Publications
of the

Mississippi Philological

Association

1988

Editors

Rex Stamper Hilton Anderson

Advisory Editors

Ben Fisher Rosalie Daniels
Anita Stamper Daniel E. Williams
Ancilla Coleman
Nancy Hargrove Niriam Shillingsburg

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The editors wish to thank Dr. James H. Sims, Academic Vice-President, of the University of Southern Mississippi; Dr. David Wheeler, Chairman, Department of English, University of Southern Mississippi; and Professor Frederick Barthelme, of the Center for Writers, University of Southern Mississippi for their support for this publication.

Publications of the Mississippi Philological Association

Annual dues include a subscription to POMPA. Subscription rates for libraries--$5.00. Manuscripts are not solicited. Correspondence concerning POMPA for 1986, 1987, 1988 should be addressed: POMPA, Department of English, University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-5037.

CONTENTS

Tennessee Williams' *Clothes for a Summer Hotel*: Feminine Sensibilities and the Artist 1
Hilton Anderson

Poems 10
David Breeden

Mrs. Ramsey as the Archetypal Guide in Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* 13
Glen P. Bush

Mythological Structure and Psychological Significance in Hurston's *Seraph on the Suwanee* 21
Ancilla Coleman

The Propositions of Faith: The Ideology of the Royal Society and Bunyan's Academy of Maxims 28
Kevin L. Cope

"The Manufacturing of Christ"; An exerpt 39
J. Madison Davis

The Poisonous Snake in the Garden: Racism In the Agrarian Movement 46
John L. Grigsby

The "Attained Bourne" of Joanna Burden: Narrative Evasions in *Light in August* 56
Joan Wylie Hall

From *Robinson Crusoe* to *Philip Quarll*: The Transformation of a Robinsonade 64
Patricia Harkins

Poems 74
Rabiul Hasan

Tootle: The Little Engine and What it Carries: Ideological Cargo in a Children's Story 75
Jeanne Johnsey

Charles Dickens: Murder, He Wrote 81
Davida D. King

A Nice Derangement of Epitaphs 88
Gerald A. Kirk

"Lawrence, Genius but... Poet but... etc...." 95
Michele Frucht Levy

Mamet and Mystery 106
Edward Lundin

Opposition and Reversal in Primo Levi's *The Periodic Table* 115
Murdo William McRae

Repetition, Continuity, and Development of Character in P. D. James 125
Jill T. Owens

Robert Creeley's *Hello*--A Postmodern Long Poem 131
Wilfried Raussert

Chaucer, An Androgynous Personality 137
Ruth Marshall Roberts

Toward a Reassessment of the *Psalms of David* Within Renaissance Poetry 143
Sallye Sheppeard

Tennesse Williams' *Clothes for a Summer Hotel*: Feminine Sensibilities and the Artist

Hilton Anderson University of Southern Mississippi

In an interview for *The Paris Review* Tennessee Williams stated that he considered his last play produced in New York, *Clothes for a Summer Hotel* (1980), to be his most difficult play to write because of the amount of research required, alleging that he spent "four or five months reading everything there is about [Scott] Fitzgerald and Zelda" (183). There is no question of Williams' researching his subject. It is apparent in his knowledge of the Fitzgeralds, and at times even the wording of the play, that Williams read Turnbull's biography of Fitzgerald, Nancy Milford's *Zelda*. Zelda's novel *Save Me the Waltz*, parts of Hemingway's *A Moveable Feast*, and some fiction of both Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway. In addition, Williams had actually met Hemingway in Cuba in 1959 through the critic Kenneth Tynan.[1] It is probable that Williams also read other material relating to the Fitzgeralds; but in spite of his knowledge of the couple, he did not attempt to portray his characters very realistically or to be objective in his treatment of them, but rather used their lives to express his own feelings, making the play, as Gerald Weales stated "a meditation . . . on art, death, madness, and infidelity, with references to the Fitzgeralds, and other celebrities of our recent literary past" (504).

The more obvious theme of *Clothes for a Summer Hotel* is Williams' often-used motif of a desperate female crying out for release from the suppression of her artistic talents, or from the suppression of her basic instincts and desires. Again as usual, the suppressing or inhibiting force is the male character or characters in the woman's life--a husband, a lover, perhaps both; sometimes it is society with its demand for conformity and respectability. Several times in the play Zelda, the desperate female of this play, uses the very words "cry out" (50) or "cried out," (26) and at one point she even tries to commit suicide because of her suppressed need for some unachievable fulfillment. One can see how Williams, with his own homosexuality and need for artistic achievement, easily relates this suppression to the restrictions and inhibitions placed on the playwright by the audience and the critics, and the restrictions placed on Williams' personal

life by Mrs. Grundy. As a playwright, Williams was often frustrated by the audiences's refusal to accept, at times, both his unconventional theatrical devices and his unusual and sometimes distasteful subject matter.

In *Clothes for a Summer Hotel*, Williams constructs a Procrustean bed for the Fitzgeralds, making them fit into his own artistic and dramatic patterns. Scott becomes the villain who suppresses Zelda's supposedly great writing talent in order to further his own career and to assuage his alleged jealousy of her ability, which for the purposes of this play, surpassed Scott's. In one important scene Dr. Zeller, Zelda's psychiatrist, referring to Zelda's *Save Me the Waltz,* tells Scott: ". . . there are passages in it that have a lyrical imagery that moves me, sometimes, more than your own . . . . I think you suspect as well as I know that Zelda has sometimes struck a sort of fire in her work that--I'm sorry to say this to you, but I never quite found anything in yours, even yours, that was--equal to it . . ." (55).[2] In addition to this alleged jealousy, Scott was supposedly so wrapped up in his own work that he did not properly take care of Zelda's personal needs.

The play itself, Williams informs us in the Author's Note, "is a ghostly play" because he has taken "extraordinary license with time and location" in order "to explore in more depth what we believe is truth of character." As the play begins, Scott, upon receiving word that Zelda has greatly improved, has hastily flown from Hollywood to Ashville, North Carolina, where Zelda is confined in an asylum. This information concerning her recovery proves false, but the asylum serves as an appropriate setting for the mixture of realistic and expressionistic scenes which comprise the play. Most of these scenes are flashbacks which Williams uses as sort of psychoanalytic explanation for not only Zelda's condition, but Scott's, and to some extent, Ernest Hemingway's as well.

The scene is set for the flashbacks when Gerald Murphy, a wealthy socialite friend of the Fitzgeralds, appears on the grounds of the asylum and accuses Scott of driving Zelda to seek a career in the ballet by discouraging her as a writer because of his jealousy, even though, Murphy says, writing was Zelda's real talent--although in truth, there is no real evidence that Scott was jealous of Zelda as a writer, while the reverse seems to be true. According to Arthur Mizener, Zelda was jealous of Scott any time he was the center of attention (135); but far from being jealous, Scott tried to get Maxwell Perkins to publish some of her stories in *Scribner's Magazine*; and when this failed, he tried unsuccessfully to get Perkins to publish them, along with some of her stories that had appeared in *College Humor*, in book

form (*Dear Scott*, 166-169). Nonetheless, in the play Scott admits that he discouraged Zelda's writing; he also states that he made Zelda promise not to publish *Save Me the Waltz* until after his *Tender Is the Night* had come out because, Scott says, "So much of Zelda's material was mine and she put it into her novel" (5). This is apparently true; in a letter to Dr. Squires at Phipps Clinic, where Zelda was being treated at the time, Scott wrote that Zelda had heard the existing 50,000 words of his novel in progress and that "literally one whole section of her novel is an imitation of it, of its rhythm materials even statements and speeches" (Bruccoli, *Some Sort*, 325). Scott also considered the book a personal attack on him (Turnbull 207). Even if Zelda did promise to wait until after *Tender Is the Night* was published, she did not; she sent the manuscript directly to Perkins (Mizener 240), and it was published in 1932--two years before *Tender Is the Night*.

When Zelda appears on stage, she immediately launches into a tirade against Scott. First, she accuses him of using her life as material for his writing without regard for her. Then she reiterates Murphy's statement that she took up ballet because Scott forbade her to write (13). The suppression of her artistic ability was not Zelda's only complaint; Scott was also incapable, she claimed, of fulfilling her as a lover and companion. In the first flashback Zelda "cries out" to Scott that she is "desperate" (32) because he is less passionate than she is, even accusing him of being too effeminate or even homosexual.[3] On top of this, she complains that he prefers his work to taking her dancing and drinking. Scott wants to work; but when she asks about her work, he only responds that her job is "Living well with a devoted husband and a beautiful child" (36). Zelda is, as Williams thinks of himself, a wild, free spirit who is beyond ordinary mortals and consequently should not be subjected to human laws of behavior, but should be allowed to live free as a hawk (Hemingway's word for Zelda).[4] Scott is not the only one incapable of understanding Zelda and keeping her from fulfilling her destiny; even Zelda's lover Edouard, the French aviator who flew so daringly low over St. Raphael, was much too conventional. During their brief affair he insisted on being discreet, while Zelda wanted to throw caution to the wind and literally shout about their relationship. He called her "dear savage" (46) and told her that she was "too romantic" (48) and dangerously impulsive (37). He even told her not to claw his shoulders because he would have to explain it in the barracks (45). And he declined her offer to become his mistress, preferring the calmer life of an aviator, telling her as Jacques tells Alabama in Zelda's *Save Me the Waltz*, "Hold on to

your benefits" (59). When she later recalls her affair with Edouard, Zelda tells the intern who represents him in the play, "I cried out so wildly in your embrace that you were shocked and abandoned me to this long retreat into --[insanity]" (27). Zelda should have been allowed to be as free as a hawk --and as predatory.

The second aspect of Williams' interest in femininity and art is seen in the relationship between Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway. Williams attempts to explore the relationship between these two as some sort of proof of the influence of feminine traits on a writer's ability. Throughout the play Williams suggests that both Scott and Ernest had certain feminine, indeed one might say homosexual, traits which contributed to the sensitivity of their perception and made them both great writers. However, both tried to suppress these traits in order to maintain a more traditional masculine image, Hemingway obviously being more successful at this than Fitzgerald. Williams' idea that feminine sensibility is necessary for good writing is apparent throughout the play, and, indeed, becomes one of the play's main themes. He hits upon Fitgerald's effeminacy in the first flashback: while Scott is working, Zelda enters the room and begins a conversation in which she tells him, among other things, that he is prettier than she is, and lacking in virility. She then states: "I think that to write well about women, there's got to be that [ambiguity of gender], a part of that, in the writer . . ." (31). Switching to a more direct attack, she asks if homosexuals keep chasing him because he's so pretty that they think he's homosexual also, adding that her body is "not so delicate to the touch" (32) as his. Next, she opens a copy of the *Princeton Triangle Club* in which Scott is pictured dressed as the ingenue for one of the club's musical productions,[5] viciously noting that the image is "Exquisite . . . a perfect illusion" (33); her comment reminds one perhaps of Owl Eyes' savagely ironic observation in Gatsby's library: "It's a triumph. What thoroughness! What realism!" (*Gatsby* 45).

When the Hemingways appear in the flashback to the Murphy's party, Ernest begins by stating his well-known opinions of the Fitzgeralds: "Zelda's a crazy, Scott's a rummy" (56), but he also admits that "Scott has talent: delicate sensibilities for a male writer" (57). When Hadley Hemingway points out that Scott has worked very hard to get her own husband's works published, Zelda asks whether the reason for that is "the attraction of Ernest's invulnerable virile nature." She goes on, "Isn't that the implication, that Scott is magnetized, infatuated with Ernest's somewhat

too carefully cultivated aura of the prizefight and the bullring and the man-to-man attitude acquired from Gertrude Stein?" (57). Hemingway and Zelda never had very high opinions of each other. Aside from thinking her crazy, Hemingway felt she was extremely jealous of Scott's success and that she encouraged his drinking bouts to keep him from writing (Hemingway 178-9). In *A Moveable Feast* Hemingway states that Zelda even sought out lesbian company as part of her scheme to impede Scott's work, forcing him to keep her company instead of working because she was "more jealous of his work than anything" (181). And in a letter to Maxwell Perkins, Hemingway stated that he "often thinks Scott might have been the greatest of American writers if he had not married her" (Bruccoli, *Scott & Ernest* 68). He even told Scott that Zelda wanted to "destroy" him (Hemingway 189). On the other hand, Zelda's epithets for Hemingway were "bogus," "materialistic mystic," "phony he-man" and "pansy with hair on his chest" (Bruccoli, *Scott & Ernest* 102). She also claimed Hemingway interfered with Scott's work by encouraging his drinking, and she even accused Scott of having a homosexual affair with Hemingway (Bruccoli, *Scott & Ernest* 102). During the party scene of *Clothes for a Summer Hotel*, Williams, obviously taking Zelda's side, has Hemingway encourage Scott to start a row by having him question the sexual preference of an effeminate male singer who flattens Fitzgerald with a single blow. Hemingway may have caused Fitzgerald to misbehave on some occasions, but Fitzgerald's penchant for getting into trouble when drinking is well-known; it is also widely recognized that Zelda encouraged such altercations.

Left on the stage by themselves, Scott and Ernest discuss their relationship with each other. This scene allows Williams to compare and contrast these two famous writers. Hemingway, not unexpectedly, says they have different sensibilities, although it appears that Williams would disagree. Hemingway accuses Fitzgerald of writing of "Zelda and Zelda and more Zelda; As if you'd like to appropriate her identity and her--." He then goes on "Sorry, Scott, but I almost said--gender. That wouldn't have been fair. It's often been observed that duality of gender can serve some writers well" (64). A little later in the discussion, though, Scott suggests that Hemingway is not as tough as he pretends, and reminds Hemingway how he treated Scott with "tenderness" when he was sick in Lyon.[6] Hemingway quickly replies, "You had the skin of a girl, the soft eyes of a girl, you--solicited attention. I gave it, yes, I found you touchingly vulnerable" (66). He also says these feelings were "disturbing" for reasons he would "rather not ex-

amine too closely" (66), obviously because a Hemingway man would not want to discover that he had homosexual tendencies. Hemingway's actual description of Fitzgerald at their first meeting is the probable source of this part of the scene. In *A Moveable Feast*, Hemingway wrote that:

> Scott was a man then who looked like a boy with a face between handsome and pretty. He had very fair wavy hair, a high forehead, excited and friendly eyes and a delicate long-lipped Irish mouth that on a girl would have been the mouth of a beauty. His chin was well built and he had good ears and a handsome, almost beautifully unmarked nose. This should not have added up to a pretty face, but that came from the coloring, the very fair hair and the mouth. The mouth worried you until you knew him and then it worried you more (147).

Scott continues the discussion, mentioning Hemingway's story "A Simple Inquiry" in which an Italian officer shows a homosexual interest in his young orderly. Hemingway replies that he also wrote a story called "Sea Change" about a homosexual couple;[7] he justifies these stories by saying it is his profession "to observe and interpret all kinds of human relations" (67), but does not explain how he was able to interpret such relations so well. He also adds that someday he will write about Scott: "You see, I can betray even my oldest close friend, the one most helpful in the beginning"[8] (67). The scene ends with a reminder of Hemingway's ultimate suicide. In his *Memoirs* Tennessee Williams stated, "There's no doubt in my mind that there is more sensitivity--which is equivalent to more talent--among the 'gays' of both sexes than among the 'norms'... (51). And while in the *Paris Review* interview he did not actually say that Hemingway and Fitzgerald were homosexuals, he did observe that "Hemingway had a remarkable interest in and understanding of homosexuality, for a man who wasn't homosexual. I think both Hemingway and Fitzgerald had elements of homosexuality in them"[9] (170), which obviously gave them more feminine sensibilities.

There is no real conclusion to the play other than Scott's leaving to return to Hollywood as Zelda shouts, "I can't be your book anymore! Write yourself a new book!" (77); but Tennessee Williams, through his manipulation of the main characters in the play, makes two different but related statements concerning the artist and feminine sensibilities: 1) It is necessary for many artists and females to be completely free and unrestrained in order to live and accomplish their goals, artistic and otherwise, in life. And 2) In

males the most perceptive and artistically creative elements come from the feminine part of their natures.

Notes

[1]In his *Memoirs* Williams wrote that he was fearful of meeting Hemingway because he understood that Hemingway could "be very unpleasant to people of my particular temperament." However, Williams had no reason for concern: "He [Hemingway] couldn't have been more charming. He was exactly the opposite of what I'd expected. I had expected a very manly, super-macho sort, very bullying and coarse spoken. On the contrary, Hemingway struck me as a gentleman who seemed to have a very touching shy quality about him." Hemingway even wrote a letter of introduction to Fidel Castro for Kenneth Tynan and Williams (67).

[2]It should be pointed out that contrary to Williams'/Zeller's praise of Zelda's novel, the reviewers were not so kind, strongly attacking its "exaggerated images" (*Books* 10), "atrocious style" (*New York Times* 7) and "strained metaphor" (Hellman 190). The book sold less than 1400 copies (Bruccoli, *Some Sort* 332), and anyone who has ever read *Save Me the Waltz* can easily see that Fitzgerald had no reason to think Zelda's novel would overshadow his work, although Scott was somewhat peeved that an amateur like Zelda could write as well as she did.

[3]Fitzgerald's inability to please Zelda as a lover is the subject of "A Matter of Measurements" in Hemingway's *A Moveable Feast*.

[4]Cf. "Hawks Do Not Share" in *A Moveable Feast*.

[5]There are several of these pictures in existence: one appears in Turnbull's biography of Fitzgerald, another in Bruccoli's *Some Sort of Epic Grandeur*.

[6]This trip is described in A *Moveable Feast* in the section entitled "Scott Fitzgerald."

[7]Hemingway's story "The Sea Change" is actually about a woman who leaves a man for another woman; and it does not take place on a ship, but in a Paris cafe.

[8]Ironically, Fitzgerald allegedly told Laura Hearne, his secretary in Asheville, "If you want to be a top-notch writer you have to break with everyone. You have to show your own father up" (Hearne 259).

[9]Dotson Rader claims that Williams actually told him that Hemingway was a "closet homosexual" and further states: "That was one of his favorite

theories, that Hemingway was a closet homosexual and his terrible mistreatment of F. Scott Fitzgerald was based on a sexual longing for Fitzgerald that he could not admit; that was why Hemingway struck the macho pose and wrote the way he did and finally killed himself, because he could not finally truly become what he was fated to be: a homosexual" (*Tennessee*, 117).

Works Cited

Bruccoli, Matthew J. *Scott and Ernest: The Authority of Failure and The Authority of Success*. New York: Random House, 1978.

--- *Some Sort of Epic Grandeur*. New York: Harcourt, 1981.

Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby*. New York: Scribner's, 1953.

Fitzgerald, F. Scott and Maxwell Perkins. *Dear Scott/Dear Max--The Fitzgerald-Perkins Correspondence*. Ed. John Kuehl and Jackson R. Bryer. New York: Scribner's, 1971.

Fitzgerald, Zelda. *Save Me the Waltz*. New York: Scribner's, 1932.

Hearne, Laura Guthrie. "A Summer with F. Scott Fitzgerald." *Esquire* Dec. 1964: 160-165, 232-260.

Hellman, Geoffrey. Rev. of *Save Me the Waltz*, by Zelda Fitzgerald. *Saturday Review of Literature* 22 October 1932: 190.

Hemingway, Ernest. *A Moveable Feast*. New York: Bantam, 1965.

Mellow, James R. *Invented Lives: F. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald*. Boston: Houghton, 1984.

Mizener, Arthur. *The Far Side of Paradise: A Biography of F. Scott Fitzgerald*. New York: Vintage, 1959.

Rader, Dotson. *Tennessee: Cry of the Heart*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1985.

Raidy, William A. "Instant in the Wind." Rev. of *Clothes for a Summer Hotel*, by Tennessee Williams. *Plays and Players* May 1980: 33-4.

Rev. of *Save the Waltz*, by Zelda Fitzgerald. *Books* 30 Oct. 1932: 10.

---- *New York Times* 16 Oct. 1932: 7.

Turnbull, Andrew. *Scott Fitzgerald*. New York: Scribner's, 1962.

Weales, Gerald. "American Theater Watch, 1979-1980." *Georgia Review* 34 (1980) 497-508.

Williams, Tennessee. "The Art of the Theater." *Paris Review* 23 (1981) 144-85.

--- *Clothes for a Summer Hotel: A Ghost Play*. New York: New Directions, 1983.

--- *Memoirs*. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1975.

David Breeden University of Southern Mississippi

Quitting

It's time I give up. Persistence
is a tired joke. I've sweated
and that's an achievement. With its tail
glued to its nose the armadillo
is a flower pot.

Moses Rose survived the Alamo because he left.
He'd been shot at wearing Napoleon's coat and knew
there was nothing to it. With its tail
glued to its nose the armadillo
is a flower pot.

And the knowledge of iron is a temporary
advantage. It's time I gave up. What
you want, what I can do, is mysterious
to me, like the figure eight in the
Pacific on so many globes.

Graveyard Shift in Radio

In the early morning, just after midnight,
only honest folks are up--cops drink coffee,
janitors gather loose change,
bakers eat their own dough.
They all listen to six covers of "Faded Love"
and hours of time & temp & sometimes call,
maybe because they like my voice,
maybe because the songs make sense
out of the sex & hate, make it

more than something fallen into
like an uncovered well--more than something pulled out,
steaming,

like a winter calf. Mostly women
call. I keep several on hold,
one with a baby, one with religion,
one with a girl gone off
with a coal miner. So many
calls I can't record the news

or call time & temp, so it's
same all night--but folks
don't notice, even when I put up
a tape and call one over. But,
live, without the phone, we're both
shy, don't say much. The last
one said, Why aren't you more like
that weekend guy?
Joke more; tell stories.

A Poetry of Action and Emotion

Because she sat in the cafeteria
terrified to leave, knowing she
had to clean her tray, not
knowing how, studying the movements
again and again:

Can one: napkin
and milk;
Can two: food scraps;
Can three: knife, fork, and spoon;

never trusting her rhythm,
because,
she sits on a bench, nine shades of orange,

two of yellow, by the sunken ocean,
sandbars stretching out past the
wharves, writing about a river.

Her birds "fold and unfold." Her
currents are "pulling and lapping."
She writes a boyfriend and a canoe.

First Memory: Trailer Park, Wooden Porch

I'll crawl under, into the space
just tall enough for my head;
I'll grab the first warm thing I touch.

I've seen the moon, heard a bit
about the stars; now I'll go
under the porch. If I don't

we'll move away; I'll forget.
If I don't get scarred, like a
picnic table, I'll forget. No,

I'll clinch my fingers at
odd moments, feel always
the warm, rusty fish hook.

Mrs. Ramsey as the Archetypal Guide in Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*

Glen P. Bush University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff

Virginia Woolf's archetypal and mythic structures in her novel *To the Lighthouse* serve as simultaneous literary paradigms, not parallel, but transposed one on the other, to such an extent that the reader and the characters are both coerced and enchanted by her archetypal imagery. Specifically, and most importantly, the mythic "vision" that serves as the convergent point in Part Three of the novel, James and Mr. Ramsey's journey to the lighthouse and Lily's completed painting, is in actuality Mrs. Ramsey's "vision" as described in Part One.

We remember in Part One, Mrs. Ramsey wants two events to occur: her son, James, to go to the lighthouse and the culmination of a successful evening meal for her immediate family and house guests, of whom Lily Briscoe is one. In contrast, Mr. Ramsey, the philosopher, illustrates his regimented male role by informing James and Mrs. Ramsey that the trip to the lighthouse must be cancelled because of coming bad weather. During this same time, Lily attempts to begin a landscape painting outside of the Ramsey house. However, she is greatly discouraged by Mr. Ramsey's young disciple, Charles Tansley, when he whispers to her that "women can't paint; women can't write," and eventually decides to wait until a better time. As Part One closes, the reader sees that two events have been indefinitely put off, thus creating a schism between father and son and Lily and her artistic desire (feminine abilities). However, Mrs. Ramsey does successfully serve her carefully designed evening meal. Therefore, Part One ends with two failures that are deeply embedded in the characters of Mr. Ramsey, James Ramsey, and Lily. The success of Part One is Mrs. Ramsey's domestic triumph; this orchestrated triumph illustrates her symbolic artistic ability, or domesticity as an art.

Part Two concentrates on the passage of time. Over the following ten years, Mrs. Ramsey dies, the Ramsey's island home is left vacant, and both the immediate and extended Ramsey family of Part One become further fragmented. Part Three sees the reunification of Mr. Ramsey, James, and Lily back at the Ramsey island home. Symbolically, each character returns to the location of defeat, after ten years, to complete the mythic trial. Mr.

Ramsey and his son set sail for the lighthouse, and Lily sets up her paints and easel. With the help of Mrs. Ramsey's memory, in fact in the form of a vision for Lily, the three characters complete their goals. Mrs. Ramsey's memory serves to symbolically reunite father and son at the foot of the lighthouse and Lily with her landscape, paints, art, and self. Thus, Woolf provides a circular journey for her characters that reaffirms and reunites each of the three characters with Mrs. Ramsey's natural artistic abilities and desires.

Working closely with the three archetypal motifs--journey, initiation, and fertility--Joseph Campbell's theory of the monomyth becomes quite apparent. In *The Hero With Thousand Faces* Campbell states,

> Only birth can conquer death--the birth, not of the old thing again, but of something new. Within the soul, within the body social, there must be . . . a continuous "recurrence of birth" . . . (16).

On one level this is the mythic structure that prevails: Departure, Transformation, and Rebirth. Woolf designs, perhaps unwittingly, her novel in such a way as to create Mrs. Ramsey as the monomythic guide. Her heroic efforts consist of her attempts to guide and seal the relationships within her family, especially that between Mr. Ramsey and James, and that between Lily and her art, painting. In this way Mrs. Ramsey serves as the unification symbol, the great heroic peacemaker. Her triumph comes about at the end of Part One after her successful evening dinner and her mythical victory over first the threatening presence of the boar's head in her children's bedroom:

> "Well then," said Mrs. Ramsey, "we will cover it up,"and they all watched her. . . . She quickly took her own shawl off and wound it around the skull, round and round and round, and then she came back to Cam and laid her head almost flat on the pillow beside Cam's and said how lovely it looked now, how the fairies would love it. . . (106).

and secondly Mr. Ramsey's philosophical logic:

> "Yes, you were right. It's going to be wet to-morrow. "She had not said it, but he knew it. And she looked at him smiling. For she had triumphed again (114).

These two victories illustrate the mythical and domestic powers Mrs. Ramsey has within her household. In the first, Mrs. Ramsey is the natural mother and Nature Goddess that can with a toss of her green shawl alleviate the night fears of her children. Symbolically she encircles the center of fear, the boar's head, with her omnipotent shawl. Similarly, she stifles Mr. Ramsey's logic with her non-verbal feminine condescension; an act, once again, that requires Mrs. Ramsey's natural and magical powers to overcome one facade with another.

As Part One ends, Mrs. Ramsey shows her acceptance of her role as guide of the journey and fertility motifs in preparation for the initiation motif. Mrs. Ramsey examines her situation throughout Part One in an effort to combat the existing order so that a new order, or a new knowledge, will eventually become known to her family, both immediate and extended. Her simple motherly actions and motives take on the heroic aspect when she so adroitly manages the common elements of fantasy and life. Thus, in relation to the three motifs, Mrs. Ramsey implants herself securely in the history and future of her household members. Her motherliness along with the surrounding eternal sea symbolizes the ever present fertility motif. Jointly, these motifs form the initiation motif that unmistakingly surfaces in Part Three. Therefore, by the end of Part One, Woolf has successfully formulated her mythic story.

As Joseph Blotner points out, Part Two serves as the assimilated Greek chorus. The incidents are related to the reader as almost a dramatic aside. This shortest section of the novel contains the greatest time span. Thus, it also provides bits of information that draw attention to incidents in both Part One and Part Three that eventually become essential to the story as a whole. For example, the death of Mrs. Ramsey is not described in an agonizing fashion, but rather in terms of Mr. Ramsey's loss:

> [Mr. Ramsey stumbling along a passage stretched his arms out one dark morning, but, Mrs. Ramsey having died rather suddenly the night before, he stretched his arms out. They remained empty] (120).

Immediately preceding and following this excerpt are references to night, sleep, and the bedroom. For this is the night of Mr. Ramsey's life, a time when he must re-evaluate his actions and thoughts exhibited in Part One. Yes, it is extremely important that Mrs. Ramsey died in Part Two, but it is just as important that she "died rather suddenly the night before" and that

his grasp for her ("one dark morning") and everything she symbolized remained empty. Spiritually, it appears, Mrs. Ramsey has entered another level of the journey for her, an extension of her water-fertility symbol, while providing the living characters with their night journey, as exemplified in Mr. Ramsey's loss of his mother, wife, female half, and temporarily, his Muse of Rhetoric, Polyhymnia, all embodied and symbolized by Mrs. Ramsey.

Thus, Part Two is interpreted as the transformation period of the monomyth. The characters, each in their own way, go through a change. In each case the transformation is drastic, but from the mythic scope Mrs. Ramsey's transformation is definitely the most drastic. She dies. However, in Part Three the reader discovers that physical death does not necessarily mean everlasting death. In another way Part Two also serves as a transformation, but this time as a structural transformation; it collects the elements of space, time, and memory. Structurally the novel is designed within the space - time - space guidelines; however, Part Two temporally relates to the original space--the island home--and the memory of Mrs. Ramsey. Woolf has very carefully constructed this section. First, the section deals with a ten-year lapse. Second, it deals with the place of origin and the changes from that place. Third, it deals with the coming or the return of Mrs. Ramsey in the form of a memory for Mr. Ramsey, James, and Lily. Once again, however, the primary elements of the section are time, change, and transformation. Almost unnaturally Woolf centers time in the middle of the novel in such a way as to force the recognition of the subtitles of events in Parts One and Three that are tied relentlessly to the spatial setting of the island home. Extending the idea of the monomyth into Jungian psychology, one immediately sees the significance of the physically circular journey from origin back to origin around the home on the island. In other words, as a diagram this journey would appear as a mandala with the home as the center; translated into psychological terms this diagram would actually portray the center of the self and all the normal intervening factors in one's life. Of course, Part Three is essential for this diagram to actually be realized.

Campbell explains the type of transcendence or rebirth that occurs in Part Three in the following way:

> The happy ending of the fairy tale, the myth, and the divine comedy of the soul, is to be read, not as a contradiction, but as a transcendence of the universal tragedy of man (28).

Thus, in Part Three the rebirth symbolizes the father-son relationship and the artist-art relationship that in turn completes the spiritual resolution of the union. To understand the complex structure of symbols and literary language in Part Three, and thus the whole novel, a method of relations need to be established. Therefore, while discussing events found in Part Three, it will be useful to refer to excerpts from Parts One and Three. This approach will also help weave the imagery and symbolism into a continual fabric.

Part Three presents the culmination of the learning process witnessed in the first section and the fragmentation from the second section. Mr. Ramsey and James have returned to the island home to make their voyage to the lighthouse. Lily has returned to the exact spot to paint her dream. In both cases there is a return to Mrs. Ramsey's organic world. These simple ideas and images have a more far-reaching effect than recognized on the surface. For example, the idea of the return fits naturally into the monomyth described by Campbell and Jung. The return to the island home, however, delves even deeper into the imagery and symbolism of the literary and psychological areas of the novel.

The island itself represents a mythological existence besides that of archetypal or literary symbolism, but not totally divorced from these forms of symbolism. Cynthia Fansler Behrman explains this significance and symbolism in terms of the English historical and psychological concepts of the garden image, that is of a pre-evil state, the Garden of Eden surrounded by fertile waters (39). This theory coincides with Campbell's discussion of the World Navel--the life-giving center (44). Jung further explains this concept when the term changes from World Navel to mandala, the circle that contains the central point within the psyche (357). From these terms, it is possible to locate the center of the island and the novel in the character of Mrs. Ramsey. She is not simply a literary figure; on the contrary, she symbolizes the growth, the organic being, of the other characters as well as the plot. In what may be interpreted as an anti-Aristotelian, or at least non-Aristotelian structure, Woolf has condensed the essence of her story to the central female character. Joseph Blotner states this central concept in the following manner:

> Virginia Woolf's concept of woman's role in life is crystallized in the character of Mrs. Ramsey, whose attributes are those of major female figures in pagan myth (169).

It is this image of a pagan myth, a pagan goddess, that captures the reader's imagination. She, Mrs. Ramsey, embraces the roles of both male and female with her ability to discuss Mr. Ramsey's ideas with him while contemplating greenhouse repairs and rabbits. From the world of ideas to the world of organic growth she reaches out in order to touch tenderly the life forces around her. In this way Woolf creates the archetypal mother and guide. Mrs. Ramsey recognizes the oppositions in her life: intellect and emotion, nature and science, male and female, and window and lighthouse.

These oppositions illustrate the forming of Mrs. Ramsey and the novel. The conclusion of Part One, her Biblical Last Supper, is parallel to the conclusion of Part Three. In Part Three the characters, Mr. Ramsey, James, and Lily, are drawn together for a similar unification. Even though Cam and Carmichael are also present in Part Three, it is obvious that the sequence of events concerns the former three. These three are the ones most affected by the organic nature of Mrs. Ramsey. She had tried to nurture these three in the ways of life, mythical and magical, during Part One. Now in Part Three she spiritually returns as a memory for Mr. Ramsey and James and as a memory and vision for the visual artist Lily. The evening meal thus becomes the food of life, love, and art in Part Three. Both of these major events occur, it should not be forgotten, on the island surrounded by the fertile waters.

Mrs. Ramsey knows the organic side of the psyche. She does not see herself struggling to get past the "R" in order to get to "Z" in Mr. Ramsey's philosophical theories. Plants, animals, children, and water are her domain. From each of them she gathers her magical powers to distribute strength and growth. The trip to the lighthouse is the trip that she knows James will cherish and need in his later life; the water journey will provide him with his mythical powers. Similarly, she realizes that Mr. Ramsey's intellect prevents him from actively seeking the inevitable journey. Mr. Ramsey uses water imagery, such as rain or wet, as derogatory terms--almost inorganic. Mrs. Ramsey inserts her organic desires into the intellect of Mr. Ramsey in a tenderly violent fashion--through a silent psychic means to triumph.

Closely examining Mrs. Ramsey's preparatory actions in Part One, it is possible to see the parallels Woolf creates in Part Three. A primary element in this creation is the ultimate acceptance of Mrs. Ramsey's desires by Mr. Ramsey, James, and Lily. In Part One these three characters show

an awareness for Mrs. Ramsey's magical knowledge; her motherly instincts are prevalent. However, there is a lack of action on the part of these three to actually accept, or be ultimately influenced by Mrs. Ramsey's powers until Part Three. Two elements that Mrs. Ramsey possesses are patience and time. She is aware of this advantage while Mr. Ramsey is totally blind to the situation. Her awareness, however, goes beyond the conscious level; perhaps this is directly concerned with her motherly powers because she acts instinctively while impressing her desires on family and guests.

Part Two, the period of transition through destruction, leads to the unification of Part Three. The questions asked in Part One, the human and spiritual connections fragmented in Part Two, are the needs for positive action in Part Three all culminate when Mr. Ramsey, James, and Lily return to Mrs. Ramsey's organic world. Only after years of Mr. Ramsey's type of life, philosophical and mathematical, do the three characters learn, apparently unconsciously, that they each need to accept Mrs. Ramsey's desires as their own. Although their actions appear unconscious, it is the new conscious level, one that will replace the philosophical level, that each realizes is important and necessary. Thus, Part Three provides a transference and a transcendence from spirit to human and unconscious to conscious. The journeys of Mr. Ramsey, James, and Lily merge on one heroic figure in the closing lines of the section. Melvin Friedman describes the closing in the following terms:

> She [Lily] indeed shares the focus of narration with Mr. Ramsey and James, who are journeying to the lighthouse. There is a constant shift from her mind, composing the details of the painting, to the collective mind of James and his father, who are intent upon reaching the lighthouse. This final part has a kind of parallel structure, with rapid alternations from one consciousness to the other. Lily's thoughts are filled with the imaginary apparition of Mrs. Ramsey... (202).

Lastly, Woolf has her reborn heroes James and Lily "leaping into space" and drawing "a line there, in the centre," respectively. Symbolically, each character has now broken from the chains of the past and completed the desired mission. Thus, the mythical powers of Mrs. Ramsey as well as the island, the center of their universe, now are transferred to the newly initiated generation of man child and artist.

Works Cited

Behrman, Cynthia Fansler. *Victorian Myths of the Sea*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio UP, 1977.

Beja, Morris, ed. *Virginia Woolf: To The Lighthouse: A Casebook*. London: Macmillan, 1970.

Blotner, Joseph L. "Mythic Patterns in To The Lighthouse." Beja, *Virginia Woolf*. 169-88.

Campbell, Joseph. *The Hero With A Thousand Faces*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1973.

Friedman, Melvin. *Stream of Consciousness: A Study in Literary Method*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1955.

Jung, C.G. *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*. trans. R. F. C. Hull. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1980.

Woolf, Virginia. *To The Lighthouse*. London: Grafton, 1985.

Mythological Structure and Psychological Significance in Hurston's *Seraph on the Suwanee*

Ancilla Coleman Jackson State University

The theme of Zora Neale Hurston's last novel, published in 1948, comes as a surprise. All of Hurston's work before this date, novels, folklore and autobiography, had focused on the life and culture of black people, and contained, in my opinion, the best presentations of the beauty and variety of Afro-American speech to be found anywhere. But in *Seraph on the Suwanee* Hurston writes the story of Arvay Henson, a poor white girl raised in rural Georgia. The title seems related to the passage in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* in which she describes the attitude of Mrs. Turner who grovelled before Janie on account of her light skin. She believed:

> that somehow she and others through worship could attain her paradise heaven of straight-haired, thin-lipped, high-nose boned white seraphs (216).

Arvay is just such a seraph, but the satirical tone evident in the passage just cited is absent. The novel instead is a serious, sympathetic study of the passage of a deprived, poorly educated and defensive young girl into maturity. Comments on the books by critics like Darwin Turner and Lillie Howard have dealt with the plot almost entirely, but have not offered any explanation of this anomalous work in the corpus of Hurston's writing. Why did Hurston create a character like Arvay who opts to become an "angel of the house" in an almost Victorian style?

Short of seizing the Golden Bough and following in Aeneas' footsteps to query the shades, one cannot know exactly what intentions Miss Hurston had in writing this novel, which was published six years after her autobiography, *Dust Tracks on a Road*, appeared. We have, therefore, no statement from the author relevant to this book. However, a careful examination of the work itself reveals a close parallel to the structure of the myth of Cupid and Psyche as recounted by Apuleius in his *Metamorphoses* or *Golden Ass*, the only completed novel in Latin which has been preserved.

Apuleius, a native of Africa, born in the first century A.D., wrote of the adventures of one Lucius, an incorrigible rascal whose highly immoral career is described in language which is realistic and at times even bawdy.

But Apuleius wrote other works dealing with magic, oratory and philosophy. These interests seem more likely sources for the delicately beautiful and moving tale of Psyche, imbedded in an otherwise raucous tale. A contrast between the harsh realism of the story of Lucius and the delicate symbolism in the story of Cupid and Psyche is paralleled in the contrast between Hurston's earlier fiction and anthropological works, and her final novel, *Seraph on the Suwanee*.

The myth of Cupid and Psyche was one of the very last myths given literary form before the ancient religions of the Roman Empire were replaced by Christianity around 300 A.D. Walsh comments that Apuleius drew upon a folktale of Cupid and Psyche inspired by the *Phaedrus* of Plato in constructing his tale (195).

Arvay, heroine of *Seraph on the Suwanee*, like Psyche, comes from a background much lower than that of her husband, Jim Meserve. She thinks of herself as "a Cracker born and a Cracker bred" (238). Jim, on the other hand, is the scion of a Virginia family, impoverished but aristocratic. Like Psyche, Arvay sees her sister married to the most eligible man in the little town of Sawley--Carl Middleton, the preacher--and like Psyche, is much admired but not much desired as a wife. Since she holds herself like a goddess above the other girls of the town, she remains unwed, and a "childishly ignorant girl" (Neumann 78). Jim Meserve, like Cupid, arrives to claim her, and before the wedding, when indeed like Cupid he is neither known nor understood by Arvay, under the mulberry tree, he inflicts upon her "a pain remorseless sweet" (45). Arvay, like Psyche, feels fear, dread at the thought of separation from her family, fear of the monster in the man who "growling like a tiger which has just made a kill and was being challenged" (48), hurried Arvay from the tree, past the curious gaze of her parents, into the buggy and off to the courthouse, promising as they go that he will go on raping her ever after.

Like Psyche, despite the fact that she does indeed see her husband in daylight, Arvay understands him not at all, does not really know him and suffers tortures of jealousy. All the negative comments of Psyche's jealous sisters are made by Arvay, for indeed in the myth these sisters voice the unspoken doubts and fears of Psyche herself. Arvay eventually gives birth to a son, Earl, who is retarded. This event only adds to her fear, defensiveness and self-hatred. The subsequent births of a normal and lovely boy and girl do nothing to quiet her fears.

Jim, meanwhile, labors long and successfully to improve their financial situation and succeeds, eventually, in all his endeavors. He educates the children at the university and surrounds Arvay with every necessity and many luxuries. But she does not rise as he does; she clings to the thought patterns and self-depreciation of her impoverished background. It seems that the gap between them will never be bridged; at last, Jim, stung by Arvay's seeming indifference, like Eros burned by oil from the lamp, withdraws from Arvay's life. Jim accuses her of being "unthankful and unknowing like a hog under an acorn tree eating and grunting and never even looking up to see where the acorns are coming from" (230). She replies bitterly ". . . all I could ever see was that the only holt I ever had on you was the way you craved after my body. Otherwise, I felt you looking down on me all the time" (230). Stung, Jim retorts "I never have seen you as a Teppentime Cracker like you have thrown in my face time and again. I saw you like a king's daughter out of a story book with long soft golden hair. You were deserving and noble, and all I ever wanted to do was to have the chance to do for you and protect you" (231). Jim, frustrated and infuriated, then leaves Arvay.

Distraught, abandoned like Psyche, Arvay approaches the crisis of her life. Then she receives word her mother is dying, and rushes home to Sawley, telling herself that God "meant for her to go back home. This was his way of showing her what to do. The Bible said, 'Everything after its own kind,' and her kind was up there in the piney woods around Sawley" (238). "She was packing frantically to flee away, and to be gone from her married life for good" (239).

But her arrival in Sawley, like the arrival of Psyche at the court of the great mother, Aphrodite, is the signal for her labors to begin. As Erich Neumann said in his Jungian analysis of the myth, Psyche in these labors emerges as the female Hercules. And indeed the task facing Arvay on both the psychic and the physical level is herculean. She must face her life and see it for what it really is.

The memories of life in Sawley have been overlaid for her with a golden glow during her long absence. Now she must really see the little shack in which she grew up, hear the rats scamper about behind the wall panels, threatening to devour even the body of her mother. She must see Carl Middleton for what he is--no servant of God, but rather of Mammon eager only to get his hands on the money Arvay possesses, evidenced by the quality and even luxury of her luggage and dress. She must see her sister, Lor-

raine, whom she so greatly envied, as the slatternly matron who persuaded Carl to marry her by lying and saying Arvay was not interested in him. She shudders when she sees the offspring of this pair--gross, unmannerly young people devoid of ambition, greed and envy staring from their eyes--and reflects that these might have been her own children. The contrast between her own position and that of those she has left behind forces her to see all that Jim has done for her; at last, she is willing to break away from Sawley and to accept all that Jim wishes to give her. She buries her mother splendidly. When, after the funeral, she returns to the little shack and finds that Carl and Lorraine have stolen everything including the expensive gifts Arvay and her children sent to her mother, she steels herself to her final labor--the destruction of all the negative influence of the past--by burning the poor ravaged house to the ground. She donates the land and the mulberry tree under which Jim first possessed her to the town for use as a park.

Freed at last from her hesitations, jealousies, and self-hatred, Arvay returns to Florida to take her rightful place beside her husband--just as Psyche, after her labors are accomplished, rises to Mount Olympus and is numbered among the immortals. She says to Jim at last, with a full heart, "You're a monny ark, Jim, and that's something like a king, only bigger and better" (292).

The close parallels between Hurston's story and Apuleius' Psyche are indeed striking. The story, therefore, lends itself to the Jungian analysis that Erich Neumann performed on Apuleius' tale. Neumann sees the tale of Psyche as a paradigm of the psychic development of the feminine. She sees her husband at first as a monster. Neumann notes of Psyche what was true of Arvay--"The beginning of her love was a marriage of death as dying, being-raped, and being taken" (79). In that marriage, Psyche is "subservient to Eros; though she had yielded to him in the darkness, she had not loved him" (81) as Arvay had not loved Jim. With each, "the loss of her love is among the deepest truths of this myth; this is, according to Neumann "the tragic moment in which each feminine psyche enters upon its own destiny (81). Each has deeply wounded her lover. Each must struggle to transcend "the separation accomplished by her act" (83).

Neumann notes that "Love as an expression of feminine wholeness is not possible in the dark, as merely unconscious process; an authentic encounter with another involves consciousness, hence also the aspect of suffering and separation" (85). As Plato observed in the *Symposium*, "the yearning to reunite what has been sundered. . . [is] the mythical origin of love" (86).

Psyche must enter into a contest with Eros' terrible mother, Aphrodite. Arvay must in her visit to Sawley wrestle with her false image of her mother. She sees that her mother really wishes for her to rise, to leave ugliness and poverty and squalor behind, to embrace her husband and take all he wishes to give. Arvay's complete break with her lowly past comes when she burns down the poor home in which her mother died. Psyche leaves her own lowly existence when as Eros' wife, she joins the gods on Mount Olympus. In each case,

> the solution of the problem consists not in struggle but in the creation of a fruitful contact between feminine and masculine. Psyche is an exact reversal of Delilah. She does not rob a disarmed and enfeebled man of his power in order to kill him in the manner of the Terrible Mother. . . Nor does she, like Medea, steal the Golden Fleece by trickery and violence; she finds the element of the masculine that is necessary to her in a peaceful situation, without harming the masculine in any way (Neuman 102).

As Neumann observed of Apuleius' Psyche,

> What Psyche [Arvay] now experiences may be said to be a second defloration, the real, active, voluntary defloration which she accomplishes in herself. She is no longer a victim but an actively loving woman (70).

Eros, deeply moved by the struggles of Psyche, assists her in her third task when she falls unconscious. Eros awakens her and in so doing, defies his terrible mother, Aphrodite. The struggles of Psyche have enabled Eros also to liberate himself from a childish bond to his mother and to give himself wholly to her. She has helped him achieve his maturity as she struggled to achieve her own. And therefore:

> The supreme masculine authority bows to the human and feminine, which by its superiority in love has proved itself equal to the divine(125).

Psyche and Arvay at last "raise the matriarchal stage to its authentic being and exalt it to the Amazonian level" (79). They are no longer naive and infantile. They have truly seen their lovers.

Janie, in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, had won her heart's desire by fleeing bourgeois comforts to embrace the tedium of stoop labor, clad in

overalls, beside the man who gives her freedom. Arvay, on the other hand, must reject her poverty and limitations to find her fulfillment. She becomes a seraph in fact, an "angel in the house," devoting herself entirely to the service of her husband as he has devoted himself to her, providing her with every luxury and comfort in his power to give. She is in a sense "deified"--at last willing to rise to a higher level of life--to be happy and relaxed in it --to enjoy it as the earthly paradise it is, but one closed to her as long as she clung to the values and pettiness inherent in her impoverished beginnings. Arvay's story overturns the old rhyme she learned in her childhood which for so long clouded her mind: Cracker born and Cracker bred, / I'll be a Cracker when I'm dead. She has learned as did Psyche, that to achieve fulfillment, individuation and personhood, service to others whether through a profession or to a husband and children, must be love's free gift. A vision of fully realized mature conjugal love wherein two fully empowered beings give themselves each to each finally emerges after all the fears and jealousies are overcome and their bonds broken.

Whether consciously or unconsciously, Hurston has re-created one of the powerful myths of the ancient world, a tale of a girl rising from her ignorance and lowly human state to become fully empowered, a goddess. In telling this tale, she distances the characters from herself by making them white just as Apuleius distances them by: making them deities--at a time when sophisticated Romans no longer took the gods seriously. Each tale reflects the psychological growth necessary for a young girl taking her place eventually as a matriarch in her own family. It is like the story of Janie and Teacake, a tale of love in which a woman is completely fulfilled. One can say of the story of Arvay what P. G. Walsh says of Psyche in his study of the Roman novel: "the history of Psyche presents a vision of the progress of the human soul alienated from true reality, but searching unceasingly for it and being eventually admitted to it" (233).

The story calls to mind as well D. H. Lawrence's vision of a proper relation between man and woman in *Aaron's Rod*, where he describes the lovers as:

> Two eagles in mid air, grappling, whirling, coming to their intensification of love-oneness there in mid-air. In mid-air the love consummation. But all the time each lifted on its own wings: each hearing itself on its own wings at every moment of the mid-air love consummation. That is the splendid love-way (Beaty 359).

Works Cited

Apuleius Madaurensis. *The Transformation of Lucius: Otherwise Known as The Golden Ass*. Trans. Robert Graves. New York: Farrar, Strauss and Young, 1951.

Beaty, Jerome, ed. *The Norton Introduction to the Short Novel.* 2nd ed. New York: W. W. Norton, 1987.

Hurston, Zora Neale. *Dust Tracks on a Road.* New York: Arno Press, 1969.

-----*Seraph on the Suwanee, a Novel.* New York, AMS Press, 1974.

-----*Their Eyes Were Watching God*. New York: Fawcett World Library, 1969.

Neumann, Erich. *Amor and Psyche: The Psychic Development of the Feminine.* Princeton UP, 1956.

Tatum, James. *Apuleius and The Golden Ass.* Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1979.

Walsh, P. G. *The Roman Novel.* Cambridge UP, 1970.

The Propositions of Faith: The Ideology of the Royal Society and Bunyan's Academy of Maxims

Kevin L. Cope Louisiana State University

The prose writings of the later seventeenth century have away of humbling attempts at generic criticism. Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko* could be a short story or a drama; Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* might or might not be a novel. Writers on the vanguard of Restoration thought took pride in defying authoritarian notions of genre. Yet four of the most irregular, most polymathic writers, and most aggressive (if not progressive) writers of this period--Joseph Glanvill, Abraham Cowley, Bishop Thomas Sprat, and John Bunyan--do agree on one point: that the "proposition," whether defined as "a proposal" or as "a declarative statement of principle," must lay the foundation of any new work and of any new genre. The peculiar discourse of the "proposition," I shall argue, underwrites some of the most remarkable experiments with genre during the later seventeenth century. A combination of plans (proposals for doing something) and assertions (theses from which arguments can proceed), propositional discourse sustains the visionary propaganda of the Royal Society, promotes Bunyan's project to link religion with fiction, and leads to the development of a genre, like the novel, which presents fragmentary experience as a pathway to an organized, providentially guided society.

According to that venerable source, the *OED*, the seventeenth-century fused the definition of the words "maxim" and "proposition." For writers of this period, a "proposition" was literally a "setting forth," an advancing of a thought. "Proposition" thus retained more of its original, voluntaristic meaning than its present-day, lackluster meaning might suggest. The assertiveness associated with the term "proposition" colored the definitions of many particular types of propositions, especially the definition of one popular literary form, the maxim. "Maxim," meanwhile, was in the process of losing its straightforward philosophical meaning. While "maxim" once meant simply "axiom" (like, for example, the fundamental rules of logic), it now came to mean "a rule or principle of conduct" and a "proposition. . . expressing (especially in aphoristic or sententious form) some general truth of science or experience." "Expressing" is a key word; in becoming

synonymous with propositions, sententious statements were coming to count as "approaches to," "pressings against," and "operations on" experience, not just disengaged analyses of it.

Owing to their brevity, maxims usually appeared in collections. Glanvill's and Cowley's "proposals," about which I shall speak below, thus belong to the maxim tradition, for they offer collections of suggestions rather than systematic philosophies or full-scale descriptions of visionary utopias. The goals of the maxim book changed radically during its long history. The maxim collectors of the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras were modest in their aims. They presented themselves as editors rather than authors, as compilers rather than as ideologues. Would-be scribes like Nicholas Bacon, George Gamage, and George Wither recorded, in more or less random order, the witty declarations of all antiquity. Restoration maxim "collectors," on the other hand, present themselves as the chief authors of their books. For writers like Halifax and Whichcote, maxims are made up on the spot. They lack the authority of antiquity. For these more progressive authors, maxims apply to specific situations and need to be integrated into some larger, authorizing structure. The one Elizabethan collection of maxims which enjoyed unrelenting popularity during the Restoration, Nicholas Ling's *Politeuphia, or Wits Common-wealth*, owed its unwithering fame to its theorizing principle of organization. Ling arranges his aphorisms according to a scheme of knowledge and concludes each of his sections with summary comments of his own minting. Less enduring authors took a less aggressive approach to the gathering of propositions. Anthony Copley, for example, amused himself by organizing *Wits, Fits, and Fancies* according to the social rank of the authors quoted; aphorisms by kings precede those by dukes, and so forth. A forward looking editor like Ling, however, proceeds in a more literary way, juxtaposing comments from high and low in order to play up to his conclusive remarks.

As the seventeenth century progressed, "wit" played less of a role in an increasingly pragmatic maxim. The early seventeenth century held onto a vague distinction between, first, epigrams and apothegms, and, second, maxims and aphorisms. In theory, epigrams and aphorisms were witty and elaborate, while maxims and aphorisms were more incisive and compact. Yet as early as Francis Bacon's *Apothegms New and Old* (1625-6), these two modes were converging. Lord Verulam treats apothegms as "*mucrones verborum, pointed speeches*," as witty dilations compacted into sharp points. In the mid-sixteenth century, decorative, witty sentences sprawled all over

Nicholas Bacon's great house; at the turn of the century, Raleigh opened his *Cabinet Council* with an announcement that he offers modest but effective aphorisms distilled from "authority and experience"; during the Restoration, Halifax asks his lean, serious maxims to respond to experience and criticize authority.

> *Salus Populi* is the greatest of all Fundamentals, yet not altogether an immoveable one. It is a Fundamental for a Ship to ride at Anchor when it is in Port, but if a Storm cometh the Cable must be cut.[1]

No longer a witty turn by a well-established ancient, the Halifaxean maxim prescribes a practical approach to experience and a revisionist approach to authority. In the same way, Samuel Hartlib, introducing his *Macaria*, equates "brief and pithy," his definition of "maxim," with "easy to be effected." For Halifax and Hartlib, the action rather than the foundation--the effect rather than the authority or the referentiality--of the maxim is the central issue.

By the end of the seventeenth century, expectedly, the distinction between maxims, epigrams, apothegms, propositions, and aphorisms all but disappears. Maxims, once the favored genre of the ruling class, takes on an innovative, or at least revisionist flavor. They flow from the pens of pragmatists, visionaries, interlopers, and "trimmers." Like William Penn's visionary *Fruits of Solitude*, John Pennyman's *Useful Sayings* for 1689 claims to offer maxims but offers instead a series of pragmatically intended invocations. "Let there be merchants for trade, seamen for admiralty," and so forth, cries Pennyman, treating the maxim as a means of asserting his proposal for a new society.

The internal rhetorical strategies of the maxim reflect these changes in the maxim book. "Sentence" writers use many techniques, but none is more characteristic of the form than is the generous use of multiple negation. For the epigrammatists of the early century, the rhetorical complexity afforded by doubly, triply, and quadruply negated propositions is an end in itself. For an insistent, late-century divine like Benjamin Whichcote, however, multiple negation is a beginning for a reformative program. Less of a sign of literary accomplishment than a means to an end, multiple negation is both subtle and provocative. "A Man's Reason is no where so much satisfied; as in matters of Faith" (#943). A complex tissue of implied contradictions, this maxim leaves its readers wondering whether faith and reason differ or agree. It encourages them to find some way to reconcile

the two. Halifax follows a similar strategy, filling his maxims with conditional clauses in order to force decisions between possibilities. "It is not surer that there is a *God*," says Halifax, "than it is, that by him all *Necessary Truths* will be revealed to you" (7). By compressing contradiction and conditionality into a single rhetorical turn, the Restoration maxim presents sententious "truths" as plans by which an author can make future experiences or aphorisms fit into a format. As the individual maxim proposes a plan of action for a particular problem, so the "collector" or "editor" or "author" of a maxim collection sets forth a plan by which to organize his commonwealth of plans. "*God* is the Object, which does *fully* exhaust and draw out, which does perfectly employ, the Faculties of Mind and Understanding," advises Whichcote (#938); the ideal "collector" of maxims, likewise, generates an endless but orderly series of propositions.

II

"Faith" of Whichcote's literary and editorial variety lays the foundation for that great collection of data and scientists, the Royal Society. Never frightened of paradox, the indefatigable Joseph Glanvill, a founder of Britain's first scientific academy, promotes what he calls "solid speculation." Glanvill's world is a collection of fragmented, disconnected informations. No one part of experience evidences any *a priori* relation to any other. Scientists must aggressively put things together; "solid" "science" creates contexts rather than truths. "Irreducible," facts must be explained extrafactually, in the context of a constructive response to an otherwise inexplicable world (50). Science itself is a kind of proposal, an aggressive plan for organizing the world. Even the most visionary proposals create a sense of expectation, for the proposal as a genre entails a belief that its tenets will be implemented. Abraham Cowley's proposed college, for example, always verges on the edge of real construction (only lack of money stands in the way!). This "expectation" is less mystical than mathematical; expectations will be implemented in steps, and each day, Cowley explains, will "adde" "new and greater Purchases" (26). Cowley has faith that he can collect deconstructive pluralism into constructive progress. Although his four travelling professors seek out a relativistic "Philosophy of those [foreign] parts," Cowley himself *expects* that their discoveries will enter into the master context-building process of his academy.

At pains to distinguish fragmentary "experience" from collative "science," Cowley locates the soul of science, "expectation," in the artificial, civil world of his academy. Here he adjusts Aristotle's natural teleology for the modern world; instead of moving toward a natural, cosmological perfection, nature is in the process of making itself eligible to participate in the activities of the academy--in a social process of expectation. By declaring that the proposition will be the basic unit of discourse in the new science, that coherent sentences have priority over individual facts, Cowley suggests that experience proposes itself to man, that it shows itself moving into a social synthesis. "Facts" become aggressive propositions. Bishop Sprat, accordingly, boldly writes his history of the Royal Society before most of that history has happened, for he expects the few available facts to provoke the anticipated history. Sprat's repeated concern with the "delivery of so many *things*, almost in an equal number of *words*" (113) is likewise a concern to use a forceful delivery to yoke together irreducible things, the result being a plan for "propositions."

Like Cowley's *Proposition for the Advancement of Learning*, Glanvill's *Vanity of Dogmatizing* presents the world as a disorderly collection of "inconceivables." As for Cowley, the hard irreducibility of Glanvillian experience ends up authorizing the "solid" assembly of still more complex inconceivables. If the data are inconceivable, why not make a science of organized inconceivables? Glanvill thus treats an irrational, expanding surd, like the number pi, as his model of scientific activity. He selects the womb as an image of science. The womb's immediacy, limitation, irreducibility, and yet capacity for expectation nominate it as a beginning. For similar reasons, Glanvill sets up Aristotle as the arbitrary, irreducible point from which all science proceeds. Glanvill's use of Aristotle shows that the alleged distaste of the modern virtuosi for antiquity has been greatly overestimated. Sprat, for example, complains only that tradition has lumped the ancients into a single mass. Rather than reject the ancients *in toto*, Sprat would break up their wisdom into aphoristic "parcels" suitable for re-editing into a "Roman Common-wealth" of knowledge (106). A "Praeliminary Collection" of "Works," "Opinions," "Ghesses," "Inventions," and maybe a little evidence provides as good--and as irreducible--a starting point as does experience (95).

Everything in Sprat's fragmentary world is expected to become something more synthetic. Facing an already complex evidentiary heap, a mass of "Ghesses" and "Opinions," Sprat treats his academy as nothing less than the

organized intercourse of utterly everything, as a "Freeport of the World." Into this academy, he enlists a complex crew of wildly diverse foreign nationals, persons not yet connected in any one state. "Free and unconfined," these "gentlemen" withdraw from colloquial society, then re-present themselves as members of a synthetic institution (67). Like wide-ranging maximists, these born-again virtuosi propose their own transformation of themselves into "objective" observers of *everything*. Sprat's Royal Society thus incorporates a faith that the private, disconnected parties can always be expected to produce a public view of things, that an elite group of isolated scientists can manufacture an omniscient observer of the ever-partial world. Knowledge, scoffs Sprat, aims at "Dominion over Things" (62). It amounts to a faith that "Things" can be subdued by editorial acts and that science will stay in "a condition of perpetual increasing." The virtuosi "do (as it were) carry the eyes, and the imaginations of the whole company into the *laboratory* with them" (99). Here, then, is the rub: for practical purposes, the unwieldy, totalizing duties of the Sprat's society fall on the individual experimenter, on one fragment of the whole society. The discoveries of this one party, moreover, must be cast in the form of propositions. They must be expressed as a contribution toward an enlarging science, not as a datum incapable of further synthesis and revision. Vested with a collective authority, Sprat's virtuoso creates the fiction of a collected experience.

Sprat thus values not "Things," but the ability of the Society to guarantee belief in their public image.

> By this union of *eyes,* and *hands* . . . there will be a full *comprehension* of the object in *all* its appearances . . . whereas *single labors* can be put as a prospect taken upon one side (85).

Sprat practices a holography of belief in which rays of testimony circumambiate "things" that no one has seen *except* as a public fiction. This holographic process also postulates a mythical scientist, a super-reader of the empirical movement, who never falters under the weight of "infinite Observations" (102). Collective, fictional, and futuristic, the climax to proposition literature, as Sprat's *History* shows, inevitably turns out to be a visionary, aesthetic, and surrealistic event. Cowley, for example, thinks that the crowning achievements of his academy will be the building of a huge tower and a deep, weird vault, both "adorned with all sorts of Dyals and such like Curiosities" (33).

Like Restoration maxims, proposed institutions develop through complex, provocative negations. Like Disneyland, Cowley's proposed college can never be completed. Its "preemptive" constitution calls for its continual enlargement and its continual self-calibration to new evidences. Cowley's proposal tells what his college will be, but it also continually reports that it will not be completed; like the fragmentary maxim, it points toward its collection into a whole book, but it also anticipates the continual enlargement and revision of this book. Sprat, for example, refuses to allow professors to keep students. He wants the social system of his academy to continue developing without the obstacle of permanent, fixed social obligations. Glanvill, for his part, wants to adopt an open-ended resolution to avoid conclusions, to keep research going forever by expecting its completion while refusing actually to complete it.

The habit of hesitation, negation, and delay cultivated by all three of these authors re-directs the all-important sense of expectation. The indefinite postponing of conclusions, coupled with the assumption that there will be conclusions, allows time for the elaboration of the narrative of their pursuit. It shifts attention from the shortcoming of the evidence at hand to the open-ended "common expedition" of research (Sprat, 22), to the scientific picaresque. With "a very necessary regard to the power of particular *Inclinations*," Sprat allows that the random distribution of interests in different disciplines will bring about the eventual, holographic "comprehension" of science (84). Sprat's faith in the accidental directedness of science, in the orderliness of its story, is manifested in his proposed method for assigning research--a methodical program in which, with "well-grounded praemeditation," the Royal Society *disorganizes* its works into a "roving, unsettled" course (115). The "register" of the society becomes a "history" which documents a rambling intellectual travel. "By a long forebearing of *speculation* at first, till the matters be ripe, "Sprat's society creates the comprehending illusion that a prolonged history is operating in the fragmented world of immediate fact. The academic science envisioned by Glanvill, Cowley, and Sprat thus fixes in institutional form a paradoxical world of voluntary providence. In Cowley's refectory, "Arbitri Mensari" narrate the dinner-time chat in order to insure that random, voluntary, and propositional discourse will direct itself toward a conventional, productive form. It is this casting of casual conversation into conventionalized but assertive propositions which leads to the writing of John Bunyan.

III

The virtuosi may have talked a great deal about the evidentiary duties of "experience," but their "experience" presented itself in a literary, propositional form. Their "irreducibles," for example, act like the sudden revelations, the instantly appearing scriptures, which punctuate Bunyan's work. Like Sprat's nature, Bunyan's God manifests Himself through aggressive quotations--through maxims.

John Bunyan's is a pointed world. "My sin was point-blank against my Saviour" (*GA*, para. 172). Grace is always "running after" this hapless sinner. Every proposition in Bunyan's world includes a vectored quantity of momentum, pushing Bunyan into motion until some contrary motion arrests his progress. The mobility of Bunyan's proverbs derives from their character as propositions, sentences set forth by someone for some purpose. It may be God who is the author of a given sentence, but Bunyan uses its divine authorship not to argue for its rightness, but to bring out its energy, directedness, and forcefulness. The authority and clarity of a proposition depends not on its truth, but on the character and power of its source and of its target. Christian misconstrues the simplest sentences when they are uttered by daemons, but he understands difficult propositions when they are advanced by angels. "Ignorance," likewise, travels "with his back toward Zion" (*PP*, 134), letting his redeemed audience read him as damned, even if his own self-serving, self-saving discourse makes perfect sense to him.

"Imagery" like that of the backward-travelling Ignorance is less allegorical than moral. It deals as much with directions, intentions, and forces as with the correspondence of image and idea, and it sets up a discourse in which signifying characters may be expected to move toward some point of reference, whether or not they "mean" that point of reference, and to support the development of some genre, whether or not they understand the form that their story is taking. In the Vanity Fair scene of *Pilgrim's Progress*, Pickthank and Faithful direct more-or-less the same miscellaneous charges at one another. Pickthank's accusations fly off in all directions, taking the form of disorder, while Faithful's indictment shapes itself into the coherent form of numbered list (*PP*, 96). So at Hill Difficulty, Christian's one-way armor permits him to use proverbs only as weapons, in an aggressive, forward-directed manner, even when he doesn't understand the words that he uses. Christian's "Roll" contains the *beginning* of a direction, "fly from the

wrath to come" (*PP*, 13). *From* the City of Destruction, in need of a destination, Christian's identity is defined by direction.

Bunyan's approach to his Biblical sources recalls the approach of the modern maximist to his sources in antiquity. *Pilgrim's Progress* opens with Christian in the act of excising passages from Scripture. Suddenly the question, "What Shall I do?" forces him to respond to his random quotations. As Felicity Nussbaum has pointed out, Bunyan cannot simply accept the truth of his scriptures. He leans, rests, and even reclines on them.[2] Bunyan's "sentences" become complexes of ideas, powers, and implementations. One Scripture "stood against" Bunyan like "an army of forty thousand men" (*GA*, para. 246). Pressing him until he responds, this free-floating text demands that Bunyan find some way to edit it into the developing narrative of his life.

Bunyan thus converts the (Scriptural) sentence from a transcription of authority to a device for founding expectations and regulating faith. The contradictions and multiple negations which characterize maxims help Bunyan to make out the limits of belief, to see his enthusiastic religion as part of a whole, coherent plan. In one passage from *Grace Abounding*, for example, Bunyan rebels against God, but he does so by quoting an excerpt from Job (*GA*, para. 10.) God and God's word reactively define Bunyan's limited moral space. In the "sell him" passage, likewise, Bunyan opens up a wide-ranging psychomachia by playing contrasting Scriptures against one another in his own stereophonic mind (*GA*, paras. 139-143). Confronted with combative texts, Bunyan fills up the space between contrasting sentences by expecting that they will all form up into a book. "Then I began to *give place* to the word" (*GA*, para. 92) sighs Bunyan, as his contrasting sentences both open and occupy a space of belief.

Like the evidences quoted by Glanvill, Cowley, and Sprat, Bunyan's quotations form a kind of society. They make themselves and their hearer eligible for membership in specific sorts of institutions. When Bunyan breaks off with one the Ranters, he leaves behind one set of maxims; when he joins a new sect, he does so by hearing and interpreting a new brigade of propositions (*GA*, paras. 44-7, 137). Bunyan's many encounters with palpable sentences all involve him in attempts to gain entry into the interpretive society behind the proposition. *Pilgrim's Progress* could thus be said to verge on the anti-allegorical. Nobody in the story can figure out what Lot's wife might stand for, at least not until some writing in "an unusual hand" (*PP*, 109) opens the access to the exegetical tradition behind this irreducib-

ly uninterpretable "Thing." Adam the First remains uninterpretable even after a proposition appears on his forehead (*PP*, 71). Transcending allegory, he can depend on no external referent to explain him. He must elucidate himself, and he must start a society of interpreters to continue his work. Adam becomes the living image of a maxim, a sentence which asserts its membership in a more complex, emerging context. By putting his defining proposition (the tatoo on his forehead) into a context, he edits himself. He presents the novelistic craft of characterization as a matter of editing together character traits. Like Sprat's experimenter, he vests himself with a fictional authority--a narratorial omnicompetence--which exceeds the literal meaning of his component propositions. Bunyan's best scenes, like that at Vanity Fair, congregate such "allegorical"--that is, anti-allegorical--figures and objects. Jumbled settings invite Bunyan to intrude editorially, to collect a miasma of junk into some moral order, and to present the allegorical journey to heaven as a matter of the emergence of format from disconnected presentations. Hence the emphasis throughout Bunyan's *oeuvre* on the place rather than the content of Biblical texts. "All" "virtues, relations, offices, and operations met together" (*GA*, para. 231), Christ Himself condenses the editing process. Christ is the process of complication and organization. "I was filled with admiration at the fitness, and also, the unexpectedness of the sentence," exclaims Bunyan (*GA*, para. 188). In Christ's propositions, the progress toward a stable format and the spontaneous revision of expectations coalesce, forming a whole but living book.

Pilgrim's Progress is a story of, about, and in maxims. Like these "pointed speeches," Christian's wide-ranging story can be found in a condensed form: his interlude with "Faithful." Like a proposition, Faithful embodies and enacts rather than allegorizes his defining trait. He not only represents, but responds to ideas and events. It is Faithful, appropriately, who catalyzes Christian's transformation from allegorical type figure to complex character, narrator, and editor. Before the advent of Faithful, Bunyan can only read, allegorically, those personifications who come his way. Taking them one at a time, he can't make sense of their relation to one another. After the arrival of Faithful, Bunyan believes that his every encounter fits in with some story. He learns to author, edit, and interpret his otherwise fragmentary experience. Because Christian's story is segmented into episodes, because it recalls a maxim book, the reader expects that it will culminate in an institutional but domestic result--in the formation of a society between two contrasting, even negating characters, the wandering

Christian and the directed Faithful. An academy of maxims, *Pilgrim's Progress* can only lead to the formation of characters like Christian or Faithful, characters who, as principles of action rather than personifications of particular virtues, can coordinate the most fabulously diverse advices from the most fabulously diverse authors. Christian progresses toward the abbreviated but organized retelling of his wandering story to an abbreviated but organized reduction of himself. By reiterating, in abridged form, large segments of Christian's life story, Bunyan would produce that same mixed sense of present partiality and expected, if delayed, resolution that Sprat tried to produce in his too-early "history." Looking for a literary paradigm which unites irreducible facts with anticipated formats, that links irregular history with directive proposal, Bunyan settles on the directed rendering of random experiences, on the reading of life as a collection of propositions. This cooperative confederation of randomly given event with expressly given maxim would eventually issue in the maxim-laden, quasi-providentialist stories of Richardson, Smollett, Fielding, and Austen.

NOTES

[1]George Savile, Marquis of Halifax, *Political Thoughts and Reflections*, in the *Works*, ed. Walter Raleigh (Oxford: Clarendon, 1912), p. 212. Citations from other authors are taken from the following editions. For Benjamin Whichcote, *Moral and Religious Aphorisms,* ed. Samuel Salter (London: J. Payne, 1753 (a redacted transcript of Whichcote's lectures)). For Joseph Glanvill, *The Vanity of Dogmatizing* (1661 edition), ed. Moody Prior (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931). For Abraham Cowley, *A Proposition for the Advancement of Learning,* ed. Alfred B. Gough, in *Abraham Cowley: The Essays and Other Prose Writings* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1915). For Thomas Sprat, *History of the Royal Society,* ed. Jackson I. Cope and Harold Whitmore Jones (St. Louis: Washington University Press, 1958). For John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* ("*GA*"), ed. G. B. Harrison (New York: Dent, 1924); and *The Pilgrim's Progress* ("*PP*"), ed. G. B. Harrison (New York: Everyman, 1954). All citations are incorporated in the text.

[2]"By These Words I Was Sustained: Bunyan's Grace Abounding." *ELH* 49 (1982): 27-8.

"The Manufacturing of Christ"; An excerpt from The Age of Ascendancy: A Social History of the First 300 Years of Our Era by Caldor Ntomala Mbuella (Toronto: Interspace Media, 2312)

J. Madison Davis Pennsylvania State University

. . . but this was not the most peculiar attempt to revitalize the waning interest in traditional religion. Paolo Chiaroscuro of the University of Bologna, had won the Nobel prize (the most eminent award in its day) in 2082 for his synthesis of the theories of controversion and cofibrillation in sub-atomic structures. Despite being secure, not only economically but in his place in the annals of science, Chiaroscuro was a perpetually uneasy man, for whom even scientific certitude was a dissolving vapor. The voice of authority that rings so clear in his Nobel address and his oft-quoted speech to the American Association of Physicists concealed the irascible orphan, abandoned in the slums of Naples, vexed by his inability to know his parents, his name, even his nationality.

The full scope of this element of his character is clear in extant materials. In the Bologna archives are old-fashioned laser data disks of Chiaroscuro's which are not accessible to the general public, though they were used in the monumental biography by G. Q. Hemmerling. Each day, as Chiaroscuro completed his work, he dictated his thoughts, whatever they were. Sometimes he seems aware that the disks will be unscrambled, and perhaps he intended to play a joke on future researchers--we simply cannot know--but his ruminations seem extraordinarily sincere, so frank, in fact, that even after three hundred years they're embarrassing. The long discourse in which he compares himself to the first cell of life in the primordial sea (a cell "without past, without companion, without a breast to feed it") is, in its entirety, so psychologically and emotionally dense as to be nearly unbearable to listen to at one sitting.

Upon the death of his wife Nina in 2085, however, Chiaroscuro's "diary" begins to express an even greater obsession with his isolation and insecurity. He is a man upon quicksand, or tumbling in a geosynchronous orbit, or a Brownian particle. The careful balance between his belief in his marriage of forty years (a remarkable length of time, even then) and his interest in

Catholic Christianity listed sharply. Visitors were sternly ordered to pray before meals. His guest lectures in Paris in February 2089 were all preceded by the Lord's Prayer, to which only Chiaroscuro knew the words. The huge audience mumbled the words of popular songs, the families of the elements, and the names of extinct species, anything to make it sound as if they were praying with him.

Shortly after Chiaroscuro received an abiogenic pancreas in 2092, he spotted the Pope Juan Miguel II (chief executive officer of the Roman church) riding a bus to his office in the Vatican. Juan Miguel thought Chiaroscuro was another of the fanatical Old Believers and begged him to get off the floor and stop kissing his ring. Chiaroscuro, however, stayed on his knees, blocking traffic in the aisle. As the passengers grew more irritated at the bus's continuous repeating of "Please clear the aisle for your own safety. Thank you. Please clear the isle for your own safety. Thank You. Please. . . " The gentle Juan Miguel, an underrated archivist who enjoyed personally dusting the Vatican's art objects before auctions, agreed to an appointment later that day.

As he recounted to World Press:

> I had no idea the man was Paolo Chiaroscuro, and I was relieved that the physicist was announced by my wife early that afternoon, instead of the nervous stranger who had accosted me on the bus. Imagine my surprise when he came through the door and I realized Chiaroscuro was this man. He was back on his knees again and calling me Holy Father, the whole drill. Well, I assumed he wanted to make another contribution to the preservation of Vatican art works. Instead, he wanted to buy, or rent, the Shroud of Turin.

The Shroud of Turin was a Medieval cloth alleged to be the burial pall of Jesus Christ. The Shroud, however, had been preserved in xenofreeze since 1995, when ordinary light was seen to be damaging it. Juan Miguel assumed Chiaroscuro, as an Old Believer, wanted to worship the cloth, or to place it on public display, and saw an opportunity to finance several pet projects, including the polymerization of the Cathedrals at Sienna and Bologna. By five o'clock, a deal was concluded--at Chiaroscuro's insistence--by kissing the Pope's ring, which, in fact, was a class ring from the Sorbonne, where Juan Miguel had received his Ph. D. in art preservation. It was due to the exorbitant fee extorted from Chiaroscuro that we can see the Cathedrals, though they were moved after the polymerization to the Museoparque de Majorca in 2270.

Chiaroscuro had concealed from Juan Miquel, however, his true purpose. He intended to re-make Christ. Cloning had become possible in the 20th century, and genetic microscanning shortly thereafter. Besides the elimination of genetic diseases and the study of cellular genetic material from prehistoric animals leading to the re-establishment of the mammoth in northern Siberia's parks, several experiments with human materials had been done. In Salisbury, United States, in 2051, a cell from the alcohol-preserved body of John Paul Jones was used to recreate his genetic material and, after being transplanted into a woman in Topeka, produced a boy remarkable in no way except for his big ears, motion sickness, and propensity for raising huge mangoes. A cell taken from Albert Einstein's preserved brain in 2053 produced six boys, each of whom revealed no particular talent, except for Charles Planck Einstein, who was the most influential advertising executive in his day. After the microscans of the bone cells of various American Presidents, French scientists, British philosophers, and writers produced genetic material that also led to some unusual, but not extraordinary children, the procedure was rarely employed, except in paleoanthropology, particularly after the recreated Vladimir Lenin drove into a bridge abutment because he had done poorly in an athletic contest called "racquetball" (see chapter 16).

Chiaroscuro, deeply troubled, clinging desperately to his need for certainty, needed to prove there was a God in order to revivify his church. For all his scientific genius, he was nearly opaque as an historian. He thought he could restore the era of universal belief, which many Old Believers, erroneously believed had existed between 500 and 1800. He intended to implement the Second Coming (or return of Christ), and thereby to restore Christian faith. He theorized that the body of Christ contained the normal genetic mixture of the Divine Father and the human mother. This is not to say that God had chromosomes, but that whatever was divine in Christ would, of necessity, have been composed in those entities simply in order to create the genetically whole human being, which Jesus was. Whatever genetic material the Virgin had supplied would have been matched by new material created for the occasion by God Himself, including the essential Y chromosome. However, the body of Christ had inconveniently ascended to Heaven and assumed divine form, so there were no bones or mummified cellular materials to microscan. This was where the Shroud of Turin came in. If there were one flake of skin, one hair, one drop of blood with a scannable cell, still clinging to the ancient cloth, Chiaroscuro would find it. In

that cell would be the complete genetic message for the Christ. In that cell would be the co-mixture of God and Woman. Christ could be reborn in the lab, and ironically, in just as much of an immaculate conception as the first time.

Chiaroscuro had always been secretive in his research, trusting only his beloved Nina with the vaguest information about it. With Nina dead, he hired a young doctor, Yu Jong Shing, to assist him. A hard worker, but somewhat of a conniver, Shing had been among 500 applicants and regarded an association with Chiaroscuro as an opportunity to establish a reputation, though no one was permitted to know in advance exactly what the research entailed. Shing lied earnestly about his personal beliefs, and was assigned various tasks, such as finding a suitable surrogate mother, without being told the entire story. Despite this, he soon divined what he had gotten himself into. He considered the possibility that Chiaroscuro was suffering from slow virus MT72-DL9B, and wondered, if it were true, how long it would be before the secondary stage would develop and Chiaroscuro would slide into publicly obvious dementia.

Nonetheless, Shing was careful. He recognized that any discrediting of Chiaroscuro would make his own ability to get a good position at an important hospital somewhat dubious. While Shing interviewed thousands of attractive women and tested them to find out how close their psychological profiles came to Chiaroscuro's estimate of the Virgin Mary's psyche, Chiaroscuro pored over each square millimeter of the Shroud with a high-frequency microscope. His eyes were weakening, but he drove himself on. He seemed to sense the coming of his own untimely death, and he had one final great gift he wished to give the world. To be a scientist in those days was to posit oneself as some sort of philanthropist (see chapter 12), and despite the naiveté of this idealism, there are many instances of great scientists of that era going beyond what an ordinary devotion might have allowed.

Finally, Chiaroscuro located two pieces of biologic material, both in the vicinity of the image of the face. One, a slightly damaged red corpuscle, could be used to verify 67.752 percent of the whole genetic message, scrolled out on the chromosomes of one tiny shingle of dandruff. There is no way of knowing were this flake of dandruff, ancient though it seemed to be, came from. When thirty years later Shing revealed the entire story, Old Believers argued that Christ could not have had dandruff. Shing himself, on the night before the zygote was to be implanted, cautiously approached

Chiaroscuro with two cups of mulled wine and posed obvious questions. "Have you considered, sir, that the flake of dandruff upon which this Messiah's life is to be based, might actually be that of a Medieval nun or priest who handled the cloth? Of a sickly noble who held it against the pain in his chest, hoping for a miracle?" Chiaroscuro stared at him with frighteningly cold, red eyes, but Shing sipped his wine quickly and continued. "What is the realistic probability that this Shroud is either a fraud or not the actual burial cloth of Jesus of Nazareth?"

Chiaroscuro seemed to be warming his hands on his cup, then spoke quickly. "And how did Abraham know that it was God telling him to sacrifice his son? I know it is the shroud of Jesus. I know that the genes baking in that oven are the reality of the true Christ."

"If you say so," said Shing, more confused than before, having thought Abraham was President Lincoln, whose temple he had once visited.

Chiaroscuro, unfortunately, did not live until the birth of Giosué Eleison. Marisa Permiglia, the mother, swelled like a pumpkin and Chiaroscuro doted over her like he had over no one except his Nina, but two weeks before Giosué's birth by cesarean, the great scientist died in the collision of a bus and a refuse collector. Gone at a youthful 72, he would, in another generation, become a cult figure by people interested more in the flagrant fancies and mysticism of his last days. The highly creative mind that had made him a genius in his youth, had made him a caricature of a wizard. A thorough autopsy revealed no illness or mental disability, and a complete index of Chiaroscuro's genetic make-up was filed in the National Heredity Library in Milan, where someday, perhaps, when an environment can be controlled enough to produce a duplicate of him.

And what of the Second Coming? Giosué was reared on the comfortable income of a trust fund established by Chiaroscuro's will. According to all school records, he was, naturally, rather an ordinary child, who got along well with his stepfather, a deep-mantle miner from Tuscany. We find indications that Giosué was talented at music and painting, but rather inarticulate and not very original in abstract work or spatial relations. He played soccer until he was fifteen, when he rebelled against his parents and stayed out all night, working on antique jet engines. He smoked Indonesian cigarettes and had a dog, named Schwarzeneggar after a cult figure from the distant past. He was, probably, more intelligent than anyone recognized. There is a disk in the Bologna library, containing the transcript of an appearance in court. He had received a ticket for shattering the win-

dows in a suburban neighborhood while illegally repairing an antique MIG-37. Though not clever in his speech, he asks penetrating questions which seem to endear him to the judges, resulting in Giosué's receiving only a warning.

After trade school, he went to work for Fiat making refrigerators and was transferred at age 28 to the plant in Bemidji. He was thirty and unmarried when Shing published his tell-all recollections of Chiaroscuro on the Interface Network. Giosué's house was swarmed by people who wanted to see the overweight, prematurely balding son of God or a flake of dandruff or both. "Josh," as he was known to the neighbors, bought a dog, put up a chain-link fence and kept his blinds down, but was startled by faces pressed against the frosted glass in his bathroom, had meals interrupted by the sounds of people ogling his car, and, on more than one occasion, was awakened in his bedroom by the purring of tourist video cameras. No one seemed to want any more than to look at him, or ask about his dog, so he eventually posted a sign: "Giosué Eleison, Celebrated Person in Dr. Shing's Sleazy Memoirs, Will Be Available for Perusal Through His Picture Window Each Saturday. Do Not Tap the Glass. Do Not Trample the Lawn. Do Not Interfere With My Diversions."

Between the spring 2112 and 2113, some six-thousand tourists stopped in Bemidji, merely to see "Josh." One tourist laser disk is extant. Josh sits in a recliner, wearing shorts, a tee-shirt, and open sandals, eating popcorn, corned beef sandwiches (see chapter 11), and big pickles washed down with beer. He has been, he says, watching sports holograms since noon, when he rose. He declines to accept a bet from an amiable gawker that the Minnesota Thrips will upset the Genoa Marinari. Something happens in the sports program that pleases him and he is laughing as his image deteriorates. His life seems typical for that century, except that when "Josh" was ordinary, people watched him as if it were extraordinary. Within eighteen months, the novelty wore off, and Josh disappeared from the popular media, except for two incidents. In August 2125, he needed heart resuscitation on a vacation cruise to Brunei. In June 2127 he snatched a four-year-old girl from the path of a runaway street cleaner and was awarded a good citizen stipend. Other than that, there were only the common government records of the time: the implantation of an artificial heart, retirement at age 85, and his death in a retirement home on Kilimanjaro in 2191.

He was only a footnote, much less than Chiaroscuro had hoped. Yet, who knows what causes the existence of Giosué Eleison precipitated? Who was the girl he saved, and what were her progeny or deeds? Chains of causation are long and complex. The original Christ was known only by a few social misfits in the first century, much as he is today. Who could imagine in 1990 that the greatest leader of the twenty-first century was visible each morning in Kansas City introducing "cartoons" (see Appendix) for children? In any case, Josh Eleison was certainly part of the flow of history in his time, and therefore part of ours whether we remember him or not. In his own way he was as important as Clemenza Bosco, the much more legendary hologram celebrity from 2130 to 2160, who genetically engineered double larynx caused a brief revival of interest in the human voice, polyphony, and the tedious entertainment called ventriloquism.

Sunday but as devils toward them on Monday, as Covey did toward Douglass. Finally, Davidson's lack of awareness, and thus racism, is shown in his criticism of industrial civilization for dividing life into dehumanizing labor and tension relieving frantic play. He says, "We cannot separate our being into contradictory halves without a certain amount of spiritual damage" (34), apparently never realizing that just such a racial division of Southern society via segregation had the same kind of spiritually damaging effect upon all Southerners, black and white. Thus, Davidson exhibits the pathological mindset of the extreme racist and is the serpent that the person entering the Vanderbilt Agrarians' garden needs to be most wary of.

Davidson was not alone, however; several other Agrarians shared his sentiments, evident in their essays in *I'll Take My Stand*. A number of statements by Frank Lawrence Owsley and John Gould Fletcher reflect the same sentimental idealizing of the antebellum South that is characteristic of the Southern racist. For instance, Owsley brazenly and without proof concludes that when the Civil War was over, the South was "turned over to the three millions of former slaves, some of whom could still remember the taste of human flesh and the bulk of them hardly three generations removed from cannibalism" (62). He fails to provide any proof that the South was completely "turned over" to the former slaves, or that some of the slaves were cannibals at the time, or that the remainder were the descendants of cannibals. In fact, recent anthropological study, as reported in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, has raised serious questions about whether cannibalism was ever a ritual practice anywhere in the world and has indicated that it has probably only occurred as a last resort against starvation (and in all cultures and locations, not just Africa).

Owsley also freely labels the slave revolt in Santo Domingo and Haiti as resulting in "barbarian" control (77) never even seeming to consider the possibility that it was the barbarians who were overthrown. Similarly, John Gould Fletcher's racism is obvious in his constant sarcasm about the ability of Blacks. For example, he defends the antebellum South's school system, saying that it "educated only the class that had time and leisure, as well as an innate capacity and desire to learn something" (102). The obvious implication is that the other Southern classes, poor whites and slaves, had neither the desire nor the innate capacity to learn, which is about as supremely racist and elitist a statement as anyone can make. With equal sarcasm, Fletcher criticizes the period of Reconstruction because it "did nothing for education, either state or private, beyond repeated discussions

of the advisability of mixing white and negro children in the public schools" (113). Such mixing of children was, of course, the horrible specter so frightening to Davidson, Owsley, Fletcher, and the other segregationists. Finally, and perhaps most nastily of all, Fletcher dismisses public education and the Blacks in the 1920's South by saying that "the negro could, if he wished, pass easily through the high school and college mill (such a task does not require any profound knowledge of self or determination of mind)" (119). Again, the obvious message is that all Blacks, to Fletcher, lack self-knowledge and determination, which is the kind of blatant racial stereotyping that Davidson doubtless wanted from Robert Penn Warren but did not get.

There are racist implications in several comments by other Agrarians in *I'll Take My Stand*, too, although these remarks aren't frequent enough to completely justify labeling these writers as extreme racists and segregationists like Davidson, Owsley and FIetcher. However, Mississippian Stark Young's comment that Southern civilization ended in 1867 when Blacks began to vote (328) clearly has racist overtones, as does his defining of life in the old South as "founded on land and the ownership of slaves" (336). Even the Agrarian historian Owsley says, in direct contradiction of Young, that slavery was not an essential element in the old South economic system, though most old South leaders thought it was. Clearly then, Young thinks strikingly like the leaders of the old South about slavery's centrality to their way of life.

Also, John Donald Wade sounds racially insensitive when he writes that, following Reconstruction, Black farm hands "shared quite as fully as justice might demand in the scant dole of the world's goods handed down to their white overlords" (290). Similarly, a kind of Southern and racial bias is implicit in Wade's objection that, after the Civil War many Southern families were forced to give up their land, and "mortgage firms turned over the land to aliens, people from here and yonder, whose grandfather never owned a slave nor planted a pomegranate" (297). Thus, whether one's ancestors owned slaves and planted pomegranates was apparently a major criterion by which Wade chose his friends.

There are even a few racist overtones in the otherwise delightful essays by Andrew Nelson Lytle and John Crowe Ransom. Lytle uses the racist metaphor "nigger in the woodpile" (205), and Ransom feels compelled, seemingly almost against his will, to defend the old South and slavery. He says, "It was a kindly society, yet a realistic one; for it was a failure if it could

not be said that people were for the most part in their right places. Slavery was a feature monstrous enough in theory, but, more often than not, humane in practice; and it is impossible to believe that its abolition alone could have effected any great revolution in society" (14). Ransom may be correct that the collation of slavery alone wouldn't have made any drastic improvement in the old South. However, one has to question his objectivity when he says that slavery was usually humane in practice, and that the old South was a "kindly" society. Slaves beaten and killed and poor whites who, according to Margaret Walker Alexander in *Jubilee*, sometimes ate dirt in order to survive aren't obviously the outgrowth of a "kindly" society. Ransom, similar to the definitely racist Agrarians, has fallen victim here to some sentimental idealizing of the antebellum South.

However, there are no racial snakes in the gardens tilled by the other five Agrarians who contributed to *I'll Take My Stand*. This is most obviously true of Robert Penn Warren, whose essay so disappointed Davidson because of its blunt criticism of unequal treatment of Blacks by the criminal justice system and because of its abrasive criticism of "the group in the South whose prejudice would keep the negroes forever as a dead and inarticulate mass in the commonwealth--as hewers of wood and drawers of water" (248). Warren wholeheartedly advocates higher education and economic gains for Blacks, saying that "an enlightened selfishness on the part of the Southern white man must prompt him to encourage the well-being and possibly the organization of negro, as well as white, labor" (258). Even more impressively, Warren is aware that the opposition between poor whites and Blacks, encouraged and enjoyed by powerful, wealthy Southern white racists as a way to control both groups by having them fight each other, must be ended. He says, "The only way out, except for a costly purgation by blood, is in a realization that the fates of the 'poor white' and the negro are linked in a single tether. The well-being and adjustment of one depends on that of the other" (259). Also, even though Davidson disliked Warren's essay because of such statements, Warren has said that he felt uncomfortable when he wrote the essay because it wasn't egalitarian enough, and because he failed to openly advocate integration as he wanted to do, and as he did in a 1950's essay called "Segregation" (Rubin 451). Havard praises the sentiments expressed in Warren's 1930 essay, too, saying that

> In his insistence on the need for the white man to attend to the task of finding a place for the black man in an Agrarian society and in the stress he places on the ways in which blacks might escape their iden-

> tity as members of a black community on the way to establishing identity as human beings, Warren does not sound so much like Booker T. Washington (whom he quotes) as he does a more philosophical Martin Luther King or Jesse Jackson. The intimation that whites and blacks might eventually find a common identity in the mutual recognition of their humanity is hardly veiled either, and that is what neither white nor black revolutionary separatism is ever likely to achieve (769).

Also, given Warren's objection to the word "South" in the title of the collection of Agrarian essays as too parochial (Havard 766), and given that Warren was in London as a Rhodes Scholar when he wrote his essay (Rubin 452), it is clear that he had recently grown beyond the limited, racist vision of Davidson's South, hence Davidson's criticism of "The Briar Patch." Certainly, the essay remains as a powerful statement against the racist extremism in a society and time that were dominated by such extremes, and is thus a testament to Warren's courage, intelligence, and honesty.

Similarly, Allen Tate deserves praise for his intelligent and courageous disavowal of the dominant racist ideology of the early twentieth century, a disavowal obvious in his brilliant essay in *I'll Take My Stand.* Writing on Southern religion, Tate openly criticizes Ransom for his sentimental idealizing of the old South, saying "a distinguished contributor to this symposium argues that the Southern population were originally much less rebellious against European stability than were the Northern. It is doubtful if history will support this, though I should personally like to do so, for it is the myth-making tendency of the mind in one of its most valuable forms" (167). Such a criticism implies that less valuable myth-making is in the essays of other Agrarians, and particularly about racial issues. Tate implies that again when he notes that the South "never created a fitting religion" (168), and thus Southerners' "rational life was not powerfully united to the religious experience, as it was in medieval society, and they are a fine specimen of the tragic pitfall upon which the Western mind has always hovered" (173). Also, like Warren, Tate (who had lived in New York for several years) objects to the title of the book as too exclusive because of the word "South," clearly showing that he had grown beyond Davidson's provincial, racist vision, as well, and that growth is evident in Tate's meeting and praising Jean Toomer, too. Tate read and liked *Cane*, exchanged several letters with Toomer, and eventually met him in 1927 and 1929. Said Tate of Toomer, "I greatly admire his book *Cane* and still think it a distinguished work. He is a fine lyric poet" (Rusch 60). It is very difficult to imagine the

segregationist Agrarians like Davidson even reading Toomer's work, much less praising Toomer so openly; and it is to Tate's credit that he had the insight and fortitude to do so.

Of the other three Agrarians whose essays in *I'll Take My Stand* have no racist overtones, only Herman Clarence Nixon deserves special mention, though Lyle Lanier's essay is an extremely impressive tracing of the history of, and debunking of, the myth of progress. Nixon is worthy of note because, in a different way, he upset the segregationists among the Agrarians as much as Warren's essay did. That is because Nixon was an openly avowed political liberal who directed New Deal programs and did not reject everything unconnected to the antebellum South. As he put it, "I am for constructive acceptance of the inevitable, with a maximum effort for the preservation of human community and common roots" (390). Thus, like Warren, Nixon praises Booker T. Washington's encouraging Blacks toward economic improvement; and also like Warren, he criticizes Southern whites for their treatment of Blacks since Reconstruction. Says Nixon, "Negro tenantry and exploiters of negro tenantry have been important factors in over-emphasizing a commercialized cotton production and delaying a wholesome agricultural diversification" (190). The "exploiters of negro tenantry" were, of course, white Southerners who owned large plantations. Havard notes Nixon's courageous contribution to *I'll Take My Stand*, too, and says that Nixon paid a price for it.

> He was a prominent figure in the Southern Conference on Human Welfare and in other organized efforts to improve the lot of the poor farmer, black as well as white, through the development of public programs alone New Deal lines. Although widely respected among his professional peers for his work as a political scientist as well as for his personal integrity, he came under criticism from intransigent political forces in the South and may have paid a heavier price, in terms of career advancement, for his practical actions than any of the other Agrarians (768).

Without question, then, this non-racist, egalitarian group of Agrarians--Warren, Tate, and Nixon, especially--has not received the notice that it deserves, at least partially because of the frenzied, irrational polemics of the segregationists among the Agrarians. Of course, Tate and Warren are well-known literary figures, but their farsighted analysis in I'*ll Take My Stand* of the social, political, and economic chaos created by racism has been ignored for far too long. Granted, the Agrarians have been deserved-

ly praised, as a group, for sounding a loud and clear alarm about the dangerous direction in which much of twentieth-century society is going. Specifically, Havard notes that "the critique of industrialism as a mode of production and of the major pre-conditions, as well as the structural consequences, of industrial development is the most strikingly apparent element of continuity running through *I'll Take My Stand.* It is also the feature of the book that has most clearly maintained its cogency and established the strongest claim to prescience on the part of its contributors" (770). In addition, George Core says that the Agrarians "have remained consistently opposed to big business or industrial capitalism; to science and technology; to totalitarian government, whether of the left or the right" (294), and that "Agrarianism in the 1950's had a greater intellectual following than in the 1930's. It has a still greater influence today. More and more people are embracing the idea that science, technology and industry are the gods of a capitalist state, and they deplore the worship of materialistic progress" (298-99). Also, as Havard argues, "*I'll Take My Stand* is more than a relic that recalls a mythic past; it continues to provide a social critique and some moral and political principles that may enhance our understanding of the current predicament and provide some sense of direction for the future" (758-59. This is because the Agrarian metaphor "symbolizes a broad conception of the proper relation of man to nature (especially to the land), a sound grasp of the organic unity of work, family and community, and a desirable spatial and personal relation of man to man" (Havard 767).

An often-ignored but crucial part of the success of that metaphor is the farsighted imperative for racial harmony and egalitarianism that is embodied in the work of Warren, Tate, and Nixon. As W. T. Couch notes, this strain of Agrarianism is directly in opposition to the racism and elitism of the antebellum South, the old South that is defended so fanatically by Davidson and the other segregationist Agrarians. Says Couch,

> Several of the essays in the volume *I'll Take My Stand* . . . call for the establishment of farming as a way of living, not as a way of making money. This is agrarianism pure and undefiled since the plantation system existed primarily for the purpose of making money, since it was not devoted to farming as a way of living but as a way of achieving power, it is no wonder the ante-bellum South detested this radical, egalitarian doctrine (296).

This is indeed the radical, egalitarian Agrarianism of Warren, Tate, and Nixon, and it will hopefully finally be recognized as different from and in-

The "Attained Bourne" of Joanna Burden: Narrative Evasions in *Light in August*

Joan Wylie Hall University of Mississippi

Joanna Burden relates her curious genealogy to Joe Christmas in Chapter 11, at the physical and thematic center of *Light in August*. Joseph W. Reed, Jr., notes the crucial placement of the story in "the middle of the book's arbitrarily timed but strictly chronological tracing" of Joe's past (114). According to David M. Wyatt, Faulkner's "fulfilled will to digress is, in this case, "bent upon dominating material hardly necessary to the successful development of the novel" (75). Wyatt blames the alleged deficiency on "a story Faulkner cannot seem to forget"--the pattern of violence in several generations of his own family. As evidence that the Burden account is structurally weak, Wyatt also cites Regina K. Fadiman's study of the *Light in August* manuscript, which concludes that the tale of Joanna's blighted family tree was written separately from the story of her blighted romance and was revised to provide a motivation for her otherwise incomprehensible behavior" (86). Like Wyatt, Hugh M. Ruppersburg believes that Joanna's story "proves cumbersomely long," and "her passion for Christmas seems almost an awkward authorial excuse for getting her to talk" (45).

Ruppersburg, however, himself provides a key to the centrality of the account: "Joanna becomes a focal character only when she describes her family history" (49); otherwise, she is viewed, like Bobbie Allen and Mrs. McEachern, through Joe Christmas's "warped" perspective (48). There is a second episode, two chapters later, in which Joanna again escapes Joe's distorted scrutiny: as she lies dead at his hands outside her burning house, her spirit evades the gossiping townspeople as well. Reed effectively describes the blaze as a "narrative landmark," a "pillar in the center of the book" (118). In these scenes, where her story twice breaks free from the confines of Joe Christmas's encompassing narrative, Faulkner's unusual manipulation of point of view underscores the theme embodied in Joanna Burden's name.

Several commentators have dealt with the literal and the emotional burdens carried not only by Joanna but also by Lena Grove, Joe Christmas, and Gail Hightower. (See, for example, Richard Chase [546], Ilse Dusoir Lind

[307-29], Patrick W. Shaw [89-97], and Joan Wylie Hall [48-50].) Murray Krieger emphasizes the general "unburdening effect" of a "new dispensation" that arrives with the birth of Lena's child (330). But in stressing what he calls the "figural" impact of Lena, Krieger slights Joanna's importance in establishing the theme of burdens assumed and removed. The repetition of this motif, in both comic and serious contexts, throughout the second half of the novel helps to explain the highly detailed rendering of the Burden past at the book's midpoint.

The fourteen-page record of Joanna's ancestry that forms much of Chapter 11 is complicated by its division into two almost equal parts, with two different narrative methods. Reed indicates the complexity of the narrative by distinguishing various "levels of time" (114). More typically, commentators ignore Faulkner's method. Ruppersburg groups the "long monologues" (44) of Joanna Burden, Mr. and Mrs. Hines, and Gavin Stevens, though Joanna's is hardly as straightforward as the others. The first half of the genealogy is introduced with special attention to the voice of Joanna, who has already been sitting beside Joe on his cot and talking about her life for two hours. Her accent is a prelude to the account of her forbears: "when she spoke even now, after forty years, among the slurred consonants and the flat vowels of the land where her life had been cast, New England talked as plainly as it did in the speech of her kin who had never left New Hampshire and whom she had seen perhaps three times in her life, her forty years" (227). Symbolically, perhaps, "the light failed" as Joanna turns to the past, and her voice becomes strangely remote, "without source, steady, interminable, pitched almost like the voice of a man" (227). This distancing provides a framework for the third-person genealogical narrative that follows almost immediately: the Burden history assumes control of the story that Joe Christmas's viewpoint had dominated for the preceding one hundred and thirty pages.

Especially pertinent to the theme of burdens is the emphasis on names, beginning with the first Burden: the family record starts: "Calvin Burden was the son of a minister named Nathaniel Burrington" (228). Twice on the same page, the reader's attention is parenthetically directed toward the gradual transformation of Burrington to Burden. In both instances, the act of writing is fundamental to the change. Calvin runs from his New Hampshire home at twelve, "before he could write his name (or would write it, his father believed)" (228). He grows to violent adulthood in California and Missouri and is known as Burden: "(he pronounced it Burden now,

since he could not spell it at all and the priests had taught him to write it laboriously so with a hand more apt for a rope or a gunbutt or a knife than a pen)" (228). This is Joanna's grandfather, who transmits the burden of his surname and his obsessions, teaching his son to hate hell and slaveholders. Krieger remarks that Calvin Burden takes on his name "as if he wants to be sure he has a Burden to pass along to his heirs" (315).

The son is several times referred to in the narrative as "the boy," "the child," and "his son" before we learn that "The son's name was Nathaniel" (230). Ruppersburg suggests various reasons for the "reductive characterization" of others--Joe Brown, Joe Christmas, and Hightower--who are identified throughout a passage as "he" or "the man" (49-50). In the Burden narrative, the delayed naming of family members heightens the impact of the inevitable repetition. Immediately after this recurrence of the grandfather's name, other elements of the past reappear. Like Calvin, the second Nathaniel runs away as a boy, goes West, kills a man in an argument, and wanders for years. He too has a son--called "the kid," the young one," "the boy"--whom he eventually introduces, along with the boy's mother, to Calvin: "'That's Juana,' he said. 'That's Calvin with her'" (233). The Spanish Juana so closely resembles the old man's dead Huguenot wife that he calls out "Evangeline" (one of the older Calvin's daughter's is similarly named "Vangie"): he seems as bewildered as the reader by all the repetitions, "'Another damn black Burden,' he said. 'Folks will think I bred to a damn slaver. And now he's got to breed to one, too'" (234). But Calvin becomes more optimistic about his grandson: "'By God,' he said suddenly, '. . . he's going to be as big a man as his grandpappy: not a runt like his pa. For all his black dam and his black look, he will'" (234).

At this point, the first half of the Burden account closes with a return to Joanna and Joe. Maintaining the illusion that Joanna has related the story thus far, the frame narrative resumes without even citing her name: "She told Christmas this while they sat on the cot in the darkening cabin. They had not moved for over an hour" (234). Joanna's voice is again stressed, as it was just before the history began: "He could not see her face at all now; he seemed to swing faintly, as though in a drifting boat, upon the sound of her voice as upon some immeasurable and drowsing peace evocative of nothing of any moment, scarce listening" (234). Wyatt says that Faulkner emphasizes Joanna's distance from her family history "by telling most of it for her" (72). But if the narrative distancing of Joanna from her words reflects her attempt to unburden herself of the past, such escape proves im-

possible. The remote point of view with which the first half of the family record began was interrupted occasionally in its first few pages by the harsh thoughts and voices of the Burden men. As the record continued, coming closer to Joanna in time, the narrative technique turned increasingly dramatic. The older Calvin and his son, finally reunited, spoke more and more until their dialogue completely subordinated the third-person narration.

With the return to the present, Joanna simply echoes her grandfather's description of his grandson: "His name was Calvin, like grandpa's, and he was as big as grandpa, even if he was dark like father's mother's people and like his mother" (234-35). In its doubleness, the family narrative reenacts the history of the Burdens, doomed to repeat themselves in each generation. The third-person account and Joanna's subsequent seven-page commentary and continuation of it both open with a Calvin, a family relationship, and an attention to names. The Burdens are almost as obsessed with naming themselves as they are with religion and racism, and the final half of the story shows the violent culminating of these obsessions when the two Calvins, pursuing racists with religious fervor, are shot together in Jefferson "over a question of negro voting" (235).

The last phrase is the external narrator's, not Joanna's. A four-page monologue by Joanna (quoted directly rather than presented as another distanced account) is the core of this second half of the Burden history. But beforehand Faulkner mixes Joanna's words with the third-person narrator's summaries and with Joe Christmas's brief thoughts and direct questions. Joanna's monologue describes the secret burials of her grandfather, stepbrother, and later Juana, then relates her father's second marriage to her own New England mother, before receding in time to the point where the first half of the Burden narrative broke off, with her father's delayed wedding to Calvin's mother, who was Joanna's namesake. The long closing scene in Joanna's unbroken speech concerns her reluctant trip at the age of four to the cedar burial grove with her father. Nathaniel imposes the family burden of racial guilt on Joanna, evoking her terrible vision of babies born in a black cross-shaped shadow. Much as the first half of the family history closed with her grandfather's violent words on the black strain in the Burden line, Joanna's monologue ends as she quotes her father on the futility of efforts to escape the shadow, since "the curse of the white race is the black man" (240).

The remaining page and a half of Chapter 11 brings the history to an inconclusive finish as Joanna and Joe Christmas puzzle over her heritage, and then his. Each poses several questions: Joe wonders why Nathaniel sought no revenge for the two Calvins' deaths: Joanna asks how Joe knows one of his parents was part black. Their voices--hers quiet, his sardonic--are repeatedly mentioned, sounding out of the dark, and the silences between the questions and their tentative answers recur until the chapter ends. The Burdens have the final word; Joanna speculates that her father was French enough to understand the love of one's land that could have led Colonel Sartoris to murder her grandfather and stepbrother: "I think that was it," she concludes (241). This dialogue, following upon Joanna's monologue, prevents Joe Christmas's viewpoint from reasserting its power.

Joanna's history and her perspective make the burdens of the past the centerpiece of the novel. She is, as Harold Hungerford observes, the main character most strongly bound by the past and the last of the five (after Lena Grove, Byron Bunch, Gail Hightower, and Joe Christmas) to appear (184). But she is also the first of the five to break her bonds. Although Joe Christmas quickly resumes control of the narrative for the length of Chapter 12, that chapter ends in a death that enables Joanna to escape the weight of racial guilt inflicted by her father and the inherited religious guilt that she fails to suppress in her affair with Joe. Joanna's murder inaugurates the series of releases that marks the end of the book. First of these is the sudden lightening of tone that comes as the townspeople gather in Chapter 13, alerted by the burning of her house.

No other scene in the Joe Christmas story sustains the mood of comedy this long. Such words as "amaze," "astonishment," and "baffled" transfer to the citizens of Jefferson the confusion Joe had experienced during the liaison, but the atmosphere of a circus or a magic show replaces the earlier air of doom. Joanna now provides "an emotional barbecue, a Roman holiday almost" (273). Robert M. Slabey observes that "The destruction of the old house in the flames is like a solemn cleansing ceremony; everything of the old order must be removed in preparation for the new" (94). Michael Millgate similarly comments on the importance of fire at the festival of Diana, celebrated in August (136). Faulkner's onlookers are festive, but hardly solemn. Within half an hour after the discovery of the fire and the body, the desolate area "produced, as though out of thin air, parties and groups ranging from single individuals to entire families" (271). "Racing and blatting cars" bring others from town, and a new red and gilt fire truck

pulls up gallantly, with noise, with whistles and bells" (272). Clinging to the truck "with the astonishing disregard of physical laws that flies possess" are "hatless men and youths." The engine has "mechanical ladders that sprang to prodigious heights at the touch of a hand, like opera hats; only there was now nothing for them to spring to" (272). When the "caravan" returns to Jefferson, cars "honking and blatting" again, it is briefly halted by a country wagon; the sheriff, in the lead car, watches "a young woman climbing slowly and carefully down . . . , with that careful awkwardness of advanced pregnancy" (278).

Like the comic interlude at the smoldering ruins, the near-collision with Lena underscores the lightening of burdens that begins with Joanna's release from life. The crowd at the postmortem mistakenly believes that "the body that had died three years ago [with Joe's arrival] and had just now begun to live again, cried out for vengeance"; they do not understand that "the rapt infury of the flames and the immobility of the body were both affirmations of an attained bourne beyond the hurt and harm of man" (273). Like Joe Christmas in Chapter 11, the bystanders cannot comprehend that revenge for the dead is not part of the Burden inheritance. In both scenes, narrative technique enables Joanna to separate herself from the confining viewpoints--first Joe's, now the countrymen's--that surround her.

Joanna's resurrection and new security herald the coming of Lena. As Millgate suggests, Joanna's death is somehow "a precondition of the rebirth . . . so eloquently evoked" (135) by Hightower later in the book. David Williams expands upon Millgate's suggestion that Lena serves as a "substitution" for Joanna, a replacement which Williams says "should be taken as a major part of the mythos of *Light in August*; it is at the vital centre of the book" (160). Hightower senses the barren plantation return to life when Lena is relieved of her nine-months' burden at the old cabin, on the same bed where Joanna related her history to Joe Christmas. Still in the cabin, Lena further unburdens herself, and Joe Brown too, when she "release[s]" her reluctant boyfriend forever, "by her own will, deliberately" (409). With Brown's flight, Byron Bunch is free to pursue Lena. The aging Hightower feels "restored" (392) by his involvement in the birth of Lena's baby, an involvement that fortifies him for his abrupt confrontation with Joe Christmas, the last of the main characters to find relief. After Percy Grimm kills him in Hightower's kitchen, Joe's pent black blood seemed to rush like a released breath. "It seemed to rush out of his pale body like the rush of sparks from a rising rocket; upon that black blast the man seemed to rise

soaring into their memories forever and ever" (440). Subsequently, Hightower, who believes he himself is dying, envisions a halo of faces--his own, Byron's, Lena's, and Joe's among them. The faces epitomize the theme of disburdenment: they look "peaceful, as though they have escaped into an apotheosis," and the whirling wheel that forms the halo is "freed now of burden, of vehicle, axle, all" (465).

Much as Faulkner stresses the theme of weighted lives with Joanna's centrally positioned genealogy, he emphasizes the passing of burdens with a surprising reference to her nephew in Chapter 13. Joanna leaves instructions, italicized in the narrative, that Nathaniel Burrington of Exeter, N.H., be notified of her death (278). The sheriff reads these directions minutes after he watches Lena dismount from the farm wagon. Following so closely upon Lena's calm advent in the midst of confusion, the mention of the long-abandoned Burrington name and the distant New England home that opened the family history affirms possibilities for new beginnings. The burden of suffering that Faulkner sounds through much of the novel comes to rest with Joanna.

Works Cited

Chase, Richard. "The Stone and the Crucifixion: Faulkner's *Light in August*." *Kenyon Review* 10 (1948): 539-51.

Fadiman, Regina K. Faulkner's *Light in August: A Description and Interpretation of the Revisions*. Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 1975.

Faulkner, William. *Light in August*. New York: Smith & Haas, 1932: Vintage, 1972.

Hall, Joan Wylie. "Burdens, Bunyan, and *Light in August*." *American Notes and Queries* 24 (1985): 48-50.

Hungerford, Harold. "Past and Present in *Light in August*." *American Literature* 55 (1983): 183-98.

Krieger, Murray. "The Light-ening of the 'Burden' of History: *Light in August*." *The Classic Vision: The Retreat from Extremity in Modern Literature*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1971.

Lind, Ilse Dusoir. "The Calvinistic Burden of *Light in August*." *New England Quarterly* 30 (1957): 307-29.

Millgate, Michael. *The Achievement of William Faulkner*. New York: Random House, 1966.

Reed, Joseph W., Jr. *Faulkner's Narrative*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1973.

Ruppersburg, Hugh M. *Voice and Eye in Faulkner's Fiction*. Athens: U of Georgia P, 1983.

Shaw, Patrick W. "Joe Christmas and the Burden of Despair." *Texas Review* 1 (1980): 89-97.

Slabey, Robert M. "Myth and Ritual in *Light in August*." *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 2 (1960): 328-49; revised in *The Merrill Studies in Light in August*. Comp. M. Thomas Inge. Columbus: Merrill, 1971. 75-98.

Williams, David. *Faulkner's Women, The Myth and the Muse*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 1977.

Wyatt, David M. *Prodigal Sons: A Study in Authorship and Authority*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1980.

From *Robinson Crusoe* to *Philip Quarll*: The Transformation of a Robinsonade

Patricia Harkins University of South Alabama

The first edition of *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe of York, Mariner* was published in London by W. Taylor on April 25, 1719. Since the book was supposed to be autobiographical, Defoe's name did not appear in the first edition. *Robinson Crusoe* was such an immediate best seller that Taylor reprinted it three times that year. Several pirated abridgements of the story were soon circulating and robinsonades, books modeled on *Robinson Crusoe*, began to proliferate during the next ten years.[1] One of the earliest English robinsonades was *The Hermit: Or, the Unparalled Sufferings and Surprising Adventures of Mr. Philip Quarll*, published by Cluer and Campbell in 1727. Like *Robinson Crusoe*, *The Hermit* claimed to be "real matter of fact" (vi). The actual author in this case was Peter Longueville, however, though only his initials, P. L., indicated his identity.[2] *The Hermit* is similar in theme to *Robinson Crusoe* but very different in spirit. In the preface to *The Hermit* Longueville analyzes popular literary trends. He criticizes Defoe's work as appealing primarily to the "lower Rank of Readers," while his own book is "of more Use to the publick," being neither "replete with vulgar stories" nor marred by "the least Arrogance" or satire (v). Longueville explains that he has merely edited the papers of Philip Quarll, an island recluse. The introductory material in the 1727 edition concludes with a map of Quarll's island and a poem entitled "On the Hermit's Solitude," which praises the life of piety and penitence.

The first part of *The Hermit* is narrated by "an Eminent Merchant" (3), Mr. Darrington, a character invented by Longueville's editors.[3] He explains how he discovered Philip Quarll living alone on a remote island. Quarll tells the merchant that he was in a shipwreck more than fifty years ago. Unlike Crusoe, Quarll has learned to value his solitude so much that he hails the ship which has finally come to rescue him as an "unlucky invention" (14). He elects to remain on his island, "the Garden of Life" (32), where he has found strength and salvation far from the temptations of civilization. Before Mr. Darrington reluctantly leaves the hermit to himself again, Quarll gives the merchant his journal, saying:

> If ever these Writings should have the Luck to fall into the Hands of Men after my Decease, they might be an Encouragement to the Destitute, and a Comfort to the Afflicted, that he who rightly applies himself and firmly trusts in the Almighty, shall, at his Extremity, find Relief (41).

Mr. Darrington returns to England where he arranges to have the hermit's manuscript published.

The rest of the novel is presented as Quarll's journal. It begins with a description of Quarll's early life in England. Many of the story elements are familiar: a naive young boy is seduced by the thrills and dangers of city life; after a series of adventures he goes to sea to seek his fortune. But in Longueville's tale his hero's sympathetic mother encourages him to try city life, after his father has died, leaving the family destitute. Philip's handsome face and gallant manners lead him into a series of amorous adventures in London that take up nearly a third of the novel. In contrast to Crusoe, who marries once, relatively late, and then only for practical reasons, Philip Quarll marries three times while he is still young, and always unwisely. He is tried and sentenced to death for bigamy. When his sentence is reduced to transportation, Quarll sails from England forever. There is a terrible storm and the ship sinks. Everyone who had been on board is lost, except Quarll, who offers up a prayer of deliverance close in style and content to Crusoe's.

The final section of *The Hermit* describes Philip Quarll's island life. No longer the innocent wanderer or the harassed husband, Quarll "assumes the role of the hearty and confident Englishman who creates economic order out of jungle chaos" (Bosse 8). Turning from his former sinful life, he learns to rely on "God's Providence" (248) and his own ingenuity. After some years alone Quarll is provided with a Man Friday when a French fisherman, "an acute and ingenious lad" (238), is stranded. However he soon leaves on a passing ship, and his benefactor never sees him again. Just as Quarll has become reconciled to this loss, God sends him a second Friday, this time an extraordinarily beautiful and talented monkey native to the island. His master names him Beaufidell. Longueville manages to make the relationship between the hermit and his loyal animal companion touching rather than silly; Quarll's care of the monkey when it is dying is especially affecting. The detailed descriptions of all the natural wonders on Quarll's island --the cave of echoes, the great lake, the birds and flowers and trees--are

more vivid than anything in *Robinson Crusoe*, though also sometimes less believable. Quarll draws detailed pictures of his island home, writes poetry about it, praises God for it daily in song and prayer. Indeed, in spite of such occasional dangers as foul weather or raiding pirates, he comes to view himself as "Adam before his Fall," living in Eden (220).

The Hermit ends on a curious note. Quarll has the last in a series of prophetic dreams, this one predicting the glorious reign of the house of Hanover. It is an irrelevant conclusion, probably included by Longueville as a bid for patronage. Fortunately, Longueville's three dimensional characterizations, earthy depictions of London life, and imaginative recreation of an island setting ensured *The Hermit's* popularity for over a hundred years.

In fact, one of the ways in which *The Hermit* parallels *Robinson Crusoe* is in its history of imitators and adapters, though they never numbered into the thousands, and never included adaptations into non-European languages such as Swahili.[4] By the 1750's chapbook versions of both *Robinson Crusoe* and *The Hermit* were selling briskly. In this form, the novels were compressed into as little as 24, 16, or even 8 pages, including cheap woodcuts. They invariably focused on Crusoe or Quarll's island adventures. These pocket-sized, pirated adaptations were very popular with children but were not referred to as "children's books", that is, they were not edited especially for that audience.

During the latter part of the eighteenth century there was a great expansion of the trade in books which were, in Locke's words, "fit to engage the liking of Children" (Axtell 260). With the general acceptance of Locke's beliefs that people were made good or evil, useful or not, by education, and that childhood reading was an important part of that education, European parents began to demand "suitable" books for their children. Even some of "the best" novels for adults were considered dangerous reading for "unformed sensibilities" (Ellis 91). In general, eighteenth-century books for children depicted the reformation of bad characters and the corruption of good characters; few characters of "mingled virtue and vice" appeared (Pickering 33). The already popular chapbook versions of *Robinson Crusoe* and *The Hermit* were ideal for further adaptation into children's literature since they concentrated on the reformation of the central characters within the framework of an entertaining adventure story. The first abridgement of *Robinson Crusoe* intended specially for the juvenile market was advertised by F. Newberry and T. Carnan in 1768 "with a frontispiece and six

other illustrations" (Carpenter 891). During the same year a new edition of *The Hermit* was published, "recommended for the edification of children" (891).

Seven years earlier, in 1761, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, often called the founder of modern education, had written *Emile*, a book which would have a profound influence on children's literature. "Reading is the curse of childhood," the French philosopher declared (Bk. III 185). The only text he approved for youth was *Robinson Crusoe*. "This book will be the first to be read by my Emile; for a long time it will constitute his whole library and it will always be pre-eminent there" (Bk. III 184). Rousseau extolled Crusoe's self-reliance as the man without technical resources who must struggle with the forces of nature for survival. Rousseau was also greatly interested in Friday, the "unspoiled savage" whom he saw as a symbolic figure for his age which had started to believe in the natural goodness of mankind. Rousseau derived many of his ideas on education and childhood from Locke; but he disagreed with Locke's confidence in reason, instead believing that sensibility and feeling were the best guides to living. Through these guides the conscience rather than the intellect would point the way to virtue and happiness. Control of the passions was the key to felicity: vice and misery followed their indulgence.

Rousseau also saw mankind and childhood as corrupted by the artificialities of society. He would remove the child from the corrupt influences of urban life and bring him up in rural seclusion. This philosophy agreed with the ideas expressed by Longueville's island hero, rather than Defoe's, for while Philip Quarll was content in the end to live alone on his island, Robinson Crusoe welcomed the opportunity to re-enter civilization. Though Rousseau probably never read *The Hermit*, he is a major reason why Longueville's novel, as well as Defoe's, remained popular into the nineteenth century, not only with the reading public, but with many critics and educators.

There are countless twentieth-century articles and books which trace the history of *Robinson Crusoe's* literary descendants from the period of Rousseau's *Emile*, but none that studies analogies of *The Hermit* in depth. Today Longueville's novel is often considered only as one among many robinsonades. Contemporary authors whose adaptations of the Crusoe story include animal helpers seldom recognize their debt to Longueville's novel. And though scholars frequently mention *The Hermit* as "the best of

the English imitations of *Robinson*," publishers continue to neglect it (Gove 267).

By the middle of the nineteenth century *The Hermit's* popularity as an adult novel had begun to suffer a sharp decline. Full-length new editions were no longer being published, and the last chapbook edition appeared in the 1870's (Gove 266). However, *The Hermit* is the subject of several literary allusions during the Victorian period, attesting to its continuing popularity as a children's book. Although it no longer ranked "with the Bible and *Pilgrim's Progress* in rural homes" (Gove 268), Dickens comments on Philip Quarll's ingenuity in *Martin Chuzzlewit* (544) and Lamb mentions it twice, once in "Recollections of Christ's Hospital," when some of the schoolboys pretend to be looking for Quarll's island (600), and again in a letter to Walter Wilson, to whom he writes, "the monkey is the best in it, and his pretty dishes made of shells" (Gove 268).

Charlotte Yonge was another nineteenth century writer who read and enjoyed *The Hermit*. Although she was not a great thinker like Locke or Rousseau she had a profound impact on children's literature. Between 1844 and 1901 Yonge wrote over one hundred and twenty books, most of them bestsellers. Cornelia Meigs has noted "there was never, perhaps, a writer more typical of her own age" (167). Charlotte Yonge wrote about life as lived among the large families who were growing up in Victorian nurseries and schoolrooms. Besides being a popular writer, Yonge was an influential critic and editor. In 1887 she compiled *What Books to Give and What to Lend* which was referred to by educators and parents for fifty years. Although she was a staunch Christian and believed that literature for children should have a didactic element, she also believed in the dictum "beguile, bemuse" (Gurney 454). She maintained that adventure stories such as *Robinson Crusoe* and *The Hermit* were an important part of a boy's education, and acceptable for girls as well-- provided the children read "properly adapted" editions (Meigs 174).

Yonge developed her theories not only through her own writing, but through her editorship of *The Monthly Packet*, a widely read magazine for girls which she founded in 1850. As an editor, she believed her job was not only to encourage high literary and moral standards among contemporary writers, but to preserve and promote "worthy" stories from the past (Field 231). In 1870 she edited *A Storehouse of Stories*, published by Macmillan. The narratives which appear in the *Storehouse* had all originally been issued in the eighteenth century. The first story in the collection is *The His-*

tory of Philip Quarll. Yonge recommends it as among "the old children's classics of the last century" and goes on to say, "Judging from our own childhood we find that we preferred the inherited books of the former generation to any of our own, with a few rare exceptions" (v). It is through Miss Yonge's edition of *Philip Quarll* that most English and American children of her own and the next generation knew Longueville's work.

Yonge conjectures that *Philip Quarll* was written in the period immediately before the French Revolution by "some ardent believer in the comforts and benefits of primeval simplicity" (vi). It is this "tone" in the novel which causes her to reject its "reputation of being by Daniel Defoe"(v). As a proof of *Philip Quarll's* popularity when she was a girl (Yonge was born in 1823), she tells her readers "we remember to have seen it reduced to rhyme, in a little pictured nursery book," and, she goes on, "it deserves it, for it has much of the charms of the true desert island story" (vi).

It is no wonder that Yonge dates the origin of *Philip Quarll* or *The Hermit* as later than 1727, for in the abridgement of Longueville's novel that she uses, the author's Preface has been replaced by an Introduction that sounds like a treatise on Rousseau's ideas about the disadvantages of civilization and refinement:

> But in the entire possession of all his bodily faculties,how great is the superiority of the savage! The inhabitant of cities, pale, feeble, and bloated, drags on a tedious existence with difficulty, under the incumbrance of an hundred diseases, to which his intemperance has subjected him. Before half his life is run out, we frequently behold him incapable of using his limbs, and that idleness, which was at first voluntary, becomes inevitable, from the imbecility he has contracted. . . . How different from this is the life of an American or a Tartar! Accustomed from his infancy to contend with dangers and difficulties, he becomes hardened against all the vicissitudes of nature, against all the attacks of fortune (1).

This adaptation omits Mr. Darrington entirely and also omits the map of Quarll's island and the pious opening poem. Following the tradition begun in the chapbook editions, this version of *The Hermit* skips the entire history of Philip Quarll's boyhood and later London adventures. Instead, it begins with a quick summary of the shipwreck. The "bold and brave" Philip Quarll is not a deported criminal anymore, but "an English sailor" who finds himself marooned "in a dismal condition" (3).

America" was in a Boston edition of 1795 (*Children's Books In England* 112).

During the 19th and early 20th centuries authorship of *The Hermit* became a matter of debate. The initials P. L., signed at the end of the Preface, were "assigned" to Alexander Bickness among others (Jones 82). The controversy came to a close when Arundell Esdaile discovered a rare editon of *The Hermit* in which the preface is signed "Peter Longueville," ("The English Hermit" 186). This led to the rediscivery that, only a few months after the first edition of *The Hermit* appeared, the author had privately published a limited edition of his own in protest to the changes his editors had made in his original MS (Grove 267).

[3]One of changes Longueville's rival 1727 edition of *The Hermit* protests is his editors' invention of Edward Dorrington (Esdaile 192). A rich, unexplored subject for investigation would be whether Longueville's own version had any influence on later editions and translations of *The Hermit*.

[4]According to Percy Muir (*English Children's Books*), "adaptations of the Crusoe story in every modern language are virtually countless." He cites several "exotic" examples of versions in non-European languages, including Hindustani, Arabic and Swahili (42).

Works Cited

Axtell, James L. *The Educational Writings of John Locke*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1968.

Carpenter, Humphrey and Mari Prichard, eds. *The Oxford Companion to Children's Literature*. New York: Oxford UP, 1984-85.

Darton, F. J. *Children's Books In England*. Ed. Brian Alderson, 3rd ed. Cambridge UP, 1982.

Defoe, Daniel. *Robinson Crusoe*. Ed. Michael Shinagel. New York: Norton, 1975.

Ellis, Alec. *A History of Children's Reading and Literature*. Oxford: Pergamon, 1968.

Esdaile, Arundel. "Author and Publisher in 1727: 'The English Hermit.'" *The Library*. 4 Sept. 1921: 185-192.

Field, E. M. *The Child and His Book*. 2nd ed. 1892. Detroit:Singing Tree, 1968.

Gove, Philip Babcock. *The Imaginary Voyage in Prose Fiction*. New York: Columbia UP, 1941.

Gurney, Joan Glazard. *Introduction to Children's Literature.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979.

Harlimann, Bettina. *Three Centuries of Children's Books in Europe.* Trans. and Ed. Brian W. Alderson. New York: World, 1968.

Hutchins, H. C. *Robinson Crusoe and Its Printing.* New York: Columbia UP, 1925.

Longueville, Peter. *The Hermit.* Ed. Malcolm J. Bosse. New York: Garland, 1972.

Lowes. J. L. *The Road to Xanadu.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1927.

Meigs, Cornelia, et. al., eds. *A Critical History of Children's Literature.* New York: Macmillan, 1953.

Muir, Percy. *English Children's Books, 1600 to 1900.* New York: Praeger, 1954.

Pickering, Samuel F. "Tom Jones as a Children's Book in the Eighteenth Century." *CLAQ* 10 (1985): 33-35.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Emile.* 1762. Trans. Ed. Alan Bloom. New York: Basic Books, 1979.

Thwaite, Mary F. *From Primer to Pleasure in Reading.* Boston: Horn Book, 1972.

Rabiul Hasan Alcorn State University

You and I

You and I are one in our birth.
Ferns breed on rocks hidden below the dark waters;
Waves surge and break against the shore;
Minnows swallow hooks held by the Hindu vegetarian.

I spell your name written on my bare chest,
a place blessed by our parents from evils.
We walk together, bolstered by high meadows;
we enter the house made of granite and rhododendrons.

Shack Poem

The elk leaves his footprints in the snow, and cannot trace them.
It is the lotted winter that one endures alone,
and the nimbly darkness, and the shadows intense among the cliffs.
I live alone in a shack by the sea.

Tootle: The Little Engine and What it Carries: Ideological Cargo in a Children's Story

Jeanne Johnsey University of Southern Mississippi

Observers of culture who share an interest in the interactive relationship between art and history can find in the Marxist literary method a point of perspective from which to engage specific texts. Since Fredric Jameson has made a case for considering everything around us as a text, and has issued the call to "historicize everything" (*Political Unconscious* 1), such an observer may feel surrounded by objects that clamor for historical contextualization.

Jameson suggests, for example, that a person seeing Van Gogh's painting of Peasant's Shoes, must reconstruct "some initial situation out of which the finished work emerges" and confront the work in its initial context and in terms of the raw materials that produced it. By "raw materials" Jameson means the whole network of objects and people that make up the world in which the shoes exist. Contrast between the drab peasant reality and the colorful Van Gogh canvas forefronts what Jameson calls Van Gogh's "utopian gesture...of compensation." This process saves the painting from becoming a meaningless piece of decoration ("Cultural Logic," 18-19). The same process may be applied, with equally fruitful results, to objects that we do consider merely decorations or trivial entertainments.

If, as Terry Eagleton says, the "complex structure of social perception . . . ensures that . . ." certain social realities "are either seen by most members . . . as 'natural' or not seen at all" (536), we might learn some surprising things about ourselves by observing the very elements in our culture that we have considered empty of meaning. By examining these elements, we may see some of those things that we have previously "not seen at all." We might encounter some portrayed values that seem so self-evident they have become invisible. Being invisible, these values might become unintentionally packaged in the stories we tell our children.

The popular children's story, *Tootle*, contains such a package. Originally published in 1945, *Tootle* has been continually in print and is still in stores today. This little book is part of a marketing venture called Little Golden Books that began in 1942 when the concept of a cheap line of children's

books grew out of World War Two toy shortages. The Little Golden Book series was started by Simon and Schuster and continues under Western Publishing Company, which is owned by the toy company, Mattel, Inc.

The line was so successful that it spread from bookstores to department stores and, eventually, to supermarkets and has sold hundreds of millions of books. For this reason the books have been treated more like merchandise than like literature, and little is known about the editorial life of the books. As Barbara Bader points out in her comprehensive study of children's picture books, "Apart from the reports in *Publishers Weekly* . . . virtually nothing appears to have been written about this publishing phenomenon" (589). *Publisher's Weekly* reveals that the Little Golden Books are, indeed, a successful venture. Hundreds of millions of have been sold (24), and *Tootle* is recognized as a successful title (283).

Tootle is the story of a little locomotive engine who goes to school to learn to become a big locomotive. He is a good student. He follows all the rules, including the most important one, "Staying on the Rails, No Matter What." But one day Tootle chases a black horse across a meadow and becomes acquainted with the natural wonders there: the frogs, the daises and the buttercups. Bill the engineer, who is Tootle's teacher, is very upset. Under Bill's direction the whole town turns out waving red flags, and Tootle, who has been taught to, "Always Stop For a Red Flag Waving," returns to the track, never to depart again.

This is supposed to be a happy ending. The little engine knows his function in life, and he has become reconciled to it. However, David Reisman, who calls *Tootle* an appropriate story for "bringing up children in an other-directed mode of conformity," says that *Little Red Riding Hood* is a more realistic cautionary tale which "does not present the rewards of virtue in any unambiguous form or show the adult world in any wholly benevolent light..." (qtd in Bader 283).

Bruno Bettleheim has also compared the two tales and considers *Red Riding Hood* a more realistic tale because, in *Tootle*, "[T]he trappings are real enough, but everything essential is unreal, since the entire population of a town does not stop . . . to help a child mend his ways." Further, Bettleheim sees, "no initiative, no freedom" in the Tootle story (182-83). Or, as George Lukacs might point out, Tootle, has subverted part of himself in order to fulfill the narrow function demanded by division of labor in a stratified, industrial society. Lukacs warns that modern industrial workers

are "ossified" by this division of labor that "makes automata of them in their jobs and turns them into the slaves of routine" (335).

A nightmare of man's being subsumed by machine has long haunted western consciousness, providing a theme for numerous and varied texts. Fritz Lang's 1927 movie classic, *Metropolis*, presents horrific urbanscapes through which workers trudge lifelessly to and from their posts. They have become part of the machines they serve and have ceased to exist in human terms. Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, published in the thirties, shows a world in which society, itself, functions with mechanical proficiency. By 1946, when *Tootle* comes along, the idea is no longer a nightmare. The merging of man and machine occurs in a cute little tale for children. The question no longer is, "Will man become a machine?" but, "Will the machine stay on the rails?"

A story in which the protagonist is a machine is seen as natural or not seen at all in a society that looks to the machine as a vehicle for salvation-through-progress. The young reader will obviously identify with the young student-train wanting to forsake the classroom for outdoor play. The message in the story is that the little engine is rewarded when he shuns his outdoor adventure in favor of "Staying on the Rails." One is reminded of the groups of children in Huxley's book who are conditioned to hate nature so they will be docile workers.

Ariel Dorphman sees childhood as a kind of third world nation,

> which might be the only universal world, and which constitutes the axis of all processes of domination . . . the new generation is always required to accept the status quo of their parents, comfortably, devoutly, and without interruption, at the same time learning to judge and pre-interpret every rupture and rift in reality with the same indisputable assumptions used by their forefathers (8).

In *The Empire's Old Clothes*, Dorphman takes the well-known Babar Stories to task for being an apologia for French Colonialism. The Babar stories chronicle the adventures of an elephant who leaves the jungle for civilization and returns to "civilize" the jungle. *Tootle* provides the same kind of apologia for the stratification in industrial society. The little engine has a definite place, "on the rails", and he is not allowed to deviate from it. Along with his point by point illustration of the colonial usurpation of native cultures and folkways by French colonialism, Dorphman draws a parallel with adult usurpation of childhood imagination. Such a usurpation of

imagination, Dorphman reasons, "closes the juvenile imagination and its rebellious tendencies off from alternative routes." This closure is undesirable because, "True imagination implicitly criticizes the prevailing version of reality and invites us to make our own substitutions" (36).

It is clear that adult usurpation is happening in Tootle's story from the first page, where "The young locomotives steam up and down the tracks, trying to call out the long, sad "TooOoot" of the big locomotives, but the best they can do is a gay little "Tootle." Hence, the hero's name, and hence, the scorning of the gaiety of childhood and the valorization of sober adulthood.

It is important to realize that when Tootle leaves the rails it is in response to a personal challenge. The horse, a creature of nature, challenges him to a race. It is Tootle's very desire to excel in the grown-up world that propels him off the track. "If I am going to be a Flyer," he reasons, "I can't let a horse beat me." While Tootle raced the horse, as the text puts it,

> A dreadful thing happened. After all that Bill had said about staying on the rails no matter what, Tootle jumped off the tracks and raced alongside the black horse!"

Success is only to come through the adult sanctioned routes. At the end of the story, Tootle is a big famous Two-Miles-a- Minute-Flyer. The young locomotives gather to listen to his advice, "Work Hard," he tells them "Always Remember to Stop for a Red Flag Waving. But most of all, Stay on the Rails No Matter What." This is the corporate success story, the Horatio Alger of Trains. The reward comes from conforming.

Bruno Bettleheim points out that, traditionally, fairy tales have helped children deal with serious inner struggles entailed in growing up. He cites deviation from the path, as in the Little Red Riding Hood story, as necessary for the young person to gain a higher state of personality organization and that, "only by going out into the world can the Fairy-tale hero (child) find himself there" (182-83). Riding Hood learns from experience and makes her own choice.

Tootle presents a different message, according to Bettleheim. Getting off the rails is shown as undesirable. Tootle comes to no understanding of himself in the larger world of experience, but returns to the security of home, not a stronger person, but happily unchanged (182-83).

A similar story published in the 1930s is still popular today. This little hero, *The Little Engine That Could*, is also a personified machine. This

famous little engine huffs and puffs up the hill saying, "I think I can. I think I can." Like Tootle, he is totally absorbed in his function. Ruth Moynihan provides some insight into social implications in this type of story by comparing it with *Winnie the Pooh.* This story, one that remains popular today was first published in England in 1926. Moynihan reflects that "A. A. Milne's story takes place in a sheltered, circumscribed world, the easy-going world of the English upper classes," in which "The ideology is that of a bumbling imperfect world, though a generally kind-hearted and not at all dangerous one . . . . The message is that goals don't matter so long as everyone enjoys himself and is kind to one another along the way" (168).

Moynihan contrasts the two. "American books . . . are usually firmly rooted in some aspect of reality, and, in the pursuit of specific goals, such as *The Little Engine*, which reflect the official optimism with which the nation entered the depression." She describes how Hoover told the nation at that time, it was, "the willingness of all the little people to make temporary sacrifices and work a little harder which would solve the problems of the depression." As Moynihan puts it, "I think I can, I think I can" became the motto of a whole generation of depression parents and their children, while society's general structure remained unchanged" (166-71). This statement in Moynihan's article has a curious echo in a 1982 book by Noam Chomsky, who says of our current domestic economic reality that, "those who are not at the high end of the income distribution must be willing to sacrifice for the cause . . ." (31).

It may be that these little picture books that parents pick up at the supermarket check-out can provide a special insight into our perceived reality. These texts seem to have no ideological content simply because don't challenge any of our assumptions. They only mirror our predigested ideas. For this very reason, they may reveal deeply held, subconscious beliefs. For instance, while we give lip service to individual initiative, we may secretly feel it is better to play it safe, and "Stay on the Rails."

With increased awareness of this process, it is possible to see a little story like *Tootle* with increased flexibility of response. *Tootle* is no longer a fixed object that exists in a vacuum, but a text that can be understood in terms of the attitudes that shape it and the attitudes it is likely to reinforce. New echoes then start to resound in the "long, sad "TooOoot" of the big locomotives." It becomes possible to imagine other realities, realities in which there can be another little engine, The Little Engine That Stayed in the Meadow, The Little Engine That didn't "Stay on The Rails, No Matter What."

Works Cited

Bader, Barbara. *American Picturebooks From Noah's Ark to the Beast Within*. New York: Macmillan, 1976.

Bettelheim, Bruno. *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*. New York: Vintage Books, 1976.

Chomsky, Noam. *Towards a New Cold War: Essays on the Current Crisis and How We Got There*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1982 .

Dorfman, Ariel. *The Empire's Old Clothes*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1983.

Eagleton, Terry. "Marxism and Literary Criticism." *Criticism: The Major Statements*. 2nd ed. Ed. Charles Kaplan. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985. 532-554.

Jameson, Fredric. *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1981.

---. "Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism." *New Left Review* 146 (1984): 53-92.

Kellman, Jerold L. "Letter From the Midwest." *Publishers Weekly* 9 Apr (1982): 24-25.

Lukacs, Georg. *History and Class Consciousness*. Trans. Rodney Livingstone. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1971.

Moyniham, Ruth B. "Ideologies in Children's Literature." *Children's Literature: Journal of the MLA Seminar on Children's Literature* 2. Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1973. 166-172.

Note: This article is the first fruit of a study of ideology and literature which began in Dr. Kenneth Watson's literary criticism seminar in Spring, 1987, at the University of Southern Mississippi.

Charles Dickens: Murder, He Wrote

Davida D. King University of Southern Mississippi

Perhaps the most avid detectives are scholars, critics, and researchers found among the university subculture. We, in the academic world, are always looking for a clue, an answer, or meaningful insight about an author or a piece of literature. Maybe, that is why mysteries and murder appeal to the academic mind--they awaken the curiosity, the primitive urge for the "hunt." The search for and detection of the murderer are certainly stimulating, but so are the "how" and "why" of the murder. One wants to know how and why a person was killed. Along this line, while re-reading the murder scene in Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*, I wondered why Dickens chose to depict the murder of Nancy the way he did. Dickens does not make Nancy's murder a mystery. He tells the reader who the murderer is, Bill Sikes, how the murder is committed, and why it is committed. So, there is no search or detection of the murderer required by the reader. However that which remains, the actual depiction of the murder and the psychological makeup of the murderer and victim, is disturbing because the sense of realism and the sense of immediacy are uncanny:

> 'Bill,' said the girl, in the low voice of alarm, 'why do you look like that at me!'
>
> The robber sat regarding her, for a few seconds, with dilated nostrils and heaving breast; and then grasping her by the head and throat, dragged her into the middle of the room, and looking once towards the door, placed his heavy hand upon her mouth.
>
> 'Bill, Bill!' gasped the girl, wrestling with the strength of mortal fear, . . . 'tell me what I have done!'
>
> 'You know, you she devil!' returned the robber, suppressing his breath. 'You were watched to-night; every word you said was heard.'
>
> 'Then spare my life for the love of Heaven, as I spared yours,' rejoined the girl, clinging to him . . . . stop before you spill my blood! I have been true to you, upon my soul I have!'
>
> The man struggled violently to release his arms; but those of the girl were clasped round his, and tear her as he would, he could not tear them away . . . .
>
> The housebreaker freed one arm, and grasped his pistol. The certainty of immediate detection if he fired, flashed across his mind even in the midst of his fury; and he beat it twice with all the force

he could summon, upon the upturned face that almost touched his own.

She staggered and fell: nearly blinded with the blood that rained down from a deep gash in her forehead . . . .

It was a ghastly figure to look upon. The murderer staggering backward to the wall, and shutting out the sight with his hand, seized a heavy club and struck her down . . . . He had struck and struck again. Once he threw a rug over it; but it was worse to fancy the eyes, and imagine them moving towards him, than to see them glaring upward, as if watching the reflection of the pool of gore that quivered and danced in the sunlight on the ceiling . . . . And there was the body mere flesh and blood, no more--but such flesh, and so much blood!

He struck a light, kindled a fire, and thrust the club into it. There was hair upon the end, which blazed and shrunk into a light cinder, and, caught by the air, whirled up the chimney . . . . He washed himself, and rubbed his clothes; there were spots that would not be removed, but he cut the pieces out, and burnt them. How those stains were dispersed about the room! The very feet of the dog were bloody. (364-67)

This passage is not just an exercise by Dickens in horrifics; it is an accurate reflector of a crime scene and of the psychological workings of a murder of this type. As any criminologist would recognize, there is a presence of more than just an author making up a good murder scene. There are clues which give Dickens away. For example, when Sikes starts to shoot Nancy, it flashes "across his mind" that the sound will attract attention, so he, logically, decides to hit her with the weapon instead. This action by Sikes is typical of a sociopath. A sociopath knows exactly what he is doing; yet, he is out of touch with reality. He has his own set of values and rules, does not see anything wrong with his actions, feels no guilt, is incapable of significant loyalty to groups or individuals, is grossly selfish, callous, irresponsible and impulsive, has a low tolerance of frustration, has a tendency to blame others or offers a plausible rationalization for his behavior and becomes anxious when close to being caught and can and will lie, cheat and do whatever necessary to better his position.

Also, when Nancy clings to Sikes instead of attempting to get away from him, she reflects a very common trait of prostitutes. They are fiercely loyal to their pimps or "main men," to the people who abuse them the most. Nancy even says herself, "I am drawn back to him [Sikes] through every suffering and ill usage; and I should be, I believe, if I knew that I was to die by his hand at last" (308). Prostitutes suffer from a psychological phenomenon known as an inadequate personality. They are easily led and

are generally known as "losers." The intensity of this scene reflects more than an author's knowledge of the streets or crime or of an author's imaginative powers at work; it reflects a kinship between the author, Dickens, and his characters, Sikes and Nancy.

It is no coincidence that Oliver is about twelve years old when Monks begins his search for his step-brother in the novel. Monks tells Mr. Bumble, "Carry your memory back--let me see--twelve years last winter" (277). It was then that Oliver was born in the workhouse, and it was winter when Dickens was born and his twelfth year when he was left alone and sent to work in the hated blacking-factory during the time when the family was in financial trouble and his father was taken to debtor's prison. It is certainly no secret that Dickens never got over this traumatic, childhood experience and that it haunted him to his grave. I agree with Edmund Wilson when he says, "For the man of spirit whose childhood has been crushed by the cruelty of organised society, one of two attitudes is natural: that of the criminal or that of the rebel" (Collins 14). But, I disagree with Wilson when he says that "Charles Dickens, in imagination, was to play the roles of both, and to continue up to his death to put into them all that was most passionate in his feeling" (Collins 14). I believe that Dickens did not merely play, "in imagination," the roles of the criminal and of the rebel but that he actually possessed the same kinds of feelings as they did. Humphrey House explains this point well:

> The psychological condition of a rebel-reformer is in many ways similar to that of a criminal, and may have the same origins. A feeling of being outside the ordinary organization of group life: a feeling of bitter loneliness, isolation, ostracism or irrevocable disgrace any one or any combination of such feelings may turn a man against organized society, and his opposition may express itself in what is technically crime or what is technically politics: treason, sedition .... Dickens's childhood had been such that all these feelings, at different times in different degrees, had been his: he knew no security and no tenderness the family home was for a time the Marshalsea prison, and for six months Dickens himself was a wretched drudge in a blacking-factory. These two experiences, and others similar, lie behind the loneliness, disgrace and outlawry which pervade all his novels .... *Oliver Twist* reveals them in an early stage, not fully developed, certainly not analysed, but very clear (Collins 15).

Dickens' acquaintance with characters such as Bill Sikes is not through imagination but through introspection. Sikes, the outsider, resides in some

part of Dickens' psyche as does Nancy. Dickens' addiction to his public readings of Sikes' murder of Nancy is significant. He gave the "Murder" reading "as many as ten times in a week" (Collins 270). Seven weeks before Dickens gave his first public performance of the "Murder," he wrote to W. P. Frith inviting him to "Come early in January, and see a certain friend of yours do the murder from *Oliver Twist*. It is horribly like, I am afraid! I have a vague sensation of being "wanted" as I walk about the streets" (Collins 267).

Edgar Johnson relates that Dickens "enjoyed the readings. Above all he enjoyed shocking his audiences with the murder and liked to joke about his 'murderous instincts'" (556). Dickens liked the audiences' fixed expression of horror as he portrayed Sikes. Consequently, he put the "Murder" on his programme again and again (Johnson 556). Dickens did not do this because he felt a high degree of identification with Sikes but because Sikes was, indeed, a part of himself. In fact, Dickens' manager, George Dolby, out of concern for Dickens' health, pointed out to Dickens that of four Readings a week he had scheduled the "Murder" three times. When Dolby suggested that "Dickens should refrain from tearing himself to pieces and suffering the tortures he endured" by reserving the "Murder" for only the larger towns on his tour, Dickens became extremely angry, "bounded up from his chair and threw his knife and fork violently on his plate, smashing it to pieces. 'Dolby!' he shouted, 'your infernal caution will be your ruin one of these days'" (Johnson 556). Dickens' explosive, aggressive behavior is very much like that of his character, Sikes. What Dickens said to Dolby is consistent with remarks that Sikes could have said to Fagin. When Dickens wrote the character of Sikes and played the role of Sikes in his public readings, he had called up to the conscious what had been submerged in his subconscious.

Like Dickens, "we are such people ourselves in our true moments, in our veritable impulses; but we are careful to stifle and to hide those moments from ourselves and from the world . . ." (Guerard 23). Any criminal investigator knows that, in order to catch a criminal, one must think like a criminal. There is a fine line between the law enforcer and the criminal, between pro-law and outlaw. The murder of Nancy is not stifled, and so it is disturbing, unsettling. It must have been so to Philip Collins because he commented that the "Murder" chapters were "indeed effective, whether read or performed, but like most of Dickens's horrifics they lack restraint, subtlety and depth" (272). I find this comment by Collins truly amazing.

Since when is murder of this type an act of restraint, subtlety and depth? Murder does not take place where restraint is employed. The majority of murders committed have always been crimes of passion. Sikes murders Nancy in a fit of passion because he thinks that she has betrayed him. This type of murder by its nature lacks restraint, subtlety or depth of thought or worry about the consequences. Most often, the passionate murderer does not care what the consequences are, or he is willing to suffer any consequence in order to complete the act of revenge. Before, Sikes had displaced his frustration by kicking his dog, Bullseye; now, he kills Nancy. Dickens also knew frustration, especially in marriage. His relationship with his wife, Catherine, was one of "long frustration" which "ended in a failure that left him ruthless and embittered" towards her (Johnson 554). Like Sikes, there were depths in Dickens that he shrank from exposing to even the gentlest touch (Johnson 96). This is the kinship of outsiders--either in reality or psychologically.

Nancy, too, is an outsider. She describes herself as a typical prostitute to Rose Maylie: "I am the infamous creature you have heard of, that lives among the thieves . . . . I am younger than you would think, to look at me, but I am well used to it. The poorest women fall back, as I make my way along the crowded pavement" (305). Obviously, Nancy is quite used to being shunned, but she does not blame people for doing so because she feels that she deserves this sort of treatment, even Sikes' abuse. She rebukes Rose for speaking to her in a sweet, gentle voice. "do not speak to one so kindly till you know me better" (305).

When Nancy goes to Rose for the purpose of helping Oliver, she is exhibiting a psychological defense mechanism known as undoing or restitution. Nancy feels the need to atone for, thus counteracting, immoral acts or desires. The undoer is one who makes donations to charities, makes apologies, "I'm sorry," to the degree of doing penance, and induces self-punishment. By helping Oliver, Nancy feels that she can make up for some of the wrong she has done in her past. She is so overwhelmed with a sense of guilt that she wishes for punishment, for death. She is well aware of the danger in which she places herself when she goes to see Rose; she tells Rose, "I have stolen away from those who would surely murder me, if they knew I had been here, to tell you what I have overheard" (305-6). Even though Nancy experiences extreme fear and dread of being found out by Sikes and knows that she will be killed if discovered and even though she has horrible

"thoughts of death" and of "shrouds with blood upon them," she feels compelled to help Oliver (353). Death becomes her obsession.

Dickens is, like Nancy, an undoer. Throughout his life, Dickens attempted to undo the traumatic effects that his father's imprisonment and the blacking-factory had upon him as a boy and attempted to undo societal wrongs by lending his support to many charitable causes such as the Ragged Schools. As visions of Sikes "haunted" Nancy "perpetually" and as those staring eyes haunted Sikes after the murder, visions of the blacking-factory haunted Dickens (307). To rid himself of the shame of debtor's prison and of the blacking-factory was Dickens' obsession. The very lifestyle of Dickens was clearly that of an obsessive-compulsive. His need for a rigid/ritualistic lifestyle is reflected in his famous long walks and the bulk of his work. Every minute in Dickens' adult life must have been carefully scheduled.

But fame did not bring Dickens "the things he most deeply wanted" (Johnson 554). His marriage to Catherine had failed, and his affair with Ellen Ternan did not seem to bring him happiness. "Even his children whom he loved were one after another worrying and disappointing him" (Johnson 554). And he could foresee nothing but decline in England's future. It was the reading of the murder of Nancy that made Dickens come alive. The "Murder" reading was Dickens' new stimulus, and he performed it with terrifying vividness. But, this new stimulus became an obsession with death. Even though Dickens' already failing health was considerably worsened by his volatile reading of the "Murder," he refused to stop or even decrease the number of readings. "No matter what the consequences, he would go on doing what he loved" (Johnson 553). Like Sikes, in "deciding to add the murder of Nancy to his repertory, he was sentencing himself to death" (Johnson 553). Doctors, friends, and family pleaded with Dickens not to do the "Murder," but their pleas fell on deaf ears. Like Nancy, Dickens had a death wish. In Irving Howe's words, "Dickens's subject found him, laying rough hands on his throat, never to let go" (xi). The words said by Rose Maylie to Nancy could have been easily addressed to Dickens as well: "What fascination is it that can take you back, and make you cling to . . . misery? Oh! is there no chord in your heart that I can touch! is there nothing left, to which I can appeal against this terrible infatuation!" (309). The infatuation is, of course, with death. Nancy knew that, if she continued to help Oliver, Sikes would kill her, and Dickens knew that, if he continued with the "Murder" reading, it would hasten his death.

When Sikes kills Nancy, he sentences himself to the death penalty. Likewise, each time Dickens slew Nancy in the "Murder" reading, he drew himself closer to death. Like both Sikes and Nancy, Dickens was well aware of the consequences of his actions, but he, like they, risked death anyway. Perhaps, Dickens was killing the torment, pain, and suffering within himself each time he murdered Nancy. Perhaps, each time Dickens performed the "Murder," he was murdering himself. Maybe, Sikes was that aggressive part of Dickens that desired to choke and to beat to death the frustration and misery within, and Nancy was that tender, wounded, remorseful part of Dickens that desired to be undone, to undo the pain and guilt of his past. When Dickens continued his obsession with his readings of Nancy's murder, it was his "Murder, He Wrote."

Works Cited

Collins, Philip. *Dickens and Crime*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1968.

Dickens, Charles. *Oliver Twist*. New York: Bantam Books, 1982. Guerard, Albert. *The Triumph of the Novel: Dickens, Dostoevsky. Faulkner*. New York: Oxford UP, 1976.

Howe, Irving. "Introduction." *Oliver Twist*. By Charles Dickens. New York: Bantam Books, 1982. ix-xix.

Johnson, Edgar. *Charles Dickens: His Tragedy and Triumph*. Rev. ed. New York: The Viking Press, 1977.

A Nice Derangement of Epitaphs

Gerald A. Kirk University of North Texas

Henry Philip Dodd, who lavished a Victorian lifetime on the collection and annotation of epigrams and epitaphs, states that "The chief intention of an epitaph is to perpetuate the memory and character of the person on whose tomb it is placed, as an example of virtue."[1] Dodd, of course, principally had in mind the Greek and Roman models whose function was to celebrate heroic deeds and achievements. But once the epitaph passed from the province of marble to manuscript and printed page, it became an agent of the poet's fancy. While it was still used frequently to celebrate the virtues of the person it described, it also could be used to damn, abuse, or ridicule the poet's enemy or the object of his satire. It became, like the epigram, a handy little weapon in the arsenal of wit.

The effect of the epigram could, of course, be scathing. When Joseph Trapp, the first Oxford Professor of Poetry, published his initial volume of the *Aeneid* in 1718, Abel Evans, a member of Pope's coterie, was appalled and wrote this epigram:

> Keep the commandments, Trapp, and go no further,
> For it is written, That thou shalt not murther.

In like manner, the epitaph could be equally devastating. Francis Jeffrey was a Scottish judge and one of the founders of the *Edinburgh Review*. When Peter Robinson, a jurist and minor poet died, Jeffrey wrote this epitaph:

> Here lies the preacher, judge, and poet, Peter
> Who broke the laws of God, and man, and metre.

Some of the epitaphs have extended histories. Probably the best known is that of the Stanton Harcourt lovers. The small village of Stanton Harcourt is about six miles from Oxford. Near its parish church, now as in the early part of the eighteenth century, is a small tower that was once part of the manor house, which has long since disappeared. The tower is called "Pope's" Tower because it is where Pope, as a guest of the first Viscount

Harcourt, translated most of his *Iliad*. In the summer of 1718 he was working on the fifth book of that epic when an odd incident occurred that moved his sympathy and compassion. On the afternoon of July 31, as he later wrote Martha Blount, a "terrible Storm" ensued while the laborers were in the field harvesting. Frightened by the thunder and lightning, they scattered to whatever shelter was available. Two of them, John Hewet and Sarah Drew, who were engaged to be married the following Sunday, took refuge in a haycock. Although their love was the talk of the whole neighborhood, in his letter Pope stressed their innocence and virtue, insisting that all John aimed at was "the blameless Possession of Sarah in marriage." As they huddled in the haycock, there was a loud crack of thunder, and afterward they were found dead in an embrace, "John with one Arm about her neck, & the other extended over her face as to shield her from the lightning."[2] The lightning evidently did not damage the bodies except for slightly singing Sarah's left eyebrow and leaving a small spot between her breasts.

The two young lovers were buried in one grave in the churchyard of Stanton Harcourt. Through Pope's intervention, Lord Harcourt erected a small monument made of plain stone. Pope wrote an epitaph for the monument, but Lord Harcourt was not at all happy with it. It began with a reference to the Indian practice of suttee and was full of oriental imagery. Lord Harcourt felt that the diction and imagery was such that the country people would not understand it. Pope was agreeable to Lord Harcourt's criticism and consented to write another that would be more scriptural and that, as Gay put it, would have "as little of poetry as Hopkins and Sternhole."[3] Pope's next epitaph had no oriental imagery and very little poetry.

Lord Harcourt accepted this epitaph, and it was inscribed upon the monument. Though he modestly insisted he liked neither, Pope sent copies of the two epitaphs to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who had just returned from the Near East. He justified writing them by explaining that the "greatest honor people of this low degree could have was to be remembered on a little monument." He also said that he wished that she had been in England so that she could have written the epitaph herself.[4]

Lady Mary, however, did not feel the same way toward the "Haymakers," as she called them, as Pope did. In her reply she said that she doubted that once married they would have lived in "everlasting joy and harmony" because she could see no reason to imagine that they were any wiser or more virtuous than their neighbors. Nor was she touched by Pope's description of John's attempt to shield Sarah from the lightning: Lady Mary considered

this a natural action, one "he would have certainly have done for his horse, if he had been in the same situation." She enclosed the following epitaph which presents her more realistic view of haymakers.

Here lies John Hughes and Sarah Drew;
Perhaps you'll say, What's that to you?
Believe me, friend, much may be said
On that poor couple that are dead.
On Sunday next they should have married;
But see how oddly things are carried!
On Thursday last it rain'd and lighten'd,
These tender lovers sadly frighten'd,
Shelter'd beneath the cocking hay
In hopes to pass the time away.
But the BOLD THUNDER found them out
(Commission'd for that end no doubt)
And seizing on their trembling breath,
Consign'd them to the shades of death.
Who knows if 'twas not kindly done?
For had they seen the next year's sun,
A beaten wife and cuckold swain
Had jointly curs'd the marriage chain;
Now they are happy in their doom,
FOR POPE HAS WROTE UPON THEIR TOMB.[5]

This was not the last word on the Stanton Harcourt lovers, however. Sometime later Pope wrote this couplet, which he sent to Teresa Blount.

Here lye two poor Lovers, who had the mishap
Tho very chaste people, to die of a Clap.[6]

Not too far from Stanton Harcourt and Pope's Tower is Woodstock, the site of Blenheim Castle, which Pope described as "the most proud & extravagant Heap of Towers in the nation."[7] That remark echoes the attitude of many of Pope's contemporaries toward Sir John Vanbrugh's architectural abilities and Blenheim Castle in particular. Designed in 1705 at the request of Queen Anne for the Duke of Marlborough, the castle took more than thirty years in building, and the expenditures were enormous, both Vanbrugh and the duke dying before its completion. The Duke died in 1722. His wife Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, offered a reward of five hundred pounds for the best epitaph on her husband. The following epigram upon the award appeared in the *Evening Post:*

Five hundred pounds; too small a boon
To put a poet's muse in tune
That nothing may escape her.
Should she attempt the heroic story
Of the illustrious Churchill's story,
It would not buy the paper.[8]

This adulatory attitude was not shared by all. Abel Evans, for example, privately circulated an epitaph that made short shrift of the duke's adventurous and honor-laden life.

Here lies John Duke of Marlborough,
Who run the *French* thorough and thorough;
He marry'd *Sarah Jennings*, spinster
Dy'd at *St. James*, bury'd at *Westminster*.[9]

When Vanbrugh died four years later, Evans wrote the following epitaph. It is one of the more famous epitaphs of the eighteenth century, one so well known that even today it rankles many historians of architecture, so much so that Downes, in his recent book on Vanbrugh's architectural career, absolutely refused to print it, saying that to quote it "serves neither truth nor justice."[10]

Under this stone, Reader, survey
Dead Sir John Vanbrugh's house of clay:
Lie heavy on him, Earth, for he
Laid many a heavy load on thee.

Evans, who was frequently styled "the epigrammatist," in due time had his own epitaph written for him. Evans's best known work was the "Apparition," a long, satirical poem rebutting the deist, Matthew Tindal. It was published in 1710, and its popularity is indicated by the fact that it quickly went through three editions. Although Evans did not die until 1737, his epitaph, which he may have written himself, appeared in Nicholas Amhurst's *Terra Filius* in 1726.

Here lies the author of the "Apparition,"
Who died, God wot, but in a poor condition:
If, reader, you would shun his fate,
Nor write, nor preach for *Church* or *State*:
Be dull, exceeding dull, and you'll be great.

The dullness attributed to Evans is a frequent theme in many literary attacks. The *Dunciad*, of course, is a prime example of such. Elsewhere Pope frequently complained of the flattery and false history to be found in epitaphs. The following, entitled "Epigram on One Who Made Long Epitaphs," is possibly directed at Robert Freind, who was the headmaster of Westminster School. Freind composed his epitaphs in Latin, and they were laudatory as well as lengthy.

Friend! for your Epitaphs I'm griev'd,
Where still so much is said,
One half will never be believ'd,
The other never read.[11]

There are occasions when a good writer has a lapse, when he simply goes bad. Immediately after Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo, tourists all over Europe rushed to Belgium to view the field where the great Corsican had come to his final end. Sir Walter Scott, who was forty-four at the time and had never been abroad, was caught up in the excitement and joined the throng. After visiting the battleground, he wrote "The Fields of Waterloo," which consists of the worst twenty-three stanzas any reputable writer ever composed. When it was published, it was universally damned, although Scott attempted to apologize for it by insisting that he did it hastily and that it was written to assist the Waterloo Subscription, a charitable fund for the survivors of those who died in that struggle. The poet Thomas Moore wrote in his diary "I have read *Walter*-loo. The battle murdered many, and he has murdered the battle: 't is sad stuff."

This sentiment was echoed by Thomas, Lord Erskine. Although Erskine was a politician, he was also extremely well read in literature, particularly Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, and Pope. He knew by heart both *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*, though, unlike his contemporary, Richard Porson, he could not recite *Paradise Lost* backwards. He was also extremely vain, which generally made him ridiculous, and thus he was known as Counselor Ego; but his wit was proverbial and many of his epigrams and epitaphs are classic, as is the following concerning Scott and "The Fields of Waterloo."

On Waterloo's ensanguined plain
Lie tens of thousands of the slain;
But none by sabre or by shot,
Fell half as flat as Walter Scott.[12]

Erskine's legal reputation was such that the historian Nathaniel Wraxall claimed that the luminaries of the law were "half subdued by his intelligence, or awed by his . . . undaunted character."[13] Wraxall's reputation as a historian was quite high in the last years of the eighteenth century and during the first decade of the nineteenth. But the publication of his *Historical Memoirs of My Own Life* in 1815 brought his repute into doubt. The *Memoirs* was attacked vigorously in the *Quarterly Review*, the *British Critic*, and the *Edinburgh Review*. A fake epitaph, originally thought to be by George Colman, the Younger, on Wraxall was published in the *Edinburgh Review*. Actually, the writer was James Mackintosh.[14]

Misplacing--mistaking--
Misquoting--misdating--
Men, manners, things, facts all,
Here lies Nathan Wraxall.15

My title, of course, is taken from Sheridan's *The Rivals*, and I am certain everyone recognizes it as one of many of Mrs. Malaprop's collisions with the English language. It is probably appropriate, therefore, that I close with an epitaph that has to do with the drama, and for that purpose I shall return to Vanbrugh. In 1700, his adaptation of Fletcher's *The Pilgrim* was produced at the Theatre Royal. One of the principal parts, Alinda, was performed by a seventeen-year-old girl named Anne Oldfield. About a year before, Vanbrugh had first met her at the Mitre Tavern owned by her aunt. He had introduced her to Rich, the theater manager, but she had only appeared in a few minor roles until Vanbrugh insisted on her for Alinda.

In that role, she caught the attention of the London audience, but it was not until she played Lady Betty Modish in Cibber's *The Careless Husband* three years later that she gained what then amounted to stardom. She soon replaced Elizabeth Barry and Anne Bracegirdle as the leading London actress. Universally applauded, she finally retired from the stage in April, 1730, and died six months later. The following epitaph is an exquisite and punning farewell to her.

This we must own in justice to her shade,
'Tis the first bad exit OLDFIELD ever made.[16]

NOTES

[1]*The Epigrammatists* (London: 1876; rpt. Detroit: Gale Research, 1969), p. xxxvi.

[2]*The Correspondence of Alexander Pope*, ed. George Sherburn (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1956), I, 481-82. Two letters by Pope and one by Gay relate substantially the same story about the Stanton Harcourt lovers.

[3]Ibid, I, 483.

[4]Ibid, I, 495-96.

[5]Ibid, I, 523.

[6]Norman Ault, *New Light on Pope* (London: Metheun, 1949), p. 333.

[7]*Correspondence*, I, 480.

[8]Aubrey Stewart, *English Epigrams and Epitaphs* (London: Chapman & Hall, Ltd., 1897), p. 65.

[9]*A Collection of Epitaphs and Monumental Inscriptions* (London, 1806), I, 196.

[10]Kerry Downes, *Vanbrugh* (London: A. Zwemmer, Ltd., 1977), p. 125.

[11]*The Twickenham Edition of the Poems of Alexander Pope*, gen. ed. John Butt (London: Metheun, 1939-67), VI, 363.

[12]*English Epigrams* (London, 1878; rpt. Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1974), p. 72.

[13]*Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Leslie Stephen and Sidney Smith (London: 1885-1900; rpt. London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1968), VI, 856.

[14]*The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals, 1824-1900*, ed. Walter E. Houghton (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1966), I, 454.

[15]Stewart, p. 218.

[16]*A New Select Collection of Epitaphs* (London, 1775), II, 84.

"Lawrence, Genius but...Poet but...etc...."

Michele Frucht Levy Xavier University of Louisiana

> So much greatness and hot air; so much insight and so much pernicious nonsense, and the insight and the nonsense so intimately and perilously related. How are we to sort one from the other?[1]

Thus does Lawrence Lerner voice that peculiar ambivalence many critics feel toward the poetry of D. H. Lawrence. A few declare unqualified admiration; a few disdain the poems utterly. But the majority echo that vague qualification implicit in Aldington's epithet for Lawrence, "a genius, but . . .". Attaching myself to the long stream of perplexed commentators, I find my own great admiration for Lawrence tempered, though not diminished, by a keen awareness of "flaws" which I can never satisfactorily rationalize despite my strong inclination to do so. I have come to suspect, however, that in some peculiarly Lawrencian fashion those flaws, and that trailing "but," embody the quintessentially Lawrencian view of life and the legacy of the works in which he transmitted that view. I will contend, therefore, that the ambivalent critical response to Lawrence ultimately rests upon a paradox central to Lawrence's conception of life and art. In order to trace the roots of that ambivalence back to the initial paradox, I will first consider the theoretical questions Lawrence's poetry raises for critics, then the problems of practical criticism inherent in the treatment of his "vital forms," and finally certain of the poems, observing how the new form and content fuse and whether the structure of vital form can be effectively delineated.

To begin, at the heart of the controversy over Lawrence lie certain fundamental questions of aesthetic theory. What is art? What is poetry? What constitutes the relation of art and poetry to life? It is an eternal paradox that while such questions remain ultimately unanswerable, the receptors and interpreters of art must nevertheless posit answers or forever hold their peace. To this end orders are established, categories demarcated according to certain criteria. Inevitably, a structure which does not fit neatly within a given category underscores the inherent limitations of that category, and, incidentally, of categorization, while simultaneously assuring, for a time at least, that the criteria will be reasserted for the sake of the order: the exception proves the rule. Yet absolutes do become relative,

relatives absolute, as theory evolves to describe the expanding fields of human awareness--and new orders arise out of the momentary chaos.

Let us first refer briefly to Lawrence's own theoretical position. He certainly recognizes the traditional concept of art, its nature and role, as well as of that form through which it is realized. Speaking of such poetry Lawrence maintains:

> The poetry of the beginning and the poetry of the end must have that exquisite finality, perfection, which belongs to all that is far off. It is in the realm of all that is perfect. It is of the nature of all that is complete and consummate. This completeness, this consummateness, the finality and the perfection are conveyed in exquisite form: the perfect symmetry, the rhythm which returns upon itself like a dance where the hands link and loosen and link for the supreme moment of the end. Perfected bygone moments, perfected moments in the glimmering futurity, these are the treasured gem-like lyrics of Shelley and Keats.

But Lawrence himself intends another manner of poetic expression, the poetry of the Now:

> But there is another kind of poetry: the poetry of that which is at hand: the immediate present. In the immediate present there is no perfection, no consummation, nothing finished. The strands are all flying, quivering, intermingling into the web, the waters are shaking .... The living plasm vibrates unspeakably, it inhales the future, it exhales the past, it is the quick of both, and yet it is neither. There is no plasmic finality, nothing crystal, permanent.[2]

Further, Lawrence perfectly well recognizes that the poetry of the Now demands its own peculiar form:

> It is obvious that the poetry of the instant present cannot have the same body or the same motion as the poetry of the before and after. It can never submit to the same conditions. It is never finished. There is no rhythm which returns upon itself, no serpent of eternity with its tail in its mouth. There is no static perfection, none of that finality which we find so satisfying because we are so frightened.[3]

Here Lawrence does not refute established poetic theory, but asks instead that room be made for a new poetics which can help modern man to recognize deeper realities in life rather than within art's caves of ice. Yet even such an expansion threatens the stability of the theoretical status quo.

In this light let us first examine the responses of R. P. Blackmur and Stephen Spender. Blackmur authored the classic attack upon Lawrencian verse, observing that "it totters where it towers, collapses where it is strongest.[4] Spender, an admiring reader, responds favorably to the power of Lawrencian organicism, yet feels moved to remark, "Lawrence is organic, but that is both his strength and his weakness."[5] Attempting to isolate the basis of this ambivalent criticism, we find that both Blackmur and Spender perceive in Lawrence's poems a paradox which threatens art. To Blackmur they represent "ruined life rather than achieved art." By placing his faith in "expressive form,"[6] Lawrence has violated the formalistic precepts to which Blackmur adheres--art as distinct from life, an ordered symmetry, a complex aesthetic structure in which beauty is truth, or, as Lawrence would have it, the poetry of the past and future. Spender, on the other hand, can accept and respond to Lawrence, while rightly recognizing that Lawrence attempts to effect a paradox:

> to express in literature what is almost inexpressible--a state of consciousness springing directly out of the most powerful and obscure forces where individuality becomes merged in the origins of life.

So Spencer perceives the poems as "an attack on the aesthetic consciousness."[7]

For Blackmur art is the perfected crystal, the hallowed form reflecting that perfection which life does not permit. Spender, less rigidly bound to formalistic tenets, nonetheless cannot sever ties with that "aesthetic consciousness" which upholds the sanctity of art first, and of form as the aesthetic base. For both, art is the Keatsian absolute. Moreover, by its very nature art cannot reproduce the organic process of life; art is form perfected, not becoming. If Yeats' lapus lazuli or Keats' Grecian Urn depict life in process, yet the forms themselves cannot evolve further, still less so the verbal structure which render them. "Achieved art" is finally static.

But for Lawrence, as we have seen, life is the only absolute between the two eternities of past and future. Truth is the flux of life, and that vitality is beautiful. Art, no longer absolute, proves the means by which to "reveal the most secret places of life: for it is the passional secret places of life, above all, that the tide of sensitive awareness needs to ebb and flow."[8] Finally, as form must reflect content, so to distill life demands the paradox of "vital form," ultimately static, but far more organically alive than the absolute perfection of Blackmur's "achieved art."

Implicit in the latter critiques is the sense of Lawrence as the challenger of traditional norms rather than as under-endowed would-be versifier. Yet many critics choose to reprimand Lawrence for a lack of skill rather than to explore the principles underlying his verse in order to determine the roots of his divergent form. Hence it became popular to invoke as commonplaces "carelessness," "formlessness," "lack of craftsmanship," or "the rejection of craftsmanship" to account for the Lawrencian phenomenon. Yet even while remarking Lawrence's lack of form and care, Spender admits:

> The poems have a deeply lived carelessness, at best achieving unity in a pattern which gives the reader the feeling about the works which one has about the pattern of behavior of people one knows.[9]

Here Spender comes very close to suggesting that Lawrence has, in some measure, at least, achieved his paradoxical aim, the creating of forms closer to life than to art.

To underscore further the paradox of vital form, let us consider the remark of H. Seligman: "All of Lawrence's poems are fine pieces of carelessness embodied in the supreme care of craftsmanship."[10] Inasmuch as Lawrence did revise his poems, some repeatedly, others before the publication of the 1928 *Collected Poems*, the notion of carelessness or lack of craftsmanship demanded rethinking. But not until the sixties did Vivian de Sola Pinto reply to the Blackmur contingent by suggesting that Lawrence practiced a different kind of craftsmanship, a refined carelessness compatible with his own poetics. Such recent critics as Gilbert and Murfin have, of course, amply demonstrated his "art."

Finally, some confusing statements emanate from the essential definitional ambiguities created by the paradoxical nature of Lawrence's poetry. Conrad Aiken declared, "If Lawrence is not wholly an artist, certainly in a fragmentary sense he is a brilliant poet."[11] Aiken never precisely established the reason for which Lawrence could not be called an artist; nor did he make clear the fragmentary brilliance of Lawrence as poet. But the primary source of ambiguity in this statement resides in an apparently tenuous relationship between art and poetry such that one who qualifies as poet, however fragmentarily, proves despite his poetry no artist.

From Aiken's equivocal vagary we turn to Gamini Salgado, who throws up his hands before the perplexing Lawrencian structures, crying, "Perhaps we shall have to settle on the formula that it is magnificent but it is not

poetry.[12] Then, once again, what is poetry? Generic labels, whether in science or the arts, are never static. They evolve as the forms which they define modify, or as heightened perceptions of those forms spark new formal developments. It is a quantum-jump from Newton to Einstein, from Fielding to Robbe-Grillet, yet physics and the novel remain. But rather than reconsider and redefine, Salgado here enforces stasis: Lawrence emerges a lord without a realm.

Still, less fearful critics have sensed and partially transcended the definitional dilemma. Seligman early remarked of Lawrence, "To be a poet you do not have to think in terms that any rules of prosody have yet formulated."[13] To be sure, this hardly constitutes a radical revelation. The Ancients and the Moderns disputed the problem of the natural and the imitative. Could the Romans have refined upon the Greeks had the Greeks not formulated the initial model? Evidently it proves difficult to accommodate a Modern Ancient.

Karl Shapiro and others finally managed to affirm the art and poetry of Lawrence by taking the logical step and expanding the fundamental conception of poetry to admit this particular strain. Shapiro distinguishes between "cosmic poetry" and the poetry of "imposed form." But with or without the label, one can place within the genus poetry the particular species which presupposes that art is subordinate to life, proposes as its goal that art should serve life, and employs a vital, "intentionally imperfect" form to effect its ends. This expansion of the generic limits partially resolves the theoretical ambiguities out of which arises so much critical ambivalence. Formalistically, at least, there is now room within art and poetry for such structures as D. H. Lawrence built.

Further, the new form and poetics treat of a new subject matter which itself defies convention. Lawrencian art attempts to serve life by revealing its "passional secret places," a different orientation resulting in a different range of subjects--the living plasm, the dark recesses of deepest reality beyond the purely conscious existence. As Aiken observes, "Mr. Lawrence is a captain of more force than tact: part of this directly relates to his venturing among moods and sensations which no poet has hitherto explored."[14] Lawrence determines to acquaint us with the most fundamental human reality, with man as a creature in nature, transcending any conscious mental apprehension of self. So Lawrence ridicules the egocentricity and empty behavioral norms of modern man. He cuts through the mechanized construct which man has superimposed upon the vital organic center, manifest-

ing the sexual act as a quintessential primal merging of two polar entities, autonomous when separate, joined in synthesis, then sundered and reborn in the selfless autonomy of a heightened individuality devoid of dehumanizing egocentricity. These new directions attack aesthetic norms as directly as the "expressive form" with which they unite to create poetry. In content, too, Lawrence seeks to articulate the inexpressible, the flow of sensation in a vital universe.

Moving now to the poetry itself, let us first examine the practical critical problems which even the most favorably disposed critic faces in the attempt to define the essence of each poetic structure. Vital form renders traditional terminology ineffectual. With what critical tools does one then approach the poem? How can one evaluate such poetry? Certainly one cannot apply conventional tools and hope to obtain an accurate assessment when the form itself diverges radically from the norm? Again, by inference from the central paradox, poems which accurately reflect life will mirror the imperfections and asymmetry in life. The traditionally rooted aesthetic consciousness, including that of this critic, pauses, awed, before the implications of that problem. For then, in an inversion of Blackmur, cosmic art succeeds even when it fails: life is like that, as they say. If we suggest, moreover, that art is something different from the random, then we fall back upon Blackmur's theoretical formalism. But surely there must exist some meaningful measure of a cosmic poem's intrinsic power, or must we accept that six words flung across a page is art? Kenneth Rexroth, a devoted Lawrencian, felicitously explains that "all great art is nobly disheveled."[15] But we might wish to distinguish between noble and mundane dishevelment.

Still another difficulty arises when considering the element of "latent form" which both Bloom and Shapiro remark quite justly in the poems of Lawrence. In this alternative to formless form, Lawrence frequently provides only a seemingly surface substance, which demands the active participation of the reader on a deep emotional level for the realization of its potential order, as in the linear rendering of "Tortoise Shout." This necessarily enforces a highly personal involvement on the reader's part. The more personal the reading, the less objective and more elusive the criticism. But this, on the other hand, is precisely the kind of relationship Lawrence posits for art and life, man and his universe. So once again Lawrence achieves his end while creating some frustration for the would-be critic.

Then let us discuss several poems and fragments as examples of the new poetics, reflecting the fusion of vital form and content and the essential paradox inherent in the structure thereby realized. First, Lawrence's "Leda" provokes comparison with Yeats's "Leda and the Swan." Yet where Yeats molds a fine aesthetic structure, powerful in its evocation of cataclysmic historical and cultural events, Lawrence offers a loose structure without cultural-historical referents:

Come not with kisses
nor with caresses
of hands and lips and murmurings;
come with a hiss of wings
and sea-touch tip of a beak
and treading of wet, webbed, wave-working feet
into the marsh-soft belly.

Nothing here evokes the vivid recollection of a whole cultural tradition with the power of "and Agamemnon dead." But what in Yeats is remote and refined, adumbrated by the force of history and literary tradition, Lawrence renders as an immediate and vital presence of elemental power. The poem has an organic rhythm, and the sounds matter greatly: first the weak syllables and indistinct rhythm of lines 1 - 3, then the aggressive "s's," hard groups of "t's" and "b's," allied with the relentless surging sense created by the alliterated, deliberate short syllables broken by natural end-stops and commas in lines 4 - 6, which die suddenly in the soft "s's" and "1" of the shortened final line. One senses with dread and awe the slow approach of some elemental masculine force which eschews the ineffectual murmerings and kisses of modern lips, the facile touch of hand, but subdues the eternal "marsh-soft belly" with "wings," and "tip of beak," and "wet, webbed, wave-working feet." Thus, where Yeats projects within a polished formal structure an intellectualized vision of that mythical sexual confrontation and all which it suggests in terms of human history, Lawrence creates the raw shiver of sensation as the elemental force draws near.

In "Relativity" form appears formless, relatively.

I like relativity and quantum theories
because I don't understand them
and they make me feel as if space shifted
about like a swan that can't settle,
refusing to sit still and be measured;
and as if the atom were an impulsive thing

always changing its mind.

There is an absence of rhyme, and only two images, the swan who can not settle and the impulsive atom. One might note the relative lack of stress, save for the natural end-stops and that very curious enjambment between lines 3 and 4, which greatly stresses "shifted" and "about." But there is power in this poem, argues the beleaguered critic, beset by methodological limitations imposed by the nature of the structure itself. Perhaps that power emanates in the weighted terms "relativity" and "quantum theory," which instantly evoke the sense of highly complex theoretical abstractions. Yet Lawrence deliciously inverts these terms, immediately banishing the scientific abstractions and replacing them with a sense of a living, organic universe full of impulsive atoms and shifting spaces. So the relatively artless sentence, with its mid-way up settling swan, undercuts the mechanical connotations of relativity and quantum theory and points to the manner in which even they can reaffirm and sustain the sense of a fundamental mysterious organicism in the universe. Reverence for the mysterious core of vital life replaces the blackboard and its mathematical equations.

Next, "Tortoise Shout" has repeatedly been labelled "hysterical."

A far, was-it-audible scream,
Or did it sound on the plasm direct?

Worse than the cry of the new-born,
A scream,
A yell,
A shout,
A paean,
A death-agony,
A birth-cry,
A submission,
All tiny, tiny, far away, reptile under the first dawn.

Perhaps there is a kind of hysteria here, but again it represents a fusion of form and content which cannot be dismissed. For how may one render vitally in art the particular intensity of orgasm, "the silken shriek of the soul's torn membrane?" Here linear arrangement underscores the impact of every word, punctuation by insistent comma renders each exclamatory, and various aspects of sexual fusion are intermixed. Ultimately, the poem does communicate something of the violently intense pleasure-in-pain sensation of sexual death and rebirth.

But what of poems like "Bourgeois and Bolshevist," or "The Deepest Sensuality?" Even admitting the examples of Pascal and La Bruyère, Lawrence does not really duplicate their effort. His derivation of pansy is neat, and we might add that the ideas expressed in them are frequently valuable, but here we encounter head-on the resurrected paradox of vital form, in all its painful glory. Where is the art? How can we determine its existence, how discern its lack? We may agree with Sandra Gilbert, who invokes influence as mediator, that some of these pensées are "squibs crackling with the intensity of Blakean proverbs."[16] But clearly the idea-pansy is Now poetry, representing precisely that structure which eludes the critic's attempts at analysis. Of this Anais Nin remarked:

> In understanding Lawrence's poetry it is necessary to set to one side that part which is merely expository and didactic, where he was repeating ideas better expressed in his prose and belonging more properly to prose, as distinct from the relatively few poems in which the true poet in him spoke naturally and spontaneously.[17]

Yet as if in response, Erica Jong, in a review of a new volume by Anne Sexton, suggested:

> At times one aches to edit her. But then the same remark can be made about D. H. Lawrence, Doris Lessing, Whitman, and Blake. Perhaps unevenness is sometimes the mark of a major writer. Perhaps it is better to be excessive than to risk restriction of the self.[18]

Once more Lawrence declines static perfection, the beautiful crystal of "achieved art," opting for that vital form which falls and rises but always threatens, like the overflowing fountain of Gilbert's appointed mediator, to burst the limits which separate art and nature and bring all into organic connection.

It appears, finally, that the theoretical and critical dilemmas which the poetry of Lawrence provokes arise from Lawrence's paradox of vital form, wherein form is never purely aesthetic, but natural, organic, life-like. Even when aesthetic theory expands to embrace such new art forms, criticism finds the task of defining the new structures with old tools difficult and sometimes futile. The paradox does not prevent a certain strong union of form and content in the poems themselves, but makes the delineation of that union a cumbersome undertaking. Moreover, idea poems without dis-

cernible shape provide critical cul-de-sacs while yet fully justified within the tenets of the cosmic art.

In the end I remain ambivalent, but the words of Erica Jong have recalled my initial suspicion that in the trailing "but" of Aldington's epithet, expression of critical ambivalence toward Lawrence, lies the essence of the Lawrencian vision. Consider the implications of Aldington's phrase. The noun "Genius" introduces a category, vague but presumably delimited. The "but" indicates a qualification placed upon the attempted categorization: the appositioned noun does not quite satisfactorily exhibit the characteristics of the category into which it has been placed. The epithet then forces us to question the nature of the category if we would understand why the element has been excluded. Ultimately there emerges a sense that definition and system-making necessarily limit life, imposing amorphous and arbitrary labels which become transitory absolutes. That no static precision exists in life, but only flux, vitality, the need of constant inquiry and redefinition, Lawrence realizes in his poetry, to the delight and dismay of the critics in general. But perhaps that is his own particular glory, and we ought simply to accept the paradox and those problems it poses for critics, realizing that our very ambivalence toward these poems paradoxically mirrors and fulfills the Lawrencian aesthetic.

Endnotes

[1]Lawrence Lerner, *The Truthtellers: Jane Austen, George Eliot, D. H. Lawrence* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1967), p. 173.

[2]D. H. Lawrence, "Poetry of the Present," *The Complete Poems* ed. by Pinto and Roberts (New York: The Viking Press, 1964), p. 181-82.

[3]Ibid., p. 184.

[4]R. P. Blackmur, "D. H. Lawrence and Expressive Form." *The Double Agent* (New York: Arrow Editions, 1935), p. 76.

[5]Stephen Spender, *The Struggle of the Modern* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), p. 42.

[6]Blackmur, "*D. H. Lawrence*," p. 78.

[7]Spender, p. 42.

[8]D. H. Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1968), p. 106.

[9]Spender, p. 40.

[10]Herbert J. Seligman, *D. H. Lawrence: An American Interpretation* (New York: Haskell House Publishers, Ltd., 1924), p. 18.

[11]Conrad Aiken, "The Melodic Line," *The Dial*, Vol. LXVII (1919), p. 98.

[12]R. G. N. Salgado, "Complete Poems of D. H. Lawrence: A Review," *Critical Quarterly*, Vol. 7, (Winter, 1965), p. 392.

[13]Seligman, p. 19.

[14]Aiken, p. 99.

[15]Kenneth Rexroth, "Introduction," *Selected Poems of D. H. Lawrence* (New York: New Directions, 1947), p. 18.

[16]Sandra Gilbert, *Acts of Attention* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1972), p. 253.

[17]Anais Nin, *D. H. Lawrence: An Unprofessional Study* (Paris: Edward M. Titus, 1932), p. 98.

[18]Erica Jong, "Giving Birth to Death," *Ms.* (March, 1964), p. 37.

Mamet and Mystery

Edward Lundin University of Southern Mississippi

To show how the American playwright David Mamet brings his readers/theatergoers to the realm of mystery, I will focus on the endings of three plays: *American Buffalo*, *Edmond*, and *GlenGarry, Glen Ross*. Through the endings, I will explain the condition the characters are left in (characterization), the outcome of the dramatic action (plot), and the nature of dramatic action (meaning) in the context of that play.

I am broadly defining mystery for the purpose of this discussion. Mystery has a commonly understood meaning, ranging from an admission of ignorance (i.e., "it's a mystery to me"), to an experience of the ineffable (i.e., the "mysterium tremendum"). Mystery cannot be encapsulated, but some useful dimensions include: mystery of persons or characters, mystery of plot or dramatic action, mystery of dramatic irony (related to plot), and the mystery of the connection between the characters and the world each inhabits (ontology).

The first dimension is "mystery of character." As it relates to character, mystery can refer both to one's self-knowledge or self-acceptance and to one's relationships with others. Eudora Welty has written,

> Relationship is a pervading and changing mystery; it is not words that make it so in life, but words have to make it so in a story. Brutal or lovely, the mystery waits for people wherever they go, whatever extreme they run to. (10)

In his direct manner, David Mamet says he understands characters through what they say they want and how they go about getting what they seek. What remains a mystery, to characters and audience alike, is the overwhelming failure of Mamet's characters to achieve what they desire.

The mystery of dramatic action and the portrayal of dramatic irony are also found through Mamet's endings. All of the playwright's characters are on a quest. Mamet stated that a dramatic scene is composed of one who wants something and an antagonist who frustrates that purpose (Savran 37). Mystery pervades plot and action in terms of characters choosing inappropriate (or destructive) means to achieve their stated ends. Mamet uses

events dramatically to underscore the frustration of the characters. Rather than achieving a new insight, understanding or resolution at play's end, however, the characters are often further entrenched in their failed lives (or, they are dead).

Mamet will not allow his audiences to sigh with relief as one character puts the pieces of the puzzle together. In the three works cited in this paper, characters as well as audience are left with an unresolved (perhaps insoluble) puzzle. We are left with the mystery of failed characters, with action that is not cathartic, with questions that are not answered (or answerable), and with schemes that collapse around the characters onstage. We are left with the final mystery: how, then, shall we live?

American Buffalo portrays the many faces of failure, and leaves us with a sense of mystery over human relationships. The relationships are interpersonal and intrapersonal; their residual failure amounts to a spiritual crisis. During the interview with David Savran, David Mamet discussed our culture's veneration of success, particularly commercial and business success (Savran 38). In the play, *American Buffalo*, Mamet explores this veneration and explodes the sentiment which associates commercial success with virtue or personal worth. *American Buffalo* dramatizes how business transactions hinge on personal domination over another; the play shows the connection between ontological and commercial terrorism (Savran 38). What remains at the end of the play is a sense of mystery about people who lack connection with themselves, with each other, and with their environment. They have no guiding purpose. Meaningfulness in terms of commitment to a larger purpose has no place in the Mametian landscape; hence, purpose is tactical, rather than teleological.

The dramatic action is simple and compact. The language of the play is staccato and highly charged. There are four "onstage" characters--the man with the coins, Don, Bob and Teach--and four "offstage" characters--Earl, Fletch, Grace and Ruthie. At the beginning of the play Don is passing down the wisdom of the business culture to Bobbie: "business is . . . people taking care of themselves" and, "You don't have friends in this life." Don tells Bob that Fletch is worthy of emulation (". . . by nightfall he'll have that town by the balls"). Teach interrupts the mentor-protege relationship and sows the seeds of distrust by telling Don that Fletch is not trustworthy ("He stole some pig iron off Ruth"), and that Fletch cheated Don at cards (Fletch ". . . spills his f------ Fresca . . . When we look back, he has come up with a king-high flush"). Teach tells Don that Bobbie is not to be trusted because

of his (Bobbie's) inexperience. Don concurs with Teach's assessment and they discuss the plan to rob a coin collector's apartment. At the end of the play, Teach has beaten Bobby (to which Don says to Bobbie: "You brought it on yourself"). Fletch is in the hospital, Bobbie is going to the hospital, and the robbery is called off.

The environment for dramatic action is one means of conveying the mystery of this play. The characters inhabit, and the audience is drawn into, the disturbing and foreign world of junk-shop entrepreneurs and petty hoodlums. The setting expresses a cast-off environment with valueless items that nobody cares about. The characters are extensions of that environment. We are introduced into an environment and a culture laden with conveniences that bear little relationship to one's quality of life. We are asked, perhaps challenged, to examine the analogy between the mechanical conveniences onstage and those in our own lives. We are also confronted with the possibility that these petty hoodlums are not simply denizens of the near-underground, but people whose values and manners of conducting business have become endemic in our culture. One critic has suggested the parallel between Don-Teach-Bobby and the Watergate conspirators (Savran 37). These issues disturb and perplex the reader or theatergoer, but there are other elements--internal dramatic elements--which evoke a sense of mystery at the play's end.

One of these internal dramatic elements is language. The characters mysteriously speak a language which is both realistic and opaque. We recognize the words, we sense the underlying emotion, but there's a lack of connection between the emotion and its referent. At one point, Teach is telling Don and Bobbie about an action that took place offstage. When Teach took a piece of toast off Grace's plate, Grace said, "Help yourself." Teach is upset about this slight put-down and unleashes a tirade against her (to Don and Bobbie, since Grace is offstage), berating her: "But to have that s---head turn, in one breath, every f------ sweet roll that I ever ate with them into ground glass . . . . The only way to teach these people is to kill them." Although poetic (sweet roll/ground glass), this language shows impotent rage and serves to comment on a hidden condition, unrelated to Grace's piece of toast. This disconnectedness is inherent in the dialogue between Don and Bobbie. Bobbie is bleeding in the ear, and Don says (mentor-like):

Don: You got to see our point here.
Bobbie (whimpering): Yeah, I do.

Don: Now, we don't want to hit you . . .

Don's refusal to acknowledge Bobby's pain is cruel, but the world of *American Buffalo* is cruel.

What is mysterious about this encounter (in which Don the teacher condones the physical beating of Bobbie the learner) is not the cruelty but its lack of sympathetic resolution. The lack of resolution in plot and character development is both unsettling and disturbing. At the end of *American Buffalo* Don realizes that he has misunderstood Bobby, Teach and Fletch; he has been silenced, humbled, but not changed. He faces no new direction, merely a recognition that he's sorry for his mistake. Bobby continues to apologize for his existence. Teach has been ridiculed, but Don's not "mad at him." There is no moral order or choice that these characters work through or suffer the consequences from. This sense of randomness confounds the reader's/audience's desire to bring order out of chaos. To the extent this play leaves us in chaos, we remain in mystery (also, misery).

This movement toward chaos can be applied to plot construction as well. Very little happens in this play, and the events that take place foreclose rather than promote possibilities. In both acts, there is a great deal of discussion about a robbery which never takes place. In a sense, one could say the main focus of the play never takes place. It is unfulfilling, a little like pushing a car that refuses to budge from a snowdrift. The reader/playgoer feels exhausted by the effort and frustrated by the lack of movement. A number of events that control the outcome of the play take place offstage: Fletch's cheating at cards, Don's deal with Earl (the fence), Teach's episode with Grace, Fletch's accident. This suggests an out-of-control dimension to the characters onstage. Mamet removes the audience from experiences that directly affect the characters, so we are also out-of-control of elements necessary for the construction of meaning. What we see as playgoers or as readers of the text is not susceptible to our active interpretation and reconstruction. We are deprived of the opportunity to build meaning, perhaps even to speculate on outcomes because key events and relationships are outside our experience as audience. This makes interpretation contingent upon the unknown, the unseen-- i.e., mystery. The reader or playgoer is challenged to consider how contingencies impact our own lives.

Acknowledgement of our contingent existence is the realm of mystery. Rudolf Ott called this awareness the "mysterium tremendum," because this

recognition precedes faith. But Mamet is not interested in faith development; he is interested in bringing us face-to-face with uncertainty, with not-knowing, with the mystery of our existence. Like Teach, we can say of the characters in this play, "You people make my flesh crawl." Language, characters and plot are Mamet's means for moving us from structures and preconceptions to chaos, uncertainty and mystery.

Discussing the play, *Edmond*, David Mamet said this:

> the central problem of *Edmond* lies in the title character's attempt to use a wholly inadequate language as the intermediary between his desires and the world . . . Edmond, unable to connect with a world that doesn't play according to his rules, succumbs to rage and madness (Savran 38).

The mystery of place (dislocation through a 'quest') transports us from the familiar to the unfamiliar as we view Edmond's journey into dislocation. Moreover, the force of violence and loss of civility disturb and provoke a sense of dis-ease and out-of-control in both Edmond and the audience. We observe Edmond suffer crisis and loss of identity; he is stripped of mediating structures (such as sexual role, marriage, church and job). The accelerated pace of Edmond's downfall is both dizzying and unrelenting. The elements of mystery propel Edmond to rage and madness: loss of identity, being out-of-control, alienation from self and society, dislocation and uncertainty, violence.

Mamet takes his audience into a strange environment as we observe Edmond's descent into hell: Edmond visits New York bars and encounters New York street culture "after hours." Just as Edmond is removed from the civilizing structures, routines and surroundings of daytime, "straight," middle class life, so, too, is the audience which views Edmond's journey. Mamet reads his audience as well as Edmond; what is alien to Edmond is also alien to most playgoers. The plot, in brief, moves Edmond, a middle class New Yorker, along from his early search for guidance (from both the Fortune Teller and the Man in the Bar) to life on the streets (whores, pimps, hustlers), to violence (assault on a pimp, attack on an unnamed woman on a subway, murder of Glenna), to jail and enforced homosexuality. The sleaziness of life "on the streets" is foreign, at first, to Edmond. Like a traveller suffering from culture shock, Edmond attempts to make casual acquaintances conform to his self-understanding, to his rules, and he meets with failure. His language becomes inchoate: emotion and referent are un-

related, a disapproving look from a woman on a subway provokes rage in him (just as Teach is provoked because Grace says, "help yourself" to her toast). This failure precipitates the rage and madness that Mamet mentioned in the interview. Displacement and dislocation, two elements of mystery, are unsettling forces in Edmond's life and affect us as we view Edmond's descent.

Edmond's character development, resulting in his final imprisonment, is contrary to what one might expect. Instead of realizing progressive revelation and insight, Edmond experiences an unravelling and progressive diminution. Hence, at the end, Edmond is reduced to quasi-philosophical babblings: "There is a destiny that shapes our ends . . . rough-hew them how we may." To underscore exactly how rough hewn Edmond's end is, Edmond is coerced into homosexual acts with his cellmate in the last scene. What is tragic about this ending is its dizzying and suffocating inevitability. Edmond descends from being a person who is free, who functions in a marriage relationship with a woman, to being a prisoner in bondage to a homosexual partner.

Encounters with the mysterious can be life-enhancing as well as life-threatening. Danger and enhancement can heighten one's awareness of how precious existence is. When Edmond encounters the mysterious however, danger and uncertainty cause him to cave in, to give way to violence and madness. When Edmond steps outside the bounds of the mediating structures of his life, he is overwhelmed by his inability to cope. He is no longer in control of his life and of the means (resources) to meet his needs. He is not simply in the twilight zone or strange land but in the chaos that exists beyond our limitations: his being is contingent, uncertain and dependent. Edmond's journey brings the play and the audience to an unsettling and mysterious non-resolution at the end; the audience views the deterioration of one who subscribes to the same value system and wonders, "how would I cope?" The playgoer experiences Edmond's loss, his disorientation and vulnerability (perhaps susceptibility) to violence. Edmond has a false view of himself; he maintains a fiction of inviolability and self-justification throughout the play. He believed that the actions he took were necessary to preserve moral order as he understood it. Hence, when the audience watches Edmond's downfall, we can either particularize the experience and say, "that's his problem," or we can identify with Edmond's journey and his destiny. There's a paradox at work in this ending: to the degree that we recognize our own capacity for evil (hence, identify with Ed-

mond), there is hope; to the degree that we refuse to recognize our own capacity for evil (hence, particularize Edmond's journey), there is no hope. As audience, we are challenged to acknowledge the capacity for evil which Edmond denies. His denial leads to a life-threatening encounter with mystery. Our acceptance may lead to a life-enhancing encounter with mystery. Mamet's genius lies in putting those options squarely to us.

GlenGarry, Glen Ross is a deeply disturbing play for at least two reasons. First, the characters are so hungry for advancement, recognition and the passionate climax of a sale, that they seem almost desperately heroic, or, mock heroic. Second, the ending of the play leaves many questions unanswered and doubts unresolved. In the interview with David Savran, Mamet sets forth some of these questions: is anyone else involved in the crime? how deep and extreme is the conspiracy? is anyone in the office not guilty? (Savran 39). The mystery of *GlenGarry, Glen Ross* is not simply the answer to "who committed the robbery?", but, more profoundly, the cumulative desperation of the characters. Mamet stated that he set forth a condition which implicates everyone; in a sense, the conditions in the play, in the real estate office, are guilty (Savran 39).

The robbery has taken place between acts one and two. At the conclusion of the play there is no resolution to the conditions and relationships that are central to the drama. First, the realty office is still open for business, in spite of the robbery; salesmen are still setting up appointments and meeting clients. Second, the office manager, John Williamson, retains his control despite campaigns against his leadership. Third, Shelley Levene has committed the crime and has implicated himself by revealing too much about a check Williamson (the man whose office was robbed) did not deposit. Fourth, Aaronow is tricked into complicity in the robbery because he was privy to the planning of it and did nothing to stop it. Moss is implicated in the robbery because of Levene's statement to Williamson. Fifth, Mitch, Murray (and Graff), the offstage initiators and manipulators, are still getting leads through unscrupulous practices. And, finally, Roma is still the hungry animal that he was at the beginning; he is perpetually "on the make."

The evocation of mystery at the end of *GlenGarry, Glen Ross* is due to the world which Mamet portrays and the worldview of the characters who inhabit that world. What the reader/audience views in this play is not just a "dog-eat-dog" world, but a world of blood lust, in which the characters go in for the kill. Like Edmond in *Edmond*, and Don in *American Buffalo*, the

characters in *GlenGarry, Glen Ross* are driven to dominate others through commercial exchanges, and through that domination to realize, presumably, some degree of meaningfulness in their lives. These commercial exchanges are the inappropriate or destructive means Mamet's characters use to achieve fulfillment. Mamet has described this quest for personal fulfillment through business successes as a "connection between commercial and ontological terrorism" (Savran 38). Levene expresses this ontological terrorism (and its complement, submissiveness) in the recapitulation of the sale to the Nyborgs.

> *Levene*: I locked on them. All on them, nothing on me. All my thoughts are on them. I'm holding the last thought that I spoke: 'Now is the time.' (pause) They signed, Ricky. It was great. It was f------- great. It was like they wilted all at once . . . imperceptively slumped . . . (13).

Mystery is communicated through the relentless repetition and endless victimization the audience discovers in this world: a world of predators and victims. Mamet has been called the chronicler of the failure of the American Dream. As audience/ readers, we see this failure dramatically enacted, and we are left with the burden of choice. How do we respond? Mamet says the theater is the place of recognition, where we show ethical interchange, where society can debate its future (Savran 39). The world of *GlenGarry, Glen Ross* is so rapacious that we are left with the consequences of the characters' schemes and intentions. Mamet challenges the audience to write the final act of this play (and all of his plays) through placing the burden of resolution on us.

Mamet's genius resides in his ability to move audiences/readers to the point where we are engaged in the ethical conflicts and profound choices dramatized in the text or on the stage. We enter the theater looking for insights, lucidity, vicarious resolution of life's enduring problems, and we leave the theater "holding the bag," disoriented, and wondering, "where in the hell did I park my car?"

Works Cited

Mamet, David. *American Buffalo*. New York: Grove Press, 1976.
-----. *Edmond*. New York: Grove Press, 1979.
-----. *GlenGarry. Glen Ross*. New York: Grove Press 1982.

Savran, David. "Trading the American Dream." *American Theatre* 4 (1987): 36-39.

Welty, Eudora. *Thirteen Stories*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1965.

Opposition and Reversal in Primo Levi's *The Periodic Table*

Murdo William McRae Tennessee Technological University

Italian chemist Primo Levi is best known in this country as a Jewish survivor of the Holocaust whose memoirs of the two years he endured Auschwitz distinguish themselves with neither rancor nor bitterness but, in the words of Irving Howe, with "refined simplicity" and "muted tactfulness" (9). As a memoirist, not a polemicist, Levi is thus something of an autobiographer; as an autobiographer, he is also something of an historian of his private life: at least so goes our conventional understanding of the slippage among these genres. With what may thus seem no small measure of deliberate obfuscation, Levi refuses to permit his most critically acclaimed work, *The Periodic Table*, which certainly seems to be a collection of autobiographical memoirs, or a personal history, to be characterized in the terms of those slippages. He insists instead that his text is not "autobiography, save in the partial and symbolic limits which every piece of writing is autobiographical, indeed every human work; but it is in some fashion a history . . . a micro-history, the history of a trade and its defeats, victories, and miseries" (124). Such a micro-history Levi further associates with the table of elements that lends its name to his text, even with the chemical indices of a Bilstein or a Landolt--places, Levi writes, where the chemist at the end of his career will find the "memories rise up in bunches," where "every chemistry student should be aware . . . on one of those pages, perhaps in a single line, formula, or word, his future is written in indecipherable characters" (125).

If these claims are to be taken seriously, as I think they are, then Levi's is a most unusual work: a collection of memoirs which denies its status as an autobiography, thus as a remembered personal history, yet claims itself nonetheless to be the micro-history of a trade, a history which, like an autobiography, paradoxically calls up memories, but only of a time before memory, when the chemist's life was inscribed in the indecipherable signs of the periodic table or a chemical index. All of Levi's detours, diversions, and disclaimers seem consequently the product of caprice, especially since the serialization of the book's chapters, each titled after a particular chemical element, seems narratively to follow the course of his life--from the his-

tory of his Piedmontese ancestors to the experiments of his early adolescence, from his years as a university student to his life as a partisan and a prisoner of Auschwitz, finally from the post-war years to the present, when Levi turned from the chemist's to the writer's craft.

In the face of this narrative evidence, there is the temptation to discount all of Levi's claims that his is not that sort of personal historical narrative we customarily label memoir or autobiography. To succumb to this temptation, however, would be to allow our reading to be governed by cultural expectations of historical (or memorial or autobiographical) "narrativity," Hayden White's term for the guiding principle of historical narration. That is, we would expect Levi's work to display, as White says, "coherence, integrity, fullness, and closure" in other words, all the "formal attributes of the stories we tell about imaginary events" (24). Levi's text does possess coherence, integrity, fullness, and closure, but to presume that the presence of these formal attributes warrants reading his memoir as if it were an imaginary narrative, with all the temporal and linear expectations that presumption entails, would be to seek for one kind of structure at the risk of ignoring others. Indeed, all of Levi's disclaimers about the autobiographical status of his text are motivated by the fundamentally non-narrative structure of his meditations. If Levi's text records something like the temporal progress of his life, that record is not dominantly structured by narrativity. Levi's meditations record instead a life lived less in narrative time than in textual space, where the boundaries are marked by the periodic and cyclic inscription, reinscription, and reversal--the deconstructive play--of the oppositions of matter and spirit on the one hand and language and reality on the other.

To read Levi's text it is necessary, in other words, to displace expectations born of narrativity with greater attention to the play of Levi's oppositions, to the effects of their *différance*, in the sense Jacques Derrida assigns to this term: "one could reconsider all the pairs of opposites on which . . . our discourse lives, not in order to see opposition erase itself but to see what indicates that each . . . must appear as the *différance* of the other, as the other different and deferred in the economy of the same" ("Différance," 17). As with any discourse, Levi's is a tissue of oppositions, something of an oppositional economy in which the valuable paradoxically maintains the same worth as the seemingly valueless. Neither concept in either of Levi's oppositions represents a plenitude, a truth whose privilege maintains itself outside its inscription in his text. Each concept in each opposition supple-

ments the other: neither matter nor spirit, neither language nor reality, can be thought without its enabling opposite. As a result, each concept in each opposition, though different from the other, defers to the other; each possesses the other's value in the sense that the thought which privileges either will fold in upon itself, arrive at a point where the initially undervalued concept emerges to assert its privilege, thereby reversing its position in the original opposition.

Although *The Periodic Table* seems to unfold temporally, its constant returning to the oppositions of matter and spirit and of language and reality point to what Levi's book radically is: a *textus*, a fabric in whose folds there is no single thread of thought which does not entangle itself with all others. As we shall see, however, this entanglement also involves Levi's efforts to efface opposition itself. From a deconstructive point of view, such effacement is quite unexpected, of course. Although Levi's oppositions do undergo the reversals which the logic of *différance* entail, those reversals give way at the end of his meditations to a cancellation of the opposition between language and reality in a move which is also an effort to rehabilitate chemistry as a science which no longer can be thought of in terms of the opposition between matter and spirit. At the end of his text Levi closes off the space within which his thought has unfolded itself only to infold itself; he creates, in other words, a periodic text, exactly what one would expect of a work which draws its name from the chemist's table of elements.

Levi's early life unfolded in the space marked by the opposition of matter and spirit, *hyle* and *ousia*. For the young chemist, the "adversary" was always the same--"the *hyle*: stupid matter, slothfully hostile as human stupidity is hostile" (154). Conversely, matter's "great antagonist" (33) was the spirit, whose presence Levi felt as a university student in the chemist's distillery, where "you acquire the consciousness of repeating a ritual consecrated by the centuries, almost a religious act, in which from imperfect material you obtain the essence, the *usia* [sic], the spirit" (58). Since the quest for spirit was for Levi a holy act, from his early years he conceived his life Mosaically. "For me," Levi writes in "Hydrogen," which describes his first efforts to electrolyze that gas at age 16,

> chemistry represented an indefinite cloud of future potentialities which enveloped my life to come in black volutes torn by fiery flashes, like those which had hidden Mount Sinai. Like Moses, from that cloud I expected my law . . . I was fed up with books, . . . and searched for another key to the highest truths (23).

In its inauguration for Levi, the opposition of matter and spirit defined the means whereby chemistry discovers the highest truths, exposes the manner in which stupid, slothful, and imperfect matter imprisons the spirit, trammels in the mesh of an imperfect signifier a perfect signified.

This elevation of spirit over matter is as much Platonic as Mosaic, of course, and it is this Platonic strand which accounts for Levi's youthful rejection of books. To be sure, Levi's meditations on his adolescence do not explicitly condemn writing as Plato does, as a tissue of imperfect signs, of inscriptions which imitate speech imitating truth; for that condemnation we must wait until Levi unfolds his thought about Jewish life in Fascist Italy. Even so, the young chemist implicitly adopted this Platonic condemnation of writing when he yearned for some other key to the highest truth, to an inscription of the spirit in a place equivalent to the Mosaic tablets. The desire is satisfied when, in his second year of university studies, he revealed to his friend Sandro Delmastro that "conquering matter is to understand it, and understanding matter is necessary to understanding the universe and ourselves: and that therefore Mendeleev's Periodic Table . . . was poetry, loftier and more solemn than all the poetry we had swallowed down in liceo" (41). To conquer matter may be to understand it, but the higher goal of that conquest is the pursuit of spirit and the finding of a key to the expression of its essential truths. For the young university student, the chemist's table of elements, a poetry loftier than any merely human inscription, implicitly constituted this key to the spirit's highest truths. That *ousia* which inscribed the Mosaic tablets also reveals its presence in the poetry of Mendeleev's periodic table. As it conquers matter, chemistry pursues the spirit; in that pursuit chemistry is a science whose guide, the periodic table, is also the spirit's table of laws.

The elevation of spirit over matter which the periodic table validated for Levi was reversed, however, in 1941, his last year at the university, the year that Italy entered the war. As the Fascist grip tightened even more on Italian Jews, chemistry came no longer to be a source of certainty in an uncertain world: "It led to the heart of Matter, and Matter was our ally precisely because the Spirit, dear to Fascism, was our enemy; but . . . I could no longer ignore the fact that chemistry itself . . . did not answer my questions" (52). These expressions of doubt about chemistry indicate that Levi understood full well the elevation of spirit which typified, for example, Mussolini's quasi-Hegelian definition of the Fascist state as "a spiritual and

moral fact in itself . . . in its origins and development a manifestation of the spirit . . . the custodian and transmitter of the spirit of the people . . . the immanent spirit of the nation" (21-22). This Fascist valuation of the spirit meant that the spirit could no longer be the chemist's ally, and, in turn that the matter which was once his adversary, inhibiting his pursuit of spirit, would come to be his ally in defense against the valorizing of the spirit which defines Fascism itself. The spirit which seemed to inscribe the poetry of the periodic table was now the adversary itself, its allegiance to Fascism a mark of the poverty in the chemist's studies.

Even though Fascism forced Levi to invert the valuation of *ousia* in its opposition to *hyle,* it did not eliminate his oppositional thought altogether, for the opposing of matter and spirit which marked the boundaries of part of Levi's life was doubled in the way he conceived of the opposition between language and reality which marked the rest. That this second opposition also shapes the space of Levi's thought is no accident, for the opposition of language and reality is as fundamentally Platonic as the one it replaces, a point Derrida examines with compelling force in his commentary on Plato's *Phaedrus*. Plato reinscribes the opposition of matter and spirit in the opposition of language and reality because his defense of philosophy against sophistry, Derrida remarks, is a misguided effort to "restore truth itself . . . truth as the presence (*ousia*) of the present (*on*)" (*Dissemination*, 112). The ontic, that which is the present, is true for Plato only insofar as it signifies presence, Derrida's master term for the way in which Plato, indeed all of Western metaphysics, conceives of the signified to somehow possess an essential plenitude prior to its imitation by any signifier, which is by definition therefore inferior to that plenitude. *On* points to the privilege of *ousia*. Derrida's insight being that the "difference between signifier and signified is no doubt the governing pattern within which Platonism institutes itself" (*Dissemination*, 112). Viewed Platonically, the real stands to the linguistic in the same relationship of privilege as the spiritual stands to the material. Precisely this alignment was implicit in Levi's adolescent rejection of books and in his seeking for a higher truth in the chemist's pursuit of spirit, and it is again precisely this alignment which directed the first stage of his overt opposing of language and reality.

To his friend Sandro Delmastro, Levi voiced his belief that the chemist's conquest of matter leads finally to the spirit, and that the periodic table, as one tabulation of the spirit's laws, is a key to truth far superior to any human inscription. Not surprisingly, then, Levi found himself uncertain in later

years about the capacity of his words to recall this same Sandro, the first Piedmontese partisan killed in the war: "Today I know that it is a hopeless task to try to dress a man in words, make him live again on the printed page, especially a man like Sandro. He was not that sort of person you can tell stories about, nor to whom one erects monuments: he lived completely in his deeds" (48-49). Like the matter which trammels the spirit, words at best may only clothe reality, their dress incapable of making the real man come alive on the page, of restoring him to the vitality of his deeds. For the Platonic valuations Levi adopted, the problem with language, whether phonic or graphic, is thus the problem of truth. Language lies, or at best fails adequately to express truth precisely because of its status as a derivative signifier of an originary and therefore privileged signified. Since that originary presence, Sandro himself, is gone, only Levi's memory of him remained, and it was only that memory which Levi's words could signify. Displaced from presence, the memory is not the thing itself, nor is the language which signifies that memory; thus, Levi felt his language to be doubly removed from Sandro's living presence. Socrates remarks on exactly this double sin of language at the end of *The Republic*, of course, in his condemnation of tragic poets, whose work is "at the third remove from reality, nothing more than semblances, easy to produce with no knowledge of the truth" (329). If Sandro's reality was his deeds, then no linguistic imitation of those deeds could bring him to life again precisely because such imitations would possess no knowledge of Sandro's truth.

Even so, Levi concludes his remembrances of Sandro's deeds with the seemingly incidental remark that "nothing of him remains--nothing but words, precisely" (49). Yet if Sandro's deeds are now nothing but Levi's words, then to deny those words would be utterly to dispossess Sandro, to take his life once again, to become complicit with the Fascists by refusing to incorporate Sandro in those very words which can be his only reality. Levi's offhand remark records his intuition that the Platonic opposition of language and reality, like the opposition of matter and spirit, may insidiously return his thought to the embrace of the Fascist enemy. That intuition calls out for a reversal of the opposition between language and reality, a reversal which became explicit for Levi when, after the war, he worked as a salesman for a varnish factory. One of his customers, Bonino, a pudgy little man, claimed to have escaped from the Fascists only to fall into the hands of two Nazi scientists who gave him a brick of uranium, a piece of which Bonino gave to Levi for analysis. The analysis revealed the uranium in fact

to be cadmium, but Bonino's lie did not occasion Levi's anger at a story-teller whose words bear no relation to truth so much as a desire to imitate the story-teller's inventive freedom:

> I, tangled in the . . . net of duties toward society, the company, and verisimilitude, envied in him the boundless freedom of invention of one who has broken through the barrier and is now free to build for himself the past that suits him best, to stitch around him the garments of a hero and fly like Superman across centuries, meridians, and parallels (199).

In a distinctly non-Platonic vein, Levi writes that the duties of verisimilitude impose a barrier to the story-teller, inhibit his ability to build his own past. It may have been a hopeless task to dress a man in words, as Levi said of his memory of Sandro Delmastro, but not when the story-teller is conceived to be a Superman, in the garments he fashions for himself free to traverse both space and time. It is as if Bonino's lie expressed the goodness his name denotes, permitting Levi to assign to his language a privilege over reality which at one stroke realigns the relationship between language and reality by cancelling their opposition. Invention displaces verisimilitude for the liberated story-teller because, for him, there can no longer be a reality outside his language which would make his language comparatively inferior to that reality. Having broken through the barrier Platonism erects between language and reality, Levi could no longer see his language as a falling away from truth, at best truth's tainted simulacrum. Instead, his language came for Levi to occupy the very place of truth itself.

Given the popular image of the scientist as one bound to empirical reality and not to linguistic invention, Levi's claims about linguistic freedom may seem fanciful if not downright suspicious. To think of the scientist in this way, however, is to conceive of him as Plato's seventeenth-century avatar, Francis Bacon, does when he inaugurates modern empiricism by adapting Plato's myth of the cave, stressing that the scientist's work often ends when he emerges from his "individual cave or den" into the revelatory "light of nature" (279). For Bacon, as it did for the youthful Levi, truth as *ousia* presents itself luminously. From this point of view, if the spirit is to be sought after, if the chemist is to understand how spirit expresses itself through the matter which entrammels it, then the chemist must attend to material reality. As we have seen, however, the Fascist appropriation of spirit put the question to Levi's youthful desire to move through matter to

spirit. If the Platonic epistemology which seemed to validate the chemist's quest for spirit could be appropriated by the enemy, then perhaps it was necessary to question that epistemology in all its dimensions, especially in the way that it makes language inferior to reality.

Platonism institutes a barrier between language and reality, but it is precisely that barrier which Levi had broken through, in recognition that merely to make language superior to reality, that is merely to invert the Platonic hierarchy, would not do, for such an inversion could maintain itself only by accepting the supplemental validity, however marginal, of the Platonic epistemology the inversion sought to overcome. Levi's attempt to cancel the difference between language and reality, however their relation is conceived, was also an attempt to deny the epistemology which the Fascists appropriated, as Levi saw it, to deny him the validity of his science. Levi's effort to make his language equivalent to reality, to thereby efface any traces of the opposition of language and truth, became an effort to rehabilite chemistry itself, to conceive of it in ways no longer traced by a disabling Platonic epistemology.

The success of these efforts to efface the opposition between language and reality, along with the corollary effort to rehabilitate chemistry, is the accomplishment of Levi's final meditation, "Carbon," a fiction about a single carbon atom, released from a limestone kiln in 1840, captured in the embrace of photosynthesis in a grape leaf in 1848, consumed in the wine of 1868, captured again and again in photosynthesis, consumed again, until 1960, when it finds itself at rest in dead leaves and loam. Levi understands how whimsical his fiction may sound, especially for those who think of science only empirically. "Is it right," he asks, "to speak of a 'particular' atom of carbon? For the chemist there exist some doubts, because until 1970 he did not have the techniques permitting him to see, or in any event isolate, a single atom; no doubts exist for the narrator, who therefore sets out to narrate" (225). The chemist's inability to isolate the atom is at best trivial, at worst inhibiting. Concerned with a sort of verisimilitude, no chemist who conceives of his science within the space of Plato's epistemology could write the fiction which Levi does. Freed of such doubts, however, Levi insists that not only is his fiction true but that he could tell innumerable other stories about this carbon atom, "and they would all be true: all literally true, in the nature of their transitions, in their order and data" (232). Levi's insistence that the invented and the true can coincide, that the difference between language and reality can be effaced, their opposition replaced by

identity, may sound invalid if one reasons that identity between language and reality can be thought only in terms of their difference, so that no effort to cancel, efface, or collapse the opposition between them can avoid the enabling trace of their opposition. Even so, if Levi could not put a stop to the deconstructive play of the oppositions which informed his life, he seems in his final meditation to have found a way to control its effects.

In his final paragraph, Levi narrates in the present tense how the carbon atom which his language invents next enters a cell in his brain, guiding that cell, "which at this instant, issuing out of a labyrinthine tangle of yeses and nos," he writes in his final sentence, "makes my hand run along a certain path in the paper, mark it with these volutes that are signs" (233). Collapsing the apparent distinction between the reader's sense of a narrative present and the narrator's sense of a completed past, Levi's present tense recalls those earlier volutes, those swirling clouds from which the spiritual lightning flashed, inscribing the Mosaic tablets and the periodic table. But now those volutes are spirals put down by Levi's hand. Now it is his invention, not the Mosaic *ousia*, which inscribes. If the claim that *ousia* inscribes the chemist's table of laws no longer occupies the center of his mediations it is because Levi's language and that which his language truthfully invents --in this case the carbon atom--inscribe a different periodic table, Levi's very text itself. As a site where Levi cancels the difference between language and reality, where he makes the invented equivalent to the true in an effort to rehabilitate chemistry, the "volutes" of his final sentence are thus spirals which return the end of his text to its beginnings. Like Mendeleev's table, whose periodic groupings of the elements map the space within which chemistry can be conceived, Levi's *Periodic Table* marks the periodic groupings of his life's experiences, arriving finally at the enclosure of the space within which he conceives his life. This is why Levi rightly insists that his is no memoir, autobiography, or personal history. His text is structured less by narrativity than by periodicity, by his controlling the deconstructive play of opposition and reversal which has mapped the space of his thought. In the final sentence of the final paragraph, *The Periodic Table* becomes exactly that: Primo Levi's completed tabulation of a life lived less in time than in the space of thought, where the oppositions of matter and spirit and of language and reality which have periodically unfolded and infolded themselves are now controlled, the effects of their *différance*, I think, triumphantly overcome.

WORKS CITED

Bacon, Francis. "Magna Instauratio" *Essays, Advancement of Learning, New Atlantis, and Other Pieces*. Ed. Richard Foster Jones. New York: Odyssey Press, 1937. 237-363.

Derrida, Jacques. "Différance" *Margins of Philosophy*. Trans. Alan Bass. Chicago: Univ. Chicago Press, 1982. 1-27.

---. *Dissemination*. Trans. Barbara Johnson. Chicago: Univ. Chicago Press, 1981.

Howe, Irving. Introduction. *If Not Now, When?* By Primo Levi. Trans. William Weaver. New York: Summit Books, 1982. 3-16.

Levi, Primo. *The Periodic Table*. Trans. Raymond Rosenthal. New York: Schocken Books, 1984.

Mussolini, Benito. *The Political and Social Doctrine of Fascism*. Trans. Jane Soames. London: Hogarth Press, 1934.

Plato. *The Republic of Plato*. Trans. Francis MacDonald Cornford. New York: Oxford UP, 1945.

White, Hayden. *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1987.

Repetition, Continuity, and Development of Character in P. D. James

Jill T. Owens Louisiana State University

Detective novelists may write five, ten, twenty or more novels featuring the same protagonist. This practice, while not restricted solely to mystery writers, does constitute one of the differentiating characteristics of the genre--examples are almost too obvious to mention: Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes, Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple, Dorothy Sayer's Lord Peter Wimsey, Amanda Cross's Kate Fansler, the list goes on and on. By adopting this stock practice of the trade, mystery writers take on a problem unique to such a series: How can they maintain interest in this character in book after book without becoming monotonously repetitious, while at the same time providing enough information for any new reader who comes to the novel with no prior knowledge?

I first began considering this technical problem while reading the novels of P. D. James. James has, to date, published ten novels, seven of them featuring her protagonist Adam Dalgliesh. I read her fifth novel first and then proceeded haphazardly and unchronologically to read the other five. I certainly did not feel hampered in my enjoyment by the lack of continuity, but I was led to consider how James overcame the problems inherent in this very special situation. A look at how she handles the problems of repetition, continuity, and development imposed by her chosen genre enables us to understand more clearly why she is so often lauded for her skill in characterization and why she is acclaimed as a writer who transcends the limitations of the mystery genre. As Norma Siebenheller points out in her study of James, she "is a novelist who happens to write in the mystery form" (ix). I believe she transcends the mystery form to be characterized as a mainstream novelist primarily because of Adam Dalgliesh.

As I said, Adam is the protagonist in the seven of her ten novels, but, in fact, he is mentioned in two others, *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman* (1972) and *The Skull Beneath the Skin* (1982). These two feature Cordelia Gray, a young private detective who has a peripheral professional connection with Adam through contact on one murder case and through her ex-partner Bernie Pryde, who once worked with Adam at Scotland Yard. The possibility

of a romantic relationship developing between these two has had James's fans speculating, but James's most recent novel does nothing to develop that possibility. Since Adam has only a minor role in these two Cordelia Gray novels, I will focus on the seven in which he holds center stage.

The simplest and most predictable method employed by James to solve the serialization problem is repetition. Regardless of which of the seven you read, *Cover Her Face*, *A Mind to Murder*, *Unnatural Causes*, *Shroud for a Nightingale*, *The Black Tower*, *Death of an Expert Witness*, or *A Taste for Death*, these salient facts come out about Adam: he is a competent, highly respected member of Scotland Yard who is dedicated to his job; he prides himself on his reputation for objectivity and speed; he is cultured and an art connoisseur, particularly interested in architecture; his father was a rector and he knows Anglican traditions, although he is not a believer himself; he is tall (6'2") and dark, has "remarkable" hands, and is generally considered handsome; he is a widower--his wife and son died at childbirth; he values privacy and solitude, perhaps inordinately; and he is a published poet. These facts comprise the essential data we must know about the man and, thus, are simply repeated in each book. However, these facts do receive varied emphasis. *A Mind to Murder* opens with a publisher's party which coincides with the third reprint of his first book of verse and his poetry is alluded to several times, and in *Unnatural Causes* he actually composes a poem. In *The Black Tower* and *A Taste for Death* his rectory upbringing is central. In *The Black Tower* the murder victim is a former curate of his father's and his death leads to memories of childhood at the rectory, and in *A Taste for Death* and *Death of an Expert Witness* the murder takes place in a church. But regardless of whether they are just mentioned peripherally or emphasized, these reiterated facts make it possible to read any one of the books independently and know the essentials about Adam Dalgliesh, as Bruce Harkness testifies: "Oddly, in *Shroud for a Nightingale* (1971), with which P. D. James first hit the world market, a fresh reader of her material would not really be aware that Adam is a series character at all" (121).

But unlike many other mystery writers, James offers continuity in her depiction of her protagonist. He ages with each novel and matures and changes as the series progresses. He rises in rank from Detective-Superintendent to Commander and has relationships which overlap the novels. For example, he meets Deborah Riscoe in *Cover Her Face* and *A Mind for Murder* and decides he wants to pursue the relationship, and then lets her

go in *Unnatural Causes* because he cannot commit himself to marriage. He works with the same detective-assistant on several cases--Martin in *Cover Her Face* and *A Mind to Murder* and Massingham in *Death of an Expert Witness* and *A Taste for Death*. More significant than these sometimes superficial links between novels is the on going development of the man himself.

Through the series James chronicles Adam's maturation and increasingly adds psychological depth to his character. In her first two novels, *Cover Her Face* (1962) and *A Mind to Murder* (1963), Adam is a stock detective figure, the master of ratiocination who unravels the puzzle. These are excellent mysteries, but they do not transcend that genre. *Unnatural Causes* (1967) does and precisely because the treatment of Adam becomes more subjective, more personal. In this novel he is off-duty, visiting his Aunt Jane on the Suffolk coast. He faces a serious personal decision--is he going to marry Deborah Riscoe? He loves Deborah, but he has to face the truth of his own character--particularly his need for personal privacy. He cannot reconcile marriage with that need. A murder occurs and all the paraphernalia of a good mystery come into play, but the fact remains that this is a novel about Adam and his decision as well as a novel about the solving of a murder.

In *Shroud for a Nightingale* (1971) Adam is again on the job and is presented predominately as the dedicated, objective detective, this time determined to catch the murderer of two young nurses. His attraction to Mary Taylor is the only personal development, but since she turns out to be a murderer and commits suicide, nothing comes of that relationship. He has become cold and detached at this stage of his career: "He seldom did care. Human beings were perpetually interesting to him, and nothing about them surprised him anymore. But he didn't involve himself" (204).

In contrast, *The Black Tower* (1975) focuses on the change which a close call with death has wrought. Here his psyche is as important as the mystery. Again he is off duty--this time convalescing in Hardy country, on the Dorset coast, where he is on hand to solve the mystery of the four murders in a hospital for the terminally ill. He has just gone through the harrowing experience of being hospitalized and diagnosed as dying (leukemia), but tests reveal his problem is really mononucleosis and he gets a reprieve or "sentence of life." The trauma of such a readjustment, the determination to quit his job, and the personal loss of an old friend are central.

Back on the job again in *Death of an Expert Witness* (1977), he is a more human Adam than in any other on-the-job novel. His sensitivity is obvious

when he counsels the young secretary who has to decide between work or marriage. His assistant wonders "what they would think at the yard if they could see the old man taking time from a murder investigation to advise on the moral ambiguities of Women's Lib" (291). Also in this novel we are aware of a change of attitude about children and his own self-sufficiency. In the early *A Mind to Murder* (1963), we are told, "He was not a man who liked children and he found the company of most of them insupportable after a very brief time" (154). But by the time he takes inventory of his personal life in *The BlackTower* (1975), he sums up: "His bereavement, his job, his poetry, all had been used to justify self-sufficiency. His women had been more amenable to the claims of his poetry than of his dead wife . . . And the worst of it--or perhaps the best--was that he couldn't now change even if he wanted and none of it mattered. It was absolutely of no importance. In the last fifteen years he hadn't deliberately hurt a single human being. It struck him now that nothing more damning could be said about anyone" (12). But in *Death of an Expert Witness* (1977) he expresses a change in attitude:

> His only son had died, with his mother, just twenty-four hours after birth. Although he could now hardly recall his life's face except in dreams, the picture of those waxen, doll-like features above the tiny swathed body ... was so clear and immediate that he sometimes wondered whether the image was really that of his child so briefly but intently regarded, or whether he had taken into himself a prototype of dead childhood. His son would not be older than this child, would be entering the traumatic years of adolescence. He had convinced himself long ago that he was glad to have been spared them. But now it suddenly occurred to him that there was a whole territory of human experience on which, once repulsed, he had turned his back, and that this rejection somehow diminished him as a man. This transitory ache of loss surprised him by its intensity. He forced himself to consider a sensation so unfamiliar and unwelcome. (226-7)

The conversation he has with the child Nell Kerrison reflects this new awareness. Of course, in this novel the motive for murder is the father's love for his children; typically, James parallels character development with plot demands.

James most recent novel, *A Taste for Death* (1986), is her most ambitious (500 pages) and, in my opinion, best work to date. Adam investigates the murder of a man he knew and respected--the personal angle is again there. In this novel, James goes further than in any previous work in characteriz-

ing Adam's assistants. John Massingham and Kate Miskin have personal lives and problems which lead to conflict. The account of the interaction between these very real people who are working on the same criminal investigation move this novel into a broader genre than the detective novel proper.

Throughout these novels James communicates Adam's complexity predominately by the use of contrasts. Early in *Unnatural Causes* we see the convalescing Adam drowsing by a cottage fire: "He had always enjoyed contrast in art or nature and at Pentlands, once night had fallen, the pleasures of contrast were easily self-induced. Inside the cottage there was light and warmth, all the colours and comforts of civilized domesticity; outside under the low clouds there was darkness, solitude, and mystery" (24). This affinity for contrasts explains the man to a large degree. He is the epitome of civilized, urbane man who enjoys "civilized domesticity", but he prizes solitude and thrives on darkness and mystery. A private man who values order and beauty, he works at a job where daily he has to violate privacy and deal with disorder and ugliness.

The most effective contrast that James employs is the policeman/poet dichotomy. The rational man and the emotional man are one. In the classic mystery story "The Purloined Letter," Edgar Allan Poe shows the combination of mathematician and poet. As Dupin points out, "As poet and mathematician, he would reason well; as mere mathematician, he could not have reasoned at all . . . " (806). The intuitive talent ascribed to Adam in three of the novels is rooted in this creative faculty. His poetry reflects "his detached, ironic and fundamentally restless spirit" (*Mind to Murder*, 19). But we gather that words provide a vent for suppressed emotions. He calls one of his books *Invisible Scars* and has one poem which clearly is an emotional reaction to a case in which a child was murdered.

James offers us another contrast when she shows us how Adam is perceived by subordinates, colleagues, and suspects and then gives us an intimate view of his thoughts. Sergeant Masterson in *Shroud for a Nightingale* sees him as "too proud, too fastidious, too controlled, too bloody inhuman" (252). Detective-Inspector Massingham in *Death of an Expert Witness* reflects that "At times he's cold enough to be barely human" (159). Most outsiders do perceive him as controlled, emotionless and distant. But time and time again, when his thoughts are related to us, we see his vulnerability. For one thing, the memories of his lonely childhood humanize him. Also, we know that he is prone to personal antipathies and has to guard against

first impressions, although observers would never know this. He demonstrates courage, but we know he fears infirmity, being crippled or dependent on others. Even his objectivity in his relations with women is made understandable by the memories of his wife who died young--the private ritual of lighting candles on the anniversary of her death demonstrates the significance of her death to him. We come to know Adam so well that we can easily predict that he will not marry Deborah nor will he resign from the force. But James makes these dilemmas entirely credible. He loves Deborah and his job is bad for him, for it is hardening his sensibilities and diminishing him as a man. An advantage of reading the Dalgliesh series in chronological order is that we can clearly see how Adam changes as he grows older.

P. D. James satisfies the need for "more" which we so often feel at the end of a good novel. We want to finish, but we don't want it to end, either. With a character like Adam Dalgliesh in a series, novel readers have the best of both worlds--we do finish but we will also get more.

Works Cited

Harkness, Bruce. "P. D. James" in *Art in Crime Writing: Essays on Detective Fiction*, ed. Bernard Benstock. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983.

James, P. D. *The Black Tower*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975.

-----. *Death of an Expert Witness*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1977.

-----.*A Mind to Murder*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1963.

-----. *Shroud for a Nightingale*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971.

-----. *Unnatural Causes*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967.

Poe, Edgar Allan. "The Purloined Letter" in *Complete Stories and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966.

Siebenheller, Norma. *P. D. James*. New York: Frederick Ungar, 1981.

Robert Creeley's *Hello* - A Postmodern Long Poem

Wilfried Raussert The University of Mississippi

Though Robert Creeley's *Hello* appeared as late as 1978, after Creeley's tour of Asia and Australia, it bears many traits of poetic innovation that help illustrate the break with the modernist tradition in American poetry in the late 1950s and early 1960s. No doubt still vague and arguable, postmodern seems to me a historically and aesthetically useful term to describe the major changes in American poetry brought about by such different poets as Charles Olson from the Black Mountain group, Allen Ginsberg from the Beat poets, Robert Bly from the Deep image group, Frank O'Hara from the New York group, and Robert Lowell from the Confessional poets. Although quite different in content and style, they all share a common interest in opening the field of American Poetry after the overwhelming reign of T.S. Eliot and the New Critics.

Creeley, who belongs to the first group mentioned, in his essay, "Introduction to the New Writing in the USA," sums up significant tendencies in the current poetry at the time. Discussing such poets as Robert Duncan, Olson, and Ginsberg he primarily elucidates their rejection of imposed form. According to James E.B. Breslin in his historical study, *From Modern to Contemporary American Poetry, 1945-1965*, to the new poets "forms were not given from nature; nor were they desired from tradition. Literary shapes were then specifically human creations but ones that were, ideally, not impositional."[1] Turning its back on the autotelic poem, American poetry opened up to "the physical moment--the literal, the temporal, the immediate."[2] "History is bunk,"[3] Ginsberg provocatively proclaimed, and modernism at its end, David Antin announced.[4]

It is with the above physical moment that Creeley struggles to come to terms with in *Hello*. Throughout the long poem Creeley roams through space. The fast-paced movement of the poem, detached from any spatial fixation, allows him to focus on the experience of the moment. *Hello* thus represents a break with modernist historicity. The desire to reconstruct history mythologically gives way to the poet's intrinsically personal experience of the here and now. Though a long poem, *Hello* does not strive

to obtain epic dimensions. "Save some room for my epic,"[5] Creeley jokingly undermines any such intentions on his part.

Dismissing a specific spatial setting for *Hello*, Creeley takes on his central concern, namely to stay within the flux of time without imposing memory or vision on the experience of the moment. As he puts it, the mind that lingers solely in the past estranges the individual from life. "What's gone is gone forever, every time."[6] The illusion and uncertainty connected with living either in the past or the future he signifies by asking: "how call back or speak forward?"[7] Only in the total awareness and experience of the here and now can life be captured in its full essence. So, not only does *Hello* mark a significant turn-away from modernist poetic practice, it also displays an important shift in Creeley's own poetic development. In *Hello* he moves away from the almost exclusively introspective poems in his earlier works such as *For Love* (1962), *Words* (1967), and *Pieces* (1969) to more outer-oriented poetry.

Using a journal sequence--February 29-May 3, 1976--as a loose frame device for the long poem, Creeley indicates that form to him is a means of discovery, not a preconceived unit. Essential to the form of *Hello* becomes his conception of the poetic image which corresponds to Ezra Pound's definition of it. As for the latter, an image "presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time."[8] This definition calls for immediacy and spontaneity. Thus the poet's mind has an almost camera-like or tape-recorder-like function in *Hello*, recording and reproducing fast-paced series of sounds and images. Creeley follows here his own theoretical premises, as outlined in his essay, "Notes for a New Prose." "Poetry depends on the flux contained,"[9] he explains. The spontaneity that characterizes such poetic expression prevents the poet's mind from reflecting preconceptions as well as from generating overanalyzed or overreflected statements about human perception.

In order to grasp the immediacy of the instant, Creeley reduces poetic lines to very small fragments, ranging from a single word or syllable to a phrase of six or seven words at the maximum. Syntax becomes more and more condensed, as it falls into a syncopated style:

Sun out window's
a blessing, air's
warmth and wetness.[10]

Occasionally the syntax is completely dissolved and replaced by of single words like "body/white/inutile"[11], or simple sequences of one-syllabic sound expressions such as "Da. Da da."[12]

This openness to improvisation allows for sudden, spontaneous flow or change of direction. It enables Creeley to capture the immediate instant as well as the perpetual continuity of time. The open form-sentences that do not finish at the end of a line--and sometimes even cover several stanzas--give the poet the possibility to react directly to impulses from within or stimuli from without. A tightly-knitted structure based on fixed foot and/or certain rhyme scheme would render this procedure impossible. While the open endings of lines suggest the constant flux of time, the density of images in a line or a short stanza evokes the intensity of the moment. Thus Creeley's *Hello* does not represent a human construct imposed upon time. It rather is a sequence of smaller poetic fragments flowing along with time.

Assuming an intrinsic form, *Hello* puts into poetic practice what Charles Olson theoretically outlined in "Projective Verse." The poem moves according to the breath of the poet at the moment of writing. As Breslin points out, Olson's prescriptions are designed "to return writing to its prelogical, physical origin."[13] In this original condition language appears to move by itself. The lyric "I" of the poem almost disappears behind the words. Robert Hass in *Twentieth Century Pleasures* quotes Creeley:

> The organization of poetry has moved to a further articulation in which the rhythmic and sound structure now become not only evident but a primary coherence in the total organization of what's being experienced . . . . Words are returned to an almost primal circumstance, by a technique that makes use of feedback, that is a repetitive relocation of phrasing where words are returned to an almost objective state of presence so that they speak rather than someone speaking through them.[14]

Creeley's explanation shows that he wants to strip language of abstraction. Specifically in *Hello* he deals with the problem that for such a self-conscious poet as himself language seems to be intrinsically abstract. These two opposed poles at work here call forth a conflict within Creeley and the long poem at hand. What on a semiotic level evokes a gap between signifier and signified, most prominent in abstract terms such as the brand "SIEMENS,"[15] signifies to Creeley on a very private level a sense of isolation from the exterior world. He then struggles to "keep the physical

literal"[16] to overcome this feeling of isolation or, put figuratively, to break through the separating window of the subsequent passage:

WINDOW

Aching sense
of being

person-body in-
side, out-

the houses, sky
the colors, sounds.[17]

In taking a closer look at the passage just cited the reader can distinguish differences in tone and structure, especially between the first two stanzas and the last one of the small poetic fragment. In the first two stanzas Creeley's mind is inner-oriented, self-centered and troubled. The rhythm of this passage, accordingly moves jerkily and abruptly. Conversely, in the third stanza, Creeley's mind is outer-oriented, searching contact with the exterior world. Here he comes closest to William Carlos Williams's "no ideas but in things."[18] The rhythm of the stanza assumes a harmonious nature being regulated by the parallel structure of the two lines. Creeley's mind and breath appear to be soothed; the world and the self are communicating. As he explains in the introductory thoughts to *Words*, the awareness of the instant brings him closest to knowing his self. "I know myself to be, for that instant, I will never know myself otherwise." [19] Being in its fullest essence finds expression in the following passage:

Sun again, on table
smoke shaft of cigarette,
ticking watch,
chirr or cicadas--
all world, all mind, all heart.[20]

What Creeley strives for in *Hello*, namely the very essence of being, corresponds to the yearning he sees behind his journey to the Far East: "I wanted at last, to be human, however simplistic that wish." [21] This statement, as well as *Hello* itself, represents a yes to life, a yes to existence. Poetically *Hello* embodies Creeley's struggle with and final acceptance of the constant change in life. In accepting the flux he develops a sense of ap-

preciation for the intense experience of the instant. In cheerful lyric passages of *Hello* he even shows a sort of carpe diem attitude:

Moving on. Mr. Ocean
Mr. Sky's
got the biggest blue eyes

in creation-

'here comes the sun!'
While we can
let's do it, let's
have fun.[22]

Embracing lilts and cliches as above, Creeley's poetry does not only turn its back on elitist poetic practices but often verges on the edge of popular art. Already the simplistic title *Hello* seems to imply that he attempts to address a wide audience. Moreover, its diary-like character lifts *Hello* out of a historical, cultural or political context related to a specific place. Intrinsically private and self-referential, *Hello* mirrors the frequent social detachment of art in a predominantly postmodern age in which literature is foremost seen as an autonomous discourse, as the sacred realm of the individual artist's imagination. *Hello* with its intrinsic form is a means of discovery and self-discovery on the part of the poet, not an attempt at mythological reconstruction of history, nor a tool to bring about social change.

Notes

[1]James E. B. Breslin, *From Modern to Contemporary/American Poetry, 1945-1965* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), p. 60.
[2]Ibid., p. 59.
[3]Ibid., p. 54.
[4]David Antin, "Modernism and Postmodernism: Approaching the Present in American Poetry," *Boundary 2*, 1(Fall 1972), pp. 117-118.
[5]Robert Creeley, *Hello: A Journal, February 29-May 3, 1976* (New York: New Directions, 1978), p. 77.
[6]Ibid., p. 19.
[7]Ibid., p. 44.

[8]Albert Cook, "The Construct of Image," in Carroll F. Terrell, *Robert Creeley/The Poet's Workshop* (Orono: The National Poetry Foundation, University of Maine, 1984), p. 136.

[9]Robert Creeley, "Notes for a New Prose," in Donald Allen, *Robert Creeley/A Quick Graph* (San Francisco: Four Seasons Foundation, 1970), p. 13.

[10]*Hello*, p. 43.

[11]Ibid., p. 23

[12]Ibid., p. 19.

[13]Breslin, p. 66

[14]Robert Hass, *Twentieth Century Pleasures/Prose on Poetry* (New York: The Ecco Press, 1984), p. 156.

[15]*Hello*, p. 53.

[16]Ibid., p. 44.

[17]Ibid., p. 27.

[18]William Carlos Williams, *Patterson* (New York: New Directions, 1963), p. 6.

[19]Robert Creeley, *Words* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967), p. 9.

[20]*Hello*, p. 12.

[21]Ibid., p. 85

[22]Ibid., p. 22.

Chaucer, An Androgynous Personality

Ruth Marshall Roberts University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff

In his recent biography of Chaucer, Donald Howard states that Chaucer had an androgynous personality. In this sense *androgynous* does not suggest any physical anomaly or any characterological limitation; it is merely the ability to see things clearly and accurately from the viewpoint of either sex. Coleridge said that, to be great, a mind must be androgynous. Chaucer illustrates this characteristic in his successful portrayal of feminine minds. Although he lived in a man's world of knighthood and warfare in the fourteenth century, he had no difficulty in portraying feminine thoughts and feelings as precisely as those of a man. A man's accurate understanding of a woman's mind, perhaps rare in any age, was even more so in Chaucer's day.

It seems a fair assumption that in that male-oriented society that women were generally taken for granted and would have rarely received much genuine consideration. Donald Howard says that at best women were merely the necessary possessions of men, hardly ever their companions, and never their equals (97). A man was expected to master his woman as he did his horse or hound and was free to beat all three. If he did not rule his wife, he lost face.

Chaucer lived in a man's world, but his mind or heart was attuned to all kinds of women--vulnerable women, women victimized; enigmatic and complicated women, like Criseyde and the Wife of Bath: admirable, heroic women; wicked women--all are in his works. But the vulnerable, lost, and victimized stand out. Everyone remembers and is amused by Alisoun, that sex kitten romping through the Miller's Tale, but it is Criseyde and the Wife of Bath--in a different way--that haunt us.

This essay reflects Chaucer's androgynous ability in developing Criseyde and the Wife of Bath, his two most fully drawn female characters. Although his techniques in presenting these characters are as opposite as the characters are themselves, their innermost thoughts are revealed as each woman interacts in her particular world. So effectively are these characters drawn that each of them is better known to day than any of Chaucer's contemporaries.

The first sight of Criseyde in *Troilus and Criseyde* is that of a woman alone with no one to talk to. Fearful for her own safety, she is "well nigh out of her wit." Her father, Calkas the Soothsayer, having foreseen Troy's downfall, has deserted Troy and joined the Greeks. He has left his daughter behind to incur the wrath of the people, who declare that Calkas' kin should be burned to ashes.

Described as the fairest woman in Troy, Criseyde, dressed as a widow in black and flowing silk, goes to Prince Hector. Upon her knees and weeping helplessly, she begs his mercy. Hector, not the first nor the last man to succumb to the tears of a beautiful woman, says in essence, "Don't worry. So what, your father is a traitor. You just stay right here in Troy with us. Everything is going to be all right." She thanked him, went home, and bore herself discreetly. She kept her estate and lived in great affection. Young and old spoke well of her.

Thus Chaucer introduces Criseyde as beautiful and vulnerable but prudent and discreet. He further adds to her appeal by making her mysterious. For example, one wonders why, after her father had deserted her, she had no friend to turn to. Why could she not turn to her uncle, Pandarus, a Trojan nobleman, a friend to Prince Troilus and counselor to King Priam? In any case, she handles her affairs herself and handles them well.

Chaucer also gives this delightful creature a sense of humor. In her first scene with Pandarus, he suggests that she lay aside her widow's barbe (a piece of pleated linen reaching from the chin to the waist) and dance with him on this beautiful May morning. Pretending to be very shocked, she turns into the demure widow, too pious to endure. Her dear uncle must be mad to suggest dancing, when everyone knows that widows never do such things. It would become her more to wait her time in a cave and study the lives of saints. Dancing is for girls who have husbands--this from a lady whose reading of a Theban romance has just been interrupted. Marchette Chute says, "straight-faced foolery of this kind is something that the English have always enjoyed, and Chaucer knew that he did not need to underline any of Criseyde's remarks with the statement that she was making a joke" (173).

Criseyde again proves her cleverness as she matches wits with Pandarus, who baits and taunts her before revealing the real motive of his visit. He has come to initiate a romance between her and Prince Troilus, who is literally perishing--as courtly lovers do--from his love for her. She wisely dismisses Pandarus by promising not to lead Troilus on nor to love against

her will; but, saving her honor, she will try to please him from time to time. She demands that Pandarus expect no more.

Most impressive is the delicate accuracy with which Chaucer reveals Criseyde's change in attitude toward Troilus from mild curiosity to an overwhelming, self-forgetting love. Criseyde is not aware she is falling in love. The reader, however, is because Chaucer authentically presents Criseyde's thoughts. After the affair is consummated, Criseyde explains to Troilus why she loves him. It is not for his wealth, his breeding, nor his courage as a warrior. It is because he is a man of courtesy and self-control and because he possesses "moral vertu, grounded upon trouthe" (4.1672). This passage places Criseyde at the culmination of feminine beauty and perfection.

The ideal happiness of this excellent couple, however, is not destined to continue. Criseyde, a pawn in the affairs of the state, must leave Troilus and join her father in Greece. Diomede, a young Greek knight and a skilled lover, comes to escort Criseyde to her father, and Diomede soon has designs on her. After ten days Criseyde tries to find the nerve to escape through armed lines, but before she can, Diomede arrives and promptly seduces her. At this point, Chaucer's precise and glowing characterization of his heroine falls apart. This story of a woman's unfaithfulness had been popular for two-hundred years; Chaucer could not change it. It is as though he has abruptly dismantled this exquisite, life-sized, flesh and blood character that he himself created and has returned her to the small box in which she came. Thereafter, he follows Boccaccio's *Il Filostrato*, his source, closely. Three times he disclaims all responsibility in the matter: "Men seyn --I not--that she yaf hym hire herte" (5.1050).

Despite the unsatisfactory ending of the work and Chaucer's apparent displeasure with it, our literary heritage is enriched by Chaucer's Criseyde, the first fully developed portrait of a woman in English literature. Because of Chaucer's rare ability to depict her thoughts and emotions as well as her actions, Criseyde's joys and sorrows continue to be real.

Another female character whose heart and head Chaucer clearly reveals is that hardy pilgrim, the Wife of Bath. However, his technique in developing the Wife is directly opposite of that used in presenting Criseyde. For example, Chaucer gives no objective description of Criseyde until near the end, but he does not hesitate to describe her subjectively. With the Wife of Bath, however, Chaucer introduces her with objective description and then steps aside and lets her act. He introduces her in the Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales* as a fat wife with red stockings and gapped teeth from the

suburbs of Bath. Thereafter, this unsinkable character appears to have no further need of her author. This lusty female, who loves center stage, reveals her own character through her incessant chattering.

The Wife has so vast an enthusiasm for her subject--the "wo that is in mariage" and knows so much about it because she is so experienced--that she surges along like some great natural force. It is no wonder that the prologue to her tale is longer than any of the other prologues. Hardly any of the pilgrims nor the over-powered author, much less the awed and delighted reader, would wish to stop her.

As Dame Alice talks, one detects early that the woe in marriage has been experienced more by her five late husbands than by her. The Wife thinks marriage is a fine institution--her thoughts on the subject of virginity must be read to be appreciated--but she is certain that in any successful marriage that the wife must be the controlling partner. It is not that she is against men. On the contrary, they are her chief delight, the sole motivation for most of her thoughts and deeds. But as husbands, they have much to learn, and Alice is the self-appointed expert to teach them. She expounds long and loud on her complicated techniques for training a husband, in which she gets him on the defensive and keeps him there. Ultimately, she brings him to a state of subjection.

The Dame reveals much about her own personality in discussing her five husbands. The first three had been conveniently rich and old, and they were ideal subjects on which she could perfect her skills. The fourth husband was not satisfactory: he had a paramour. Consequently, Alice gave him his just deserts. She is certain he went straight to heaven upon his death because she had provided his purgatory on earth. Anyway, she did not like him and she buried him cheap, but not before she had spotted husband number five--Jankin, the clerk. Jankin, who was half her age and who probably married her for her money, tried to lord it over her. He told her uncomplimentary stories from his "book of wikked wyves." Furthermore, when she had at last mastered him, after having suffered a great deal of abuse herself, he disobligingly died.

From an objective viewpoint, the Wife of Bath is a healthy old broad, conspicuously dressed and crude in her speech, but friendly and, when necessary, shrewd and practical. Though she has acquired snatches of knowledge from her educated husband, Jankin, she is, as her speech reflects, essentially illiterate. Her theory of life is one of frank animalism.

These are the surface facts about the Wife, but beneath this hardened exterior this immortal old reprobate is a bit more complicated. Her frequent quoting and glossing of the Bible reflects her preoccupation with the "good book," possibly in an effort to alleviate guilt. She is haunted with a vague suspicion, argue as she may to the contrary, that her way of life is not right. In a candid moment she utters: "Allas! allas! that evere love was synne!" (1. 614).

In spite of her boisterous gaiety, the Wife does not appear happy. Just as the lustful souls in the first circle of Dante's *Inferno* are continually blown by the whirlwind, so is Alice driven. Her restlessness has already taken her several times to Europe and three times to Jerusalem. Worst of all, she is growing old. She dreads the toll that age takes on physical pleasure, which her fancied happiness depends on. Consequently, she has two alternatives: she can be despondent and morbid or she can take delight in the good times she has had. She has chosen the latter, and her entire discourse to the pilgrims is one whoop of satisfaction over the fun she has had.

Like Criseyde, the Wife of Bath is no flat creation on paper. She is a living, breathing woman, whose tones of voice and turns of mind are recognized. The two contrasting characters--one a refined aristocrat from an earlier era, the other a member of the struggling middle class and Chaucer's contemporary--denote the writer's broad understanding and appreciation of women.

How Chaucer came to have this great understanding of women has been open to wide speculation through the years. The natural conclusion is that his relationships with women in general were pleasant. However, the only extant details of his personal life are the objective facts recorded in documents containing the affairs of the royal households in which he served or the affairs of government in which he was directly involved. Personal feelings are not recorded in documents of this nature, nor was Chaucer inclined to self-revelation in his writing. When he did refer to himself, his tongue was centered in his cheek. One remembers the bumpkin narrator reciting his "Tale of Sir Topaz."

Donald Howard says, "For all his fascination with women, his fondness for them and attraction to them, his ability to have them for companions, care about them, see into their minds, and depict them in his writings--for all this, his relationships with women had been, in retrospect, disappointing" (468). Professor Howard bases this assumption on the number of prominent women of the court that Chaucer out lived, such as the Duchess

Blanche, Queen Philippa and, later, Queen Anne, plus the fact that Chaucer never remarried though he outlived his wife fourteen years. These premises, however, are hardly convincing.

It is true that no other male writer of Chaucer's era portrayed the feminine mind as successfully as did Chaucer. He had no models to follow, and there was little to lead him into this accomplishment but his own interest and ability. What prompted his predisposition for this androgynous ability may never be known, but one can safely assume that Chaucer liked and understood women.

Works Cited

Chute, Marchette. *Geoffrey Chaucer of England*. New York: E. P. Dutton, 1946.

Howard, Donald R. *Chaucer, His Life, His Works, His World*. New York: E. P. Dutton, 1987.

Robinson, F. N., ed. *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*. 2nd ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1957.

Toward a Reassessment of the *Psalms of David* Within Renaissance Poetry

Sallye Sheppeard Lamar University

In 1599 or 1600, Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, presented to Queen Elizabeth a copy of the *Psalms of David*, a metrical translation of the psalms begun in collaboration with her brother, Sir Philip Sidney, before his death in 1689 and completed by the Countess sometime after 1593. Circulated widely in manuscript (Waller 18-36; Rathmell 356-58) and lauded by Mary Herbert's contemporaries, many of them respected poets, the *Psalms of David* nevertheless remained unpublished until Samuel Singer's limited edition of 250 copies appeared in 1823. Since that time, Philip Sidney's portion of the work has been reprinted on several occasions, but the complete text of the Psalms was not published again until J. C. A. Rathmell's 1963 edition.

Particularly during the past two decades has there been a revival of scholarly interest in the Countess of Pembroke as collaborator with Philip Sidney in translating the *Psalms of David*. And although still the subject of critical disagreement, the poetic integrity of Mary Herbert's substantial portion of this work (she completed 107 of the work's 150 psalms, Sidney only 43) and its importance to Renaissance poetry have now been suggested by several modern scholars. In particular, these scholars have examined such matters as the imagery and the rhetorical competency of the *Psalms*, and such examinations provide increasing evidence that scholars since the Renaissance have greatly misunderstood the nature and purpose of the work, as well as its influence upon the creative imagination of the Renaissance itself.

In his general discussion of Mary Herbert's poetic methods and achievement, J. C. A. Rathmell observes that in her treatment of the various sources underlying her metrical translation, the Countess expands and develops "biblical images where the commentaries give her authority to do so" (Rathmell xx). According to Rathmell, the Countess' version of psalm 139, which incorporates John Calvin's commentary on the Book of Psalms, provides an excellent example of the Countess' scholarly expansion and development of such an image. Basing his commentary on the fifteenth stanza of Psalm

139 on a version that reads, "My strength which thou hast made in secret is not / hid from thee, / I was woven together in the lowest parts of the earth," Calvin expands the weaving metaphor and provides a lengthy explanation of the comparison of the mother's womb to the 'dark denne' of the tailor's workroom. The Countess, in turn, explores this metaphor further in her version, which reads:

> Thou, how my back was beam-wise laid,
> And rafting of my ribbs, dost know!
> Know'st ev'ry point
> Of bone and joynt,
> How to this whole these partes did grow,
> In brave embrod'ry faire araid,
> Thou wrought in shopp both dark and low.
> (11. 50-56)

As a result, the Countess' meditation upon the text lends to her version a sense of personal involvement that, along with her appreciation for underlying meaning, conveys the force and impulse of the textual original (Rathmell xx).

Rathmell cites another example of such intensity in Mary Herbert's Psalm 58:

> So make them melt as the dishowsed snaile
> Or as the Embrio, whose vitall band
> Breaks er it holdes, and formlesse eyes do faile
> To see the sun, though brought to lightfull land.
> (11. 21-24)

Here, Rathmell points out, the Countess captures the psalmist's intense desire for the destruction of his enemies by making the images of the crushed snail and the still-born embryo palpable to the imagination. Rathmell correctly observes that the Countess creates in the embryo image "an immediacy that is not present in the formal metaphor of the 'untimely frute' . . . in both the Geneva and the Bishop's Bible" (Rathmell xx-xxi).

Although incorrectly characterizing the work as primarily Sidney's creation, Louis L. Martz first suggested that the *Psalms of David* represents "an intimate, personal cry of the soul to God--an effort in which, later, dozens of poets were to play their part; poets as different as Wither, Carew, Crashaw, Vaughn, or Milton" (Martz 278). As evidenced from the examples cited above, this same quality permeates the Countess' work, and

elements pointing toward the metaphysical poets are also present in the Countess' psalms. If the identity of the author of the lines were not known, for example, one might be tempted to think the image in psalm 119D of "Very woe and greif / My soul doe melt and fry" to have been created by one of the metaphysical poets; and the same temptation might extend to the evocative images from psalm 90:

Therefore in thy angry fuming,
  Our life of daies his measure spends:
All our yeares in death consuming,
  Right like a sound that, sounded, ends;
(11. 33-36)

or to the image in Psalm 130 of the soul watching in anxious anticipation of God's promise:

  Who longest watch,
    Who soonest rise,
  Can nothing match
    The early eyes;
The greedy eyes my soule erecteth,
While Gods true promise it expecteth.
(ll. 19-24)

Coburn Freer deems Mary Herbert a poor poet whose artistic achievements are accidental rather than intentional and whose psalms bear no kinship to the more complex metaphysical poetry that flourished in the seventeenth century. Unlike Martz and Rathmell, Freer contends that as a maker of poetic images Mary Herbert is "like Aldous Huxley's Mr. Barbecue Smith, who is very adept at drawing out a metaphor but often unable to understand why he has done it" (Freer 40). When isolated from their poetic context, however, metaphysical images have often received this type of negative criticism, for such images are rarely constructed as self-contained units of poetic expression. Even Freer acknowledges the presence of some metaphysical passages in Mary Herbert's psalms, among them the following conceit in Psalm 105:

  How fisshes die, what should I stand to tell?
Or how of noisome froggs the earth-bred race
  Croake where their princes sleepe, not only dwell?
How lice and vermyn heav'nly voice attending
Doe swarming fall, what quarter not offending?

Freer cites as additional evidence of metaphysical qualities in the Countess' psalms the presence of *discordia concors* in Psalm 104:

> The vulgar grasse, whereof the beast is faine,
> The rarer hearb man for him self hath chose:
> All things in breef, that life in life maintaine,
> From Earths old bowells fresh and yongly grows.
> (Freer 38)

And while I do agree with Freer that Mary Herbert is not a metaphysical poet, I believe him mistaken in his negative assessment of Mary Herbert's overall image-making ability, for her psalms are replete with powerful images, many of them "metaphysical" in nature.

Modern scholars also examine Mary Herbert's rhetorical technique. Both Rathmell and Freer note that in Psalm 68 the Countess creates an *argumentative momentum* not present in earlier Renaissance versions of the psalter. Mary Herbert's version of Psalm 68 begins with the following challenge:

> And call yee this to utter what is just,
> You that of justice hold the sov'raign throne?
> And call yee this to yeld, O sonnes of dust,
> To wronged brethren ev'ry man his own?

Rather than beginning the rebuttal, which occurs in the final half of the stanza, with the somewhat moderate "nay" of the Bishops' Bible or the "Yea, rather ye imagine mischief in your heart: your hands execute crueltie upon the earth" of the Geneva Bible, the speaker in the Countess' version counters the challenge with scathing resentment;

> O no: it is your lone malicious will
> Now to the world to make by practize known,
> With whose oppression you the ballance fill,
> Just to your selves, indiff'rent else to none.
> (Rathmell xxi; Freer 45)

Neither Rathmell nor Freer comments further on the power of this psalm, yet the argumentative structure initiated in this first stanza continues throughout subsequent stanzas and intensifies the emotive power of the speaker's complaint. In the second stanza, for example, the Countess begins with another question, followed by a harsh reply:

But what could they, who ev'n in birth declin'd,
From truth and right to lies and injuries?
To shew the venim of their cancred mynd
The adders image scarcly can suffice;
Nay scarce the aspick may with them contend,
On whom the charmer all in vaine applies
His skillful'st spells: ay missing of his end,
While shee self-deff and unaffected lies.
(11. 9-16)

The speaker's subsequent invocation virtually explodes in righteous anger:

Lord crack their teeth, Lord crush these lions jawes,
Soe lett them sinck as water in the sand: . . .
(11. 17-18)

These lines are followed by equally explosive pleas:

So make them melt as the dishowsed snaile
Or as the Embrio, whose vitall band
Breaks er it holdes, and formlesse eyes do faile
To see the sun, though brought to lightfull land.

O let their brood, a brood of springing thornes,
Be by untimely rooting overthrowne
Er bushes waxt, they push with pricking hornes,
As fruites yet greene are often by tempest blowne.
(11. 21-28)

The argumentative structure ends with the speaker's resolve that

The good with gladness this reveng shall see,
And bath his feete in bloud of wicked one
While all shall say: the just rewarded be,
There is a God that carves to each his own.
(11. 29-32)

Such persuasive power notwithstanding, Coburn Freer views the Countess' translations as often ineffective and offers as evidence the following lines from her Psalm 59:

Now thus they fare; when sunn doth sett,
Retorn'd againe,
As hounds that howle their food to gett,
They runn amayne
The city through from street to street
With hungry mawes some prey to meet.

Abroad they rane and hunt apace
Now that, now this,
As famine trailes a hungry trace;
And though they miss,
Yet will they not to kennell hye,
But all the night at bay do lye.
(11. 67-78)

In the Sternhold-Hopkins psalter, the major liturgical psalter of Mary Herbert's day, these stanzas read:

At evening they return apace,
As dogs they grin and crie:
Throughout the streets in every place
They run about and spie.
They seek about for meat, I say,
But let them not be fed:
Nor find a house where in they may
Be bolde to put their head.

According to Freer, the Sternhold-Hopkins version "creates a good deal more terror by having the 'dogs' descend upon the houses," while the Countess' version is "longer, to no great effect" (Freer 40-41). Yet if one meditates upon this passage as the Countess intends, the terror expressed in the passage has nothing to do with the dogs' descending upon the houses. In her expanded version, the inhabitants of the town and of the houses become the passive, helpless prey of hungry dogs that range the streets "with hungrey mawes some prey to meet." The hounds can be neither controlled nor lured to their kennels. Unlike the people of the Sternhold-Hopkins psalter, the people of Mary Herbert's meditative version lack the choice of feeding or not feeding the dogs, of opening their doors or leaving them shut. The dogs will feed themselves one way or another. People can experience no more debilitating terror than that of imminent danger which lies "out

there" and over which they have no control. Such terror is both the point and the emotive strength of the Countess' psalm.

In her dedicatory poem to Queen Elizabeth, Mary Herbert says that she and Sidney undertook their collaboration on the psalms because

> We thought the Psalmsit King
> Now denizend, though Hebrue borne,
> woold to thy musicke undispleased sing,
> Oft having worse, without repining worne.
> (Waller 88)

Furthermore, in her dedicatory poem to Sir Philip Sidney, also contained in the Queen's presentation copy of the work, the countess explains that the "superficial tire" of the *Psalms of David*, their forms and meters, are intended

> to praise, not to aspire
> To, those high Tons, so in themselves adorn'd,
> Which Angels sing in their caelestiall Quire,
> And all tongues with soul and voice admire,
> Theise sacred Hymnes thy Kinglie Prophet form'd.
> (Waller 92)

Both explanations are in keeping with Sidney's view in *A Defence of Poetry* that the Hebrew psalms are divine poetry (Sidney 22). Clearly Mary Herbert and Philip Sidney understood their metrical psalms as a contribution not to psalmody *per se* but to Renaissance poetry. Until the *Psalms of David* appeared in manuscript near the end of Elizabeth's reign, Renaissance England had no aesthetic version of the complete psalter, and the work is important within Renaissance literature precisely because the poetry of the *Psalms of David* reflects a conscious treatment of the psalms as art.

I believe this aesthetic treatment to be the reason for the enthusiastic reception of the work by Mary Herbert's contemporaries, who were familiar with a complete version of the *Psalms of David* and who were well aware that both sister and brother were responsible for its creation. Most notable among these contemporaries was John Donne, whose "Upon the Translation of the Psalms of Sir Philip Sidney and the countess of Pembroke his Sister" (written in apostrophe to God) bestows equal praise upon both poets:

That, as thy blessed Spirit fell upon
These Psalms first Author in a cloven tongue;. . .
So thou hast cleft that spirit, to preforme
That worke againe, and shed it, there, upon
Two, by their bloods, and by thy Spirit one;
A Brother and a Sister, made by thee
The Organ, where thou are the Harmony
(Grierson 318)

Among those other luminaries acclaiming the Countess' work may be counted Ben Jonson and Samuel Daniel, the latter clearly praising the work's greatness when he writes in reference to it:

By this, great lady, thou must then be known,
When WILTON lies low levell'd in the ground;
And this is that which thou may'st call thine own,
Which sacrilegious time cannot confound;
Here thou surviv'st thyself; here thou are found
Of late succeeding ages, fresh in fame,
Where in eternal brass remains thy name
(Drake 182)

That during the course of "sacrilegious time" scholars and critics have ignored the judgment of Jonson, Daniel, and Donne and have paid little attention to the influence of the complete *Psalms* upon the poetry of Donne and George Herbert and to the "terrible sonnets" of Gerard Manley Hopkins (Rathmell, "Hopkins," 51-66; Martz 273-78; Freer, *Music*, 72-108) has deprived the twentieth century of a proper understanding not only of the *Psalms of David*, but also of the nature and scope of Renaissance poetry itself. The traditional disclaimer of the creative significance of the *Psalms of David* because it is a translation seems wrongheaded, as I have argued elsewhere (Sheppeard 1-3). The work is neither a translation nor an "Englishing" of biblical materials in the sense of rendering into the English language a work originally written in the Hebrew language. Certainly English translations of the Book of Psalms were plentiful during the sixteenth century, and both Mary Herbert and Philip Sidney used such translations as the basis of their own work. But their concept of "translation" derived from the aesthetic rather than the liturgical tradition of psalmody, from their understanding of the psalms as divine poetry. To them the *Psalms of David* represented translation or "Englishing" in a sense differ-

ing from the narrow interpretation modern scholars usually apply to the term: rendering into the language of English poetry a work already existing in the language of English prose.

In assessing the work of both Mary Herbert and Philip Sidney in the *Psalms of David*, we might do well to take our lead from Hallet Smith, who in 1946 made the following observation:

> When the literary history of Elizabethan poetry comes to be written, it will be not so much a series of biographical sketches, with critical remarks thrown in from any random point of view, as a study and interpretation of the great commonplaces, with accurate description of the variety of ways in which the treatments of them became art. One of these great commonplaces was the Book of Psalms (Smith 271).

Well versed in classical rhetorical theory and practice, Mary Herbert and Philip Sidney, as well as other Renaissance writers, availed themselves of such a commonplace as part of the creative materials of rhetorical invention. For Mary Herbert, with the help of her brother, creating an aesthetic version of the complete psalter was not a matter of versifying biblical content but, as I have pointed out in another context, of returning the spirit of the English psalms--so frequently rendered during the sixteenth century in liturgical verse and prose--to its aesthetic origin (Sheppeard 3). As others of the time had given to Renaissance poetry the spirit of Greek, Italian, and Latin poetry, so Mary Herbert and her brother had given to English poetry the spirit of Hebrew poetry. No doubt it was the artistry of the *Psalms of David* to which Donne, Daniel, and other writers of the day responded with such genuine enthusiasm, for to them the addition of an aesthetic psalter to English devotional poetry was of the greatest literary significance. As these Renaissance writers well understood, devotional poetry was an intrinsic part of the English poetic tradition, and Mary Herbert and Philip Sidney's *Psalms of David* was both appropriate and necessary in carrying forward that tradition.

Works Cited

Drake, Gnathion. *Mornings in Spring*. London: John Murray, 1828.

Freer, Coburn. "The Countess of Pembroke in the World of Words." *Style* 5 (1971): 37-56.

Freer, Coburn. *Music for a King: George Herbert and the Metrical Psalm*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1972.

Grierson, Herbert, ed. *Donne: Poetical Works*. London: Oxford UP, 1933.

Martz, Louis L. *The Poetry of Meditation*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1954.

Rathmell, J. C. A. "Hopkins, Ruskin, and the Sidney Psalter." *London Magazine* 6 (1959): 51-66.

Rathmell, J. C. A., ed. *The Psalms of Sir Philip Sidney and the Countess of Pembroke*. New York: Doubleday-Anchor, 1963.

Sheppeard, Sallye J. "On the Art of Renaissance Translation: Mary Herbert's Psalm 130." *Texas College English* 18 (1985): 1-3.

Singer, Samuel, ed. *The Psalms of David translated into verse by Sir Philip Sidney and the Countess of Pembroke.* London: Chiswick Press, 1823.

Smith, Hallet. "English Metrical Psalms in the Sixteenth Century and Their Literary Significance." *Huntington Library Quarterly* 9 (1946): 260-70.

Waller, G. F., ed. *The Triumph of Death and Other Unpublished and Uncollected Poems of Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke (1561-1621).* Salzburg: University of Salzburg, 1977.

Annie Stevens Trevecca Nazarene College

Beachcombers: Gulf Coast Highway

Jets of gossamer trail across the sidewalks,
leaving lines of speckled folly when the mowers
cut their engines, throttle back behind the warehouse,
apologizing for the early morning intrusion,
belatedly addressing Christmas cards
along the beach across the boulevard.
Picking strands of black and gold caught
and wound among the blades, I thought
I had some fortune teller's fringe of prophecy
able to reconstruct the lovers' walk, the rest
beside the seawall, threads unravelling
from her cape draped across a picket fence.
What if I followed them all night?
Would there still be the ragged edges
left in parting, softly nibbled inch by inch
until a checkered flag emerged, woven
from the separate strands? He left,
she cried, forgot the silky garment
on the wall, so light it lifted its own weight
caught in a morning sea breeze, sailing now
somewhere alone in the bay. She is a colored sail
out there, headed for the islands, while he
sits beached alone in his hotel, punching out
a feature story with his byline exposing a public
nuisance long neglected, unmown grass
waving beside the sea wall, obscuring the view
for motorists in passing cars, clicking cameras
at the waves, thinking they've seen
the ocean sailing past them at 65.

Orison of a Bag Lady

Walking through broken glass, crunching step
by cracked leather, listening for the clicking sound
against your chest prepare to ignite
the flame--tossed canisters of sullen air
beneath the railroad bridge. The starlight
buckles beneath the weight of rainsoaked brick
below us. Hollowed out, a cavity swells
beneath my feet, allows a floating stick
to divinate next summer's average rainfall.
Cook the turnips on the spit, roast catfish
in the glowing coals we found behind the grill.
Rumbling down the track I hear the locomotive
churn the other lifetime all behind us,
fling the sparks across the aqueduct
for Gil and Tib and sister Lucy standing on the platform.
I know--we'll hop a freight and steer ourselves
around the world, if six or eight of us
could sneak away we'd join the ranks
of Belgian waffles dreaming of a sweet
thick rain of maple indecision--
between the sheets my love, beneath the weight
I love, cover me tonight and dream
I died and went to heaven, quick
before the air begins to change
before the train pulls into another station
before the little gaslights fill the stars
I wake and ride the dawn across the street.

Faulkner's Two Dantes: To the Inferno and Back

Terrell L. Tebbetts Arkansas College

Light in August reads so much like a sequel to *Sanctuary* that even casual readers might guess their chronological relationship in Faulkner's canon. Characters, especially, seem to spill over from *Sanctuary* into *Light in August*: both novels give us the rootless ones, the aliens, people in Jefferson but not of it. In fact, the striking character parallels are the most significant key to both the similarities and differences of these two novels. In both novels a character initially rather innocent involves himself with other characters caught up in crimes of increasingly greater evil and finds himself changed--irrevocably and with amazement and anguish changed--by that involvement. An examination of both these innocents and these criminals will reveal why *Light in August* is a genuine sequel to and not a mere recapitulation of *Sanctuary*. In essence, *Light in August* is Faulkner's *Purgatorio*, *Sanctuary* his *Inferno*.

The "innocents" of the novels, their Dantes, have much in common. Horace Benbow and Byron Bunch even have names reminiscent of each other, each with a poet's first name and each with an alliterative "b." They both have some connection to Jefferson without being fully of the town--Horace having moved to Kinston and Byron having lived in Jefferson anonymously in a boarding house for only seven years.

In the action of their novels, both Horace and Byron seek to protect characters in trouble. Horace looks after the fallen woman Ruby Lamar and her illegitimate child, housing them in his own quarters, then at the hotel, and finally in an old shack at the edge of town frequented by Negroes. He tries but fails to save Lee Goodwin, officially charged with murder and publicly accused of rape. Byron looks after the fallen woman Lena Grove and her illegitimate child, housing them in his own quarters, a boarding house something like a hotel, and then in an old shack once lived in by Negroes. He tries but fails to save Joe Christmas, officially charged with murder and suspected of rape.

At the end of each novel both men leave Jefferson. Horace goes to Kinston, to Belle, a woman whom he has married but whose child is not his. She is clearly in command. Byron hits the road, following Lena, a woman

whom he would marry but whose child is not his. She too is clearly in command. Neither man appears again in Faulkner's fiction after leaving Jefferson.

The most important function of these external similarities is to draw our attention to the internal ones. Chief among them is the alienation of both men. Horace, of course, seems incapable of sustaining any normal relationship, and he does not take too warmly to others': he does not like Ruby holding her baby, as Arthur Kinney has noted (110), and when she spends the night in jail with Lee, he makes sure he is there too. Byron, for his part, is friends only with an outcast. More largely, though both men are attached to larger fictive worlds --Horace to law and Byron to the church--neither attachment seems to provide the kind of bridge "between self and non-self" that Philip Weinstein says many of Faulkner's characters need (129), principally because the "non-self" both Horace and Byron seem alienated from is the human universe rather than the mechanical one. The law, in fact, seems to contribute so much to Horace's alienation that Lee Goodwin has to ask him if he has been living in a kindergarten, and the church has clinched Byron's by taking him thirty miles away from Jefferson on the only day he might use to meet and come to know those he lives among. Weinstein not withstanding, the fictive structures of Horace and Byron seem to enforce rather than alleviate their alienation.

Yet these similarities are hardly the whole story of these two Dantes. At the end of *Sanctuary*, Horace Benbow returns to Kinston in defeat. Having entered the *Inferno*, he has discovered the Evil to be systematic, organized, insidious, easily overwhelming his puny system of law, the fictive fortification he has thrown up in vain effort to hold back the blood-dimmed tide. He has looked upon drunkenness and lechery, upon rape and murder, finally upon inexplicable Betrayal, which the law has portrayed as violated innocence. Even before Goodwin's lynching, he has seen the fires of hell consuming the just and the unjust alike. He goes home all right, but not to a sanctuary so much as to a prison, where he will forever live alone even though married to Belle. An ominous three times she tells him to lock the prison door upon himself. His motion in the novel has become a circle, and he is locked inside. His alienation will continue.

How different from Byron Bunch. At the end of *Light in August*, he is not returning to a place at all, let alone to a place of former defeat. He is setting out on the open road, his motion linear rather than circular. His life is just beginning, his future open. He has looked on the same Evil that

Horace Benbow looked on and has even seen it portrayed not only as "innocence" but even as Godliness--in Hightower's ministerial facade that masks the betrayal of his wife that led to her seduction and death, in Hine's mad preaching that masks his betrayal of his daughter and grandson. But that evil has not defeated him. His last words proclaim his undefeat: "I be dog if I'm going to quit now" (479). And Lena, anything but a warden, offers not thralldom but hope: "'Ain't nobody never said for you to quit'" (479). If anything, she seems to be his Beatrice, leading him away from the purgatorial flames that consumed Joe and Joanna as surely as they consumed their perverse and tormented "home," leading him toward the union that the furniture dealer predicts for him and that Cleanth Brooks calls "hopeful" (367). His alienation will end.

Why do these two innocents come to such different ends? Why does Byron Bunch escape the flames that consume Horace Benbow? It can hardly be due to encountering different kinds of evil. In fact, the two men who are most thoroughly sunk in evil in the two novels--Popeye and Joe Christmas--are as remarkably similar as are Horace and Byron. Both have had broken childhoods, one a half orphan the other full; both have been haunted by mad grandparents, Popeye by his pyromaniacal grandmother and Joe by his fanatic Grandfather Hines. As adults, they look alike--both being smallish, dark men, Popeye called "black" repeatedly, Joe taken for a foreigner and taunted as a "nigger." Both men hang cigarettes from mouths frozen in perpetual sneers at once both challenging and defensive. Both men can paralyze others with an "unmoving stare" (Pitavy 64). Both men are crippled by what they inherit, Popeye by congenital physical defects that leave him impotent, a man and not a man; Joe by racial confusion and anxiety that make him neither black nor white and leave him as impotent and unformed as Popeye. Both men "progress" from petty to violent crimes: both bootleg in conjunction with others in old houses owned by others out from Jefferson, where they are unknown or little known; they both progress to rape and murder. Both men continue in perverse relationships with the very women they rape. Both men die in perfectly legal executions, Popeye in a normally staged execution, Joe in armed resistance to a legal officer, in flight from charges that could bring capital punishment. And in one way or another both men's legal deaths are terribly unjust, Popeye's simply because he is innocent of that crime at least, Joe's for reasons that could fill an entire paper but which might range from his possible innocence (self-defence?) to the whole community's complicity in the

horror of both his life and his death as a scapegoat in whose blood it rushes with Percy Grimm to wash its hands (note Hightower's blending of Grimm's face with Joe's and his confession that he too is guilty of seduction and murder: the implication is that the executioner, the executed, and the last-minute defender are all similarly guilty). Clearly, then, both Horace and Byron involve themselves in progressive and pervasive evil. Yet Horace is consumed in its sulphurous fires, while Byron seems merely to bathe in cleansing flames. Why?

Perhaps the answer lies in their different motivations: both in the different impulses behind their involvements and in the different ends of their actions. And the key to those differing motivations may well lie in their relations to a third fictive structure, not to the law or to the church but to the family.

One striking difference between the two men is in their positions in regard to family. Horace is in flight from his family . Little Belle's sexuality torments him, and he comes to identify her with Temple, upon whom he projects all the guilt of his incestuous desire for Little Belle and whose degradation he will have to expose in order to save Lee Goodwin. And his wife Belle's domination of him--the servile fetching of her dripping shrimp --provides the public reason, however pitiful and humiliating, for his flight. And what does he find when he stumbles onto the Old Frenchman's Place? A husband and wife whose relations almost entirely reverse his and Belle's. The "husband" Lee Goodwin dominates the "wife" Ruby Lamar: Lee is as confirmed a breaker of the law as Horace is its upholder, as violent as Horace is meek, as "manly" according to his wife as Horace is uxorious; and Ruby is as abject in her relation to him as Horace is to Belle, as servile in fetching her no-doubt leaking buckets of water from the spring as Horace is in fetching shrimp. And who else does he later find had followed him there? Temple Drake, his shadow, as public in her combination of sexual desire and revulsion as he is private. Could this mirroring, this repetition in reverse, suggest the nature of Horace's motivation? Is Horace attempting to participate in Lee's dominance by exonerating him? Is he easing his own abjectness by protecting Ruby? Is he exposing the horror he finds in his attraction to Little Belle by exposing the incontrovertible horror of Temple's nymphomania? Finally, are all of his actions self-directed? Is he consumed because he takes on evil by brandishing his own wounded, disguised, and alienated ego rather than a weapon worthy of that struggle and capable of winning it?

If the family is the key to motivation, the answer may be yes. Certainly, Byron's position in regard to family suggests that answer as surely as Horace's does. For in exact reverse of Horace, Byron comes with no family. No "Judge Bench" for Papa. No Narcissa, or Echo, or Daphne, or any other still, unchanging Attic priestess for Sister. And certainly no death-knell Belle for Wife. So when he takes up Lena's cause, he brings to battle no wounded spirit looking for solace, undefeat, sanctuary. And he protects, nurtures, woos a woman not only unlike Ruby--un-abject, if you will--but also as unlike himself as possible. She is young; he is past his prime. She is irresponsible; he keeps his own time on Saturday afternoon. She is footloose; he is doing the same things in the same places seven days a week--at the planing mill for six days and at church on the Sabbath. She is full of life; he has been as sterile as his only friend in Jefferson, Gail Hightower. Despite these differences, Byron is as far from Horace's flight from marriage and decision on divorce as he can be; he tries continuously to make marriages--Lena's and Lucas's and, that failing, Lena's and his own.

Moreover, when Byron subsequently takes up Joe's cause, he is still trying to put together a family. Joe's life offers no particular reverse image of Byron's; unlike Horace, Byron can see no precious alter-ego in the man he defends. But that man is precious to someone else, to the sad and faded and irretrievably lost old Grandmother Hines. Byron seems, in fact, to act for her really, rather than directly for Joe--or for Joe because of her--to give her her lost baby, to restore the lost child to the aching arms that have needed him as much as he has needed them. With the voice of tragedy muted by its terrible ordinariness, Mrs. Hines pleads for the impossible atonement of her family:

> I never saw him when he could walk and talk. Not for thirty years I never saw him. . . . if folks could maybe just let him for one day. Like it hadn't happened yet. Like the world never had anything against him yet. Then it could be like he had just went on a trip and grew man grown and come back. If it could be like that for just one day (367).

When Byron is not trying to form new families, he is trying to re-form tragically broken ones. He has a much greater role than the one which critics have so often recognized, that of "bridge" character, the only one who knows all the others. It is greater even than the role Francois Pitavy recognizes, that of simply bringing together and introducing unknowns (37). He not

only brings people together; he repeatedly tries to form bonds, to unite, to atone.

Byron thus acts not out of ego like Horace, who was not fighting evil so much as re-fighting his own old, lost battles through the lives of others. Byron acts out of a strong, spontaneous, overflowing attraction to and sympathy for others. In Lena he sees something unlike himself, something that can complete itself in him, him in it. In Mrs. Hines and Joe he may see more than two lost strangers, an anonymous old woman and her criminal grandson; he may see two others who might have, should have, but tragically have not completed *their* lives in and through each other. Byron, then, hardly fights evil at all. He leaves it behind when he joins his Beatrice on the road; he is creating good in the space left by abandoned evil, making right in his life and in Lena's what could not be made right in Joe's and Mrs. Hines'. And his tool is not a wounded, outraged, and regretful ego. Having endured the cleansing fires of his purgatory, he now has heaven's own creative power. The narrator of *Light in August* calls his strong, spontaneous, overflowing sympathy and attraction nothing less than "love." Lena's seeming domination of Byron springs not from his weak resignation but from love's strong, inexplicable ability to enable him to sacrifice his own will: Certainly that is the implication of his bringing Lucas Burch to Lena, an act that places her love above his own. And that love will no doubt be as nurturing in the lives of Byron, Lena, and their eventual children as it is in the life of Gail Hightower, whose contact with it leads him to spontaneous self-sacrifice, self-recognition, and maturity.

In the inferno of *Sanctuary*, Horace's family survives in form only; Horace's motivation is anti-familial, self-concerned rather than self-sacrificing. In the purgatory of *Light in August*, Byron and Lena end on the verge of forming a family, Byron being motivated by the chief familial virtue of love, which seeks to complete others as well as self, which can place others before self. Faulkner has led Byron to the metaphysical paradox: in sacrifice of self he overcomes the alienation of self. It is this sense that Byron Bunch is what Judith Wittenberg more loosely terms him, the "moral standard" of the novel (117).

Works Cited

Cleanth Brooks. *The Yoknapatawpha Country*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1963.

Arthur F. Kinney. "Sanctuary: Style as Vision." In *Twentieth Century Interpretations of Sanctuary*. Ed. J. Douglas Canfield. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice, 1982. 109-119.

Francois Pitavy. *Faulkner's Light in August*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1973.

Philip Weinstein. "Precarious Sanctuaries: Protection and Exposure in Faulkner's Fiction." In *Twentieth Century Interpretations of Sanctuary*. 129-133.

Judith Wittenberg. *Faulkner: The Transfiguration of Biography*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979.

A Critic's Defense and Self-Revelation

John W. Warren Louisiana State University

Although Walter Savage Landor's concern for political and social affairs both on the contemporary scene and in the past occupies the major portion of the English Imaginary Conversations, he devotes a substantial portion to his interest as a literary critic. Landor scholarship has consistently referred in a general way to Landor's role as a critic, but only in recent years have his writings received scholarly attention in this area. Of Landor's prose devoted to criticism, two Imaginary Conversations between Southey and Porson offer the most extensive revelation of Landor's criticism. Here he systematically recommends a model for critics to follow in analyzing literary works. Within his own application of critical principles, his emphasis on the faults of great writers, his satirical manner in the tradition of Pope and Swift, his frequent use of comparison, his analysis of grammatical structure, his distaste for the sonnet, and his didactic purpose all relate him to eighteenth-century practices. His view of imitation, on the other hand, parallels Samuel Johnson's but does not dissent radically from critics of the nineteenth century. It may well be noted here that Landor's long life placed him as a contemporary figure in both eras.

The two dialogues between Southey and Porson show Landor working as a textual, analytical critic, as he presents his defense of William Wordsworth. It is in this appraisal of Wordsworth's poetry that Landor himself emerges as a worthy critic. The first of the two dialogues serves as a kind of dedication to Wordsworth in Landor's 1822 edition of twenty-three Imaginary Conversations. Instead of a formal dedication, Landor enlarged upon some remarks about Wordsworth's poetry that he had once scribbled on an old letter and had used to develop the dialogue between Southey and Porson. In this piece, Landor expressed his hope that the judgments about Wordsworth as voiced by Southey would more than outweigh in the poet's mind the pain he felt from attacks of his "unprincipled adversaries" in the contemporary reviews and publications (Super 118).

In his book *The Literary Critic* (1962), George Watson observes that English criticism has often proved itself ill-adjusted to the real literary achievements of its time. Landor's assessment of Wordsworth makes him

an "exception to the rule." He has succeeded where many have fallen short, for it is the just and lasting estimate of his contemporary Wordsworth that vindicates his judgment as a critic. A study of Landor's two dialogues will illustrate this point.

Because of a delay in publishing the first Imaginary Conversation between Southey and Porson, Julius Hare gave John Taylor permission to print it in the *London Magazine* in order to please Wordsworth. Landor's biographer John Forster states that it "excited considerable interest; and much curiosity was raised for the appearance of the book, which the magazine had promised would be immediate" (Forster 330). Although Wordsworth expressed regret that the Conversation had appeared in a magazine and that Landor had "condescended" to minute criticism upon the *Laodamia*, he concurred with many of the objections cited and removed, for example, a line about the "witness" and "second birth" that disfigured the stanza describing the Elysian Fields.

When William Gifford reviewed the 1824 edition of the Imaginary Conversations in the *Quarterly Review*, he specifically selected the Southey-Porson dialogue as a point of attack. Of the segment on Wordsworth, he said,

> Though it is doubtless with the best intentions that Mr. Wordsworth is figured in the same fruitful allegory, first as Adam, (or Eve, we do no clearly make out which), and secondly as an elephant, yet we know enough of that gentleman's modesty to assure ourselves that he would be satisfied with appearing in one of those characters (Gifford 510).

The review of the same edition in the *Edinburgh Review*, written by William Hazlitt, likewise assailed the treatment of Wordsworth, though somewhat less severely.

It is thus within this aura of dislike that Landor had so firmly defended his contemporary. Both of his Conversations between Southey and Porson are entirely imaginary. In selecting Porson as a speaker to criticize Wordsworth's poetry textually, Landor set forth a creditable and capable critic who had followed in the line of the chief classical scholars of the eighteenth century, such as John Taylor, Jeremiah Markland, Richard Dawes, and Benjamin Heath. To provide his defense, however, Landor chose a contemporary writer who was still living and a loyal admirer of Wordsworth--Robert Southey.

Landor explicitly presents principles of analytical, textual criticism. His Porson classifies critics into two groups--those "who write for the learned" and those "who write for the public"--and then suggests specific steps a critic should follow. He says:

> That under the superintendence of some respectable student from the university, they first read and examine the contents of a book; a thing greatly more useful in the criticism than is generally thought; secondly, that they carefully write them down, number them, and range them under their several heads; thirdly, that they mark every beautiful, every faulty, every ambiguous, every uncommon expression. Which being completed, that they inquire what author, ancient or modern, has treated the same subject, that they compare them, first in smaller, afterward in larger portions, noting every defect in precision and its causes, every excellence and its nature; that they graduate these, fixing plus and minus, and designating them more accurately and discriminately by means of colours, stronger or paler (Works 140).

This recommendation to critics conforms to the analytical approach in two aspects; first, by an examination of the work itself both as to its content and its text and, second, by comparison with other authors either ancient or modern. There seems to be little question that Landor is presenting his own views here, for both speakers are in agreement.

Landor's views as a textual, analytical critic are further supported by Southey, who reads poets for their poetry and attempts to "extract that nutriment of the intellect and of the heart which poetry should contain" (Works 144). In this process, he is guided by precept, habit, taste, and constitution. Porson heartily agrees with this approach to literature, but supplements it with a more technical one. To make an accurate and just survey of literary works, he suggests that one imitate geometricians and astronomers and thus "measure out writings by small portions at a time, and compare the brighter parts of the two authors page by page" (Works V, 148).

To Landor, an important practice in criticism is recognizing the faults of the great poets. This method not only relates Landor to the tradition of textual criticism, but it also shows his similarity to Samuel Johnson. The dialogue says that every man can see what is very bad and what is very good in a poem, but the real critic is one who is able to "fix or to discern the exact degree of excellence above a certain point" (147). Through Porson, Landor questions "whether a poet is to be judged from the quantity of his bad

poetry, or from the quality of the best" (149). Southey's reply that the quality of the best should be the criterion uses the device of comparison:

> He who arrives at a high degree of excellence in those arts, will have made more models, more sketches and designs, than he who has reached but a lower; and the conversation of them, whether by accident or by choice can injure and affect in no manner his more perfect and elaborate works (149).

Similarly, Samuel Johnson had said in his criticism of Milton's *Samson Agonistes* that

> To expunge faults where there are not excellencies is a task equally useless with that of the chemist, who employs the arts of separation and refinement upon one in which no precious metal is contained to reward his operation (Johnson 158).

In addition to the analytical principles, Landor employs a satirical approach to attack contemporary critics that he says have never before been so plentiful because almost every young author makes his first attempt in some review. Although Landor ironically proposes as a useful volume a compilation of the incorrect expressions of the "booksellers' boys, the reviewers," his most bitter censure compares the young author/critic to a monkey "showing his teeth, hanging by the tail, pleased and pleasing by the volubility of his chatter, and doing his best to get a penny for his exhibitor and a nut for his own pouch, by the facetiousness of the tricks he performs upon our heads and shoulders" (143). Landor advises these reviewers to "read us for the sake of showing off a somewhat light familiarity, which can never appertain to them" (144). And much in the same manner of Pope and Swift, he makes a final slash at the reviewers:

> Those who have failed as painters turn picture-cleaners, those who have failed as writers turn reviewers. Orator Henley taught in the last century, that the readiest-made shoes are boots cut down! There are those who abundantly teach us now, that the readiest-made critics are cut-down poets (144).

In Southey's speeches, Landor's technique in defending Wordsworth is a comparative development. He asserts that the most evident things are often but little perceived and mentions that Swift--

> ridiculed the music of Handel and the generalship of Marlborough, Pope the perspicacity and the scholarship of Bentley, Gray the abilities of Shaftesbury and the eloquence of Rousseau. Shakespeare hardly found those who would collect his tragedies; Milton was read from godliness; Virgil was antiquated and rustic; Cicero, Asiastic. What a rabble has persecuted my friend (153).

Unlike his predecessors, Wordsworth is compared to an elephant born to be consumed by ants: He is the "prey of Jeffrey." And for the ultimate in allegories, Southey concludes this speech by recollecting "that God in creation left his noblest creature at the mercy of a serpent" (153).

Porson, who examines Wordsworth's poetry analytically and severely, attacks Wordsworth's verbosity. His explanation contains astute advice for any writer not to pursue his thoughts too far. He thus censures Wordsworth for accumulating thoughts rather than selecting them. Speaker Southey does not question the rightness of these principles, but he questions an unqualified application to them to Wordsworth. Speaking comparatively again, Southey replies to Porson:

> You admire simplicity in Euripides; you censure it in Wordsworth; believe me, sir, it arises in neither from penury of thought, which seldom has produced it, but from the strength of temperance, and at the suggestion of principle (154).

He further claims that Wordsworth's very clarity puzzles and perplexes critics who imagine that straightness is distortion. Southey's argument is convincing enough so that Porson agrees that no other English poet has "exerted greater powers with less strain and less ostentation" (161).

To Landor, imitation of the ancients is more than merely copying them, but is a proper adaptation of models such as Wordsworth's accomplishments in his *Laodamia*. Southey says that "To neglect what is recoverable in the authors of antiquity is like rowing away from a crew that is making its escape from shipwreck" (164). In this view Landor joins ranks with those critics of both the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries who reacted against the eighteenth-century writers who interpreted Aristotle's concept of imitation to mean the slavish copying, not of nature, but of other works of art. Landor is particularly in harmony with Samuel Johnson, who had stated that "No man every yet became great by imitation" (*Works*, IV, 87). Even so, Landor recognized the importance of the ancients to modern writers

particularly in the confirmed comparisons that have been longest known and thus best understood.

In view of Landor's satirical treatment of the relationship between poets and critics, it appears that all his critical principles are subordinate to a moral purpose. In Porson's speeches, Landor presents the attitude of poets toward critics that not only do poets consider them cheap, but they are a drilling company out of their own body, "who march with their legs too high and fire with their eyes shut" (172). The moral emphasis in Porson's textual criticism is evident when he says: "In our praises and censures, we should see before us one sole object: instruction" (176). Porson also cuttingly denounces the poet as philosophical and refuses to consider him soul-stirring or capable of exciting any emotion. Even in Southey's speeches Landor reinforces this moral purpose in suggesting that "poetry which is strong enough to support, as [Wordsworth's] does, a wide and high superstructure of morality, is truly beneficial and admirable" (210).

It is in these dialogues between Southey and Porson that Landor for the first time expresses his distaste for the sonnet. Both speakers praise Milton's sonnet on the massacre at Piedmont, but acknowledge no other comparably great sonnets. Wordsworth's sonnets, for example, are called "mince-meat put into small patty-pans all of equal size with ribs at odd distances . . . without salt or succulence" (182).

Basic to Landor's textual approach is his discussion of the grammatical structure of the text. Particular attention was given to lines from Wordsworth's *Epitaphs and Elegiac Poems*:

> No thorns can pierce those tender feet,
> Whose life was as the violet sweet!--

Speaker Southey says that it "should have been written her tender feet; because, as the word stands, it is the life of the tender feet that is sweet as the violet" (183). And Porson is given to say that "if there is a Wordsworth school, it certainly is not a grammar school . . . " (184). Yet Landor gives strong praise to Wordsworth for his harmony of language and ease and simplicity.

A final mention of Wordsworth in Landor's Conversations appears in *Archdeacon Hare and Walter Landor* in 1853--thirty years after the first Southey-Porson dialogue and eleven years after the second. It is evident that Landor has been keenly aware of the reaction to his evaluation of the Romantic poet. For here he states that time has not disagreed with his es-

timate of Wordsworth's poetry. He repeats his admiration for his contemporary, but now places him second to Robert Southey (Works VI, 29-30).

In conclusion, Landor's discussion of Wordsworth's poetry provides a relatively extensive revelation of textual, evaluative criticism. The use of the comparative method, exacting textual analysis, emphasis upon beauties, and the attitude toward the sonnet all relate Landor to the practical, analytical tradition.

Works Cited

Gifford, William. "*Imaginary Conversations of Literary Men and Statesmen.* By Walter Savage Landor, Esq." *Quarterly Review*, XXX (1824), 508-519.

Hyman, Stanley Edgar. *The Armed Vision*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948.

Landor, Walter Savage. *The Complete Works of Walter Savage Landor.* Edited by T. Earle Welby and Stephen Wheeler. 16 vols. London: J. M. Dent & Co., 1891.

Super, R. H. *Walter Savage Landor: A Biography*. New York: New York UP, 1954.

The Works of Samuel Johnson. 9 vols. London: William Pickering, Chancery Lane, 1825.

"Wolves in Sheeps' Clothing": Ministerial Deception and the Manipulation of Belief in Early America

Daniel Williams University of Mississippi

Although he was entirely illiterate, and although he much preferred taverns to churches and bawds to Bibles, Teague O'Regan suddenly decided to become a minister of God. His decision, however, was motivated more by a desire to offer spiritual comfort, for Teague, in reality a servant, had spent the past few days admiring the fine horses, clothing, and lifestyle of a group of Presbyterian minister. Despite his lack of ethics, education, and religious experience, he simply decided that he would join them. His rather vexed master, Captain Farrago, was then forced to call upon his greatest rhetorical skills to try to persuade Teague to give up his ludicrous aspiration and remain in his proper station.

This situation, found in Hugh Henry Brackenridge's *Modern Chivalry* (1792-1805), was typical of many conflicts between Captain Farrago and his incorrigible servant. Throughout the novel Teague continually tried to assume roles for which he lacked both the necessary skills and qualifications. In addition to his desire to preach the Gospel, he aspired to become a politician, a philosopher, an actor, an Indian commissioner, an Indian chief, a tax collector, a gentlemen of property, and a judge. Most of the novel's action, in fact, involved Captain Farrago's attempts to keep Teague from becoming what he was unqualified to become. Yet what astonished Captain Farrago the most was not his servant's ambitions to suddenly vault up the social ladder but the fact that, in each case, Teague was able to reach his goals. In each case it was only Captain Farrago who stood between the illiterate servant and his enormous desires. According to Breckenridge, early American society was perfectly ready to accept the bogtrotter for whatever he wished to become, whether preacher or politician, gentleman or judge.

For example, after deciding that he would become a minister, and after spending several days aping the actions and expressions of the Presbyterian ministers, Teague was able to make enough of a show of piety to convince everyone but the Captain that he had truly found religion. Therefore, when he proposed to the ministers that he be accepted as "a candidate for the

less desire to acquire wealth. Apprentices, such as the young Franklin, ran away to set themselves up in businesses rather than serve out their time with their masters. Domestic servants, not wishing to serve anyone but themselves, frequently ran away rather than remain in service. Colonial rogues were no different; they were only more extreme. Defiant of authority and impatient with the normal methods of material progress, they discovered that the end often justifies the means, that a clever performance was often all that was required to insure material progress. Relying more on appearance than on skill, more on language than on knowledge, they appointed themselves doctors, teachers, lawyers, traders, speculators, and--of course--preachers.

That rogues became preachers is not surprising, since from the earliest settlements the ministry had always been one of the most respected professions. Particularly in New England, ministers occupied a central position in secular as well as sacred affairs. Traditionally, they were among the most influential and, therefore, the most powerful members of their communities. So respected were they that inevitably those with great ambitions and a smattering of knowledge would try to join their ranks. Yet it was the special nature of Puritanism in New England that made ministerial deceptions first possible.

The Puritans who arrived in America during the early seventeenth century were predominantly Congregationalists. Believing that every church was autonomous and sovereign, they not only rejected all forms of church hierarchy and state control, but they also demanded the right to appoint their own ministers. One of the major complaints while in England had been against the corrupt and incompetent ministers forced upon them by the bishops.[3] They came to the New World as much to choose their ministers as they did to choose their form of worship. Once settled in New England, the precedent was soon established that each congregation had the right to hire or fire its own ministers, and neither king nor governor could say otherwise.[4] More important, once appointed, Congregational ministers had to depend entirely on the good will of their congregation for their livelihood. In order to remain in their positions, the ministers had to please their audiences. The emphasis, what the congregation scrutinized the most, was on outward ministerial performance.

Moreover, the continual controversy and dissent within the Puritan movement created the confusion and instability necessary for deception. By the end of the seventeenth century declension and dissent were evident in

religious matters throughout the New England colonies. Never a monolith, Puritanism brought over to America patterns of independence and defiance, and these patters remained in the cultural framework of later generations. Controversies over doctrines, practices, and personalities filled the churches and the courts, sometimes setting towns against towns, congregations against congregations. The greatest conflicts of the period, such as the Half-Way Covenant, the Brattle Street Church, and the feud between the Mathers and Soloman Stoddard, made any attempt at unity of belief or action impossible. By the turn of the century New England was broken up into a mosaic of factionally divided towns and congregations. Naturally, there were a few unscrupulous individuals who looked upon controversy as opportunity, confusion as possibility.

Fear of impostors posing as preachers was great enough in 1699 to move several of New England's leading ministers to circulate a letter of warning. In addition to advising congregations to demand both testimonials and tests of capacity from potential ministers, they warned people "to beware of running after *New Preachers*" (Mather, Book 7, 31). This was peculiar indeed, since in the beginning the Puritan movements had developed out of people running after new preachers. The ministers who wrote the letter must have been aware of this, for their primary fear did not simply concern the "*Deceitful Strangers*, who have set themselves up for preachers"; rather, they were concerned with the effect the "pretended preachers" had on the people of New England (30). They were afraid that the people would be "strangely deceived by those impostors," and, once deceived, they would prefer the impostors over the real ministers (30-31).

Cotton Mather, never one to miss an opportunity to publish, used the letter as the basis for a more elaborate warning. In order to make the people fully aware of the dangers of ministerial fraud, he published *A Warning To The Flock Against Wolves in Sheeps-Clothing* (1699). In this narrative, which used the ministers' letter as its introduction, Mather's fear of impostors successfully posing as preachers was evident. Early in the narrative he declared that:

> Men are too insensible of the horrid *Villainy* and *Blasphemy* in the crimes of those fellows, who set themselves up for *Teachers* to the people of God, when God knows they are wicked *Vagrants* and *Varlets* . . . The faults of the *Penitent*, indeed, should be concealed; but these pretended *Preachers of Repentance* are not known to *Practice* the *Repentance* they teach (32).

Since there were no precise laws for the punishment of such impostors, Mather took it upon himself to punish them in print. Unable to place them in a pillory in the marketplace, he resolved "to set them up in a *History*, instead of a *Pillory*, with a *Writing* as it were in *Capitals*, to signifie, THESE WERE IMPOSTORS THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN ESTEEMED MINISTERS" (32).

Mather's narrative described the activities of nine questionable ministers, but in some of the accounts the line between piety and hypocrisy was never clearly drawn. In defending what he believed to be New England orthodoxy, he lumped together actual ministers who had refused to conform with outright impostors. Such was the case with John Lyford, whose conduct and conflicts during the early days of the Plymouth colony made him different in Mather's eyes from other scoundrels. A few of the other accounts were simply short and comic. One, for instance, ran as follows:

> Many among us do still remember a fellow that made himself memorable by preaching zealously on that text, "*Let him that stole, steal no more*"; when he had at that time a parcel of *Stolen* Money in his pocket. The Sum, as I remember, was *Five Pounds*; but in the dozed Conscience of the Thief, it hardly made the weight of a *Scruple* (33).

In another of these short accounts, "an *Irish Servant*," who like Teague O'Regan was taught "to be *almost* able to read *English*," happily played the role of a minister until he was discovered by his master (33).

There were two accounts, however, which were much longer and which unmistakably revealed Mather's deep concern for clerical impostors. The first described activities of Dick Swayn, a former servant whose ungovernable nature caused him to be dismissed by his mistress. Mather wrote that Swayn had been a "Servant unto a Captain of a ship in Boston," but, "after a Thousand Rogueries," he had "his Time given him by the Widow of the Captain . . . because she would not be troubled with so Thievish, Lying and Wicked a Villain" (33). Evidently a resourceful fellow, Swayn was not at a loss to locate new employment. According to Mather, he was "afterwards detected in Villanies enough to fill a Volume" (33). Whether to escape punishment or simply to search for new opportunities, he left Boston for Virginia but, ever moving, soon turned up in Providence wearing a black frock carrying a Bible. Barely able to conceal his anger, Mather declared:

"There the Monster set up for a Preacher of the *Gospel*, and putting on a mighty show of Religion, he was mightily followed and admired; and the People treated him with more than ordinary Liberality" (33). Mather's indignation is evident in his language, but what is not so evident is whether his anger resulted from Swayn's "mighty show of religion" or the fact that he was "mightily followed and admired."

Swayn was so popular and so successful that he felt confident enough to try his luck in Boston, despite his "thousand rogueries" there. Returning in 1698, he immediately began to put on another "mighty show of religion." Mather commented that Swayn "would be ridiculously forward in thrusting himself upon *Prayer*, which he would manage with a Noise that might reach all the Neighborhood" (33). Apparently he did make enough noise, for he was soon invited to preach. But, hoping that the people of Boston would either forget or forgive his notorious past, he did not bother to change his name. This proved to be a problem when his former mistress, hearing of a new preacher by the name of Dick Swayn, could not resist confronting the man to see if he was indeed her old servant. As Mather described the confrontation, both mistress and servant were equally shocked.

> When to her Astonishment she found it was *Dick*--even that very Scandalous *Dick* that had played so many abominable Pranks in her own Family some years ago--the Gentlewoman could scarce believe her Eyes; and finding the Vagrant not [able to] give her any Intelligent Account how he became a *Christian*, it was yet more Unintelligible to her how he became a *Minister (33)*.

Unable to persuade his former mistress of the sincerity of either his sudden reformation or his new profession, Swayn decided to depart from Boston, but not before accepting "considerable Sums of Money" from his admirers (34).

Boston's most successful pious pretender, Samuel May, arrived in 1699, not long after Dick Swayn's departure. He was so successful, in fact, that he not only caused Boston to divide itself between those who believed he was a minister and those who believed he was an imposter, but he was also the immediate cause of the minister's letter of warning and of the Mather's narrative. Even Mather was fooled for a short time. When May first arrived "in Ragged, Wretched, Forlorn Circumstances" Mather took pity upon him and found the man employment preaching to private religious meetings (36). According to Mather, May was "able to imitate a plausible *Utterance*

tioned, and their testimonies were made public. Righteously indignant, Mather stated that "several Women of unblemish'd Reputation" swore that

> he [May] would often watch [for] Opportunities of getting them alone, and then would often affront them with Lewd, Vile and Lascivious carriages, which rendered it a dangerous thing to be alone with him, and abundantly assured them, that he was a *great Rogue* . . . (40).

May was a "great Rogue," but he was also a great performer to have had such a strong hold over so many people. Although a number of young women were "abundantly assured" that he was a scoundrel, they said nothing about him, regardless of his outrages. According to the women, May would appear on a Saturday with a Bible in his hand and, using the examples of Soloman and David and pleading "that there was no sin in adultery," he would urge the women "to lye with him" (40). If the women resisted this peculiar sort of religious rapture, he would then "Endeavor to Intoxicate them, that he might pursue his Vile purposes . . ." (40). With appropriate sarcasm, mather concluded: "More of this prodigious Devilism was testified against this *'Eminent Worthy Stranger'*; and other horrid stuff begins to come to Light . . .but I abhor to rake any further into such a *Dunghil*" (40).

May's appetites finally exposed him, but before this occurred he succeeded in gathering numerous loyal and defiant supporters about him. Many people fully believed that he was indeed an "Eminent Worthy Stranger," and as long as they maintained this belief, he was no different to them than Cotton Mather. Many, in fact, believed that he was a better preacher than Mather. Qualifications, which meant a world of differences to the real ministers of Boston, meant nothing to them. May's success rested on his popularity, and, as long as he performed well, as long as he functioned in every outward capacity as a minister, he remained popular. The real difference, the only significant difference, was sincerity of faith, and this could neither be measured nor evaluated. Only when May trespassed against the boundaries of expected behavior, only when he stepped outside the role of a preacher, thus destroying the illusion of his performance, did he reveal his true motivations. Had he not done this, the fact that his Hebrew was gibberish and that his spelling was atrocious would never have mattered to his dissenting followers. The Anabaptist would

have persisted in rejecting the Congregational Mather's accusations as either stemming from sectarian or personal prejudices.

Paradoxically, early American society celebrated as much as it condemned its rogues. In *Modern Chivalry*, Brackenridge attempted to show that in a young democracy, where theoretically every individual had the chance to rise to the top, reckless and ruthless ambition could often destroy proper judgment and pervert social values. Brackenridge was afraid that fools would claim the place of wise men simply because they were better actors, because they were better able to amuse their audiences. And people in general, wishing either to be amused or to see leaders like themselves, would choose the ordinary and the uninspired. Brackenridge used Captain Farrago to stop Teague O'Regan, offering reason as a means of modifying wild ambition. But early American society, while paying homage to the principles of reason, preferred its more lively Teagues over its stuffy Farragos. Nearly a century before Brackenridge published *Modern Chivalry*, Cotton Mather similarly tried to expose roguery and demagoguery through ridicule. Yet, ironically, the defiant democratic tendencies which the Congregationalists themselves had planted in New England were too firmly rooted in the concepts of individuals' rights and popular choice to be easily dispelled. One hundred years later, one of Mather's worst fears had come to pass. Simply to exercise their right or choice, people would choose whomever they wanted, whether fool or fraud, and would refuse to defer to their betters. Swayn and May by chance stumbled upon this peculiar aspect of the American experience, and they exploited it. No matter what else they were, they were literally self-made men. Although lacking either training or sincere motivations, they were excellent preachers, for they realized that in America what people believe is often more important than what is real.

Notes

[1]For a discussion of Brackenridge's perception of early America's instabilities and how those instabilities invited roguery, see Martin et al.

[2]For a discussion of the problems off identification in early America and how rogues exploited these problems, see Lindberg, 3-11.

[3]For a list of the Puritan complaints against corrupt Anglican ministers, see Morgan, 8-9.

[4]There were, however, certain checks to insure that congregations did not choose utterly incompetent or theologically unsound ministers. For ex-

ample, New England Puritans developed an elaborate ordination ceremony, which included "the laying on of hands" by other ministers. For a discussion of ordination procedures, see Miller, 88-90, 131, 152-154.

Works Cited

Primary

Brackenridge, Hugh Henry. *Modern Chivalry*. New York: American Book Company, ed. Claude M. Newlin, 1937. Originally published 1792-1815.

Burroughs, Stephen. *Memoirs of the Notorious Stephen Burroughs*. London: Johnathan Cape Ltd., 1924. Rpt. of 1798 edition.

Mather, Cotton. *Magnalia Christi Americana*. New York: Arno Press, 1972. Facsimilie Rpt. of 1702 edition.

Tufts, Henry. *A Narrative of the Life, Adventures, Travels and Sufferings of Henry Tufts*. Dover, NH: Samuel Bragg, 1807.

Secondary

Ahlstrom, Sydney E. *A Religious History of the American People*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972.

Brodtkorb, Paul, Jr. "The Confidence Man: The Con-Man as Hero." *Studies in the Novel*. Vol, I, No. 4 (Winter 1969), 421-435.

Gaustad, Edwin Scott. *The Great Awakening in New England*. New York: Harper and Row, 1957.

Heimert, Alan E. *Religion and the American Mind from the Great Awakening to Revolution*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966.

Lindberg, Gary. *The Confidence Man in American Literature*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.

Martin, Wendy. "The Rogue and the Rational Man: Hugh Henry Brackenridge's Study of a Con Man in *Modern Chivalry*." *Early American Literature 8 (1973), 179-192.*

Miller, Perry. *Orthodoxy in Massachusetts 1630-1650*. Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1965.

Morgan, Edmund S. *Visible Saints*. Cornell: Cornell University Press, 1965. Rpt. of 1963 edition.

Wright, Richardson. *Hawkers and Walkers in Early America*. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1927.

Alienation and Redemption: The Sufferings of the Selfhood in Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner"

Rodger Wilson Jackson State University

The title of Coleridge's finest finished poem, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," is itself ambiguous: "of" can mean either "by" or "about" or both. It would seem the title implies that the offered narrative is, yes, the Mariner's Rime and yet also that this Rime is about the Mariner himself. The poem, in short, is both a poetic rendition of the specific sea-world which the Mariner has experienced and also a rendition of the peculiar mind or consciousness which has experienced it. Hence, when the Hermit, in Part 7, asks the Mariner what manner of man he is, the Mariner is "forced" in response to "forthwith" begin his tale. The Mariner defines himself and thus can explain himself--who he is--only experientially, only in terms of the ordeal he has undergone: "my tale I teach." The Mariner, is short, is his tale, by which I mean that the journey, illuminates the topography of the Mariner's journeying mind.

The "subject" of the poem is, appropriately, the unfolding consciousness of the narrator himself as it is objectively delineated through the latter's depiction of the natural world which stands as mirror image to the mind which contemplates it. The images employed, while derived from nature, depict the movement of the narrator's mind through contrasting modes or levels of apprehension. The Mariner's poem dramatizes a process of "becoming," the evolution or emergence of a particular consciousness which in its interaction with the encompassing external realm oscillates between extremes of alienation, estrangement, division, isolation, fragmentation, distortion and, on the other hand, communion, harmony, coherence, unity, wholeness, integration.

In short, the predominant issues of the poem are epistemological; Coleridge is concerned with dramatizing the emergent shape or form of a given consciousness, is preoccupied explicitly with the process of knowing and perceiving. What the Mariner sees is an expression of the way he sees it; and the way he sees it is expressive of his particular relation to what he sees, and hence, of the condition of the mind which at any given moment is engaged in the act of perceiving. Given this central emphasis on the nature

and quality of perception, it is indeed appropriate that the Wedding Guest, the Mariner's chosen auditor, is captivated by his "glittering eye," is, as the gloss informs us, "spellbound by the eye of the old seafaring man."

The Guest is compelled by the Mariner's eye to hear a tale which is about the Mariner's eye, about the various modes of perception and awareness which define the evolving structure of his experience. I might merely add that 53 lines of the poem contain a direct reference either to the organ of sight or to the act of perception. And these lines do not include, of course, the puns involved in the recurrence of the pronoun "I"--the perceiving subject and informing intelligence of the poem--nor those involved in the frequent reference to the "sea" itself--the locale, both physical and psychological, within which the action of developing consciousness unfolds. Both categories of puns, however, are organically relevant to the central theme of either distorted or potentially renovated vision. The Mariner is defined in terms of his modes of perception, functions as the "eye" through which we apprehend not only the world he has perceived, but also the consciousness of the perceiver himself, the "I" which that world reflects. The Mariner is the particular vehicle Coleridge has chosen to employ whereby he can "characterize" divergent modes of apprehending reality, the dramatization of which modes is indeed the essence of the poem itself. Further, the sea and all that is encountered thereon--the reality the Mariner experiences--is, as implied above, directly influenced by and hence illuminative of the Mariner's specific modes of experiencing that reality.

In order to substantiate these contentions, I wish briefly to highlight the three decisive "moments" or crises in the poem by which the Mariner's given manner of apprehending reality is illuminated and through which his consciousness apparently evolves: the slaying of the Albatross in Part I, the blessing of the water snakes in Part IV, and, finally, the dawn singing scene which is centered upon the Sun in Part V. In terms of these three focal events, the poem may be seen to dramatize, initially, the dimensions of the darkened, contracted, deadened consciousness which characterizes the fallen mind of unregenerate man and which arises from that perversion of the human will which for Coleridge is synonymous with original sin; secondly, the grace-imparting capacity of the imagination to release the will from its state of utmost abstraction and to elevate, transfigure, or re-create the corporeal images of the Understanding into symbols of substance and of life; and thirdly, the apocalyptic vision of cosmic or universal harmony and interaction, the realization of which is presumably available to man as a struc-

tural capability inherent in human consciousness--any permanent participation in such a reconstituted cosmos presupposes, however, a radical regeneration or re-ordering of the mental faculties in their due subjection to the sovereign and divine light of Reason.

The opening section of the poem--that which culminates in the poem's first central "moment"--dramatizes an initial state of utmost abstraction, of posited self-sufficiency, of willful and perverse self-assertion which is epitomized in the killing of the Albatross and which, given Coleridge's conception of the human will, may be seen as synonymous with original sin and hence a re-enactment of the fall of man. A basic distortion of the mental faculties, the disruption of their appropriate relation and functions is inevitably presupposed by the Mariner's descent into the paralytic and isolated enclosure of his contracted, de-humanized Selfhood. The Mariner's self-idolatrous succumbing to the "serpentine and perverted,"[1] the "unenlivened and stagnant"[2] Understanding --implicit in his failure adequately to perceive and to respond to the providential sea-bird--yields inevitably in the poem the state of existential barrenness, of spiritual desiccation, the deadened inanimate cosmos amidst which the Mariner suffers and which in effect reflects the contours of the fallen human mind. In short, the Mariner's consciousness at this point, dominated wholly the spatio-temporal dimensions of the Fancy and Understanding, is estranged from the grounds of his own being, the indwelling presence of the divine Reason, and hence is blind to and estranged from the corresponding divinity or informing Reason which underlies, structures, substantiates the phenomenal realm.

The purgatorial cleansing of the Mariner's deadened and hence deadening perceptual powers and, in consequence, the partial redemption of his rebellious will from its state of utmost abstraction to one of potential immanence in wisdom and love is effected through the grace-imparting light of imaginative vision, as epitomized in his blessing of the foul sea snakes by moonlight in Part IV. The apprehension of a loveliness alien to the corporeal eye of the Understanding suggests, indeed, the renovative and hence healing powers of the imagination whereby base matter or slime is alchemized into the living spirit of its forms and is experienced as analogous to the corresponding spiritual life or presence potentially operative in the being or consciousness of man.

The Mariner's intuitive blessing of the water snakes affirms the possibilities inherent in an active inter-relationship between nature and mind

through which the seemingly irreconcilable dichotomies of existential being--themselves both product and expression of the disease of the selfhood through which man has dissociated himself from the grounds of his own inherent nature--are for the moment reconciled in a self-extinguishing gush of love, a love through which the isolated and severed consciousness can organically re-establish itself in a reciprocally humanizing intercourse with a reclaimed and responsive nature.

Yet, the moment of communion in the moonlight of imaginative vision does not consummate the Mariner's redemption; it but initiates it, constitutes the promise of grace, affirms--at least--the possibility of a re-ordered or regenerated consciousness and hence one capable of an harmonious interchange with an imaginatively recreated and hence wholly humanized cosmos.

The extent to which this goal is indeed susceptible of realization remains problematic for Coleridge, who refuses, as is evident in this poem, to minimize the reality both of a fallen world and, more pertinently, the very real sclerosis of consciousness which has precipitated that fallen world and which in turn characterizes the fallen human mind. In spite of the moonlight scene, Coleridge's theme remains the extent to which the Mariner has willfully contracted the dimensions of his intellect down to the level of the Understanding and the Senses and thus subjected himself to a world of apparitions and phantoms, of alien lifeless appearances rather than to one of substance and of life. Hence, the Mariner's penance--the spiritual ordeal of combating the presuppositions, the insidious encroachments of an unregenerated Selfhood--becomes coterminous with and ultimately the defining and shaping characteristic of his life.

Nonetheless, within the dimensions of his enduring penance, the Mariner has been vouchsafed, as it were, a vision of ultimate redemption, the dawn singing scene in Part V. This scene is both curiously distanced or dissociated from the foreground of the mariner's suffering selfhood and yet universalized so as to embrace the cosmos itself in one rhythmic or harmonious interaction. The auditory imagery suggests a musical or harmonic coalescence of hitherto disparate entities through which each in its vital interaction with the whole embodies the one and the one in being manifest and articulated in each encompasses and certifies the whole. It is only in terms of such a dialectical synthesis as I have here attempted to describe that one can remotely translate the vision of cosmic fulfillment vouchsafed the Mariner in part V.

"The blessed troop of angelic spirits" which had inspirited the dead bodies of his fellow Mariners are experienced by the Mariner as ascending in the form of "sweet sounds" towards the Sun, only slowly to come back again, "now mixed, now one by one"--sounds experienced alternatively as the "sweet jargoning" of "all little birds that are" or as the sounds of "all instruments" or, finally, as an "angel's song that makes the heavens be mute."

The particular choice of auditory imagery in this significant passage is in accord with the poem's basic epistemological attack upon the "slavery of the Mind to the Eye,"[3] the "usurpation exercised in and through the senses"[4] by which the corporeal Understanding, in its alienation from the spiritualizing and regenerative light of Reason, has been "tempted to throw off all show of reverence to the spiritual and even to the moral powers and impulses of the soul."[5] In short, Coleridge wishes here to emphasize that the "eye is not more inappropriate to sound than the mere understanding to the modes and laws of spiritual existence."[6] Further, his reference to Plato's use of musical symbols clarifies still further the rationale behind their employment in this particular scene: "To emancipate the mind from the despotism of the eye is the first step towards the emancipation from the influences and intrusions of the senses, sensations, and passions generally. Hence we are to account for the preference which the divine Plato gives to expressions taken from objects of the ear, in terms of Music and Harmony."[7]

I would content that the dawn scene is posited as an apocalyptic prefiguring of a potentially reborn and regenerated cosmos presupposing, however, a radical alteration in human consciousness, a corresponding re-ordering of the mental faculties of man in due subjection to the sovereign and divine light of Reason.

The angelic spirits ascending and descending from the Sun and filling "sea and air" with their "sweet jargoning" is, it would seem, a poetic image of the operations of the divine Reason, as the latter--the primary and constitutive forms, the structurally substantiating and informing grounds of being both within Nature and within the intellect of man--is conceived by Coleridge as both transcendent and yet immanent within individuality. The Reason, as described in *The Statesman's Manual*, "when contemplated objectively or in abstraction from the personality" is the transcendent or "supreme being (herein the Sun), but which as the "indwelling of the living Word" in its immanential presence within individuality (herein the angelic spirits) is "life and communicates life, is light and communicates light" and further, insofar as we ourselves possess reason, is that "life whereby we are capable of the

light, and by which the light is present to us, as a being which we may call ours."[8]

Yet, again, the extent of the mariner's participation in this apocalyptic consummation remains at best problematic. The transition from the unitary or divisive consciousness of the isolate Selfhood to the unitive consciousness of the regenerated mind is herein posited by Coleridge as a potentiality inherent in the structure of human consciousness itself but one which the mariner cannot be said to have finally realized, or even perhaps, in his visionary moments, to have understood.

In conclusion, the poem dramatizes the existential anguish of an alien and alienated consciousness which, given the numbing, the deadening of man's inherent spiritual capacity for imaginative regeneration through conformity with the indwelling light of Reason, can apprehend only a de-humanized wasteland, a phantom world of empty abstractions, fleeting apparitions, apparently bereft of God's informing or substantiating presence. The moments of visionary apprehension, the one personal and subjective, the other universalizing in its proportions so as to encompass the cosmos, exist only as promise or potentiality within the otherwise unrelieved blindness of man's willfully isolated and contracted consciousness. The Mariner's initial failure in apprehension and response--his inability to realize, in William Blake's words, that "ev'ry Bird that cuts the airy way is an immense world of delight closed by your sense five,"[9] that the Albatross he slew was potentially a sacramental vehicle offering to the disalienated mind entry into a rehumanized and hence responsive and hospitable cosmos--remains the decisive factor in this poetic rendition of a fallen world.

Notes

[1]Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection*, Vol. I of the *Complete Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. W. G. T. Shedd (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1884), p. 269.

[2]-----*Biographia Literaria* (London: Oxford UP, 1939), Vol I, pp. 168-69.

[3]From a note written on a flyleaf of Coleridge's copy of the *De Devisione Naturae* of John Scotus Erigena, quoted from Owen Barfield, *What Coleridge Thought* (Middletown: Wesleyan UP, 1971), p. 20.

[4]Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Statesman's Manuel*, Vol. I of the *Complete Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. W. G. T. Shedd (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1884), p. 425.

[5]*Ibid*., p. 464.
[6]*Ibid*., p. 459.
[7]Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Treatise on Logic*, II, 403-04, quoted from Owen Barfield, *What Coleridge Thought*, p. 21.
[8]-----, *The Statesman's Manual*, p. 460.
[9]William Blake, "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell," Plates 6-7.