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For The Time and Energies of

Wilton Beauchamp
David Matchem
Philip O'Mara
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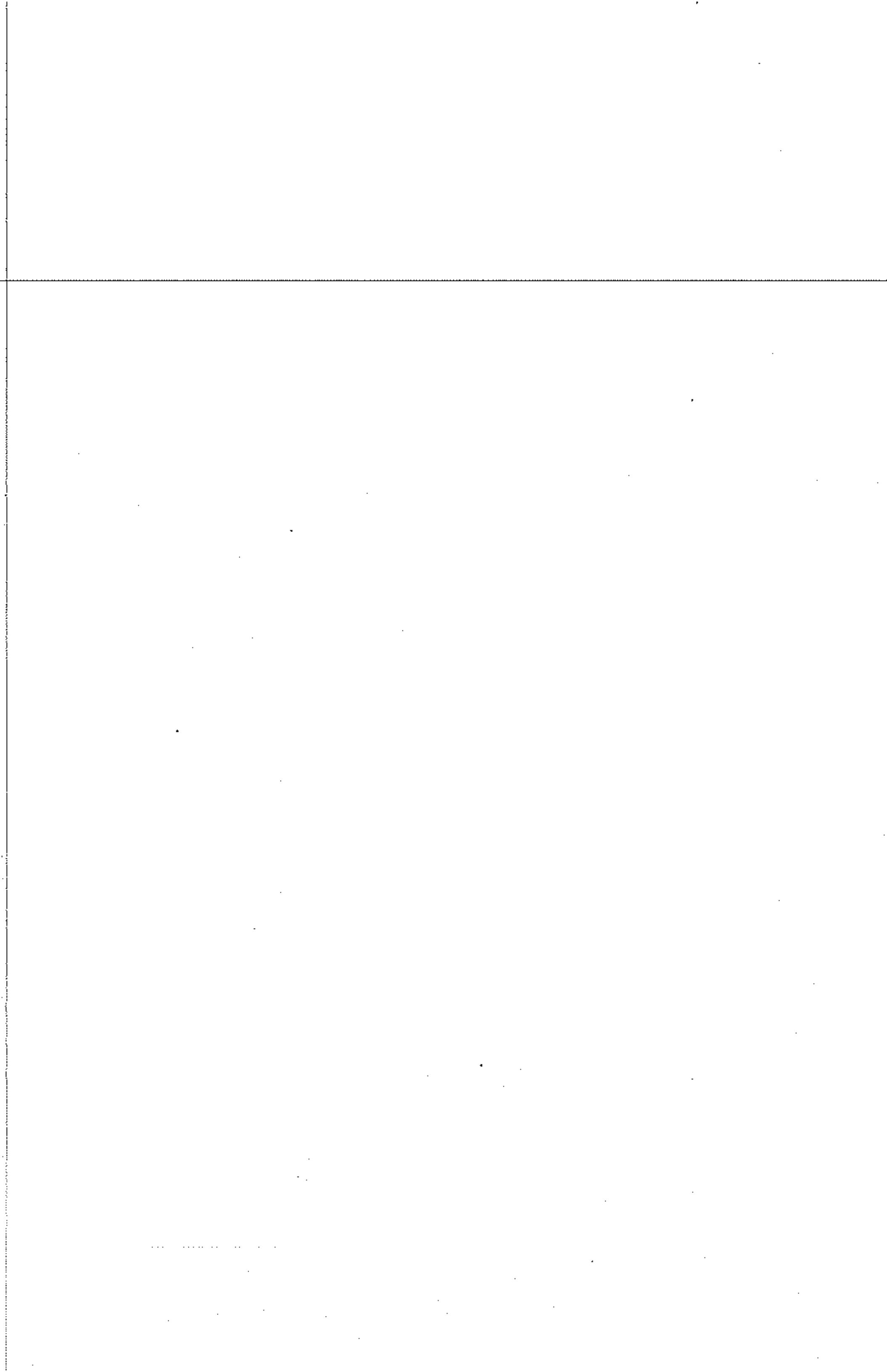


Poe's Apologues: The Unexamined Tales
Norman E. Stafford

With few exceptions, American Gothic fiction, including Edgar Allan Poe's, portrays neither the contemporary period, actual characters, nor actual situations. The reality it does reflect is the reality of their authors' philosophical, social, and theological beliefs. Extracting these beliefs without violating their contexts is no simple matter and depends on careful analysis of the genres. Such an examination of Poe's works is particularly complex because of the breadth of his fiction. Poe wrote in each of the forms comprising Sheldon Sacks's "grammar of the types of fiction"--the represented action, in which an unstable relationship is complicated and then resolved; the satire, which dramatizes concepts an author negates; and the apologue, which illustrates concepts an author affirms.[1] Within these types, the range is extensive, and one must examine each to uncover Poe's philosophical and ethical convictions. Although complex, this search is particularly rewarding because it is an important key to our understanding of the entire Poe corpus and the mind which created it.

A prevailing theme in Poe's fiction and critical writing is the true nature of the poetic mind, an ultimate intellect liberated from preconceptions and blind adherance to inappropriate methods of reaching truth. Poe explores this theme in the apologues--which form a sizable portion of his fiction--the colloquies, the landscape stories, and numerous individual tales. Poe commentators have generally failed to analyze the apologues as a form, yet Poe speculates more freely on the nature of the poetic mind in the apologues than anywhere in his non-fiction, with the possible exception of Eureka. His views in the apologues on this exceptional intellect are more explicit than they are in the represented actions and stated more positively than they are in the satires.

As a group, the colloquies--"The Conversation of Eiros and Charmion," "The Colloquy of Monos and Una," and "The Power of Words"--reveal the nature of Poe's speculations in the apologues. Without using the term apologue, Poe himself acknowledged that a colloquy performed the same function, stating that the "drama of colloquy" in fiction was an appropriate forum for philosophical analysis because it was "vivacious and breathing of life."[2] The philosophy they illustrate is Poe's concept of the human mind, a concept

that permeates his fiction, from the ratiocination tales to the tales of terror, a concept that advocates the use of all the faculties of the mind, the imaginative ones proposed by the intuitionalists, as well as the logical ones proposed by the rationalists. Those, like Dupin, who use this method succeed, and those who do not fail, as the terror tales portray. The colloquies make this philosophy plain.

The setting of the colloquies is an after-life of some kind, an after-life of the spirit, whose inhabitants are either experiencing the joy of expanded mental faculties approached only by earthly geniuses or who are coming to know them. The characters also recall the world they left and the cause of earthly unhappiness; that is, an intellectually narrow approach to reality.

In the first of the colloquies, "The Conversation of Eiros and Charmion" (1839), Eiros, newly arrived in the world beyond death after the destruction of the earth, is aware that "her" spirit is being affected by her new environment: her "senses are bewildered . . . with the keenness of their perception of the new." Her companion Charmion, who has preceded her to this place, understands that she can be "over-burdened with the majesty of all things--of the unknown now known--of the speculative Future merged in the august and certain Present" (IV, 2). Eiros' confusion mirrors the confusion of the world she has left with this difference: Eiros now can be fully enlightened; when restricted to the earthly world, she was confined intellectually as well.

The subject of the colloquy is Eiros' description of the last days of the earth, and what Charmion and the reader learn is not that the catastrophe could have been prevented but that, through liberating all faculties of the intellect, earth's inhabitants could have been prepared and in the time remaining lived useful and meaningful lives. Eiros attributes this failure to faulty speculation (IV, 3), for when astronomers discovered that comets were without fire, the people no longer felt threatened by them. This complacency was illusory because they did not understand the comet's real nature. In addition, prophecies in "holy writings" spoke of the fiery destruction of the earth and were interpreted to mean that such a catastrophe would be caused by an earthly agency (IV, 3). The possibility of a harmful comet was regarded as "inadmissable" (IV, 3-4).

When some astronomers predicted a collision at the discovery of the new comet, they were ignored because the people had been "so long employed among worldly

considerations" that they could not grasp the possibility (IV, 4). At the appearance of the comet, the truth of "astronomical knowledge" became apparent, and discussions of the implications began. At this point in their ignorance, many realized that they did not have either the correct information or the proper methods for obtaining it. They

> now gave their intellect--their soul--to no such points as the allaying of fear, or to the sustenance of loved theory. They sought--they panted for right views. They groaned for perfected knowledge. Truth arose in the purity of her strength and exceeding majesty, and the wise bowed down and adored. (IV, 5)

The unenlightened view of "reason," however, prevailed again as the philosophers convinced the people that the comet was harmless because it was not fiery and only slightly dense. The theologicans supported this attempt to calm the people by reminding them that, according to the Bible, destruction would come by fire (IV, 5). The people still sought to exercise their reason, "as if by some sudden convulsive exertion" (IV, 6), and their fear indicated their need for an applicable approach. Because they did not have one, their mental efforts lead them astray.

When the people at last faced the reality of the looming comet, they could not rely on "accustomed thoughts" (IV, 6). Their imprisoned methods of thinking inhibited any response other than paralysis and oppressed them with a "hideous novelty of emotion." The comet was not perceived as an "astronomical phenomenon" but as an "incubus upon [their] hearts, and a shadow upon [their] brains" (IV, 6). Years of "practical" thinking had left them ill-equipped to respond in realistic or meaningful ways at a moment of unique crisis.

The destruction begins with the comet removing atmospheric nitrogen, and all the earth is affected by the rarified air--vegetation responds in an increased lushness, and the people experience an "unusual elasticity of frame and vivacity of mind" (IV, 7). They do not interpret these signs as the beginning of the end, nor do they understand that vivacity of mind is a characteristic they have long ignored in their own beings. Only when they begin to experience pain do they understand that the end is at hand.

If judged as a short story, a represented action, Poe's colloquy reveals little more than an imaginative vision of

the apocalypse. As an apologue, though, it explains th
view that the approach of most people to reality is limited
and it offers the more successful avenue (made mor
convincing because it is urged by a spirit with beatifi
vision) which incorporates all the mind's faculties.

Whereas "Eiros and Charmion" treats the general proble
of an imprisoned intellect, "The Colloquy of Monos and Una
(1841) criticizes more specifically attitudes, such a
materialistic rationalism, which contribute to the perverte
use of the intellect. The cause of this perversion is wha
Monos calls the "intemperance of knowledge," for man, h
says, could not "both know and succumb" (IV, 203). He mus
succumb, in Monos' view, to the natural law and to hi
natural sentiments, or he will destroy himself and his world
This is apparently what happens since the earth is alread
in its "dotage" when Monos dies (IV, 206), but we have n
clear idea in this colloquy of the end of the earth.

Echoing the thought of many in Poe's day, Monos oppose
"progress." He criticizes scientific advances an
improvements to elevate civilization. Science encourage
men to believe they controlled nature (IV, 203), but in fac
an advance in "practical science" was actually a "retro
gradation in the true utility" (IV, 202). He calls th
"great 'movement' [of material progress proposed by th
Utilitarians] . . . a diseased commotion, moral an
physical" (IV, 203) and illustrates the effect of th
"movement" by referring to the role of the arts. Art becan
tyrannical by chaining the intellects of those who raised i
to supremacy (IV, 203). System and abstraction als
tyrannized men and encouraged the growth of such ideas a
democracy and equality, "in the face of analogy and o
God--in despite of the loud warning voice of the laws o
<u>gradation</u> so visibly pervading all things in Earth an
Heaven" (IV, 203).

Monos observes that some intellects, for whom knowled
was to be used according to natural law (IV, 203), were no
so imprisoned. Among these was the poetic intellect, th
"most exalted of all" because it uncovers the importan
truths (IV, 202) through both rationalism and intuitionalism
These truths can be reached only "by that analogy whic
speaks in proof-tones to the imagination alone" (IV, 202
Monos calls the poets the true utilitarians (IV, 202), fo
their liberated minds serve mankind's true needs, eve
though they could not overcome the mechanistic an
progressive spirit of the day.

Beauty rather than knowledge might have saved me

Taste or the sentiment in men of the natural might have "regained its . . . ascendency over . . . mathematical reason," but man ignored the cultivation of taste and did not see the "Art-scarred surface of the Earth" (IV, 204-205), or "affected not to see" (IV, 204). Monos has no hope that the problem will be corrected because the world is infected with the evil of knowledge (IV, 205). Man's regeneration is possible only in death.

Like Charmion, Monos possesses the expanded intellect, perceiving real circumstances and real causes. Even his feelings after death, the relation of which is more than half of the colloquy, reflect Monos' increasing intellectual capacities. Death does not lead to nothingness, but to heightened awareness and a wiser vivacity of mind, of which Eiros had spoken, in the rarified atmosphere of the world beyond death.

Monos' view of the corrupting influence of knowledge, or scientific rationalism, is reflected in "The Power of Words" (1845). Agathos has discovered the corruption that results from man's belief in a finite body of knowledge which he can master. This is the "curse of the fiend" (VI, 139). Agathos explains to the fledgling spirit of Oinos that knowledge is actually infinite, just as our thirst for knowledge is unquenchable. This is man's true happiness: in "for ever knowing, we are for ever blessed" (VI, 139). Understanding the real purpose of knowledge permits man to have an understanding of the nature of creation. Agathos explains that only in the beginning did the Deity create. Subsequent creations are not the immediate result of the divine creation, but a mediate or indirect result of the original force. For instance, the operation of the natural law gives the "appearance of creation," but these "creations" cannot be attributed to the original force, only to the mediate force (VI, 140-141).

To demonstrate to Oinos the truth of this view of creation, Agathos explains the idea of the indestructibility of any action or thought. Any movement reverberates throughout the universe causing an infinite number of other reverberations. Agathos reminds Oinos that this fact had been established experimentally on earth: scientists understood that their analysis of this phenomenon had "a capacity for indefinite progress--that there were no bounds conceivable to its advancement and applicability, except within the intellect of him who advanced or applied it" (VI, 142). Perhaps because of their limited intellectual capacities, the scientists did not pursue what was so

plainly before them. Consequently, they did not learn wha
only those in the other world know--that every impulse ca
eventually be traced to the Creator, that in effect ever
action or motion is creation. Even words are motion whic
have the physical power of creation, as Agathos demonstrate
in a star which he spoke into birth; its flowers are "th
dearest of all unfulfilled dreams, and its raging volcanoe
. . . the passions of the most turbulent and unhallowed o
hearts" (VI, 144). Agathos' view of creation is the suprem
example of an intellect which employs all faculties. It i
creative and fulfilling, the instrument of man's tru
knowledge and true happiness. To ignore the promptings o
the expanded intellect is to limit both knowledge an
happiness.

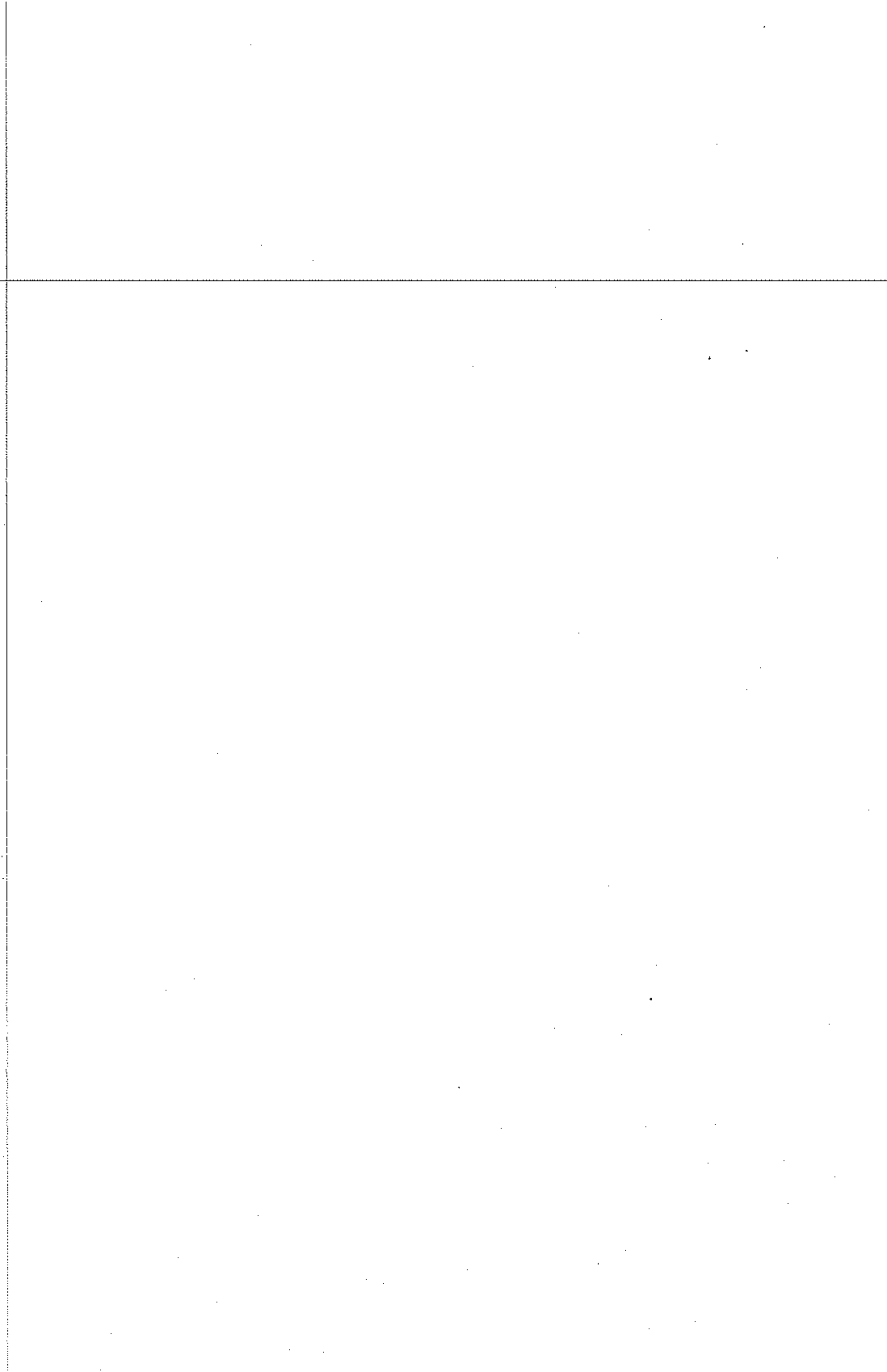
Like the other colloquies, "The Power of Words
contrasts the imprisoned intellects of earth-bound men an
the liberated intellects of the spirits. The limitation o
perversion of the intellect can result only in man'
unhappiness; the expanded, or poetic, intellect is the mean
of true joy.

Poe is at his speculative best in the apologues. H
may have indulged this freedom of thought because h
believed the mask of fiction protected him from ridicule
Whatever the reason, these overlooked tales disclose th
essence of the man and the mind behind the mask. Judged a
apologues rather than short stories, these tales increas
the reader's awareness of Poe's intentions in portraying th
creative intellect and achieve an integrity they may no
otherwise possess. The colloquies dramatize but one aspec
of Poe's philosophical belief; examination of the othe
apologues should provide additional information which woul
increase our understanding of Poe's short stories, satires
and poetry.

NOTES

[1]Represented actions are traditionally called novel
short stories, or dramas, and Sacks uses the term t
distinguish the form from satires and apologues. For a fu
discussion of <u>represented action</u>, see Sheldon Sack
<u>Fiction and the Shape of Belief</u> (Berkeley: University
California Press, 1964), pp. 1-69. See also R. S. Crane
<u>The Languages of Criticism and the Structure of Poet</u>
(Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1953).

[2]Edgar Allan Poe, rev. of Bulwer's Night and Morning, in The Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe, ed. James A. Harrison (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., 1902), X, 123. Further references to this work will be noted in parentheses in the text.



"Eloisa to Abelard": The Religion of Love

Rochie W. Lawes

Pope based "Eloisa to Abelard" upon a historical pair of medieval lovers whose lives--including their love affair and its consequences--are well known. There exists, in fact, first-hand documentation. Of their correspondence, five of Abelard's letters and three of Eloisa's, nine copies are known today: five in the Bibliotheque Nationale, one each in the libraries of Troyes and Reims, and partial collections in the Bodleian and in Douai.

It is, however, quite unlikely that Pope ever read or even knew of these manuscripts written in medieval Latin and hidden in prestigious libraries. Indeed, from 1135 when Abelard wrote the last of the eight, Regula Sanctimonialium, which was a treatise outlining the regimen of the religious life that he wrote in response to his wife's desperate and passionate letter of love, until 1717, when Pope wrote his heroic epistle, rather astonishing developments in the translation of the letters had occurred.

The first was the Duchesne-d'Amboise editions, both published by Nicholas Buon in Paris in 1616, with two separate editors, in two separate, yet identical, editions. Seventy years after, Roger de Rabutin (whose other claim to literary fame is the salacious Histoire Amoureuse des Gaules) issued a highly romanticized translation of three of the eight letters. Until Rabutin's death, these were privately circulated among his friends. Their posthumous publication inspired an anonymous author, in 1703, to publish at the Hague an extended version of the Rabutin translation. In 1713 John Hughes produced a bowdlerized English translation of the Buon editions of the original manuscripts. Hughes's English version, with all the anachronisms and inconsistencies, and, with some expurgation, many of the utterly fanciful elements of the French authors, became Pope's source.[1]

To criticize him for choosing an inaccurate yet widely-circulated English-printed edition in preference to a manuscript written in medieval Latin is inappropriate, for "Eloisa to Abelard" is neither a translation nor a historical document; it is poetry. A study of Pope's dependence upon Hughes's volume, his modifications to and improvements upon his source, might be useful in examining the creative process or the artist at work. Such a study would, however, be superfluous, for the University of Miami Press published--nearly twenty years ago--James Wellington's

excellent edition of both Pope's poem and Hughes's Letters with line-by-line annotation of Pope's borrowings from his friend. Wellington's notes, which provide historical background of the actual story of Heloise and Abelard, as well as of the translations which have strangely modified the original story, attribute nearly two-thirds of Pope's poem directly to Hughes's Letters.

Splendid as is his edition, however, Wellington takes little note of the one hundred thirty lines Pope added to his source; he merely defends the poem against the charges of prurience and romanticism that have been leveled against it. He also praises Pope for his "dramatic insight" by which he "instinctively" and "intuitively" selected Eloisa as the *persona* of his poem. In Abelard, Wellington argues there can no longer be--as a result of his "physical neutrality"--any real conflict.

Perhaps. One, however, not so skilled as Wellington in determining the instincts and intuition of a poet dead for two hundred years, but willing to credit Alexander Pope with at least as much imagination as "Monk" Lewis, might, rather examine what Pope added to his source, consider what he omitted, explore his selection of letter and lover, and develop the not insupportable thesis that "Eloisa to Abelard" is more than a narration, more than oratory, more than a sonata in literary form, as Wellington suggests. Pope's poem is an artistic vehicle for expressing a moral truth: it is didacticism, "to advantage dress'd," to be sure.

The moralism of "Eloisa to Abelard" is a warning against--not the sin of *accidie*, which the legend traditionally typifies, and which, however appropriate for the medieval world in which a religious vocation might well be the only alternative to a life of shame or a death of starvation, is hardly relevant six centuries later. Pope's poem, rather, depicts the tragedy of succumbing to a temptation more alluring and a transgression more prevalent among the sophisticated and enlightened audience of 1717. For Eloisa's sin, as he clearly shows in the passages that are entirely his own, derives not from her reaction to being forced against her will and over her vociferous protests into the life of a nun. Her sin, rather, is of preferring Abelard's love to God's, of fearing loss of that love more than of heaven, of substituting for the faith of the Church the religion of love.

Eloisa does not begin by preferring Abelard to God. But, disregarding the First and Great Commandment, sh

allows him equality with God:

> Dear fatal name: rest ever unreveal'd,
> Nor pass these lips in holy silence seal'd.
> Hide it, my heart, within that close disguise,
> Where, mix'd with God's, his lov'd Idea lies. (9-12)

Then, like Adam's and Eve's, and like all sinners' since, Eloisa's heart not only hides her sin; it finds greater delight in the fruits of that sin than in the fruits of the Spirit. For her, the convent represents "solitary gloom" and "stern religion," where died the "best of passions." She contrasts God's light "Where awful arches make a noon-day night, / And dim windows shed a solemn light," with Abelard's: "Thy eyes diffus'd a reconciling ray, / And gleams of glory brighten'd all the day." She ostensibly praises the lot of the "blameless Vestal," while bemoaning the "curst, dear horrors" of her own life, where "conscience sleeps." The happy lot she describes, however, is barren, as her use of adjectives indicates:

> How happy is the blameless Vestal's lot!
> The world forgetting, by the world forgot.
> Eternal sunshine of the spotless mind!
> Each pray'r accepted, and each wish resign'd;
> Labour and rest, that equal periods keep;
> 'Obedient slumbers that can wake and weep';
> Desires compos'd, affections ever ev'n,
> Tears that delight, and sighs that waft to heav'n.
> Grace shines around her with serenest beams,
> And whisp'ring Angels prompt her golden dreams.
> For her th' unfading rose of <u>Eden</u> blooms,
> And wings of Seraphs shed divine perfumes;
> For her the Spouse prepares the bridal ring,
> For her the white virgins <u>Hymenaeals</u> sing;
> To sounds of heav'nly harps, she dies away,
> And melts in visions of eternal day. (209-22)

No subtle interpretation is necessary to realize that Eloisa greatly prefers her own situation:

> O curst, dear horrors of all-conscious night!
> How glowing guilt exalts the keen delight!
> Provoking Daemons all restraint remove,
> And stir within me ev'ry source of love.
> I hear thee, view thee, gaze o'er all thy charms,

And round thy phantom glue my clasping arms. (229-34)

For she admits that, upon waking, "I shriek, start up, th
same sad prospect find, / And wake to all the griefs I lef
behind" (247-48).

Eloisa establishes the religion of love by admittin
Abelard into her heart in a position first equal to, an
later above, God's. Her second heresy is denying th
traditional "born in sin and conceived in iniquity
doctrine, maintaining rather that she was "guiltless" whe
she first met her lover, that her fancy formed him "o
Angelick kind, / Some emanation of th' all-beauteous Mind.
With selective artistry, Pope has interwoven Eloisa's denia
of guilt into a passage taken freely from Hughes. Reiter
ating the significant term <u>guiltless</u>, Eloisa describes th
rite by which she was initiated into the religion of love:

> Guiltless I gaz'd; heav'n listen'd while you sung;
> And truths divine came mended from that tongue.
> From lips like those what precept fail'd to move?
> Too soon they taught me 'twas no sin to love.
> Back through the paths of pleasing sense I ran,
> Nor wish'd an Angel whom I lov'd a Man.
> Dim and remote the joys of saints I see,
> Nor envy them that heav'n I lose for thee. (65-72)

The religion of love, which Eloisa has begun by preferrin
man's love to God's, and continued by substituting for th
orthodox doctrine of original sin a notion that ignorance
or at least inexperience, is a virtue, thus includes
ceremony from which the initiate rises, renounces the forme
life, and, regenerated by the experience, determines to lea
a new life after this beginning.

As the initiation into the religion of love resemble
the Christian sacrament of Holy Baptism, so does
remembered sacrifice emulate the Eucharist. Elois
describes the occasion on which her savior, bound an
bleeding, suffers an ignominious and barbarous penalty fo
having loved her. "Canst thou forget," she asks, "that sad
that solemn day, / When victims at yon altar's foot we lay?
(107-08).

To depict fully the extent of Eloisa's heresy, Pope ha
juxtaposed another "Canst thou forget." Eloisa describe
another ceremony, the one in which she took her vows
Without images of fire and blood, without power and emotion
but "with cold lips I kiss'd the sacred veil, / The shrine

all trembled, and the lamps grew pale" (111-12). Eloisa's explanation for the difference between the ceremonies is clear: "Not on the Cross my eyes were fix'd, but you" (116).

Wholly committed to the religion of love, Eloisa finds all other observances meaningless. "Dying lamps," the shrine's "hollow sound," have no claim on her soul. Even in the mass itself, her thought is only of Abelard:

> I waste the Matin lamp in sighs for thee,
> Thy image steals between my God and me,
> Thy voice I seem in ev'ry hymn to hear;
> With every bead I drop too soft a tear.
> When from the Censer clouds of fragrance roll,
> And swelling organs lift the rising soul;
> One thought of thee puts all the pomp to flight,
> Priests, Tapers, Temples, swim before my sight;
> In seas of flame my plunging soul is drown'd,
> While Altars blaze, and Angels tremble round. (267-76)

For the Grace of God, Eloisa does not yearn. She pleads with Abelard to save her from heaven:

> Oppose thy self to heav'n; dispute my heart;
> Come, with one glance of those deluding eyes,
> Blot out each bright Idea of the skies.
> Take back that grace, those sorrows, and those tears,
> Take back my fruitless penitence and pray'rs,
> Snatch me, just mounting, from the blest abode,
> Assist the Fiends and tear me from my God! (282-88)

Not only do Pope's additions to and modifications of his source establish Eloisa's epistle as a religious creed; his omissions support such an interpretation. His poem contains no references to Abelard's reputation as a philosopher, his published works, or his heresy trials, although these facts were in previous publications and were of great significance to the actual story. Historically, as well as traditionally, Eloisa's reluctance to marry her lover was not based upon religious grounds (for neither of them was bound by vows of chastity at the time of their meeting) or from any philosophical, emancipated, or Courtly Love notion that marriage is an institution from which love should be free. Rather, her refusal was based upon her concern for his reputation. As Wellington explains:

> The twelfth century had inherited the belief of St. Paul and St. Jerome, to say nothing of the pagans Cicero and Seneca, that wedlock was a mere concession to the weakness of the flesh, that it was a mark of disgrace to any true philosopher, and that its numerous responsibilities and vexations were incompatible with a life of dedicated scholarship.[2]

Pope's poem contains no reference to these practical matters. Instead, Eloisa writes only of her initiation into the religion of love and Abelard's sacrificial suffering in its cause:

The religion of love, to which Eloisa commits herself and for which she rejects all hope of heaven, is not merely a personal tragedy, a warning to foolish women. For one would like to believe that, outside medieval France and the pages of romantic fiction, no woman would love so unwisely would behave so foolishly as to cast all her affections o one who lacks both the ability and the intention to requit that love. The religion of love has deeper and mor universal implications.

For, whatever its basis, any religion based on earthly either immediate or remembered, pleasures, endangers th Church in exactly the ways Eloisa outlines. First, havin clearly established her rejection of the Church, he contempt for its rites, her not very successful pretence a participation in its observances, Eloisa determines to us the Church for her own ends. Noting that his positio offers certain advantages, Eloisa begs him to administe unction and read her burial service. Denied, as mos adherents of the religion of love are not, a church wedding Eloisa demands a church funeral.

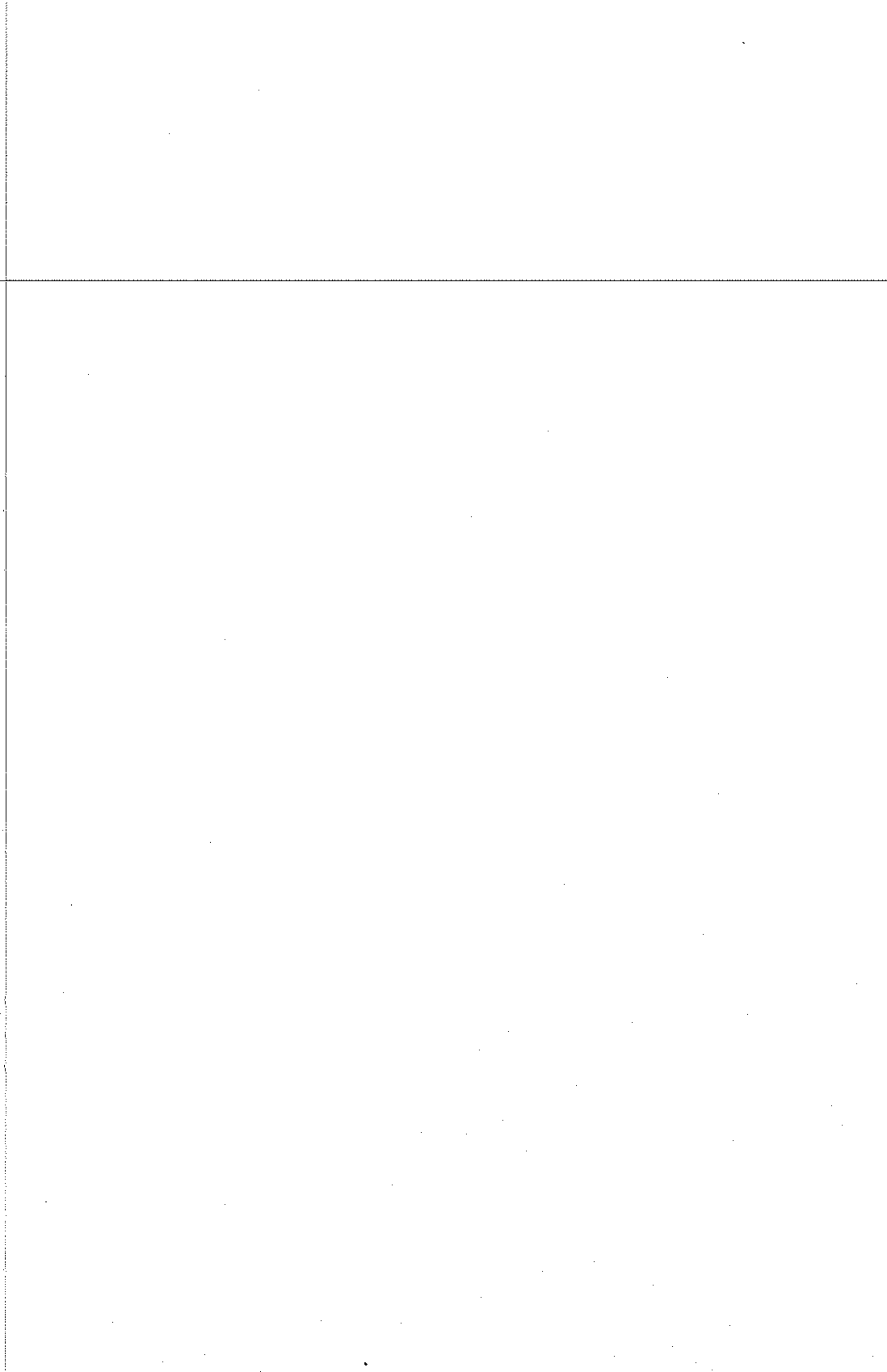
Using the offices of the Church for social occasions i but one of the ways in which a false religion, such a Eloisa's religion of love, endangers the Church. Eloisa ha taken her vows to God reluctantly; she uses the Church an its institutions selfishly. Her commitment to the opposin religion is sincere; her service is devoted. Deprived o any hope herself, in this world or the next, Elois nevertheless determines to win converts. The poem close with her fervent wish that she and Abelard may be burie together, and that such a tomb may be erected for them tha lovers who come to Paraclete hereafter may find their gaz distracted from the mass, that "Devotion's self shall stea a thought from heav'n" (357).

"Eloisa to Abelard" is a tragic tale. It is passionate and beautiful. It contains, however, a frightening moral: the religion of love is as tempting and alluring as an incubus. It is also as damning to the immortal soul and as inimical to the Holy Church.

NOTES

[1]James E. Wellington, ed., Eloisa to Abelard (Miami: University of Miami Press, 1965).

[2]Wellington, pp. 7-8.



W. Somerset Maugham and Netta Syrett: Two Perspectives on the Years 1885-1915

Jill T. Owens

We who read novels must admit to an active interest in our fellow human beings. Call it intellectual curiosity or crass nosiness, but the desire to look in on the lives of other people is there. We test our experiences against theirs; we add to our own experiences vicariously. In our search for some understanding of life we read literary accounts to determine others' conclusions and insights. But introspective novels which satisfy this curiosity and answer this need by chronicling man's struggle for meaning are a relatively modern phenomenon. In the transition period between the traditional Victorian novel, rooted in moral and social certainties, and the modern psychological novel, with its self-consciousness and uncertainties, appeared what William Frierson calls "the life-novel or spiritual biography." This form, which originated in France, flourished in England between 1911 and 1914. Frierson says:

> The life-novel is virtually a new form or mode of writing in England since it is a semi-autobiographical account dealing with a person's life from birth to his discovery of the world. Early influences and the pain of youth are stressed. . . . A distinctive feature was a central character sympathetic to the reader and at the same time one who was not too representative of the established social virtues. In this way it provided for a troubled study of living, of living in England, of confronting difficulties as they present themselves to the young, of experiencing love and passion as it presents itself to a man, and of finding an honest philosophy of life which, if not altogether satisfactory, would enable one to meet the world and accept what fate has to offer.[1]

W. Somerset Maugham's Of Human Bondage, published in 1915, conforms clearly to this type. Philip Carey, the protagonist, is a troubled young Englishman who confronts life's difficulties, experiences love and passion, and, after grappling with the meaning of life, attempts to formulate a livable philosophy. The current reputation of Of Human Bondage attests to Maugham's success in creating

Philip Carey.[2] Although it is squarely set in a particula historical period and place, it offers universal huma truths in its study of the psychological development of young man. But the particular historical period and plac that comprise the setting of this novel make Of Huma Bondage particularly interesting for the student of Englis literary history between 1885 and 1915. Histories migh provide us with factual information and statistics about th period, but in Of Human Bondage Philip Carey personall confronts the challenges and problems of the late nineteent and early twentieth centuries. As an artist he confront the problem of the artist's role in society; as a medica student he confronts the horrors of human life--pain, death hopelessness--and grapples with the seeming meaninglessnes of life. He is a man of his era because he has no religiou beliefs to sustain him, no belief in progress as a inevitable panacea for human ills. He tries to find som meaning in experience and to formulate some rules fo living.

Another life-novel or spiritual biography, Ros Cottingham by Netta Syrett, also appeared in 1915 and make an interesting companion piece for Maugham's novel in such study of the era. Here, the young protagonist, like Philip confronts life's difficulties, experiences love and passion and grapples with the meaning of life. In this novel however, the protagonist is a young girl. Of Human Bondag was not the first such account of a young man's development J. D. Beresford's The Early History of Jacob Stahl appeare in 1911 and his A Candidate for Truth in Fortitude appeare in 1913. But Rose Cottingham may well be the earlies British novel presenting the development of a young girl; i predates May Sinclair's May Olivier by four years. Syret portrays Rose from age nine to age twenty in Rose Cottingha and in the sequel, Rose Cottingham Married, published i 1916, continues the account into Rose's forties. Virtuall the same years form the backdrop of these two novels and O Human Bondage. Rose's experiences are not so varied a those of her male counterpart and Syrett's treatment is no as naturalistic, but she does explore some avenues o experience which Maugham does not, avenues which wer available to a young woman of the time.

The fact that Rose Cottingham appeared in the same yea as Of Human Bondage and the fact that Rose Cottingham an Rose Cottingham Married are dedicated to W. Somerset Maugha indicate a clear connection between the two writers. Syret knew Maugham and considered him a friend. In he

reminiscences, published in 1939, she mentions him, but unfortunately her comments are sketchy. She notes meeting him when his first play, The Man of Honour, had just been introduced in 1903, "when his future fame awaited him." She mentions his helpful advice to her younger brother Jack who showed Maugham his novel,[3] and she tells of seeing much of Maugham the summer of 1905 in Paris. She says, "Of such a much-discussed man it is unnecessary to say anything here, except that he is still my friend."[4] Why she dedicated the Rose Cottingham books to him and whether they ever discussed their autobiographical novels are both subject to speculation. The fact remains that these two novelists produced autobiographical novels in 1915 and 1916 that offer a varied and valuable picture of life in England between 1885 and 1915.

Somerset Maugham's realistic presentation of Philip as a schoolboy, an apprentice accountant, an aspiring artist, a medical student, and a department store floorwalker provides a wealth of information about the realities of English daily life in that era. Philip experiences the sense of powerlessness, personal limitation, and "bondage" inherent in each of these positions. As a boy his classmates at King's School mercilessly humiliate him because of his clubfoot. Maugham writes:

> It is an illusion that youth is happy, an illusion of those who have lost it; but the young know they are wretched, for they are full of the truthless ideals which have been instilled into them, and each time they come in contact with the real they are bruised and wounded. . . . They must discover for themselves that all they have read and all they have been told are lies, lies, lies; and each discovery is another nail driven into the body on the cross of life.[5]

After leaving school and failing as an accountant's clerk, Philip goes to Paris to study to be an artist. He arrives at the height of the Impressionist Movement. After initial amazement and confusion, he adopts Manet, Degas, and Monet as his standards of perfection and adopts the dress of the Bohemian artist:

> With Ruskin, Burne-Jones, and Watts, he had put aside his bowler hat and the neat blue tie with white spots which he had worn on coming to Paris;

and now disported himself in a soft, broad-brimmed hat, a flowing black cravat, and a cape of romantic cut. He walked along the Boulevard du Montparnasse as though he had known it all his life, and by virtuous perseverance he had learned to drink absinthe without distaste. He was letting his hair grow, and it was only because Nature is unkind and has no regard for the immortal longings of youth that he did not attempt a beard. (186)

A vivid account of life in Paris at the turn of the centur follows. Accompanying the intoxicating freedom, th colorful parties, the vehement intellectual discussions ar poverty, degeneracy, and suffering. When Philip finds hi fellow student, Fanny Price, hanging from the ceiling in he empty garret, he has to deal with suffering and death. H tries to comprehend what would motivate a girl like Fanny t choose to live as she did; Fanny had no talent, yet she ha starved herself rather than admit defeat. Philip puzzle over the handsome, energetic young Spaniard who aspires t be a great writer but who cannot write and is doomed t failure. He listens to Cronshaw, the author of a sli volume of poetry and some poems for the Yellow Book wh plays literary lion in a local cafe and leads a drunken destitute life. He tries to understand what drives thes would-be artists to continue their work against the greates of odds. In truth, Philip is as much a student of men as student of art. In one scene his artist's eye joins wit his perceptive nature to evoke a particularly memorabl picture of Paris night life. He goes with his frien Flanagan to a music hall, the Bal Bullier:

Philip watched the people . . . . The hussies were got up to resemble the music-hall artiste or the dancer who enjoyed notoriety at the moment; their eyes were heavy with black and their cheeks impudently scarlet. The hall was lit by great white lights, low down, which emphasized the shadows on the faces; all the lines seemed to harden under it, and the colours were most crude. It was a sordid scene. Philip leaned over the rail, staring down, and he ceased to hear the music. They danced furiously. They danced round the room, slowly, talking very little, with all their attention given to the dance. The room was

> hot, and their faces shone with sweat. It seemed to Philip that they had thrown off the guard which people wear on their expression, the homage to convention, and he saw them now as they really were. In that moment of abandon they were strangely animal: some were foxy and some were wolflike; and others had the long, foolish face of sheep. Their skins were sallow from the unhealthy life they led and the poor food they ate. . . . Their eyes were haggard and grim; and notwithstanding the beastly lust that disfigured them, and the meanness of their faces, and the cruelty, notwithstanding the stupidness which was worst of all, the anguish of those fixed eyes made all that crowd terrible and pathetic. Philip loathed them, and yet his head ached with the infinite pity which filled him. (216-17)

When he returns to England he gives up painting completely and moves on to a medical career. Working in the out-patients' room at St. Luke's Hospital, Philip sees a parade of misery. The descriptions of the life of the poor in London make a graphic comment on the times. He recounts the tragedy of a sick working-man whose death "was inevitable because the man was a little wheel in the great machine of a complex civilization, and had as little power of changing the circumstances as an automaton" (371). He sees lovely young girls who learn they are dying. Pathos co-exists alongside a naturalistic rendering of the horrors of the sick. Philip makes no judgments; he perceives that what he sees at the hospital is not bad or good: "There were just facts. It was life" (372).

When funds run out, Philip has to drop his medical training; he is driven to extremities. He literally faces starvation, sleeps on public benches, and contemplates suicide. He does find work as a floorwalker in a department store and again we see a graphic picture of such a life--the fight to get even such a humble position, the long hours of monotonous, mindless standing directing shoppers, the small recompense on pay day. Maugham clearly communicates the despair and pain of such an existence.

The spectrum of life presented in the novel is varied and rich. Philip's speculations may be individual, but his exeriences provide a realistic picture of the era.

Netta Syrett performs much the same service in her Rose Cottingham and Rose Cottingham Married. Rose provides a

but she articulates indictments of the set which "had lon
existed, though only hazily, in her mind":

> In fancy she saw "the whole set of them" crowding towards her like marionettes wound up to gaity, to the utterance of witty speech, to mocking laughter, to paradoxical remarks--heartless, soulless, unacquainted with, scornful even of human sympathy. . . . He [Jack] was only clever. Clever enough to laugh at himself, to laugh at his companions, to laugh at existence in general; to evade all responsibility for himself in regard to others. That was it. He wanted to avoid ties; to be free; not to let any one encroach on that charmed circle which guarded from annoyance a delicately posed instrument for enlightened selfishness. (RCM, 128-29)

These people were self-centered and not willing t
participate in full human relationships. Rose seeks
saner, full view of life. Like many other young people o
her time, she rejects the artistic life and adopts Socialis
with a vengeance. She alienates herself from her aristo
cratic family, moves into poor lodgings, and gets a job at
working women's club. Rose has grown up an aristocrat--sh
is a "lady" and her class consciousness cannot be erase
overnight. When a friend suggests that the Labour leade
John Dering may be interested in her as a woman, sh
discounts the possibility:

> John Dering was certainly not a gentleman. To suggest even in fun an approach to anything but the neutral ground of social service in connection with the man, was, to say the least of it, misplaced. . . . Rose . . . with a dim sense of dignity outraged, went home to finish reading in <u>The Clarion</u> an article on the absurdity of class distinctions. As personal applications were entirely omitted during her perusal of the article, its theme won her immediate intellectual assent. (RCM, 159)

Rose canvases for Dering's election to Parliament as
Labour candidate. After his election he shocks her with
proposal of marriage. The conflict between her backgrou
and her ideology is strongest in this declaration scene:

> For a second, a lightning space, perhaps, she had a glimpse of an abyss between her and the man beside her. He was a workman, a factory "hand," a man whose friends were the sort of people who dug in the garden at home, or mended tables and chairs--people to whom one said good-morning casually in passing, and straightway forgot! . . . Such a man was asking her, Rose Cottingham, to be his wife! . . . And then, in another lightning flash came a stab of shamed self-contempt. She too was a socialist, and for socialists class distinctions had no meaning. A great man was doing her honour, undeserved honour. (RCM, 176)

But the world Rose and John Dering live in is a class-structured world. Great courage is needed for a lady to marry a workingman. Great courage is needed to make the marriage work. Most of Rose Cottingham Married deals with the problems their marriage imposes.

Syrett explores the marriage question in some detail. Rose proclaims again and again that she will never marry. She longs for freedom which boys and then men have. She asserts her independence as soon as she is of age and can get her inheritance. Rose is a "modern woman." In fact, Syrett aptly subtitles Rose Cottingham "The Development of a Modern Woman." In asserting her independence and determining to live on her own, Rose breaks with established social form and with enthusiasm confronts an exciting new world. But Rose is not active in the Suffragette Movement. She is interested in feminist ideas; she wants to learn more about the theory of free love and marital contracts, but her friend Helen Fergurson is the one with advanced ideas. Helen actively works for the vote but severs relations with the Suffragettes when the "mad, hysterical, unbalanced element" enters. Thus, we get some comment on the Women's Movement through Helen, but Rose is not directly involved. She does make observations on the condition of women, however. In working with the working women's club, she perceives that "so far as the feminine members of the working class were concerned, very little attention was paid to the efforts in progress for the bettering of that class" (RCM, 317). Never trained for domestic work, Rose has to learn to be a member of that class, to be a workingman's wife, to cook and to keep house. She sinks into depression as a result of the hard manual labor required and the

complete lack of leisure. She is married to a man s
involved in his work that he cannot perceive her deprivatio
or needs. At one point "a flash of intuition revealed t
her that in his view, women ministered to the material need
of men, naturally, inevitably" (RCM, 247). The account o
her efforts to do what is expected of her as a wife is
painful one in light of all the opportunities and leisur
she once had.

The novel realistically describes the rocky early year of John and Rose's marriage. At one point, she almos deserts her husband to go with her old friend Geoffre Winter, who has been in love with her for years. Joh changes, however; he makes Rose's domestic life easier b hiring help; he allows Rose to use her influentia connections to further his career and to return to writing John adjusts to the comfortable home of a Member o Parliament, becomes popular in prominent social circles, an if it were not for Rose, would have sacrificed hi principles by publicly aligning himself with a right win paper for the sake of providing more money and opportunitie for the son he dotes upon. Rose has learned to "manage John Dering, and one senses he changes much more than Rose Syrett believed in tradition and aristocratic standards. I her formulation, John simply learned true values--Rose' values. His abject dependence on Rose at the end of th book contrasts unpleasantly with the striking, independen figure in the early years. The ending of Rose Cottingha Married is disappointing. Syrett is at her best in th accounts of the struggling marriage and in the detaile picture of the artistic social set of the nineties.

Maugham's ending in Of Human Bondage is als anticlimactic after the fierce struggle Philip has waged t understand himself and to get along in life. Afte suffering the throes of an unreasonable passion for th unpleasant and cold Mildred, he finally finds happiness wit the sweet, simple girl of nature, Sally Athelny. The highl romanticized view of Sally contrasts with the realisti tenor of the rest of the novel and strikes a discordant note Where Syrett explores the conflicts and problems of marriage, Maugham uses marriage as a deus ex machin Maugham's life-novel is superior to Syrett's in hi naturalistic presentation of the artistic, medical, a working world of his time, but on this issue of marriag Syrett's is by far the more realistic work. Syrett portrayal of married life, her pictures of the artist coteries of the 80's and 90's, her presentation of t

Socialistic movement, and her frank chronicle of a young girl's development supplement Maugham's work. Taken together, the novels capture the multiplicity and variety of life in England during the years 1885 and 1915.

NOTES

[1]William C. Frierson, The English Novel in Transition: 1885-1940 (New York: Cooper Square, 1965), pp. 133-34, 193-94.

[2]Six editions of Of Human Bondage are currently in print, and according to the MLA Bibliography, four articles and books relating to the novel appeared in the two years 1980-81.

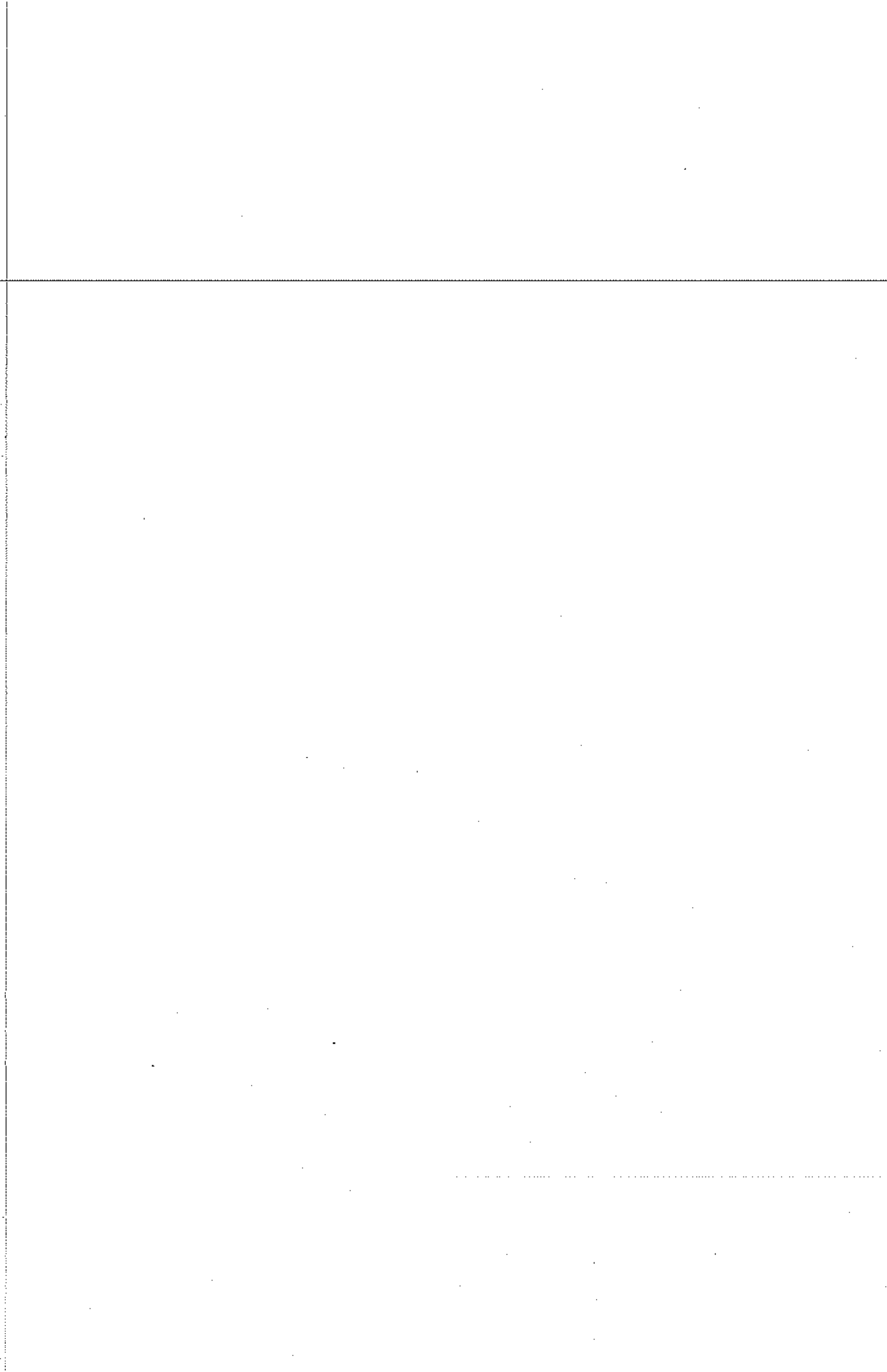
[3]The novel was A Household Saint by Jack Syrett. Netta Syrett says Maugham spoke of it with "enthusiasm, and wrote at length about it to Jack." This comment appears in The Sheltering Tree (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1939), p. 198.

[4]The Sheltering Tree, p. 127.

[5]W. Somerset Maugham, Of Human Bondage (Garden City: Doubleday, 1915), p. 106. Subsequent references are to this edition.

[6]Netta Syrett, Rose Cottingham (Chicago: Academy Press, 1978), p. 211; hereafter the novel is referred to as RC. Subsequent references are to this edition.

[7]Netta Syrett, Rose Cottingham Married (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1916), p. 54; hereafter the novel is referred to as RCM. Subsequent references are to this edition.



"This Love Will Undo Us All": Lyly's Erotic Virginity

William Alexander McClung

In the lengthy sequel to Euphues, called Euphues and His England (1580), John Lyly offers curious praise of Queen Elizabeth, not only as Vesta, which is to be expected for a virgin queen, but as her contrary: "having the beauties that might allure all princes, she hathe the chastitie also to refuse all, accounting it not less praise to be called a Virgin, than to be esteemed a Venus."[1] It would not surprise us to hear her praised for arousing men's passions; the question is how she might fulfill Venus' task of gratifying them. What I shall suggest is a development and deepening of sexual paradox leading to different resolutions or syntheses of Venus and Vesta in the comedies staged at Court in the 1580's, especially Campaspe, Sapho and Phao, Gallathea and Endimion, the decade that saw the climax of the Queen's political and marital intrigues. I hope thereby to offer a reading of the plays at a level more consistent than has been found in allegorical studies, and one that makes sense of an apparent violation of theatrical decorum that has troubled the plays' most thorough and sophisticated critic, Prof. Peter Saccio.[2] That violation involves the intrusion of the Court directly into the pastoral world of Gallathea, and first suggested to me the importance of the plays as courtesy-books, designed to instruct courtiers in how to live well. For a courtier, indeed, to live well is to love well, and to love best is to love the Queen. The problem of love at Court is how, in its highest form, it can be fulfilled.

Elizabeth has often been detected in both the virginal and amorous women and goddesses of the plays, but it is the emphasis on love that is surprising, to the point, in Gallathea at least, of overriding chastity. The Elizabeth who emerges is less the Britomart who stands up to Philip II than the woman whom the Earl of Leicester and the Duc d'Alencon, both suitors for her hand, must have known: a queen of a court rather than a nation, whose cult of virginity coincided with supervision of men and women guided by Petrarchan conventions of etiquette.[3] These men and women are not themselves the subjects of the plays, nor are Lyly's settings easily identified as Greenwich or Whitehall; rather, they are men and women (and gods and goddesses) populating an ancient city or a pastoral grove or an indefinite Arcadia in which only fears and desires arising from the experience and contemplation of love are real, and

only the power of the sovereign is meaningful. Both the
and their sovereigns are equivalents of Elizabeth and he
court, but need not be understood as topically connected
and the sphere of their activities in the major actions o
the main plays is confined to love, the cause of the action
the substance of the subsequent intrigues, and the favorit
subject of monologue and debate. Conversation, which i
constant and in fact pretty much all that "happens" in th
plays, is ethereal: that is, Lyly's main-plot character
talk only of concepts, manners and feelings, rarely o
personalities or events or objects. The kind of people the
are is equivalent to the kind of language they use: the
speak a patterned English that might serve as a model fo
Court speech without prescribing its content. Their inter
play as characters is similarly loose, idealized, abstrac
or "openwork"; that is, they avoid idiosyncrasy and compli
cation of motive or activity in favor of reinforcement o
the central action of amorousness at Court, and so encourag
the widest possible identification of themselves a
courtiers or models of courtly behavior, unencumbered b
problems or feelings distinct from the world of sovereignt
and passion.

Campaspe and Sapho and Phao are early efforts to defin
the state of erotic virginity that ultimately will charac
terize both the perfect sovereign and the perfect courtier
The former tale descends from Pliny and Plutarch by way o
Castiglione, and recounts how Alexander, victorious ove
Thebes and Athens, becomes distracted from the great enter
prise of conquering Persia when he is smitten with passio
for a captive Theban whom we can only call "middle-class.
He commissions her portrait, and the artist--the legendar
Apelles, but in Lyly's play merely a masculine sweet youn
thing--falls hopelessly in love with her, as she with him
The conventional problem, in the old story, is that of
monarch's choice between love and duty, complicated by th
potential for tragedy should Apelles' behavior, or eve
Campaspe's, be called treason. Sapho, in a story derive
from Ovid, is Queen of Syracuse and an equivalent o
Alexander in dignity: "faire by nature, by birth royall
learned by education, by government politike, rich by peace
insomuch as it is hard to judge, whether she be mor
beautifull or wise, vertuous or fortunate."[4] Though famou
for her immunity to passion, she has no defense against
seizure of love for Phao, an unimportant ferry-conducto
whose most recent passenger, Venus, took a liking to hi
and, with the idea of humbling Sapho by forcing her to love

marvelously improved his looks. Much of the Court, in fact, imitates the 'ueen's passion, but Phao is caught up by a corresponding love for Sapho, and in the meantime Venus, falling victim to her own handiwork, loves Phao as well. In both cases, that of Alexander and of Phao, marriage with a commoner is unthinkable.

But the solution is not simple rejection, nor must either prince pay the cruel price of erotic denial and romantic frustration. For one thing, a prince's love is simply too rare and fine a commodity to be dismissed from the world of the Court. Hephaestion, who in orthodox fashion advises that desire be crushed or subordinated to duty is answered thus:

> Alex: My case were light Hephestion, and not worthy to be called love, if reason were a remedy, or sentences could salve, that sense cannot conceive. Litle do you know, and therefore sleightly do you regarde, the dead embers in a private person, or live coles in a great prince, whose passions and thoughts do as far exceed others in extremitie, as their callings doe in Maiestie. An Eclipse in the Sunne is more then the falling of a starre; none can conceive the torments of a king, unlesse hee be a king, whose desires are not inferior to their dignities. And then iudge Hephestion if the agonies of love be dangerous in a subject, whether they be not more then deadly unto Alexander, whose deep and not to be conceived sighes, cleave the hart in shivers; whose wounded thoughtes can neither be expressed nor endured. Cease then Hephestion, with arguments to seeke to refel that, with which their deitie the Gods cannot resist; & let this suffice to aunswere thee, that it is a king that loveth and Alexander, whose affections are not to be measured by reason, being immortal, nor I feare me to be borne, being intollerable. (2.2.77-93)

Love on such a princely scale is not to be rejected as "effeminate" in the Renaissance sense of the word, meaning inclining a man excessively towards women, and Alexander's solution is not denial but affirmation through subjection--not subjection of Campaspe (and Apelles), for he has acknowledged that even a prince cannot compel love, but subjection of love itself. It is Alexander who assumes

responsibility for uniting Campaspe and Apelles, who hereto-fore have been hopelessly enmeshed in Lylian dialogue in their groping towards a joint declaration of passion. In other words, the dramatic statement at the climax of the play is that love requires the intervention and supervision of the prince to fulfill its task, and that as a kind of God of Love, and not as a lover, Alexander is justified in saying "Thou shalt see that Alexander maketh but a toye of love, and leadeth affection in fetters" (5.4.132-33).

But his god-like "love-inclusive" role is lightly sketched, and Lyly moves only tentatively away from the parable of the victory of masculine duty over effeminate love to the union in a sovereign figure of the powers of chastity and eroticism. For one thing, Alexander's sex is wrong; Lyly hits his stride with Sapho, whose resistance rather than mere indifference to love Cupid acknowledges in the first scene of the play: "She hath her thoughts in a string . . . she conquers affections, and sendeth love up and downe upon errands" (1.1.39-41). Her passage through the fires of love--a victim of Cupid's darts--is marked by a touching interview with the equally enamored Phao. Like Apelles and Campaspe, they are caught in a web of language, unable to risk a declaration of passion (hindered by fear of rejection, and by the indecorousness of such a liaison) except through puns:

> *Sapho*. . . . but why doe you sigh so, Phao?
> *Phao*. It is mine use Madame.
> *Sapho*. It will doe you harme, and mee too: for I never heare one sighe, but I must sigh't also.
> *Phao*. It were best then that your Ladyship give me leave to be gone: for I can but sigh.
> *Sapho*. Nay stay: for now I beginne to sighe, I shall not leave, though you be gone. But what do you thinke best for your sighing to take it away?
> *Phao*. Yew Madame.
> *Sapho*. Mee?
> *Phao*. No Madame, yewe of the tree.
> *Sapho*. Then will I love yewe the better. And indeede I think it would make mee sleepe too, therfore all other simples set aside, I will simply use onely yewe.
> *Phao*. Doe madame: for I think nothing in the world so good as yewe.
> *Sapho*. Farewell for this time.
>
> (2.4.68-85)

But immediately afterwards, under Venus' interrogation, she says that she would "shame to embrace one so meane."

Her solution consists in a deepening of the definition that Cupid had given of her authority over love. In obedience to his mother's commands, Cupid frees Sapho from her passion for Phao, and the Queen quickly capitalizes on the situation, bribing the little god with sweetmeats and persuading him to strike Phao with an arrow that will cause him to despise Venus. Cupid does this, and accepts Sapho's invitation to "sitte in her lappe," to become the Court plaything. Thus at the end of the play Venus is the prisoner of hopeless love for Phao, while Sapho controls the agent--Cupid--both of Venus' bondage and her own liberty. "Venus, be not collerick, Cupid is mine," she says, "he hath given me his arrowes, and I will give him a new Bowe to shoote in," adding "You are not worthy to be the Ladye of Love, that yeelde so often to the impressions of love." And she extracts Cupid's assent to these propositions: that she shall be "on earth the Goddesse of affections" and "rule the fansies of men, and leade Venus in chains like a captive" (5.2.57-60; 64; 66-67).

Thus by denying love Sapho includes the realm of love within herself; the Virgin Queen is the New Venus. Her role is more suitable than Alexander's because Syracuse is a Court of Love; the foil for the queen's ethereal erotic powers is a courtly pragmatism that finds expression in numerous scenes of this and other of the plays. Here we observe the kind of world over which the sovereign presides; in them an illusion of topicality--of the stuff of actual Court conversation--is conveyed through non-topical language. A brief scene from the late play _Midas_ (1592) is helpful; the speakers are Sophronia, Suavia, and three other ladies:

> _Sophronia_. Ladies, here must we attend the happy return of my father [i.e., the King]; but in the mean season what pastime shall we use to pass the time? I will agree to any, so it be not to talk of love.
> _Suavia_. Then sleep is the best exercise.
> _Sophronia_. Why, Suavia, are you so light that you must chat of love, or so heavy that you must needs sleep? Penelope in the absence of her lord beguiled the days with spinning.
> _Suavia_. Indeed, she spun a fair thread, if it were to make a string to the bow wherein she drew

her wooers.
Sophronia. Why, Suavia, it was a bow which she knew to be above their strength, and therein she showed her wit.
Suavia. *Qui latus arguerit corneus arcus erat*; it was made of horn, and therein she showed her meaning.
Sophronia. Why, dost thou not think she was chaste?
Suavia. Yes, of all her wooers.
Sophronia. To talk with thee is to lose time, not well to spend it. How say you, Amerula, what shall we do?
Amerula. Tell tales.
Sophronia. What say you, Caelia?
Caelia. Sing.
Sophronia. What think you, Camilla?
Camilla. Dance.

(3.3.1-21)

The conversation is both trivial and ethereal, reflectin the forms of Court conversation, dependent on mythologica allusions exploited for their sexual double-entendres, bu idealized by the absence of topical language and by th careful balancing of statement and retort. Mileta in *Sap and Phao* is another lucid, witty skeptic like Suavia; her she characterizes courtiers:

> for then fall they to good manners, having nothing in their mouthes but "sweet mistress," wearing our hands out with courtly kissings, when their wits faile in courtly discourses. Now ruffling their haires, now setting their ruffes, then gazing with their eies, then sighing with a privie ring by the hand, thinking us like to be wowed by signes and ceremonies. (1.4.34-40)

Here is love as we know it in Act III, scene 1 *Troilus and Cressida*, the boudoir episode of song and bant among Paris, Pandarus and Helen, whose corrupt but intell gent remark, "this love will undo us all," point up th degrading effects of desire complicated by calculations the impediments to satisfaction--as (in the case of Mileta observation) masculine vanity, hypocrisy and role-playing.

Passages and scenes of this kind remind us th although the love that threatens a sovereign is blind a

arbitrary, advancing and retreating by miracle and metamorphosis as well as by heroic acts of will, the more familiar kind of love exists as well; complex, tangled in the mesh of ambition and envy, perhaps little more than lust, and manipulable by the techniques of the courtesan. In Sapho and Phao a sybil in a cave advises Phao on dancing, dressing, and billets-doux. She says that love must be governed by artfulness, that the skills of the courtier are needed to bring desire to fruition, and that cynical intelligence remedies mere passionate sincerity. In her worldiness we sense a certain relish on Lyly's part for the details of the game.

Yet the divorce between a worldiness that we would be wise to avoid and the usually faultless behavior of the principal lovers in the plays suggests that the frequent invoking of an apparently irrelevant milieu of cynical sophistication--irrelevant that is, to the progress of the main plots--serves as a lesson in manners and morals to us, the spectators and potentially ideal courtiers. When Phao begins to behave like the courtiers whom Mileta deplores, she quickly sets him straight: "You are too young to cheapen love" (3.4.34). It is not the arts of psychological manipulation that resolve a Lylian love plot, but rather magic, miracle and divine intervention. Nowhere is this more evident than in Gallathea.

Gallathea is a pastoral comedy set in Lincolnshire, a Lincolnshire under the displeasure of Neptune, who on account of an impiety done to him in the past requires every fifth year the sacrifice of the most beautiful virgin girl. She is bound to a tree and exposed to a sea-monster called the Agar, whose behavior unites that of the rapist to the ghoul: "Come Agar," cries Haebe, a prospective victim, "thou insatiable Monster of Maidens blood, & devourer of beauties bowels, glut thyselfe till thou surfet, & let my life end thine. Teare these tender joynts with thy greedy iawes, these yellow locks with thy black feete, this faire face with thy foule teeth" (5.2.50-54).

The question must be not only why Neptune is doing this but what exactly is the meaning of the sacrifice. He is caught in the play in a triangular conflict with both Venus and Diana, and in the slaughter of virgins he destroys both chastity and beauty at once, since both qualities are required in the scapegoat. Presumably incontinent behavior would get a girl off the hook, and so betray Diana, just as inadequate looks in fact do serve to spare Haebe her fate. To put it another way, the people are required to sacrifice

their finest creatures, those uniting beauty and chastity to a destroyer whose associations are violently sexual. Th connection between this loss and the Court world of Lyly' audience is established by Haebe, in what she supposes ar her last words:

> Fare-well, you chaste virgins, whose thoughts are divine, whose faces faire, whose fortyunes are agreeable to your affections, enioy and long enioy the pleasure of your curled locks, the amiableness of your wished lookes, the sweetnes of your tuned voices, the content of your inwarde thoughts, the pompe of your outward showes. . . fare-well the pompe of Princes courts, whose roofes are embosst with golde, and whose pavements are decked with faire ladies, where the daies are spent in sweet delights, the nights in pleasant dreames, where chastitie honoreth affections and commaundeth, yeildeth to desire and conquereth.
>
> (52.27-32; 35-39)

The violation of pastoral decorum is explicit and ha given pause to Saccio, but it serves to make clear what th fairest virgins of Lincolnshire have a right to expect bu are to be denied: entrance into the Court world o flourishing virtue and gratified sensuality, summed up i Haebe's paradoxical formula, "chastitie honoreth affectio and commandeth, yieldeth to desire and conquereth." Ra devastates both love and chastity, and Neptune's ange strikes at the heart of the Court.

Meanwhile we observe the operation of love in tw beautiful girls, Gallathea and Phillida, both sure candi dates for the sacrifice. To preserve them the father o each, without knowledge of the other, disguises his daughte as a boy, and of course they meet in the forest and fall i love, each initially presuming the other to be male. The love is admirable for several reasons, one of which is th it has not resulted from Cupid's arrows, which have wound several of Diana's nymphs and caused them to fall in lo with the disguised girls. Diana and Venus clash over t issue of Cupid's trespass into virgin territory a Gallathea and Phillida, who have been quietly practicing t kind of homoerotic double-talk that Rosalind and Viola wi perfect in the next decade, become the problem that t deities of the play must resolve at the close of the ma action. The disclosure of their sex in no ways abates the

ardor, yet the fullness of romantic passion unites with the fullness of chastity, since the genteel assumption is that they could not be unchaste together. In the end this will not do, and Venus, praising their devotion, vows to convert one into a boy. But this happens offstage, after the play is over, and we never discover who is changed. The dramatic experience remains homosexual: homosexual love is scarcely advocated, but it is offered as a limiting example of perfection, achieving the balance of chastity and eroticism to which orthodox romance should aspire. The passage of love through a homoerotic circuit, so to speak, ensures its fulfillment within Diana's laws. That balance is achieved at the political level by a reconciliation among Diana, Venus and Neptune, a trinity of sovereigns over a land from which Neptune lifts the curse, and in which their conflicting goals are harmonized.

The chain of accidents and miracles on which these comedies are strung points up the impossibility of resolving the conflicts of love by reason or human effort. Each play is designed to conclude with an act of divine or royal grace which magically resolves a paradox or problem. Alexander's magnanimous gesture is the simplest: proceeding from the same generous spirit which loved, it alone is capable of channeling love in the proper direction, through himself as arbiter and dispenser, to complete the circuit between the tongue-tied Apelles and Campaspe. The subjection of Cupid to Sapho likewise locates the sovereign in the mechanism of love, as in fact the critical or deciding factor as to who will love, and when, and how: the implication is that the cynical, Ovidian manners of the Court may be superseded or annulled. Neptune renounces his enmity to beautiful virgins in order to reconcile Diana to Venus, and so establishes in a pastoral realm the equivalent of that Court of Love evoked by Haebe. In _Endimion_ that Court reclaims the center of the stage.

Endimion is a cluster of conversations arising from situations of frustrated love. Its setting is a kind of fairyland, and two principal characters are both women and planets: Tellus, the earth, a Court lady who would like to be sovereign, and Cynthia, the Queen, the moon, and the moon-goddess all at once. Cynthia is the only sovereign unquestionably in command of her situation throughout the play: she is never in danger, and the plot centers not upon her heroic chastity and triumphant subjection of love, but upon the hopeless passion of the courtier Endimion, who can expect no consummation. His confession of love suggests how

far one could press a claim upon the Virgin Queen:

> The time was Madam, and is, and ever shal be, that I honoured your highnesse above all the world: but to stretch it so far as to call it love, I never durst. . . . Such a difference hath the Gods sette between our states, that all must be dutie, loyaltie, and reverence; nothing (without it vouchsafe your highnes) be termed love. My unspotted thoughts, my languishing bodie, my discontented life, let them obtaine by princelie favour that, which to challenge they must not presume, onelie wishing of impossibilities: with imagination of which, I will spende my spirits, and to my selfe that no creature may heare, softlee call it love. And if any urge to utter what I whisper, then will I name it honor. From this sweet contemplation if I be not driven, I shall live of al men the most content, taking more pleasure in mine aged thoughts, then ever I did in my youthful actions. (5.3.222-47)

In this his most delicate expression of love softly turne in upon itself in contemplation, Lyly implies the limita tions of human and social machinery in advancing love. Onl an act of divine grace can satisfy the courtier's passic and channel it to everyone's satisfaction. That act i Cynthia's response: "Endimion, this honorable respect c thine, shalbe christned love in thee . . ." (5.3.248-49 Endimion's passion for Cynthia, a vital and potentially dangerous force in the Court, is recognized as a new dimension of feeling, higher than the mere gentility of Eumenides' love for Semele in the same play. The subject adoring the sovereign and the courtier in quest of the lady are both satisfied, not by physical or spiritual union but by recognition, by a smile, by merci, and the tension of thwarted desire is released. Love for Elizabeth, the highest love possible for a courtier, can thus be viable when transformed into that state of satisfied suspense which Petrarch felt in adoration of Laura, or Dante of Beatrice who smiled at him in the street. The gesture of recognition is that of a goddess, and suggests the ultimate reward from Elizabeth herself.

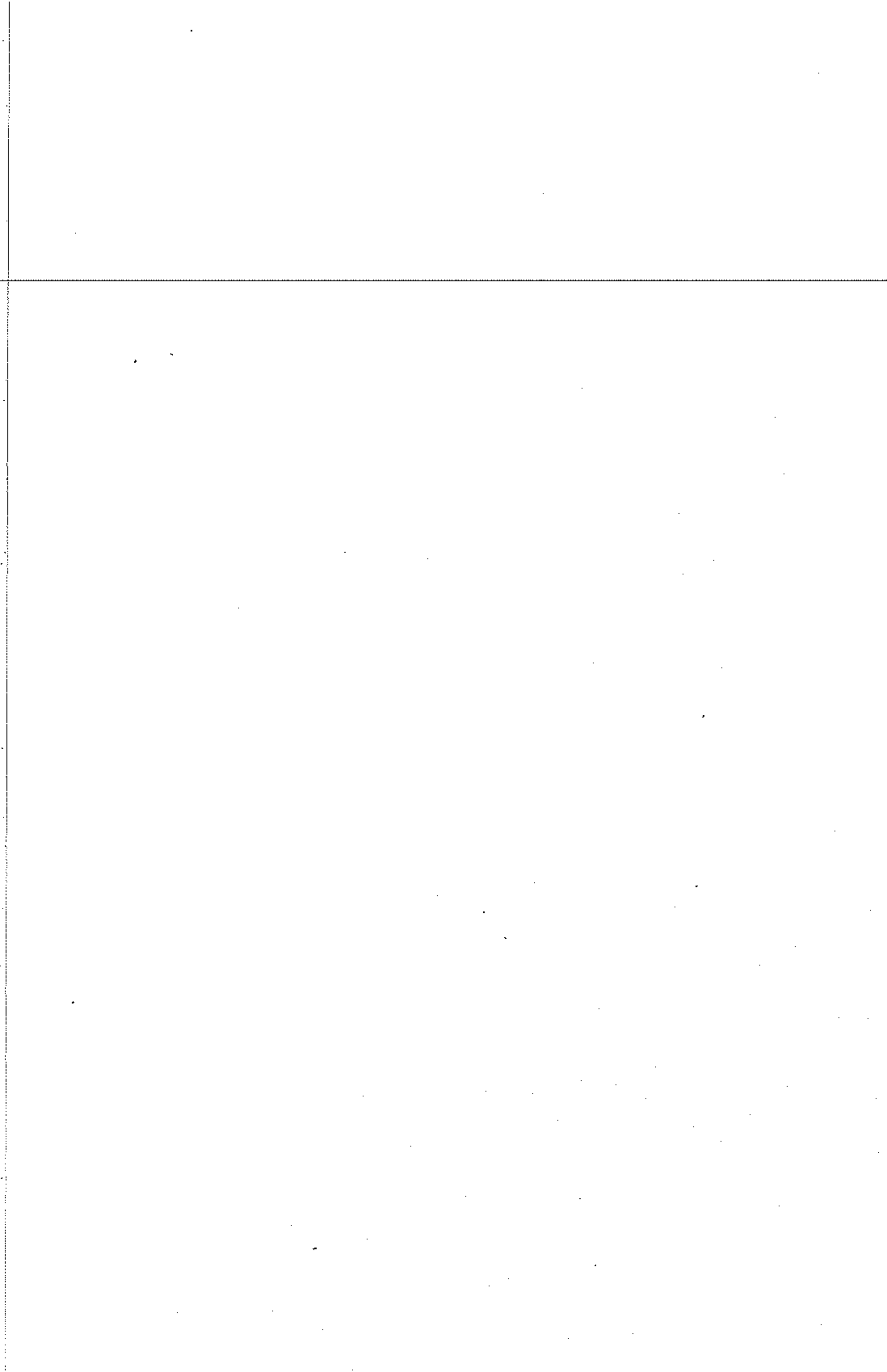
NOTES

[1]Cited by Bernard F. Huppé, "Allegory of Love in Lyly's Court Comedies," ELH 14(1947), 98.

[2]Peter Saccio, The Court Comedies of John Lyly: A Study in Allegorical Dramaturgy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 128.

[3]G. K. Hunter, John Lyly: The Humanist as Courtier (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962), p. 7.

[4]Sapho and Phao, I.2.7-10. All citations from the plays are from the edition of R. Warwick Bond, The Complete Works of John Lyly (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1902) and are identified by act, scene and line numbers in the text.



Clarissa: Costume, Uniform, and Self-expression

Rex and Anita Stamper

Before being undeceived as to Lovelace's true intentions, Clarissa is unknowingly staying at a London brothel.[1] When a fire breaks out after she and Lovelace have parted for the night, Lovelace, hearing a commotion, rushes to her bedchamber where (as he writes to Belford):

> I beheld the most charming creature in the world, supporting herself on the arm of the gasping Dorcas, sighing, trembling, and ready to faint, with nothing on but an under-petticoat, her lovely bosom half open, and her feet just slipped into her shoes. As soon as she saw me she panted and struggled to speak. . . . (Vol. 2, p. 510)

Obviously this is a prime moment for the seducer as hero, and Lovelace, in his words, "clasp[ed] her lovely half open bosom to my own." For a moment they are as close as they will ever be in the novel. When Clarissa realizes the compromising position she is in, she turns upon Lovelace, who complains:

> But what did I get by this my generous care of her, and my successful endeavour to bring her to herself? Nothing (ungrateful as she was!) but the most passionate exclamations. . . . (Vol. 2, p. 501)

Clarissa manages to elude his advances, and when Lovelace tries to see her the next day she refuses. Finally she agrees to send him a note, and Lovelace sends the maid Dorcas for the message. When she returns he asks her only one question: "How did the dear creature look, Dorcas?" The maid replies, "She was dressed" (Vol. 2, p. 510).

Two lines in this scene indicate the importance of costume to Clarissa. Lovelace makes the comment to Belford that his presence was a "successful endeavour to bring her to herself." Then, after she has retired to her room, after he has let pass the moment he might have possessed her, he receives a message from her. The important item is not the contents of the note but the description he receives from Dorcas of her appearance when delivering it: "She was dressed."

Clarissa dressed and undressed is two different persons.

When dressed, confronted with Lovelace's presence, she is obviously confused. She pleads with him, forgives him, chastises him and threatens him while "wildly looking all around her" (Vol. 2, p. 504). Yet out of his presence, dressed, she becomes what Anna Howe calls her in the opening letter of the novel, a woman "whose distinguishing merits have made her the public care" (Vol. 1, p. 1). In costume she reverts to her public role, the daughter of the rich Harlows; undressed she is confused, unsure, and mistrustful of herself and of her motives.

This scene presents the crux of the problem caused by the conflicting roles her society wants her to play. Which is the true Clarissa? Is she the erotic plaything of the aristocratic Lovelace, who after being <u>successfully</u> exposed to his charms, will express herself sexually? Or, is she a paragon of virtue representing the interests of the propertied upwardly mobile Harlowe family whose behavior must always be beyond reproach? As the above scene indicates, Clarissa is in some sense both of these characters. But, to accept either of these Clarissas to the exclusion of the other is to accept also the passive interpretation that both Lovelace and her family have given her, that she is a possession which wants to be or should be sexually exploited for either pleasure or profit. The importance she gives to costume and role-playing throughout the first part of the novel gives credence to these interpretations, not because Clarissa wants either of these roles, but because she has no other roles to play.

Since <u>Clarissa</u> is presented as a series of letters written by the characters, it is not surprising that recent criticism of the novel has focused on the act of writing. Critics such as Terry Eagleton in <u>The Rape of Clarissa</u> and William Beatty Warner in <u>Reading Clarissa</u> demonstrate how stylistic shifts and verbal play in the letters reveal motives and desires unknown to either Clarissa or Lovelace. Much of this criticism is interesting and provides insights necessary for a fuller understanding of the tragic ambiguities in the novel.

As a complement to approaches which focus on verbal modes of expression, we will focus on another dimension of style in the novel. By examining the role of clothing in the presentation and creation of identity, we can explore the possibilities of reading the text within its broader cultural context. We will consider how Clarissa Harlowe's self-presentation through her choice of clothing allows us to read her problems with self-identity in terms of th

experience of women in the eighteenth century. This method of reading is based on two assumptions: first, that all culture contains a complex of meanings which interact with one another; second, that literature is a part of the system of signs that constitutes a culture.[3] Clarissa, as a system of signs, provides a microcosmic glimpse into the world of eighteenth-century woman, and by studying Clarissa's tragedy in terms of then current modes of dress, we can better understand the structures of social, economic, political, and sexual power in which these women functioned.

The following overview of Richardson's references to clothing within a political, social, and sexual context will provide the basis for our reading of Clarissa.

Political implications of dress: Except for overt symbols of political affiliation such as facial patches and Windsor coats, most clothing worn by eighteenth-century women clearly symbolized their political impotence.[4] Their clothing, in its physical restriction of movement, symbolized a corresponding lack of freedom in determining the course of events even in their own lives. A woman's upper torso was tightly-laced, her sleeves tightly seamed, and her movement slowed and hampered by wide-hooped skirts, flowing trains, and delicate cloth shoes. Often even her sight was impaired by the expanse of her cap. The sheer weight of the yards of fabric required for proper dress--approximately fifteen pounds--obviously impeded bodily movement.

The eighteenth-century woman in full dress was well suited only for walking slowly about the center of a room or for sitting primly on the edge of a chair. When Lovelace describes the typical activities of the women of his time--eating, sleeping, dressing and visiting--he mentions no other purposeful activity in which they engaged or for which they dressed (Vol. 4, p. 110).

Economic implications: Throughout Clarissa, Richardson refers to details of dress which reflect the wearer's economic status: men and women wear ermine, silver, silk, satin, damask, velvet, and lace. Lace, in particular, which is mentioned twenty-five times in the novel, represented the most effective means of exhibiting wealth in the period. Although jewels could be imitated in paste, and expensive apparel was handed down to servants and the less well-to-do, lace could not be cheaply produced until the century was nearly over and was less frequently given to persons of lower classes than other items of clothing. Lace was made slowly and painstakingly by hand. The yardage for a set of

sleeve ruffles required the labor of several workers for
period of months. Consequently, most lace trimmings cos
considerably more than the garments they trimmed. Fo
example, the Brussels mob cap which Clarissa wore to mee
Lovelace (Vol. 1, p. 511) would cost almost four hundre
dollars today. When Solmes calls on Clarissa he wears
suit "standing on end with lace" (Vol. 1, p. 376), obviousl
attempting to impress Clarissa and her family with hi
wealth.

Clarissa's father demonstrates his understanding of th
persuasive power of clothing when he offers Clarissa s
suits of "the richest silks" (Vol. 1, p. 207), each
which, we learn, is worth approximately one hundred guinea
as an inducement to marry Solmes. Even without this gif
Clarissa supports herself completely after her escape fr
Lovelace by selling the most valuable items in her wardrobe

Social implications: The expense of garments worn
the eighteenth century was a good indication of
individual's status, but differences of dress defined
person's social role as well. The clothing worn by servan
clearly revealed their occupation, and it often signal
even the family or individual whom they served: "I ha
borrowed an other cote, instead of your Honners' liferi
and a blacke wigg; soe cannot be knoen by my lady iff
nowe she should see me" (Will Summers to Lovelace, Vol.
p. 22). When she gives a gown to the servant Mabe
Clarissa insists on alterations "to make it more suitable
her degree" (Vol. 3, p. 310).

So closely were rank and station identified with dre
that Lovelace successfully deceives Clarissa into believi
that two prostitutes are his relatives simply by dressi
them in the appropriate clothing: "I had not the lea
suspicion that they were not the ladies they personated; a
being put a little out by the richness of their dresses,
could not help (fool that I was!) to apologize for my ow
(Vol. 3, p. 345). Clarissa herself reverses this form
deception by escaping from Lovelace in her maid's clothin
Lovelace, too, carefully covers his lace-trimmed cloth
with a great-coat and his "clocked" stockings with pla
ones to disguise his identity from Clarissa when he fin
her at Mrs. Moore's (Vol. 3, pp. 26-53 passim).

Descriptions of clothing in the novel indicate mor
standards as well as social standing. Belford, describi
Mrs. Sinclair's sickbed scene, cites the personal appearan
rather than the behaviour of her attendants in judgment
their characters. They dressed "in shocking dishabille, a

without stays. . . . All slip-shoed; stockingless some; only under-petticoated all; their gowns made to cover straddling hoops, hanging trollopy, and tangling about their heels" (Vol. 4, p. 381).

Terms such as full dress, half dress, undress, morning dress, nightgown, and sack described not only garment styles but also the places and activities for which they were appropriate. So prescribed was the custom of wearing hats out of doors that when Clarissa meets Lovelace wearing neither hat nor hood, he immediately and correctly assumes that she has decided not to leave with him: "She seems to have intended to show me that she was determined not to stand to her appointment" (Vol. 1, p. 512). The importance of this omission is underscored by the fact that Lovelace mentions it three times and Clarissa twice in their descriptions of the abduction. Throughout the novel, clothing dictates appropriate and inappropriate forms of social interaction.

Sexual implications: Women's apparel during much of the century exposed more of the breast than at any other time in English history. The actual garment was often cut entirely below the breast with only a ruffle of lace or sheer linen inserted to cover, yet reveal, the breast. The breasts were made even more conspicuous by the boned and tightly-fitted corsets and stomachers which thrust them up and forward.[5] Even when a handkerchief covered the low decolletage, it was usually of a transparent fabric. Lovelace describes Clarissa in such a garment: "A white handkerchief concealed--O Belford! what still more inimitable beauties did it not conceal! And I saw, all the way we rode, the bounding heart (by its throbbing motions I saw it!) dancing beneath the charming umbrage" (Vol. 1, p. 512).

Even the hoops which Anna Howe despised as being good only to "clean dirty shoes, and to keep fellows as a distance" (Vol. 1, p. 316), did provide a barrier to physical closeness, but were at the same time capable of being very revealing. They tilted upward easily and frequently.[6] Clothing sent dual messages--covering, yet revealing; enticing, yet forbidding. It provided a means of advertising goods which could, as Lovelace says, be owned "by deed of purchase and settlement" (Vol. 2, p. 476).

Early in the novel, Clarissa receives a letter from her friend Anna Howe, who is filled with frustration at the subordinate role women had to play in courtship and marriage:

> Upon my word, I most heartily despise that sex! I wish they would let our fathers and mothers alone; teasing *them* to tease *us* with their golden promises, and protestations, and settlements, and the rest of their ostentatious nonsense. How charmingly might you and I live together, and despise them all! But to be cajoled, wire-drawn, and ensnared, like silly birds into a state of bondage or vile subordination: to be courted as princesses for a few weeks, in order to be treated as slaves for the rest of our lives. Indeed, my dear, as you say of Solmes, I cannot endure them!
> (Vol. 1, p. 131)

The phrase she uses, "How charmingly might you and I liv together, and despise them all!" gives voice to a impossible dream and underscores Anna's feelings toward th male-dominated culture in which she lives. Women, Ann realizes, are treated as objects of exchange who have n control over their own lives, no means for self-expressio other than in the prescribed feminine roles men hav allotted to them. Anna and Clarissa can be mothers, lovers benefactors, or subordinates, but they can never b independent or dominant. Anna's unarticulated question "How can I be myself?" was one her culture would not answer.

If, as this example suggests, the problem faced b women like Anna and Clarissa is one of achieving a independent female identity within an oppressive patriarcha society, David Hume provides a hint of how we might bette understand the problem of self-realization these eighteenth century women were attempting to solve. In *A Treatise c Human Nature*, Hume writes that "all the nice subtil questions concerning personal identity can never possibly b decided, and are to be regarded rather as grammatical tha as philosophical difficulties."[7] Working from the notic that personal identity is a grammatical problem, we ca propose a simple formula for examining identity and sel expression in eighteenth-century society. In this formula the active voice is defined by society as masculine, and tl passive voice as feminine.[8] Neither voice expresses th position Clarissa wishes to occupy within her society. Sl is seeking to establish a voice apart from this opposition one that would be asexual, neither active/masculine nc passive/feminine. Borrowing and modifying a term of Rolan Barthes, we might call this position a middle voice,[9] o

that would provide a mediation between a desire for expression of the self as an active subject and the constraints of social roles that define women as passive, as objects. Clarissa's tragedy occurs because neither her father nor Lovelace will allow her articulation of the middle voice. When she realizes she can play only one of two roles--she can be the pawn in her family's property game, or she can be an aristocrat's erotic playmate--she chooses to withdraw from the cultural exchange, realizing that in her culture she can never express what she most desires--to be a virtuous young woman making her own decisions about how to live her life.

Perhaps nothing symbolizes her galvanized negativity toward her society more than the change in her attitude toward clothing after she is raped. Clarissa's withdrawal from her society is indicated when she changes her mode of dress from the socially-approved costumes of her class to the uniform of a spiritual acolyte.

For most of the novel, Clarissa represents a model of the eighteenth-century woman. She is on show, presenting to the world a living model of feminine grace and charm. Clarissa's role as daughter of a wealthy, middle-class family gave her ample opportunity to indicate to the world that her family belonged to the aristocracy. Late in the novel, she comments on her mode of dress when she was a girl at home, and excuses the extreme value of her clothing with the remark, "My father loved to see me fine" (Vol. 3, p. 441). Even without Veblen's Theory of the Leisure Class to tell us that expenditure on dress is the most apt illustration of wealth,[10] the role her family expected her to play is obvious. Perhaps the most blatant demonstration of how much Clarissa's father would pay for status occurs when he promises her wedding suits worth approximately six hundred pounds--the equivalent of more than sixty thousand dollars in today's currency[11]--if she will marry Solmes.

In all areas except this one, Clarissa is a dutiful daughter. She plays to perfection the roles expected of her by her family and her society. The clothing she wears signals to all the economic stratum occupied by the family she represents. Her particular place in that stratum, however, requires more than money alone: it requires distinctive and exquisite taste. Both Clarissa and her sister Bella wear expensive clothing, but only Clarissa's shows exceptional taste: Bella "affected dress without being graceful in it, and the fine lady, which she could never be; and which her sister was without studying for it,

or seeming to know she was so" (Vol. 4, p. 498).

As fashion leader, Clarissa is entirely responsible fo her image. Without easy access to ready-made clothing apparel designers, or even fashion periodicals, Clariss must select the fabrics and trims and create the designs fo her own clothing. Her excellence at this activity wa widely recognized and is a point one of her eulogizer emphasizes in the following remarks: "She had an easy convenient, and graceful habit made on purpose, which sh put on when she employed herself in these works; and it wa noted of her, that in the same hour that she appeared to b a most elegant dairymaid, she was, when called to change o dress, the fairest lady that ever graced a circle" (Vol. 4 p. 497). Clarissa possesses the talent, charm, grace, an money necessary to be a great lady in her society. She ha the ability to costume herself exactly for the role she i expected to play, either rustic dairymaid or gracefu ornament. Socially, Clarissa uses clothing to affirm he identity to herself and to others, but only after the rap is she able to use clothing to make a personal statement o her individual rather than her social identity.

The crisis of the novel occurs when Lovelace finall drugs and rapes Clarissa. This act, more than just physical violation, reveals to Clarissa the impossibility o living her life according to her own ideals. The costume that have provided her with a social identity have betraye her, leaving her the only recourse of shunning the costume and donning the uniform of a new identity. Clarissa rejecting the roles that society has given her, no longe consents to wear the costumes that identify her as a dutifu daughter or as the emblem of her sex; she rejects thes roles in favor of a white robe which she wears until he death. She replaces the various costumes that she has wor with one single, emblematic garment. This shift fro costume to uniform marks a significant psychological chang in her attitude to her culture. Gregory P. Stone notes tha "costume is any apparent misrepresentation of the self whic permits the wearer to become another." He contrasts costu to uniforms: "the uniform is an apparent representation the self which reminds the wearer and others of a appropriate identity, a real identity."[12] Clarissa's fir rational act after the rape is to put on a uniform, and wi it she assumes a new, more active identity.

Following the rape she is deranged and psychotic for number of days. When she regains her composure, sh confronts Lovelace, dressed, as he says, "in a white dama

night-gown . . . with such dignity in her manner, as struck me with great awe" (Vol. 3, pp. 218-19). She is no longer caught in the power struggle between her family and Lovelace, but has become a person who knows herself and what she must do. The new Clarissa, much like Hester Prynne, will flaunt her shame, turning her violation into a symbol, revealing to the world her lack of any but a sexual identity and her refusal to accept such a role. She indicates that a new individual history is being written, that she will enscribe herself into the world in a new way. The donning of the white uniform signals the initiation of a new action, a new person, and by wearing the color throughout the remainder of her life, she signals that the world's values are no longer her own.

Richardson's realistic technique perhaps slips when he chooses to give this uniform supernatural qualities: it will not show dirt. After Clarissa finally escapes from the brothel, she is tracked down by the prostitutes and falsely charged with debt. She is arrested and confined for almost a week before Lovelace discovers what has occurred and sends Belford to release her. When Belford finally locates her, he finds Clarissa housed in a squalid room, "sunk with majesty . . . in her white flowing robes" (Vol. 3, p. 445). These robes are more than ordinary dress, and Belford, in awe, reports to Lovelace that they were "beyond imagination white, considering that she had not been undressed ever since she had been here" (Vol. 3, p. 446). In Richardson's estimation, at least, Clarissa has made a complete transition from passivity to active assertion of self-identity. Unfortunately, the only end for such an assertion in her society is death.

Although Clarissa was one of the most popular novels of the eighteenth century, neither Richardson nor Clarissa has fared too well recently. Critics from Irwin Gopnik to Leslie Fiedler to Ian Watt to Dorothy van Ghent have taken the position that Clarissa is a neurotic prude who deserves whatever happens to her.[13] She has been characterized as dull, naive, morbid, masochistic, narcissistic, and finally as responsible for her own rape. Warner's Reading Clarissa even suggests that Lovelace is the misunderstood hero of the work and that Clarissa is the villain (p. 30). These readings, although fashionable, seem basically incorrect for an obvious reason: regardless of how much Clarissa might have wanted Lovelace, he raped her; she did not violate him.

Rather than wander in a psychological labyrinth of motives and intentions, it seems more fruitful to consider

the book as a powerful statement on the roles of women an their relationship to the structures of political, social and economic power in eighteenth-century culture. Clarissa as some critics have suggested, might have wanted to b raped; however, we do not consider that hidden desire to terribly important. We do consider Clarissa's realizatio after the rape that a sexual role is the only one he society will allow her to fulfill as extremely important t a fuller understanding of eighteenth-century culture. Fro this perspective, we can read Clarissa's death as political gesture. By rejecting the costumes which defin her as a sexual object, by choosing the uniform of chastity and by willing her own death, Clarissa repudiates the sexua role she has been assigned and repudiates the dominant powe structures of her age. Through her death she speaks ou with the only voice she has, her body, against th oppressive collusion of male interests, represented on on hand by her family and on the other by her lover.

Richardson's biographers, T. C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D Kimple, make the point that whatever criticisms of the age reader might find in Clarissa are almost certainl unintentional. They state that Richardson was " conventional, self-made, middle-class man who neve seriously questioned the assumptions of his age." Yet, thi man, "who at times made himself ridiculous,"[14] created powerful work of literature which captured the dynami workings of the centers of political, social, economic, an sexual power that molded the lives of most eighteenth century women.

NOTES

[1]Samuel Richardson, Clarissa, or the History of Young Lady (London: Everyman's Library-Dent, 1965). Futu references will appear in text.

[2]Eagleton, The Rape of Clarissa: Writing, Sexuali and Class Struggle in Samuel Richardson (Minneapolis University of Minnesota Press, 1982); Warner, Readi Clarissa: The Struggles of Interpretation (New Haven: Ya University Press, 1979). Future references will appear text.

[3]Stephen Greenblatt, Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), pp. 3, 6.

[4]Ann Buck, Dress in Eighteenth-Century England (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1979), p. 21.

[5]Paul Ettesvold, The Eighteenth-Century Woman: Exhibition Catalogue (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1981), p. 9.

[6]C. Willett and Phillis Cunnington, English Costume in the Eighteenth Century (London: Faber and Faber, 1952), pp. 26-27.

[7]David Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature (Garden City: Dolphin Books-Doubleday, 1961), p. 237.

[8]Formula suggested by Shoshonna Felman's analysis of Luce Irigaray's consideration of dichotomous oppositions in "Women and Madness: The Critical Phallacy," Diacritics, 5 (1975), 2. This position is also discussed in Sue Warrick Doederlein's "Clarissa in the Hands of the Critics," ECS, 16 (1983), 402-03.

[9]For a fuller discussion of the concept of the Middle Voice see "Criticism and the Experience of Interiority," by Georges Poulet, and "To Write: An Intransitive Verb?" by Roland Barthes in The Structuralist Controversy: The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man, ed. by Richard Macksey and Eugenio Donato (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972).

[10]Thorstein Veblen, The Theory of the Leisure Class (New York: McMillan Co., 1912), pp. 167-68.

[11]Although values of currency is difficult to establish and express accurately, the suggested value of these garments was arrived at by using values found in Donald Greene's The Age of Exuberance: Backgrounds to Eighteenth-Century Literature (New York: Random House, 1970), pp. 48, 56, and allowing for inflation since 1970.

[12]Gregory P. Stone, "Appearance and the Self," in Dress, Adornment, and the Social Order, ed. by Mary Ellen Roach and Joanne Bubolz Eicher (New York: Wiley and Sons,

1965), p. 241.

[13]See Irwin Gopnik, A Theory of Style in Richardson's Clarissa (The Hague: Mouton, 1970), p. 90; Dorothy van Ghent, The English Novel: Form and Function (New York: Harper Torchback, 1961), p. 49; Ian Watt, The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957), p. 229; Leslie Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel (New York: Criterton Books, 1960), p. 41.

[14]T. C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimple, Samuel Richardson: A Biography (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 3.

Overcoming, yet Affirming Nakedness and Darkness: Henry Dumas' Novel Jonoah and the Green Stone

Philip F. O'Mara

In 1964 and 1965, Henry Dumas, a young black writer from Sweet Home, Arkansas, wrote a novel about a man who grows up amid the Delta plantations of Arkansas and Mississippi and becomes a civil rights worker. Dumas, who had already produced a large body of poetry and of short fiction, brought the work close to completion; rejecting some episodes, he revised others, and gave relatively full development to his themes and characters, but did not bring the narrative to a definite conclusion. He was just beginning to publish in various little magazines, and was studying at Rutgers University with the prominent poet Jay Wright. In the years after 1965 he wrote more poetry and short fiction, but neither finished nor discarded his novel.

At some point during these years Dumas moved with his wife and children from New York City to 508 South Ninth Street, Island Park, New York. This small town on the south shore of Long Island, not far from the bays and barrier islands and comparatively remote from the city, is a largely middle class and almost wholly white suburb, inhabited mostly by commuters and with little business or industry of its own. Despite its quiet, backwater character, and small size (population about 6,000), it is easily accessible to Rutgers by the nearby expressways. In a tragedy of mistaken identity, this young writer was shot and killed in a subway train running under Harlem, on 23 April 1968, by a New York City transit policeman. Dumas was thirty four years old. All of his books have appeared posthumously; the poet Eugene B. Redmond worked through the manuscripts of the novel and edited it under the title Jonoah and the Green Stone.[1]

Little known during his life, Henry Dumas was widely and variously praised after his death. Critics generally noted that he had a mystically religious, but socially aware sense of the common realities and the spiritual depths of American Black life. There is little discussion of the forms of the stories, or even of the poetry, but frequent attention to Dumas' acute descriptions and characterizations, to his sensuous language, and to his vital awareness of the positive dynamics underlying the most bitter and tragic Black experience. Thus, in a preface to the poetry Imamu Amiri Baraka observed that Dumas linked mystical power with the presentation of moments of everyday life, and that his sense of a consciousness deeper than the individual

extended even to the world-awareness of the animals. Fo
Baraka, the result is a renewal of black language that draw
it closer to music, in "revelations of secret experience,
symbolic but intellectually so powerful that "our selves a
minds are articulated by them."[2]

Other critics, even if they saw signs of strain i
Dumas' handling of black idiom, recognized his vivi
characterizations, his sense of place, and his ability t
carry on the tradition of the Blues.[3] Similarly, on
reviewer found in his work both a "mystical sense of origin
and purpose" and a record of southern folkways.[4] Georg
Cohen saw in his stories, "never strident, but consistentl
affirmative," confident use of a distinctively Black world
view.[5] Herbert Liebman noted a fusion of influences fro
Wallace Stevens with Afro-American rhythm and imagery i
"precise and controlled" poetry which yet evokes "powerfu
outrage" at the torment inflicted on black people.[6] Angel
Jackson synthesizes these perceptions when she discerns i
the stories both earthy humor and "a moral exactness tha
our tradition has cherished," which gives them a Biblica
prophetic form as well as "spine and point." The Duma
technique, shifting focus from individuals to the natura
and social environment, makes, as she sees it, a doubl
point. Sociologically it evokes "the bleak mean detachment
of the urban experience, while religiously it affirms tha
"we are not alone in the universe. There is a continuity."
Hers is perhaps the most penetrating critique which Dumas
work has yet received.

Only two more specialized studies of Henry Dumas'
achievement seem to have been published, and they reac
similar conclusions. Browne and Launay observe that Dumas'
perception of the Afro-American heritage is of a sharpl
divided society. The folkways of the South transmit, eve
to the most callow youth, some sense of ancestral Africa
roots, and build in the more sensitive a consciousness
mediated through religious and natural experience, of th
numinous favor of the ancestors themselves. In the North
however, most young people suffer a fragmenting experience
not wholly counteracted by the vibrant musical life of th
community; they lack access to nature, suffer estrangemen
in the family, and become, in Dumas's words, "the songless,
who "poison the heart of the earth." In this context Blue
rhythms and biblical imagery in Dumas are like "broke
chords," but they utter the meaning of modern Black history
they are "notes that / speak my people," all the mor
effectively for that.[8] This interest on Dumas's part i

tracing the full "line of the diaspora" from Africa into rural South and urban North is also emphasized by Clyde Taylor. Dumas, who spent most of his adult life in and around New York, prefers to write about the isolated Delta plantations and villages, the remote country on either side of the Mississippi River. Yet he never impresses the reader as one who writes from exile: Taylor astutely observes that the alienation, so strong at times in authors such as McKay and Bontemps, is transmuted in Dumas into a confidence that the authentically African personality can be "securely at home . . . in the middle of the Mississippi valley."[9]

This sense of security is religious, and the religious connotation of much of the material in his poetry and short fiction becomes more evident and explicit in the novel. Dumas studied many religious traditions, including the Hindu, Native American and Sufi, and saw in all music a form of bond between humanity and the divine. He was especially attracted, however, to the religious practices and ideals of the Yoruba, Akan and Dogon peoples of Africa and to the Christian life found in the Black American church. From the Dogon he adopted the teaching that the Word, Nommo, is a weaver and spinner of life; cloth-making, for him a symbol of the element of craftsmanship in all art, is like sexual union, a divine gift which enables human beings to share in the creation.[10] The act of creation in art, like sexual intercourse, fulfills a drive that is essential to the human personality; yet in a sense it is impersonal and natural, part of our inherited and constitutive being, rather than worldly. Creativity, originating in us in a drive that is prior to personality, intrudes into culture and reshapes it, while being always subject in its mode of expression to cultural modification.

In this basically phenomenological perspective, Black suffering, however terrible, was for Dumas an aspect of the Divine action in Black people, and enables them to express their ancestry, their maturity, their individual artistry, and their situation in American society in an indigenous idiom:

> I am growing in the bosom and the loins
> of America . . .
>   when I finish growing
>   . . . you can
> blow Africa
> on me as you would a holy reed.[11]

This is the complexity of imagery, the depth of insight, an
the readiness to embed ritual, prophecy, and direct notatio
of incident into his work, which led the poet June Jordan t
declare that his writings "suggest the promise of a second
if you can imagine this, a second Cane."[12]

Jonoah and the Green Stone is Dumas's most full
developed narrative. In it, he meets the reader as a mysti
with sensitivity to the historical and social realities,
prophet who devises out of human action a pattern to embod
his message, a subtle observer of individual character wh
never forgets the currents of the life of the mass. Her
too we find one of the few fictional portrayals of the civi
rights movement, through which Dumas explores essentiall
new territory while also redeveloping several themes tha
are traditional in Black American fiction.[13]

Like Richard Wright's Black Boy, Jonoah and the Gree
Stone has a purgatorial structure. In the very process o
growing up, the protagonist finds himself inextricably
part of the guilt of his society, and acutely aware that th
forces of oppression are blocking his maturation. Afte
several false starts, and at great cost, he breaks free to
life still full of struggle and suffering but now focused o
morally sound goals.

This protagonist, Jon, or Jonoah, has lost his family
and his original name, in the 1927 flood on the Mississipp
River. The family that rescues him has found him driftin
in a little johnboat, from which his parents have been swep
to their deaths. Because he has survived alone in th
flood, and because his boat is their own source of safety
both Jonah and Noah are suitable names for him; hence the
call him Jonoah, and adopt him as their own child
Throughout his life, beginning at the time of rescue fro
the flood, his sorrows are exacerbated by the oppressor.
white man whose life has also been saved by Jonoah's ne
family, the Solomons, browbeats them and eventually force
them to move away from their first place of refuge from th
flood. This little incident suggests the pattern whic
defines the theme of the whole book, that the Blac
community has the strength to deal with natural misfortur
and with the wrongdoing of its own people, but tha
demeaning and oppressive white interference is a constant
and sometimes an overwhelming, destructive force.

Jonoah's adult life is presented as a series c
carefully realized scenes accompanied by complex anticipa
tions and recollections; the time-line of the novel would b
difficult to work out in detail. Returning to Mississip

after living in the north, he is almost killed by a couple of white men, and again narrowly escapes death on the river. By this time, as we learn largely in flashback, he has experienced a period of drug-taking, violence, and degraded living in Harlem, and before that, periods of serious civil rights work and of cynical use of the movement as a hustle. Some of Jonoah's friends reject him during this phase, when he is conducting benefit concerts for civil rights workers and then pocketing the money; others hope against hope and wait for his return. One close friend, with whom he had worked and whom he had known in moments of selfless bravery, becomes irredeemably a hoodlum. At the end of the novel, talking with his sister Ruby, who has been injured in a demonstration and who may not see again, he admits his faults and promises to return to his first commitment. The nature of that commitment is the challenging question for any interpreter of the book, for he does not directly state an intention to rejoin the movement. The reason, apparently, is that his own sense of identity, as an orphan, a victim of oppression, a wanderer, and one who has often doubted or denied his allegiances, remains unresolved: "I couldn't think of what I was, to say nothing of what I was not" (146).

The novel, then, is in a special sense a Bildungsroman, preoccupied with a question that, both in stories of oppression and in the real process of growing up, does absorb much of the energy of youth: what symbol can be found, personally meaningful and socially validated, by which the individual can be properly described without being rigidly defined? At least since Pico della Mirandola, the variety and excellence of the human status has been linked to the indeterminacy of the human character. Dumas allows Jonoah to explore two images of the self, darkness and nakedness, which he has chosen for himself, and to repudiate them; he ends the story just as his hero is realizing that the mystery of his identity may be resolved in terms of a vocation, religiously grounded, to the service of his own community. Whether he will answer the call is left unstated, at least in the novel as it stands.

Jonoah associates his own difficulties with darkness because he is black and he has been told that the Bible associates darkness with sin (71-78). It is his pastor, the symbolically named Reverend Flare, however, who teaches him the evil of segregation, and finally he understands that the biblical darkness of sin is voluntary, a matter of deliberate blindness, and that it applies to all Americans:

"It took me years to discover that everybody lived i
darkness" (78). A symbol applied to everyone is of no valu
for individuation and darkness plays only a small role i
the imagery of the book, until, at the end, the physicall
sightless Ruby proves to see his vocation more clearly tha
Jonoah himself can.

Nakedness is much more pervasive. It plays a
ambivalent role, with both positive and negativ
connotations, and is almost wholly non-literal. In child
hood Jonoah repeatedly feels as though he were naked: "Th
terrible feeling of being lost and without any clothe
engulfed me" (24); "We were kids but we knew we were nake
and at the mercy of the world" (55). The image is o
defenselessness and lack of definite identity, and also of
false or impoverished identity. His first awareness of lif
comes to him as "a series of impressions . . . which helpe
form the thin cloak, the first pair of pants, which I wor
proclaiming myself naked before the world" (15). Thi
passage comes from the narration of his time on th
johnboat, where Jonoah is, in a sense, both Huck and Jim
although, unlike them, he is apparently not really withou
clothes. The "impressions" that reveal his nakedness to th
world are not yet mediated through a fully realized culture
Later, the mediation proves to be deforming, the "expensiv
overclothes" and "hand-me-down values of the Anglo-America
civilization" summed up in the "ancient robes of Jesus" (79
Jonoah is spiritually naked because he has no direct link
Africa (82). He may be counselled by Reverend Flare a
learn that Jesus' cross has atoned for all evil; he may s
that the qualities of "evil and the unknown" attributed
Blacks, like an "eternal shroud," are not exclusive
theirs; he may grow in strength and self-knowledge (79-83
It all leads to a bare self-awareness as human, a reducti
placing of the self at the stage of the newborn. He say
"I had begun to believe that I was more human than anybo
else," eligible "to represent all men, to be man . . . in
state of chosen nakedness" (84). Such exalted thoughts a
unrelated to the necessity of living a real, individu
existence. Their positive value is only momentary, and th
do not fully define the symbol of nakedness.

Only twice is Jonoah physically stripped, once when
was hosed in Greenwood in a demonstration and lost h
clothes (4), and once when, escaping from a possib
lynching, he is immersed in the river and takes off h
clothing to get it dry (102-08). On the latter occasion
indulges briefly in some sexual memories, but the novel h

little erotic material. When he hears shots in the woods nearby he dresses and runs off, remembering childhood war games. Nakedness is associated not so much with sexuality as with struggle and, above all, with the fear that dominates the struggle. There is an air of bravery and honesty about wishing for nakedness, but an air of desperation about recognizing that one is involuntarily and inescapably naked, or that the clothes one is wearing are not one's own, which may be worse than having none (90). Finally, nakedness is associated with death and damnation, with being plunged in a river of boiling blood for deserting the civil rights struggle (125). In Dante's *Inferno*, Canto XII, Phlegethon, the river of boiling blood, is reserved for those who have done violent harm to their neighbors, and Jonoah, during the days of his worst degradation in Harlem, has killed his childhood friend Hoodoo (91). Hoodoo and he were both deserters, but Hoodoo, who misquotes the Bible and derides all faith, is seemingly the more degenerate. Jonoah, on the way to a reawakened faith in Jesus, reflects that the money they have swindled out of civil rights supporters could have gone to help the Black church. Renewed religious faith is joined to a renewed belief in the civil rights movement and those who stayed with it, although not to the outlook of the warriors, "sworn to vengeance," like his sister Ruby and brother Lance (90-93). Determining to return to Mississippi, Jonoah effectively decides also the future meaning of his darkness and nakedness, and wherewith he will now be clothed.

Jonoah's return to Mississippi, and perhaps to the active struggle for civil rights, constitutes the final movement of the novel. There are many ambiguities in the action, thought, and language of these chapters, but they point toward a final affirmation of the whole Black heritage, especially its African roots and its fusion of Christian worship with social activism. Jonoah returns to the little community of Cruscible to learn that his people are facing disaster. Outright war has broken out between whites and blacks, with Federal troops, supposedly there to assure the safety of the Black population, less and less reliable in their allegiance. He himself is saved from probable murder by some white soldiers (they call him "boy" but also "soldier," 129-30), but he finds that the leaders of the struggle for civil rights have been killed, driven away, or reduced to ineffectiveness. Various factions of the movement give him help and protection, and the strong old people, whom he once scorned because their faith made

them turn the other cheek, demand that he accept a call t
return to the movement (130-46).

Here indeed is a communal nakedness, from one point o
view, far more limiting than the personal nakedness Jonoa
had fantasized. The nude individual body may imply defense
lessness, but also heroic energy and self-reliance, oppres
sion and poverty, but also sexuality and naturalness. A
one stage he had wanted to reject all of his memorie
because they were memories of oppression, to be utterl
without culture, heritage, or social roots. He has though
of this self-stripping as a way to become a universall
human figure, "nothing but a man." Now he sees that thi
rejection of his own history, and implicitly of his ow
people, would mean submission to the worst slavery of all
it would mean acceptance of the slave-master's definin
terms for a Black person -- not white, not free, not
participant in any world with a history, not a recipient o
redemption, not really a man.

The exposure of his community, however, is not th
nakedness of heroism or new potentials; Cruscible is bare o
leaders, of a working organization, of visible hope. Th
narrative heightens the real racial crisis of the sixties
by increasing the numbers of the dead and by including amon
them a number of drafted federal troops (150). As histor
this is inaccurate, but as a symbolic way of underlining th
helplessness, naked to their enemies, of the civil right
workers and their allies, it is truthful. The atmosphere o
the early and middle 1960's was one of battle agains
entrenched opposition, and while, in fact, nearly all of th
victims were either non-combatants or volunteers, man
people felt involuntarily involved and endangered. Man
Black people certainly felt that the allegiance of th
federal government was uncertain, and some never believe
that it was real. Jonoah is compelled to admit that thi
social nakedness is not an ambivalent metaphor but a harsh
seemingly permanent reality. To overcome it, to enable hi
community to be clothed in effective citizenship or robed i
honor and respect from the rest of the society, he mus
himself be committed to his people in all their deprivation

The symbol of that commitment was apparently to be th
"green stone" of the title. The green stone, of which h
had learned from Reverend Flare (75) and from his tongue
speaking friend Red Eye (119), and which he sometimes se
in dream visions (123-26), is a symbol of transformatio
It is associated with adventure and power, for it can becom
a pair of ships for escape, perhaps back to Africa (120

but it is also associated with art when he imagines himself "carving out the hollow of the great green stone" (120), and its loss, when he dreams that he has thrown it into the river, is linked to racial oppression, exclusion from the Black community, and damnation (123-26). For Jonoah to question the value of the rituals concerning the green stone is harmful to his sense of identity ("I doubted something about my own identity," he says, when he questions a green stone ritual that Red Eye had taught him, 105). He images his earlier betrayal of the civil rights cause as the act of throwing the green stone in the river, just when the church people are longing for it (123); and this loss of the stone is destructive in several ways: he sees the whole nation, people of all races, moving in "a strange cloud of confusion" (126), and feels that "Christ and I were strangers now" (127). The stone is associated with renewal in nature, religious recommitment, and with personal self-discovery through the music of his friend Jubal: "I was coming back into the light of truth again . . . onto the path that would lead to the green stone" (126). Jubal's music itself, once the consolation for misery and exploitation, will become both "my song" and a music for all Americans:

> Now the congregation rises,
> Now the new corn sprouts,
> Now the air breathes fresh,
> Now the trodden land sings. (136)

The origin of this metamorphic green stone is obscure, but it is not unlikely that it has a close connection to the "Great Smaragdine Tablet" of which Yeats wrote in the "Supernatural Songs."[14] In various alchemical, theosophist, and hermetic systems reference is made to a green tablet, supposedly inscribed by Hermes Trismegistus with thirteen "precepts," each of which has a metaphysical, an ethical, and an alchemical significance, and which collectively teach that the experiences of this world somehow reflect spiritual realities by which worldly events are ultimately caused.[15] These ideas would have been available to Dumas from several possible sources, and may have reached him directly through hermetic texts. Yeats' group of poems, however, composed in 1934 (the year of Dumas' birth), include the lines

> Natural and supernatural with the self-same ring are
> wed,

As man, as beast, as an ephemeral fly begets, Godhead
begets Godhead,
For things below are copies, the Great Smaragdine
Tablet said.

. . . .

Thought is a garment and the soul's a bride
That cannot in that trash and tinsel hide. . . .

The link, here, of nakedness imagery with a metamorphic green stone, occurring in a dramatic monologue spoken by an intensely nationalist and somewhat heterodox Christian (Ribh, Yeats' mythical rival to St. Patrick), suggests that this may be the actual literary source for Dumas' green stone.[16]

The denouement of the novel involves an acceptance by Jonoah of his full human status. He is, and knows that he is, a Black man, a Christian, one bound to the life of his own people and only through that life to the whole human race and the currents that move through all of creation. But ambiguity remains, and is never resolved; nor is it likely that if Dumas had lived he would have tried to resolve it. Jonoah recalls the church's teaching "not to be afraid of the guidance of God, . . . not to worry about the sureness of the hand of deliverance." He realizes that Jesus, when he instills the Holy Spirit, "would make me able to do all things in the name of Christ," but "as much as I knew and recalled the power inside the old church, I was afraid" (140). If one does "all things in the name of Christ," one may or may not imply an assurance that all one does is acceptable to Christ; and to sense the church's power is not the same as sensing the same power in oneself.

If there is a more assured vision in the book, it is not Jonoah's but that of the old women of the church. To them, the fusion between the Lord's work and civil rights is complete, and the role of the church is not to support an illegitimate patience but to be the nursery of the heroes of the struggle. For Jonoah to return, just when so many leaders have been killed, is, as they see it, clearly the Lord's work (146-47), and Jonoah's political vocation is given by one old woman in prophetic form: "Young man, you better listen to God" (147). The novel in its present state ends with several verses about the need for "ebony" to "strike the blow that launches this ship," and for "ebony cups" to "dip into the river." The ship, undoubtedly

associated with the mysticism of return to Africa in spirit, may also be the old ship of Zion, but it does not have to be, and the blow struck need not be symbolic, though it may be. The river may be an almost secular image of cleansing, refreshment, and freedom, or that which provides the water of life.

In any case, on any reading, Dumas' one novel leaves his protagonist at the moment of turning away from purely introspective concerns, as a *Bildungsroman* should, but with the future shape of his work in the world unclear. Jonoah has acknowledged a call to action, however, and the vision that will direct that action, mystically originated and religiously grounded, will be socially determined by the voice of his community, and perhaps politically expressed on their behalf.

NOTES

[1]Henry Dumas' published works are as follows. *Poetry for my People*, ed. Hale Chatfield and Eugene B. Redmond, intro. Jay Wright, preface Leroi Jones (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1970). This book, with the omission of the Preface by Jones, was republished under the title *Play Ebony, Play Ivory* (New York: Random House, 1974). *Ark of Bones and Other Stories*, ed. Hale Chatfield and Eugene B. Redmond, intro. Eugene B. Redmond, preface Hale Chatfield (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1970). *Jonoah and the Green Stone*, ed. Eugene B. Redmond (New York: Random House, 1976). *Rope of Wind and Other Stories*, ed. Eugene B. Redmond (New York: Random House, 1979). Biographical information on Dumas is from the prefaces and introductions to the books cited above. Information about his residence at the time of his death and the circumstances of his death is from a letter to the author, 5 January 1983, from Robert F. Burke, Deputy Inspector, Public Information Division, New York City Police Department. Information on Island Park is from a letter to the author, 8 March 1983, from Mrs. Virginia Ann Romano, Uniondale, N.Y.

[2]"The Works of Henry Dumas - A New Blackness," pp. xiii-xiv in *Poetry for my People*.

[3]Mary Ann O'Brien Malkin, rev. of *Ark of Bones* and *Poetry for my People*, *A B Bookman's Weekly*, 25 January 1971,

p. 237.

[4]Herbert Liebman, rev. of Ark of Bones, Librar Journal, 1 June 1971, p. 237.

[5]Rev. of Rope of Wind, Booklist, 15 June 1979, p 1517.

[6]Rev. of Poetry for my People, Library Journal, 15 Ma 1971, p. 1717.

[7]Rev. of Ark of Bones, Black World, January 1975, pp 51-52.

[8]W. Francis Browne and J. Launay, "Henry Dumas Teaching the Drunken Earth," Centerpoint 1 (1975), pp 47-55.

[9]"Henry Dumas: Legacy of a Long-Breath Singer," Blac World, November 1975, pp. 4-8.

[10]Taylor, pp. 9-15. Dumas' knowledge of Dogo religion, symbolism, and art probably derived fro attendance at some of the exhibits of Dogon work that too place in New York during his years there, such as the one a Galerie Kamer in 1964 of which the catalogue was publishe Jean Laude, Iron Sculpture of the Dogon (New York: Galeri Kamer, 1964). It is also likely that he knew th influential work of Marcel Griaule, Conversations wit Ogotemmeli: An Introduction to Dogon Religious Idea (London: Oxford University Press, 1965). Dogon sculpture of nommo figures generally show the arms carved in a upraised position, unusual in African art but very simila to gestures of prayer and praise in Black American churche see, for extensive nommo illustration, Jean Laude, Afric Art of the Dogon: The Myths of the Cliff-Dwellers (Ne York: The Brooklyn Museum, 1973).

[11]"Son of Msippi," Poetry for my People, pp. 19-2 Taylor, p. 12, relates this and other music images in Duma work to the thought of the Sufi writer Hazrat Inayat Kha but without documentation. Khan's works were not availab to this writer.

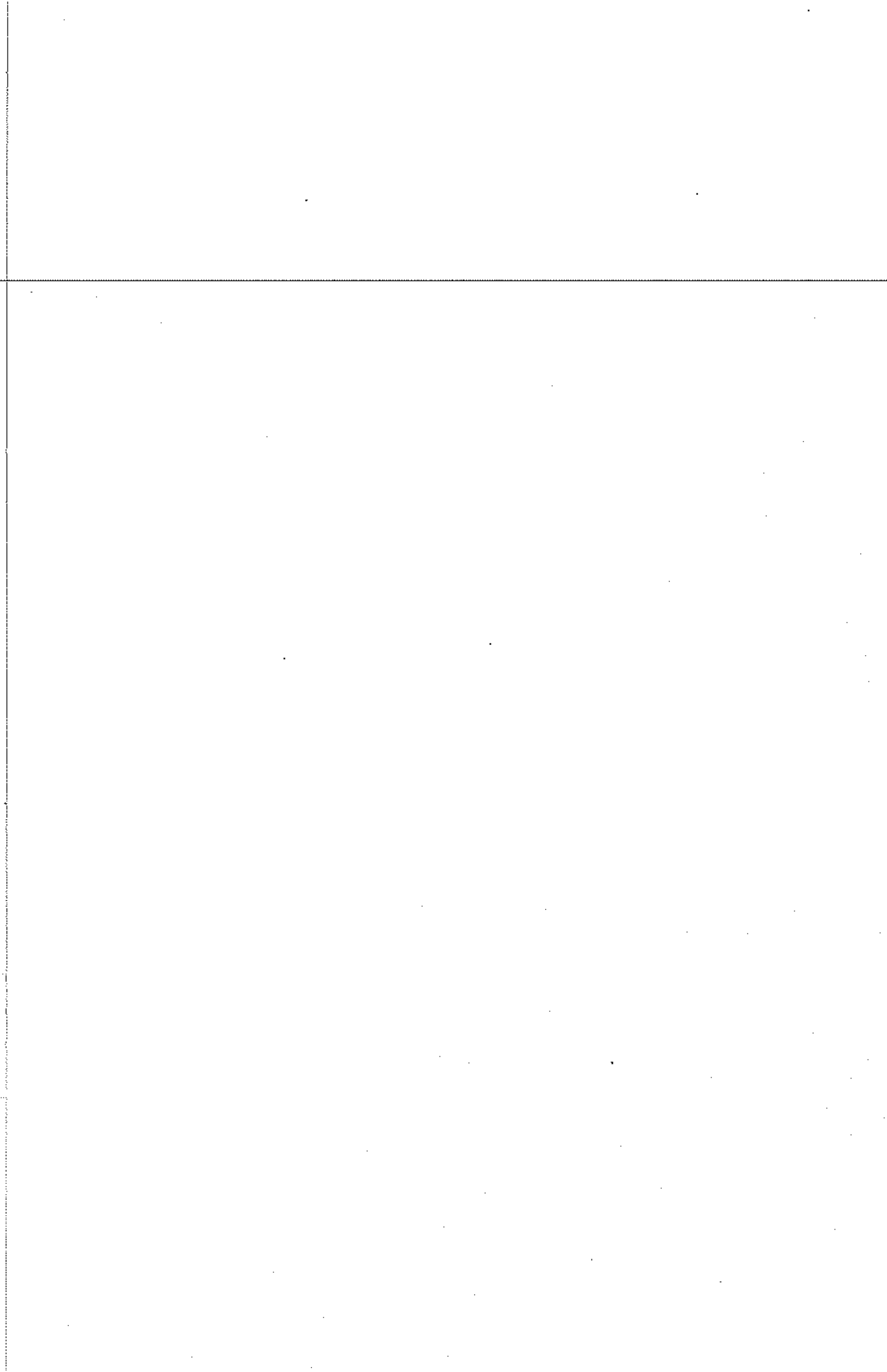
[12]"To Keep Them Alive," Village Voice, 14 Novemb 1974, pp. 44-45.

[13]Dumas' work has some thematic similarity to the fiction of Ernest J. Gaines but deeper affinities, both stylistic and thematic, appear between his work, at least in Jonoah and the Green Stone, and Alice Walker's novel about a civil rights worker's life, Meridian (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976).

[14]Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats (New York: Macmillan, 1953), p. 283.

[15]Allison Coudert, Alchemy: The Philosopher's Stone (Boulder: Shambala, 1980), pp. 27-29.

[16]Yeats believed, and said in The King of the Great Clock Tower in 1934, that primitive Irish Christianity owed much to Egyptian models and to pre-Christian ideas drawn therefrom; see the discussion of "Supernatural Songs" in A. Norman Jeffares, A Commentary on the Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968), pp. 424-430.



William Faulkner's "The Tall Men": A Closer Look

Allison Bulsterbaum

In May 1941 the Saturday Evening Post published William Faulkner's "The Tall Men." The story was later included, unrevised, within the first section of the author's Collected Stories. Like much of Faulkner's other short fiction, this piece has been either much neglected or unjudiciously categorized and cast aside. For there are two risks to take when a reader ventures into Faulkner's short stories: finding that one cannot fathom the author's intended message or, worse, that the message is all too plain, announcing itself through Faulkner's own familiar voice. This last argument has been used to suggest that "The Tall Men" is little more than a didactic insert into the author's canon, an additional verse to his characteristic song about "the old verities and universal truths" of human experience.[1] Although on one level there is some validity to this proposition--that "TM" says nothing we have not heard from Faulkner elsewhere--by no means does it completely represent the truth.

Initially "TM" is about the McCallums, Faulkner's favored family of yeomen who "maintain a balance of 'pride and humility,'"[2] who live according to "the old verities" in the midst of a world changing too quickly and, seemingly, for the worse. Closer scrutiny reveals a curious paradox: although the McCallum clan's virtue lies in its ability to resist the changing world, the story is, on another level, specifically concerned with a need for change. I refer to change that must come over the young draft board investigator, Mr. Pearson. M. E. Bradford suggests that Mr. Pearson is only a "representative 'outsider'";[3] Faulkner intends that Pearson's experience of change, of conversion, should become ours as well.

The story is set in Yoknapatawpha County during the late 1930's. Pearson has come from Jackson to investigate a case of draft evasion; the youngest of the McCallum family, twins of about twenty, have failed to register. As he goes out to the McCallum homestead, Pearson is accompanied by the county sheriff, Mr. Gombault, who is to serve the warrant for arrest. Pearson is angry with Gombault because the sheriff had phoned ahead to the McCallum farm and the investigator is sure that the boys have been warned and will try to escape. Pearson's attitude toward these country farmers might be that of any young government worker who has aligned himself with the "higher" auspices of the state:

> *These people who lie about and conceal the ownership of land and property in order to hold relief jobs which they have no intention of performing, standing on their constitutional rights against having to work, who jeopardize the very job itself through petty and transparent subterfuge to acquire a free mattress which they intend to attempt to sell. . . . And then, when at long last a suffering and threatened Government asks one thing of them in return, one thing simply, which is to put their names down on a selective-service list, they refuse to do it.* (*CS*, p. 46)

And to Pearson, Gombault is "one of them, too, despite th honor and pride of his office, which should have made hi different" (*CS*, p. 46). Clearly, in Pearson's eyes a man worth what he does or what office he holds.

Arriving at the McCallum place, the two men find th doctor is there; earlier that day Buddy McCallum, father the twins, had mangled his leg in a hammer mill. Pears and Gombault go to his bedroom, where he is surrounded his sons and older brothers. The investigator is awed this room fairly bulging with "tall men," though Faulkn writes that in fact they are not physically tall (*CS*, p. 49 Pearson is anxious to take charge of the situation, to sta his business and to leave with the two boys in custody. his dismay Buddy simply tells his sons to pack up and go Memphis to enlist, as though the charge of draft evasi were inconsequential--after all, he tells Pearson, "we' not at war now" (*CS*, p. 51).

I want to note at this point that James B. Carothe completely misread this portion of the story--and that th mistake may contribute to his quick dismissal of "TM." Sa Carothers: "The boys have not run away, and at the father's instructions they pack their bags to go to Memph to enlist. This more than satisfies Pearson, who had on wanted them to register for the draft."[4] It is obvious the text of the story that Pearson is not satisfied wi Buddy McCallum's simple answer to the charge, and this fa helps illustrate the idea that Pearson's loyalties lie wi the government--not with the people whom government designed to serve. Small wonder Faulkner regards him figure in need of conversion.

> "Wait!" the investigator cried. . . . "I protest this! I'm sorry about Mr. McCallum's accident. I'm sorry about the whole business. But it's out of my hands and out of his hands now. This charge, failure to register according to law, has been made and the warrant issued. It cannot be evaded in this way. The course of action must be completed before any other step can be taken. They should have thought of this when these boys failed to register. If Mr. Gombault refuses to serve this warrant, I will serve it myself and take these men back to Jefferson to answer this charge as made. And I must warn Mr. Gombault that he will be cited for contempt!" (CS, p. 53)

But Pearson is overruled. Gombault speaks to him "as if he were a child," saying, "Ain't you found out yet that me or you neither ain't going nowhere for awhile?" (CS, p. 53).

To the young man's credit, we can by now say of him that he is not exactly "going nowhere." He begins to settle down; he ceases trying to control the situation. Pearson and Gombault wait outside the room while the doctor proceeds to amputate Buddy's mangled leg (again Carothers errs; he writes that the two men watched the operation).[5] Gombault uses this interim to tell Pearson the history of the McCallum family; he means for the young man to look again--to re-see, as it were, "these people." He talks of old Anse (Virginius, in Sartoris) McCallum, who years before had walked all the way to Virginia to fight under Stonewall Jackson, then walked all the way back to Mississippi when the Rebels surrendered to the Union at Appomattox. Buddy and the other McCallum "tall men" are Anse's sons, content to grow cotton and maintain their self-sufficiency until the 1930's, when "the Government first begun to interfere with how a man farmed his own land. . . . Stabilizing the price, using up surplus, they called it, giving a man advice and help, whether he wanted it or not" (CS, p. 55). So the McCallums retained their integrity by ignoring the government, but were then unable to sell their crops.

> "And that's about all. Them twenty-two bales of orphan cotton are down yonder in the gin right now . . . these here [are] curious folks living off here to themselves, with the rest of the world all full of pretty neon lights burning night and day both, and easy, quick money scattering itself

> around everywhere for any man to grab a little, and every man with a shiny new automobile already wore out and throwed away and the new one delivered before the first one was even paid for, and everywhere a fine loud grabble and snatch of AAA and WPA and a dozen other three-letter reasons for a man not to work. Then this here draft comes along, and these curious folks ain't got around to signing that neither, and you come all the way up from Jackson with your paper all signed and regular, and we come out here, and after a while we can go back to town. A man gets around, don't he?" (*CS*, pp. 57-58)

Although this portion of Gombault's speech begins to effec a change in Pearson (the very presence of the McCallums i part of the lesson, too), his speech has also brought th story its harshest criticism. According to Carothers, th story fails because Faulkner's moralizing through th sheriff is all too pointed and self-evident, especially a the speech progresses.[6] I would agree with Carothers, if thought that the central point of the story is no more tha a celebration of McCallum virtue. "TM" is not so much abou the McCallums, however, as it is about the changing attitud of a young man who has been too long removed from spiritua and moral stature--"tallness," we might call it, a qualit embodied by the McCallum men.

Elmo Howell draws attention to the resemblance betwee Faulkner's tall men and the Tennesseans of Donald Davidson. In 1938 Davidson published the second version of his poe entitled, interestingly, "The Tall Men." It is uncertai but entirely possible that Faulkner took the idea for hi story from this poem (note also that Davidson publishe another poem entitled, "Sanctuary"). At one point Northerner questions the poem's central figure:

> 'You are so tall, you men,
> You Tennesseans. I've never seen so many
> Tall fellows riding in elevators.
> What makes you then so tall? Is it the cornbread
> And the buttermilk, or is it in the air,
> Or is it having to climb so many hills
> That makes you stretch your legs?'
> Why, since you ask,
> Tallness is not in what you eat or drink
> But in the seed of man. And I am minded

> (Remembering an Indian grave) to speak
> As only I can speak of what I am,
> What were the loins that begot me, what the blood
> Running rebelliously within me still
> Of the tall men who walked here when there were
> No easy roads or walking or for riding.[8]

Surely the idea expressed here, whether or not Faulkner borrowed from Davidson, is not unlike that which the novelist espoused throughout his lifetime: tallness is not in what you do, but in who you are. This is the lesson young Mr. Pearson (perhaps all of us, we products of the twentieth century?) must re-learn.

I say "re-learn"; the story hints that Pearson himself comes from stock similar to the McCallums. He recognizes the demijohn from which Buddy is swigging whiskey to ease the pain in his leg--Pearson's own grandfather had kept such a jug (CS, p. 49). As the story opens, however, Pearson is removed from "these people" and is a man of the modern age, a government worker with more interest in policies than in people: more likely to serve the letter and not the spirit of the law. It is Gombault--the voice of Faulkner--who will set the young man aright.

Let me return to Gombault and Pearson, waiting outside Buddy's room. With the amputation complete, the bundled, bloody leg is handed through the door for Gombault and Pearson to dispose of. The very sight of Buddy's mangled leg had earlier nauseated the investigator, and now he must hold it while the sheriff collects a lantern and a shovel. The two men leave the house and walk toward the small family cemetery out back, where they will dig a miniature grave. The narrative from here to the end is punctuated with organic words, earthy images, and a tone almost feminine, almost motherly. Faulkner refers repeatedly to the bundle which still retains the "warmth of life," to the "clump of cedars" surrounding the cemetery, to the "starred sky," and to the lantern's light. Gombault is compared with "an old lady trying to decide where to set out a shrub" (CS, p. 60) as he looks for a place to dig. And no less than seven references to the earth or ground appear within the story's last pages. Similar organic elements are evident in the story from the beginning (as well as feminine ones: note that the two McCallum boys kiss their father on the mouth [CS, p. 54]), but now they appear with increasing frequency and bring the story to its unassuming climax. Gombault has resumed speaking, and he delivers the main points of his

lesson:

> "Yes, sir. A man gets around and he sees a heap; a heap of folks in a heap of situations. The trouble is, we done got into the habit of confusing the situations with the folks. Take yourself, now," he said in that same kindly tone, chatty and easy; "you mean all right. You just went and got yourself all fogged up with rules and regulations. That's our trouble. We done invented ourselves so many alphabets and rules and recipes that we can't see anything else; if what we see can't be fitted to an alphabet or a rule, we are lost . . . We have slipped our backbone; we have about decided a man don't need a backbone any more; to have one is old-fashioned. But the groove where the backbone used to be is still there, and the backbone has been kept alive, too, and someday we're going to slip back onto it . . . ." (CS, p. 59)

Significantly, when they reach the cemetery and begin t dig, Pearson only very reluctantly relinquishes the bloo bundle that before he hardly dared touch; he has come bac in a sense, to "these people."

The story might fare better had Faulkner ended without further sermonizing. He too readily underestimat his readers, assuming that the lesson regarding "tallnes must be elaborated by still more talking on Gombault's par and in fact we can see that Faulkner was already qui conscious of the qualities he would later praise in h Nobel Prize acceptance speech--the "honor and pride a discipline that make a man worth preserving, make him of a value" (CS, p. 60).

As I have noted, Carothers was fairly quick to lab "TM" as little more than Faulknerian didacticism. Yet th same critic so fittingly stated in his opening remarks:

> Each of Faulkner's short stories is a self-contained, unified work of prose fiction, describing a significant change in the life of the story's central character. The specific nature of this change, the ways in which it is brought about, the character's response to it, and the implications of the change . . . all contribute to an implicit value judgment of the characters and

their world.[9]

This is indeed as true of "TM" as it is of any of Faulkner's other short fiction; this central concern with change, conversion of the individual, is the author's way of calling modern human beings to reevaluate continually their definitions and standards of progress. By the end of "TM" we have reason to believe that the young investigator has at least begun to grow into a man of taller spiritual stature--and this change in him has little to do with the sort of progress to which he, product and co-producer of his times, had been committed.

Recall that the McCallums are "tall men," though they are not physically large; we can suppose that in this story--and elsewhere, admittedly--Faulkner means us to understand "tallness" apart from height. Is "TM," then, essentially about the McCallum family? Look again. It is about change, growth, the need for a vision that leaves room for people and not mere situations and policies. Inevitably, Faulkner writes about--and for--each of us.

NOTES

[1]James B. Carothers, *William Faulkner's Short Stories*, Diss. University of Virginia 1970 (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms, Inc. 1971), p. 117.

[2]M. E. Bradford, "Faulkner's 'Tall Men,'" *SAQ*, 61 (1962), 31.

[3]Bradford, p. 34.

[4]Carothers, pp. 117-118.

[5]Carothers, p. 118.

[6]Carothers, p. 118.

[7]Elmo Howell, "William Faulkner and the Plain People of Yoknapatawpha County," *Journal of Mississippi History*, 24 (April 1962), 81-82.

[8]Donald Davidson, "The Tall Men," in *Lee in the Mountains and Other Poems* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin 1938),

pp. 67-68.

[9]Carothers, p. 1.

Significant Silences: Patterning of Pauses in the Late Style of Henry James

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In his book on the rhythm of prose, Paull F. Baum quoted a sentence from Henry James, one more than usually rich in those "recurrent breaks and resumptions" characteristic of the late style, and inquired whether involved sentences "always stopping and starting in unexpected ways, filled with curlicues as well as curves [were] rythmically bad?"[1] Assuming that the question is more than rhetorical, I will try to answer it in the following pages by showing the appropriateness of the rhythm of James's sentences to his semantic and rhetorical, but particularly to his poetic purpose. Rhythm is an integral feature in his style. It is impossible, it appears to me, to judge the rhythm of a single and incomplete sentence out of context as "good" or "bad." A more generous sampling from the greatest works in the late style will reveal much more clearly the relation of the rhythm to the other aspects of the style.

Others besides Baum have commented upon the rhythms of James's prose. Stephen Spender, writing on The Golden Bowl, said of James's monologues, "They are written in a language in which one loses oneself among imagery which is poetry, but which has not the rhythm or the diction of a writer who is completely a poet."[2] Abram Lipsky noted that James's is a "vigorous" and "emphatic" style characterized by a strongly accentuated rhythm in which stresses are frequent and close.[3] Oliver Elton commented briefly on the fitness of the rhythm to the meaning in a short passage from The Golden Bowl.[4] James himself was acutely conscious of the importance of the structure of sound for the reader's pleasure. He wrote:

> It is scarce necessary to note that the highest test of any literary form conceived in the light of "poetry" -- to apply that term in its largest literary sense -- hangs back unpardonably from its office when it fails to lend itself to viva voce treatment. . . . The essential property of such a form as that is to give out its finest and most numerous secrets, and to give them out most gratefully, under the closest pressure -- which is of course the pressure of the attention articulately sounded.[5]

James, like Hopkins, considered his literary productions a "speech framed for hearing." It is precisely this carefu attention to the elaboration of the structure of sound whic endows his fiction with the quality of poetry. James' habit of dictating his novels to a secretary aforded him th opportunity of constantly hearing the flow of sound, and o adjusting it to satisfy the exacting demands of his own ear His novels have throughout the tone of cultivated conversa tion in the drawing room, an effect reinforced by th occasional use of the pronouns of the first person, contrac tions like "don't" and "aren't," and the deferred subject as in the famous opening sentence of The Wings of the Dov -- "She waited, Kate Croy, . . ." Those who heard him spea testify also to the charm of his conversation, but, what i more important for our purposes, testify also to the fac that his "writing" style is essentially identical with hi "oral" style. Finally, in his fiction and in hi conversation, "he was meticulously (no other adverb is s appropriate) careful to convey his precise meaning, so tha his remarks became a sort of Chinese nest of parentheses; i took him some time to arrive at his point but he alway reached it and it was always worth waiting for."[6] For Maddox Ford reported, "when I read a passage aloud, whethe from the Prefaces or The Golden Bowl, it became, to mysel at least, infinitely clear. . . ."[7]

Though James spoke with rare authority on many aspect of the art of the novel and insisted on the importance o the sound structure, he wrote very little on the subject o rhythm. What is probably his fullest statement is found i his critical introduction to an English translation o Madame Bovary.[8] In it he spoke of Flaubert's struggle wi a difficult medium, the French language, and of his battl to write in an elegant style, following his statements wi a rueful comment on the intractability of the Englis language:

> Recognising thus that to carry through the individual pretension is at the best a battle, he adored a hard surface and detested a soft one -- much more a muddled; regarded a style without rhythm and harmony as in a work of pretended beauty no style at all. He considered that the failure of complete expression so registered made of the work of pretended beauty a work of achieved barbarity. It would take us far to glance even at

> his fewest discriminations; but rhythm and harmony were for example most menaced in his scheme by repetition -- when repetition had not a positive grace; and were above all most at the mercy of the bristling particles of which our modern tongues are mainly composed and which make of the desired surface a texture pricked through, from beneath, even to destruction, as by innumerable thorns. . . . I have spoken of his groans and imprecations, his interminable waits and deep despairs; but what would these things have been, what would have become of him and what of his wrought residuum, had he been condemned to deal with a form of speech consisting, like ours, as to one part, of "that" and "which"; as to a second part, of the blest "it," which in an English sentence may repeat in three or four opposed references without in the least losing caste; as to a third face of all the "tos" of the infinitive and the preposition; as to a fourth of our precious auxiliaries "be" and "do"; as to a fifth, of whatever survives in the language for the precious art of pleasing?[9]

Prose, like poetry or music, is an interruption of silence by sound. In prose as in verse, the patterning of pauses does much to determine the rhythmic character of the whole. Pauses themselves of greater or less duration are played against members of differing length and provide another example of the variety and complexity of prose rhythm. The typical Jamesian sentence is one composed of members of varied length followed by pauses of proportionate duration; short members are often followed by commas, members of intermediate length by semicolons, and the longest and final member by a period:

He himself, o o o (3)

at the end of a fortnight, o o o o o o o (7)

had written twice, o o o o (4)

to show how his generosity could be trusted; o o o o o o o o o o o o o (13)

but he reminded himself in o o o o o o o o o o

case of Mrs. Newsome's   o o o o o o o o o o
epistolary manner at the times   o o o o o o o o o o
when Mrs. Newsome kept off   o o o o o o
delicate ground. (<u>Amb</u>, II, 4)[10]   (36)[11]

Once this pattern has been established and becomes a convention of James's prose, deviations from it become effective means of expression. In the next sentence cited the final pause follows upon a member only two syllables long. So brief a member at this juncture is an evident departure from the prevalent pattern of correlation between length and pause. The word "nothing" is thus invested with dramatic intensity by the comparatively long and sharp breaks which precede and follow it, and by the sharp contrast in length between it and the other members of the predication. "Nothing" stands out vividly in this rhythmic context:

. . .

full also in especial of that   o o o o o o o o o o
purchased social ease,   o o o o (14)

the sense of the comfort and   o o o o o o o o o o
credit of their house,   o o (12)

which had essentially the   o o o o o o o o o o
perfection of something paid for,   o o o o o (15)

but which "came" on the whole   o o o o o o o o o o
so cheap that it might have   o o o o o o o (17)
been felt as costing --

as costing parent and child --   o o o o o o o (7)

nothing. (<u>GB</u>, II, 47)   o o (2)

In the following sentence, the monosyllabic member at the end of the predication terminated by a semicolon achieves a degree of intensity perhaps even more marked. The prevalent pattern in James's sentences leads us to expect a member of intermediate length, so here again a well-established expectation is frustrated. Contrast in duration with the preceding and following members is great; further tension at the rhythmic level is generated by the contrast between the maximum stress on the word "lost" and the silence which

precedes and follows it. Deviation from the rhythmic norm serves dramatically to underline the ominous import of the word:

Finally,	o o o (3)
at the end of April,	o o o o o o (6)
she decided that if he should	o o o o o o o o o o
say nothing for another period	o o o o o o o o o o
of twenty-four hours she must	o o o o o o o o o o
take it as showing that they were,	o o o (33)
in her private phraseology,	o o o o o o o o o (9)
lost;	o (1)
so little possible sincerity	o o o o o o o o o o
could there be in pretending to	o o o o o o o o o o
care for a journey to Spain at	o o o o o o o o o o
the approach of a summer that	o o o o o o o o o o
already promised to be hot.	o o (42)
(<u>GB</u>, II, 48)	

In James's prose pauses may also recur at regular intervals; the effect of such regularity in the placement of pause is to set masses of sound against each other in a rhythmic balance which may be either symmetrical or asymmetrical. Pairs of members like the following occur frequently:

giving him,	o o o (3)
as it did, (<u>GB</u>, I, 18)	o o o (3)

A similar balance exists also in many lengthier members:

Not a single one of his ob-	o o o o o o o o o o
servations but somehow fell	o o o o o o o o o o
into a place in it;	o (21)
not a breath of the cooler	o o o o o o o o o o
evening that wasn't somehow a	o o o o o o o o o o
syllable of the text.	o (21)
(<u>Amb</u>, II, 254)	

In the following sentence, a third and concluding membe
expands the series of balanced members to three:

It would have required an explanation -- o o o o o o o o o o (10)

fatal to Mrs. Lowder's faith in him -- o o o o o o o o o o (10)

of the nature of Milly's wrong. (WD, II, 343) o o o o o o o o (8)

The four members cited next constitute a pattern alternatin
in length and in rhythmic structure, counterpointing th
repetitions at the lexical level:

her funny race, o o o o (4)

her funny losses, o o o o o (5)

her funny gains, o o o o (4)

her funny freedom, (WD, I, 253) o o o o o (5)

In the next series, the members are almost exactl
equivalent in mass; even the occurence of the minc
variations is patterned:

It reduced her to her ultimate state, o o o o o o o o o o (10)

which was that of a poor girl -- o o o o o o o (7)

with her rent to pay for example -- o o o o o o o o o (9)

staring before her in a great city. o o o o o o o o o o (10)

Milly had her rent to pay. (WD, I, 253-54) o o o o o o o (7)

In other sentences, masses of sound are variously balance
Here, the middle member is twice as long as the first a
third together:

This whole vision was the worst thing yet -- o o o o o o o o o (9)

as including in particular the interview to which she had braced herself; o o o o o o o o o o o o o o o o o o o o (20)

and for what had she come but for the worst? (<u>WD</u>, I, 4) o o o o o o o o o o (10)

The longer member balancing two shorter members may either precede or follow them. In the sentence examined next, the alliterative patterning of the second and third members with its play upon "h" and "m" carried to the point of the exact repetition of two words effects the cohesion of these two members and sets them over against the first member with its play upon "l," "s," and "t" in the qualitative structure of sound. Thus:

He hadn't in the least stated at Lancaster Gate that, o o o o o o o o o o o o o o (14)

as a haunted man -- o o o o o (5)

a man haunted with a memory -- (<u>WD</u>, II, 343) o o o o o o o o o (9)

If one moves from the level of the syllable to that of the syllabic group, characterized by one syllable having primary stress and accompanying syllables with lesser degrees of stress, other interesting sequences with evident patterning are found. Typically, too, the rhythmic patterning becomes more noticeable at the end of the sentence where determinateness at all levels is most likely to be found. The sentence follows:

Milly, ó o (1)

alone, o ó (1)

as happened, o ó ȯ (1)

in the great garnished void of their sitting room, o o ó ó o ó' o o ó o ó (2)

where, ó (1)

a little,	o ó o (1)
really,	ó o o (1)
like a caged Byzantine,	o o ó o ó o (2)
she had been pacing through the queer long-drawn almost sinister delay of night,	o o o ó o' o o ó' ó ó' ó o ó o o' o ó o ó (5)
an effect she yet liked --	o o ó' o ó ó (2)
Milly,	ó o (1)
at the sound,	o o ó (1)
one of the French windows standing open,	ó o o ó ó o' ó o ó o (2)
passed out to the balcony that overhung,	ó ó' o o ó o o' o ó o ó (3)
with pretensions,	o o ó o (1)
the general entrance,	o ó o o ó o (1)
and so was in time for the look that Kate,	o ó' o o ó o o ó' o ó (3)
alighting,	o ó o (1)
paying her cabman,	ó o o ó o (1)
happened to send up to the front. (_WD_, I, 256)	ó o o ó ó' o o ó (2)

We frequently find in James's prose that a paus
pattern created by the recurrence of pauses in a particula
order may be repeated in reverse order so that a symmetrica
sequence of relations of pause to syllabic groupings appear
Frequently the number of syllables and the number
stressed syllables is identical also, and there is maxima
sameness with a correspondingly heightened degree
perceptibility. The reader is then more likely to feel th
triad of members as a unit; it is perceived as another ty

of rhythmic figuration in which like and unlike masses of sound stand in a patterned relation to each other. This is exemplified in the following sequence of three members representative of many similar triads in the novels written in James's late style. The massing of sound at beginning and end where pause follows groups of eleven and twelve syllables frames a member where pause occurs after three syllables, and so produces a bipolarity similar to that found in the micro-structure in a rhythmic figure like the cretic. The first and third members each also divide into three syllabic groups, and each contains five stressed syllables:

so far as the village aspect   ó ó' o o ó o ó o' o
was concerned --   o ó   (11-5-3)

as whiteness,   o ó o   (3-1-1)

crookedness and blueness set   ó o o' o ó o' ó o ó
in coppery green; (*Amb*, II, 254)   o o ó   (12-5-3)

Finally, specific cadence patterns such as the choriamb are frequently found clustered in a series of members. Such patterns appear in all but a few members in this typical series of three sentences consisting of six members in the first, and five in the other two. When such sentences are arranged in lines as the pauses indicate, a complex rhythm approaching the regularity of poetic rhythms is discernible:

He had taken her chair and let   o o ó o o ó o ó o ó
her go,

and the arrangement was for   o o o ó o ó o ó o o
Maggie a signal proof of her   ó o ó o o ó o o
earnestness;

of the energy in fact,   o o ó o o o ó

that,   ó

though superficially common-   o ó o ó o o ó o ó o
place in a situation in which   o ó o ó o o ó ó o ó
people weren't supposed to be   o ó o o ó o ó ó o
watching each other,

was what affected our young   ó o o ó o o ó ó o o

woman on the spot as a breaking of bars.	o ó o o ó o o ó
The splendid shining supple creature was out of the cage,	o ó o ó o ó o ó o o ó o o ó
was at large;	ó o ó
and the question now almost grotesquely rose of whether she mightn't by some art,	o o ó o ó ó o o ó o o ó o ó o o ó o o ó ó
just where she was and before she could go further,	ó ó o ó o o ó o o o ó o
be hemmed in and secured.	o ó ó o o ó
It would have been for a moment,	o ó o ó o o ó o
in this case,	o ó ó
a matter of quickly closing the windows and giving the alarm --	o ó o o ó o ó o o ó o o ó o o o ó
with poor Maggie's sense that though she couldn't know what she wanted of her it was enough for trepidation that at these firm hands anything should be wanted:	o ó ó o ó o ó o ó o ó o o ó o o ó o ó o ó o ó o ó o o o ó ó ó ó o o ó o ó o
to say nothing of the sequel in the form of a flight taken again along the terrace even under the shame of the confessed feebleness of such evasions on the part of an outraged wife. (<u>GB</u>, II, 238-39)	o ó ó o o o ó o o o ó o o ó ó o o ó o ó o ó o ó o ó o o ó o o o ó ó o o o ó o ó o o o ó o o ó o ó

A schematic representation of the patterns involving th choriamb will aid in pointing out the many relations betwee the different patterns, relations involving simpl repetition, expansion of the pattern by the addition of number of unitary patterns before and after the basi pattern, and reversal of simple and expanded patterns:[12]

1 ó o o ó o ó o ó
2 ó o ó o ó o o ó
3 (ó)o ó o o ó
4 ó o ó o o ó
5 (ó)o ó o o ó
6 (ó)o ó o o ó
7 ó o ó o ó o o ó
8 ó o o ó o o ó
9 ó o o o ó o o ó o o ó
10 ó o ó o ó o ó o o ó o o ó
11 ó o o ó o ó o ó
12 (ó)o o ó o o o ó
13 ó o ó o o ó o o o ó
14 ó o o ó
15 ó o ó o o ó
16 ó o o ó o ó o o ó
17 (ó)o o ó o o o ó
18 ó o ó o ó o ó o ó o o ó
19 (ó)o o ó o ó o ó o ó o ó
20 ó o o ó o ó
21 ó o o o ó o o o ó o o ó
22 ó o o ó o ó o ó
23 (ó)o ó o ó o o ó
24 ó o o o ó o o ó o ó

I have presented in this paper some idea of what rhythms occur in James's prose, how they are accented by the patterning of pauses and of the way in which these rhythms are sporadically repeated and subtly varied in the texture of the novels. These recurrences are always unobtrusive; James never overtly, or I might say crudely, lapses into verse. Grammatical and rhetorical structures are regularly subordinated to the purely acoustic exigencies of the rhythmic structure.[13] The recurrences of rhythmic figurations allow us to say that if these lines are not a lyric, they are nonetheless lyrical; if they are not a poem they are poetical.

NOTES

[1]Paull F. Baum, <u>. . . The Other Harmony of Prose</u> (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1952), p. 196. In a note to his comment on James, Baum observes that some

sentences in James are constructed with careful balance, and with flowing rhythms unbroken by frequent pauses. He implies that this is "good" rhythm.

[2]The ^uestion of Henry James, ed. F. W. Dupee (New York: Holt, 1945), p. 242.

[3]"Rhythm as a Distinguishing Characteristic of Prose Style," Archives of Psychology, 4 (1907), p. 17.

[4]"English Prose Numbers," A Sheaf of Papers (Liverpool: University Press, 1922), pp. 141-2.

[5]Preface to The Golden Bowl, New York Edition (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909), pp. xxiii-xxiv. All citations of the novels in this paper will refer to this edition.

[6]F. Anstey, quoted by Simon Nowell-Smith in The Legend of the Master, (London: Constable, 1947), p. 10. Ezra Pound in his volume Instigations (New York: Boni and Liverwright, 1920), pp. 106-7, expressing regret at James's death, commented, "we should have had, at least conversation, wonderful conversation; even if we did not hear it ourselves, we should have known that it was going on somewhere. The massive head, the slow uplift of the hand gli occhi onesti e tardi, the long sentences piling themselves up in elaborate phrase after phrase, the lightning incision, the pauses, the slightly admonitory gesture with its 'wu-a-wait a little, wait a little something will come'; blague and benignity, the weight of so many years' careful, incessant labor of minute observation always there to enrich the talk. I had heard it but seldom but it was all unforgettable."

[7]Henry James: A Critical Study (London: M. Secker 1918), p. 174.

[8]This translation was published in London by William Heinemann in 1902. The introduction was reprinted in Notes on Novelists and Some Other Notes (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1914).

[9]Notes on Novelists, pp. 106-7.

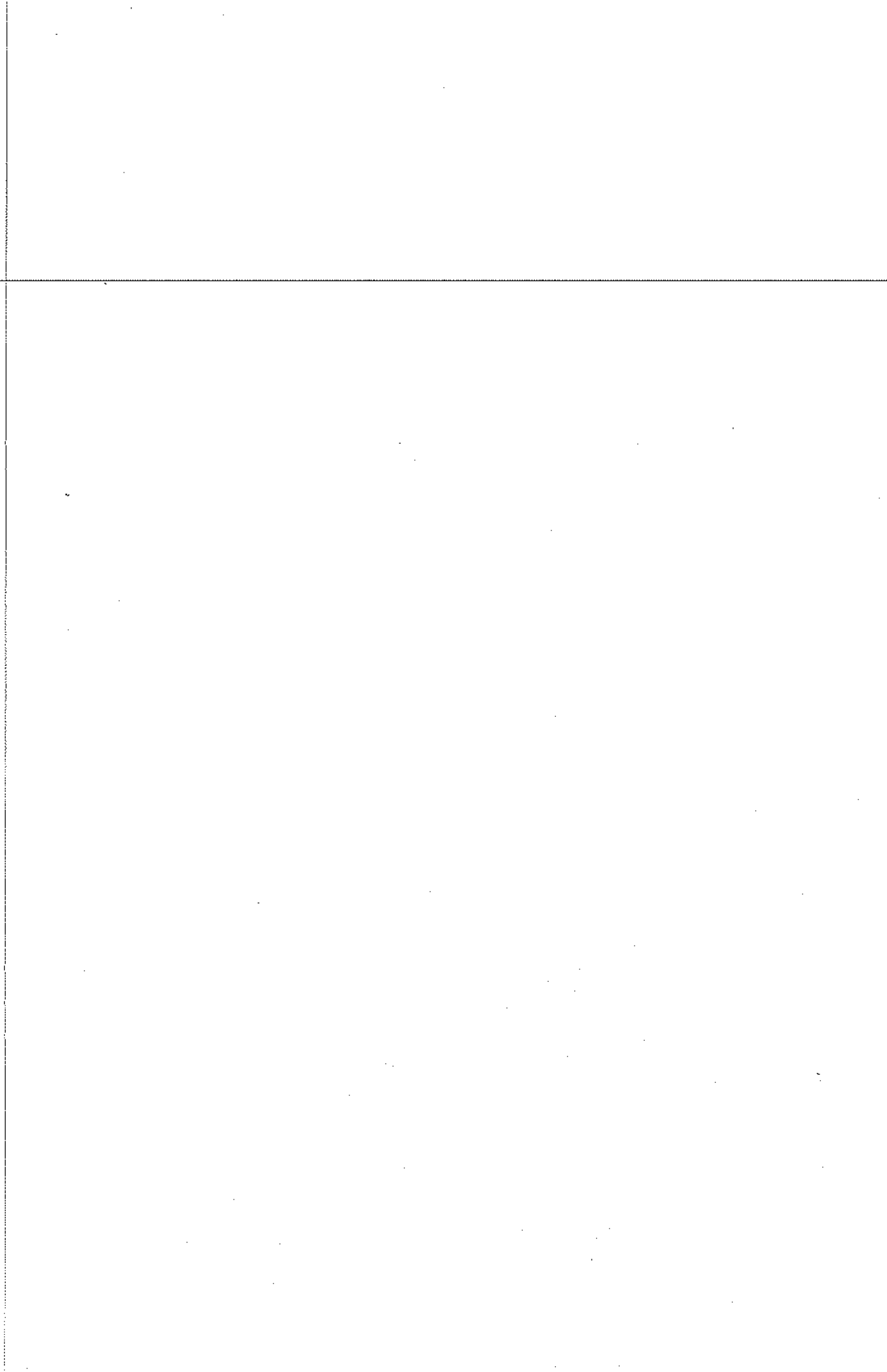
[10]The Ambassadors will be referred to as Amb, Th

Golden Bowl as GB, and The Wings of the Dove as WD.

[11]The notation used is that proposed by Craig LaDriere in "Prosodic Notation," Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics, ed. Alex Preminger (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965).

[12]The syllable common to both elements in the continuous pattern is enclosed in parentheses when repeated for convenience.

[13]One need only consider, for example, the effect of the omission of the comma in a series of adjectives, a thing often done by James, which secures at the level of sound that cohesion and unity of cadence necessary to establish a pattern. The introduction of the customary commas would shatter the rhythmic unity, and of course destroy completely the delicate balance of the differing cadences.



Aristotle and Longinus: Conflicting Methodology and Disputed Literary Merit in Eighteenth-Century England

David Wheeler

The Restoration and Eighteenth Century seems an easy period for students to define. And the definition is not merely a chronological or historical one (though 1660 and 1800 are certainly convenient dates) but an intellectual one as well. Dryden, Swift, Pope, Fielding, Johnson, and Goldsmith share a poetic largely borrowed from the ancients but modified by the influence of Christian morality, a strong sense of tradition which spawned an appreciation of imitation, and the contemporary importance of rational philosophy. We see in these writers critical statements that combine to form what we call neoclassicism: an insistence on the mimetic function of art, an attempt to portray universals, an emphasis on form, order, decorum. Moreover, creative performance mirrors critical precept as evidenced in Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*, Addison's *Cato*, Fielding's *Tom Jones*, and even Reynolds's portraits. The result is a conception of the period as a rather monolithic one: shared ideals, shared interests, similar works.

But such a conception is not entirely accurate. The monolith crumbles when we recall the combative nature of the period. It was Pope who boldly proclaimed, "Yes, I am proud; I must be proud to see / Men not afraid of God afraid of me" and who described his satiric pen as "O sacred Weapon! left for Truth's defence, / Sole Dread of Folly, Vice, and Insolence!" We may, of course, impute such statements to Pope's satiric pose here as he plays the half comic, half tragic role of the last bastion of virtue in a quickly corroding society. Role playing or not, Pope, beyond a doubt, employed his pen as a weapon, and employed it not only against moral or political transgressors but also against literary transgressors, a list of whom may be found in any annotated edition of *The Dunciad*. Nor was Pope's combativeness unique. There was the long controversy over the relative merits of the ancients versus those of the moderns. Dryden quarreled with Buckingham and Settle and immortalized Thomas Shadwell for his literary shortcomings. Fielding and Richardson engaged in a battle over the direction the new genre of the novel was to take. Goldsmith atacked Richard Cumberland on the same issues in the drama. Johnson hated Gray and, after bludgeoning James Macpherson in print, for months carried a club about him in London to fend off an anticipated rebuttal. Without mentioning such

cantankerous figures as Ambrose Philips, Joseph Addison, and Bishop William Warburton, we can quickly clutter the battlefield. The point is that the consensus which seems so definable when we read the writers included in the Norton Anthology begins to break down when we add their lesser-known contemporaries.

Such contention is not surprising if we push aside preconceptions about neoclassicism and remember just how new an endeavor literary criticism was during the Restoration and Eighteenth Century. Though we have Sidney's Apology and a few remarks here and there by Ben Jonson, Samuel Johnson was essentially correct when asserting that "Dryden may be properly considered as the father of English criticism, as the writer who first taught us to determine upon principles the merit of composition."[1] Thus, criticism and literature during the period (as in all periods, I would guess) was in a state of flux. Old genres such as the epic, the ode, and the eclogue were being reconsidered in critical terms, and a critical apparatus was developing to consider the emerging new genres such as sentimental drama and the novel. As neo-classicists, all of the writers mentioned above agreed that there were identifiable principles of composition, but they disagreed over precisely what those principles were or over the priority to be given even agreed upon principles in judging the value of any literary work.

Surely many of the disputes were the result of the things that plague writers of all eras: petty jealousies, rivalries over preferment, accusations of plagiarism; but in the more important disputes over genres, we can detect a common element that distinguishes the combatants, which seem to fall into two camps. And it is certainly not the case that Fielding, Johnson, and Goldsmith are neoclassicists looking backward while Richardson, Gray, and Cumberland are somehow precursors of romanticism. Their differences lie in their preferences of classical authority: Fielding, Johnson, and Goldsmith (as well as Dryden, Swift, Pope, and Addison) are all Aristotelians, focusing on formal structure, wholeness, logical progression of ideas while Richardson, Gray, and Cumberland (and I would add Dennis, Defoe, Young, and Collins) are followers of Longinus, emphasizing the transporting moment, emotion, elevated diction. I think the differences between Aristotle and Longinus in both critical precepts and critical methodology go a long way in explaining the critical and literary postures of the two lines of neoclassicism that existed collaterally throughout the period. Before examining the

effect of this ongoing debate on the conceptions and hierarchy of genres and on eighteenth-century critical methodology itself, it would be wise to outline the two classical positions, highlighting only relevant portions of the works.

First, Aristotle's Poetics may be classified, to use the expression frequently applied to much eighteenth-century criticism, as genres criticism: Aristotle concerns himself with defining the epic and the comic and tragic drama, distinguishing one from another, and outlining the histories of the genres. As philosopher and logician, he knows the importance of precise terminology and the inherent power of defining that terminology to suit his critical needs. The extant Poetics primarily discusses tragedy, which Aristotle, like eighteenth-century genres critics, breaks down into its constituent elements--plot, characters, diction, thought, spectacle, and song. For Aristotle, the most important element in both tragedy and epic is plot which must be complete and whole, consisting of the famous "beginning, middle, and end" and whose "various incidents must be so arranged that if any one of them is differently placed or taken away the effect of wholeness will be seriously disrupted."[2] Of characters, Aristotle maintains that they should be of universal types, leading lives governed by universal truths rather than particular individuals performing particular acts, a narrative which is the province of history: "By universal truths are to be understood the kinds of thing a certain type of person will probably or necessarily say or do in a given situation."[3] Aristotle requires probability; he says "anything irrational should as far as possible be excluded" and includes the impossible, the irrational, and the inconsistent as three of his five criteria for censuring a poetic passage. (The other two are the immoral and those technically at fault.)[4] The final assertion that I wish to include here is the brief statement that ideal diction should be clear without being commonplace.[5] Thus, we find the philosopher employing a critical method of definition, division, and classification and holding up as critical precepts wholeness, universality, probability, rationality, and clarity.

Three or four centuries later, for Longinus, the rhetorician, the methodology and the emphases are strikingly different. Longinus is not concerned with defining or distinguishing genres nor with the integration of parts into wholeness. He differentiates Aristotle's critical emphases from his own on the first page of his treatise On the

Sublime:

> Inventive skill and the proper order and disposition of material [the Aristotelian emphasis] are not manifested in a good touch here and there, but reveal themselves by slow degrees as they run through the whole texture of the composition; on the other hand, a well-timed stroke of sublimity scatters everything before it like a thunderbolt, and in a flash reveals the whole power of the speaker.[6]

Though he is speaking specifically of rhetors here rathe
than poets, Longinus frequently steps back and forth ove
the thin line that for him separates oratory from poetry
And his focus is always on the particular, transportin
passage and the emotional effect it produces on the reade
or listener. A glance at any page of Longinus wil
demonstrate his interest in parts rather than wholes: O
the Sublime is dotted with quotations exemplifying sublimit
and illustrating various poetic and rhetorical device
useful in producing emotional response. And of course th
agent of the sublime for both poet and orator is language
and Longinus tells us that the "effect of elevated languag
is not to persuade the hearers, but to entrance them; and a
all times, and in every way, what transports us with wonde
is more telling than what merely persuades or gratifie
us."[7] Here the term wonder, meaning awe or astonishmen
with suggestions of the marvelous, stands as a direc
contradiction of Aristotle's insistence on probability. Th
example of Longinus most frequently cited by eighteent
century Longinian critics is the Biblical "God said, 'le
there be light,' and there was light." Such a passag
strikes the reader at once with awe of God's infinite powe
So we find in the eighteenth century, critics employing th
classical authority of Longinus to defend a critica
position that particular beauties may outweigh structur
defects of the whole and to advance their poetic preferenc
for lofty or "poetic" diction, passages of emotional impac
religious subject matter, and the introduction o
allegorical personages or specters (what Addison called "t
fairy way of writing").

One way of ascertaining a literary period's poet
values is by examining its response to the ever-existi
tripartite relationship between poet, poem, and reader. F
the subjective romantics, the poet reigned supreme. But f

eighteenth-century writers who seem to agree (with only slight variation) that poetry was "an imitation of an action for the pleasure and instruction of mankind," both the poem (the imitation) and the reader (who gains both pleasure and instruction) are emphasized. And here is where the split occurs: though both speak of universals and of morality, Aristotle emphasizes the work itself, Longinus the reader.

It seems to me that Restoration and eighteenth-century writers tend to take one position or the other. The effects of this neoclassical rift may be perceived in at least three important areas: in the numerous literary disputes mentioned previously, in the conceptions of generic criteria and the ranking of the genres, and in the critical methodology or kinds of criticism produced during the period.

Just as the most famous of the period's writers are Aristotelians, the best known critical works may properly be termed Aristotelian. Dryden's full-length works deal with specific genres: the Preface to Fables, Ancient and Modern; the Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire; the Dedications to the Translations of Virgil (broken down into discussions of the eclogue, the georgic, and the epic); and the Essay on Dramatic Poesy. All of these works include a definition of the genre, a history of the genre from ancient to modern times, a discussion of the elements of each genre, and an evaluation of individual authors' attempts in the genre. Such a procedure conforms to Aristotle's method of examining tragedy. Taken compositely, Dryden's essays offer critical commentary on nearly all of the literary kinds composed during the Restoration. Pope's Preface to the Iliad, Preface to Shakespeare, and Postscript to the Odyssey follow the same format.

Perhaps the most ambitious neoclassical Aristotelian criticism applied to a single work is Addison's series of Spectator papers on Paradise Lost (1712). Addison's indebtedness to Aristotle appears at once:

> I shall therefore examine it [Paradise Lost] by the Rules of Epic Poetry, and see whether it falls short of the Iliad or Aeneid, in the Beauties which are essential to that Kind of Writing. The first Thing to be considered in an Epic Poem is the Fable.[8]
>
> . . . This is Aristotle's Method of considering;

first the Fable, secondly the manners, or as we generally call them in English, the Fable and the Characters.[9]

Addison discusses the plot in terms of the relationship o parts to the whole and characters in terms of thei appropriateness to the subject. After examining the epi elements of sentiments and language in Milton's poem Addison concludes his series of papers with an analysis o beauties and faults, praising Paradise Lost for its grandeu and censuring it for frequent digressions from the action improbabilities in characters and speech, a mixture o heathen and Christian agents, and the use of a labore diction, filled with technical language.

The primary result of this prominence of genr criticism with its emphasis on structure was a generi consciousness which contributes strongly to the imitativ quality of much neoclassical poetry. A writer like Pope wa always conscious of his predecessors in the poetic kind an of the genre's structural demands, whether he was composin his Pastorals, the georgic Windsor Forest, a mock epic lik The Rape of the Lock, or even a verse epistle. Pope' adroitness in imitation allowed him to avoid the rigidit and staleness to be found in many of his contemporaries Such generic evaluation also produced, as we have seen wit Milton, a depreciation of numerous modern poets on th grounds of formal irregularities, a fate shared by th Italians Tasso and Ariosto and the Elizabethans Spenser an Shakespeare, whose plays (particularly the tragedies) wer rewritten to conform to the standards imposed on the genre With formal structure as primary evaluative criterion harmonious versification and a logical progression of idea could gain applause for poems like Dryden's Absalom an Achitophel and Pope's verse essays. We also find suc interesting sidelights as the frequent use of architectura terms applied to poetry, such as Johnson's remark at the en of The Life of Dryden: "What was said of Rome, adorned b Augustus, may be applied by an easy metaphor to Englis poetry embellished by Dryden, . . . he found it brick, an he left it marble."[10]

But not all neoclassical critics were so concerned wit formal structure or the poetic parts used to construct it In his 1701 Advancement and Reformation of Modern Poetry John Dennis defines poetry as "an imitation of Nature, by pathetick and numerous Speech." By using the wor "numerous," Dennis has done no more than affirm that poetr

is written in verse, but by using the word "pathetick," Dennis is following Longinus and demanding the presence of emotion:

> That the Speech, by which Poetry makes its Imitation, must be pathetick, is evident; for Passionis still more necessary to it than Harmony. For Harmony only distinguishes its very Nature and Character. For, therefore, Poetry is Poetry, because it is more Passionate and Sensual than Prose. A Discourse that is writ in very good Numbers, if it wants Passion, can be but measur'd Prose. But a Discourse that is every where extremely pathetick, and, consequently, every where bold and figurative, is certainly Poetry without Numbers.[11]

As a result of this critical stance, Dennis, using the Longinian method in The Grounds of Criticism in Poetry (1704), is able to lavish praise on Milton by illustrating particular passages that display powerful emotion and sublimity without having to account for Milton's deviations of plot and diction.

Dennis is supported by Shaftesbury, Joseph Trapp, John Hughes, the Wartons, and many others. By examining the part rather than the whole and by agreeing with Trapp that "the great art of poetry is to work upon the passions,"[12] these Longinian critics can appreciate the Renaissance writers more fully by freeing the authors from the demands of genre, logic, and probability. Mid-century critics would use the criteria of emotion, power, and sublimity to denegrate Dryden and Pope in favor of Gray whose odes, though less regular than those of Dryden and Pope, possessed the power to help elevate the genre to its classical position alongside epic and tragedy.

As I mentioned before, the dispute between an Aristotelian emphasis on structure and a Longinian emphasis on emotional impact existed throughout the century and involved all literary genres. But of the major literary disputes over genres in the eighteenth century, perhaps none is so well-known or so influential as the debate over the novel between Richardson and Fielding. To begin with, Richardson was no critic; I would certainly hesitate to presume that he was intentionally following Longinian methodology. But his novels contain the elements we have been discussing in relation to Longinus: de-emphasis of

ordered plot and a concentration on the poignant, emotiona
moment. Fielding, on the other hand, was a critic and a
avowed Aristotelian. In discussing Richardson and Fielding
I wish to focus upon their first novels whose publicatio
chronology may be summarized as follows:

November, 1740: Publication of I Pamela
April, 1741: Publication of Fielding's Shamela
December, 1741: Publication of II Pamela
February, 1742: Publication of Joseph Andrews

We all know Pamela, but we usually think of Shamela a
a short parody or burlesque of Richardson's epistolary styl
and a comic swipe at the heroine's prudish morality, a wor
occasioned by the success of the long novel. Fielding'
attack, however, is more strongly based on his critica
position. He faults Richardson for not adhering to an
conception of plot unity and for creating improbabl
characters who provide scandalous models of behavior
Fielding, who senses as most modern readers do, a potent, i
sometimes latent, sexuality in the book, cannot accept as
moral exemplar a scheming maid servant who uses sex to clim
the social ladder nor condone a country squire who firs
seduces and then marries his serving woman simply to bed her
So Shamela exposes the heroine for the bad characte
Fielding feels she is and dissolves the marital reward tha
Richardson had given her. But Shamela is not just
revision of the Pamela tale; it is a sequel to it. Fieldin
was irritated by a plot based on a series of episodes
seemingly independent of each other and thu
interchangeable, which carried the main characters to th
natural ending of marriage (the ending Fielding chose fo
both Joseph Andrews and Tom Jones) and then far beyond
Lacking completeness, Pamela begged for a sequel, an
Fielding gave it one.

In Richardson's own sequel, the second part of Pamela
the novelist, as several critics have noted, seems at leas
somewhat occupied with answering Fielding's criticisms.[1]
Not only does the sequel fulfill the demand fo
completeness, but Richardson answers the charge o
improbability as well. Agreeing with Fielding that th
behavior of Pamela and B is atypical, unrepresentative o
real persons in their situations, Richardson goes to grea
lengths illustrating how very special Pamela is: sh
discourses at length on the leading philosophical an
religious issues of the day, advises her husban

continually, and in short behaves like a refined woman of the gentry. Despite her low birth, she possesses every quality to make her not only desirable to B but suitable to her station and acceptable to society (and to Fielding). Thus, Richardson, rather than imitating a recognizable eighteenth-century character type, has created a unique individual, a step remarkable and influential in the development of the novel but contrary to Fielding's Aristotelian sensibility.

As a consequence, Fielding, in his famous Preface to Joseph Andrews, reasserts Aristotelian critical premises and their application to the new genre. Writing in a new genre, Richardson is unconcerned with literary precedent. But Fielding, also making the claim of newness, delves deep into generic history and literary antecedent to place his work. The Preface is filled with definitions of comedy, romance, epic, the ridiculous and with distinctions of various sorts. And the novel itself fulfills the promises of the Preface.

Much has been written about Fielding's ingenious plotting--the delayed revelation of the importance of seemingly trivial incidents--but we need at least point out the obvious adherence to a demand for a clear beginning, middle, and end: the initial London scenes, the long series of events on the road, the reunion of all the characters in Somersetshire with the unraveling of confused identities and the marriage of Joseph and Fanny. Perhaps more important, however, is Fielding's statement about his characters:

> I declare here once for all I describe not men, but manners; not an individual, but a species. Perhaps it will be answered, Are not the characters then taken from life: To which I answer in the affirmative; nay, I believe I might aver that I have writ little more than I have seen. The lawyer is not only alive, but has been so these four thousand years.[14]

Here are Aristotle's universal types. Once a character's type is determined, the response to particular situations is always predictable. The types, Joseph Andrews and Tom Jones, will always have the same, inevitable outcome; Pamela and Clarissa, however, as unique individuals, are subject to unique outcomes and thus engage the reader's emotional concern much more fully. As Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg express it in their The Nature of the Narrative:

> In responding to Richardsonian characterization, the reader does not make a connection between the fictional character and the actual type or concept; he makes a connection between the character's psyche and his own. Richardson's characterizations are much more personal--drawn more deeply from the author's own being--than Fielding's, and the reader's response is also much more personal.[15]

Note the concern with the reader's involvement. Richardso gives the reader emotional outbursts (primarily the "terror of the seduction scenes and Pamela's despair over he plight) interspersed throughout a "long, still book," an the epistolary style allows the reader to share Pamela' emotional introspection. Richardson's interest in emotio at the expense of developing his plot occasioned an ap appraisal by Johnson: "'Why, Sir, if you were to rea Richardson for the story, your impatience would be so muc fretted that you would hang yourself. But you must read hi for the sentiment, and consider the story as only givin occasion to the sentiment."[16] I think this dispute betwee Richardson, the emotionalist, and Fielding, the skille literary craftsman, well illustrates the results of th clash between the literary values advanced by Aristotle an Longinus.

By no means do I wish to suggest that all of th differences between the two lines of neoclassicism, or eve between these two early novelists, are attributable to Longinus/Aristotle dichotomy. Such a claim would reduce an oversimplify eighteenth-century literary history greatly But an understanding of these conflicting classica approaches may help us understand the state of flux in bot criticism and literature during the period. Neoclassicism as one of the first definable literary movements in England sought desperately to accommodate not only a divers eighteenth-century literature but all of world literature Such an attempt was bound to produce rifts, and I think th ultimate failure of neoclassicism to devise a comprehensiv poetic led to its final demise at the end of the century, a a mimetic theory of literature was replaced by mor subjective conceptions of how poetry works.

NOTES

[1]Samuel Johnson, *Life of Dryden* in *Lives of the English Poets*, ed. Waugh (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952), I, 287.

[2]Aristotle, *Poetics* in *Classical Literary Criticism*, trans. T. S. Dorsch (London: Penguin Books, 1965), p. 43.

[3]Aristotle, p. 44.

[4]Aristotle, p. 68, pp. 73-4.

[5]Aristotle, p. 62.

[6]Longinus, *On the Sublime* in Dorsch, p. 100.

[7]Loginus, p. 100.

[8]Joseph Addison, *Spectator* 267.

[9]Addison, *Spectator* 273.

[10]Johnson, *Life of Dryden*, I, 332.

[11]John Dennis, *The Advancement and Reformation of Modern Poetry* in *The Critical Works of John Dennis*, ed. Edward Niles Hooker (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1939), I, 215.

[12]Joseph Trapp, *Lectures in Poetry* in *Eighteenth-Century Critical Essays*, ed. Scott Elledge (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1961), I, 242.

[13]See, for example, Owen Jenkins, "Richardson's *Pamela* and Fielding's 'Vile Forgeries,'" *PQ*, 44 (1965), 200-10.

[14]Henry Fielding, *Joseph Andrews* (New York: New American Library, 1960), p. 162.

[15]Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, *The Nature of the Narrative* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), pp. 101-02.

[16]James Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, ed. R. W. Chapman,

corrected by J. D. Fleeman (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 480.