the number of column inches available. If it's only fifteen, his shame will have to spread though word of mouth, a powerful

enough engine in a small town. Twenty-five, though, and it will be enshrined.

Over by the snack table his boss, Effie Phelps, is conversing with Mac Clark, president of the historical society, which sponsors this event. Sure enough, the defeated Polk is edging his way toward her. He's not stupid enough to press for censorship of Griff's coverage, but he probably will inquire about rates for a larger ad. And it would be just like Effie to take his money and run the piece with Polk's folly on the same page.

At seventy-eight she's got as much spit and vinegar as ever. When her doltish brothers nearly ran the Grayson family paper into the ground, she got her aged father to turn the operation over to her. That was thirty years ago. One of the first things she did was hire Griff, fresh out of college with a degree in history. If he'd majored in journalism or, God forbid, communications, she would have sent him packing. Newspaper style he could learn; she wanted a reporter with savvy, one who brought long views to local doings.

Still, the fact he'd been born and bred hereabouts didn't hurt his chances. And he had seen the world three counties over during college. Upon returning home and looking for a job to tide him over until he settled on a career, he filled out an application with the *Register*, thinking he might distribute papers in his truck or copy-edit at most. Effie liked what she saw and made him a cub reporter under Stan Mitchell, who'd come out of retirement as a favor to Effie's father to help get the paper out of its hole. Within five years Griff learned the ropes well enough to take over as chief, and practically sole, reporter. It seems his career had found him.

So has Beryl Barnes. Relieving him of his glass and trying its contents, she says, "I'll take what you're having."

There are not many in this town who could separate him from his drink, but Beryl is one. "Now I'll have to step outside again for some lemonade helper."

She toasts the proposal, then suddenly sidles a bit to the right.

Griff glances behind him. "Hiding from Eileen, are we?"

"Yes. It's another damn school fundraiser. Just because I have kids there doesn't mean I enjoy planning squeeze jobs. If this cheap-ass town would pass a tax increase once a generation we wouldn't have to bother so much with this crap."

He gives her a sympathetic look. He feels it too. Though seven years his junior, she shows the lines of domestic middle age. At twenty-three she had resilience as well as spunk. The steady grind of family life has left her with a dissatisfied, plaintive edge.

“Tell you what. I’ll run interference if she comes over. Dangle a promo piece on the school festival in front of her.”

As if conjured from the crowd, Eileen starts her approach. Caught, Beryl chooses the hard place, making for her husband, an oil-lube-touchless-wash owner who is sponsoring a team. Seeing only Griff, at the last moment Eileen swerves toward Tom Isley, manager of a local steakhouse.

High and dry, Griff discreetly pours additive into his unleaded lemonade at the refreshment table and scans the competition. Against all odds, the team of wage slaves from Dollar Circus is still in the running. Griff overheard Speck Barnes opining that the kid now answering the question on the Tennis Court Oath is a ringer. It is true he looks more clean-cut and intelligent than the usual lot restocking toothpaste and laxative at the discount store. In fact, he has only been seen there the past few days, and will probably retire soon after the tourney.

With only four teams left out of a starting field of twelve, the questions are getting more serious. At first they were of the slow-pitch wiffle ball variety, fit for middle schoolers. Even so, the tattoo-parlor and sporting-goods teams tripped up on the Louisiana Purchase and Charles Lindbergh, respectively. Next, the plumbers checked out at Watergate (a coincidence that Griff will underline with the lightest of ironic touches). By round six the questions would have challenged tenth graders. The oil-lube-touchless-wash team confused Pocahontas with Sacagawea. Then the line workers from the electric-motor plant added penicillin to Edison’s list of achievements. Each of these bowed out gracefully though compared to the team from the Christian bookstore, which argued with some conviction that Lincoln did too debate Frederick Douglass. Finally the police chief drowned them out with the brass bell and declared the judges’ ruling final.

Proceedings are interrupted so contestants in the Hundred Square can be eliminated. Numbered ping-pong balls roll randomly out of a tumbling cage and are simultaneously announced and X’d from a projected grid. Purchasers have paid \$100 apiece for a shot at a \$3000 grand prize, so the cries of dismay are heartfelt.

This part of the fundraiser almost didn’t happen, being challenged in district court by Laney Stafford, chairman of the Family Matters Council. The issue finally came down to a fine point concerning exemptions to the state’s anti-gambling law. At one time the Council usually got its way, but Griff has tracked a gradual decline in its powers, evidenced by its frustrated attempts to stop private clubs from getting liquor licenses. The conservative bloc in the county has basically split into anti-vice and pro-tax-revenue

camps. If anything can counter morality, it's business. Not that the Victorian houses of prostitution will be coming back anytime soon.

Outside the VFW Hall—where liquor can also be served but isn't for the present event—Laney and the six oldest of his stepping-stone clan are picketing. Mrs. Laney has produced one new Stafford per annum for the past eight years. There is another on the way, on schedule. Along with the Ten Commandments, which he has repeatedly erected on the courthouse lawn, only to have the plywood tablets removed early the next morning, Laney takes the be-fruitful-and-multiply directive quite literally. If his progeny do likewise, in a few generations the God-fearing population of the county will get a significant boost. For now, though, Laney and his ducklings will have to hold the line as best they can, the three eldest boys dressed like their father in black cotton pants and long-sleeve white shirts buttoned to the neck, the girls in granny-length plaid jumpers with long-sleeve white blouses buttoned to the neck. The two youngest at home being boys, there is some speculation whether Mrs. Laney will follow the pattern or slyly deviate with a stray stitch. In fact, a betting pool has sprung up on this very outcome, with odds running 2-1 in favor of a man-child.

Griff has had occasion to interview the patriarch a number of times over the years, though he refrains from the public sport of Laney-baiting. A strange kind of détente has risen between them. Rather than berate Griff for strong drink and presumed liberal views and lifestyle, Laney makes muted reference to bent-knee sessions on his behalf. Griff in turn points out to scoffers how the man does do his share of good works, such as hauling off tons of debris in his flatbed after that tornado touched down on the outskirts. The older he's gotten, the less inclined Griff has been to mock.

At the Shamrock Realty table Charise Durbin is leading a cheer for the home team, contestants and supporters alike decked in their regulation green polo shirts. Charise's husband Glenn owns the business. Once it's clear that Griff is not marriage material, whatever his virtues as a drinking companion and conversationalist, his ex-girlfriends go on to do pretty well for themselves, at least as far as comfort and security are concerned. And because bedding down has never been a central feature in his relations, encounters with these women, even in their husbands' company, are seldom awkward. Around the hall this very afternoon he can count four previous connections, not one rueful or reason for ducking.

"I'll bet you're pretty damn pleased with yo'self for trashin' my career. You ain't nothin' but a busybody what goes pokin' his nose where it don't belong. Don't go thinkin' it'll be your ticket out this hog trough

neither. You'll be pushin' slop at that raggedy excuse of a paper till you or it fold. Either way, I'll be whoopin'."

Tyrone Meeks, ex-manager of Action Video and padder of late charges, has blindsided him.

Griff remains cordial. "Looks like you landed on your feet. Window-tinting, isn't it?"

Meeks glares. "Bet you think you're funny. Tell you one thing, I'm gonna beat that rap. I'm gonna beat that rap, then I'm gonna make a load of money and I'm gonna run this damn town." This last he says loudly enough to turn heads, including those of the police chief and county judge. Finger still pointed at Griff, he retreats into the crowd.

Effie comes up. "I see you've been exchanging pleasantries with Mr. Meeks."

Griff smiles. "You mean the future Pooh-Bah of Opal Spring. Would you believe I couldn't interest him in a subscription?"

Despite his light comment, they're both all too aware how low the numbers are. Griff is the only fully salaried employee on staff, and he's paid modestly enough. If Effie didn't take nominal wages, or if her husband Milo didn't run the press as a retirement hobby, Tyrone Meeks' wish would soon come true.

"We'll scrape by anyhow," Effie asserts in her smoker's gravel. "Did I tell you we sold a running ad to that bail bondsman? That'll bring in another hundred a week. Now we won't have to charge ole Purvis."

It's a longstanding joke. Purvis Dix, the paper's sports correspondent, is one of those guys who, never any good at sports himself, becomes an enthusiast and haunts the sidelines at every game. Absolutely dependable, he submits more stories than the weekly *Register* could ever use, all for free of course. To manage the flow, Effie and Griff have batted around the idea of charging him for space as they would an advertiser. The pathetic truth is he would probably go for it, especially if it meant publishing all his pieces. There was actually some question in his mind whether he or Griff should cover the history bee, what with the competitive element and all.

Conscious of his pay, Griff does give value for the money. On average he writes two to three articles a day, six days a week. When free of distraction he can pound out thirty column inches an hour, copy so clean Effie says it makes her role as editor superfluous. And if he does stay at the *Register* until he keels over, it won't be for lack of offers elsewhere. Both Memphis and Little Rock have made overtures. He's fairly sure it's not a simple case of inertia. It just seems that if a man can know a place the way

he knows Buckstaff County his epitaph won't be a sorry one. What he would really like on his headstone is name, dates, and —30—.

Effie breaks off mid-sentence to go collar BJ for his latest stupidity. The man takes after his low-watt uncles. Much of her precious free time Effie spends bailing him out of some screw-up or other.

Down front the team from Federated Title teeters over the abyss. The question is the name of the city where the British colonel Gordon made his last stand. Prepped by his teenage children, the guy on the spot knows they covered this one. All he can remember, though, is their laughing over the joke answer "Kaboom." With the clock ticking, he falls on his sword and blurts out "Timbuktoom." And then there were three.

In the next round the Young Lawyers resort to a tactic that boomeranged on an earlier dropout. Thinking to knock the lawyers off the field, the day-spa team ponied up the \$100 necessary to fob off what seemed a tough question about elevators. After conferring, the lawyers simply announced that they would pay the same amount to return the inquiry to its rightful owners. The first party strongly objected, but after perusing the manual the county judge ruled with some reluctance in the lawyers' favor. Feeling outmaneuvered and outbid, the day spa collectively protested at the mike with a moment of silence.

Now the lawyers pass a real stumper to the Dollar Circus team, knowing full well they can't afford to deflect it. Even the ringer is a little hazy on Canadian history, and between them his teammates can only come up with hockey players and that mounted policeman who's a cartoon, so the discount-store delegation shuffles off to aisle five.

A break is taken while the ping-pong balls are winnowed down to the final five. At this point the finalists have to decide whether to split the purse or proceed to a winner-take-all round. By a 3-2 vote they opt for the latter, which will occur after the bee is completed.

The sure winner here is the historical society, which will clear the ten grand it needs to purchase a working 1930 pumper engine from Cletis Bryant. It's worth much more than that, but Cletis is getting on and wants to ensure it stays in the area and is properly kept. The county museum will now have a centerpiece it can run in parades and use as a focal point for fundraisers.

Unlike those who come to see their own generation's place in the scheme of things belatedly, Griff has been steeped in the ongoing story all his adult life. In spare hours he has combed through old copies of the *Register* going back to the first issue in 1922. At the county library he's done likewise with microfilm archives of its predecessor, *The Buckstaff*

Clarion. For the past decade or so he's toyed with the idea of writing a book based on the mass of material in his head. His facility is such that the text would probably roll right out if he ever got that first sentence down. He's even imagined doing the Kerouac thing with a scroll of paper and a supply of Irish coffee. Maybe a day will come like any other and prove the day he starts.

For now though he records the death struggle between the realtors and the young lawyers. Everyone including the realtors knows that the god of dumb luck has been smiling on them up to this point. They have on average gotten the easiest pitches of any team. And while they may have been liberal-arts majors in college, their nights are not spent on serious reading. Still, the astronomy question directed to the lawyers has those jurists scrambling between Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo. In this final round they can't buy their way to victory, so their spokesman ventures "Copernicus" and gets the bell. Someone suggests, "Try Pavlov, you curs," and elicits laughter tinged with malignant merriment.

The realtor whose turn it is to speak for the team is pressed by her fellows to go with Galileo, but a vague memory buzzes in the back of her mind as she steps up to the plate. It has to do with the strange name of her astronomy professor's rat dog. In explaining it he shared interesting facts about the namesake's contributions to stargazing.

"Tycho Brahe."

Consternation gives way to exulting as the judges nod in approval. Charise Durbin, ever girlish, turns a victory cartwheel. Griff grins.

Once the noise dies down, the last four ping-pong balls roll to elimination. Lucky 13 carries the day. A triumphant Tyrone Meeks emerges from the background waving the winning ticket overhead.

"Ain't no justice," mutters Tom Isley as he crumples his runner-up ticket, having voted himself out of a sure \$600.

But Griff catches a glimpse of Steele Cobb at that moment. The prosecuting attorney's poker face is as set as ever, though something about the eyes says he now knows exactly how large a fine he'll seek in Tyrone's case. The lady with the scales hasn't quite finished her balancing act.

As Griff's gaze passes from him to the rest of his townsmen, Effie Phelps considers the newsman himself. Lately she's enlisted her grandson's wife to help with the ad sales and accounts. The girl is a quick study, and should make a good business manager someday. With that side of things taken care of, and assuming that he outlives her, Griff could be the paper's next owner-operator, because she sure as hell won't turn it over to BJ. Griff can already do all the editorial tasks she does. And to lighten his load he can

hire a cub reporter fresh out of college, some kid with more ink in her blood than she realizes. Maybe the enterprise will have to fold anyway, or go online or take some other form beyond her old sight, but all she can do is hand it on and wave goodbye.

She turns without so much as a parting nod and heads outside for a smoke.

Poetry**Yvonne Tomek****Delta State University****On Valentine's Day**

Today, millions of
Starlings have converged on
The ground of a neighboring yard,
Pecking at granules of nothing, and then
To mine, swooping to the tree tops, then low,
Then over my roof, like Crop Dusters, as I look
Into their dark flight from my window. There
Is no full moon, no Solstice, only the great
Fault in the heart of the earth that moves
Under this Delta land, as it turns from

Cold to warm
 To cold again
Sending,

As if by a Magician's hand, the
Twist of a vast black cape
Snapping in the head-
Winds of a winter
Day.

Drafting**The Lawn Mower Incident
March, 2007**

When the pebble ricocheted
Against our garden window door,
It sent an impact like a Meteor on our
Primitive earth.

No

It sounded like a gunshot
In the silence of a Sunday
Afternoon.

No

It set in motion an Ice Storm
Of fractures crackling for hours
Like finger lakes in all
Directions.

But to be sure,
The window swallowed up in
Filagree is prettier now than when
It was unscathed.

And soon,
The Contractors will replace it
With another plane of glass.

“Safe”, we will say, and
“Smooth and Neat”.

But I think that Beauty is
The fragile state between two
Worlds of holding on and letting go.

The seedling in the open field,
The greenstick break,
The apple pulling from the branch,

Or when the cloudburst casts in
Grey design to fathom rain or sleet or

Winds that blow,

And somewhere deep, instead, from
Ancient script or mind is written loveliest,

“An early Spring time fall of snow.”

ESSAY

Sonja Luther

University of Southern Mississippi

Translating the South: Berthold Viertel's German Translation of Tennessee Williams's *A Streetcar Named Desire*

The translation of a text from one language into another is only the first stage in the translation process of dramatic literature. It is the an extraordinarily difficult one because, besides his or her own interpretation of the work, the translator's job is to translate the author's intentions as closely as possible without knowing them, although in the end, as Armin Frank proposes, "[The] translator is [still] a reader among many. He does not translate the source text *as such*. We have to account for his hermeneutic situation as well. And the briefest way of putting it is to say that the translator does not translate a text but his understanding of it," thus, it will never be a one-to-one translation of the source text and the translator's interpretation can always be "regarded as a document of translational reception" (15, 17). Nonetheless, inaccuracies in the translation are a problem in the case of Tennessee Williams's *A Streetcar Named Desire* since the translation is the only version of the source text available to some readers, which has deep impact on the audience's reception of the play. The impossibility of creating a one-to-one translation does not take away any of the translator's responsibility to remain as faithful to the source text as possible. After all, it is not his creative work but that of the author, and it is the translator's job to spread the author's words and ideas to a non-English speaking country.

A Streetcar Named Desire premiered in Zürich, Switzerland in November 1949 and in Pforzheim, Germany on March 17, 1950 (Wolter, "Cultural Context" 200). Although today some theatres use new translations by Bernd Schmidt or Helmar Harald Fischer, Berthold Viertel's translation, published by the Fischer Verlag in 1954, has been the only German version of *Streetcar* available at bookstores.¹ Unfortunately, Viertel's translation has inaccuracies, mistakes, and amended comments and directions which are not found in the English New Directions edition of the play nor in the American Acting Edition.² Many of Viertel's changes and deletions are most likely due to Viertel's insufficient knowledge of American English, especially Southern dialect and Southern culture. Furthermore, Viertel's own creativity

may have influenced his changes as well. Unfortunately, these errors have an enormous impact on the audience's reception and can cause misconceptions, which I will discuss in this article. I will further examine the difficulties of translating literary works, and especially dramatic works, by taking a close look at Viertel's translation and discussing a number of its errors and the origins of those errors. What the examples of translation errors demonstrate is that in order to create a translation that is as accurate as possible, Ortrun Zuber affirms, "[It] is important for the translator to obtain all various text editions of the original and as much information about the play's meaning and the dramatist's intention as possible" ("Translation of Non-Verbal Sign" 73). In addition, the translator not only needs to be familiar with the culture of the target audience but also with the culture of the characters and the world they live in.

Berthold Viertel (6/28/1885 – 9/24/1953) was a theatre director and author of essays and poems. In 1923 he founded the expressionistic theatre group "Die Truppe" in Berlin (Kaiser 7).³ From 1925 till 1928 Viertel worked in theatre and film in Germany and then lived in exile in the USA and Great Britain from 1928 until 1948. However, he never lived in the American South, which means that he had no full knowledge of Southern culture and dialect. In December 1948 Viertel moved back to Vienna and worked as a director in productions in Zürich, Vienna, and Berlin. He focused his production work on the newer American plays at the time, some of which he translated himself, for instance, works by Arthur Miller and especially Tennessee Williams. When he translated *Streetcar*, he had to do it under the pressure of a deadline and did not use Williams's original script of the play but the precursor of the Acting Edition (Zuber, "Problems of Propriety" 98). Thus, the examples from Viertel's translation provided in this article will be compared to the released Acting Edition and the 1951 New Directions edition, and they will show that Viertel tried to remain loyal to the Acting Edition in many cases; however, the translation includes many sharply misleading changes that alter the symbolic meaning of Williams's words and his intentions.

The translator is the mediator between cultures and languages and, therefore, it is his or her responsibility to provide a translation as faithful to the original text as possible. However, the work of the translator is more complicated than just translating one word into the targeted language. The translation of a literary work is an intricate task because, as Frank declares, "the relationship between the source and target text is not binary but triangular" (15). Jan Walravens provides a more detailed explanation on the pitfalls of translation:

The transposition of one semiotic system to another occurs primarily at two levels: *denotation* and *connotation*. At the denotative level, the literary translator's job is similar to that of all other translators: a 'horse' *is* a 'horse' in that images of horses across the world probably coincide sufficiently not to cause any loss of meaning when you translate 'horse' by 'cheval' or 'paard'. But the connotation involving horses may differ greatly from one culture to another, e.g. when it comes to *eating* as opposed to *riding* them.

Tennessee Williams's heavy symbolism makes the task of translating his language to another semiotic system even more difficult because his symbols do not always have the same connotation in other cultures or there is no similar word for it in the foreign language. A case in point is the word 'desire' which does not have a comparable word in German. Instead, it is necessary to use several German words to describe the English word "desire."

The title of *Streetcar* gives us an aperture into Viertel's incorrect translation, and several critics, among them Jürgen Wolter, agree that the translated title, *Endstation Sehnsucht*, was inappropriate. *Endstation Sehnsucht* is unsuitable because it leaves out important information about the play, which is given in the original title (Wolter "Cultural Context" 202). Among other things, the English word "desire" stands for an enduring and passionate longing or intense yearning, a strong physical inclination, and erotic urge: sexual attraction or appetite. The German word "Sehnsucht," however, simply means "longing," without any sexual connotations. According to Viertel's translation, the central theme of the play is Blanche's longing for understanding. The idea of Blanche's, Stanley's, and Stella's sexual desires is completely suppressed, as Zuber declares, "The German title relates exclusively to the character Blanche, while the original title refers to Stanley and Stella and their relationship rather than to Blanche" ("Translation of Non-Verbal Signs" 68). Not only did Viertel leave information out in his title, but he also added the German word "Endstation," which means "last stop" or "final destination." Thus, Viertel's title already implies Blanche's inevitable failure (Wolter, "Cultural Context" 202).

Accordingly, many reviewers did not use Viertel's translation of the title but preferred a more literal title, which is "Eine Straßenbahn namens Sehnsucht" ("A Tram Called Longing"). Another unpublished translation of

Streetcar by Paul G. Buchloh and his students at the University of Kiel used another more accurate title (Wolter, "Cultural Context" 217). It was called "Triebwagen Sehnsucht." "Triebwagen" means "railcar," but it also has a second word hidden in it, which is "Trieb" and means "impulse" and "urge" but also "desire." This reviewer persuasively identified what was missing in Viertel's translation. Accordingly, it would be most helpful to look at Buchloh's complete translation of *Streetcar*, but as Wolter proclaims, "Unfortunately, it is no longer extant. Buchloh states that this version was produced at the theatres in Kiel and Bochum, but there are no traces of such a production in the archives of these theatres" ("Cultural Context" 217).

As the title *Endstation Sehnsucht* already demonstrates, the translation of literature is difficult, and when it comes to dramatic literary work, the translation process becomes even more complicated. Zuber claims, "The translation of a play requires more consideration of non-verbal and non-literary aspects than does the translation of novels or poetry. A play depends on additional elements, such as movements, gestures, postures, mimicry, speech rhythms, intonations, music and other sound effects, light, stage scenery" ("Problems of Propriety" 92). Williams's choice of music, for instance, has intense symbolic meaning that should not be lightly disregarded; the music is the Blues represented by the "Blue Piano." In Viertel's translation whenever the Blue Piano is supposed to play, Viertel changes it to jazz or simply omits it. Such decision is unfair to Williams since the "Blue Piano" has symbolic meaning which is not interchangeable with jazz. As Lionel Kelly argues, "'Blue,' I take it, stands for 'the blues,' a sound of music historically and socially metonymic of the Afro-American experience of cultural and economic disempowerment, especially, if not uniquely, in the southern states" (122). According to Kelly, Williams equates the Blue Piano with the "spirit of the life which goes on here" (122). Kazan connects it closer to Blanche and her feelings. He says,

The Blues is an expression of the loneliness and rejection, the exclusion and isolation of the Negro and their (opposite) longing for love and connection. Blanche too is "looking for a home," abandoned, friendless. "I don't know where I'm going, but I'm going." Thus the Blue piano catches the soul of Blanche, the miserable unusual human side of the girl which is beneath her frenetic duplicity, her trickery, lies, etc. ("Director's Notebook" 131)

While other symbols emphasize Blanche's fears and desperation through visual forms, the Blues makes Blanche's feelings audible. However, since Viertel never translated Williams's original stage directions, the German audience never got to hear nor read the Blues since it was not just changed for the theatre productions of the play but also never appeared in print. But even if it had appeared in print, one cannot be sure if Viertel would have been able to translate it properly since the symbol of the "Blue Piano" does not simply indicate the Blues but also contains the color "blue" whose connotation is sadness while the only connotation of the German word for "blue" ("blau") is "drunk" (Zuber, "Translation of Non-Verbal Signs" 71). Thus, the translation of the "Blue Piano" would be more complex than just a transposition at the denotative level.

In addition to the play's musical elements, symbolic props such as the brand of beer, Jax beer, Stanley and his friends are drinking during the poker games, are clouded in Viertel's translation. Fortunately, the symbolic Jax beer remained in the American Acting Edition when Steve says to Eunice, "I told you and phoned you that we was playin' Jack's Beer . . ." (17), which is not identical to the New Directions Edition in which it says, "Jax beer" (28) and is addressed to the men. According to Philip Kolin, Jax beer is a "local favorite, [it] was brewed by the Jackson Brewing Company which, until about ten years ago, was located on Decatur Street, right off the Mississippi River and immediately adjacent to the Quarter and to the Kowalski residence" ("Jax Beer" 2). Besides that, this brand adds to the local color of the play, it is also "associated with the game the men play" (Kolin, "Jax Beer" 2) and the men themselves. Like the jacks in the card game, the beer is Jax or "jacks," and like the cards and the beer, the men are jacks, too, (Kolin, "Jax Beer" 2), and, as Pablo says, "One-eyed jacks are wild" (Acting Edition 31). With this knowledge, Stanley's comment, "What do you think you two are? A pair of queens?" (Acting Edition 77) provides a far deeper meaning. Stanley's figurative language now turns Blanche and Stella into poker cards, too. The game is Stanley's world and he relates everything to the game. Queens are higher than jacks. They win over jacks. When Stanley accuses Blanche and Stella of acting like queens, which means they are not, Stanley admits that he is taking offense at the women's attitude and displays the rules of the game. After all, Blanche and Stella only think they are queens. Thus, in the end, the jack will be the winner.

In Viertel's translation, Steve neither says anything about Jax nor about beer in general. Neither does Pablo mention that "One-eyed jacks are wild" (Acting Edition 31). Instead, when Steve asks, "Wieviele Karten hast du genommen?" (Trans. 43) which means, "How many cards have you

taken?" Pablo only responds, "Zwei" (Trans. 43), "Two." Thus, later when Stanley says, "Was glaubt ihr denn, daß ihr seid? Ein paar Königinnen?" (Trans. 114), "What do you think you are? A pair of queens?" still creates the picture of them wanting to be treated like queens, but it cannot be seen in any relation to Stanley being a wild jack and therefore being superior to the fake queens. The symbolic relationship of the name of the beer and the poker cards could have been translated into the German word for jack, "Bube," and would have provided a better symbolic connection and explanation to Stanley's comment about the queens later on. However, even if Viertel had translated and not erased the jacks, what would have remained lost is Williams's unique use of locality. Just like the streetcars' names "Desire" and "Cemetery," Williams used the name of a local beer brand and loaded it with symbolic meaning. Even if a translator tried to translate Williams's language accurately, it would be impossible to translate Williams's use of locality because a German audience is not acquainted with the beer brand "Jax" and its place of origin. Some of the author's intentions will always be lost unless the translator, and interpreter, finds something equivalent for the author's play on words in the target language.

Besides symbolic props and musical elements that need to be translated, the most important part of the translation of dramatic literature is its dialogue, which is closely related to cultural situations or locations and therefore causes additional problems. If the translator is not cross-culturally capable, severe mistakes will occur as in the translation of *Streetcar*. The following is an example for Viertel mistranslating parts of the dialogue from the Acting Version, thus, this error has nothing to do with the source he is using but only with his own translation skills. For instance, when Blanche is looking for Stella's apartment Eunice asks her, "What's the matter honey? Are you lost?" (Acting Edition 7) Viertel translated this: "Was suchen Sie, liebes Kind? Haben Sie sich verlaufen?" (Trans. 12) which, translated into English is, "What are you [formal you] searching for, dear child? Are you lost?" Eunice calling Blanche "dear child" and using the formal 'you' is an incorrect translation of the characters' sociolects. The German language differentiates the word 'du' (the informal 'you') and 'Sie' (the formal 'you'). It would be appropriate for Blanche who is well-educated and well-mannered to keep up the tradition of formal and appropriate behavior, but with Eunice the use of the formal 'you' is out of place because she comes from a different social class and her different language style should emphasize the class distinction between the two characters. Moreover, Blanche's language, unlike Eunice's, ought to underline Blanche as being what Kazan called her: "an outdated creature, approaching extinction"

(Kazan, "Director's Notebook" 130). It is possible for the translation to emphasize Blanche's outdated character by letting her speak an outdated and rather artificial sounding language while Eunice would be speaking a more natural language from the streets. Viertel had these choices; however, he did not use them. The result is an overall rather comical language throughout the play that does not resemble the characters' sociolects.

Viertel misuses the formal 'you' even further. In the penultimate scene of the play, the animalistic Stanley still uses the formal 'you' when he talks to Blanche and asks, "Haben Sie vielleicht einen Flaschenöffner gesehen?" (Trans. 133), meaning, "Have [formal] you maybe seen a bottle opener?" while in the American Acting Edition he says, "Seen a bottle-opener?" (Acting Edition 90). Stanley the brute still using the formal 'you' and formulating extremely proper sentences while being at his own apartment with his wife's sister who has lived with him for a while appears to be a joke. To think of a reason why Viertel used the formal 'you' is difficult. It might have seemed more appropriate at the time to use more formal German on stage, but Viertel should have realized the ridiculousness in having an uncivilized man, who is proud of who he is, speak in such a formal tone. Even if Viertel intended Stanley's behavior to be received as ironic, the text itself does not suggest this interpretation for the reader. Nonetheless, translating sociolects is always problematic because it cannot be completely captured, especially since, according to Wolter, sometimes the "differences in idiom and pronunciation are more regional than social," but Viertel's translation is simply taken too far away from the original text ("Cultural Context" 205). Even if Viertel could not have completely captured the characters' sociolects, he could have been more careful with his choice of idiom and style.

The translation of Steve's joke about an old farmer is another inaccuracy which demonstrates a different problem of Viertel's translation, and this mistranslation was not caused because of the usage of the Acting Edition. In the Acting Edition it says:

This ole farmer is out in back of his house sittin' down throwin' corn to the chickens when . . . this young hen comes lickety-split around the side of the house with the rooster right behind her and gaining on her fast. . . . But when the rooster catches sight of the farmer throwin' the corn he puts on the brakes and lets the hen get away and starts pecking corn. And the old farmer says, "Lord God, I hopes I never gits *that* hongry! (32)

In Viertel's translation, Steve does not tell a joke about an old farmer, but instead in his translation the old farmer is an African-American and Viertel uses the German word "Neger" (44) which means "Negro." In the 1940's when Viertel did the translation, the word "Neger" was not considered an insult (today it is). In the past, it was often a common word for Africans, without any negative connotation. Still, there is no obvious reason why Viertel changed the race of the character from being an old farmer to being an old African-American. Since Viertel had lived in the United States, but not in the South, this might have been the picture he had perceived of the South and its history while being in the U.S. However, if it is seen in connection with the history of the American South, the use of the black race gives this joke an extremely negative racist undertone, especially since today the word "Neger" is considered an insult.

The reasons for Viertel's erroneous changes are partly related to the source of his translation. Instead of translating the reading script of *Streetcar*, which contains helpful explanations by the playwright, Viertel used a forerunner of the American Acting Edition of the play (Zuber, "Problems of Propriety" 98). However, most of the inaccuracies in the dialogue and other inappropriate changes in the script, such as Steve's joke, are not due to Viertel's source text, the American Action Edition. Instead, what presumably caused Viertel's mistranslations is the fact that English was not his native language and that he was not well enough acquainted with the American South. Even though he was very well able to speak English and had spent many years in the U.S. and Britain, Viertel did not have the language knowledge of a native speaker and especially not of a Southerner. Galinski states, "The Southern speech area and its subareas are usually less well-known to translators than other regions" (254). Since *Streetcar* incorporates Southern slang, lifestyle, and locale, a translator may have to experience this culture for a longer time to be able to translate it. Viertel never lived in the South and changes in the script, such as Steve's joke, might have their origins in prejudices Viertel had heard about the South while living in the United States.

Another cause for his erroneous translation is that he translated *Streetcar* in a hurry. According to Zuber, Viertel's widow said that Viertel "translated *Streetcar* in 3-4 weeks dictating to her the text freely from the American manuscript as she typed. He hardly ever used a dictionary, only occasionally looking up uncommon or slang expressions" ("Problems of Propriety" 100). Thus, it is not surprising at all that Viertel's choices were not always the most sensible. In general, the translation of a play should be treated like a newborn drama that has to be tried out first before anyone can

know if it will be successful. Viertel actually tried it out in Berlin in 1950 and made immense adjustments to the play, but unfortunately these changes have never been published and therefore today's directors cannot know and follow these changes ("Problems of Propriety" 101).

Finally, Viertel's own profession and creativity played a role in his skewed translation. First and foremost, Viertel was a director and author of essays and poems. Both asked for Viertel's own creativity. Even though a director produces the creative work of another author, he needs to interpret the work and visualize it because he has read the play and therefore knows more than the audience. The audience has to be seen separately from the reader because the reader gets the important signs in the instructions written by the author while the audience is dependent on the director to interpret the signs and enact them in the production (Schiller 294). Thus, when Viertel translated *Streetcar*, he most likely already envisioned the play like a director, consciously or unconsciously changing parts he thought could be improved or needed to be improved.

The list of mistakes, inaccuracies, and added comments, most of them unnecessary, in Viertel's translation of *Streetcar* is long, and the list of examples in this presentation is far from being exhaustive. Nonetheless, these given examples demonstrate the difficulties of translating a Southern drama and its impact on an audience and, therefore, it also demonstrates without a doubt the urgent need for a new translation. Even though Viertel's translation has to be regarded as an interpretation of the play, which are always subjective and debatable, enough time has passed since its publication that because of its deficiencies another more contemporary translation should be offered to the German audience so that Williams's dramatic masterpiece will not lose its appeal to the German reader simply because of its outdated translation.

Notes

- 1 Dietrich Hilsdorf's production at the Halle Beuel in Bonn-Beuel, Germany, used Bernd Schmidt's translation of *Streetcar* (premiered on 15 Dec. 2000). Barbara Weber's production at the Schauspielhaus in Graz, Austria, used Helmar Harald Fischer's translation (premiered on 11 Dec. 2004).
- 2 A close look at the American Acting Edition, the New Directions edition, and Viertel's translation makes evident that the cause for the translation's errors is partly due to Viertel's usage of the American Acting Edition of *Streetcar* instead of Williams's original text which offered more stage directions than the Acting Edition.
- 3 In 1923 Berthold Viertel founded the expressionistic theatre group "Die Truppe" in Berlin whose production list tried to represent the modern movement. Among its productions was the first German premiere of Eugene O'Neill's play *The Moon of the Caribbees* which premiered in December 1924 at the Berliner Volksbühne. For more information, see Hugo Altmann's article on "O'Neill, Eugene Gladstone."

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POETRY:
Michael J. Spikes
Arkansas State University

Best Brew

They always fill it
to the rim,
give it all they've got,
as if you'd feel cheated
were any small part
of your cup left
free.

One needs room
for sugar and cream.
How can I make what you give me
my own,
Fix it to my taste, without
any space?
Leave enough
empty
So I can stir,
won't waste
what you've poured me
with what
I mix in,
make my morning
a sticky-hot mess.
Don't they know?
Too much is never enough.

ESSAY

Benjamin F. Fisher

University of Mississippi

F. W. Thomas, Friend of Poe And ...

The name of Frederick William Thomas surfaces often enough in connection with that of Edgar Allan Poe to keep it current, but the space devoted to Thomas in works concerning Poe typically presents him so minimally that he remains to this day, when many other Poe connections have gained substantial illumination, little more than a shadowy figure in the carpet of Poe studies. We have long known that Poe reviewed Thomas's first novel, *Clinton Bradshaw* (1835), citing its excellences and, at greater length, its deficiencies. This notice is, however, not among Poe's lengthier reviews, and thus it has never become so well-known as, say, that which (quite rightly) reduced to pulp T. S. Fay's atrocious novel, *Norman Leslie*, or that more complimentary set of observations regarding Hawthorne's short fiction. Arguably, Thomas then became best-known for a novel that is not his best work. We know, too, that in the 1840s Poe sought Thomas's assistance when he hoped for a political appointment—one he did not get—during the administration of President John Tyler. Furthermore, for a biographical sketch of himself, Poe sent Thomas notes to employ in the latter's preparation of that account, but Thomas returned them, and the work was subsequently delegated to Henry Beck Hirst as author of the sketch that ultimately circulated in the *Philadelphia Saturday Museum*, a mammoth weekly, in late February-early March of 1843. One even wonders if personal and professional jealousies did not help keep Thomas in relative obscurity.

Those who read beyond the usual Poe items included in anthologies or many selective collections of his writings, may remember that Poe disparaged a later novel by Thomas, *Howard Pinckney* (1840), which he said that he would review but never did. Thomas also sent in a letter, at Poe's request on behalf of Rufus W. Griswold, for *The Poets and Poetry of America*, edited by Griswold and published in 1842, a sketch of his (Thomas's) life, which appears in the Harrison edition of Poe's works (17: 95-100--misdated there as 3 August 1841, when it should have been 3 September, as John Ward Ostrom subsequently pointed out in his edition of Poe's *Letters*:181). Interchanges of correspondence during the mid-1840s suggest that Poe wanted to repay some of Thomas's kindnesses to him by

reviewing Thomas's book-length poem, *The Beechen Tree*, which had appeared in late 1844. So far as we know, however, that contemplated review was also never published, although William Doyle Hull thought that the brief notice in the *New York Evening Mirror*, for 19 November 1844, may have been the work of Poe (*Poe Log* 477).

Many might understandably ask: what else is there to know about Frederick W. Thomas? He was one of our early nineteenth-century writers to be associated with the West, when the western frontier consisted chiefly of parts of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Kentucky. Thomas's writings divide interestingly in this respect. In any one of his fictions, the setting is likely to feature far more eastern U. S. A. locale than western, whereas many of his poems clearly focus on western locales and themes. The readily available sources of information that we may turn to today, other than what I've already mentioned, are a brief essay on Thomas's family history, along with a reprinting of the life sketch he sent to Poe, already noted, offered by Hervey Allen in his biography of Poe (Appendix VI: 706-711), Nina Baym's terse comments on reviewers' responses to Thomas's third novel, *Howard Pinckney*, and my own article in *DLB* (1999).

Correspondence between Poe and Thomas is located principally in the Boston Public Library, the New York Public Library, and the Huntington Library. Since he was a descendant of Isaiah Thomas, some information bearing on F. W. Thomas may also be found in the American Antiquarian Society. Scattered references to Thomas and his work occur in such works as Ralph Leslie Rusk's *The Literature of the Middle Western Frontier*, William D. Gallagher's 1841 anthology, *Selections from the Poetical Literature of the West*, (rpt. 1968, with an introduction by that doyen in studies of Midwestern American literature, John T. Flanagan), W. T. Coggleshall's *The Poets and Poetry of the West* (1860), and Thomas Ollive Mabbott's *Collected Works of Edgar Allan Poe*, and Dwight Thomas and David K. Jackson's *The Poe Log*. Thomas, the author in his own right, however, awaits definitive treatment. Ironically, there is no entry for Thomas in the recent *Encyclopedia of Frontier Literature* (1997), ed. Mary Ellen Snodgrass.

Like Poe, Thomas was born in New England (Providence, R. I.), whence his parents moved shortly thereafter to Charleston, South Carolina. Thus, having spent much of his youth in South Carolina and Baltimore environs, F. W. Thomas thereafter usually styled himself a Southerner. He experimented in various literary forms: verse, novels, historical and biographical sketches. Thomas also worked as a literary magazine editor and newspaper journalist. During his lifetime, Thomas was customarily

designated as the “author of *Clinton Bradshaw*,” although he published far more literary work than just that one novel. Moreover, I believe that this is not his best novel, preferring to cite for that accolade *Howard Pinckney*, published in late 1840, though a well-read contemporary found that his reading of *Clinton Bradshaw* “enforced several principles not, to me, new, yet not enough familiar” (Berry 266). These were uplifting principles, of course. Thomas’s vague information about his birth date and other biographical facts have helped to obscure his record, and we are not helped substantially by autobiographical elements that appear in his literary works. Thomas recreated a far larger quantity of personal circumstances in his fiction and verse than Poe did—*pace* Marie Bonaparte and her descendants. Another Poe-Thomas affinity is that the latter, although he did not so designate himself, may well be called a “magazinish,” just as Poe referred to himself. Many of Thomas’s writings appeared first in popular literary periodicals of the day, for example, *Graham’s*, the *Knickerbocker*, the *Baltimore American Museum*, *Snowden’s Ladies’ Companion*, and the *Southern Literary Messenger*. This list reads almost like a roll call for Poe’s own publications. Thomas also brought out some of his works in shorter-lived periodicals that arose in western literary centers such as Cincinnati.

Setting aside the customary epithet, “author of *Clinton Bradshaw*,” if we survey Thomas’s corpus overall certain interesting features may be discovered. Thomas’s earliest publications were, in the main, poems that circulated in western newspapers, but the poem that attracted greatest attention, most of it favorable, during his early career, was a brief book (37 pp.), *The Emigrant, or Reflections While Descending the Ohio*, published in Cincinnati in 1833, and, evidently, ranked favorably enough to be reprinted, with a terse introduction, in 1872, half-dozen years after Thomas’s death. This poem is an extended meditation on feelings aroused when the speaker, who hails from the eastern United States, first beholds captivating natural western scenery. Antecedents in the poetry of Thomas Gray are cited, although we also readily discern that influences from Wordsworth and Byron are uppermost. The speaker’s patriotism also heightens as he contemplates this western region and its settlers, the former abounding in Nature’s beauties, the population manifesting a free spirit of joyous frontier American outlook. A wistful note sounds in the speaker’s lamenting the disappearance of former Indian inhabitants of this Ohio River region (albeit he also recalls episodes of Indian savagery), and the wistfulness deepens to sadness as he remembers parting from his inamorata in the East. The overarching sense is that of excitement occasioned by the speaker’s travels, whatever Byronic gloom he may occasionally evince. Thus the poem may be

ranked as a forerunner to the far better known travel writings of Mark Twain, which convey enthusiasm, whatever their mood shifts.

The Emigrant emerged from Thomas's personal circumstances. He relocated from Baltimore to Cincinnati in the early 1830s, to assist his father in editorial tasks. Second in importance to this extended musing are shorter poems, some centered in recollections of an adored lady, who has not followed her swain; others resembling Byronic apostrophes to fair ladies, ladies who are often far distant or else downright false. A pairing of western with love themes informs "Retrospections," a poem in the *Baltimore American Museum* in late 1838, a monthly magazine far better remembered as the original place of publication for Poe's "Ligeia" and "How to Write a Blackwood Article." Thomas's speaker's thoughts shift between those called up at parting from a dear friend, apparently in Baltimore, where both grew up, to the feelings that that wanderer must have sustained upon returning years later. The speaker-Thomas's recollections include those of childhood happiness before he was lamed in an accident, an old woman who sold apples on the streets, his sister, who cared deeply for him and was his early source of emotional comfort, and several relating to his first love experience. The poem concludes with the speaker's serio-comic memory of a farewell supper:

'Twas there upon that eve they gave a supper,
 A farewell, to the wanderer to the West,
 And each I ween grew light in story upper,—
 There, let that falling tear proclaim the rest.

A more pervasive comic spirit infuses "Song of the Western Steamboat-men," published in the *Knickerbocker Magazine* for October 1843. This is an apostrophe by the river boatmen to sailors on ocean vessels, emphasizing the advantages of river to ocean navigation. The poem is a "song" in its rollicking lyricism, which coalesces with the high spirits of the river men:

vii.

But though we puff as stately, boys,
 As any Dutchman smokes,
 We eat the best and drink the best,
 And crack the best of jokes.
 Why mariners, ye're months away,

On hard junk-beef ye feed,
 While we have turkey, toast and tea,
 And every thing we need.

viii.

In every port ye boast there's one
 To spend the cash ye give her;
 Why, we have sweet-hearts, mariners,
 On both sides of the river!
 We ask not for the starry lights
 To cheer us on our way'
 We've eyes that flash from every wood
 The clearest kind of ray!

Although Thomas produced some additional comic verse, his poems tend to present speakers with serious, at times rather grim, mindsets. An example appears in "Stanzas: To My Sistr," in the *Knickerbocker Magazine* for October 1846 (344-45). Written on the eve of his sisters marriage, the poem pays tribute to her devotion to him over long years. Thomas was lame, and, when he was young, often ill, and his sibling's care for his physical well-being, as well as their shared emotions, are remembered and praised in this poem.

Unlike Poe, who claimed that the death of a beautiful woman was the most poetic of all themes (which I have often thought should be emphasized as "the most *Poe*-tic of all themes, to foreground Poe's relish for punning and his self-awareness), another of Thomas's reiterated themes is the *loss* of a beautiful woman, though that loss does not necessarily result from her death. For example, the poem, "Woman," which dates from 1832, unfolds the metaphor of the stars, most notably the Pleiades, to represent feminine mass attractiveness for men. Nevertheless the conclusion depicts the sorry emotional plight the man who has courted the many in his time, but who has by now been reduced to the vain courtship of one woman alone, the "separate star," in Thomas's phrase, who is likewise lost to him. Man (in general), the poem continues, has not during his dalliances with the many given heed to "the left lone light,/ Till all above is dark." An argument for the influence of Edward Coote Pinkney's poems about women upon Thomas's "Woman" is on record, and, although Thomas had been approached by R. W. Griswold in 1841 to supply the biographical sketch of E. C. Pinkney for *The Poets and Poetry of America*, because of Thomas's interest in the older poet's work, Thomas failed to complete the task and so

Griswold prepared the essay himself.¹ One wonders whether this circumstance motivated Griswold's scanty treatment of Thomas's verse in that anthology.

During the close of the 1830s on into mid-1840, Thomas circulated a manuscript of his "extended poem," tentatively entitled "Adventures of a Poet: A Tale Told in Rhyme." We learn from various literary gossip columns of the times that this work was received with great favor. For example, the "high praise" accorded this work by one reader offered:

The sentimental, the pathetic, the descriptive, the humorous and the satirical, alternate with the shifting scenes. The author's fancy possesses a fine vein of satire; and when this humor is upon him, he indulges it freely, and applies the lash with much vigor. Woven in with the thread of the narrative, is an occasional lyric of much beauty.... ("Literary Intelligence": 341).²

Elsewhere, Thomas's comic abilities in these "Adventures" are singled out for positive comment, as are his overall achievements as a literary artist. From such commentary we might perceive that, as has been the case with Poe's "Tales of the Folio Club" and projected history of American literature, we are left to wonder what the outcome might have been, had "Adventures" seen publication.

One portion of this work appeared in the *Southern Literary Messenger* for July 1838, as "Stanzas to Helen," but Thomas's Helen, unlike Poe's, has proven fickle and false to her *quondam* lover, who is now journeying down a western river, seeking alleviation after the breakup of their relationship. The changing currents in the water make him wish that he could cast his "dark thoughts" and thereby have them pass from him forever. The previous evening, the river had been calm, but now it is turbulent; just so, his emotions veer from delight to near despair in the face of his departure from a familiar world to enter new, unknown regions.

Several of Thomas's other poems were intended to be vocal songs, and one, "'Tis Said that Absence Conquers Love," long enjoyed status as an anthology piece from Griswold's very popular *The Poets and Poetry of America* (1842) on to the era of E. C. Stedman's *An American Anthology* (1900). Not bad for a piece of sheet music published originally in 1833, though its sentimentality would not be attractive today. Another of Thomas's songs, "When Thou Wert True" (1843) calls up an ironic connection to Poe. Thomas's words were set to music by John Hill Hewitt, Poe's rival for the

poetry prize sponsored by the Baltimore *Saturday Visitor* in 1833. Under the pseudonym, “Henry Wilton,” Hewitt’s poem, “The Song of the Winds,” was ultimately awarded the prize for the best poem, although Poe’s “The Coliseum” had first been given the palm by the judges.

Although he continued to turn out verse during his later years—such as *The Beechen Tree*, a slim volume published late in 1844, which, like *The Emigrant*, blends the Byronic misanthropy within a misunderstood lover—whose “Helen” seemed to be false to him—with Wordsworthian vignettes of pleasing, soothing natural scenery, Thomas the fiction writer must not be ignored. *Clinton Bradshaw; or, Adventures of a Lawyer* (1835) brought him greater attention from literary America than *The Emigrant* had, and became the most popular of all his works, going through reprintings over many years. Thomas’s distinguishing feat in this book, as Poe remarked, not with thoroughgoing approval, was an Americanization of Bulwer-Lytton’s fashionable or “silver-fork,” novel of high life among urban characters, that is, *Pelham; or, Adventures of a Gentleman* (1828). Novels of this type customarily charted the transformation of a wealthy young blade from an avid seeker of power and prestige, who, along this chosen way, often left scarred hearts in his wake, into one who eventually meets a woman whose love softens his emotions (which have alternated from manic high’s to morbidity and gloom, earmarking him as one who inherited the Byronic characteristics that typified Bulwer’s early protagonists) and regularizes his everyday lifestyle. Love eventually transforms such a protagonist into a sensible, contributing, successful, and financially comfortable member of society.

Clinton Bradshaw, whose home is in some eastern city, doubtless modeled after Baltimore, wends his way through a turbulent, if often sentimental, love affair, nights out with the boys for alcoholic revels, encounters with underworld characters, a breath-taking courtroom defense against murder charges leveled at an innocent girl, ultimately to marry the insipid heroine, with whom, he will, presumably, live happily ever after. Thomas’s novel lacks the more overt sensuality found in *Pelham* and some of its Byronic antecedents, nor does it serve us out the welters of slang that was often savaged by reviewers of the Bulwer-Lytton canon. *Clinton Bradshaw* also stands as a forerunner to such novels of underworld life as George Lippard’s *The Quaker City* (1847), or to Dickens’s productions, for example, *Oliver Twist* or *Our Mutual Friend*. Long ago, that doughty historian of American fiction, Arthur Hobson Quinn, singled out *Clinton Bradshaw* as a “respectable production” among American novels of city

life,³ no mean words of praise from one whose own moral outlook was severe.

East and West (1836), Thomas's second novel, surprisingly enough, has not been brought forward by students of the frontier because this book highlights the positive values of western life in contrast to those found in the more urban and, even at this early stage of American history, more decadent East. Thomas comments in the "Preface" that reviews of *Clinton Bradshaw* motivated him to improve his techniques. *East and West* unfolds the triumphs of the good qualities nurtured by the West over the foppishness and febrile Gothicism in the stealthy machinator, Henry Beckford, who travels west expressly to create trouble for the protagonist and heroine. This villain comes to an ignominious death when, cloaked to conceal his identity, like the antagonist in many an antecedent Gothic novel, extreme drunkenness causes him to fall overboard from the riverboat on which they are all traveling and drown, as if great nature in the West casts out such an altogether pitiful, but nonetheless hazardous, creature. Moreover, the effervescent rustic, Blazeaway Staylor, numbers among those ring-tailed roasters whose antics fill many pages of frontier or Southwestern humor texts. Such characteristics are evident when he is introduced:

He was a man of tall and almost gigantic proportions, being nearly six feet two inches high, and what is not often seen in men of his height, his limbs were well knit, and graceful, though his arms seemed rather too long, and he had a habit of swinging the right one by his side, while the left was thrust carelessly in the bosom of his shirt. He was dressed in a full suit of that domestic cloth called "Kentucky jeans," ... The stranger had a handsome foot, and he appeared to be conscious and proud of it, as it was encased in a fine and tight boot [.]

In line with other humorous elements we may not find incredible the possibility that in depicting Henry Beckford Thomas was creating a hit at William Beckford, author of *Vathek*, an earlier Gothic novel that in its featuring the equivalent of foppishness. Such foppishness, in tandem with his savage impulses, would mark out Henry Beckford as one unsuited to thrive in the American west. Given the publication date of Thomas's novel, combined with his attunement to America's literary world of his day, he would have known about the popularity that *Vathek* and Beckford enjoyed at the time. Thomas White, owner of the *Southern Literary Messenger*, liked *Vathek*, and wanted to publicize the novel. *Vathek* had been reprinted in the

U. S. A. several times during this era, notably by Carey, Lea & Blanchard, in Philadelphia, in 1834, so that awareness of Beckford and his book would have been understandable in Thomas.

East and West provides a combination of the Ainsworth-Bulwer school of contemporaneous British crime or “Newgate” novel with themes of successes emanating from democratic freedom, hardihood in character, intense exuberance and nature’s attractions to be found in the American West. Thus, *East and West* takes rank with works such as James Kirke Paulding’s play, *The Lion of the West* (1830) or his novel, *Westward Ho!* (1832), in emphasizing the positive elements in American frontier life, in contrast to those in the thin glitter of veneer overlaying much life in the more urbanized East. Thomas’s treatments of violence, brutality, lust, and jealousy in this novel are more plausible psycho-sexuality than what we find in his preceding novels, or in many another nineteenth-century American novel. The race between the steamboats, the *Alexander* and the *Turtle*, which occasions an explosion of the boiler on the *Alexander*, causing many deaths from scalding, adds sensationalism to the novel, heightened when the pilot on the *Turtle* shoots the pilot of the *Alexander*. Such sensationalism was, however, one of the facts of steamboat life, witness a similar race in Twain’s *Life on the Mississippi*. Thomas’s interweaving of violence with comedy is characteristic of the Southwest Humor authors popular at the time.

We might be arrested by Poe’s letter to Thomas, 23 November 1840, in which he compares *Howard Pinckney* with *Clinton Bradshaw*, stating his preference for the earlier book as better art. Poe finds *Howard Pinckney* wanting because it manifests the “dainty by-paths of authorism,” and because it lacks “abandon” (Poe, *Letters*: 148-49).⁵ And this in the face of what any other reader might designate as far greater abandon than we find in Thomas’s earlier books. Poe also speaks of reviewing *Howard Pinckney* at length in the upcoming January issue of his *Penn Magazine*—but that aspiration never came to fruition. One might well argue that Poe’s dismissiveness toward Thomas’s book—which, in its last chapters, bears distinct elements of detective fiction—may have come about because Poe’s own renowned tale, “The Murders in the Rue Morgue,” was forming, or had formed, within his own literary imagination, to be published the next April. He certainly would be wary of anything potentially competitive with that bit of work. Although Thomas’s Constable Ross, whose role model in crime detection is Vidoq, pretends to be a rural rustic, and his sleuthing takes place in rural environs, he is none the less kindred to Poe’s Dupin. The successes of Thomas’s sleuth, his admiration for Vidoq, his exposure of the criminal

and the consequent acquittal of the innocent who was imprisoned on a trumped-up charge all may have seemed all too close to the situations in “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” to permit Poe to remain objective about *Howard Pinckney*, or to compose a review at any length of the book that might have been held up as a precursor to his own literary inspirations and methods. The Gothic atmosphere in *Howard Pinckney* surpasses that in *East and West* because the later work displays greater subtlety on Thomas’s part in creating transgressions that impart disorder to much of the novel, and the machinations and violence of Gordon are likewise handled with greater imagination. Sexuality is more blatant in Gordon than it had been in the evil persecutor of female innocence in *East and West*. Gordon wants Peggy, his victim’s relative, at any cost, though lust, not love, motivates his hostile, violent actions toward her and others. After Gordon is imprisoned, his fantasies—of demonic pursuers—are presented convincingly, much like those of Fagin in Dickens’s *Oliver Twist*. One might well wonder if Gordon’s name is suggestive of Byron and several of his literary protagonists, and the hinted strong sexuality in their makeup.

The remainder of Thomas’s literary output may easily be summarized. One more novel, this one drawing again upon his own early move from South Carolina to Baltimore, to the West, *An Autobiography of William Russell* (1852), offers little other than diminished control of plot and character as regards young Russell’s vicissitudes in his career and in love, although he eventually marries the vapid heroine, Alice Clare. Two volumes of shorter pieces, *Sketches of Character, and Tales Founded on Fact* (1849), which was expanded into *John Randolph of Roanoke, and other Sketches of Character* (1853), mingle brief biographies, several published in the *Southern Literary Messenger*, of figures like Randolph, Simon Kenton, or William Wirt with slight tales that Thomas had published years earlier in periodicals. Of these, “Chapter from the Adventures of a Lame Gentleman” (1838) is of interest because, stylistically, it rather resembles Poe’s method of creating what initially seems like mounting terrors, which comedy ultimately deflates, in tales like “How to Write a Blackwood Article.” Finally, Thomas prepared biographical information concerning Poe, never published in its entirety, but presumably used by J. H. Whitty in the introduction to his 1911 edition of Poe’s poems. No manuscript seems to exist now.

In sum, F. W. Thomas was an author of varied parts. His versified blendings of love and lamentations represent the conventional love poetry of his day, inspired chiefly by the poems of Moore and Byron, although he often pairs such feelings with those of enthusiasm and spiritual regeneration

as benefits of life in the American West. These combinations would be natural for one nurtured on the poems of Byron and Wordsworth, as well as those of writers like Pinkney, Poe, and Halleck on this side of the literary sea. Adapting currencies from popular British fiction of the 1820s and 30s, Thomas managed to offer the American public some freshness in venue from the novels of Cooper, say, and certainly those of Fay or Mattson. He likewise fashioned stronger adaptations of the Byronic Hero and Byronism to American characters and situations than many another in his day had managed, and, as such, his achievements merit more consideration than has been given to them in such long standards works on relevant subjects as William Ellery Leonard's *Byron and Byronism in America* (1905), or other accounts of the Byronic in America (Landrum, Thorslev). Thomas's westward-looking eye aligns him more solidly with writers like Timothy Flint, James Hall, William Gilmore Simms, and with his own brother and sister, Lewis F. and Martha Thomas, whose writings about western frontiers appealed to the Knickerbocker tastes of Lewis Gaylord Clark's New York coterie. F. W. Thomas's accomplishments in characterization in fiction also rose far above those of many other American authors in his day, as was long ago pointed out by Joseph Holt Ingraham in a biographical essay on Thomas, in the May 1838 *Southern Literary Messenger*. Ingraham also singled out Thomas's keen eye for setting as one of his excellences.⁶ Thus, we should not unwittingly pass by this writer as nothing other than one more member of the Poe circle.

NOTES

¹ Thomas's "Woman" appeared in *The Hesperian; or, Western Monthly Magazine*, 1 (July 1838): 230. Information concerning Thomas and Pinkney appears in *The Life and Works of Edward Coote Pinkney*, ed. Thomas Ollive Mabbott and Frank Lester Pleadwell. New York: Macmillan, 1926: 63, 80, 86. See also *Passages from the Correspondence of R. W. Griswold*. Cambridge, Mass.: W. M. Griswold, 1898: 66, 97.

² The quotation comes from "Literary Intelligence," *The Hesperian; or, Western Monthly Magazine*, 1 (August 1838): 341. Other favorable comments appear in "Review of New Books," *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine* 4 (October 1838): 280-81; and, understandably, from that promoter of literature from and about the West, Lewis Gaylord Clark, e. g., "Editor's Table," *The Knickerbocker*, 16 (July 1840): 88.

³ Arthur Hobson Quinn. *American Fiction: An Historical and Critical Survey*. New York, London: Appleton-Century, 1936: 131. A contemporaneous evaluator had argued that "the moral [*Clinton Bradshaw*] unfolds, if not of the most elevated kind, is still useful and highly applicable to our existing state of society." See "Increase of Novel Writing," *American Monthly Magazine*, 6 (November 1835): 233.

⁴ See Benjamin F. Fisher, *The Gothic's Gothic: Study Aids to the Tradition of the Tale of Terror*. New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1988: 9-15.

⁵ *The Letters of Edgar Allan Poe*, ed. John Ward Ostrom. rev. ed. New York: Gordian Press, 1966: 148-149.

⁶ "Biographical Sketches of Living American Poets and Novelists. No. I. Francis [sic] William Thomas, Esq.," *Southern Literary Messenger*, 4 (May 1838): 297-301—cited commentary from 301. Identification of Ingraham as the writer of the article was made by David K. Jackson, *The Contributors and Contributions to the Southern Literary Messenger*. Charlottesville, Va.: The Historical Publishing Co., 1936: 27.

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POETRY**Maura Gage Cavell****Louisiana State University—Eunice****An Eclipse of Innocence**

The umbra of your smile
lingers as you lick lollipops;
the wolf at your side
can never atone
for his lack of bravery.
As you two meander
Through the children's park,
your petite form disappears
in the hedges where bunnies
nibble juicy carrots
and the wolf scares them away,
your innocence lost along with them.

ESSAY**James Tomek****Delta State University****Reading as Sacrament: Balthasar reading Barth****Through Roland and Claudel**

In an effort to understand the importance of reading as a means of “salvation” for us teachers and students, I will do a reading of Catholic theologian, and a literary scholar, Hans Urs von Balthasar reading theologian Karl Barth and French dramatist Paul Claudel and French medieval text *The Song of Roland*. The way that theologians use the word “sacrament” is close to the conception of “symbol” by the French 19th Century poets. The goal of this paper is to arrive at a “religious” sense of reading in seeking the symbol.

A sacrament is a sign that empowers the recipient to experience the presence of God. Christ then is a sacrament of God. Balthasar’s Christology takes shape in a dialog with Karl Barth, articulated in Balthasar’s ecumenical study *The Theology of Karl Barth* (Kehl 24). Balthasar, a Catholic theologian, was trying to iron out some “confessional” differences between Protestantism and his religion. As Balthasar is being ecumenical with Protestantism, I will be trying to reconcile “sacrament” with “symbol” and interpretative reading in general. After reviewing the forms of analogy of the two theologians as a way to reach God, I will show how Balthasar’s analogies of love and obedience are literary “symbols” as well as sacraments. If sacramental reading can take believers to God, “symbolic” reading can take all readers to the deeper transcendental levels of human existence. How one “gets” to God can be analogous to how one gets to the symbol level in reading. This paper is a praise of the art of reading.

Forms and Analogies

Balthasar’s major work is a fifteen volume trilogy where, in order to transcend to a God-human relation, one goes through stages of seeing God’s form of beauty, comprehending God’s form of goodness and arriving at a form of truth (Resumé 2). Thomas O’Meara clarifies Balthasar’s aesthetic theology as an interpretation of the expression and reality of Christianity as art, and not just a pointing out of Christian themes in works of art (272).

When we encounter a “work of art” we search for meanings through its form. Louis Dupré sees the Incarnation as a “work of art” having a visible form of Christ the person appearing as words in Scripture and a more invisible form—a super form or interior reality that we only arrive at through faith (317-18). The “word of God” is more than words. It is the sacramental presence of Christ as God in scripture and in the world. Since a transcendent God would be beyond language, “word of God” is a symbol. I use this meaning of “word” of God in this study. Balthasar and Barth strive to hear this “Word” of God. Balthasar is a literature scholar as well as theologian. His use of “analogy” achieves the status of symbol and sacrament.

Balthasar’s “formal” principle in his dialog with Barth has to do with the “Analogy of Being.” Since all creatures proceed from God there is a similarity between them and God. However, John O’Donnell reminds us that the transcendent character of God remains and the mystery deepens as the believer extends his reach (4). “Analogy” here means a form of movement going “to another logos,” or of going from the human to the divine or vice-verse. All we need to transcend our being is the right form or symbol or analogy.

Balthasar is trying to reconcile the Protestant Reformed Theology’s mistrust of nature with the positive use of nature in Catholicism. Barth’s objection to the “analogy of being” is that the focus seems to be on the humans attempting to get a “hold of God.” Religion as an attempt to get a hold of God is diabolical and seen in the “Fall.” Barth criticizes the pride of thinking that humans can get to it (*Barth* 125). In the line of Calvin, Barth focuses on the word “humility. There is an “analogy”—we do move upward, but we do it in an “analogy of faith” that God will send his “word.”

Balthasar’s Analogies of Obedience and Love

Balthasar tries to reconcile Barth’s mistrust of pride and the need for humility and grace by allowing philosophy (and literature) to extend the capacity of human nature to get to God, especially in the experiences or analogies of love and obedience. There is an impasse or gap between nature and grace here since going by nature should be allowed since God created it, yet the mystery of God will never allow a grasp of it (*Barth* 302). Impasse is the stuff of tragedy. Love and obedience are two ways to occupy the gap.

For love, Balthasar talks about the smile of a mother to a child as the start of the transcendental experiences of beauty, truth, and the good. The child sees the mother as pure goodness embodying the truth of pure love

(Resumé 2). Michael Himes, in his video series on the mysteries of Catholicism, explains the Trinity as loving outside of the self. God then is the source our love and not the object of it. Christ is the source of the mother's smile and love. Balthasar's "Catholic" response to Barth suggests that the analogy of being is necessary so that we can collaborate with God in our sanctification.

To illustrate the importance of obedience, Balthasar concludes his study of Barth with the concept of the communion of saints. We all share the guilt of our sins and the guilt of others' sins (eg. famines, poverty). All personal sins are community sins too. He cites Claudel as a writer who deals with social sin. Just people bear more guilt than others. Balthasar sees Christ as the obedient bearer of all the guilt. "The true follower of Christ joins Christ in that darkness that is all the more bitter because he knows that he can never suffer alongside of Christ. No, this suffering highlights how deeply bound he is in solidarity with all his fellow sinners, who are jointly responsible for the Cross of Christ" (*Barth* 375). There is a role of sin in our sanctification. There is also a need to show the greatness of Christ in his obedience and responsibility to the mission of gracing the world. Balthasar ends his study on Barth with a metaphor of the vine and the branches with the Protestants sticking close to the Vine—the Bible, while Catholics went to other sources for the beatific vision (388). One such source is literature. I will now turn to the literary "symbol."

Symbols of the "Guarant" and Unrequited-Sinner- Lover

Philosopher Luc Ferry talks about how we love others in the same way that we fall in love with a work of art. We pass from universals that appeal to all ages to particulars that come from a time. Ferry cites Pascal's observation that we can fall in love with people for their particular qualities, and fall out of love if they lose those qualities. True lasting love comes from a "singularity." We seem to "know" the other person and just love them for their presence -- for qualities that they have that resemble no one else's (281-87). It is a mystery. This "singularity" becomes an experience of "concreteness" that Balthasar attributes to Christ. Balthasar, in his study of Barth, defines *Concretissimum* as the act where a person touches God and becomes a totally submissive believer receptive to Christ (341). We can "see" the concreteness of the singularity in the "symbol." A Balthasar symbol that we have already encountered is the "smile" on his mother's face and how that reflects beauty, goodness and truth. To search for Christ's singularity we will use Balthasarian literature examples. The goal is to

deepen our reading of Christ as a “work of art.” We will use two figures or symbols: the medieval “gaurant” type like Roland, and the Claudelian lover as they personify two of Balthasar’s important contributions: the concept of Christ’s descent into hell as our “guarant” and the drama of love and salvation. The descent into hell, according to Michelle Schumacher, is a sign of self-emptying love. Christ suffers what sinners deserve—abandonment by God (54, 57). Balthasar, in his essay on science, religion and Christianity, says that the highest acts of the Church are accompanied in lonely responsibility which is synonymous with obedience (118).

The obedience shown in the descent into hell of Balthasar’s “guarant” reminds me of Roland’s obedience in the eleventh century French epic. His army was the rear guard protecting Charlemagne’s retreat from Spain from the Maures. By a betrayal Roland is confronted with far superior forces, but refuses to blow his horn for Charlemagne to come and help. My teachers taught me that Oliver, Roland’s friend, was the wiser knight who realized that his forces were outnumbered and therefore used common sense to seek help. Roland is seen as a great hero, but guilty of pride. Robert Cook reads the story from an earlier medieval context and makes clear that Roland is the “guarant” of Charlemagne’s safety (62). The duty of a lord is to protect the land and people until death. Roland does so and in the end is escorted by angels to paradise. Therefore, according to Cook, Roland is not being proud. He follows his duty to the end. Christ fulfills this role for Christians especially in times when they are in hell. Bernard Marthaler, in his study of the Creed, explains Christ’s “descent into hell” with a Balthasar reading:

For many however, Holy Saturday – the Death of God – symbolizes not just a momentary eclipse of the divine presence, but the enduring reality. God is dead. Humans suffer the punishment of the damned—the pain of loss—not because of anything they have done, but because the Word of God is not heard. (175)

Marthaler again cites Balthasar’s insights that Christ’s descent into hell opened communications with those who were unable to raise their eyes to heaven and who, unable to see God, suffered the punishment of the damned (175-76). Balthasar, in the essay on science religion and Christianity, remarks that unlike Dante, who is a “tourist” in hell, Christ undergoes the intensity of the punishment. Thus, with the intensity of the sacrifice also manifests the intensity of Christ’s obedience (117, 136-37). Christ opens the doors of communication in a place where there is a complete absence of it.

And ironically it is through separation and sin that believers encounter Christ. Roland's experience is a symbol of the self-giving Christ figure if we read him acting in obedience.

Balthasar also translated and analyzed the work of the French poet and dramatist Paul Claudel, a writer who, according to Wallace Fowlie in *Dionysus in Paris*, his study of twentieth century theater, attempts to convey the meaning of the Communion of Saints and the drama of salvation in his works (127). Balthasar is concerned with the drama of human love that refuses God, whose presence is necessary in order to transcend to a deeper form of love. Claudel's theater is poetic, in the line of Shakespeare, and a suitable subject for Balthasar. In *Partage du midi (Sharing of Noon)*, a man, Mesa, rejecting a religious vocation meets a married woman, Ysé, on a boat to China. They fall in love, a love so intense that it seeks something way beyond the human. Mesa sends her husband, like David and Uriah, to his death, but Mesa too is abandoned by her in the end. As he lays waiting to die in a house on the verge of exploding (the setting is a Chinese insurrection) his moment of grace comes. In his "Canticle" we see that he understands what Christ might have felt on the Cross—to still love people who have totally rejected you. His lover has a moment of grace too and does return to die with him and the two awaiting death have their loves transformed into the eternal. Balthasar does believe that the analogy of love -- the intense human love of the other human can be transformed to a love of God -- a pure love not looking for needs and satisfactions (*Science, Religion, and Christianity* (147).

Balthasar and Barth's concept of the "Word of God" being revealed by Christ is on the same level as poets using symbols in language to express deeper experiences. The sacredness of language was a goal of the symbolist poets of 19th century France, including Baudelaire, Mallarmé, and Rimbaud. Wallace Fowlie's concept of symbol and metaphor are like signs of revelation sought by Balthasar and Barth. According to my former teacher Mr. Fowlie, the symbolists wanted to elevate the role of language and pay homage to how language explains meaningful experiences in the world, and create a newer world at the same time. The symbol is the drama or "story" or the metaphor -- the expression of its meaningful experience. The idea that a metaphor can have multiple expressions goes back to Aquinas's four fold interpretation of the Bible, which Fowlie found in Dante's letters (*A Reading of Dante* 9-11). The literal level is the historical moment, mainly in the Old Testament. The allegorical is how that moment appears in the New Testament. The tropological is the moral interpretation, how we are to live. The anagogical would be the final destiny if we act in the way of the

symbol. For example, the “rock of Peter” refers to the law of Moses in the OT and Christ being cleft in the NT. We have to be strong like a rock to follow Christ’s way, but if we do, we will reach the rock of the heavenly kingdom. The symbolist poets were looking for this dynamic power of words and did not necessarily see Christ as the source of metaphors and symbols, with the metaphor being the comparison while the symbol is more the experience or drama of the metaphor. Balthasar is looking for the revelation of God and Christ in them. Here, we have symbols of Christ as the obedient self-sacrificing “Guarant” going into hell, and Christ as sinner/rejected and redeemed lover—at the same time. The two symbols form a complex symbol/experience of love that is really the drama of Trinitarian transcendent love. God becoming Christ chooses to love something outside of God. The spirit of this non selfish love is divine or transcendent love -- a pure love not based on any needs. This spirit is the “singularity” that we see in people that make us love them. The words “I love you” are really an expression of a deeper experience than the words themselves. The smile between two friends, or between “Balthasar’s” mother and child, are also the “word” or symbol of their love. Where is the origin of the smile? One can never be sure, but the smile is an expression not only of the friendship, but the friendly space that friends share. The smile is an example of the “singularity” that attracts us. The real origin of the smile is in a space between the friends—God’s space—or better yet a “transcendent space.” When the “symbol” reaches Christ my teacher Wallace Fowlie would call it a myth,”— the “big” symbol. The “Guarant” is Christ who is a faithful lover and servant. Claudel’s lovers have passed beyond “noon” love (“Partage du midi” can mean a “leaving” of noon—the physical sense of love) and experience a fuller attraction with a more “midnight” transcendent type of love.

Reading as Sacrament

Reading a sacrament properly takes believers to God. Reading a symbol properly takes readers to deeper levels of existence. With these words on Barth, Balthasar, and symbol, we see that sacrament and symbol are almost synonymous. As a sacrament can take you from the “image” word to the “likeness” word of God, reading a symbol can take you from the beauty of a sign to its deeper profound experience. According to Luc Ferry, philosophers try to see ultimate forms of reality from which they form an ethics of life and a wisdom. One philosophizes in three dimensions: “theory,” where we try to see ultimate reality; “ethics,” where we formulate

a practical way of living according to this reality; and “salvation” or “wisdom,” where we contemplate the ends or goals of this way of life (8-18). Luc Ferry’s final analogy of philosophy’s reality is the “pensée élargie”—thought widened out (268). We can see transcendence in this world (261). Mystery leads to more mystery. Every “other” whether a person or an object, with proper effort in reading, can be a work of art that will plunge us into further reality and further mystery. Ethics and salvation come in the form of wisdom when we “make sacred” these others and see values that are superior to a solely material life. Every image can achieve “work of art” status. A work of art passes from specific content to universal meaning by way of “singularity.” Symbols have this singularity. Reading symbols that makes us fall in love. Wisdom is achieved as we continue to grow and fall in love with mystery. Luc Ferry’s singularity is in the smiles of our always reading friends as we read symbols together to achieve deeper readings –newer analogies.

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POETRY**Joe Amoako****Delaware State University****A Little Here a Bit There**

A little here a bit there
Shall thou be saved
And hear the whole world wail
What then is the use of knowing
About everything if you do not
Know who you are

Avoid this inquiry into the
True self my dear fellow
For men of immense
Integrity and statesmen
Try to rule others when
In their heart of hearts
Cannot rule themselves

Ask them if they have
Solved the mystery of man
And they shall bow
Their heads in shame
In fact
The fact therefore is present
And not a past fact

Fiction**Robbi Jean Pounds****Xavier University of New Orleans**

from *The Grass Widow*
Yantis County, Arkansas
Summer of 1980

The horses were nervous and their riders were drunk. The sun was still behind the mountain when they filed into the yard, shod hooves grinding at the small stones of the driveway. The early morning light cast the world in shades of blue, and the sheriff's horse and the small white house before it glowed like icebergs looming out of the dark. The riders who knew better loosed the reins and let the horses pick their way through the tall dead grass, seeing what their riders could not. Each horse hesitated at the old cattle guard, nearly filled in with gravel and webbed over with grass runners. Each rider clucked or kicked or cursed at his horse until the animal went forward, against its better judgment, shoes ringing like muffled bells against the submerged pipes.

On the roof of the house, a mockingbird cocked his wings and ran to the peak, where he held himself erect, rigid as a weathervane. The bird dropped from the roof, barely missing the hat of the nearest rider, then flapped his way up to the top of the pear tree to begin his morning tirade.

Behind the screen of wisteria, Grady Fowler sat in his reclining chair with a plate of toast on one knee and a coffee cup on the chair's fat arm. No one saw him. The vines were three feet thick at that end of the porch, leaves still green in spite of the drought. The mockingbirds raised their families in those depths. The pair screamed and squalled all night, seemingly with no need for sleep. The birds were enough to make Grady wish for a cat.

Every few seconds, a cigarette pulsed from a different point in the yard. There must have been a dozen of them out there. A horse and rider passed the end of the porch, hooves knocking against the splintered wheelchair ramp. The horse's teeth ripped at the tomato vines, rattling the trellis against the side of the house. A protest caught in Grady's throat. They were oblivious to him. He sat still and willed his lungs to behave.

A bottle shattered against the old highway—they were still coming in off the road. Grady only wanted his breakfast. The coffee was black and

scalding, grease floating on the surface, the toast brown and crisp as an asphalt shingle, yellow patches sopping wet with oleo. A cough began to rumble up, and he swallowed it down. These people were trespassing on his morning.

Early mornings usually belonged to the old man. No one else wanted them. Since his last trip to the VA, his sleeping pattern had become so exaggerated that he could no longer explain it away as personal habit or the eccentricity of old age. He was up before the chickens, before the stars began to fade, hours before. When he rose, it wasn't even morning. It was the middle of the night.

He had expected something along these lines. The evening before, he had driven by the sheriff's farm, seen the sparking bonfire and at least a dozen Copelands in the fallow pasture, passing a bottle. Their high-pitched laughter reminded him of coyotes. Snatches of song made it across the pasture. *I should've been watching my ass, darling, but I was busy watching yours.* Three pale blue balloons sagged from their mailbox. With the sheriff's nine kids, they were always celebrating something. The sheriff made sure to keep them from behind the wheel, but seemed to have no aversion to saddling up and riding while blind drunk.

He had already been awake for an hour when these people rode up in his yard. Now the sheriff was there on her Arabian, a big woman on a small horse. Even the auctioneer had raised his eyebrows when she laid out three thousand dollars for the mare. The sheriff might as well have bought a unicorn. In Yantis County people rode Quarter Horses—cutting horses, barrel horses, trail horses, the best of them with haunches like Mae West. But Grady shared the sheriff's weakness for fancy horses. As the sheriff walked the white mare down the corrugated strip of driveway, Grady admired the Arabian, high-strung as she was. Next to her, the rest of the horses looked like sleepwalkers.

Most of the other riders hung back, milling around the muscadine arbors. One boy let his horse drop its head and drink from Virginia's birdbath. They kept their eyes on the house, though. They had heard stories about the old man. They let their horses crop his grass at a good distance from the house itself, occupied themselves with their bottles and their cigarettes. They eyed the tattered shades at the windows, half-expecting to see them nudged aside by the barrel of a shotgun or a rifle.

The sheriff's cheeks were blotchy, as if she had been slapped. She cleared her throat, held onto the horn and twisted in the saddle, checking on her fellow riders. "We got to find that girl of yours, Fowler. Come on out

and tell us what you know." The mare jawed against her bit, danced to one side, her neck and haunches gray with lather.

Grady swallowed and hacked and finished by spitting into his red handkerchief. "See you got your mare back," he said, lifting his chin at the sheriff's horse.

The sheriff leaned over her saddle horn, trying to see through the vines. "Fowler? You in there?"

Grady took a sip of coffee, let her see him move. "I say you got your mare back."

There was a jangle as the sheriff shifted her weight. The fool was wearing spurs. The sheriff eased back into the saddle. "Gone two weeks this time and comes home pregnant, little whore. I ought to shoot that old stud she run off with. Last week he went through a hot wire and stole Dub Morrison's filly." The sheriff pulled at the bill of her hat, a ball cap with a star on it. "Now, Fowler. Look here. That girl of yours has been missing twenty-four hours. You should have come to me." The little mare sidestepped across the yard, as if the ground were hot.

Grady coughed, wiped his mouth, folded his handkerchief over the stain and slid it into the breast pocket of his coveralls. "Virginia call you?" he said.

The sheriff played with the reins until her horse reached back, arcing her neck like a bird, and nipped at the woman's leg. "What were you waiting for, Grady? The girl's, what, six years old? This could be kidnap. She wandered off, she could die of the heat."

"She has sense enough to come out of the heat," Grady said. "No, anybody kidnapped Ola it'd be her own mother. Snatched her two months ago. It's how come Dolan brought her up here."

From the darkness near the road, a man called. "Come on, Fowler. Saddle up and ride with us."

"Mule's gone lame," Grady said.

The boys laughed at that. There were more of them out there than he had thought. "No, Sheriff. I can't help you," he said.

"Old man, you best come out here and talk to us." This, a girl's voice from out in the yard, one of the sheriff's daughters.

Grady looked for a place to set his cup and plate. His last three wives had been collectors, and now the cupboards of both his trailer and the house were crammed full. Grady treated his cups and saucers and bowls like they were made of paper, left them where they lay. On every horizontal surface, from the sides of the bathtub to the floorboard of his truck, dinner plates and drinking glasses collected dust. He set his coffee cup, then his plate of toast,

on a stack of racing forms, got a grip on the arms of the chair, and heaved himself up. He looked around for his stick, remembered leaving it inside the door. He hooked his fingers over a rope of wisteria and straightened up. "I don't know that girl's whereabouts. She run off. If I knew where she was I'd of gone and got her already."

The sheriff shook her head. "I swear, Fowler. I'll get a warrant. I'll turn that house upside down. Your trailer, too. I dealt with these custody messes before."

"There's no custody mess. She's Dolan's. All there is to it," Grady said. He let go of the wisteria, picked up his coffee and his toast. "Well. I'm going inside to eat my breakfast," he said, and moved toward the door.

The sheriff leaned forward and dug her heels into the mare's ribs. Grady knew then that the woman was as tight as the rest of them. The mare shifted her weight back, her front legs coming off the ground. The sheriff kicked her again and the horse lurched up the steps and onto the porch, where she skittered like a bug on the slick boards. Grady flattened himself against his front door. Everyone but the old man was screaming. The mare spun, her rump knocking Grady off balance. His plate hit the floor, coffee splattered down the front of his coveralls. The sheriff dropped a rein, leaned over to get it, slipped from her saddle and crashed into the wisteria. The porch shook. The mare danced in front of Grady, eyes rolling to the whites. If she reared, she could kill herself, break her skull on the beams of the ceiling. Grady reached up and grabbed for the bridle. In a few swipes he snagged a dangling rein, drew the horse to him, and caught the other rein under her chin. She huffed and pulled against him, and just when he knew he had her, the mare brought a hoof down on his bad foot. He sucked in his breath. His vision whited out for a second, but he held her. The mare's slobber leaked over Grady's hand, bubbled and dripped down to the porch floor.

Someone was at his elbow. "I'll take her," a voice said. "Let me take her, sir."

Grady let the boy have the reins and lead the horse away. He lifted his bad foot off the floor and leaned against the wall, dug in his pocket for the handkerchief. The coughing had its way with him then. He clutched at the doorframe, choking. Tears squeezed out of his eyes. His face bloomed red. He choked and he choked and when he lifted the handkerchief from his mouth, it was soaked through with blood.

The sheriff was propped up on the porch steps, holding her left arm by the elbow. The other riders struggled to dismount, with varying degrees of success. A potbellied rider forgot to slip his left boot out of the iron, then

clung to the side of his horse while both he and the saddle inched toward the ground, cigarette still pinched between his teeth. Two of the sheriff's sons squatted beside her, elbows on their knees, eyeing her as if she might topple over. Her head was bare. "Think I'm gonna have to have this set," she said. Her voice was small and hard to hear.

Grady worked on catching his breath. "You find that girl, watch your step."

The sheriff managed a wan smile. "What? She armed and dangerous?"

Grady stumped across the porch, half-bent at the waist, boots scattering pieces of his breakfast plate. He held on to the porch railing and took his weight off the bad foot.

"Roll up my sleeve." Grady held out his right arm to where the younger boy squatted in the grass.

The boy looked to the sheriff for permission, got nothing but a glazed stare, reached forward, unsnapped Grady's cuff and folded back the sleeve, delicately, without touching the flesh. The forearm looked like something half-eaten and thrown away. The scars pulled tight and hard and close to the bone. On television, healed shark bite wounds looked something like this. It was a wonder that the hand still operated.

"This here," Grady said. He pointed to the intact skin near his elbow, to a purple crescent there in the white flesh. He lifted his chin at the bite mark. "This one's nearly two months old. Had to go to the VA. Wouldn't heal. Human mouth's a nasty thing."

The sheriff said nothing. The flush was gone from her cheeks, hair springing away from her head. She reminded Grady of twenty years ago, when she was Rodeo Queen three years running, plump even then in a red satin shirt with white fringe. With black tack on a black horse, and quick as she was, she almost looked to be riding bareback. Grady shook his head. That wasn't the sheriff. He was thinking of her mother. That woman had known how to sit a horse.

"Ola," Grady said, "that girl's gonna be all right. Got more sense than the lot of you." He pivoted on his good foot and aimed himself at his front door, his new chair, that bottle of pink medicine.

* * *

The mare's hoof had woken it up, and now Grady's foot was raging. He wanted the foot gone. This was how he had thought of it since the war—the *the* foot, not *his* foot, because something that caused him so much pain could not be a part of him. He wanted rid of it. They could have done it in France.

He would have been happy to leave the damn thing there, but the doctors wouldn't give up. They had already patched him up once and sent him back to the front, but in spite of all the surgery and medicine and three months in bed with flies crawling over his toes, no one could pretend that what was left of Grady's right foot would ever be sound, and they had shipped him back to Alabama. Not fit for battle, but good enough to farm.

Now, propped on the footrest of the recliner, the foot glowed orange-red, lit from behind like a hand held over the lens of a flashlight. The thing pulsed with Grady's heartbeat. He reached down into the pocket of the chair and his fingers felt for the smooth glass of the medicine bottle, careful not to move his body, not to disturb the foot. He unscrewed the bottle cap with the heel of his hand and took another swallow of the syrup.

He could not imagine moving from this chair, but the garden would have to be watered, the mule fed, the dog buried. He had dug the hole last night and rolled the dog into it, left the rest of the shovel-work for later. The day before, after driving more than two hundred miles, looking for the girl, he had pulled into the driveway when the sun was going down, only to run over his own goddam dog. He had not told Virginia, couldn't stand to see her so pleased.

The morphine was seeping in. The skin of his back itched. He kept still and waited for the numbness to set in.

The dead dog didn't even have a name. He never bothered to name the runt of a litter. That just made it harder. When the boys were small, Lester had sneaked the runts into bed with him, toted them in his pockets for warmth. Once, he nursed a litter of possums that gave Grady the shivers with their shark's eyes and needle teeth. Lester had always been soft. He had let his daughters do the same with this dog, the last one off the farm, a sheepdog mix with spooky blue eyes. Once half-grown, the dog had shrunk from the girls' ministrations. For years, that dog had lived for Lester. Since he left, the dog had become a wild thing skulking around the yard, always within sight of a human, but never close enough to touch. The dog lived in the periphery of Grady's vision. He needed people there, but not right there. Choking down scraps on the back steps, he would bolt at the clink of a spoon or scrape of a chair from inside the kitchen, disappearing into the treelike and not coming back for hours. The raccoons would finish the meal for him.

On the farm, the dog had known what to do. Lester had taught him to herd. He worked cattle, then sheep, and those last few years, just a herd of pygmy goats. He slept under the porch, lived off burnt biscuits and pork trimmings, and never saw the inside of the house. Lester and the dog spent hours together riding the back roads. Lester was happy with his forbidden

beer and radio, the antenna coiled against the roof like a trick rope, the dog just thrilled to be by his side.

After Lester ran off, Sarah waited a year before taking the girls and moving back to her parents in Missouri. Grady held out another year before selling the farm to a big chicken outfit. By the time the furniture was out of the house, they were already leveling a pasture. Grady watched the dozers take off the top of the field where his horses had grazed for more years than he could count. There would be three chicken houses—three-hundred thousand chickens. The company would use the house and barn for storage. When Grady left, he didn't bother to lock the door behind him.

Grady would have thought that Lester had the sense to take the dog with him when he left. But Grady had always given his son more credit than he deserved, while most people gave him less. People assumed that Lester was a simpleton because he was slow and quiet, and because he smiled too much for a grown man. He was too neat, kept his things as clean and organized as if he were still in boot camp. No one would have guessed he had been raised without a mother. He had the manners of a schoolboy and the sweet tooth to match. He would talk his own daughters out of the last piece of pie. But above all, Lester was suspect because, at the age of twenty-two and fresh out of the Marines, he had forsaken television, liquor, his '62 Mustang, and a life of modern conveniences to marry a Mennonite woman five years his senior. Folks thought he was shell-shocked, or at least pussy-whipped beyond compare.

Grady had heard that part of a child stopped growing when he lost his mother, which explained why portions of Lester seemed to have stalled out around the age of two. To Grady, this excused Lester for almost anything, that part of him that was still as wide-eyed as a baby. Grady thought of his own son as an orphan, even though with Navis for a mother, the boy had not had that much to lose.

But Lester was anything but stupid. Grady had watched him fix Dolan's Volkswagen with a screwdriver and a paperclip. He could doctor any of the electronic gadgets that Sarah's church shied away from. And after Sadie was born, the fourth daughter in six years, Lester borrowed the money from Dolan, and one afternoon he slipped off to Hot Springs for a vasectomy. He came home bowlegged and tender, and there wasn't much Sarah or anyone else could say about that.

* * *

The dog had refused to get in the truck. He loved to ride, high in the truck bed, but now the bed was packed solid with furniture and boxes, and the dog had never ridden in the cab with Grady. He was wary. The barns and pastures were empty. Even the barn cat had migrated to a neighbor's farm. The dog shoved himself under the porch. When Grady got down on his hands and knees to tempt the dog with a piece of jerky, he crawled to the furthest corner and froze, fixing Grady with those pale eyes.

"Come here, you crazy booger. Come on," Grady said, and the dog faded into the space beneath the steps. "Goddammit, Lester," he said, and held onto the peeling weatherboards to pull himself upright again.

So Grady drove out to the farm every day, trying to lure the dog into the bed of the truck. He brought barbecued ribs and chicken-fried steak, Vienna sausages and French fries, treasures the dog had only smelled through the kitchen window. Grady sat on the tailgate and tossed food to the dog, one bite at a time.

Every day, the dog inched closer to the truck, closer to Grady. He moved to the cab, left both doors wide open, and fed the dog chunks of raw beef and strips of bacon. In two weeks the dog was eating out of his hand, but if their eyes met, he took off. The weather was turning cold. Grady's fingers ached, sitting in the old truck, handing meat to that silly dog.

So he stayed away from the farm for three days. When he came back, he brought an aluminum pie pan full of scraps from his Thanksgiving turkey, the new kind, deep-fried in peanut oil right there at the supermarket. He set the plate on the floorboard and took up his place on the tailgate. He waited, looking at what winter was doing to his old farm. From the corner of his eye, he saw the dog creeping closer, a patch of black and white in the dry weeds. When he slipped into the cab, Grady eased one door to, then shuffled around and slammed the other. He had the dog, hunkered on the floorboard, wolfing down scraps of turkey.

Grady slipped into the driver's seat. He remembered. He knew what Lester had called the dog. Grady watched the dog lick its greasy chops. "Old Boy," Grady said. "Hey there, Old Boy. You need more of a name than that." Grady reached out a hand, offered it for the dog to smell. The dog began to shake. "Have it your way. Crazy thing." They rode into town, furiously ignoring each other, the dog plastered to the passenger door. Within a year, Grady married Virginia, and the dog got cagier than ever.

Even before they married, he had asked Virginia to help him get rid of the foot. She had worked in a hospital, after all. Virginia just crowed at him, called such thinking an abomination before God. He had asked each of his wives to help him get rid of the thing, but they had refused. Only Dora had seriously considered it. The best idea they had was an ax, but she could not swing hard enough to split wood, and honestly, he had known she couldn't swing it at all, not at his ankle. He had thought her sweet for trying.

Grady had empathy for foxes caught in leg traps. At least they had their teeth. But prostrate in the recliner, all he could do was stare at the foot, and medicate it, and wait for the morphine to kick in. His back itched as if ants were under his shirt, but he couldn't move to scratch himself. The sun was boring holes through the shades. Soon it would be too hot to sleep in the house. He would have to make it to his trailer somehow, and the window unit. For now, he lay still. He'd turn eighty-seven years old if he made it to January. This was it--this was old age. He had been reduced to a throbbing foot, an itchy back, a mouthful of sickly-sweet medicine. He lay still and he waited.

Grady's wife appeared in the door of her bedroom in her yellow robe, clutching at the doorjambs as if the house were rolling at sea. Virginia tended to wake up confused, and confusion made her angry. Her lips worked in and out. She spied Grady prone in his chair.

"What are you doing in here?" she said, screaming, deaf, her hearing aids in the pocket of her robe.

Grady pointed at the phone. "Thought Ola might call," he said.

Virginia shuffled past him into the kitchen. "Need you a phone in that trailer," she screamed.

Grady was thirsty. The pink stuff had gone to work and the foot was just a dull warm blur, but he wouldn't risk putting weight on it. The fridge door opened and closed, then the pantry. He would ask for a glass of water, once she was good and awake. Cellophane crinkled. She was unwrapping her crackers, peeling slices of cheese under the fluorescent tube above the sink.

"She's been in here," Virginia screamed. She came into the living room, chewing, the little tray from the toaster oven in her grip. On it were eight Saltine crackers, each topped with a square of processed cheese. Virginia's breakfast routine was to add a layer of miniature marshmallows before shoving it all in the toaster oven. She made Grady look at the tray.

"That girl took my marshmallows and the new jar of peanut butter and who knows what else. She went in my purse. Stole ten dollar."

Grady made a screwing motion at his own ear. "Put in your aids."

Virginia sucked her lips at him but set the tray down atop a stack of newspapers as high as her waist, dug in her robe pocket for the hearing aids. She looked at the ceiling while she twisted them into place.

"What?" she said.

"You went and told the sheriff."

Virginia swallowed. "Well, sure I did. I'm worried sick about the child."

"That come on you awful sudden."

Virginia picked up her tray of crackers. "You'd just as soon keep her."

"She's my granddaughter. She's Dolan's."

Virginia snorted. "Better ask the redhead about that," she said, then turned and made for the kitchen.

Grady's lungs seized up. "Dolan," he said, but the coughing welled up, choking off his words.

The old woman kept walking, dismissing him with a limp wave of her hand, like she was throwing something small behind her. The aluminum tray clattered to rest on the countertop, then the screen door slapped shut. She was headed across the back porch. He would have to wait a while longer for that glass of water.

ESSAY

Jeffrey Pusch

University of Southern Mississippi

“All Is Ahab”: Narrative Tyranny in *Moby-Dick*

In his story “The Artist of the Beautiful,” Nathaniel Hawthorne writes:

It is requisite for the ideal artist to possess a force of character that seems hardly compatible with its delicacy; he must keep faith in himself, while the incredulous world assails him with its utter disbelief; he must stand up against mankind and be his own sole disciple. (271)

Herman Melville, in his personal copy of *Mosses from an Old Manse*—in which “The Artist of the Beautiful” appears—underlined the above passage three times (Leyda 381). Evidently, the passage from Hawthorne’s story resonated with Melville. Within the context of “The Artist of the Beautiful,” the narrator’s argument that the artist “must keep faith in himself” is naïve; after all, Owen Warland looks on as a baby crushes his masterpiece. On the other hand, Melville seems to have taken the narrator’s comments to heart. *Typee* and *Omoo*, Melville’s early novels, were written with a goal of popular consumption, and were in fact bestsellers. Subsequent novels such as *Mardi* and *White-Jacket* confounded and disappointed readers. Part of the problem resided in Melville’s authorial tone, and as Cindy Weinstein points out, “Critics emphasized Melville’s refusal to participate in the required aesthetic of self-denial, though they attributed his unusual style to unrestrained egotism” (Weinstein 209). Furthermore, it was only after reading *Mosses* (including “Artist of the Beautiful”) that Melville famously confided in a letter to Hawthorne that “dollars damn me.” André Kaenel argues that by this time in Melville’s life, he had formulated a “poetic of failure,” in which Melville believes that artistic success is inversely proportional to economic success. Only hacks made money; true artists went broke. In light of this biographical information, I would argue that Melville had the passage from Hawthorne’s story in mind when composing *Moby-Dick*, for it is in this novel we get the embodiment of the artist who stands up against mankind and the marketplace: Ahab.

In his essay “Hawthorne and his Mosses,” which he published when working on *Moby-Dick*, Melville asserts, “If you rightly look for it, you will

almost always find that the author himself has somewhere furnished you with his own picture” in the artist’s own works (“Mosses” 528). For decades critics have “looked for” Melville’s self-portrait in *Moby-Dick*. Those who undertake this investigation tend to label Ishmael as Melville’s ideal artist figure. Rarely do critics extend their argument to include Ahab. Indeed, Ahab is arguably the more interesting of the two characters when thinking about Melville’s treatment of narrative authority. Of all the characters in *Moby-Dick*, Ahab most clearly embodies the figure of the artist who keeps faith in himself and acts as his own disciple. Yet how do we reconcile Melville’s emphasis on the stalwart artist figure with Ahab’s doom? I believe the answer lies in Melville’s description of the doubloon, for it is in that image that Melville has “furnished us” with the “picture” of the ideal artist.

The doubloon represents the novel’s world in microcosm; a volcano, a tower, and a crowing rooster are shown on the face of the coin, balanced by the sign of Libra. When Ahab gazes on these three images, he sees himself in them. Yet these three images are linked with other episodes in the novel, episodes that warn against undue introspection, obsession, and enthusiasm. Over the course of the novel Ahab engages in all three of these activities. If we accept the traditional view of Ishmael as the contemplative, democratic, and in some places invisible artist, we might also propose that Ahab is an artist who is alternately self-absorbed, oblivious, and tyrannical. All of these characteristics stem from Ahab’s unwillingness as an artist to yield narrative authority. By narrative authority I am referring to Ahab’s literary monomania—he is obsessed with his own desires rather than those of his readers—and that marks him as the novel’s figure of the commercially unsuccessful artist. If commercial and artistic success are inversely proportional, then Ahab’s renunciation of the marketplace is linked to his artistic sensibilities. In other words, Ahab becomes an artistic tyrant by refusing to relinquish any control of his narrative to his audience or the forces of the marketplace.

Some readers may say the doubloon as an image seems insignificant compared to the overwhelming power of *Moby Dick*’s symbolism. Upon closer examination, though, we see that the doubloon is a silent but constant presence on the Pequod. Ahab dramatically nails it to the mast in “The Quarter-Deck,” and characters like Starbuck and Stubb reflect on it during the occasional whale hunt. The narrator even devotes a chapter to its depiction. The coin is stamped with the name of the capital of Ecuador. Coming from an equatorial country, the coin itself comes to represent the whole world in miniature, a kind of all-encompassing symbol. Moreover, the

centrality of the doubloon's location on the ship (similar to Ecuador's geographical centrality on the globe) marks the coin as the central image of the novel. In the chapter "The Doubloon," we are treated to a series of interpretations of the coin's symbols by Ahab and his mates. Flask remarks, "Here's the ship's navel, this doubloon here, and they are all on fire to unscrew it. But, unscrew your navel, what's the consequence?" (335). On one level, Flask is referencing the joke that unscrewing one's navel will result in one's rear end falling off. Yet biologically, the navel is proof of creation; the navel is the mark left on humans after being born. By referring to the doubloon as a navel, Flask marks it as the ship's place of creation—and if we understand Ahab's quest as an artist's quest for meaning—then the doubloon is the site of artistic creation. Once Ahab nails the doubloon to the mast, the novel's plot begins to revolve around Ahab's artistic quest.

If the doubloon represents an artistic birthplace, then the symbols on its surface correspond to artistic sensibilities. In other words, I would argue that the doubloon signifies the characteristics of Melville's ideal artist. The narrator describes the coin:

Zoned by those letters you saw the likeness of three Andes' summits; from one a flame; a tower on another, on the third a crowing cock; while arching over all was a segment of the partitioned zodiac, the signs all marked with their usual cabalistics, and the keystone sun entering the equinoctial point at Libra. (332)

The three symbols on the coin – volcano, tower, cock – are what Ahab focuses on, and reflects the characteristics of the artist that Ahab embodies. In deciphering the symbols on the coin, John Seelye argues that the coin depicts cosmological signs of air and fire which he subsequently links to introspection and transcendentalism (353). More significantly, I see Libra not simply as an "air sign" but more clearly as "The Scales," representing balance. Therefore while volcano, tower, and cock are images associated with the artist, Libra demands those characteristics be balanced in the artist.

Lacking that balance, Ahab embodies the aspects of the artist reflected on the coin: the volcano signifying the passion of the artist, the tower as the artist's isolation, and the cock crowing the artist's achievement, then enthusiasm for his work. Certainly Ahab sees himself reflected in those images; when he meditates on the doubloon he mutters:

The volcano, that is Ahab; the courageous, the undaunted, and the victorious fowl, that, too, is Ahab; all are Ahab, and this round gold is but the image of the rounder globe, which, like a magician's glass, to each and every man in turn but mirrors back his own mysterious self. (332)

The epithets "courageous" and "undaunted" echo Hawthorne's claims in "The Artist of the Beautiful" that the artist must "keep the faith" when the word "assails" him, and Ahab envisions himself as a man alone in this scene. While Ahab recognizes that the self is "mysterious," his soliloquy here suggests that he is not mystified by his motivations. Yet Ahab *does* misread his characteristics; without any artistic balance, the artist Ahab's passion becomes obsession, his isolation renders him oblivious to his audience's desires, and his enthusiasm for his artistic output becomes a kind of authorial tyranny.

Ahab's narrative tyranny begins in a kind of artistic obsession. Of course, Ahab is single-minded; Ahab himself recognizes his stubbornness as he shouts, "Swerve me? The path to my fixed purpose is laid with iron rails, whereon my soul is grooved to run" (131). Ahab admits that his one-track mind is as unstoppable as a runaway locomotive. Furthermore, his obsession is clear to any who look upon him. Characters from Starbuck to Gabriel comment on the captain's monomania; Ishmael even remarks that he could nearly see Ahab's thoughts as the captain paced the deck. Ishmael observes the transparency of Ahab's obsession when he says, "you could almost see that thought turn in him as he turned, paced in him as he paced; so completely possessing him" (137). The pacing is an outward manifestation of Ahab's consuming passion, one that Stubb realizes is creative when he whispers "The chick that's in him pecks the shell. T'will soon be out," (137). On one hand, Stubb fears Ahab's passion will be less like "chick" emerging from the shell than a volcano erupting. On the other hand, Stubb is marking Ahab's obsession as a *creative* force. Later in the scene, Ahab forcefully argues that he is looking for some meaning in the world, with *Moby-Dick* representing the world's meaninglessness. But as Marilyn Patton claims, "If the whale is but a 'pasteboard mask', so, of course, is this novel, literally covered in pasteboard and just as much a mask" (23). If Ahab wishes to strike through that mask to rend "indeterminacy," then his passion fuels the creation of art that will assign that meaning he desires. Yet just as the whale consumes itself on the pyre in "The Try-Works," so too does Ahab's artistic fervor consume him.

Ahab's destruction stems not only from his obsession, but also from his nature as a solitary artist. The second image on the doubloon's face is the tower, representative of just that figure. The narrator often describes Ahab as aloof, and his solitary act of artistic creation is evident in "The Chart." The chapter takes place in Ahab's cabin, and in all of Melville's novels the captain's cabin is always associated with writing (Ackerman 95). The narrator describes Ahab entering his cabin when his artistic obsession overtakes him, and the "large wrinkled roll of yellowish sea charts" Ahab unfurls mirrors manuscript paper (166). Ahab frowns as he pours over his charts, the embodiment of an artist having a tough time with his composition. He frowns as he works, and the wrinkles on his forehead mimic the lines he draws on the chart. The reference to Ahab's head marks this as a painful mental exercise, as if putting his thoughts onto paper causes him physical anguish. Ahab's extensive knowledge of whales and the ocean allows him to predict Moby Dick's possible location and chart effective courses. Using his seafaring experience, "he could, *by his art*, so place and time himself on his way" (167-8, emphasis mine). The narrator's phrasing highlights that Ahab's talents are artistic. Ahab becomes the archetypal solitary artist.

But Ahab lacks the artistic balance signified by the doubloon, and his solitary nature (taken to the extreme) makes him oblivious to his audience. He is either unwilling or incapable of engaging the thoughts of others. In his study of Melville's reaction to the literary marketplace, Michael Gilmore argues that Melville resisted the demands of his audience, preferring, whenever possible, to exert his own authority over the text. Melville's fans of *Typee* and *Omoo*, confused by his later efforts, echo Pip's plea, "My master, come back!" (421). The captain does not respond to Pip, for as the narrator points out, "Ahab heard nothing" (421). The Ahabian artist is so intent on completing his work his way, he cannot or will not bend to the desires of his audience. Ahab refuses to relinquish narrative authority.

In addition to his audience, Ahab also cannot heed the advice of his artistic mentors or forebearers. Ahab seeks meaning in the whales; in "The Sphinx" searches for that meaning by addressing a whale's head: "Speak, thou vast and venerable head," muttered Ahab, "which, though ungarished with a beard, yet here and there lookest hoary with mosses" (249). Ahab references the beard because it was a symbol of experience and wisdom and points to the mosses as emblems of the whale's knowledge. Yet the "mosses" might also refer to Hawthorne's collection (and Melville's subsequent essay). The whale head does not speak to Ahab in the way

Mosses from an Old Manse has spoken to Melville; the novel's dedication indicates that Melville at least wanted to glean artistic knowledge from Hawthorne. This scene does more than suggest the ineffectual author cannot learn from his literary predecessors. For example, the narrator wishes Ahab to understand, "Thy thoughts have created a creature in thee" (170). The narrator associates Ahab with Prometheus, but the "vulture" that tortures is "the very creature he creates" (170). Figuratively, then, in "The Chart," Ahab's artistic creation becomes a monstrosity. The narrator seems to be suggesting that by avoiding marketplace forces, the tyrannical writer's work is unnatural. And while this might satisfy the artist's ego, it will ultimately lead to the artist's economic ruin.

Unlike Ahab, the novel itself allows for differing viewpoints and audience participation. In fact, the novel's narrative "authority is not merely different from Ahab's, it deliberately runs counter to the captain's" (Patterson 296). Whether recorded in the voice of the Ishmael or the more omniscient narrator, the text constantly engages and challenges the reader's expectations. For example, the shifting narrative genres interspersed with "rhetorical questions, the admonitions, the frequent use of the present tense . . . and the prevailing chattiness" suggest the novel shares narrative authority with the audience (Gilmore 121). Furthermore, the text makes clear that this give-and-take between novel and reader is necessary for its own success. When Pip falls into the ocean, he is thrust into a world devoid of any human contact, a nightmarish inversion of the transcendent state Ishmael experiences in "The Mast-Head." In describing Pip's complete isolation, the narrator says, "The awful lonesomeness is intolerable. The intense concentration of self in the middle of such a heartless immensity, my God! Who can tell it?" (321). That last question—"who can tell it"—refers not only to the narrator's failure to adequately describe the mental anguish Pip experiences in the deep, but also to the artist's futility in working in utter isolation. The novel admonishes any artist who, toiling completely alone, risks rendering his work unintelligible.

Ahab further compounds his artistic problems by continuing to yield narrative authority once the work is presented to the audience. In his study of the novel's treatment of democracy, Mark Patterson argues that there are "two distinct centers of authority: the aristocratic and democratic," with Ahab's going from "institutional to charismatic" (290, 292). The term "charismatic" references the artist's need to win over resistant audiences, as evidenced by the image of the cock on the doubloon. Yet Ahab has an almost "hostile regard for the reader" and as such treats them as a "threat"

(Dimock 184). As a result, Ahab's extreme charisma becomes tyranny. Nowhere is this clearer than during the drama of "The Quarter-Deck." Ahab's initial address to the crew comes in a call-and-answer format common in unifying rituals like religious services. As Matt Laufer notes, "The effect [of the ritual] is nonetheless de-individualization: the collectivization that typifies a theater audience or ensemble" (28). Individual voices are lost; the crew is unified under Ahab's tyranny.

Of course, Starbuck is not initially swayed by Ahab's exhortations. Starbuck's rebuke identifies him as the novel's capitalist voice: "I came here to hunt whales, not my commander's vengeance. How many barrels will thy vengeance yield thee even if though gettest it, Captain Ahab? It will not fetch thee much in our Nantucket market" (139). Just as revenge will not "fetch much" at the "market," neither will a novel that refuses to surrender narrative authority. The Ahabian artist is doomed to commercial failure. Ahab, however, is not moved by Starbuck's argument; the Ahabian artist cares only for the integrity of his artistic vision. Starbuck has no answer for Ahab's rejoinder that all he is doing is searching for meaning, and Ahab takes the mate's silence as "tacit acquiescence" (140). The Ahabian artist so favors his own vision that he cannot entertain others. Impotent against an artist unwilling to surrender control, the audience is ultimately subdued and unsatisfied.

The novel also rebukes Ahab's tyranny as he runs roughshod over crew and audience alike. Much has been made of the novel's shifting genres, especially the use of dramatic form. In his analysis of "The Quarter-Deck," Gilmore argues Melville creates "the illusion of a text without an author," as the narrator sacrifices narrative authority (128). The theater of "The Quarter-Deck"—Ahab rallying his crew to his vision—is directly opposed by the dramatic style of that chapter. If theater has immediate impact for its audience, then reading drama as the opposite effect; reading dialogue and stage directions is jarring and disorienting (Laufer 29). Thus the text's presentation of Ahab's tyranny is a direct censure of that tyranny. The novel actually prevents its audience from being caught up in Ahab's enthusiasm.

Other chapters provide what Matt Laufer calls a kind of "generic whiplash" that undermines Ahab's tyranny (25). The narrator controls the narrative at the beginning of "The Doubloon," but soon fades as the chapter proceeds. Instead, we are treated to a series of soliloquies as a parade of characters attempt to analyze the doubloon's images. The chapter ends with Pip reading aloud from his grammar manual: "I look, you look, he looks" (335). Pip is doing more than conjugating "to look"; here the novel is

arguing that everyone—artist and audience—have the right to read the text. The text further solidifies this argument as Flask whispers, “he’s getting it by heart,” illustrating that the artist is not the sole arbiter of meaning. The audience, too, has a role in the artist’s work.

Ultimately, then, the novel succeeds by allowing the audience to come to its own understanding about Truth. Whereas Ahab desires to “fix meaning,” by rending the pasteboard mask Moby Dick represents, the novel admits that “all meanings are created by human beings” working collectively (Gilmore 117). The narrator warns against fixing Truth by yourself:

Unless you own the whale, you are but a provincial and sentimentalist in Truth. But clear Truth is a thing for salamander giants only to encounter; how small the chances for the provincials then? What befell the weakling youth lifting the dread goddess’s veil at Sais? (268)

The narrator advocates “owning the whale,” rather than seeking to destroy it, Ahab-style. It must be a collaborative effort, between artist and audience, or there will be dire consequences as referenced by the “lifting the dread goddess’s veil.” The young man who dared peek beneath the veil to get at Truth was blasted for it. He thought he could fix meaning himself. Likewise, Ahab is “deluded into the positivist belief that the truth is a substance—a visible thing immediately intelligible” (Cowan 143). Ahab locates truth in the body of Moby Dick, and that fixity leads to his destruction. If, as Richard Brodhead argues, “The proper way of being literary is not to fill out the outline of some predetermined literary kind but rather to do everything at once: to embrace and display . . . the full form of writing’s expressive potential,” *Moby-Dick* the novel attempts to be literary (4). It accomplishes this by working with the audience rather than, as Ahab does, engaging in narrative tyranny. The novel begins with its famous invitation, indicating that Ishmael recognizes the artist’s need for an audience. Alan Ackerman argues that the dramatic elements of the novel, from Ishmael’s decision to turn Ahab into a Shakespearian figure, from Ahab’s charisma¹ to the chapters written as a play, demonstrate that *Moby-Dick* is about theater itself (92). This is relevant to our discussion because theater is necessarily public and cooperative; theater requires an audience. Ishmael is willing to cater to an audience, while Ahab simply runs roughshod over any audience. Even Ishmael’s reappearance in the last chapter is reminiscent of Shakespearian epilogues, which often addressed the audience directly—sometimes out of character! Ultimately, then, the novel succeeds in engaging the audience, regardless of its success in the marketplace. Conversely, Ahab’s artistic

mission fails—economically and artistically—precisely because he refuses to yield a modicum of narrative authority to his audience.

In an 1849 letter to his father-in-law, Herman Melville remarks of his pre-*Moby-Dick* novels, “My only desire for their ‘success’ (as it is called) springs from my pocket, & not from my heart” (qtd in Weinstein 202). *Moby-Dick*, on the other hand, embodies the conflict between his heart and his purse, illustrating the allure and danger of being an artist who refuses to bow to the whims of the literary marketplace. Through the doubloon Melville furnishes his readers with the formula for artistic balance. The novel also provides us with Ahab, the self-absorbed and tyrannical artist. Ahab represents the artist who does not concede his narrative authority, but becomes an ineffectual writer and as a result must go down with the ship.

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ESSAY

Debbie Davis

The University of West Alabama

“They unman me / Here when I had remann’d myself”: Gender Parody in Byron’s *Sardanapalus*

Byron’s “closet drama” *Sardanapalus* (1821) is a political tragedy about an effeminate Assyrian king whose countrymen rebel against him because he acts more like a woman than a man. Because Sardanapalus prefers pleasure to conquest, his Satraps believe him unfit for the crown and attempt to oust him from the throne. Refusing to be a prisoner in his own realm, Sardanapalus commits suicide at the end of the play. With its effeminate but heterosexual king and the warrior slave girl who stands by her man, *Sardanapalus* begs for a critique on gendered space.

Two such studies, conducted by Susan Wolfson and Caroline Franklin, have both affirmed that Byron foregrounds the politics of gender in the context of the political struggles in the play: Sardanapalus’s “feminine” pacifism and lust for pleasure oppose the more “masculine,” bellicose values of the state. However, both scholars also claim that though Byron initially toys with the notion of gender as a fictional construct, he ultimately retreats to orthodoxy and phallocentrism when he returns his hero and heroine to their essential gender identities—Sardanapalus reclaiming his manhood and Myrrah proving finally the “self-immolating devotion of woman to man” (Franklin 220). That Wolfson and Franklin find evidence of patriarchal hegemony in *Sardanapalus* is neither surprising nor specifically Byronic; Byron, like any artist, is shaped by the ideology of his epoch. More to the point is Byron’s self-appointed role as the “voice of the people.” Believing the self to be more than an imprint of an historical milieu, Byron crusaded for individual agency in both his private life and his art. When Wolfson and Franklin minimize the Romantic and Byronic emphasis on self-fashioning, they obscure Byron’s strategic use of the closet drama to question whether gender signifies an essential male or female identity or is merely an act, a “performance,” as Judith Butler would say, that “constitute[s] the identity it is purported to be” (24-25). By theorizing *Sardanapalus* vis-à-vis Butler, we find that Byron has produced an artifact that in its parody of gender constructs reveals gender not as a fixed attribute

in an individual but as an unstable variable, adaptable to different situations at different times.

In the Preface to *Sardanapalus*, Byron forecasts the oppressive cultural restrictions on gender identity that plague our tragic hero by lamenting the artistic limitations imposed on the poet by what Byron calls “the law of literature.” Byron’s tongue-in-cheek apology for conflating the genres of poetry and drama in *Sardanapalus* prefigures observations by Derrida who asserts that an adherence to the laws of genre immediately establishes a repressive limit on a text. More interesting to this connection is Derrida’s “broad definition of the notion of genre, which in French applies both to genre as a literary form and to gender.” In *Gender, Genre, and the Romantic Poets*, Phillip Cox explains that Derrida’s discussion of genre “directs us to fundamental processes of categorization and implies that radical uncertainties in one area of discourse can be related to manifest uncertainties in others” (12). These uncertainties include, in Derrida’s words, “the generation [of] sexual difference between the masculine and the feminine gender” (Derrida 243). Cox applies the relation of genre and gender to the “closet drama,” which is a “poem [that] possesses most of the properties of a play but is intended to be read rather than performed” (17). According to Cox, “the closet drama implicitly operates within the context of binary oppositions, such as that between body and mind, which during [the Romantic period] resonate with the language of gender difference” (17). Thus, it is not unrealistic to infer that Byron’s attack on the “law of literature” in the Preface to a closet drama about the “law of gender” signals a desire to challenge both literary and social ideologies “which clin[g] unthinkingly to certain [rigidly imposed] expectations” (Cox 14) and thus inhibit the creative possibilities of both the poet and the individual.

From the opening scenes of *Sardanapalus*, Byron challenges gender constructs by presenting an array of characters whose gender identities do not mirror what has traditionally been considered the essential or “natural” traits of their biological sex. The title character is described as “effeminately dressed, his Head crowned with Flowers and his Robe negligently flowing” (I, ii). But while Byron’s historical source, Diodorus, presents the King as a hedonistic, cross-dressing bi-sexual, Byron’s Sardanapalus, though effeminate, is a confirmed heterosexual, whose “effeminacy” “is represented as concealing, but not canceling, a masculine character” (Wolfson 871). For example, though Salemenes (the mouthpiece of the people) blames Sardanapalus’s effeminacy for his country’s problems, he implies that because the King is essentially male, all is not lost if only Sardanapalus could start “being that / which he should be, as easily as the

thing / He should not be and is" (I, i. 20-21). What Sardanapalus "should be," of course, is masculine, and thus a power and war monger. The "thing" Sardanapalus "should not be and is" is feminine, which his countrymen align with pacifism, revelry, and weakness.

Ironically, Salemenes contrasts Sardanapalus's feminine pacifism with the bellicosity of another character whose gender identity does not reflect the so-called "natural" tendencies of her biological sex. Semeriamis, the "man queen" and Sardanapalus's blood-thirsty grandmother, killed her husband so that she could rule Assyria, forced an incestuous relationship upon her son, "subdued" Persia, Media, and Bactria, and returned from battle "like a man—a hero" (I, ii.129). She is characterized by a calculating brutality that is absent in Sardanapalus but deemed necessary to the performance of kingly duties. According to Salemenes, Sardanapalus shames the blood of his ancestors and neglects his responsibility as king because he is not following in his grandmother's footsteps. While Semeriamis is considered heroic by her countrymen, Sardanapalus, in contrast, sees her as "a sort of semi-glorious human monster" (I, ii. 42-43) who haunts his dreams in nightmares of blood and lust.

Sardanapalus wants no part of a "masculinity" or heroism which demands the barbarism of his grandmother. Rather, he seeks to emulate Bacchus, who through drink and revelry provides a means to "chee[r] the sad, reviv[e] the old, inspire[e] / the young, [and] mak[e] weariness forget his toil," (I, ii.189-192). Though his countrymen measure the success of Semiramis's reign by the number of nations she conquered, Sardanapalus proclaims his rule the more successful because he has advanced civilization and "founded cities" while his "blood-loving beldame" did nothing "except destroy them" (I, ii.236-239). For Sardanapalus, a noble king is one who "can make [his] subjects feel / The weight of human misery less," and kingship implies a willingness "to equal all in social freedom" (IV, i. 81). Rather than accept as "natural" the cultural categories of male/female or master/slave, Sardanapalus encourages "a disposition / To love and to be merciful, [and] to pardon / The follies of [one's] species" (I, ii. 275-278). Nonetheless, Salemenes rejects Sardanapalus's attempts to "humanize [him]," fearing that while the king "lolls crown'd with roses" in the company of women and slaves, "his diadem / Lies negligently by to be caught up / By the first manly hand that dares to snatch it" (I, i. 31-36). Sardanapalus's desire to redefine kingship (and by extension masculinity) incites his Satraps to revolt because they fear such "confusions . . . corrupt the conservative foundation of masculine culture and the discourses that bind it" (Wolfson 877). This fear of corruption is echoed in the admonitions

of Salemenes and in the language of the rebellious Satraps, who disparage Sardanapalus in order to justify their treason. Various, they refer to him as the “she-king, / That less than woman”; “that effeminate thing that governs”; “the king of distaffs”; and “she Sardanapalus.” The comments of the patriarchal representatives, as the rebellion itself, illustrate what Judith Butler terms the “punitive consequences” of one’s failure to conform to cultural constructs by refusing to perform one’s gender role correctly.

In *Gender Trouble*, Butler deconstructs the way we look at gender in order to pave the way for an equality between men and women that cannot exist within a framework that polarizes individuals based on prescribed gender roles. Her argument is based on the assumption that while “sex” (i.e. male/female) is biological, “gender” (masculine/feminine) is socially constructed. By theorizing gender as a construct independent of one’s biological sex, Butler asserts that “*man* and *masculine* might just as easily signify a female body as a male one, and *woman* and *feminine* a male body as a female one” (6). Butler argues that what we assume are essential traits of our biological sex are actually “performatively produced and compelled by the regulatory practice of gender coherence” in society (25). Thus, gender, as an identity, is “tenuously constituted in time . . . through a *stylized repetition of acts*” and “hence, must be understood as the . . . way in which bodily gestures, movements, and styles of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self” (140). To parody, or imitate, a gender “reveals that the original identity after which gender fashions itself is an imitation without an origin” (138). More specifically, gender is “a production which . . . in its effect,--postures as an imitation. This perpetual displacement constitutes a fluidity of identities and suggests an openness to resignification and recontextualization,” which ultimately “deprives [the dominant culture] . . . of the claim to naturalized or essentialist gender identities” (138). If, as Butler suggests, gender is performative and thus susceptible to “resignification,” then we may read gender parody in *Sardanapalus* as an effort to recontextualize what it means to be a human being outside the confines of cultural inscription.

With the introduction of Myrrha, Sardanapalus’s Greek slave and lover, Byron further confuses notions of gender identity, for Myrrha also defies what is traditionally considered “natural” in feminine behavior. Though she is a slave, she wields power over her master Sardanapalus and thereby muddles the distinctions between the master/slave (male/female) dichotomy. Though Sardanapalus is criticized by his subjects for loving his slave, he assures her, “I had rather lose / An empire than thy presence” (I, ii. 56-57). As the only character with any influence over Sardanapalus, Myrrha

is responsible for convincing him to take a stand against the rebels. Recalling that most masculine of texts, Machiavelli's *The Prince*, Myrrha advises Sardanapalus to keep his people "in awe and law," for "'tis sometimes better to be fear'd than lov'd" (I, ii.34) Aside from her masculine council, Myrrha proves to be a fierce warrior, who fights valiantly to help Sardanapalus save his kingdom. Rather than "herding with the other females, / Like frighten'd antelopes" during the Satraps' attack, Myrrha contends on the battle field, like a lion defending her threatened cubs. Thus, while Myrrha plays the role of the devoted and beautiful slave, addressing Sardanapalus as "my Lord" and deferring to his position as "sovereign," she denaturalizes this feminine position by adeptly imitating an aggressive masculinity.

Sardanapalus is also capable of juggling gender roles. As the rebellious Satraps besiege his castle, Sardanapalus befuddles his councilors, calling for a "song of Sappho" and offering wine to his wounded soldiers. The frustrated Pania refuses the wine and implores the King "to arm himself . . . but for a moment, / And show himself unto the soldiers" (III, i. 95-97). Pania's request is not that Sardanapalus actually participate in the battle; rather, Pania demands that he merely act like a king (read man) so that the troops may be inspired. To everyone's surprise, including Myrrha's, Sardanapalus asks for his armor, but as he assumes the "masculine" costume of war, figuratively repressing "she-Sardanapalus," he comically reveals the tension between the opposing gender forces within him by voicing conventional feminine complaints about his wardrobe while discussing masculine military strategy. Then, as he prepares to rush into the heat of battle, Sardanapalus "stops short, and turns to Sfero" saying, "I had forgotten—bring the mirror" (III, i.145-146). We can only imagine the bewilderment in Sfero's response: "The mirror, sire?" (III, i. 147). After complimenting himself for looking "passing well in these toys" (III, i.165), Sardanapalus takes his place on the battle field where, indeed, he fights "like a king" (III, i. 200). His officers are amazed at the remarkable change in their leader, and Altada, practically in shock, exclaims "The King! The King fights as he revels! Ho!" (III, i. 214).

Sardanapalus's conflation of gender roles at such a crucial point in the play epitomizes Butler's definition of gender as "a production which . . . postures as an imitation" (138). Placed in a kill or be killed situation, Sardanapalus can parody masculine antics and inspire the respect of his defenders. However, that his "masculinity" is merely performative is revealed in the language he uses once he returns from the battlefield and is faced with bidding farewell to his family and loyal supporters. Pained by

their sorrow at his impending defeat, Sardanapalus fears he will “grow womanish again” (IV, i. 96). He beseeches his supporters to conceal their tears, for “they unman me / Here when I had remann’d myself” (IV, i. 402-403). That one can “grow womanish” and be “remann’d,” or vice versa, further illustrates Butler’s contention that an “abiding gendered self” is a precarious illusion (140).

While Sardanapalus’s political problems spring from his countrymen’s inability to accept non-conventional gender identities, the King himself is a humanist as was Lord Byron; consequently, what is “natural” to Sardanapalus signifies what is “human” and thus applicable to any gender or social status. His consistent adherence to this philosophy elevates Sardanapalus to heroic stature. As a champion of the individual, Sardanapalus despises any discourse that denies the individual the right to create his or her own reality. As he boldly argues in his defense, “How my soul hates / This language, which makes life itself a lie” (I, ii. 565-566). Making it clear that that he would prefer death to any sort of cultural demand on his identity, the King asserts, “Fate made me what I am—may make me nothing - / But either that or nothing must I be: / I will not live degraded” (I, ii. 626-628). As an enlightened monarch, he has purposefully sought to eliminate subordination and oppression from his rule: “I hate all pain, / Given or received; we have enough within us, / The meanest vassal as the loftiest monarch” (I, ii. 348-350). As the king explains, “my life is love” (I, ii. 406), and “If then [my countrymen] hate me, ‘tis because I hate not; / If they rebel, ‘tis because I oppress not” (I, ii. 412-413). Moreover, his relationship with his slave Myrrha discloses to him the pretense of class structures, and her references to him as “Lord – King – Sire – Monarch” (I, ii. 444) cause “a chill / [to] Come o’er [his] heart” and demonstrate to him “a cold sense of the falsehood / Of [his] station” (I, iii. 447-449). As a result, he sets Myrrha and the rest of his slaves free at the end of the play.

In the end, Sardanapalus acts neither masculinely nor femininely but heroically, Byronic even, defying his oppressors by choosing his own fate. Though offered freedom under guard in lieu of death, Sardanapalus reaffirms his earlier vow to be “nothing” rather than live under the thumb of his oppressors. His final act is to “sacrifice” himself to his cause, and Myrrha demands to join him in death upon the pyre. Sardanapalus has no qualms or misgivings about his suicide because he believes his death will benefit humankind in time, and will serve “as a light to lesson ages” to the consequences of oppression in both public and private spheres. While time will destroy the oppressive rule of the Assyrian empire, the King suggests,

time will forgive, perhaps even valorize, Sardanapalus's defiant stand against oppression.

As a "voluptuous" Prince given to the delights and pleasures of the senses, and as an "effeminate character" concerned with the tension created by his opposing sexual elements, Sardanapalus is closely associated with Lord Byron, who infamously reveled in sensual gratification and contended with his own sexuality. By extension, we can see the uncompromising Assyrian society as a metaphor of an oppressive nineteenth century England, a society from which Byron fled in part over the very concerns expressed in the drama. In each culture, the law created by the dominant order subjugates individuals by gender and class and in doing so denies these individuals the freedom of self-fashioning. Byron's exploration of this theme in *Sardanapalus*, culminating in the suicide of the "effeminate" King and his "martial" lover, attests to the poet's insight into the problems associated with naturalized perceptions of sexual identity. Though some read the dramatic suicide as "a retreat to orthodoxy and a theatrical climax masquerading as an act transcending history" (Wolfson 890), these critics fail to see that in his death, Sardanapalus embodies an ultimate refusal, a rebellion against the injustice of limitation that was so central to the Romantic and Byronic endeavor. Rather than reinforcing the binary oppositions that divide human beings into the categories of gender, Byron's *Sardanapalus* censures cultural and political institutions that produce and reify categorical gender identities and reveals through gender parody the possibilities for the individual to choose and create his or her own identity.

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ESSAY

Cheryl D. Clark

University of Southern Mississippi

‘How well that Garb becomes her’: Dressing Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela*

“We have been *a shopping*...all this morning, to buy silks, caps, gauzes, and so forth” writes Evelina, who is visiting friends in London (27). In Frances Burney’s *Evelina* (1778), in order to “*Londonize*” herself, Evelina purchases fashionable goods and dresses herself in proper outward apparel (25). Despite her countrified upbringing and seclusion from the metropolis, she can mingle with London’s fashionable circles as long as she wears the proper attire. Textual representations, such as this, suggest the important and powerful role that clothing and accessories play in eighteenth-century England in defining a sense of self and one’s place in society, but it also suggests the ambiguity of dressing in which clothing can either invent or express a person’s self-image or identity through personal appearances.

Scholarship on Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela* has identified virtue and reputation, duty and morals, courtship and marriage as some of the novel’s central concerns, yet earlier studies have tended to undervalue Pamela’s obsession with clothing and fashion. However, with current trends exploring the role of women in consumption and commercialization in eighteenth-century England, Pamela’s attire emerges as an item of interest and inquiry.¹ Recently, Patricia C. Brückmann argues that despite Pamela selecting and purchasing her own clothing, her choices reveal a cultivated taste that she has been adopted through Mrs. B’s influence and instruction.² She points out that Pamela “takes enormous pleasure in what she has been able to create for herself, by herself, through understanding of what is required, what might be desired, what can be bought, what should be bought, and what it might be good to buy” (208). Yet in addition to these realized elements of self-invention, I will argue that a vital component of Pamela’s self-creation stems from what she chooses to “put on” and the metamorphosis that occurs each time she changes clothing. While outward apparel tends to communicate a fixed sign about her social identity, Pamela’s personal selection of specific goods provides a means of fashioning her own perception about her identity. This created identity challenges preconceived

notions of prescribed class positions and looks to interiority and individualization for defining identity and social position.³

Recognizing the significance of clothing, fourteenth-century rulers and royalty devised sumptuary laws to exclude lower class groups from wearing certain fabrics, colors, and articles of clothing. These restrictive rules gave them limited means to maintain social distinction and stability through outward apparel. Still in place in the eighteenth century, these laws were not strictly enforced. At the same time, the changes occurring in England through industrialization, colonization, trade, and consumerism gave individuals opportunities to purchase fashionable clothing and accessories.⁴ As Elizabeth Wilson and Amy de la Haye point out in their study of dress and identity: “With the development of mass production, fashionable clothing [became] central to mass culture in the widest sense as a means whereby individuals express themselves and construct identities” (1).⁵ Within this changing environment, the expensive, imported fabrics, extravagant ornamentation, and lavish styles, that previously was exclusive to the upper classes, became available to anyone with financial means. As Jessica Munns and Penny Richards point out, “In Europe in the eighteenth century, the development of an international system of trade and the growth of national systems of textile manufacture enabled the art of dress to transgress codes previously governing appearances” (27). Thus with an emerging consumer culture, fashion no longer solely reflects defined social markers; instead, clothing permits individuals to alter and shape identities that may or may not accurately signify the wearer’s prescribed status. In this sense, commodification and consumption provide a means for Pamela to make individual choices about her attire that reflect her aspirations rather than her “actual” position. Clothing and the cultural meaning attached to material goods allow Pamela to transform from a young servant girl to a fine figure of a gentlewoman to a “dressed up” country lass into an aristocratic lady.⁶ So not only can we agree with Mr. B’s assessment that “How well that Garb becomes her,” but she also becomes the garb.

Jürgen Habermas focuses on the important contribution of print culture, the press, and how culture became commodified. He proposes that public gatherings, like coffee houses, spawned intellectual debates and provided a means in which social discussions emancipated opinions and developed into public criticism. This atmosphere supported the invention of periodicals, *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*, which published the latest news and essays engaged in critical public debate. In this public debate, readings provided opportunities for the illiterate to participate, and people participated not based on social position, but on the effectiveness or

persuasiveness of their speaking. This space, according to Habermas, guided “the development of these individuals’ interiority by literary means” (54). So it would seem that within the public sphere, while seemingly engaged in public criticism through these literary venues, individual people began to recognize their capacities to form conflicting opinions, signaling the emergence of a notion of individual interiority.

Habermas discusses the formation of the public sphere and its relationship with cultural production, print culture, public opinion, and consumerism that speak in terms of Pamela’s self-fashioning:

The bourgeois public sphere may be conceived above all as the sphere of private people come together as a public; they soon claimed the public sphere regulated from above against the public authorities themselves to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labor. (27)

He suggests that prior to this eighteenth-century creation—the bourgeois public sphere—the public sphere consisted of a political arena controlled by aristocratic and governmental authority. Formed by private people in the atmosphere of commodity exchange, the reshaped public sphere emerged as a place of sociability and a space that encouraged the formation of rational, consensual judgments. This atmosphere, according to Habermas, cradled the ideology of free trade, enabling people to accumulate wealth that previously was unavailable to them, which in turn prepared the way for social mobility.

Whether we accept Habermas’s stance as right or not, his theory coincides with Pamela’s apparently successful means of self-fashioning herself.⁷ It is within this free marketplace as a servant girl that Pamela initially engages in commodity consumption. Exchanging her labor for monetary means, she learns the tools of trade in which she uses her monetary means to purchase clothing and material goods. Using this material prosperity, she refashions her identity. But Pamela is only able to refashion her identity because of the commodification of material products and those cultural meanings attached to these commodities, which according to Habermas, were perpetuated and developed through print culture.

Habermas connects this process with the commodification of other cultural elements—art, literature, theatre, music—, but he seems to overlook clothing and material possessions. However, as Erin Mackie points out in *Fashion, Commodity, and Gender in ‘The Tatler’ and ‘The Spectator’*:

Market à la Mode, fashion and fashion advice played an important role in these periodicals and public gatherings. Mackie argues that “*The Tatler* and *The Spectator* are...lifestyle magazines. Selling new and improved ways of living, they want to refashion the textures of daily life” in which they provide “proper fashion practice and give precise rulings on specific articles of clothing” (2).⁸ Fashion, thus, emerges as an essential component in eighteenth-century life, and as a commodity of production and individualized consumption, it acts as a visible expression of establishing one’s place in society. It is within this new environment of freedom, opportunity, and social mobility that Pamela creates a complex identity through her personal choices of fashionable attire.⁹

Pamela understands the relationship between clothing and social position, and in her earliest letters, she reveals the crucial role that second-hand clothing plays in her shifting identity. While strict lines of demarcation divided classes, the servant classes contact with upper social groups enabled them to experiment with blurring class boundaries through clothing. Socially ambitious women not only dressed their servants to reflect their status, but they also gave the servants second-hand clothing. As Anne Buck’s study of eighteenth-century clothing points out, clothing was extremely expensive, so it was common for mistresses to give servants cast-off clothing as partial compensation for their services.¹⁰ Servants, like Pamela, often grew accustomed to dressing in the richer and more decorative styles of the upper classes’ extravagant clothing, but these dressed-up servants often created social chaos in their “out of status” clothing.¹¹ If maids can alter their social identity through outward apparel associated with an upper class position and blur the lines of class distinction, other distinctions become confused as well. In the same way that the servant girl Pamela can appear as a gentlewoman, every time she changes her clothes, she can alter her appearance; thus, she recreates her identity with whatever attire she “puts on.”

Her cast-off clothing consists of “a Suit of [her] old Lady’s Cloaths, and half a Dozen of her Shifts, and Six fine Handkerchiefs, and Three of her Cambrick Aprons, and Four Holland ones: The Cloaths are fine Silks” (18). Later she receives, “Two suits of fine *Flanders* lac’d Headcloths, Three Pair of fine Silk Shoes... and several Ribbands and Topknots of all Colours, and Four Pair of fine white Cotton Stockens, and Three Pair of fine Silk ones; and Two Pair of rich Stays, and a Pair of rich Silver Buckles in one Pair of the Shoes” (19). Recognizing the elaborate nature of French linen, luxurious silk thread, hand-made imported lace, colored satin ribbons, white cotton hose, a laced corset, and silver buckles, Pamela asserts that these valuable,

imported, ornamented goods are “too rich and too good for me,” that is, according to her prescribed social status (18). While acknowledging the difference in her assigned social status as opposed to her new clothing and even suggesting it would be more practical and beneficial for her to sell the items, Pamela makes the conscious choice to cast off her former clothing and “put on” her mistress’s clothes anyway. In essence, she ascends into a new “pretty well dress’d” identity of an aristocratic lifestyle (25). Even though her status associated with her birth has not been altered, “putting on” new “rich” clothes signals an outward change in her perceived notion of her identity. At this point, Pamela is not the simple, uneducated, uncultured girl who first came to work for Mrs. B; instead, she has been trained in the arts and educated like a young gentlewoman. So it is partially through the artifice of dressing that she presents her new sense of self.

This new fashioning of her identity becomes problematic when Pamela decides to leave this upper class household and return to her village home. Realizing the discrepancy between her fine clothes and her “poor Parents Circumstances,” Pamela decides to put on “the Dress that would become [her] Condition” (45). However, she does not want to return home in old “Cast-offs,” which will soon be in “Tatters and worn out” (45). She exerts control over her outward appearance and reveals her new sense of identity in her unwillingness to “dwindle” into “homespun Cloths” “one by one” (45). Accustomed to nicer clothing and the respect gained through fashionable apparel, Pamela refuses to return home dressed in her old “grey Russet,” as this would surely conform to common country life, or wearing old “Cast-offs.” In an act of self creation, this young girl chooses her own clothing without consulting anyone, her parents or Mrs. Jervis.

With her costly choice of fabrics, trim, and accessories, Pamela allows her desires to dress a certain way to supersede practicality. Even though she puts aside the expensive imported goods and purchases inexpensive, native, home-spun fabrics produced by a nearby farmer’s wife, she chooses to trim her new clothes in “a pretty Bit of printed Calicoe,” an expensive imported printed fabric (45).¹² While laying aside frivolous colored ribbons, lacy head-coverings, and extravagant white stockings, she deviates from normal simplistic apparel and opts for “two pretty enough round-ear’d Caps, a little Straw Hat, and a Pair of Mittens, turn’d up with white Calicoe; and two Pair of ordinary blue Worsted Hose, that make a smartish Appearance, with white Clocks...and Two Yards of black Ribbon” (45). According to Brückmann’s calculations, “When she finishes her shopping, Pamela has spent, conservatively, about one pound fifteen and one, or nearly half her yearly wages as a servant” (206). Neglecting to consider how this significant

amount of money could be used to alleviate her family's poverty and outstanding debts, Pamela self creates her own identity in which her everyday working clothes are nice enough to wear for "a good Holiday and Sunday Suit" (45). As Buck points out in her discussion of common dress, Pamela's decision breaks with traditional dress:

In common dress, instead of fashionable variations there is the basic division between working or everyday dress and best or Sunday dress. This division was, however, carefully maintained, and abandoned only in extreme poverty. In working dress the needs of the occupation to some extent determine the garments worn and show dress at its most functional...At the same time garments worn for a particular occupation reveal that occupation and through it the wear's place in society. (141)

Yet Pamela's new working attire that she selectively chooses is suitable for Sunday wear. Clashing with her stated resolution to learn to "wash and scour, and brew and bake," Pamela's clothes visually reflect that she has adopted a different self-image, one she hopes to "keep up," one that conflicts with traditional codes (45).

As Mackie points out in her discussion of the changes occurring in the eighteenth century relationship between consumption and fashion:

Fashion rather than tradition began to be used to regulate pattern of dress. This shift comes hand-in-glove with the advent of class claims on status. Evaluating worth according to more individualistic and quantitative economic criteria, these claims challenged the traditional aristocratic status hierarchy which aligned worth with the extra-individual and qualitative criteria of birth. The new standard of novelty—that is, fashion—makes this challenge by turning class into status: Now an individual could turn income into status immediately and with no need of along expensive and perilous wait. (13)

Mackie's observation seems evident in Pamela's selection of clothing and in how these purchases help her to transform her social status. Instead of choosing traditional working attire, she purchases pretty caps, mittens trimmed in expensive calico, and fashionable hose decorated with embroidery. She appears to be practical in exchanging her mistress's silk

shoes for imported fashionable Spanish “plain-leather” shoes, but imported Spanish leather was considered a luxury and by the standard of “common” dress would rarely be worn. She removes her mistress’s “French necklace” and “Ear-rings,” but dons a plain black necklace (55). Instead of completely separating herself from unnecessary material items and returning to the plain, unadorned dress of lower classes, Pamela invents her own image or sense of identity. As Munns and Richards argue, “Bodies and clothes endlessly redefine each other to forge, adapt, adopt—and deny—varieties of selfhood, in this both responding to and creating an equally complex cultural field of alteration and vacillation with regard to appearances and meaning” (9).

In another act of personal selection, preparing to remove herself from the upper class environment and Mr. B’s inappropriate sexual advances, Pamela divides her remaining clothes into three separate bundles. One bundle contains the clothing articles from her Mistress that were to be worn as her serving maid. As these items associate her with a different identity no longer available or desired, she chooses to leave them behind. She tells Mrs. Jervis that taking fine linens and silks to her humble birthplace would only solicit ridicule from the common villagers, but her actions suggest she did not wish to return home as a former servant in “cast off” clothing. This equivocation and her decision not to seek advice about her new clothing suggest that Pamela has a different agenda in mind. The second bundle contains garments from Mr. B that were to be the “Price of her Shame” (79). She reasons that refusing Mr. B’s “service” (his illicit advances) negates her acceptance of this offering of clothing since she does not “earn” them. Plus, by wearing the clothing that Mr. B gives her would express her subordination to him and imply his agency or ownership over Pamela. Interestingly enough, these two bundles do not contain any of Pamela’s personal possessions, i.e., articles or garments of her own personal choice or design; instead, their contents suggest Pamela leaves behind borrowed or “cast-off” clothing that conflict with her new self created identity, an identity propelled by her own individual tastes and desires and by the availability of material goods in the marketplace.

By contrast, this third bundle contains articles of Pamela’s own choosing and purchased with money that she earned, making them her personal possessions of her own conscious selection and design. She demonstrates decision-making powers over consumption and attempts to amalgamate her own personal identity from social expectations and material possessions. However, this bundle also contains items that are connected with her former lifestyle that Pamela chooses not to part with, and she even

supplies “reasons” why she should keep them. She admits the “Calicoe Night-gown” is “too good” for her humble dwelling, but skillfully reasons that she “*must have something*” (emphasis mine) to wear (78). Although Pamela refers to this bundle as “poor Pamela’s Bundle,” it contains remnants of calico and silk in hopes of securing a new position in which she can “dress up” her plain clothes. In retaining pieces representative of the upper class and trimming her country clothes with elaborate decoration, these small attachments announce Pamela’s decision not to fully embrace a lower class station again. It appears that after Pamela witnesses and lives within the upper class realm, she develops her own sense of self that is reflected in her sense of style and tastes; instead, she battles against conforming to simplistic, rustic clothing not in alliance with her new sense of identity.

An interesting clothing article Pamela saves is “a Pair of Pockets” (79). These pockets would have been a fairly large construction of cotton or linen and usually embroidered. Concealed underneath a woman’s skirt, pockets were tied around the waist and used to transport small personal possessions like trinkets, jewelry, and coins. This clothing accessory would have been considered useless to lower class women as most did not possess these items. Pamela even explains that the money her mistress previously gave to her was retrieved from her “pocket.” In addition, the time consumed in making pockets would have seemed frivolous and wasteful as more important activities of survival demanded a woman’s time. Barbara Burman’s “Pocketing the Difference: Gender and Pockets in Nineteenth-Century Britain” argues that beginning in the eighteenth century women’s pockets reflect women’s decision making powers made available through monetary means. She contends that women with pockets displayed cultural participation through consumption and that pockets gave women “the means for action and power” (89). This assumption seems born out in Pamela’s desire to keep this article of clothing. Keeping her pockets reminds her that possessing money, like upper class women, gives her the liberty to spend it how she chooses. Plus, owning pockets is one way of setting herself apart from common laboring women. This mixture and contrast of lower class clothing with the expensive and frivolous dressing of the upper class communicates the complexity of fashioning an identity in which cultural materials of Pamela’s own choosing are instrumental in constructing and defining her identity.

Wherever Pamela finds herself, she always displays a fixation about clothing and what that clothing communicates. For her wedding, instead of appearing in her “humble” rustic dress, she dresses in a “rich White Satin Night-gown” and wears her “best Head-cloths” (342).¹³ Pamela shows no

hesitation about reclaiming her “bundles” and dressing in her former upper class apparel in which she declares looking like a “Gentlewoman once more” (303). Transformed through marriage from a “poor cast-off Servant Girl” into an upper class lady, Pamela assumes her new identity first by obtaining her former Mistress’s dressing room, elaborate diamond jewelry, books, pictures, linen, and laces. However, she “casts off” her former Mistress’s clothes and refashions her new identity. Unlike aristocratic women who bring their inherited coat of arms to the marriage, Pamela recognizes that she has “no Arms to quarter” with Mr. B’s on their coach (487). Instead, Pamela’s identity is not displayed on the carriage, but on her body. She dresses in a “Suit...of White flower’d with Gold, and a rich Head-dress, and a Diamond Necklace, and Ear-rings” (487). Employing the use of “Mantua-makers,” Pamela fashions herself as a fine aristocratic woman as she now spends time and money “chusing Patterns” and arrays herself in gold embroidered suits with fine lace and linen (470).¹⁴ Similar to Pamela’s earlier selections that she purchases to communicate her changing notions of her identity, her new finances allow for a wardrobe that creates a new social status for her. Even though her birth status has not changed, her internal sense of self is expressed through an extravagant outward appearance.

Pamela’s fixation on clothing emphasizes the powerful and influential role clothing plays in expressing a self image and in creating a personal identity. Her choices in clothing allow her the opportunity to fashion and to design her own sense of self. Through her conscious selection of clothing and accessories, Pamela transforms herself from a simple country girl to a “dressed up” country girl and eventually to an aristocratic lady. This attention to clothing in *Pamela* suggests the great possibilities of negotiating an individual identity in a consumer society fascinated with fashion. The growing mercantile trade and the malleability of apparel that destabilized the sartorial codes governing rank gave individuals a means to express a sense of self that aligned with the choosing and owning of one’s clothing. This self-created identity expressed through the “putting on” of clothing also challenges notions of fixed identity based upon birth or class. Just as Pamela forms new material constructs of identity, others, too, can “become the garb.”

Notes

- ¹ See G.J. Barker-Benfield's "Women and Eighteenth-Century Consumerism" *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1992); Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace's *Consuming Subjects: Women, Shopping, and Business in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Columbia UP, 1997); Amanda Vickery's *The Gentleman's Daughter: Women's Lives in Georgian England* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1998); and Deidra Shauna Lynch's *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture, and the Business of Inner Meaning* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1998).
- ² Harriet Guest's *Small Change: Women, Learning, Patriotism, 1750-1810* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2000) looks at the relationship between women's education and shopping, and she concludes that women's learning directly influences that products that they purchase.
- ³ See Stephen Greenblatt's *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1980) for his ground-breaking work on the individual's ability to shape a sense of self.
- ⁴ Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and J.H Plumb's *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1982) addresses the emergence of England as a consumer society.
- ⁵ Also see *The Clothes That Wear Us: Essays on Dressing and Transgressing in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, eds. Jessica Munns and Penny Richards (Newark: U of Delaware P, 1999); Fred Davis, *Fashion, Culture, and Identity* (Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 1992); Diana Crane, *Fashion and Its Social Agenda: Class, Gender, and Identity in Clothing* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2000); *Material Strategies: Dress and Gender in Historical Perspective*, eds. Barbara Burman and Carole Turbin (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2003).
- ⁶ Beverly Lemire's *Dress, Culture and Commerce: Trade before the Factory, 1660-1800* (New York: Macmillan P, 1997) argues that "as vital as food or

shelter, the selection of apparel was replete with personal, economic and cultural considerations” (3).

⁷ Even though scholars have certainly challenged Habermas, his theory still provides a provocative and relevant approach.

⁸ Mackie contends, “There is no more complete documentation of life in early-eighteenth-century England and no more exemplary instances of the discursive institution of the bourgeois public sphere...Pioneering and exemplary organs of the bourgeois public sphere *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* register, if sometimes inadvertently, a consciousness of the deep ambiguities, the threats and the potentials, of fashion and consumption” (xv).

⁹ Brückmann also argues that in order for Pamela to know what was considered fashionable that she probably has access to Mrs. B’s periodical that more than likely she subscribed to.

¹⁰ Amy de la Haye and Elizabeth Wilson assert in *Defining Dress: Dress As Object, Meaning, and Identity* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2000), “In studying the history of dress from the perspective of our own epoch, in which mass-produced clothes have become almost throwaway items, it is important to remember how valuable garments once were, items to be handed down from masters to servants, or, via a will, from one generation to the next, or used as items of exchange and barter” (6). Lemire’s *Dress, Culture and Commerce: The English Clothing Trade before the Factory, 1660-1800* also provides valuable insight into the second-hand clothing industry.

¹¹ In “Everybody’s Business is Nobody’s Business” Daniel Defoe explains the social relationship between clothes and identity and the confusion created through classes ignoring social meaning attached to clothing. He contends that with maids wearing mistresses’ clothing, class lines become confused. He embarrassingly confesses to mistaking a “chamber-jade” for the mistress of the house and saluting her with a kiss.

Servant wenches are so puffed up with pride nowadays, that they never think they go fine enough: it is a hard matter to know the mistress from the maid by their dress; nay, very often the maid shall be much the finer of the two...Her neat’s leathern shoes are now transformed into laced ones with high heels; her yarn stockings are turned into fine woolen ones, with

silk clocks; and her high wooden patten are kicked away for leathern clogs; she must have a hoop too, as well as her mistress; and her poor scanty linsey-woolsey petticoat is changes into a good silk one...in short, plain county Joan is now turned into a fine London madam, can drink tea, take snuff, and carry herself as high as the best. (3)

¹² In Jane Schneider's "European Folklore and Linen Manufacture," *Cloth and Human Experience* Eds. Annette B. Weiner and Jane Schneider (Washington: Smithsonian Institution P, 1989) she explores the impact of colonization and capitalism on England's cloth. She points out that because cotton did not grow well in the climate mainly flax and wool were the main fabrics used for making cloth. Linen served as comfortable, inexpensive material for underwear, tablewear, and bedclothes. Cotton, especially printed or dyed cotton, was imported and very expensive.

¹³ Clair Hughes's "The Missing Wedding Dresses: Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* to Anita Brookner's *Hotel du Lac*" *Dressed in Fiction* (Oxford: Berg, 2006) points out that Pamela's wedding dress appears after the wedding so that she can appear publicly as Mr. B's aristocratic wife.

¹⁴ See Arvil Hart's "The Mantua: Its Evolution and Fashionable Significance in the Seventh and Eighteenth Centuries" *Defining Dress: Dress as Object, Meaning, and Identity* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2000): 93-103, for a complete discussion of the mantua.

