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Quest and Fulfillment in *The Winter's Tale*: The Feminine Connection

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In *The Winter's Tale,* Shakespeare uses his protagonist, Leontes, King of Sicily, as a kind of human stage for a powerful drama of self-discovery--a play within a play, charged with an incredible range of human emotions as the king moves from revenge to remorse, madness to sanity, psychic fragmentation to emotional wholeness. And although Leontes must play out this drama essentially alone--on the stage of his own life--his dramatic inner quest is nevertheless linked to outward circumstances and to other individuals who act as catalysts, influencing him as he moves toward the place of increased self-knowledge.

Three women--his queen, Hermione, the Lady Paulina, and his daughter, Perdita--are, as Erickson points out, "strongly linked together" in the play (824). They exert a dynamic, often intermingled force in the moral development of Leontes, in his personal drama of "nosce teipsum," within the wider structure of the play as a whole.

This drama of the king's coming to terms with who he is separates itself into three parts: the rapid descent into irrationality and illusion, the period of repentance and subsequent spiritual/ emotional development, and the denouement/ reconciliation, which brings Leontes back into relationship with his loved ones--a richer, more mature relationship, because of the penitent suffering and emotional growth of the middle phase of his personal drama. In each stage, as has been mentioned, one or more of the three female characters is linked to the behavior and/or the development of the king.

Leontes at first seems to lack self-confidence; when he fails to convince his friend Polixenes to prolong his visit at the Sicilian court, he immediately turns to his wife for support. "Use your feminine charm, your womanly wiles to persuade him to stay," he seems to be saying. Yet, when Hermione complies, his fragile ego is suddenly fractured by insane, unfounded feelings of jealousy, and he immediately begins to project his own emotional instability onto his wife. As Harry Levin points out, Leontes is a "victim . . . of [his] own nature" (80).

Hermione possesses a number of positive personality traits which are clearly lacking in her husband. She is self-confident, stable, reasonable, warm, trusting, gracious and without blame, even when she is unjustly accused of infidelity, deprived of her rights, and separated from her children. J. H. P. Pafford sees her at once as a "spirited, witty, frank, . . . friendly" individual who, when her husband's "madness puts her to the test," loses the ability ever to be "gay and vivacious again," but at the same

time is able to call up "the deeper quality of her character" in order to endure what she must face (lxxiii).

Pyle sees Hermione as a catalyst, an enabler. Her inner strength and her love for her husband, he points out, enable her not only to endure his irrational treatment of her, but as well to look beyond her own feelings to express the hope that "his sorrows will work for his eventual spiritual benefit" (32). Leontes will later recall not only her prophetic, loving words, but as well her noble qualities, as he begins to face up to the violence and irrationality within his own nature.

It is interesting to note how quickly the emotion of jealousy and the corresponding desire for revenge change Leontes from an apparently rational human being into a kind of unreasonable, raging monster. As Levin puts it, "Leontes [is] overcome by jealousy in a single instanteous seizure" (203). Speaight compares the violent reaction to a "thunderbolt" (352). And as he slides progressively deeper into irrationality, allowing his madness to feed upon itself, he loses touch with all of the stabilizing forces in his life, both human and divine. He sets himself up as judge, jury, even divinity, omniscient and omnipotent, a kind of monstrous, self-contained machine, cut off from reality, raving, destructive, out of control, unable to face up to what he has so quickly allowed himself to become.

As one examines the devastating results of an uncontrolled jealous nature, as played out on the life-stage of Leontes, one cannot but be reminded of another Shakespearean husband--Othello, Moor of Venice. Both men allow themselves to fall prey to the destructive emotion of what Eagleton refers to as "paranoid" jealousy (65), and falsely accuse their innocent wives of adulterous relationships. Both wives are defended by secondary female characters, whose indignant protests are in each case disregarded by the protagonist, since his jealousy has rendered him incapable of rational thinking.

There are, however, significant differences between the two men and their situations. Perhaps the most obvious is the fact that Leontes' jealousy is self-inflicted. It arises from his own deluded nature and feeds upon itself because he allows it to do so. Othello's jealousy, on the other hand, does not originate in his own emotions, but is rather thrust upon his consciousness by what the audience knows is an evil catalyst, but which he naively perceives as a trusted confidant, his ancient, Iago. In each instance, however, the end result is similar, for the jealousies, while differing in origin, are allowed to develop and destroy. Margaret Alexander comments on the two protagonists:

> Like . . . Othello, Leontes' conviction of his wife's infidelity is total, groundless, and out of keeping with everything he knows about her. . . . Unlike Shakespeare's earlier types of jealous husband, however, Leontes' anguish is entirely of his own making. . . . [And] for sixteen long years . . . [he] lives with the knowledge that he has no one to blame but himself. Morally, Leontes is more culpable but humanly a figure of greater pathos: . . . we respond to Leontes'

suffering as closer to general human experience than Othello's, since most of us have to live with the consequences of our actions rather than die, like Othello, at the moment when guilt has been transformed to repentance and reasserted nobility. (238-239)

Alexander also points out the loss of innocence which occurs as a result Leontes' unreasonable jealousy (239). The same, of course, may be said Othello; the irrational emotions in both men destroy the "innocent" part their own inner selves, while at the same time destroying the innocents ɔund them.

In "Part II" of the play within a play--Leontes' personal drama of lf-discovery--the king is shocked back to reality as quickly and violently he had turned from it in "Part I." As the outward circumstances of his ood life" begin to unravel, the inner resources which he has buried deeply ıd then covered with illusion and a desperate desire for revenge, rise up ithin him. He is forced to come to terms with what he has become, what : must take responsibility for. Paulina is the most obvious guiding force this stage of the drama. She is acting, she says, as his conscience, :odding him always to view himself in the mirror of "nosce teipsum."

Carolyn Asp places Paulina in the tradition of medieval "consolatio" or əmale advisory figure" (152), which she defines as three-fold:

> first, she rebukes and shames her subject . . . ; then she uses reasoned arguments to prove her points, sometimes administering intellectual or moral tests; finally, she encourages him to persevere in his new wisdom. (150)

sp then goes on to show how Paulina functions in these three ways, acting ; catalyst and counselor, particularly during the period which I have efined as "Part II" of Leontes' personal drama.

Speaight sees Paulina as being "shrewish though . . . compassionate," roviding Leontes with both "blame" and "balm" as each is needed, remindıg him of his need to "purge" himself through "prayer and fasting" (352). aulina thus becomes both judge and enabler, guiding Leontes in his quest. he is not, however, the sole guiding figure during this part of his spiritual ›urney. Hermione, though physically absent and apparently dead, neverıeless exerts a strong influence on the king, both through Paulina, who onstantly reminds him of her, and through the personal recollections of .eontes, who has become painfully aware of what he has lost in the person f the faithful Hermione because of his own wretched treatment of her.

In Act V of *The Winter's Tale* the audience quickly becomes aware of the lramatic changes which have taken place in Leontes during the sixteen'ear period following the loss of his son, his wife, and his daughter. The əngthy period of penitence, the second division of his personal pilgrimage, ıas now come to a satisfying conclusion, leaving him spiritually prepared or the third and final stage of his journey. This final section of the play vithin a play may be characterized, as I have already suggested, by the heme of reconciliation/ renewal. Perdita becomes a catalyst in the initial 'eforming of the circle of love and friendship sundered by Leontes' earlier

jealousy and desire for revenge. In the role of rural maid/ shepherdess, Perdita is linked to the cycle of seasons, especially spring, the time of renewal in nature. As lover and wife-to-be of Florizel, she helps to bring the two father-kings back together in a renewal of their severed friendship. She is also linked in reconciliation to her mother, for as Levi points out, "[o]nly Perdita can distract . . . [Hermione] from her long and wordless embrace with Leontes" (313). And as Pyle reminds us, "Hermione is given one speech only" in the final scene. In that single speech, she call[s] down the graces of the gods on her daughter's head" (119), as the royal family is movingly reunited.

Paulina also figures in this scenario of reconciliation; it is she who has continued to keep Leontes on the pathway of repentance and self-analysis, and who, as well, has been waiting for the right moment to reunite the "dead" Hermione with her now-penitent husband. Hermione herself also serves as an important element in this final portion of Leontes' dramatic pilgrimage. When Leontes sees the "living statue" of his wife, he is at first shocked because it does not correspond to the idealized image which he has carried in his memory during the sixteen years of their separation. Paulina tells him that the sculptor has used his imaginative skills to sculpt Hermione as she would look if she had gone through the natural process of aging. The king does not question this explanation; and in spite of the fact that the queen no longer looks young, Leontes is so strongly moved, both with remorse and desire, as he gazes at the "statue," that he will not allow Paulina to cover it. Shakespeare here uses the "statue" as a multi-metaphoric device--a mirror in which Leontes sees not only his beloved's likeness, but his own, as well; the suffering and pain etched in the lines of the beautiful "sculpted" face reflect the suffering and pain of both husband and wife, and the statue itself is representative not only of Hermione, but becomes as well the image of Leontes' own "resurrected" self--the culmination of his journey. Michael Taylor discusses the dramatic changes evident in Leontes in terms of a "new sense of wholeness" (241); and quoting James Smith, he adds, "the physical and the moral now move in harmony with him" (241).

The pilgrimage has thus reached its successful conclusion. The order which has been ruptured by the violence of Leontes has been restored, though not, as Alexander reminds us, without an underlying sense of loss. "Nothing," she says, "not even Perdita's arrival, can fill the loss of Maxmillius . . . , nor give back to Leontes and Hermione their sixteen lost years" (241). But love and patience, penitence and forgiveness have done their healing work. Winter has given place to spring, that special season of hope and renewal. *The Winter's Tale*, then, is about love and friendship, jealousy and alienation, forgiveness and restoration. At its heart lies the drama of one man's life, and the story of the women who help him discover who he really is.

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Floral Imagery in *The Great Gatsby*

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Not only are the two most important women in *The Great Gatsby* given floral names, but there are many other allusions to flowers and blossoms, both to particular varieties and in general. This imagery serves to reinforce and to foreshadow, but more specifically it helps reveal the romantic nature of Gatsby's dreams and to portray his hopes for their fulfillment. Flowers also serve as metaphors for his shattered dreams.

The perfect flower to epitomize Jay Gatsby's dream is the orchid. Exotic, mysterious, and beautiful, it gives off an aura as artificial and unreal as Gatsby's illusion. It is this flower to which Nick Carraway alludes when he speaks of Daisy's life in Louisville before the advent of Tom Buchanan: "Daisy was young and her artificial world was redolent of orchids and pleasant, cheerful snobbery and orchestras which set the rhythm of the year, summing up the sadness and suggestiveness of life in new tunes" (151). After falling in love with Gatsby and losing him when he is sent overseas, Daisy becomes restless; her factitious world becomes more realistic and the orchids fade. She begins "to move again with the season [as flowers do]; . . . keeping half a dozen dates a day with half a dozen men, and drowsing asleep at dawn with the beads and chiffon of an evening dress tangled among dying orchids on the floor beside her bed" (151). Like the orchids, Gatsby's chances of holding on to Daisy's love wanes.

Fitzgerald also uses orchids when alluding to the fantastic world of motion pictures, where not only the films, but also the lifestyles of the people involved in them are as artificial and as fantastic as Gatsby's. Gatsby admires the dreamlike world of the movies and the pretentiousness of motion-picture people who attend his fabulous parties. The orchid is associated with several of these entertainment figures: The actress whom Tom and Daisy admire is a "gorgeous, scarcely human orchid of a woman" (106); and Newton Orchid controls Films Par Excellence (62). Fitzgerald leaves little doubt that he equates orchids with the unrealistic and the unattainable.

Somewhat paradoxically, the exotic, unattainable creature whom Gatsby strives so hard to win is given the name "Daisy," also the name of the most common flowers, usually called "oxeye Daisy" or the "white daisy." Because of the suggestive nature of the name, one might be tempted to relate Daisy Buchanan to the ox-eyed Hera with her imposing beauty and power; however, Daisy Buchanan should be more closely identified with the simplicity of the flower and its colors, white and gold. Even though she may appear too ethereal and vague to be considered so, she is a simple, shallow person who merely wants to live an uncomplicated life

of luxury without having to make conscious decisions. Nick reveals this when he states that when Gatsby couldn't return from Oxford when she wanted him to, Daisy became impatient: "She wanted her life shaped now, immediately--and the decision must be made by some force--of love, of money, of unquestionable practicality--that was close at hand" (151). So when Gatsby, the force of love, couldn't be there, Daisy settled for Tom Buchanan, the money force, thereby relieving herself of further anxiety. Like the flower which suffers little damage by swaying with the wind no matter from which direction it blows, throughout the novel Daisy allows herself to be dominated by the most powerful force present, no matter who--Gatsby, Tom, or, when she wanted to go to New York to see Gatsby off to the war, her parents (76).

"White daisy" is certainly an appropriate name to associate with Daisy Buchanan. Throughout the book allusions to both white and gold are abundant, especially in reference to Mrs. Buchanan and her alter ego, Jordan Baker. In Louisville, where both spent their "white girlhood" (20), Daisy dressed in white and drove a little white roadster (75). With one exception whenever the dresses of Daisy and Jordan are described, they are white (8, 115). The Buchanans live among the "white palaces" of East Egg (5) in a red and white mansion--the red probably indicative of the bloodshed ultimately brought about through the carelessness of the Buchanans. Although white is traditionally thought to symbolize purity and innocence, in *The Great Gatsby* it signifies the indifference and privilege which the extremely rich assume in placing themselves above moral judgment.

It is the gold at the center of the daisy and at the heart of Daisy Buchanan that makes the white on the outside appear so radiant and enticing. This gold, and sometimes silver, represents the vast power with which huge amounts of money endow its possessors. Thus, it is not surprising that Gatsby wears a silver shirt, a gold-colored tie, and a white suit for his reunion with Daisy. At Gatsby's party Daisy scornfully offers Tom her gold pencil--itself a symbol of privilege--in case he wants to take down the addresses of any young ladies he might be interested in (107), but at the same time accepting his actions as prerogatives of his class. Ultimately Nick realizes what Gatsby knew all along: that it is the "gold" that gives Daisy's voice its "indiscreet" quality and allows her to act indiscreetly when she chooses: "That was it. I'd never understood before. It was full of money--that was the inexhaustible charm that rose and fell in it, the jingle of it, the cymbals' song of it . . . High in a white palace the king's daughter, the golden girl . . ." (120). Here again is the image of the daisy which Daisy Buchanan as the golden center encompassed by her white surroundings.

The other important woman in *The Great Gatsby* whose name is a flower is Myrtle Wilson. The myrtle, perhaps appropriately, comes in numerous forms ranging from the tree-like crepe myrtle to the periwinkle. Robert J. Emmitt points out that the myrtle was sacred to Adonis and Aphrodite, "whose Nerieds crowned her with myrtle when she rose from the sea" (28).

And although one might associate the pink blossoms with Myrtle Wilson's blood, there doesn't appear to be much symbolic significance attached to the name by Fitzgerald. It appears more likely that he chose the name because it sounded as if it belonged to a lower class.

Jordan Baker is the only major female figure who does not have a name associated with a flower. Like Nick Carraway, she is a more realistic person, a de-romanticized version of Daisy Buchanan, who reflects more of Daisy's true character than is perceived by Gatsby--or the reader for that matter. Jordan is Daisy's alter ego in both senses of the word: she is Daisy's frequent, if not constant companion, but more importantly, she is Daisy stripped of the flowers, myth, and romantic overlay which were necessary to obfuscate Daisy's real character, thus making her worthy of Gatsby's quest. If the reader transfers Jordan's personality to Daisy, she is seen as she actually is: a rich, privileged, careless woman who wants to live a comfortable, effortless life, but whose plans are upset because Tom is blatantly unfaithful and Gatsby is inordinately devoted.

At times in *The Great Gatsby* flowers represent general concepts rather than characteristics of an individual. The rose is emblematic not of love as is often the case, but of vulgarity, insincerity, destruction, and death. Daisy first alludes to this flower in an apparent compliment to Nick: "I love to see you at my table, Nick. You remind me of a --of a rose, a absolute rose" (15). But Nick rejects her statement as insincere: "This was untrue. I am not even faintly like a rose" (15). Since the reader has no idea of what qualities either character attributes to the flower, these comments might serve only to point out Daisy's frivolity or disingenuousness; however, there may be more to this bantering. Emmitt points out: "rose, as color and flower, is emblematic of the death of Adonis [whom Emmitt associates with Gatsby], the effect of red blood on white petals. . . . This and the identification of Nick with Gatsby is probably why Nick is abruptly compared to an 'absolute rose'" (277-78). It should also be pointed out that the name of the gangster friend of Meyer Wolfsheim who was murdered in front of the old Metropole was Rosy Rosenthal.

Aside from Daisy's calling Nick a rose in the first chapter, there are allusions that relate the Buchanan house either to roses or blooms in general. As previously stated, the house is located among the "white palaces of fashionable East Egg" (5), but is not pure white, rather "red and white" (6). Nick describes the interior as he enters with Tom: "We walked through a high hallway into a bright rosy-colored space, fragilely bound into the house by French windows at either end" (8); and the porch where they dined was "rosy-colored (12). Both of these references reinforce the mixture of red and white, and while the Buchanans do have a "sunken Italian garden" (8), the only reference to flowers on the Buchanan estate is to roses: "our eyes lifted over the rose-beds and the hot lawn and the weedy refuse of the dog-days alongshore" (118). Nick's first visit appears cheerful, but if we accept Emmitt's suggestion that rose is "the effect of red blood on white petals" (277), then the house must be regarded as anything but gay

(a fact that we first discover when we find that Tom Buchanan has a mistress and Daisy is not very happy about it). It is actually the home of selfish and careless people who are going to cause the shedding of others' blood. The floral emblem of both Buchanans is the rose, indicative of disaster and death. Thus when Nick speculates on Gatsby's last hours, he alludes to this flower:

> I have an idea that Gatsby himself didn't believe it [the phone call from Daisy] would come, and perhaps he no longer cared. If that was true he must have felt that he had lost the old warm world, paid a high price for living too long with a single dream. He must have looked up at an unfamiliar sky through frightening leaves and shivered as he found what a grotesque thing a rose is and how raw the sunlight was upon scarcely created grass. (162)

In contrast with the Buchanan home where there are few indications of actual flowers, Gatsby's home (and Nick's when Gatsby and Daisy are there) abounds with them. Nick tells of the young ladies at Gatsby's party moving "between his cocktails and his flowers" (61); and even some of his guest's names were floral: aside from Newton Orchid, there was Ernest Lilly (62) and "Benny McClenahan arrived always with four girls . . . never quite the same ones . . . and their last names were either the melodious names of flowers and months or the sterner ones of the great American capitalists. . . " (63).

Before his tea for Gatsby and Daisy, Nick went out to buy "cups and lemons and flowers" but he needn't have bothered with the flowers because "a greenhouse arrived from Gatsby's, with innumerable receptacles to contain it" (84). Daisy, wearing a "lavender hat" arrives "under the dripping bare lilac-trees" (86). And when Gatsby shows Daisy his estate, among other things she "admired the gardens, the sparkling odor of jonquils and the frothy odor of hawthorn and plum blossoms and the pale gold odor of kiss-me-at-the-gate" (92). Upstairs the "period bedrooms" are "swathed in rose and lavender silk and vivid with new flowers" (92). And although prevented by the rain, Gatsby had intended to show Daisy and Nick the "mid-summer flowers" (94). After the party which the Buchanans attended, Gatsby laments that Daisy didn't like the party and begins to "walk up and down a desolated path of fruit rinds and discarded favors and crushed flowers" (111), obvious symbols of Gatsby's dashed hopes of impressing Daisy through his fantastic parties, but also perhaps indicative of the ultimate outcome of the story.

Probably as important as any individual flower is the concept of blossoming, blooming, or flowering, which Fitzgerald uses as a symbol of a physical or mental devolvement. The first allusion to the flowering process occurs during the reunion of Nick with his cousin Daisy and her husband, Tom Buchanan, who also happens to be a former classmate of Nick's at Yale. Since there is only a brief mention of the process, one may be tempted to pass it off as a play on words because the person flowering is named Daisy; but such a pun is out of place in serious fiction. It appears that Daisy

may even be suggesting some sort of promised relationship with Nick although she actually promotes one between Nick and Jordan Baker. When Nick denies that he is engaged, claiming to be "too poor" for such a commitment, his cousin persists: "'But we heard it,' insisted Daisy, surprising me by opening up again in a flower-like way. 'We heard it from three people, so it much be true'" (20).

In this same scene in the Buchanan home, Fitzgerald uses a similar expression in describing the room the foursome occupies before dinner: "Inside, the crimson room bloomed with light" (18). "Blossoms" is used in the second chapter at the impromptu party in the New York apartment of Tom and Myrtle: "The late afternoon sky bloomed in the window for a moment like the blue honey of the Mediterranean--then the shrill voice of Mrs. McKee called me back into the room" (34). A third such reference appears when Tom, Nick, and Jordan return to the Buchanan home after Myrtle Wilson's death: "Tom stopped beside the porch and looked up at the second floor, where two windows bloomed with light among the vines" (142-43). If these uses of "bloomed" and "blossomed" serve no other purpose, they show that Fitzgerald had this concept deeply embedded in his thought and that he was aware of the importance he attached to this idea in two of the more important scenes in the book.

> He knew that when he kissed this girl, and forever wed his unutterable visions to her perishable breath, his mind would never romp again like the mind of God. So he waited, listening for a moment longer to the tuning-fork that had been struck upon a star. Then he kissed her. At his lips' touch she blossomed for him like a flower and the incarnation was complete. (112)

Paralleling this scene is the final one, when before returning to the midwest, Nick walks down to the beach where he first saw Gatsby with his arms outstretched reaching for the green light at the end of the Buchanan pier:

> as the moon rose higher the inessential houses began to melt away until gradually I became aware of the old island here that flowered once for Dutch sailor's eyes--a fresh, green breast of the new world. Its vanished trees, the trees that had made way for Gatsby's house, had once pandered in whispers to the last and greatest of all human dreams; for a transitory enchanted moment man must have held his breath in the presence of this continent, compelled into an aesthetic contemplation he neither understood nor desired, face to face for the last time in history with something commensurate to his capacity for wonder. (182)

So it was with Gatsby, who found himself in a situation that he neither understood nor desired. While at the time Gatsby considered Daisy's blooming for him the ultimate act, he found that her opening up was not enough. As in nature, while the flower itself is pleasing, it is also ephemeral; it is only the promise of what is to come, the fruit which supplies the seeds for the continuation of life. And so Daisy's blossoming represents a fulfillment, but, more importantly, a promise of the future, a

maturation of the relationship that never comes to Gatsby, but to Tom as signified by Pammy, the product of the union of Tom and Daisy. Although the Gatsby-Daisy relationship is sexual, it is sterile, like the blossoms that are killed by a late frost and never mature. Their fruition fails because of the wartime separation, and the cycle is finished. But in this case, instead of Daisy--the flower dying it is the potential pollinator who dies, having been seduced into giving up his higher ideals.

In *The Great Gatsby* flowers become symbols that signify the life of Jay Gatsby--his hopes, aspirations, and delusions. His whole life as we see it evolves around Daisy Buchanan, and the high and low points of his life are subtly presented through flower imagery. Daisy begins as an illusory orchid--exotic, dramatic, beautiful, desirable, perfect. This is what Gatsby sees and pursues. Realistically, she is as her name implies the white and gold daisy--privileged, rich, and careless. But the combination of the two becomes the rose, the emblem of bloodshed and destruction. And although Gatsby pursues Daisy in all her flowery forms (she has obviously become the rose upon the death of Myrtle Wilson), he too ends up being the victim of the orchid--his romantic conceptions of her--, the daisy, the careless indifference of the rich, and the rose--death in the rose-colored water of his swimming pool. And so Daisy Buchanan who seemed to offer Gatsby everything ends up causing his death and giving him nothing, not even sending to his funeral "a message or a flower" (176).

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The Emancipation of the Ego: An Archetypal Reading of Two Sea Tales by Poe

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In his article "Iris Murdoch's *A Severed Head*: The Evolution of Human Consciousness," Isaiah Smithson gives a succinct summary of Eric Neumann's theory of ego evolution. According to Smithson, Erich Neumann describes the evolution of human consciousness "in terms of the ego's emergence from the unconscious." Neumann holds that the ego goes through three major archetypal phases in its evolution. In the primary phase, the ego achieves its slow birth from the unconscious state of "uroboric union" with its Great Mother. In the second phase, the ego gradually moves away from the domination of the uroboric Great Mother and goes through progressive stages as a "child," "son-lover," and "hero." Up to this point, however, the ego has not completely severed its ties with the Great Mother. Having become a hero, nevertheless, the ego is now more assertive and ready for the third archetypal phase--"the encounter with the Great Mother as the primordial dragon." Only through the hero's fight with the dragon--which in Neumann's view is "a symbolic equivalent of the descent to the cave, underworld, or sea, of being swallowed, or of committing incest with the Great Mother"--does the ego become fully differentiated from the primordial unity and establish itself as a stable part of an individual's consciousness (226-27). One of the basic notions in archetypal criticism is that archetypes or archetypal processes reside in a "collective unconscious" shared by the artist as well as other members of the society and may show up symbolically in the artist's literary texts. This seems to be the case in two well-known sea tales by Edgar Allan Poe, "A Descent into the Maelstrom" ("A Descent" here on) and "MS. Found in a Bottle" ("MS Found" here on). Indeed so many archetypal elements may be found in the two texts that each tale appears to be a symbolic equivalent of the third archetypal phase described above.

The narrative surface of the tales apparently matches well with the archetypal sequence of the ego's encounter with the Great Mother. Symbolically, we see the protagonists (or ego-heroes) descend into the sea (or "the Great Mother as the primordial dragon"), engage in the terrifying incestuous act, and, finally, become story-tellers (or conscious artists). Since archetypes in literary texts show up not only in plot but also in character and setting, it seems necessary to address briefly how the author uses imagery to personify the setting and portray the Great Mother character. In both tales the sea is portrayed as the archetypal Great Mother. The narrators use the feminine pronoun "her" to describe the ocean. The images of the soft water, of the whirlpool (depicted as resembling the

vaginal access to the womb [136]) and phrases such as the "abysses" and "the vast chasm" (121) all suggest that the sea is to be viewed as a feminine figure. In fact, as Neumann states in *The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype*, chasm, cave, abyss, valley, depths, and sea are traditionally associated with the womb (44-45). The sea in the two tales is also attributed with the terrifying qualities and, ultimately, the destructive power of the primordial dragon. The annihilating power of the mysterious stormy sea, the formidability of the whirlpool, and the enshrouding darkness the protagonists face on the ocean all indicate the monstrous nature of the Great Mother. Clearly, the sea or ocean is portrayed as the archetypal Great Mother or primordial dragon with whom the ego-protagonist will encounter.

Before its encounter with the Great Mother in the final archetypal phase, the ego, as mentioned earlier, has already become a "hero," who will soon liberate itself by severing the last tie with the Great Mother. So among the ego's qualities, courage and bravery are fundamental. The protagonist of "A Descent" is apparently courageous. A fisherman on Lofoden coast, the protagonist knows well the danger involved in fishing "among the rocks" near the islands. After telling the narrator several of his risky experiences, the protagonist says, "it was a horrible danger, and that is the truth" (132). The protagonist's understanding of the danger here may be deemed, symbolically, as the ego's awareness of his risky situation in fighting with the Great Mother. Since the "choice spots" can "not only yield the finest variety but in far greater abundance," which will in turn make the fishermen's lives better, the protagonist and his brothers have always had the courage to make it "a matter of desperate speculation" (131). In fact, as we learn later in the story, the most courageous of the three brothers is the protagonist or, symbolically, the ego that will fight the primordial dragon in order to liberate itself and gain independence.

Similarly, the protagonist in "MS. Found" lacks no courage. Even though we are not told of a clear purpose of his risky voyage, we gather it in the first paragraphs of the story. The protagonist "went as a passenger --having no other inducement than a kind of nervous restlessness which haunted me as a fiend" (118). Despite the incredibly dangerous encounter in the ocean, he calls his voyage "the positive experience of a mind" (118). Apparently the protagonist's purpose for the voyage is to cure the "nervous restlessness" and restore the equilibrium of his mind. Here the parallelism between the protagonist and the ego he represents comes very close. In order for the ego to become a stable part of a personality, it needs to have the positive though terrifying experience. If we may call it courage to have the determination to cure his own mind by going on a risky voyage, we surely can find greater bravery in his experience on the sea. When his ship is about to descend into "some watery hell" of the ocean, he and his fellow survivor see "a gigantic ship" that "bore up under a press of sail in the very teeth of that supernatural sea, and of that ungovernable hurricane" (121). At this moment, his fellow survivor panics and is drowned. The

protagonist, in contrast, courageously gains self-possession. "Staggering as far aft as I could, I awaited fearlessly the ruin that was to overwhelm" (122). It is, of course, his courageous act that salvages him--the violent shock of the sinking ship hurls him on to the strange ship coming nearby, saving him from drowning.

We may suggest that the courage and bravery of the two protagonists make them appropriate representatives of the ego-hero. Heroism, nevertheless, is only one feature of the ego. Another characteristic of the ego is its "son-lover" relationship with the Great Mother. Since both protagonists get caught in the whirlpool of the ocean, or the vagina of the Great Mother, we may suggest that both of the ego representatives are obsessed with the incestuous Oedipal relationship. Having been attracted into the whirlpool and descending farther and farther down it, the protagonist of "A Descent" describes his experience:

> After a little while I became possessed with the keenest curiosity about the whirl itself. I positively felt a *wish* to explore its depths, even at the sacrifice I was going to make; and my principal grief was that I should never be able to tell my old companions on shore about the mysteries I should see. These, no doubt, were singular fancies to occupy a man's mind in such extremity--and I have often thought since that the revolutions of the boat around the pool might have rendered me a little light-headed. (135)

Here the reader can not miss the sexual images in such phrases as "the keenest curiosity about the whirl itself," "a *wish* [italicized in the text] to explore its depths," and "a little light-headed." We may also see that the protagonist is aware of the danger involved in the incestuous act and prepared to experience it as his own "sacrifice." In another paragraph a little later, we find the protagonist talk about an archetypal phallic symbol --a "fir tree"--and use such sexually connotative language as "take the awful plunge," "my limbs again tremble," and "my heart beat heavily once more." Clearly, the ego representative is overwhelmed with his incestuous desire, and the reflection of such an instinctive desire makes him both excited and fearfully ashamed.

Like his counterpart in "A Descent," the protagonist of "MS. Found" also frequently uses words and phrases with incestuous connotations. Even though his experience is not as exclusively incestuous in the whirlpool as his counterpart's, he does encounter the whirl twice and describes it as a "gigantic amphitheater" into which he is "plunging madly" (125-126). The contradictory psychological state of a "son-lover" may perhaps be seen most clearly in this passage:

> To conceive the horror of my sensations is, I presume, utterly impossible; yet a curiosity to penetrate the mysteries of these awful regions, predominates even over my despair, and will reconcile me to the most hideous aspect of death. It is evident that we are hurrying onwards to some exciting knowledge--some never-to-be-imparted secret, whose attainment is destruction. (125)

The oedipal son seems fully aware that "the mysteries of the awful regions" of the Great Mother should be "some never-to-be imparted secret" and that his violation of the law by seeking the "exciting [but forbidden] knowledge" will result in his own destruction. However, "a curiosity to penetrate" overcomes his fear and drives him to an incestuous union with the Great Mother.

The cited examples are only the most obvious in the two tales. Throughout the texts we frequently come across sexually-connotative phrases like "into the sea," "riding" the sea, "going down," "descent," "into the world of ocean," "lay outstretched," "inevitably absorbed," "cylinder," "sphere," etc. The titles of tales also suggest a sexual overtone. While "A Descent into the Maelstrom" is symbolically a trip into the womb of the Great Mother, "MS. Found in a Bottle" could be the lesson learned in the Great Mother's womb--the "bottle," or "vessel," in Neumann's term (43), is in fact the archetypal symbol of the female body. Therefore, we may say that the ego's encounter with the Great Mother is an oedipal or incestuous experience. Through this horrifying experience, the ego realizes its violation of the law and severs itself forever from the Great Mother and becomes emancipated.

Through the encounter with the Great Mother the ego-hero is transformed into a new being. Such a transformation may again be symbolically seen in the experiences of the two protagonists. Since the protagonists have had similar experiences so far, it might be anticipated that their transformation is also of similar nature. One similar feature of their transformations is that they both become creative artists after the experiences. In "A Descent" the former fisherman has not only gone through a physical transformation--"hairs from a jetty black to white"--but also a change in his occupation. He is no longer a fisherman, but a tour guide for the great whirlpool of the Maelstrom. Moreover, unlike an ordinary tour guide who tells the tourists where to go and what to see, this white-haired guide tells stories about the scenic spot. Furthermore he interweaves personal experiences with the spectacular scenes and tells stories with both accuracy and imagination. Since "the whole expression of [his] countenance had changed," the "merry fishermen of Lofoden" cannot appreciate his artistry in story telling and, therefore, "did not believe it" (140). He, nevertheless, continues to tell his story, and his occupation as a tour guide certainly provides him the convenience of a ready audience. With a similar sensitivity and imaginative mind, the narrator in the tale seems fully appreciative of the guide's story which he records in the frame of his own tale. This recognition of the guide's authority as a story-teller suggests that the fisherman has been transformed into a creative artist.

Likewise, the protagonist of "MS. Found" also undergoes a transformation through his voyage on the sea. From the opening paragraphs we know that he has received "an education of no common order," but he was formerly a dull, rational person without much imaginative power. As he points out, "I have often been reproached with the aridity of my genius; a

deficiency of imagination has been imputed to me as a crime" (118). His desire to be an artist (manifested in "a kind of nervous restlessness") sends him off on a voyage. On the voyage the narrator experiences horror, fancies, and supernatural mysteries and makes his "discovery" of his imaginative power. As he describes it himself:

> A feeling for which I have no name, has taken possession of my soul--a sensation which will admit of no analysis, to which the lessons of by-gone times are inadequate, and for which I fear futurity itself will offer me no key. . . . A new sense--a new entity is added to my soul. (122)

With this "new sense" of the imaginative power, the protagonist is no longer the philosophy student who delights in detecting falsities in the German moralists. He has become a creative artist who records his experience in manuscripts.

The power that transforms the protagonist comes from the sea--the Great Mother of the ego. The transformation is symbolically a rebirth for the protagonist. By descending into the whirlpool the fisherman of Lofoden learns to appreciate the beauty of the natural world--his appreciation, for instance, of the full moon and moonlit sky (134) --and to love others at the risk of his own life, as indicated by his selfless act to save his brother (136). Indeed the fisherman's emerging out of the whirlpool is presented in a very symbolic way:

> By degrees the froth and the rainbow disappeared, and the bottom of the gulf seemed slowly to up rise. The sky was clear, the winds had gone down, and the full moon was setting radiantly in the west, when I found myself on the surface of the ocean, in full view of the shores of Lofoden, and above the spot where the pool of the Moskoe-strom had been. (139)

Symbolically, we may say that the ego has been raised out of the womb of the Great Mother and has achieved his new identity (in the personality of an artist) and become an independent and conscious individual.

In a similar manner the protagonist of "MS. Found" also goes through a rebirth, which occurs when he is hurled out of the sinking ship onto the gigantic ship nearby. After this incident, the protagonist acquires a new personality. He has gained "a new sense" and become a committed artist by keeping a literary journal of his extraordinary experience on the strange ship. His commitment can be clearly seen in the following lines: "It is true that I may not find an opportunity of transmitting it to the world, but I will not fail to make the endeavor. At the last moment I will enclose the MS. in a bottle, and cast it within the sea" (123).

What we may find in the transformation of the protagonists is, in fact, the development of the ego. By having the terrifying, incestuous encounter with the Great Mother, the ego finally separates itself from her and is raised to a higher mode of being--an emancipated individual with a fully asserted identity. As Smithson states, "the hero's final encounter with the Great Mother, be it seen in terms of the descent, fight with the dragon, separation

of the parents, or incest with the mother, severs utterly the ego's ties to the primordial unity" (227). We may further suggest that the severance of the ties between the Great Mother and the ego emancipates the latter and raises it to a dynamic state. Thus, the ego gains the creative power as a conscious artist.

As shown in the foregoing analyses of the two tales, abundant archetypal implications can be found in Edgar Allan Poe's works. An archetypal reading as presented in this paper may draw at least two significant points on Poe's understanding of the evolution of human consciousness. First, Poe seems to believe that in the development of consciousness some extraordinary experience is necessary to shape the ego of a personality. Such experience may seem horrifying on the surface, but the effect upon the individual, in some cases, could still be positive, as shown in both stories. Second, Poe's emphasis on the artistic and esthetic experience in the two tales--the ability to appreciate beauty in the midst of horror and the commitment to artistic creation and expression--seems to be suggesting that artistic sensitivity and imaginative power should be important parts of human consciousness. This naturally, echoes Poe's keen concern with the effect of art and with esthetics in general.

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Poems

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Two Drinks in the Wagon Wheel Lounge

1.

In a way, whatever happen's a good thing,
builds either character, or a morbid toast.
In a way, nothing's half-bad–just as well
to think it, as Circe noted, stopped making
love to talk about a rock and a hard place:
It's not a warning, friend, not like
knowing's any more than being informed.
Might as well just watch for the gory

detail: makes good copy, might stand you

a round of drinks in a natty lounge.
In a way, whatever happen's just as well,
that's the logic of always being last
in a long row of gory details: they might
stand you a round of drinks in a natty
lounge. You and Jeremiah and anyone
else interested in wheels-in-wheels,
whatever happens, and rounds of drinks.

2.

What ever will work's whatever to do.

The Pursuit of Beauty in Want and Forms

How you could have gotten
This far and here with
Brass bracelets and shoes

Tied like those when matter
Is only motion here.
I'll love you for that.

For now. Don't. Don't
Crumple like that wasp
Crumbling in the sun and window.

Smarmy Chateau

When your cheap jewelry clinks
against the wormwood and the next
of whatever you do waits
a long way from knowing,
cross you legs, simply, for
the new rest you take in boredom.

Your lips are fading, you think,
so you throw on the color,
the edges like tattered cardboard.
A watched poet does boil, sometime.
One can get whatever blessings
come from watching oriental flowers

bloom at three a.m. Still, waiting
shoves that wall we all know's there
too starkly for anyone's good. It's
tiring knowing that whatever was good,
whatever will be good, is crushed like
those various greases to your lips.

Ice Cream Mountain

PROTEUS RISING, Part II, Chapter 6

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> (Gordon Streng, having twelve years ago married a princess by pretending to be a prince, now must deal with the return of his wife's true prince. His name is Erskin; he is now at the Peabody hotel in Memphis, and last night Betty went there to see him. Somehow Gordon must endure her absence until Sunday night, when, he hopes, she will return. It is now Saturday morning; it occurs to Gordon to take his children for an airplane ride. . . .)

Gordon sat on the steps in the cold air and marveled at the warmth of the sun on his suede jacket. Little puffy clouds were rising off the damp pastures to the south of town. He put his hands on the knees of his children, who, for some reason, had come to sit beside him.

"What's that cloud look like?" he said to Jimbo, pointing.

"Which one?" Jimbo said.

"That one."

"Sort of like a frog, with one of his feet stuck out."

"I don't see any frog," Julie said.

"Don't you see it?" Jimbo said. "There's his head, and he only has one eye, and–"

"Oh, yeah," Julie said. "Only one of his feet is going away."

"I think it looks like ice cream," Jimbo said. "Daddy, can we have some ice cream?"

"You just had lunch. Maybe later."

"But I'm hungry."

"I'll tell you what. Let's go up in a plane and see what it looks like close up."

"All right!" Jimbo shouted.

"Would that be fun?"

"I guess so," Julie said.

"Can I steer the plane?" Jimbo said.

"Sure," Gordon said. Maybe it was time for heroics. Anybody's heroics.

"Can I steer too?" Julie said. "Mon won't let us when she goes with us."

"She won't be with us this time."

"Yeah, she gets scared."

He went inside to call Jerry Map, who ran his little flying school off a grass strip just south of town, from whom Gordon rented small Cessna and

Piper airplanes on occasion. The Cherokee was available for an hour. He told the kids to get in the car.

When they got to the airport the little low-wing plane was already out by the gas pump. Jimbo insisted on the front seat, even though he couldn't see out the windshield there. Gordon would let him get up on his knees once they were airborne. He leaned around the high-backed seat to help Julie strap herself in the back seat.

"You're not scared, are you?"

"Of course not," Julie said.

I'm scared, Gordon thought, but didn't say it. He had not flown in over a month: he examined himself rigorously for signs of suicidal impulse. No, he thought; it wasn't that. Out the window were the little puffy clouds, a hundred of them, lined up in rows. Cloud streets, running south-east to north-west. He wanted to race down them.

"What's your favorite runway?" he shouted to Jerry Map who stood nearby, his hair blowing.

"One-eight today," Jerry said. "Actually, the wind's out of the East at ground level. But it's not strong."

Gordon shut the door and started the engine and let the plane trundle across the grass, steering with his feet. The air was cold: a stiff little crosswind. He stopped at the threshold of the muddy pasture Jerry called a runway and read the checklist. All OK. A notch of flaps would help him get up out of the mud. He checked for traffic.

"Everybody ready?"

"Check," Jimbo said.

Gordon listened inwardly to the ticking of his metabolism, decided it would do. He lined the plane up and pushed the throttle, holding the nose high. By the half-way mark the wheels came unstuck and he knew they would make it.

He wanted to go north of town, away from the areas of predictable traffic. At 500 feet he banked the plane around and lined up with one of the cloud-rows. They would climb faster there, in the updrafts. Jimbo climbed on his knees to look for his house. By now they were just west of it. The wing was in the way.

"Look there," he told Jimbo. He lowered the wing out of the way, and there it was. The green roof. The garage. Jimbo's bicycle in the yard. There were no cars in the driveway.

"There it is!" Julie shouted from the back seat. He maintained the turn until Jimbo spotted it. By then they had made a complete circle.

It was time to take stock. There was the university, becoming smaller as he gained altitude. He could see the cars flocking around the Union building, little pastel chips of motion. There was the church, and Joe Lyons's house opposite it. There ,beyond it, was the big house where Marcia Sample lived with her husband. He had never known where Arnold Green lived. He looked left and right at the far reaches of the city, and realized there was not way to guess. No glooms were visible

Excerpts from

THE LIBERACE SUITE

For the Mississippi Philological Association

Kevin L. Cope
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These poems arose out of a concern with the impoverishment of poetry. By "impoverishment" I mean not a decline in quality, but in range. The vast array of genres that once graced the halls of the muses has shrivelled into a monotonous collection of brief, confessional, and brutally serious lyrics. Comedy must be dark and critical; satire and public poetry--judgment, declamation, and wit--must vacate a discourse obsessed with the troubles roiling in the poet's soul. My poems represent an interdisciplinary project, an attempt to revive and intermingle the forgotten genres of poetry, from didactic verse to popular satire. I want to show that lite verse can be heavy. Let's have more work in the tradition of Bennett Cerf, Richard Armour, Victor Buono, and Edgar Guest. My first essay at this adventurous song is an effort at practical poetry, a memorandum encouraging participation in the LSU Philology Club (a second-place finisher beside the Mississippi Philological Association!). In this poem, and for your assistance, I revive post-modern form an old eighteenth-century invention, the "key."

Memorandum to a Department, Or, A Vision of Philology

'Tis said, PHILOLOGY's a dying art,
'Tis no dream vision, nay, 'tis Lanc'lot's cart;
Like old King Lud, whose somn'lent form reclines,
PHILOLOGY without surcease declines.
5. Yet one dark eve, 'top fair AUGUSTA's height, }
Milt's darkness visible turned VISION bright; }
A form appears! Who? PHILOLOGY yhight. }
What? Why? Who dares the god/dess view
When, Lite, proud human wit's like dew,
10. Transient, dry'd up in half an hour,
Like puffing cakes, blown up by WUNDRA's pow'r.
Sir, think you (cry'd P.) debate's no more,
Philology succumbed in critics' war?
Go now, invite proposals by the bushel,
15. Reluctant? Great MAY'll push y'all.
Yet put not my new audience to sleep,
When seeking off'rings, search wide--dive deep.
Accept those papers which, with learned wit,

Into TRADITION's forms approximately fit;
20. Then look into the garret, ring the CHIMES,
Find presentations fit for these strange times.
Will some new PERIKLES, hot with rage,
Quiz THE PROFESSION? Damn the age?
POLEMIC's no new form, and yet
25. 'Tis no dead nag--'tis a show bet.
Fear not debate! Form AREOPAGITICAL,
On subjects textual or political;
Request a FORUM where several wits explain
The collective produce of research's pain.
30. In this age, Sir, all hierarchies get condemned,
Therefore, stay not among professors penned;
Draw papers from grad students, nay, the staff,
Any whole wit's better than any old half.
A student may learn more from application,
35. Than all of COLLEAGUEDOM from rumination.
Consider PANELS, COMMENTS, and RESPONSES,
LIVING REVIEWS, of wits or dunces.
But most, reject not plain old PAPERS,
In all professions, the movers and shapers.
40. From criticism to text, poem to profession,
The field's immense, th' enemy limitation.
Go! Armed with forms, confront the bloody fray,
But ask for answers by a spec'fic day--
A DEAD-LINE, like some faltering verse,
45. Of experience the lesson, of scholars the curse.
So spake the goddess, drawn with care,
Drawn, indeed, into thin air,
Air which, illumined by her light,
Cleared the dull dreamer's obfuscated sight.
50. PHILOLOGY's remanded to the golden age,
Like Herakles, by CLUB upstaged.
Fear not, kind reader, proposals to submit,
Truth plays no hide-and-seek; you're IT.

THE KEY TO "A VISION OF PHILOLOGY"

2. LANCELOT'S CART--Lancelot was disgraced for his failure to rush immediately into a dung cart, a deed that would have been useful in the service of Guinevere.

5. Here the author attempts a TRIPLET, in the manner of Dryden. What a pretension!

9. LITE--An allusion to a new chancellor at LSU, forenamed "Bud" and subsequently nicknamed "Bud Lite" in recognition of his sunny disposition and sunnier, lower-calorie ideas.

11. WUNDRA--A self-rising flour, likely to blow cakes out of the oven; incidentally the appellation of an instructor at LSU.

15. MAY--Mighty chairman of the prestigious Department of English at LSU; a theologian charged with practical matters.

20. CHIMES--A well-known coffee-house near the LSU campus, location of many professorial researches--and searches for professors. Designated by New Orelans Times-Picayune as the residence of LSU's new "literary elite."

22. PERIKLES--Demagogue in Athens, guiding spirit of my department.

23. THE PROFESSION--A cant term invented by malicious persons attempting to convert a recreation into an occupation, at the expense of the rulers and people they are wont to criticize. The preferred designation of "oppressed" persons, who are present in remarkably high numbers at a well-to-do NCAA Division I/Carnegie Commission Doctoral I category institution like LSU.

30. CONDEMNATION OF HIERARCHIES--It can be observed that many professors indulge in the sport of radicalizing the canon and condemning social hierarchies as a means of raising their personal incomes well above those of the average proletarian!

37. LIVING REVIEWS--A particularly viscious scholarly sport in which authors of books must sit in halls of learning located in far away places, before vast audiences, while great, learned, and honey-tongued experts systematically debunk their works. A fitting punishment for vanity!

51. CLUB--Here the author vaguely threatens to force his colleagues to offer papers!

A major project for the poetry of the next several decades will be the reclamation of spectacle. Where is the stage of poetry? Alas, usually in what that old prosperity-evangelist Reverend Ike enjoyed calling "the secret closet of the mind." How can we make poetry more public, more spectacular, more entertaining? Despite the flashiness of contemporary culture, we have nothing resembling true spectacle, communally observed wonders eliciting mutual amazement and confirming our joint pleasure in the ever-astonishing world. Instead we have poems, like those of a former professor of mine, that deal with flies breeding in water accumulating in old spinet pianos left out in the rain. Poetry, as a power of satire and a means of regaining perspective, also needs to challenge certain movements--like, for example, gay or feminist studies--that are wont to canonize only their best representatives. To the resurrection of spectacle--and to the last true American spectacle--I dedicate my "Liberace Suite."

The Liberace Suite

I

Record jacket and cake-mix box: are they the same?
Which lasts longer: Lee's or Crocker's fame?
A man, some tunes, alone, a slim domestic space,
Or larger quarters--kids, dogs, cats, dads--a fattening place?
A two-d damsel with upwaving hair,
A sweet and flowery family lair,
Or five-d man--in space, time, thought
Flat on a disk, 'twixt pressed sheets caught?
Inside the cake-box, the children watch TV,
Buy a Steinway, barks the tube, let kids be what they can be;
The family dreams of sing alongs, healthy children want to play,
No No! Cries Betty, please don't choose that way;
The children crushed, they want their friends, what will she say?
No No! My babies, Liberace's g--!

II: An Intermezzo

{This poem represents serially the six sides of a box of strawberry Jello}
He was a happy man; in later life he could be seen
From every angle, via camera, monitor, and screen;
A holographic bloke, a visual preen,
Of every pianist, the king, queen, and dean!
What could be happier than Jello? An expansive form,
Seen through, around, and all at once--such excellence its norm!
Supreme, translucent, always exquisite [pronounce as in French--ex-kwizeet]
In Will Blake's Valley of Vision, the preferred treat!
Can we cross-dress this all-panoptic fruit,
Make it wear art's stagey sequined suit?
Ah! Gelatin desert that is called Jello,
In California, certified as mellow;
So laid back it accepts all other fruit,
Except the pineapple, that enzymatic brute.
It likes to mold, to form and dress,
Into glass or copper to impress;
If shapes you like, then do not try,
To use all th' water--Lib'race's wit was dry.
With idle nutrients it won't bother
Of pure energy, it's the mythic father.
No significant protein is on tap,
But, heck, that ain't no serious rap,
The flavor matters; vitamins be damned,
In his record jacket, Liberace's canned.
Just add the water, go for a speed-set

Into the 'frig, the deadline's met!
The candelabra light, the table prepare,
Now, Betty call the kids, and Jello declare!
Eek! They're bored! The dream is at an end?
But hark! To the box! A new plan there perpend!
Mix in Cool Whip, pineapple crushed,
Dump into graham cracker crust,
Throw in ice cubes, add pomade,
With your whisk, you'll make the grade!
Tinkle the ivory slop with whirling whip,
What have you got? The Liberace dip!

III

How could you take it. The pain. The jealousy.
Our most public personality. You felt what we felt. Nothing else.
There you were. You were in your sixties.
In your sixties in the seventies. Others were on the move.
They say you made Michael Jackson possible.
You taught performers how to dress. To have a personality.
But your personality was us. And Michael's was his own.
Other pianists were there. Van Cliburn was long and Texan.
Jo Ann Castle with her flabby arms.
She slammed the keys while you were played lite.
You weren't that growling jellyroll. Just cotton candy.
Fats had keyed up his blueberry hill.
You barely tendered the keys, like strawberries on cream.
Every avatar has a legend, does great good things. You had "happies."
You gave them to everyone who needed a smile.
They came from behind the black keys, deep within the piano pool of
----Your imagination.
Look at Glenn Gould! Tight on the keys. You gushed for us.
You gave. You conquered. You were the best. Everyone loved you.
Like Teddy Ruxpin.
And yet there was no credit. Not even from the Longines Symphonette.
Would you have liked some homey macaroni from the Elite Caf) in Jackson?

IV

All the musical families tried to look so happy.
We all thought them oh so sappy.
Behold! It's Lawrence, 'tis the night for Welk,
In jacket of--what?--polyester silk.
He waves his stick, blows lots of bubbles,
And lets us polka off our troubles;
But he's a cheapskate, haven't you heard?
His Champaigne Lady drinks Thunderbird!

Norma! But where lives mighty Zimmer!
In the Poor House she must simmer!
Sub-union wages were her due,
So what if she could make her cello mew!
Clay Hard, the singer--was it clay heart?
Yet, let's confess, there was some art!
Myron Floren, his box, gosh, he could squeeze,
The whirling polka-dancers always please.
When friendly "Arthur" jigged his speeding tap,
The gasping audience leaped into his lap!
Let's not forget the tenor--Feeny, Joe,
A "Danny Boy" he sure could crow!
But of the singers none could best,
The Lennons--four in one big nest;
They chirped, they smiled, they gave delight,
Unto the voiceless, a shining light.
None could outcheer them, how they sizzled,
Even after Welk had fizzled;
Aging, smiling, everywhere admired,
Like Twinkies, they'll never waste expired.
Yet none compare to thee, O mighty Lee,
None can them in a waxen models see,
No hall commemorative, no eternal display,
That vast museum your song, your comeliest lay,
Ever to grace us, boa-beplumed,
To old Oblivion ne'er doomed,
The last true public person, not the least,
Of future manna, the bubbling yeast,
While Welk's may burst in open air,
Your legacy is buoyed with care,
To those who dream, who know you great,
Yes, Lee, at the top you rate!
Eternity's a circle, but you're not bored,
Across this circle, you're the *chord*.

Sonnet on the MPA
Existentialism? Jackson venue?
POesy's garden grows weeds and flowers.
Yes, it can penetrate that city, too.
Where, cherished, its welcome never sours.

Truth, mighty oak! Roots best in stable beds,
Martians, chest-hair, even the elephant man,*
May grow, unstressed, in deep, fertile heads,
Where thoughts, not prejudice, flow from e'ry pen.

High on the HILL of learning, HASSAN brave,
Sings loud to harkening DANIELS, poetess,
STAMPER looks far, reads scary stones grave,
No, here no one, man nor beast, dare repress.

With this learning infinite what shall we do?
Proclaim and re-proclaim, Mississippi, I LOVE YOU!
*All topics of works presented at the 1989 MPA meeting.

Narrative Discourse in Poe: Reciprocity and "William Wilson"

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Criticism of Edgar Allan Poe's story "William Wilson" tends toward unitary interpretations of this tale's discourse that reenforce the naive moral surface of the story and that ignore significant parts of the text. The recognition of this story's source as one which presents a "personification of conscience (Irving) and the twentieth-century tendency to psychologize texts provide strong reasons for this unitary reduction. Nonetheless, Poe's innovative strategy in "William Wilson" remains one of presenting the story of the double within a double structure, of superimposing on the objective elements of the story supernatural and psychic elements. This superimposition is executed in such a way that real and unreal elements become virtually indistinguishable, and, thus, "William Wilson" can be classified within Todorov's genre of the pure fantastic along with Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw*. Also, Poe's use of subjective narration and of the material image mark this story as an early example of American expressionism. What I call the material image is manifested in "William Wilson" chiefly through the presentation of archetypal psychic imagery and through images of other literary styles which help to support the supernatural element. Another manifestation of the material image involves devices that promote Poe's authorial signature.

The mimetic dialectic between naturalism and expressionism involves the ways each mode presents its respective discourse. Briefly, in naturalism discourse devolves from story, but in expressionism story becomes an element in an array of discursive devices. Subjective narration and the material image represent two of these devices with the former pertaining to the reception of expressionist writing and the latter pertaining to representation in expressionism. In this way, one can clearly see how Poe anticipates twentieth-century styles.

The double structure of Poe's tale has significant consequence. Stephen Peithman believes that "William Wilson" "may have inspired Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*" (79), which itself presents a double structure. In Wilde's novel, the naive moral fable overlays a sophisticated aesthetic critique that, once recognized, unravels the naive moral presentation. Dorian's living portrait becomes the consummate image of aesthetic representational mimesis, and the precision of this portrait utterly defines Dorian Gray, for he lives and dies by this portrait. Thus the limitation imposed upon art of direct perception of the objective world becomes exposed as a sensual prison which excludes imaginative play and which can only foster a vulgar morality based on sensual appearances. Recall that

Poe's narrator Wilson sums up William Wilson's aping of his dress and actions as "exquisite portraiture" (Poe 555).

In Poe's story, the naive moral surface of a man who executes his "personal conscience" overlays the realistic rendering of sequentially but reciprocally violent attitudes between the two Wilsons that inevitably result in a bloodbath. Clearly, Poe's discourse questions the morality of such a result. This reciprocal violence reappears beneath the dialectic of innocence and guilt in Kafka's *The Trial*, raising the question of whether Poe's influence extended to Kafka. Poe not only anticipates Kafka through this reciprocal doubling, but also through the material image of the school in this story, an anticipation of Kafka's castle. Structural doubling also prominently appears in the recent films *Angel Heart* (Parker) and *Dead Ringers* (Cronenberg), and elements of "William Wilson" appear in both of these complex examinations of moral discourse.

The most significant source of Poe's "William Wilson" comes indirectly from Percy Shelley who unearthed an old Spanish play and gave it to Lord Byron, but Byron never finished it. Washington Irving presented this in an article in an 1836 issue of *The Gift* called "An Unwritten Drama of Lord Byron" where he states "the spectre is an allegorical being, the personification of the conscience, of the passions" (Peithman 78). Poe acknowledged the borrowing in a letter to Irving. Shelley likely appreciated this play for its poetic character which "is the very image of life expressed in its eternal truth," and Poe recognized its potential (783).

"William Wilson: *A Tale*" first appeared in October, 1839, about a year after the publication of "Ligeia" (Poe's proclaimed favorite), a story that uses the same narrative approach (Poe 565). I call this device the "subjective narration" in order to distinguish it from the more widely known case of the unreliable narrator, most often identified with "The Tell-Tale Heart" (1843 [803]). Unlike the unreliable narrator, who is clearly characterized as mad, consequently forcing the reader to proceed on the assumption that certain details supplied are lies and must be read in an opposite way, the subjective narrative contains doubtful elements, perhaps even the suggestion of madness without confirmation. Nonetheless, the reader is expected to follow the story as a true narration; in short, the subjective narrator is reliable, but remains, at times, unclear.

An antecedent to this approach occurs in Petronius' Encolpius narrator of *The Satyricon*, who, as a self-proclaimed murderer, is "bad," but who presents events clearly and reliably, unless the events themselves are opaque. With Petronius, there is little difficulty in determining the outer world of the story and the inner world of the narrator, but this is not the case with Poe's innovation which mixes the objective with the subjective, even to the extent of providing false clues as to which is which. These clues lead psychological criticism astray, despite many valid points, by causing the leap that comes from considering the similarities of the other William Wilson to the narrator Wilson as grounds for the other's characterization as a mere projection of a unitary identity. Stuart Levine must dismiss the

supernatural aspect as unworkable in order to arrive at the characterization of the narrator Wilson as schizophrenic and, more specifically, as paranoid; also, Marie Bonaparte's Freudian reading concurs in the diagnosis of a paranoid state resulting from repressed homosexual attitudes (Peithman 94).

A strict Jungian approach which recognizes the other Wilson as a shadow figure, or, more precisely, as a shadow-in-reverse, would also characterize this dream figure, the shadow, as a projected hallucination. These psychological perspectives view the entire story as an obsessive dream ending with the recognition of a psychotic state in which narrator Wilson is disqualified from possessing any moral perspective, a de facto result of psychosis (i.e. an "unreliable" narrator). The ethical discourse of these psychological perspectives falls in line with the moral naivete of the story's ending, the allegorical murder of conscience, despite their valid elaborations.

The text, however, opposes these psychological perspectives since the later narrator Wilson who begins the telling of the tale possesses a clear sense of good and evil, and characterizes himself as evil. Should one consider this narrator Wilson as a psychotic in good remission? This critical gesture of narrative unreliability pushes the text too far while dismissing external and supernatural events which Poe is at pains to include: one example is to be found in the two fur cloaks that narrator Wilson carries out of the Oxford gaming session.

Poe's short story aimed at a unity of effect derived both from story and structure, but this in no way precludes the development of a double structure as part of this unitary effect (Peithman xiii). Todorov's description of the genre of the pure fantastic depends upon a hesitation in the reader (produced by an ambiguous text) between natural and supernatural explanations of apparently supernatural events sustained to the end of the story (Brooke-Rose 63). Although the supernatural may be too restrictive a criterion for fantasy in general, it can be applied to "William Wilson"; indeed, Christine Brooke-Rose has shown how Poe's story "The Black Cat" fits Todorov's description of this genre (65). Much of "William Wilson" is presented as realistic narrative, but supernatural elements occur right at the story's outset.

The moral tale of "William Wilson" provides an opportunity "to test the quality of [Poe's] Moral Sense (as he was calling that faculty when Henry James was still a child) when it unmistakably appears" (Halliburton 305-6). Still, the designation of the issue of good and evil in this story can be too limiting a perspective, unless it is understood in its widest sense, that of the ethical and existential qualities of human life and consciousness. Poe quickly suggests to his readers that this broad discursive ground is at issue through three important allusions that begin the story, all of which evoke supernatural elements.

First, the epigraph to the story from Chamberlayne: "[w]hat say of it? what say of CONSCIENCE grim, that spectre in my path?" provides a

sign of Capricorn is represented by Atu XV called "The Devil" (Crowley 105-06). Besides carrying on occult coding, the birth date has a narrative significance in that, taken together with the first date of publication, it provides an objective time frame to the events of the story, ostensibly told at the "present" time of its reception. 1839 minus 1811 gives 28 years which is the probable age of narrator Wilson as he awaits his death at the story's opening: this allows some time between the event at the story's end and the later time of the story's beginning, all approximate, but precision here is less important than the narrative mark of an objective history.

The coincidence of the birth dates is also significant for its suggestion of astrological twinning, supposing that people born on the same day may share similar fates. Also, some supernatural agency is suggested by this:

> I discovered, or fancied I discovered, in his accent, his air, and general appearance, a something which first startled, and then deeply interested me, by bringing to mind dim visions of my earliest infancy -- wild, confused and thronging memories of a time when memory herself was yet unborn. I cannot better describe the sensation which oppressed me, than by saying that I could with difficulty shake off the belief that myself and the being who stood before me had been acquainted at some epoch very long ago -- some point of the past even infinitely remote. The delusion, however, faded rapidly as it came (Poe 556-57).

That such a vision would be characterized by the narrator with the derisive "delusion" can be seen as indicative of psychic self-alienation. Besides early childhood, this image suggests reincarnation, and even eternal damnation. This last sense evokes Milton's *Paradise Regained*, allowing us to consider the narrator Wilson as the very image of the devil, albeit in human form, the representation of the monstrous other in both occult and traditional formulas. The sense of reincarnation connects this story to Poe's antecedent one "Ligeia" which presents a kind of formula for a reincarnation. The reader may detect a supernatural agency in William Wilson's continual exact copying of narrator Wilson's dress and in his precise knowledge of narrator Wilson's whereabouts.

The twinning of the two Wilsons sustains the subjective narrative which largely consists in the suggestion or the denial of the suggestion by narrator Wilson that William Wilson closely resembles him. When narrator Wilson discovers they have the same birthday, he remarks "assuredly if we *had* been brothers we must have been twins" (554). Not until the end of the story does narrator Wilson actually see that William Wilson is identical to him: "[n]ot a line in all the marked and singular lineaments of that face which was not, even identically, mine own!" (565). Here the subjective and objective aspects of the story merge into crystallization. Previous to this final moment, William's dress is like the narrator's, William's voice "grew *the very echo of my own*", and "we were of the same height, and . . . we were not altogether unlike in general contour of person and outline of feature" (555).

This process of subjectification of resemblance is foreshadowed early on and framed within the objective by narrator Wilson's remark that "man was never *thus*, at least, tempted before – certainly, never *thus* fell" (550). The continual interpenetration of objective and subjective elements characterizes the subjective narration. Still, the ambiguous or subjective elements clearly function in the text as marks of narrative discourse, so during narrator Wilson's final night in school when he sneaks into William's bedchamber, he has a virtual fit viewing William's face by the lamplight: "[w]ere these – *these the* lineaments of William Wilson? Not thus he appeared – assuredly not *thus*. . ." (557); "*thus*" functions as a discursive identifier connecting the foreshadowing to this scene, the discursive turning or climax of the story, to the final image of William Wilson's face, dying "*thus*." At this point in the story, narrator Wilson leaves the shook, no longer seeking to do harm to William Wilson, only seeking to escape from him.

This character action brings in indirect authorial narration, representing a discursive turn, because it represents a change in narrator Wilson's behavior; after this narrator Wilson becomes not the pursuer, but the pursued, so the ethical relationship between the two Wilsons becomes reversed. The literal climax of the story arrives quickly during the Eton sequence and becomes intensified during the Oxford sequence. Thus, the literal climax of the story at Eton from which the action is materially reversed by William Wilson almost immediately follows the discursive climax in which *narrator* Wilson reverses his own actions, constituting a climactic "frame." These framed climaxes are part of the objective side of the presentation.

Twinning also provides a vehicle for the intensification of temptation; this second use of twinning gives the lie to narrator Wilson's excuse that man was never "thus" tempted, for man is always tempted thus. The mechanism of this temptation has been shown by Girard in *Violence and the Sacred*. The mechanism of Freudian identification shows how the son learns to desire the emblems that the father desires, but the father's presence constitutes a social limitation. The son gives way in his rivalry to his father, but brothers may vie on equal terms for these emblems of desire. Social systems, like the law – but not an assumed "fatherly attitude," like William Wilson's – substitute the presence of the father with social differences (status, etc.), but the elimination of these differences sets loose the monstrous other, a term signifying possession, leading to reciprocal violence.

This elimination of difference is intensified by the image of twinning, and the narrator Wilson, incensed by the lack of difference between him and William Wilson which becomes only too clear at the end, becomes possessed and kills his rival. This recognition brings into focus the Miltonic allusion in the first paragraph of the story as precisely an image of satanic possession. William Wilson's dying words do not emphasize or deny the rivalry, but it is acknowledged:

> *You have conquered, and I yield. Yet, henceforward art thou also dead -- dead to the world and its hopes. In me didst thou exist -- and, in my death, see by this image, which is thine, how utterly hast thou murdered thyself.* (565)

In "William Wilson," Poe's "moral" story overlays an elaborated portrait of the devil, the western representation of the monstrous other. One may be quick to connect this portrait explicitly to the narrator Wilson, but this double story of double meanings demonstrates a reciprocal violence, for William Wilson's later intrusions into the narrator Wilson's life characterize a violent intrusion that marks a rivalry between them, no matter how well intentioned William's "entrances" may be characterized.

Poe presents a consciousness of image in "William Wilson" that is not bound by traditional interpretative formulas; this is why it has proved to be a difficult text beneath its naive surface. Nonetheless, this complex image reflects moral complexity, for the spectre of conscience stands revealed in the figure of Satan. The supernatural and the subjectively natural levels of this text develop a unitary effect of moral ambivalence, exemplified by the figure of Satan. That the image of Satan has come to represent social and personal contexts of behavior suggests the inscription of the "other" within the individual psyche, a concept noted by Freud, and the "necessary" triumph of evil over good, the idea of a social predetermination to evil. James Hillman's progressive view of archetypal psychology recognizes the archetype as a vehicle necessarily corrupt; his view seems prefigured by Poe's offering of the archetype of the devil.

Expressionistic writing uses subjective narration and the material image to comment on the problem of writing itself which must proceed from a corrupt language. Poe uses ambivalent images to indicate this problem. Besides the archetype of the devil, there is the image of the early school, an image of the unconscious:

> to me how veritably a place of enchantment! There was really no end to its windings -- to its incomprehensible subdivisions. It was impossible at any given time, to say with certainty upon which of its two stories one happened to be. From each room to every other there were sure to be found three or four steps either in ascent or descent. Then the lateral branches were innumerable -- inconceivable -- and so returning upon themselves, that our most exact ideas in regard to the whole mansion were not very far different from those with which we pondered upon infinity. (551-52)

How like the language of Borges's labyrinthine descriptions in "The Immortal," or Gormenghast Castle of the first two volumes of Mervyn Peake's "Gormenghast Trilogy," or Kafka's *The Castle,* later echoes of Poe's "school." These images emphasize the representational ambivalence inherent to writing, another facet of corrupt language.

The material image of reciprocal violence presented by Poe in "William Wilson" also recurs in Kafka: "[a]nd was it only fancy which induced me to

believe that, with the increase of my own firmness, that of my tormentor underwent a proportional diminution?" (564). This image of resistance is repeated several times in Kafka's *The Trial*, most notably, when K. complains that one of his arresting officers has stolen from him, the officer is whipped. Several discursive congruencies between "William Wilson" and *The Trial*, particularly the portrayal of the monstrous other, indicate similar attitudes toward the production of text and the strategy of using text to reveal the inherent ambivalence of writing and language. Poe's use of subjective narration and material images becomes a vehicle of fantastic ambivalence, and this fantastic quality calls attention to the ambivalence of writing. Moreover, these strategies of literary representation show precisely how Poe acts as a precursor to postmodern writers, particularly Kafka and Borges. Indeed, Poe's fantastic tale "William Wilson" contains many elements which recur in contemporary productions, and this indicates his insight into the complexities of social discourse represented by literature.

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Poems

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negative action

jolted jarred
unb alance d
batteredblurred
focus iBleimposs

   hiT
hit hard
   hiT again
hurT, hurTing

FoCus sto lE

raped of ripening Idea
   of Work and Desire –
SYSTEM-ABORTION completed,
unasked for.

SucoF iBLEiMPOSs

destination now un

Like A cradle . . .

Like a cradle
the limb rocks
gently treadled by the wind.

A spider web–
misshapened with the capture
of three weak-tea-colored leaves
   tethered and twirling on powerful spider thread
   suspended in postures of falling–
weights the limb
catching the wind's hush
holding
rocking
the dogwood branch.

Transportation

The rain came suddenly
in big slow drops
and danced against my windshield.

The smell of green growth
and raw earth
filled the cooling air.

I slipped off my shoes
and stretched my toes
in longing
and paid homage
to the sidewalk lakes and curbside rivers
I travelled long ago.

Mother's Legacy

That I can not write stories or novels
I have decided is the fault of my mother.

See, she is an artist, the kind that paints.
Her view of the world is that of the moment
   framing on canvas what she sees
    in whatever reality of time or space
    freezing it in time and place
     disregarding the possibilities of past or future
          or other surroundings
    accepting as inherent in any moment the possibilities
    but leaving them
    in the substance of the subject itself,
     explorable, but unexplored.

And so I learned to look
hungry for something to create
but practiced in the positioning of subjects
in one time, one place
not responsible for getting them there
or taking them away,
only responsible for creating wonder about their
being there at all.

"Love's Bitter Mystery": The Metaphor of Family in Joyce's *Ulysses*

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In the broadest terms, the understanding of metaphor rests in the logic and grammar of universals, a perennial problem in logic, and because of this, epistemology. Keeping I. A. Richards' distinction of vehicle and tenor, the vehicle here is the image of mother, and in some second place, father, and all of the sibling relations that might arise. These images abound in *Ulysses*. The tenor -- the idea which the metaphor conveys -- is on firm ground by virtue of Wittgenstein's conception of "family resemblance."

That is, various images or vehicles of metaphor are grouped not according to some single idea or characteristic or even some set of characteristics, but by a subtle shifting of characteristics which do not preclude or include a member of the group by virtue of pre-established characteristics (Wittgenstein 32e). For instance: we have before us a family photograph. It is clear that all the individuals pictured are of the same family, some by virtue of a chin, some because of a hairline, others the shape of an ear. However, those with a common chin need not have the hairline or ears so evident in other members of the same family. The similarities are much more subtle than this.

If we ask what games have in common, the nominalist (who denies the possibility of universals) would say that the common ground is that they are called games; this is their only connection, not some other attribute that all games share. The realist (who cannot avoid the practical use of universals) might say that games must have something in common other than that they are games, something outside the set of games that binds them together. I, along with Wittgenstein, say that what games have in common is that they are games. Particulars come to be classed as games by virtue of a grammar that all but compels us to group things; those groups are in turn established by, and are at the mercy of, the interpretive communities that Fish and others describe.

That interpretive community composed of those who read and study Joyce has certain fairly standard interpretations of the material. The rest of this paper will examine one of the elements that guides these interpretations.

And no more turn aside and brood
Upon love's bitter mystery.

These lines were written by W. B. Yeats in 1892 in the poem "Who Goes with Fergus?" Thirty years later, in *Ulysses,* James Joyce puts these words in the mouth of Buck Mulligan to help us understand the emotional state of Stephen Dedalus, who is still a young man but less an artist every day.

It is also, I believe, the key to a fuller understanding of the novel as it stands alone and its relationship to Joyce's other work.

Much has been made, and of course rightly so, of the Homeric parallels between *The Odyssey* and Joyce's great work. A convenient chart was first published by Stuart Gilbert in 1930 and is readily available. This chart is, with slight variation, the chart first provided by Joyce to Valery Larbaud, who was preparing lectures on *Ulysses* prior to publication (Ellmann 186-199).

The chart provides a schema for understanding what was, no doubt, a most baffling book when published in 1922. We are shown how the book is given shape in each section by several elements, including characters from Homer, particular narrative techniques, a science or art, a meaning (handy indeed), a bodily organ, and certain symbols.

From this schema we learn that Stephen Dedalus is to be "identified" in some way with Telemachus; because of this the meaning of the section is "the dispossessed son in struggle," that there is no affiliated organ, and that the dominant symbols are Hamlet, Ireland, and Stephen (Ellmann 188).

All these elements refer to the search for an absent father. Telemachus (Stephen) must search for Ulysses (Bloom? Simon Dedalus?); he (Telemachus / Stephen) is a son dispossessed because of a father's absence (Meaning). As for the symbols, Hamlet is a dispossessed son with a ghostly father, Ireland is a dispossessed land without a leader (except perhaps the ghost of Parnell), and Stephen represents those bright young lights of Ireland who suffer for the approval of some literary father figure to replace Grandfather Yeats.

Contrary to a schema which claims, with Joyce's aid and approval, to inform or frame each episode, the "Telemachus" episode provides us with a very different family figure -- the mother. Much of the reason for this has to be the fact that this is Stephen's episode and his mother's death is recent. This recognition is tempered though, by the fact that the image of "mother" is first invoked in a mythic sense by Buck Mulligan, Steven's foil and in turn representative of the sort of wit popular in the Dublin of the day (Mulligan is a young medical student; he is known about Dublin for his wit and because of it is invited to literary gatherings from which Stephen is excluded).

The dominant figure of this episode is that of the mother. This figure is expressed in three guises: Stephen's own mother, Mary Dedalus; the Motherland, Ireland; and finally the Mother Church.

The first episode begins with Mulligan's mocking call to Mass, (with all the implications of God the Father and God the Son), followed by the manifestation of Stephen as "Kinch" the "fearful Jesuit." However, the image of mother soon appears and becomes dominant. In lines 77-80, as the two gaze out at the bowl of Dublin Bay, we hear Mulligan: "God . . . isn't the sea what Algy calls it: a great sweet mother? The snotgreen sea [a turn on Homer's "winedark sea"] . . . Thallata! Thallata! She is our great

sweet mother. That's why she won't let me have anything to do with you" (Joyce 1:88-89).

Stephen then remembers a dream of his mother after her death. Her breath has the "faint odour of wetted ashes." He recalls that beside her deathbed rests a white china bowl filled with green bile, and the bowl which symbolizes the wasting and death of Mary Dedalus becomes identified with the bay that rests beside a dying Ireland. Joyce shows this with a simple juxtaposition:

> The ring of bay and skyline held a dull green mass of liquid. A bowl of white china had stood beside her deathbed holding the green sluggish bile which she had torn up from her rotting liver by fits of loud groaning vomiting (Joyce 1: 107-110)

Steven's mother is "beastly dead."

Ashes, the smell of wetted ashes, are always part of Stephen's dream/ vision of his mother. We see this figure twice in Telemachus, and it plays a crucial role in the "Circe" episode. Always the ashes.

To my ear, these ashes have a resonance with an aspect of Stephen's physical characterization, the ever-present ashplant. Leaving aside any easy pseudo-Freudian readings of a lost and fatherless boy with a stick always at hand, I see this as a reminder of his mother's death and a remnant of his other lost mother, Ireland. What's more Irish than an ashplant cane? What more appropriate device for Stephen to have than an ashplant that follows "lightly on the path, squealing at his heels. My familiar, after me, calling Steeeeeeeeeeeeephen!" (Joyce 1: 627-9). The keen of a mother for a lost son, issuing from a national "symbol" with a name that brings to mind a barren plant producing only ashes, a matrix or fundus that has been spent.

An even more obvious figure of mother / Ireland comes with the arrival of the old milkwoman (Joyce 1:386-407). The representation of the woman as Ireland is fairly explicit; she is referred to as "silk of the kine," and the "poor old woman," both old poetic references to Ireland.

Stephen notes that she serves two at the tower who would bring her low: Haines, the visiting Englishman who speaks Gaelic and seems to be in Ireland gathering colorful ideas and turns of phrases for export to England, and Mulligan, symbolic of those who would cater to the Anglo-Irish coterie who set the literary and artistic standards for Dublin and hence Ireland.

When Mulligan is upset that Stephen boldly asks if he can make any money from Haines' use of his metaphor for Irish art (the cracked lookingglass of a servant; 1: 146), Stephen tells Mulligan that the problem is to get money somewhere, whether from the old woman (Ireland) or from Haines (England). He sees little hope in either (Joyce 1: 490-501).

So Stephen has no motherland, either, Stephen tells Haines that he serves two masters, an English one and an Italian. "The imperial British state . . . and the holy Roman catholic and apostolic church" (Joyce 1. 638-44). A third, presumably Ireland, wants him for odd jobs.

He lives in a tower, the Martello Tower, which was built by the English "when the French were on the sea." It is a naval defense fortification built by foreign powers and referred to by Mulligan and Dedalus as the "Omphalos" (Joyce 1: 544). This word is especially rich in connotation. It alludes to, in the Greek, the "navel," the umbilicus, the stigmata of mammalian birth and specifically a tie to a biological mother, as opposed to a father. It is the center of operations for Dedalus, Mulligan, and Haines (though this arrangement changes by day's end). A matrix or a womb where they are protected from the elements. It is the place from which they issue forth.

"Omphalos" also refers to the boss of a shield, the small stub in the center of a symbol (the shield) of protection (and in this case, occupation), as well as being a name for the center of a wheel. The tower was built as a shield against French naval aggression, but it was built by the English; as such it also represents protection for a center of power, the hub of wheel not in Ireland -- a displaced center to be found in London.

This use of "omphalos" further underlines the uncertainty of the fatherhood (which Joyce referred to as a "legalistic fiction") which dominates the Gilbert schema, while asserting the connection to a mother, and shifts our attention further from the Father/ Son dyad of the schema and toward an apparent certainty, Motherhood, that is discovered to have at its core the same deep mystery -- in fact "love's bitter mystery." The introduction and development of this mystery sets the stage for the later entrance of the book's central character, Leopold Bloom.

Stephen's Italian master, the holy Roman catholic and apostolic church, "Mother Church" to the faithful, is not available to Stephen. He is, in his own words, "a horrible example of free thought." We know from *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* that Stephen is an acolyte of a new faith -- Art. We see in Ulysses that it's not working out. Throughout the novel, the ceremonies of religion are "sent up" at every turn. When Dedalus thinks of religion at all, as he must given the nature of his character, he focuses on the heresiarchs. Both he and Mulligan see themselves as "new pagans," out to "Hellenize" Ireland, and in so doing free the "poor old woman" from guilt and weeping effigies, as the Pogues so nicely put it.

The process of looking for and then pointing out the certainties in life, only to find those certainties ephemeral, is a mark of Joyce's work. A recognition of the paradoxes and ambiguities of human existence, and then some coming to terms with those difficulties (on the part of the reader, if not always the character) are elements found in all of Joyce's prose and drama. The process of stripping experience to its bare minimum, whether as epiphany or in a "scrupulous meanness" of detail, continues in *Ulysses.* It is accomplished here with a much surer hand, leaving time and space for the comedy of life not always apparent in Joyce's earlier fiction.

By undercutting or calling into question our most basic suppositions -- about parentage and history, politics and homeland, religion and its role in all these things -- Joyce in no way degrades these things and relations.

On the contrary, their revealed fragility makes them all the more dear. The reader is forced to focus on these most immediate of relations and supply whatever value is to be found in those relations.

Joyce's most detailed study of this sort is the married life of the novel's central characters Leopold and Molly, and at the heart of that relationship is "love's bitter mystery." This mystery is the big clue given us in the title *Ulysses* – along with its reference to a modern day "jewgreek" hero on the seas of the Dublin streets, and a modern Telemachus in search of a father, we are driven back to the root of the Homeric Myth, which grows from another example of "love's bitter mystery" – the loss of Helen.

"For a woman . . . Helen, the runaway wife of Menelaus, ten years the Greeks made war on Troy" (Joyce 2. 390-92). This is what put Ulysses for so long upon the "winedark sea." It is what led the suitors to Penelope and caused Telemachus to go off in search of his father.

Joyce's characters never really go away, but Stephen is moved from center stage after two more episodes. The main attribute of his character is to clear the decks of a too mindful approach to life, that is so far a failure, in order to make way and set the stage for a more heartfelt way of being in the world as typified by Leopold and Molly.

Referring one last time to Gilbert's schema, we see that the first three episodes of *Ulysses*, those with Stephen at the center, have no corresponding bodily organs. The other fifteen episodes do, and in the "Oxen of the Sun" (episode 14) that organ is the uterus and the symbols are "fecundation and parthenogenesis." Creation, and hence creativity, is the dominant symbol here, but only in part because of the setting (a maternity hospital). Indeed,Joyce has hard words for this more routine aspect of creation. I think it significant that this book should have a uterus, since this book gives birth to Molly, who in turn (both in style of discourse and the subjects considered) gives birth to the Great Mother, one of biblical proportions, of *Finnegan's Wake*, Anna Livia.

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Representation and Theatricality in Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*

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From its inception, *Bartholomew Fair* represented a number of firsts for Ben Jonson. His first play after the dismal failure of *Cataline*, it ran for only two performances in 1614, with the first performance on October 31, serving as a trial run for a performance before James I and his court on November 1, All Saints Day. The spirit of a noisy English feast day seems most fitting for the performance of Jonson's first and only festive comedy. Revolving around the "flesh and blood" of human nature, the play celebrates the year's passage through the dog-days of August, the end of summer and the beginning of harvest. Without (for once) borrowing from the ancients or denigrating fellow playwrights, Jonson wrote his play as a "generous" testament to everyman's basic nature which, like Ursula's tent, contains a humorous mixture of alimentation, defecation, and fornication. For good reason, Jonson names the lead puppet "Dionysus"; this play invokes the Dionysian spirit of misrule, giving rise to crowd revelry that, in Nietzsche's philosophy, defies the "supreme danger" of grim morality (11-15).

With the growing threat to the theatre from the encroaching morality of the evangelical movement, circumstances forced Jonson to turn his satiric sting toward the Puritans and the materialism of the middle class, itself largely Puritan. By 1614, in a spirit of what Nietzsche calls "intransigent Christian assertion that nothing counts except moral values" (11), Puritans had published writings against secular amusements, aiming specifically at plays and play houses. Barish in *Ben Jonson and the Language of Prose Comedy* quotes Stubbes' *Anatomy of Abuses*, a Puritan tract on specifying forbidden activities: "dancing, jigging, bawdie stage plays and enterludes . . . May-Games, Church-Ales, feasts and wakesses . . . pyping, dauncing, dicing, carding, bowling, tenisse playing . . . Bear-bayting, cock-fighting, hawking, hunting . . . foot-ball playing, and other such devilish pastimes" (234). In counterattacking this censorious anti-theatre movement, Jonson uses the representations and the theatricality of an English fair and fair-goers as his weapons against the hypocrisy of the Puritan stand. Part of his goal is to represent life as it is and life as it ought to be, while showing at the same time, the theatricality of human existence and the imitation of life in the theatre. Using a cross-section of England's population as his characters, Jonson sets out to prove that the theatre is a mirror of realism, an entertainment for all ages, and a teacher against hypocrisy. One must note that the denizens of *Bartholomew's Fair*, who subsist on others' demands for physical delights, provide the place where

business, ritual, sensation, law, history, and religion not only meet but collide (Watson 141).

In line with his themes of representation, misrepresentation, control, and order, Jonson included on the title page a Horatian quotation which adds another complication by blurring the line between audience and stage and misrepresenting the roles of both

> If Democritus were still in the land of the living, he would laugh himself silly, for he would pay far more attention to the audience . . . than to the play, since the audience offers the more interesting spectacle. . . .

Jonson begins his satire with sets of double images and a series of misrepresentations. Strangely, or perhaps appropriately, one of the Fair sites for the battle of flesh against hypocrisy and authority occurs at a puppet show where Dionysus battles Rabbi Busy. The question of authority is significant in *Bartholomew Fair*, because the fair grounds traditionally lay outside the jurisdiction of town or shire and were subject only to the king's laws of the Piepower court. When, in the Epilogue to *Bartholomew Fair* Jonson acknowledges the king's "leave [to] license" (3-8), the theatrics on the stage receive the king's license to license, not a laughing matter in view of the Puritans' threats to close theatres.

To introduce the play's complex structure of multiple subplots and representations within representations, Jonson sets brackets within brackets as the Stage-keeper's *Inducion* blasts the play for its failure to represent the "real" fair and a "real" play of St. Bartholomew's Day. In bemoaning the absence of the traditional freaks and fool, the Stage-keeper emphasizes the play's verisimilitude and ordinary characters. Within this reverberating complexity, Jonson adds a third set of brackets for the Prologue within which the Scrivener presents to the audience "articles" in terms of Puritan avarice: "two shillings," "six pen'worth," as Susan Wells discusses in her *Dialectics of Representation* (125-27). These downside economics are followed by the Scrivener's complaints of the play's misrepresenting representations. Instead of a traditional "little Davy," the audience will see a horse courser; instead of a Kindheart, a "fine oily pig woman"; instead of a "juggler with an ape," a "wise justice of Peace." Jonson specifically warns the audience not to attempt to discover the realities behind the masks--not to ask "what great lady" is represented by the pig woman. He also is able to hint at his representations of gross humanity "in such place, such men, such language . . . you must expect."

The play has four central intrigues and misrepresentations which engage the fair folk and the middle class fair-goers: the Littlewits' trip to the fair; Widow Purecraft's deceitful suitors; the gulling of Busy, the gulling of Cokes, the gulling of Overdo; and the fair folks' attempts to turn a dishonest dollar. While the fair folk misrepresent themselves as part of their economic trickery, their motives, admittedly low, are nonetheless free from middle-class hypocrisy. In Jonson's representations, the cutpurse, the pimp, the whore, the puppeteer fare better than the misrepresentations

of humanity by which the Puritans define goodness. Captain Whit, dealer in female flesh, is the honest counterpart of Justice Overdo, who hopes to gain a profit from selling in marriage his ward Grace Wellborn. It is no accident that Justice Overdo wears a variety of disguises in his representational misrepresentations or that he is powerless in the arena of the fair.

Misrepresentation is responsible for impelling the puritans out of their element and to the fair grounds. Jonson, as he did in *Every Man in His Humor*, sets his upstanding group in the fair and lets their righteous characters determine action. Overdo, Busy, Purecraft, Cokes and Wasp, Littlewit and 'little pretty Win" suffer punishment according to the enormity of individual hypocrisy and misrepresentation. Grace, Winwife and Quarlous, as relatively free from cant, marry well and prosperously; perhaps because Quarlous, misrepresenting himself as mad, carries out the satyr's role in castigating Overdo and Busy, he is rewarded with a rich wife. Quarlous, as "super surrogate" in his manipulation of others for fun, undoubtedly represents Jonson's view. The other characters deal in deception, from Win's feigning the longings of pregnancy ["I can be hypocrite enough, though I were never so straight lac'd" (1.5.143-44)] to, more seriously, Overdy's and Busy's misrepresentations of law and religion. Littlewit is certainly the least afflicted with hypocrisy but he misrepresent his own desires, plagiarizes Marlowe's "Hero and Leander," and once at the fair turns his pregnant wife over to a pimp. Only one step away from infidelity with the Captain, both Win and Mrs. Overdo are clothed in the green dress of prostitutes, all because their Adam's flesh demanded a "jordan." Purecraft and Busy hide their true lusts of the flesh behind evangelical platitudes. Winwife tries to live up to his name, and Quarlous hides behind the mask of madness. hoping to marry Quarlous, Widow Purecraft brags about her wealth gained through chicanery as a "holy" widow and faithfully follows her horoscope. Yet these are solid citizens that Jonson is portraying; they represent the civilized world and believe in the marriage bed, legitimate children, church attendance, and moneymaking.

The quintessential representative of Puritan hypocrisy, however, is Jonson's real target. Elder Zeal-of-the-Land Busy embodies lust, gluttony, and avarice. Immediately recognized by his quasi-Biblical speech, his rationale for attending the licentious fair involves tortuous reasoning that "in the fair . . . in a booth, the tents of the wicked . . . we may be religious in the midst of the profane, so it be eaten with a reformed mouth, with sobriety and humbleness." Secure in being Elect, he adds: "In the way of comfort to the weak, I will go and eat, I will eat exceedingly, and prophesy" (1.6.81-82). He thunders at Ursula's bearing the marks of the devil (after Quarlous calls it to his attention), even as he eats two and one-half pigs and several pints of "Satan's" ale. Attempting to recreate Christ's rage at the money changers in the temple, Busy can only overturn Joan Trash's tray of gingerbread men. Rabbi Busy reaches the peak of his frenzy when he debates a verse of

scripture with the puppet Dionysus. Using ineffective, time-worn arguments against the theatre with its players and dancers, Busy finally shores up his argument with reference to Dionysus's dress and denounces males dressing as women. Mimicking Busy's rhetorical style and screaming "you lie, you lie, you lie abominably" (5.5.86), the gaudily-dressed little doll pulls up its dress to display no sexual parts at all.

The misrepresentation of law rests with Overdo and his disguises as he pursues evil at the fair. Having been beaten for his hypocritical vigilance, his reward is a drunk wife, garbed in prostitute green, vomiting in a basin. When Overdo is supposed to carry out his legal duties, he's in the stocks and overdo is finally disabused of the notion that his conduct represents a "mirror" or other magistrates. Wasp's feeble attempt at power represents another misrepresentation of law among the middle class. Excoriating good-hearted, dim-witted Bartholomew, Wasp's stinging comments constitute overkill; yet, he misrepresents the grand authority he believes he holds. A pest, Wasp and his excremental epithets give the lie to his role as wise, patient father-figure. Quarlous asks if Wasp is "overparted" and "tired i' [his] protectorship" (3.4.43-44). Robert Watson mentions that Jonson in this instance borrowed the "overparted" line from Shakespeare's *Love's Labor's Lost*. After Wasp's belittling, patronizing comments about Cokes' "errors, diseases of youth" (1.5.40). Wasp's loss of power is devastating. His authority, as he knows, "is out . . . my government is at an end. He that will correct another must want fault in himself" (5.4.85-87). Censor, hypocrite, and nuisance, Wasp as an authority figure is humiliated in the stocks, where, tried and sentenced by the fair folk, he joins Overdo and Busy. Jonson places Wasp's ward Bartholomew with his honest and lack of pretensions on the side of the fair folk. Although it's tempting to see Cokes as one of Jonson's gulls, the character becomes far more and far less than a fool. He swaggers a bit with his lecture against cutpurses but he calls himself an ass when he loses his fiance, his cape and both his purses. Bartholomew vastly overpays (by three shillings) Joan Trash for her stock of gingerbread men, but he never returns for the goods. He swears he's been martyred like St. Bartholomew but he spreads his wealth among the fair folk as he buys hobby horses, violins, pretty china dolls. Cokes is disappointed that the play is not about his happy visit to the fair, but he settles down in front of the stage to play with the boxes of pretty puppets, whom he resembles.

Like reversed images in a mirror, the representations of the middle-class world become reverse representations in the world of Ursula's tent. Overdo's and Wasp's ineffectual power outside is represented inside the tent by Ursula's absolute control. Love and sex in the middle class world become in the land of the fair, Captain Whit and his girls, who beat Mrs. Overdo when she tries to cross into their domain. Only Quarlous is allowed to cross back and forth between the two worlds. Dilettante Littlewit who, as proctor, author, husband and father, is mirrored in the theatrical world by Leathercraft as cheat, craftsman, theatrical producer,

and puppets's master ["Orpheus among his beasts" (2.5.6)]. The plot too contains dual representations with two big-bellied women, one pregnant and one "the very womb and bed of enormity" (2.2.95), precipitating most of the action. Although the mirror representations may be viewed at all levels, it isn't necessary to belabor the point here.

Supervised by enormous Ursula the Pig Woman, whom many critics call a female Falstaff, fair folk congregate in her tent functioning as restaurant, beer hall, stage, thieves' den, and privy. The tent is the center of the fair, and the center of attention. The mixture of refined middle-class speech and the street slang of the fair folk, the odors of burnt pig, tobacco smoke, bear pit and excrement, make the booth a representation of life, of the play itself, and of the play within. However devoted to higher causes, all the fair goers, one by one, admit their lower natures and avail themselves of Ursula's pleasures. Freda Townsend in *Apologie for Bartholomew Fair* sees Ursula as a natural phenomenon (740). Her representations are varied. A "great garden-pot" (2.2.48-49), the queen of festivity waters the earth. As enfolding earth mother, she furnishes abuse, cakes and ale for the characters willing to submit to her misrule. Ursula plays a regal role as she sits in her too-small chair, nursing her scalded leg and surveying the hypocritical fair goers. As contrast to the lack of power among the straight citizens, Ursula wields real authority and her attendants carry out her commands to reward or punish.

The puppet show, like the rest of the world of the fair, mirrors the actions of the middle class and becomes another play-within. The theatrics of the show reflect the illusion surrounding the fair folk in their tents. By calling attention to moral enormities committed by middle class characters, the show becomes the misrepresentative representation of Jonson's usual wise mediator. Leatherhead produces Littlewit's plagiarized version of Marlowe's "Hero and Leander" as a representation of his own self-dramatized version of life, love, and the stage. Jonson's point is not theatricality itself but the theatricality of man's self-importance. Man is only "Adam" with his "flesh and blood" (5.6.89), as Overdo finally realizes.

There is no mediation or reconciliation at the end of Jonson's festive comedy. The fair folk are fair folk and the middle class remain the representative establishment. The theatrics of the play and its puppet show establish the capacity for pleasure as the litmus test of human conduct. The butt of the play is the pompous killjoy who is too busy with his pride to join the fun. Both Overdo, Busy, and Wasp, representatives of middle class authority and control, are too inadequate to recognize the representations of pleasure. At the play's end, they recant and claim to see the errors of their ways; Overdo invites everyone to his home where the play will continue but does anyone really believe Rabbi Busy? Or Wasp? The potential for pleasure is not in them and that, to Jonson, is the touchstone by which all men may be measured. However varied Jonson's use of theatricality and representations may be in *Bartholomew Fair*, his aim in all

of his satires is the same: to prick the self-importance of dour humans who attempt to restructure the world in their own images.

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Beyond the Ideal in Swift's *Proposal for the English Tongue*

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As a general trend, most commentaries regarding Swift's *Proposal for the English Tongue* emphasize a certain image in the work, almost suggesting a prejudiced position in those criticisms. One such commentary is that Swift was presenting a ridiculously idealistic project; in his *Life of Swift*, for instance, Doctor Johnson states that the *Proposal* was "written without much knowledge of the general nature of language, and without any accurate inquiry into the history of other tongues" (Johnson, IV, 133). However, it can hardly be said that Swift ignored how languages usually develop in time; neither can it be affirmed that he was unaware of important linguistic concepts. As it will be shown later, Swift displayed a clear understanding of fundamental tenets in the evolution of languages, especially regarding Latin. But, for all purposes, it appeared as though Swift was a kind of "new Plato" in linguistics, conceiving the possibility of an ultimate level of perfection in language. Some critics tended to connect Swift's *Proposal* with the general position of eighteenth-century neo-classicists, whose obsession with order and harmony was a trademark. While it is correct to place Swift in such a tradition, one cannot overlook the fact that there is more than just pure idealism grounding Swift's ideas in the *Proposal*; in fact, many concepts presented in it (no matter how indirectly or implicitly) are the result of pragmatic observation. These points reveal a sound sequence of arguments and notions.

Still, it is not surprising that Swift's *Proposal* is often misunderstood; bitter attacks on the work appeared as early as two days after its publication and continued throughout the years. Besides biting remarks in Whig newspapers, Swift's *Proposal* was bitterly attacked by John Oldmixon's *Remarks on Doctor Swift's Letter to the Lord Treasurer* and *The British Academy*, of composite authorship (including Oldmixon and Richard Mainwaring): these replies even reached the point of suggesting that Swift was in reality preparing the ground for the coming of the Pretender, and the restoration of Catholicism in England. It was said that Swift's "jacobitism" was evident in his assertion that Romance languages were "superior" to Germanic tongues. But, as it will be seen later, Swift did not exactly declare Romance languages to be the "best" ones; he rather criticized the modern Romance tongues which developed from vulgar latin. At that particular moment, Swifts critics managed to be as unreasonable as Swift himself was sometimes considered to be, as in his cruel lines on Marlborough's death, *On the Death of a Famous General*. Their attacks on Swift's *Proposal* usually ended up in personal offenses against his intellectual ability, which led him to

remark in a letter to Stella: "I believe if I writ an essay upon a straw some fool would answer it" (Swift, 369).

First, it is frequently pointed out that Swift was wrong in trying to "fix" the language in a permanent way. This argument is particularly dear to linguists who always remind us that, since languages are in constant change, any attempt to "fix" them is a fatal blow to their normal existence. Granting this to be certainly true, one might be too hasty in imagining that Swift closed his eyes and refused to see such undeniable reality. What seems to be a more accurate reading of Swift's idea can be thus expressed:

> He [Swift] spoke, indeed, of 'fixing' the language; but by that he did not mean that the English language should not be enlarged. He is explicitly to the contrary. What he sought to ensure is that good expressive English should never become obsolete. The real purpose of the proposed society is to try to keep sound words and expressions in currency, so that good books should never be antiquated for the ordinary Englishman. (Murry, 221)

Swift's aim was to avoid radical positions, as in most of his other works. In the case of the *Proposal*, he was concerned that English could be manipulated at will, being the target of every single individual who had a mind to change its form and insert random meanings. Although Swift's ideas in the work have an ultimate political nature, he tends to focus on a more philosophical and linguistic approach as regards this problem of chaotic manipulation. He emphasized the need of preserving order within English, thus preventing its transformation into something that even skilful speakers would be at a loss to define. One curious instance of this notion is reflected in a less-known (but not less-brilliant) work by Swift entitled *A Consultation of Four Physicians upon a Lord that was Dying*. In it, we can see the dangers of turning language into a mere instrument for erudite, learned communication; this notion is related to attempts at the reformation of English, particularly in its spelling, so that it would suit specific purposes of a certain profession, in this case represented by the medical science. Throughout the work, the four physicians debate over the fate of the agonizing lord in a way that, if put into a report, would be hardly understandable to the average person. And, to crown Swift's irony, the patient ends up dying while the doctors remain in frantic speculation in their learned way of speaking. As a sample, showing how all sentences in the work are spelled, we can mention this one:

> "Noto contra dictu in mi juge mentitis veris loto de. Itis as orto maladi sum callet," standing for "Not to contradict you in my judgement, it is very slow today. It is a sort of malady, some call it. (Swift IV, 271).

As we see, Swift was utterly against two incidents in the development of languages: the attempt to insert new words without a strong reason for their adoption, and, the idea of spelling pronunciation. First, we can say that Swift was quite pragmatic in his notion of words being created and admitted into a language. Contrary to what many critics say, he was

neither a reactionary in this point, nor a conservative who was against every single introduction of new expressions, which is unquestionably a factor in the enrichment of a language. Swift was in favor of introducing new words within a certain regulation; if a word is to be added to a language, there must be some good justification for that. Swift conceived that new words should only be the result of a need to express certain new ideas or inventions as they happen in time. For instance, Swift would not be against the creation of new words to express the functions and components of an airplane, since it is something real, requiring a particular set of expressions to define and classify its performances. In other words, the introduction of new words associated with "airplane' is not only admissible but desirable, since there can hardly be a satisfactory way of expressing its functions by using words in vogue before its invention. It can also be said that

> "He [Swift] accepted the inevitability of new words entering into the language from many sources, such as new inventions, commerce, navigation, war and changes in law and religion. Growth, controlled development of the language, this he envisaged, but it was not his main concern. His fundamental aim was to state persuasively the necessity of arriving at and preserving a sanctioned standard language, in order to give permanent life to all written records. (Davis IV, xvi)

Swift was thus poising himself against "modish" expressions, created without any specific reason. He asked why somebody would insist on saying "Plenipo" while the word is "plenipotentiaries" and why somebody would say "bamboozle" while it can be expressed by means of a more common verb. Some critics see here an attitude of elitism in Swift, reflected in the rejection of slang and other popular inventions. However, this is by no means true to Swift's idea of "popular" speech; he saw a well-defined line between different variations within a language and random creation of new exotic expressions. Swift would approve of the different manifestations of American English, which, in spite of their disparities in several aspects, allow for the perfect understanding between native speakers. Swift was ready to accept the fact that users of a certain language will necessarily differ between themselves in terms of pronunciation, particular expressions and so on; but he was definitely against changes in a certain language which would make it unintelligible to other speakers. Such modifications would be destructive to the main essence of the language, making two different manifestations of it as different as English and Welsh. The point is that Swift was inclined to admit new words provided they served a useful purpose. If a word can satisfactorily express a certain meaning in its common, accepted form, there is no reason to create a new word or a slang expression to convey the same meaning. To indulge in such creation of fanciful terms would be useless and pointless.

Considering all this, one should not make the hasty conclusion that Swift was against the speech of the common man: "When he traveled,

Swift delighted in the varieties of language he encountered. As a young man, he stayed in cheap inns, according to Lord Orrery, because he enjoyed listening to the 'vulgar dialect.' Swift himself speaks of conducting 'several experiments' in which he analyzed language in the rural areas of England and Ireland" (Kelly, 9). The idea is not to condemn the introduction of new words, but to welcome them as long as they have some practical usefulness, as in the case of the airplane. Above all, Swift wanted to prevent English from suffering corruption supposedly provoked by the almost libertine usage of expressions and words as their inventors thought fit. Obviously, it may be questioned if slang and popular invention of words can have a destructive influence upon a certain language. Most linguists tend to think they are not as damaging as Swift supposed; on the contrary, it would be a sign of healthy diversification and creativity of the popular mind. While this may be satisfactorily argued, we can understand why Swift regarded "popular linguistic creativity" as pernicious and condemnable. He had mainly two reasons for thinking so. First: "For Swift, the problem of meaning had an existential dimension. He continually fought to define himself, rather than be defined by others. Words were the medium through which he determined his presence in the world, for he was a man without family, without title, without wealth. But he had an intellect that expressed itself forcefully in language, and he hoped through language to make a lasting improvement in the world. With his writing, Swift sought to create something worthwhile, permanent, explicitly valuable, transcendent -- but these verbal monuments, he feared might sink into the swamp of oblivion if the forms and definitions of words continued to shift" (Kelly, 1-2).

Swift regarded language as more than a means of communication; he viewed it as an act of responsibility, where the producer of language should have in mind the intelligibility, pleasantness and fluency of the final product. As an utilitarian, Swift was concerned with satisfactory results in the use of language, including instruction, pleasure and edification of the reader or listener. For him, any deviant form of language would be inadequate for the achievement of those goals, especially in literature. As a reflection of the classical ideal of an everlasting form of truth which transcends time, Swift's ideas on language are not surprising. They are a product of his age and an echo of previous ages, such as the Augustan age of Rome, during Virgil's lifetime. While linguists may find it too idealistic or elitist, it is a philosophical view which has always had a great impact on other ages, even on our own contemporary way of thinking. It is a system which may be extremely helpful in drawing the line between what is convenient for a given model of thought and what is not. So, when Swift traces the development of Latin in the *Proposal*, he shows a clear awareness of how languages progress in time. The only difference between Swift's point here and his adversaries' is that, while Swift regards the fragmentation of vulgar Latin into a number of different languages as a negative factor, contrary opinion believes it to be a considerable improvement.

Even while recognizing this latter view as the right one, we cannot ignore that Swift was conscious of how linguistic changes occurred; he only happened to support one side of this development (the classical, Ciceronian Latin), while his opponents defended the other side of this same process (the resulting modern languages).

By looking at the *Proposal*, one can perceive Swift's anxiety about the possibility of English being understood by all future ages, and this accounts for the second reason why he adopted that philosophical position displayed in the work. He feared that continuous manipulation of English would infallibly result in the loss of its basic set of meanings and in its being unintelligible to later generations. This position has a social and political basis, as "his proposal for stabilizing the language is politicized by his association of linguistic and cultural decline: how to make decent English prevail in a land that has been tyrannized by Cromwell and cheated by Walpole?" (Reilly, 20). Swift had an almost paranoic fear of anarchy: it meant destruction and corrosion of values, and so, it should be avoided at all costs. Generally speaking, what was anathema and negative for Swift represented a positive, even constructive object for other currents of thought, and, as an example, we could mention the Romantics' notion of chaos as having a creative, powerful nature, an idea which Swift would have dismissed as non-sense. In this connection, what a good number of linguists regard as "healthy" and "positive" by being realized through diversity acquires a negative meaning for Swift. He could not reconcile progress with diversity; in his mind, only unity could bring a real improvement of conditions. And, Swift also conceives such unity as a permanent companion to simplicity. Although it may seem paradoxical for someone who is often regarded as "elitist," Swift considers that "perhaps because of the simple immediacy of their lives, the common people did not feel the need to alter the common, or traditional, linguistic forms and thus were able to speak in a way intelligible to all" (Kelly, 13). The bottom line of Swift's aim is clear: a state of things where English would be like an Esperanto for all its users, as a medium of total clearness and objectivity. In spite of its latent idealism, this notion was based in a very sound principle: "he believed that whatever was worth expressing could be put in words that ordinary, even uneducated people could understand" (Kelly, 13). Again, Swift's concern is of a pragmatical nature, as he could not accept the fact that a certain group of speakers is not able to produce the standard form of English: this stood for chaos and disorder, according to him. And, to his mind, this was to be avoided because it would present obstacles for a "general" understanding among speakers of English. What really mattered, as Swift saw it, was mutual comprehension and the preservation of intelligibility of works for future ages. Since he was convinced that radical variants of English and slang were impediments to the accomplishment of these two aims, he fought them until the end.

The center of these ideas refers less to language as used by people in general than language as a stylistic object, a vehicle for the successful

spreading of "truths" and values. Perhaps the greatest contribution of Swift's ideas on language is that they cast a light on how writers should produce "good" literary language: how to put thoughts on paper in a better way, how to make a reader receive the full impact of an author's ideas, and how to transmit them in a more efficacious way–in short, how to write well, so as to please and instruct readers (and, also occasionally, listeners) in the best classical tradition; or, to put it in another way, how to find good clothes to dress the naked "children of our brain," our thoughts. In order to cover the shame of original sin present in the crude nakedness of thoughts badly expressed, Swift offers his conception of fig leaves in form of better words and ways of expression. This is what practically every author and linguist attempts to do, only differing in the methods of dressing and in the clothes to be used; but, so long as there are people concerned about this, pleasant writing and speaking will not run the risk of being expelled from the primitive paradise of meanings within our minds.

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Cross-Disciplinary Literary Theory in Action: Myth and Archetype in the Classroom

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Basic knowledge of C. G. Jung's archetypal theory and of Joseph Campbell's approach to myth can assist us as teachers of literature and composition. Such is the case even with non-English majors taking a required course where literature is used as the subject matter for writing essays.

The fourth function of any living mythology involves "the centering and harmonizing of the individual" (*Creative* 623). Campbell speaks of

> certain irreducible psychological problems inherent in the very biology of our species, which have remained constant, and have, consequently, so tended to control and structure the myths and rites in their service that, in spite of all the differences that have been recognized, analyzed, and stressed by sociologists and historians, there run through the myths of all mankind the common strains of a single symphony of the soul. ("Mythological Themes" 141)

In fact, Campbell sees this function, sometimes referred to as the "pedagogical," as lying "at the root of" the other three functions of a living mythology "as their base and final support" (141).

Students today frequently lack--but very much need--immersion in the sense of meaning to which this approach to literature can introduce them. Many are starved as regards the healthy aspects of the mythic dimension. Whatever they may have absorbed of Bible--the only book of myths in which many of them are likely to have been instructed--is likely to be particularly flat, dead, and spiritless. They will probably have been told, if told anything about that great and strange book, either that it is pure trash or that it is all "sacred truth" / literal truth--neither of these views being fully accurate, to say the least.[1]

When the mythic dimension of fiction is explored, a waking up to new dimensions can occur. Campbell points out that people today are seeking "an experience of being alive, so that our life experiences on the purely physical plane will have resonances within our own innermost being and reality, so that we actually feel the rapture of being alive" (*Power* 5). This is what being enveloped in a living mythology did for people--and what most "civilized" people in the modern world are sadly denied.[2]

Jung held myths to be "symbolic expressions of the inner, unconscious drama of the psyche which becomes accessible to man's consciousness by way of projection--that is, mirrored in the events of nature" (*Archetypes* 6). Today, "since the stars have fallen from the heavens and our highest

symbols have paled," psychology becomes necessary as a partial replacement for a living mythology (23)[3] All our teaching should reflect these facts.

The mythological/ archetypal approach to literature emphasizes the narrative pattern of the quest or journey of the hero. This pattern appears in stories and novels most often in partial form: that is, a given stage of the quest occurs, the protagonist encountering a psychological crisis in a narrative comparable to myth. The quest or journey begins with the call to adventure, which beckons the individual to leave the innocence of childhood, leading through various stages on to maturity and eventually to transformation/ illumination.

This essentially universal pattern is parallel in a number of aspects to what Jung calls the process of psychological evolution called individuation. Jung's ideas of the confrontation with the shadow or unacknowledged portion of the psyche parallel the hero's encountering dark figures such as devils, tempters, or enemies. Through such encounters, the individual advances or learns truth about self and world. The confrontation with the anima/animus figure represents the need of dealing with the other sex, both in the external world and within the world of the psyche (Cf. *Hero* 109-126). What Jung calls the archetypal figure of the wise old man is paralleled by the helper/ advisor figure encountered by the hero of myth. The ultimate archetype of the "self" is parallel to god-like figures in myth and myth-like fiction, and also to symbols like the mandala, the cross, or the circle.

Both patterns--the hero's journey and individuation--are related to the pedagogical or psychological function of myth (*Creative* 623; *Myths* 222-224) in that they guide an individual through the various stages, conflicts and crises of life. Remnants of the pedagogical function survive in the modern world in the form of such ceremonies as baptism, the bar mitzvah, the initiation in the social club. However, the weakness and superficiality of such remnants in today's pluralistic society is illustrated in such phenomena as the dysfunctional family, drug addiction, the high divorce rate, and child/ elder abuse.

Having no organized living mythological paths leading to experience of the unconscious and the archetypes causes the modern individual to have a tendency to miss the trail, to fail to hear the call of inspiration from within, to lack the clues or perspective needed for approaching archetypal situations faced in the process of life. The various stages of a fully human life from the transition from childhood naivete forward parallel the stages of the hero's journey. College students are fortunate if they learn about such matters.

Recently, I have experimented with using these theories in teaching the second level freshman composition courses. In many colleges and universities, this course leads the student beyond the personal essays assigned in the primary level composition course into writing essays about a given subject matter, perhaps even employing some research and documenta-

tion. Traditionally, this course has taken literature--fiction, poetry, and/or drama--as its subject matter and has doubled as a kind of "introduction to literature," preparing students for later "world literature," "literary survey," or "humanities" general education or core courses. Yet several problems exist with this course as traditionally taught.

Some students, especially in recent times, find the course too complicated, too dry, loaded too much with technical, "literary" detail. In particular, some with problematical secondary backgrounds, find the treatment of three genres, each with its special vocabulary and set of characteristics extremely taxing in a course which continues to work in the essay writing format and usually adds the new aspect of documentation of sources quoted or paraphrased. Some would argue that as "professionals" we should not change course descriptions merely because students find the courses too complicated or not "relevant" enough, yet our mission is to help our students succeed in improving their skills and in broadening their reading and thinking experience. Surely, some common ground is the best place to start, and many students come to us with an aversion to poetry and talk of literary terminology and documentation. If problems arise in using something in teaching a course, perhaps using something else will do the job just as well and allow for more engagement and perception of "relevance" on the part of the student. Perhaps such should be seen as a change of material, not a lowering of standards.

For some students, the generic/analytic writing approach seems something foisted upon them from without--just another imposition of the college system, just another hoop through which they are expected to jump. For many the traditional three-genre literary approach is not appealing.[4] I have reduced the subject matter in this freshman composition II course to fiction approached in terms of the universal quest, what Campbell calls the monomyth. The texts are stories from *Discoveries: Fifty Stories of the Quest* (Schechter and Semeiks), Hesse's *Siddhartha*, and Clarke's *Childhood's End*. Each essay written for this class requires documentation using the new MLA format. The student quotes at least from the story or novel being discussed; one assignment requires that an article from a periodical or from a scholarly collection be quoted; students are encouraged but not required to use the *Discoveries* introductions and chapters as sources and document them as well. Each essay assignment focuses on some aspect of the journey or quest.

The *Discoveries* text is in certain respects exemplary. In fact, it is the only text of its kind in print. Schechter and Semeiks point out that each of the stories in their anthology is a variation "of a story that is as old as story-telling itself," relating a "quest--of men and women heroes traveling a difficult road toward a goal that promises to transform their lives" (xxv). They also say that

> Quest narratives "speak" to us because they portray, in straightforward or symbolic terms, very basic human experiences and reflect a common perception of life as a journey composed of separate

stages with each its own problems to overcome and its own potential rewards. (xxv)

Giving students experience in reading and writing about "straightforward" portrayals as well as ones that involve symbolic patterns is excellent background for what students do later in the English component of the general education portion of the curriculum at the university where I teach in that they go on to take either "world literature through the renaissance" or "world literature since the renaissance." In many colleges and universities, such a course as this one at the freshman level continues practice in writing by moving into writing about a particular subject, while serving also as an introduction to a later literature course of courses.

The "very basic human experiences" and "*common* perception of life as a journey" [Italics added] relate to the aspect of this use of theory in the classroom that points away from subjects somehow removed from where the students are back to the "basic," the "human" ['Hey, we're all human, aren't we?'], and the "common," in the sense of that which applies to everyone (xxv).

Further, that the journey is "composed of separate stages each with its own problems to overcome and its own potential rewards" (xxv) makes what the students are being asked to engage with even more clearly an interdisciplinary experience that just one involving the two areas of literature and mythology. It is a reference, in effect, to both the disciplines of psychology and sociology, both potentially part of the general education curriculum of many post-secondary institutions. At the same time, it is a reference to what Campbell defines as the psychological or pedagogical function. He speaks of it as "shaping individuals to the aims and ideals of their various social groups, bearing them on from birth through death through the course of a human life" (*Mythological Themes* 141). This aspect borders on concern with sociology in touching on such aspects as marriage and other social phenomena and such matters as the expectations of an individual's society regarding such areas as responsibility and self-discipline.

Discoveries is divided into six sections which the authors claim "correspond to the main stages of the quest, based on the model established by Joseph Campbell in his classic study of world mythology, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*" (xxv). These stages (the authors say) are: the call; the other; the journey; helpers and guides; the treasure; and transformation. Actually, the inclusion of "the journey" as the third stage is somewhat anomalous in that "quest," as used in the title of the anthology strongly implies, if it does not directly signify, a journey of some kind, whether physical or spiritual. If all these chapters (or sections) correspond to stages of the quest (or journey), one wonders why the third chapter should be entitled "The Journey." Hawthorne's "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," is one of the stories from this section that we discuss in my class in relation to its connection with the shadow, or what Discoveries refers to as "the other." It is also a good story to illustrate the concept of the initiation, a concept

which might really deserve a whole section in such a course. Fitzgerald's "Babylon Revisited" is another in this section I use in relation to the problem of the dark aspects of experience. The inclusion of "The Treasure" as a chapter is odd, as well, in that, in certain respects, it is not parallel to the other stages listed either. However, I do teach two of the stories in that section--Joyce's "Araby" and Le Guin's "Semley's Necklace," hoping students will find that one of the motifs common to those stories--that lusting after material objects can be disillusioning--a treasure of the non-physical sort. Actually, "Araby" would do very well as in illustration of the initiation phenomenon or stage, and "Semley's Necklace" is interesting as a combination science fiction/sword and sorcery story with an intricate narrative style and a plot involving time dilated space travel. This story provides an opportunity to discuss with the students the place of science fiction, both in print forms and cinema, as a kind of modern living mythology or pseudo-mythology.

Each of the stories in the collection has relevance to something in the experience or potential experience of each student. The hope is that the study of such stories--even when set in the past or future--is relevant to students' lives. Usually, I cover a few stories, such as some of those in the first chapter on "The Call," and then assign an essay in which the student discusses the story as a narrative which manifests that particular theme of the "call to adventure."

Siddhartha and *Childhood's End* both treat the basic motif of the journey toward some kind of transformation; both provide opportunities for thought, discussion, and writing focused on various stages and aspects of the journey. In particular, regarding *Siddhartha* I discuss his transformative experience under the Obo Tree and his overcoming of the demons of fear and desire and also explore the particular Western--and modern--theme of how the Siddhartha of the novel (same first name as the Buddha) wants to find his own path, separate from the influence of his teachers, givers of advice, and authority figures. *Childhood's End* is unique among the selections in that, with it, the hero, or protagonist, of the journey toward transformation is humankind itself, the whole species. That the helpers from outer space (the mythological world) resemble devils is an interesting irony to be related to the shadow motif.

Campbell alludes to the challenges placed on contemporary educators in a period of social disarray and psychological confusion (*Myths* 9). He speaks also of "the life-supporting nature of myths," arguing "that, in criticizing their archaic features, we [should] not misrepresent and disqualify their necessity--throwing out, so to say, the baby (whole generations of babies) with the bath [-water]" (10). He goes on to argue that when myths are interpreted symbolically like fiction or poetry, they set forth "facts of the mind" (10). Certainly, the same is true of literature carrying mythic content, when studied with attention to understanding the symbolic structures (like the journey motif) and the meanings behind them.

Campbell goes on to proclaim that

> It will be more and more, and with increasing urgency, the task of the psychologist and comparative mythologist not only to identify, analyze, and interpret the symbolized "facts of the mind," but also to evolve techniques for retaining these in health and, as the old traditions of the fading past dissolve, assist mankind to a knowledge and appreciation of our own inward, as well as the world's outward, orders of fact. (*Myths* 11)

An appropriate addition to Campbell's list beginning with the psychologist and the comparative mythologist would be the educator--indeed, the educator on whatever level, especially the one treating of non-technical or "humanities" areas. Every child born on this planet is the inheritor of an incredibly rich mythic cosmos of traditions, an acquaintance with which can teach that child a great deal. Every child is born a human being, and just as surely as it is born with the human characteristics of a physical nature, so is it born with a human psyche. The human psyche comes with built-in archetypes--informing patterns of recognition relating to crucial experiences with which every individual is likely to meet. These archetypes are what inform the bulk of the mythological traditions, rites, rituals, and religions of the world. They are projected into art, literature, philosophy, even science; they involve what is most basic to the species.

This is only one of many ways that this body of cross-disciplinary knowledge--archetypal psychology and comparative mythology--can be used to enhance what a teacher does. That only one freshman anthology text appropriate to this approach is in print--not that more than a few have ever existed--indicates the unpopularity of this approach. Also, it shows the general ignorance of myth understood in this way--indeed, an ignorance constantly indicated by the frequent use of the word "myth" exclusively as a synonym of "falsification."

Footnotes

[1]Campbell sees the modern world as being full of "the terminal moraine of mythology" (*Journey* 133). Nietzsche's Zarathustra proclaimed in the late nineteenth century, "Dead are all the gods." Traditional myth accepted literally as historical Christianity was supposed to be can never be believed in that way, again--at least not by intelligent, knowledgeable individuals with any intellectual integrity. Though this point of view has come to the West only in the last hundred years of so, Campbell says that in India as early as the ninth century B.C., the concept arose of all the gods and demons as personifications of aspects of the psyche itself--what Jung calls the archetypes.

[2]The comparative mythology of Campbell (*Myths* 1-18, 207-239) and the analytical psychology of Jung (*Basic* 4-5, 91-92) imply--if they do not state it outright--that many of the typical characteristics of life today are tied to this lack of a living mythological system or a lack of an understanding of

the matters with which myth is concerned. Students' lives typically manifest apathy, aimlessness, confusion about values, restlessness, and a general inability to "stay with" anything consistently. Another factor is an environment saturated with principally non-print "media," moving the "literate" portion of society further and further from any depth or solidity.

[3]Much interest in comparative approaches applying Jungian psychology to myth has been generated by the "Power of Myth" video series with Bill Moyers questioning Campbell, by Campbell's recorded lectures (published as *Transformations of Myth Through Time*), and by his radio talk-show appearances during the last decade of his life, some of which have seen print in *An Open Life.*

[4]Typical texts include Bain, Frye, and Perrine. One three-genre text, Davis, has fine sections on myth/symbol (280-284, 300-305, 525-541) yet has been out of print for several years.

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The Autobiographical Comedy of *Black Boy*

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Richard Wright's *Black Boy* is the result of a difficult combination of naturalistic fiction and autobiography. It is filled with consuming rage and heart-wrenching reflections on the inevitability of human suffering but ends happily. Richard, the black boy, alone escapes the determinacy of his environment that the naturalistic vision indifferently renders. As readers we must account for this paradoxical development. This paper will contrast the comic destiny of Richard with the tragic nature of the black community in the Jim Crow South. In order to better define the issue at stake here, I will also contrast the comic character of Richard with the tragic figure of Bigger Thomas in *Native Son*. While the vicious cycling of fear, flight, and fate encloses the black community in *Black Boy* in much the same way that it encircles the life of Bigger, the comic line of autobiography breaks this circle. Wright is empowered by the creative autobiographical act to free his persona, Richard, from the immanence of the black community's environment. Wright is able to organize his experience in words and, most importantly, claim new identity in the first person singular pronoun "I." By inscribing himself as "I," Wright appropriates an entire language that he can use to affirm his selfhood. It is this self-affirming quality of autobiography which makes it utterly resistant to tragedy. Therefore, autobiography as a genre is never tragic, allowing Wright to "Wright" his life experiences as a comedy that progresses in the very midst of an American tragedy.

In *Time's Arrow, Time's Cycle* Stephen Jay Gould qualifies the use of dichotomies. All dichotomies are in a sense misleading because they oversimplify a given situation; however, some dichotomies are more useful than others because they do emphasize great trends of thought in a way vivid enough to be fully and readily understood. While it can be demonstrated that the emplotment of Richard's life has affinity with the Aristotelian conventions of drama, this is not to say that comedy as a dramatic form adheres to a linear conception of time. We shall see that Greek drama is actually antihistorical. Furthermore, to contrast the vector of progress Richard's life follows with the inescapability of the naturalistic setting is not to imply that naturalism is rooted in cyclical archetypes of time. The distinction that Zola makes between determinism and fatalism (p. 653) indicates that naturalism is in fact closely allied to the modern conception of history as a series of events, the events having meaning in themselves without recourse to any transhistorical belief systems. The cycle of fear, flight, and fate in *Black Boy* and *Native Son* is not the same as the cycle of the seasons. The former is based on a modern, historical model, and the latter on a traditional, antihistorical model. Nevertheless, both

cycles have the effect of closing off the future for the individual, thus constricting human freedom until the human endeavor becomes unimportant. Herein the dichotomy between the comic and progressive destiny of Richard and the tragic and immanent fate of the black community and Bigger is useful.

Richard's painful struggle to claim his identity as a unique individual is the driving force of *Black Boy*. The title contains no hint of individuality; it speaks only of the third person "boy." Richard's emergence from type--the black boy of the dead-end black community--to individual--the nascent artist freeing himself from the oppressive South--follows a comic line. Wright traces Richard's decline of self-esteem until the point that he declares himself a "non-man," and then describes a reversal which culminates in the full attainment of his selfhood. Richard heads North with the "notion that life could be lived with dignity." This may be a "hazy" notion, but it is a complete recovery from his non-man status, a remarkable personal triumph that defies the self-effacing conditioning of the hostile, white, Jim Crow South.

The difference between the complication of the action (everything that takes place from the beginning of the text until the reversal) and the unraveling of the action (everything that takes place from the reversal to the end) is no less than the polarity between self-denial and self-affirmation. Until his reversal, Richard is subject to his environment, which teaches him to deny himself. This process of systematic self-denial is his miseducation. The institutions of family, school, church, and state all collaborate in Richard's miseducation. Richard is constantly being forced to "live in a world in which one's mind and perceptions meant nothing and authority and tradition meant everything." This leads to his complete alienation from the human race, to his downfall as the non-man. Just as Richard's downfall is due to his miseducation, his recovery and comic rise are due to his self-education. In answer to his question, "What was it that made me conscious of my possibilities?" Richard responds, "books." By educating himself, Richard affirms himself. The ultimate act of self-assertion will become writing, and the words that were once Richard's "sentence of death" will become the creation of his new life.

The movement from the complication of the action to its unraveling has its roots in Aristotle's *Poetics*. But Aristotle says that "comedy aims at representing men as worse" than they are in actual life, and so we cannot call *Black Boy* comedy merely because it ends happily. It is truly comic because it breaks away from the Hellenic circular, closed-off conception of time in much the same way that Richard escapes the black community of the South. In *The Sense of History in Greek and Shakespearean Drama*, Tom Driver says that Hellenic drama is concerned most of all with universal occurrences, with the forms and structures of reality that are accepted as natural law. For the Greeks "time inevitably takes on a negative character" because there is no novelty to human actions. The future is closed. The autobiographical act starts from the premise that the future is open. The

autobiographer proceeds from the belief that the past is not decisive and determinative; how could it be when the autobiographer is only now inscribing past experience in a form that will simultaneously interpret and await the future?

In describing what he calls the "terror of history," Mircea Eliade says that "modern man can be creative only insofar as he is historical; in other words, all creation is forbidden him except that which has its source in his own freedom; and, consequently, everything is denied him except the freedom to make history by making himself." The autobiographer is in the unique position to make himself. This is a terrifying position because he attempts to make himself against the historical background that would *make him* out of "the blind play of economic, social, or political forces." Yet it is a liberating position because it enables the autobiographer to oppose those external forces. If *Black Boy* had been written as a novel, the truth of Richard's life would be the resignation he expresses shortly after he calls himself a non-man: "The truth was that I had . . . grown to accept the value of myself that my old environment had created in me, and I had thought that no other kind of environment was possible." Since *Black Boy* is autobiography, Richard can reverse the manipulation of his environment and declare, "It had never occurred to me that I was in any way an inferior being." Autobiography affords him the language to authorize himself.

As I pointed out previously, it is the autobiographical discourse which allows Wright to replace the type that is the black boy with the "I" who is Richard. In *American Hunger*, the sequel to *Black Boy*, Wright confirms that it is the words that "build a bridge" between Richard and the outside world, "that world that was so distant and elusive that it seemed unreal." Wright's words make his reality, and not the other way around. The autobiographical discourse is literally a whole new language and therefore engenders a whole new selfhood.

Richard's selfhood emerges from his reaction to his environment. The environment of the black community in the Jim Crow South turns out to be very similar to Bigger Thomas's environment. Robert Stepto points out that the language of *Native Son* recalls the language Wright uses in his most controversial and damning indictment of the black community in *Black Boy*. The former text is divided into three sections, respectively named "Fear," "Flight," and "Fate." When Bigger kills Mary, we are told that "Frenzy dominated him." In *Black Boy* Richard tells us that the emotional strength of the black community really only amounts to "negative confusions, our flights, our fears, our frenzy under pressure." The connection between Richard's world and Bigger's world is evident. It is the same world, the same immanent, deterministic environment that traps Richard's peers and leads to the destruction of Bigger. But where Richard creates a new life for himself, Bigger fails. "The wheel of blood continues to turn" in *Native Son*. This makes for the essential difference between Richard and Bigger.

Joyce Anne Joyce characterizes Bigger as "the tragic hero." His "strong sense of pride and courageous spirit distinguish him . . . from the typical

naturalistic character," and he gains new knowledge of his self through his suffering. However, the crucial fact of Bigger's existence is his impending death: "Over and over again he had tried to create a new world to live in, and over and over he had failed." This is why Bigger is a tragic figure, as opposed to the comic figure of Richard, who creates a new world for himself through the enabling act of autobiography. Bigger's world, like the world of Hellenic drama, is closed-off from the future. Ironically, it is not an antihistorical perspective (as is the case with Greek drama) but the very historicity of naturalism that closes off Bigger's future. Bigger is trapped in the terror of history, "caught up in a vast but delicate machine whose wheels would whir no matter what was pitted against them." As a naturalistic novel, *Native Son* shows the economic, social, and political phenomena that impinge on Bigger's life and the particular circumstances that are the nearest cause of his tragic outcome.

Autobiography is tragedy-proof. Even when the autobiographical life takes place within the midst of a sterile, self-annihilating environment, that life progresses. *Black Boy* is an example of what I am calling a comic autobiography. There is not room in this paper for a full exploration of the comic mode of autobiography. The examination of *Black Boy* as an autobiography in the comic mode should be sufficient to show that the very practice of autobiography is premised upon the autobiographer's ability to organize experience in a new way that is not limited by the historical events themselves. This freedom from history allows the autobiographer to conceive of a new self apart from his historical identity but related to him through the uniqueness of the autobiographical discourse. This self-creation is not only the recognition of new knowledge of the self, but it is the very transcendence of the fate that is the tragic price of new knowledge. It may be argued that this evasion of tragic fate is merely suicide, to use Henry Adams's euphemism for autobiography. Hence, the creator sacrificially becomes the created. But the created, the self of autobiography, no longer remains subject to conditions of historical truth and thus escapes all denial and gains the promise of affirmation. At the very least, if autobiography is not a comedy it is a romance, in Northrop Frye's sense of the term. The romance autobiography would lead to the *anagnorisis* or discovery, "the recognition of the hero" that defies the recognition to that which must be.

Richard Wright's *Black Boy* is a significant autobiography not only because it is a major expression of Afro-American identity, but because it possesses the qualities of great autobiography. Most importantly, *Black Boy* challenges the integrity of the autobiographical discourse by forcing it to account for the development of the self within the naturalistic setting. The resultant comic ascendancy of Wright's autobiographical persona, Richard, reveals the anti-tragical nature of all autobiography. The black boy becomes the Wright man for posterity.

Further Metonymics of the Well in Some of Robert Frost's Poems

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I

Looking before and after his poem "For Once Then, Something" (published in 1928), we can see how Robert Frost sometimes uses the image of a natural well (a spring or a brook, which may not be quite the same), or how, in the absence of a literal well, he speaks of the "cellar hole" that represents the foundation of a house or family, the broken cisterns, as it were, of Ecclesiastes and closed wells and cellar holes of Thoreau's *Walden*.[1] In contrast to the single pond, Frost seems to have needed to divide his attention, in some of his more significant poems, about equally between the cellar hole and the brook. Sometimes he is all cellar hole, as in "Ghost House," or all brook, as in "West-Running Brook." But the perceiving and creating self that focuses upon these inspires us to want to know the truth about them just as Thoreau invites us to learn the Divine secret of Walden.

Because Frost's world, like that of Edwin Arlington Robinson and T. S. Eliot, is somewhat of a broken world "in the rush," he says in "The Master Speed," "of everything to waste," the self-gesture and the self-truth in his poems become important when as metaphor, they help us, as Frost and Eliot would agree, to stand still.[2] The habit of looking into the well that informs Frost's "For Once Then, Something" conveys just such a sense of staying power in his oft-quoted poem "The Pasture":

> I'm going out to clean the pasture spring;
> I'll only stop to rake the leaves away
> (And wait to watch the water clear, I may):
> I shan't be gone long.--You come too.

Though the speaker's ostensible intention is to clean the spring, he will "only stop" to remove the leaves, implying that his journey is to continue. From the first, Frost's self-gesture is one of motion as well as of staying. Waiting "to watch the water clear" implies both a cleaning of the mind--as Frost himself once said[3]--as well as that there may be something worth seeing. As a spring is obviously a source, it implies here that Frost's habit of looking is a basic source for his own knowledge of being. The invitation, "You come too" is our invitation to look into this well and participate in a similar process of knowing.

In another early poem, "Going for Water," Frost shows us a transformation involving a shift of attention from the well to the brook. The shift is significant for the reader as for the couple in the poem. From the observation that "the well was dry beside the door" to the perception of "a slender

tinkling fall," we have the simile of waterdrops floating on the surface "Like pearls, and not a silver blade." Between the empty well and the purling brook are the love and urgency of the couple "To seek the brook if still it ran," ending their quest for the dry well in the experience of metaphor--of poetry--which is as much their need as the obtaining of water.

The well image is once more transformed in "A Fountain, a Bottle, a Donkey's Ear's and Some Books," this time beginning with a search for an old baptismal font built by Mormons on the side of a mountain and ending with--not the sight of the font--but the sight of, and possession of poetry (in the form of a copy of poems by the deceased poetess, Clara Robinson.) But the possession of her book is much more to the man who found it, even more than the would-be font. We are reminded of what a "fountain" this discovery is by the second man's saying, when he learns they have lost their way, "I want my fountain" and he gets poetry instead. And we guess that he, too, is a poet, from what he says to himself later:

> The poetess had sighed, I knew, in heaven
> At having eased her heart of one more copy--
> Legitimately.

In looking into pools made by melting spring snows, Frost shows us where the truth will go from the self-start of his perception. The spring pools "still reflect/The total sky almost without defect," but because no river or brook will take them on, they will go "up by roots to bring dark foliage on." The poem "Spring Pools" is a protest against the dark, against loss, too soon, of the purity of picture that unites "these flowery waters and these watery flowers." The poem enunciates the brevity of these aesthetic moments of perception, reminding us in the latter part of the poem by implication that humans have it in themselves to darken them.

Frost's "A Servant to Servants" reveals a disturbed servant who has a view of Willoughby Lake from her sink window. Though she is, somehow, like the Hugh Quoils of *Walden*, "all gone wrong," she affirms, "You take the lake. I look and look at it./ I see it's a fair, pretty sheet of water," and her experiences with the lake clearly indicate that she identifies her self with it:

> It took my mind off doughnuts and soda biscuit
> To step outdoors and take the water dazzle
> A sunny morning, or take the rising wind
> About my face and body and through my wrapper,
> When a story threatened from the Dragon's Den,
> And a cold chill shivered across the lake.

Her longing for human contact gnaws at her, and the lake can be a seemingly bright spot in her existence. But the history she tells of madness in her family, of her close proximity to it, verifies a truth for her and for us, when she says, "There's more to [life] than just window-views / And living by a lake." She feels much in her relation to the lake, but she would like to know the counterpart in human terms; the lake-relation cannot answer her life-problems. Frost thus reminds us that truth--solving life's problems--

may lie beyond "a pretty sheet of water" or the physical, even aesthetic proximity of its winds. We feel the irony in her "life of quiet desperation" when she comments that she needs to "*be* kept."

The ramifications of the well or its transformations in Frost's poems thus reveal different levels of aesthetic and psychological truth--more realistic perhaps, than idealistic--more dependent upon what we have, than upon the celebration of the pure ideal. A closer parallel with Thoreau may be seen when the well (as brook, source, flow) disappears. Frost uses this possibility in two poems, "Hyla Brook" and "A Brook in the City." In the first the speaker says:

> By June our brook's run out of song and speed
> Sought for much after that, it will be found
> Either to have gone groping underground
> (And taken with it all the Hyla breed
> That shouted in the mist a month ago, . . .
> Or flourished and come up in jewel-weed,
> Weak foliage that is blown upon and bent
> Even against the way its waters went. . . .
> A brook to none but who remember long.

The water, whether it has gone underground or flourished as jewel-weed, is metamorphosed before our eyes, and can be blown (as weed) "against the way its waters went." Some of the speaker's self has gone with it in the reversal of the Hyles myth, for the brook, presumably from love, has taken below ground "all the Hyla breed," though it still flourishes in the weak weed and self-identification and love in the speaker's affirmation, "A brook to none but who remember long."

This poem could easily have been written after Thoreau's description of growing grass in the "Spring" chapter of *Walden*:

> The grass-blade, like a long green ribbon, streams from the sod into the summer, checked indeed by the frost, but anon pushing on again, lifting its spear of last year's hay with the fresh life below. It grows as steadily as the rill oozes out of the ground. It is almost identical with that, for in the growing days of June, when the rills are dry, the grass-blades are their channels, and from year to year the herds drink at this perennial green stream, and the mower draws from it betimes their winter supply. So our human life dies down to its root, and still puts forth its green blade to eternity. (*Walden* 277)

In both instances it is the month of June "when the rills are dry" and "the grass-blades are their channels," though Frost has used the jewel-weed, and Thoreau's "perennial green stream" echoes his own term for Walden, "a perennial spring." "Our human life" in Thoreau is supplanted by Frost with "We love the things we love for what they are," and instead of our human life dying down, in Frost's poem it is the water that dies down but lives in him "who remembers long." Both writers internalize the grass in immor-

talizing the stream. Self-truth here has gone beyond self-gesture to the saving grace of art.

In "A Brook in the City" Frost calls the now submerged brook "an immortal force," and as one who remembers that before being forced under concrete, it "held the house as in an elbow'crook," no amount of cinder loads dumped on it or its isolation in "a sewer dungeon under stone" can keep the thoughts from rising "that so keep / This new-built city from both work and sleep." The poem seems to say that we have an illusion that we can somehow put the brook out of our mind. The "thoughts" here are like Thoreau's railroad sleepers put down by those Irishmen or Yankee men in the second chapter of *Walden*:

> I am glad to know [says Thoreau] that it takes a gang of men for every five miles to keep the sleepers down and level in their beds as it is, for this is a sign that they may sometime get up again. (*Walden* 83)

For Frost the brook here has the force of an unconscious idea that, because his art will not let us forget, may one day well up to the surface again.

II

The progress of the brook in Frost's poems, like the consciousness with which it is identified--and thus which does not free the reader from following--shows water gradually going down out of sight (or up), only to return at strategic moments on the field of Frost's own perceptions in another way. In some of Frost's more important poems the brooks would not be nearly so significant were it not for the cellar holes he describes with them as in "The Generations of Men" and "Directive," or separately in "Ghost House." If the well can be dry, pointing up the need for renewal, and the brook can disappear and still be alive to us, the cellar, or cellar hole is itself the metamorphosed well, another image of the truth-process into which, or through which, the mind may see. While the redemptive value of the brook in "Directive" has been amply pointed out by other critics,[4] it would be inadequate to assume that redemption occurs merely because the brook is there, or that the self-identification of Frost with this brook makes him a purist at last. The cellar image provided Frost the means in the brook poems of grounding his self-perceptions in time, in history, from which the new myth, like Thoreau's could emerge in other metaphor.

Frost's interest in the cellar hole as a source for his writing might be indicated in *Walden* by at least two passages. A comparison of these shows that Thoreau consciously connected his manner of looking into the pond with looking into the cellar. When he observes the first ice in "House-Warming," he says that it

> affords the best opportunity that ever offers for examining the bottom where it is shallow; for you can lie at your length . . . and

> study the bottom at your leisure, only two or three inches distant, like a picture behind glass. (*Walden* 221)

The second passage offers a comparison of this act of Thoreau's, this time as he describes the only survivor of the Breed family who has returned to view the burned-over cellar hole of the house that had belonged to his family, "lying on his stomach and looking over the cellar wall at the still smoldering cinders beneath":

> He . . . had improved the first moments that he could call his own to visit the home of his fathers and his youth. He gazed into the cellar from all sides and points of view by turns, always lying down to it, as if there was some treasure, which he remembered, concealed between the stones, where there was absolutely nothing but a heap of bricks and ashes. (*Walden* 234)

The views may not be the same in these two examples, but the gesture on the part of Thoreau to emphasize the history of his two "wells" is clear. It is the same gesture that informs Frost's use of the cellar-hole. It is the self-gesture that attempts to locate self-truth in the lapse of time that is necessary to recover the past--for Thoreau, in effect, to "recover the long lost bottom of Walden," and for Frost, to go "back through history up the stream of time." ("The Master Speed")

Frost strikes this significant chord in one of his beautiful early lyrics, "Ghost House":

> I dwell in a lonely house I know
> That vanished long ago
> And left no trace but the cellar walls,
> And a cellar in which the daylight falls,
> And the purple-stemmed wild raspberries grow.

The self-speaker here simultaneously reveals the decay of the past that is symbolized by the "cellar walls," but daylight (the source of life) falls into it, and "raspberries grow" in the process of nature's own recovery and renewal. In "The Generations of Men" the Stark family reunion gathers where

> Someone had literally run to earth
> In an old cellar hole in a by-road
> The origin of all the family there.

But in this poem Frost adds a significant detail which shows that he wished his "history" to antedate even that of the family:

> Nothing would do but they must fix a day
> To stand together on the crater's verge
> That turned them on the world, and try to fathom
> The past and get some strangeness out of it.

As a "crater" the old cellar hole enters geological time and thus grounds the imaginative speculations (prompted by the brook) that the young couple in the poem make about the past and future, in which their own hopes secretly lie. Because real time and imaginative time participate together there, the young man's use of a metonymic image of time in his

story locates both past and future (not so much present, because the young couple are concerned about whether they will meet again) in a single image that *he* had identified with himself by hearing the voices of the brook:

'Call her Nausicaa, and take a timber
That you shall find lies in the cellar charred
Among the raspberries, and hew and shape it
For a door-sill or other corner piece
In a new cottage on the ancient spot.'

Thus the cellar hole, symbolized by the old timber in it, looks backward to the past and forward to the future, signifying, too, what the couple wants to hear.

In Frost's now celebrated "Directive" the cellar hole again exists as a center, though Frost has clearly separated, in the poem, "the belilaced cellar hole,/ Now slowly closing like a dent in dough" from the other two "centers"--the road that "May seem as if it should have been a quarry--/ Great monolithic knees that former town/ Long since gave up pretense of keeping covered./ . . . The chisel work of an enormous Glacier," and by contrast with what has been done by the great natural power of ice, the seemingly minuscule ruins of civilization in the "forty cellar holes" that appear to look out at the traveler along the road. Needless to say, since this poem is a Grail-oriented poem, its meaning is indicated by the journey to the brook's water which, if we drink it, will make us "whole again beyond confusion." But all of these "centers" are, by their connection in decay, also identifiable with the broken child's cup of the poem, and with which the speaker also identifies because he has kept it "hidden in the instep arch/ Of an old cedar tree" symbolic of the first trees of Christian mythology--"at the waterside."

Critics have pointed out how the speaker has hidden the cup "so the wrong ones can't find it," and have cited the Grail quest, and how the self-journey of the narrator, using images of decay and renewal, implies a great self-truth, that water alone will not save us, but perhaps the metaphor, and our knowledge of the metaphor, will. The brook, "Too lofty and original to rage" is indeed what the poet has brought us to, and coming later in his career, it marks a high point in his self-perceptions that have brought us all this way, from his first invitation in the "The Pasture." The marvelous thing has been the experience of consciousness in these poems --of a self seeking truth--and which after all, is Frost's gift to his readers.

In *Walden* Thoreau commented that "There have been many stories told about the bottom, or rather no bottom of this pond, which certainly had no foundation for themselves" (*Walden* 255-56). We have seen how both Thoreau's and Frost's acts of perception--both as rhetorical or symbolic self-gesture and as self-truth, do indeed inform their concepts of their most important self-images--the pond, the well, the spring, the brook, and the cellar hole. The stream of time is the myth of the self that Thoreau and Frost both create, and which in order to *have* a foundation, we must live through. The brook in Frost's "Directive" finally *is* what it must be--the ultimate

natural fact--though small, still the bright purity in the broken world--and like Walden, pure for a symbol.

Footnotes

[1]The present study is a continuation of work begun in a previously published article, "Surfaces and Depths: The Metonymic Wells of Thoreau and Frost," *POMPA*, 1985, 40-49, focusing on Thoreau's *Walden* and Frost's poem "For Once Then, Something." The final paragraph of the previous article is here reprinted to assist reading of the second article.

[2]All quotations from Robert Frost's poems are from *Complete Poems of Robert Frost* (New York: Henry Hold and Company, 1949).

[3]Poetry reading (with Donald Hall), Hill Auditorium, Ann Arbor, Michigan, April 3, 1962.

[4]Frank Lentriccia discusses this term in relation to Frost in *Robert Frost: Modern Poetics and the Landscape of the Self* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1975), 101-119. Lentriccia's interdisciplinary study of Frost complements the exceptional contributions to the study of Frost's mind and art published in *Frost: Centennial Essay* by the Committee on the Frost Centennial, Jackson, Mississippi, the previous year, mentioned in my previous article. Useful in the present enquiry also are Richard Poirier, *Robert Frost: The Work of Knowing* (New York: Oxford UP, 1977), John C. Kemp, *Robert Frost and New England: The Poet as Regionalist* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1979), and most recently, George Monteiro, *Robert Frost & the New England Renaissance* (Lexington: The UP of Kentucky, 1988). The latter study deals more formally with Frost and Thoreau than any previous book published on these writers. For use of terms I have been indebted to two studies, T. R. S. Sharma, *Robert Frost's Poetic Style* (Delhi: MacMillan India Limited, 1981), and George Bagby, "Frost's Synecdochism," *American Literature* 58, 1986, 379-392.

Poems

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The Digging

I am digging worms in the earth.
The worms are great and small; they squirm
as I gather them in the bucket.
Man has to do the digging to live a life
that takes him to the whole, the interior of light.
I spend my life as each day rolls into the night,
and as each night becomes a circle of accomplishments.
In the middle of his life man becomes solvent enough
to take his wife and children across the seven seas.
He brings her the galaxy of jewelry and dozens coats of fur.
So the effervescent man smiles the first fruit
of his risks and labor, a son whose
blood will shape the next root.
And the blossoming completes in full cycle
as it began years ago,
and he compares his notes that are leaf-yellow now,
and the balance and payment, and the profit and loss,
for what he does not owe, he pays nothing,
and goes happily to his bed,
hearing the sounds of digging.

The Wandering Loon

Hands do not hold hands; we remain apart.
The bleeding bull dies in the whiskey river.
I love you, to lose you, as flesh loses blood.
Hearts toll inside chests; bells inside sleep.
I am the wandering loon shot over the Nebraska plains.

Browning, Christopher Smart, and Visionary Poetry

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In Robert Browning's *Parleyings with Certain People of Importance in Their Day*--which William Clyde DeVane has called "The Autobiography of a Mind"--the poet of the varied group of individuals Browning addresses is the eighteenth-century madman Christopher Smart. One may well wonder why the choice did not fall to Shelley, the idol of Browning's youth. Shelley, after all, was the inspiration not only for such early works as *Pauline* and *Paracelsus* but for Browning's teenage flirtation with vegetarianism. Later there was to be the lyric "Memorabilia" ("Ah, did you once see Shelley plain") and the *Essay on Shelley*, the intended introduction to what was revealed before its publication to be a collection of forged Shelley letters. Although Browning never entirely lost his admiration for Shelley, he became disillusioned in 1858 after learning that Harriet Westbrook had been abandoned by Shelley rather than separated from him by mutual consent (Irvine and Honan 283-284). Besides, Shelley would have been the obvious choice for Browning to make for the poet in his *Parleyings*, and Browning rarely liked to be obvious. Instead, he chose Smart, the poet who, according to the story Browning knew, had written his one great visionary poem on the wall of his cell in a madhouse.

Browning first read "A Song to David" in 1827; and, as DeVane has shown, "the influence of Smart on Browning's poetry was very considerable." He affected Browning's ideas on poetry and contributed to his subject matter as well. In fact, "perhaps above all, Smart stood, to Browning, as a representative of a type of lyrical poetry--a poetry which poured out live and gratitude to God for the beauties and wonders of the good earth" (DeVane, *Handbook* 506-07).

However, I believe Browning may well have had another reason for choosing Christopher Smart to parley with. One may read the poem as primarily an attempt to define the kind of poetry Browning had written in his career, especially the kind composed and published in the waning years of his life. Read in this way, the poem reveals Browning to be at pains to differentiate his verse, not only from that of his contemporaries (a point which all commentaries on the poem have made) but also from that of Christopher Smart (a point which has not been sufficiently noted). The poem thus defines Browning's achievement in relation to what has often been considered the highest form of poetry--the visionary. There is, I believe, another advantage to such a reading. It enables one to see the first eight sections of the poem as more organically related to the last section than anyone has as yet realized.

Of the standard interpretations of what Browning is supposed to have in mind in his conversation with Christopher Smart, the most extensive is DeVane's, published as a chapter in his study of the *Parleyings*. After discussing Browning's unsuccessful attempt to explain why Smart was able once, and only once, to write a great poem, DeVane finds Browning presenting in the poem's last section "his own matured theory of poetry," which he knows to be "vastly different from that of most of his contemporaries." Browning distinguishes his type of poetry from that written by others in the 1880s, focusing on "the advantages of his own and the disadvantages of theirs." He disapproves of "the tendency of the age to go at things in the wrong order. People study the heavens and formulate laws for the universe, without understanding the things that touch their own lives most closely" (DeVane, *Browning's Parleyings* 131-32). Thus, Browning writes:

The other method's favored in our day!
The end ere the beginning: as you may,
Master the heavens before you study earth,
Make you familiar with the meteor's birth
Ere you descend to scrutinize the rose!
(Browning 2: 802, [ll. 240-244])

Browning, himself, "believes in another method" (*Parleyings* 132):

I say, o'erstep no least one of the rows
That lead man from the bottom where he plants
Foot first of all, to life's last ladder-top:
Arrived there, vain enough will seem the vaunts
Of those who say--"We scale the skies, then drop
To earth--to find, how all things there are loth
To answer heavenly law: we understand
The meteor's course, and lo, the rose's growth--
How other than should be by law's command!"
(245-253)

DeVane finds Browning "attempting here to characterize the attitude of those contemporary thinkers who accept the large generalizations of the hasty spokesmen of the scientific movement." He believes Browning had Swinburne and "his atheistic and bitter beliefs" particularly in mind (*Parleyings* 133).

While Devane regards the parleying with Smart as a defense of Browning's poetry, he only sees it as a defense against one opponent--the kind of poetry written by contemporaries like Swinburne. He does not examine the possibility that Browning may also be comparing his poetry to Smart's. By approaching the poem from this perspective, DeVane is rendering the first part of it, which deals with the mystery of Smart's composition of "A Song to David," largely irrelevant to the last part. He offers only a superficial explanation for how the musing on Smart's one-time visionary experience is related to the attack on Swinburne and his ilk. After failing to resolve the question of Smart's experience, Browning,

> turns aside to say what effectual services he thinks it is to point out the good things of the earth. But that is only the text, and the poet should go on to teach mankind the significance of the beautiful things he has shown them. (131)

From there, Browning goes on to launch his attack on those like Swinburne who ignore even the good things of the earth to seek out universal general principles. As I shall argue, Browning had a more comprehensive defense in mind, something that took the entire poem to develop.

Roma King finds the parleying with Smart to be "at once an assertion and a demonstration, the focusing artifice, of the imaginative powers by which man infers the immensity" (249). He regards the choice of Smart as "particularly effective," because he "is at once the product of the enlightenment . . . and the momentary possessor of the ecstatic vision" (250). King does not believe that Browning condemns Smart for having written in the visionary mode but the one time only: "Browning emphatically refuses to measure poetic achievement quantitatively." Rather, Smart is an "anomaly," for "He glimpsed naked truth once when the disguise fell from Nature, but such an experience can endure only one brief, maddening moment." No person, the poet included, can "approach God directly." Instead, "He must proceed rather by indirection, beginning where he is with the world itself" and work his way through the "fragments" he encounters toward "the transcendent God" (251-252). King ends his discussion of the parleying with Smart by noting, as does DeVane, a break between the first eight sections and the last:

> Clearly, man can never possess all, be all, become God in all His immensity. Perhaps this is why, after the visionary reaches of the earlier sections, the poem ends on a prosaic note: 'Live and learn,/ Not first learn and then live, is our concern' (264-65). True, perhaps, but no more elevating than the 'mere gray argument' of Mandeville's most unexhalted moments. (252)

The prosaic note is, however, characteristic of much of Browning's later poetry and the proper note, as I shall show, for him to be striking here.

Clyde de L. Ryals offers a more satisfactory explanation of the relationship of the account of Smart's one-time achievement to the attack on contemporary poetry at the end of the parleying. Smart was not only given a vision of "undisguised nature and naked truth," but was also furnished the "power to express his vision in the right language." Browning makes it clear that this "power of poetry" is something that "resides in the poet's ability to act as a moral force. With an eye on Rossetti, Morris, Swinburne and the whole art-for-art's sake school, he denounces any conception of the poet as an idle singer of an empty day" (212-213). While Ryals does attempt to establish a connection between the two parts of the poem, his view does not satisfactorily explain the role Robert Browning perceived for himself in the scheme of things.

To understand that role, one must first see, as Mark Siegchrist has, that Browning was more critical of Smart than anyone had before realized.

Siegchrist finds that "the enthusiasm of Browning's celebration of Smart's perceptual achievement is certainly matched by the sternness of his indictment of Smart's failure to put that achievement to practical use." He argues that "From his earlier endorsement of Fra Lippo's joyful realism, in which the artist's responsibility is to create (as Smart in fact has) a simple beauty that will by itself mean intensely and mean good, Browning has come to so strong an insistence on the need to preach that Fra Lippo's prior himself would have approved." This need is so strong that it "explains, if it does not make more palatable, the relentless didacticism of so much of his later work." Thus, the poem shows Browning "modulating . . . from the initial empirical problem of the clearest possible perception of reality to the subsequent ethical problem of the moral responsibility to act on that perception" (5).

Despite the validity of his comments, Siegchrist has also failed to define the precise role of Robert Browning and his poetic career in the parleying with Smart, a definition which will explain why Browning takes so much time to deal with an experience--Smart's vision--which had never occurred to Browning himself.

I believe that Browning uses most of the poem to raise the questions he does about the uniqueness and the mystery of Smart's experience in order to justify himself. Robert Browning never had such an experience. Does it lessen his achievement if he never wrote the highest sort of poetry--the visionary? No, because, as the earlier sections of the parleying point out, no poet has control over such an experience. It comes mysteriously; and it may--as in Smart's case--never recur. Why was Christopher Smart a poet:

> who always could--
> Never before did--never after would--
> Achieve the feat: how were such a fact explained?
> (137-39)

Perhaps, Browning suggests, "by rarest chance, there fell / Disguise from Nature, so Truth remained Naked, and whoso saw for once might tell / Us others of her majesty and might" (140-43).

And what happened afterwards? The ninth section of the poem makes plain Browning's criticism of Smart's failure to capitalize on his great achievement:

> --Was it because you judged--when fugitive
> Was glory found, and wholly gone and spent
> Such power of startling up deaf ear, blind eye,
> At truth's appearance,--that you humbly bent
> The head and, bidding vivid work good-bye,
> Doffed lyric dress and trod the world once more
> A drab-clothed decent proseman as before?
> (201-7)

Browning admits that Smart's praise of the world's beauties in "A Song to David" was "effectual service" (209), but

> What comes next?

Why all the strength and beauty?—to be shown
Thus in one word's flash, thenceforth let alone
By Man who needs must deal with aught that's known
Never so lately and so little? Friend,
First give us knowledge, then appoint its use!
(211-16)

Thus, Smart had a vision but did nothing beyond one poem. Browning, on the other hand, had no such vision, but he has kept the faith. He, without a vision such as the one afforded Smart, has acted on what he knows. He has shown man the God behind nature.

While one may feel compelled to regard visionary poetry as the highest kind of verse, Browning's deference to Smart's achievement is, I believe, ironic. In section nine, when he parleys with Smart about why he never was able to repeat the glory of "A Song to David," he asks:

Was it because you judged (I know full well
You never had the fancy)--judged--as some--
That who makes poetry must reproduce
Thus ever and thus only, as they come,
Each strength, each beauty, everywhere diffuse
Throughout creation, so that eye and ear,
Seeing and hearing, straight shall recognize,
At touch of just a trait, the strength appear,--
Suggested by a line's lapse see arise
All evident the beauty,--fresh surprise
Startling at fresh achievement? (185-95)

Browning then provides three lines imitating Smart's style, followed by a disclaimer as humble as any utterance by Uriah Heep:

'So indeed,
Wallows the whale's bulk in the waste of brine,
Nor otherwise its feather--tufts make fine
Wild Virgin's Bower when stars faint off to seed!'
(My prose--your poetry I dare not give,
Purpling too much my mere grey argument.)

Browning's effort at Smart's visionary style is only "prose," while Browning's approach in this parleying is "mere grey argument"? It is hard to accept Browning's really believing, or expecting his reader to believe, that his poetry could be so worthless (although such a judgment has often been made about such later jewels in the Browning crown as *Jocoseria* and *Ferishtah's Fancies*). No, his is the voice that, without the miracle of a vision, still cries out in the wilderness against the godless Swinburnes of the time. His is the voice that tells Smart:

Nature was made to be by Man enjoyed
First; followed duly by enjoyment's fruit,
Instruction--haply leaving joy behind:
And you, the instructor, would you slack pursuit
Of the main prize, as poet help mankind

Just to enjoy, there leave them? Play the fool,
Abjuring a superior privilege?
Please simply when your function is to rule--
By thought incite to deed? (225-33)

Yes, the parleying with Smart does contain an attack on the style of poetry "favoured in our day!"--a style which is generally assumed to be that employed by late nineteenth-century poets like Swinburne. But the parleying also contains, if not an outright attack on visionary poetry, at least an attack on Christopher Smart for not following up on the miracle granted to him. Robert Browning seems intent on showing that, without the advantage granted to Smart, he has spent his career following up on what Smart started but was unable to continue--to show men and women enough "strength and beauty, and no less / Nor more, to learn life's lesson by" (238-39).

In conclusion, Browning's parleying with Smart is more than an examination of the mysterious origin of visionary poetry, along with an attack on the kind of poetry that had achieved popularity in Browning's day. It may be regarded, rather as Robert Browning's defense of a long poetic career, at the end of which he was at last enjoying the hard-won fame he felt he deserved--a career which he defends, on the one hand, against the possibility that his achievement in poetry was not of the highest order and, on the other hand, against the possibility that his concept of what poetry should be had become obsolete. Such a reading also reveals the parleying to have a unity that has not been noted before.

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Old Apples in New Gardens: The Voyages of the Star Ship *Enterprise* as Modern Dystopia

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The main complaint critical Marxists have against liberalism seems to be that it has dwindled to what Terry Eagleton calls, "the impotent conscience of bourgeois society" (259). Eagleton suggest a reason for this softness when he says that, "The impotence of human liberalism is a symptom of its essentially contradictory relationship to modern capitalism" (259).

Possibilities for examination of such contradictions abound in the strategies of deconstruction. The quest for origins reveals the impossibility of an authentic present when expression is empowered and at the same time limited by the past. All new models carry within them the inscription of the old structures that makes the drawing of new ones possible and at the same time keeps them from really being "all new."

Tracing origins in Western thought leads to the creation and fall story in Genesis. Much (some would argue all) of the literature of the English language deals in one way or another with what Milton calls, "Man's first disobedience and the fruit/ Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste/ Brought death into the world, and all our woe,/With loss of Eden. . ." (*Paradise Lost*, Book 1, 1-3).

American authors have brought this theme of The Fall into discourse of the new world and tried to reconcile it with the new world's promise of a new beginning, a promise inherent in the Pilgrim's voyage itself. Thus, even the idea of a new beginning which by its very expression suggests an earlier beginning, is fruit of old world concepts the Pilgrims brought with them along with their desire to create a New Eden. The blueprint they carried propelled them toward the new world, but contained design elements that would render the mission's ultimate achievement problematic.

The same contradiction persists as the narrative journey of the Pilgrims continues into outer space in the popular American phenomenon, *Star Trek*. These chronicles are more than a television series that spawned a flock of new film and television sequels. *Star Trek* fulfills the same cultural function for Americans as *The Odyssey* and *Beowulf* for the early Greeks and Anglo-Saxons. In the Great Oral Tradition, the voice of Captain Kirk is heard by succeeding generations of audiences. It's a voice that tells us who and what we are. Scholars can learn much about deeply held twentieth-century American liberal values and beliefs by studying the voyages of the Star Ship *Enterprise*.

The place of utopian thought in that system of American values and belief is discussed by British sociologist Krishan Kumar who says, "Utopianism, the idea of America's special destiny was a central part of the

national ideology--almost the national ideology" (81). The response of the *Enterprise* crew to alien cultures they encounter reveals some underlying assumptions in the national ideology.

The American cultural tradition contains two major streams of utopian thought: the religious utopia, envisioned as return to Eden, and the secular utopia embodied in scientific progress. Each of these versions carries its shadow as anti-utopia, or dystopia. For religious utopia, that shadow is Calvinism with its doctrine of human depravity; for secular utopia it is Darwinism and the doctrine of human weakness.

These streams of thought evolve logically into literary expression. For example, the idea of man as a being limited by depravity finds its way into the work of Hawthorne as the "unpardonable sin" of megalomania. The *Blythdale Romance* offers a direct example of a failed utopia. But some of his short stories deal even more succinctly with megalomania. In "Rappaccini's Daughter" and "The Birthmark" his characters try to create perfection and in doing so, only create destruction and man is thrown out of the garden again. This theme is replayed often in our culture as the character who attempts too much, strays outside the bounds of human experience, tampers with things man was not meant to tamper with.

The secular idea of progress might have seemed to breathe new life into utopian idealism. Kumar says, "From the Enlightenment onward it was possible to see America in terms of the secular utopia . . . as the fulfillment of secular enlightenment ideals of reason and freedom" (77).

But as religious utopia pales under the shadow of Calvin, scientific utopia fades under the glare of Darwin, wherein man stands revealed as powerless against the force of the universe. The work of naturalistic writers such as Stephen Crane places man in a world characterized by deterministic fatalism. This view is Crane's short story "The Open Boat" in which men struggle to overcome a raging sea, only to face death when they approach the shore. The correspondent's cry, "If I'm going to be drowned . . . why was I allowed to come this far?" (914) shows the helplessness of man pitted against an impersonal universe. As science took the place of God as deliverer, it also took the place of God as destroyer. Thus the sinners in the hands of an angry god become weaklings in the sea of an uncaring universe. Perhaps scientific pessimism is just the old Calvinism recast. Rod Horton and Herbert Edwards offer reason to suggest such a possibility:

> Calvinism which, though temporarily subdued by the optimism of the Enlightenment and by material prosperity, nevertheless remained under the surface of the national consciousness, ready to spring forth. (261)

If Captain Kirk and his crew see hope in scientific progress, perhaps it is that old Calvinism springing through that thwarts their belief in the utopias they find. On the surface of the *Star Trek* episodes, there is an obvious, and sometimes far-sighted attempt to project progressive ideas,

but the crew often fails to be transported beyond the confines of their own interior structures.

Themes and plot elements in the television epic frequently revolve around the fallen state of man, his longing to return to paradise, and his ultimate despair of ever doing so. Kirk and crew never quite "boldly go" into those new worlds they seek, and sometimes, find because they are limited by the tools they use to interpret those worlds. Not only do they carry hardware onboard, in the form of those data banks through which they process everything to decode, define, and classify it, but they must read the data through their own internal ideology as well. They might, indeed, find Eden, but they won't be able to recognize it because they carry no internal models of it. Lacking these models, it seems impossible for them to do anything more than reread themselves in every world they encounter.

Kirk and his crew frequently meet alien beings (others) who are blissfully happy and totally healthy, like the inhabitants of Gamma Trianguli VI. Gamma Trianguli is a world in which the people live in reciprocal balance with a computer named Vaal that provides for their material needs in return for a kind of computer maintenance. But, as Allen Asherman observes, they are "in ignorance of sociological and technological progress [and] Captain Kirk is not likely to believe that 'ignorance is bliss'" (Asherman 117-18).

The end result of Kirk's visit to the planet is destruction of the computer and reintroduction of sex and violence into their society. By the time Kirk and crew leave, the natives are mending their ways and becoming aggressive and sexy. They have learned that you can't just go around being peaceful and feeling good. When a native says wistfully, "Vaal cared for us." Kirk answers him with a bit of earth-style work-ethic.

> You'll learn to care for yourselves. You'll learn to build . . . and what you make will be yours. We call that freedom. You'll like it a lot . . . and you'll learn things about men and women . . . the way it's supposed to be. ("The Apple")

Thus he equates freedom and happiness with capital accumulation and proper gender-specific behavior. Back aboard the *Enterprise,* Dr. McCoy tells Mr. Spock,"We've put those people on the normal course of social evolution. . . . Man has tasted the apple and been thrown out of paradise" ("The Apple").

This attitude is reminiscent of the early European explorers' desire to bring the advantages of European culture to primitive populations they encountered. Indeed, each *Star Trek* episode contains a moment when Captain Kirk gives the lesson for the day. Always, the lesson, reinforces human values over alien values. The message is often some variation of his comments after "rescuing" some colonists from an idyllic life like that on a planet called Omicron Ceti III,

> Maybe we weren't meant for Paradise. Maybe we were meant to fight and claw our way up, to scratch for every inch of the way.

Maybe we can't stroll to the music of the lute. We must march to the sound of drums. ("This Side of Paradise")

Although a prime United Federation directive says that the voyagers will not interfere in the workings of civilizations they visit, the captain and crew always leave the planets they contact changed. But Kirk and his crew are blind to their interference because they see the changes as "natural."

This kind of blindness can inhibit our own problem solving abilities. Harvard business professor, Robert Reich, has detailed ways in which our vision is clouded by mythological ideology, such as the "myth of the unmanaged market" (232), which causes us to accept certain government activities as "neutral rules of the game" while rejecting others as "market intervention" (232).

During a moment on Gama Trianguli VI, when Spock and McCoy discuss their actions toward the inhabitants, Spock tells McCoy, "You insist on applying human standards to non-human cultures." McCoy explains that there are certain "Absolutes" and that one is "the right of humanoids to live in conditions that permit them to "grow." Spock's reminder that , "Another is the right to chose a system that works for them" ("The Apple") is ultimately lost in the outcome of the story.

This same inability to distinguish between absolute and constructed value may cause us to misread the current changes in the eastern block. We may see their rejection of some old ideology as proof that they are joining us on the road that we consider the natural one. This reading overlooks the fact that solutions to human problems may lie outside the choice between systems that we already know.

There is no logical reason other than an anti-utopian bias for the crew's response to the planet Omicron Ceti III. The colonists on this planet are showered periodically by plant-produced spores that render them perfectly happy, peaceful, and immune to normal human illnesses. As a result, the colonists produce only enough food to satisfy their own needs with no surplus. But their idyllic existence cannot be allowed to continue, because, the shocking truth about them is that they aren't, according to Kirk, "achieving anything." Everyone on the planet is happy. But, the duty to engage in the appropriate kind of economic struggle is so essential to Kirk's ideology that the fact that the end goal of that struggle seems already to have been achieved here is beside the point.

For Kirk, the tranquillity of the planet is unnatural because it is produced by the emission of plants. However, he devises an artificial noise to create stress, knowing that the plants, being benign creatures will be killed by feelings of disharmony. The artificiality of the mechanically created stress that destroys the spores is seen as natural by Kirk, presumably because it is the product of human progress. When the colonists are saved from their happiness, by reintroduction of anger and disharmony, they immediately want to get to work "accomplishing something."

Once again, back on the *Enterprise,* the voyagers muse over their mission on the rescued planet. McCoy says, "This is the second time man's been

thrown out of paradise." Kirk quickly responds, "No, No, Bones, this time we walked out on our own" ("This side of Paradise"). That, in Kirkean logic is progress.

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Proof of Jealousy

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"There hadn't been a rift in this family in over forty years--not since Granddaddy quit speaking to his three sisters in 1942. So we'd been existing in a state of sheer bliss until Pete married Nina and made that woman my sister-in-law. You have no idea what a shock she's been to my system. See, Sonny and I live on the right-hand side of Mama, so the first thing they did is haul a bright green trailer out here and park it on Mama's left-hand side. But I just smiled. I knew the first tornado to come through would blow the whole thing away.

"From day one that hussy has been jealous of me. Why, I knew that the summer I canned forty-two quarts of green beans and she wouldn't quit until she had fifty. Then she pitched a doggone fit right there in Mama's kitchen and tried to blame me when nine of her jars didn't seal. She cried till Mama gave her nine quarts of beans right off her own pantry shelf. I knew then what I was up against, so I didn't do one thing but get my beans and march home that very day and start my *Proof of Jealousy* book. I didn't spend six months as a legal secretary for nothing; I know the importance of documentation.

"Here's just a sampling of what's in my book that'll prove my case in any court in the land. To begin, on Tuesday, November 19, 1974, I bought a sporty white Grand Prix. Drove it straight from the showroom over to show my very own Mama. Well, one week later, November 26 it was, Mama and me were sitting on the front porch shelling peas and here comes Nina driving up in a brand new red Monte Carlo. First thing that crossed my mind was how that fiery-red automobile was going to look sitting beside her pea-green trailer. Why she couldn't go out of the house any more without sunglasses. But I didn't say a word.

"Then that next fall I decided I'd be the first one in our family to get me a college degree, so I started to night school on August 14, 1975. Well, come second semester, what do you know if I didn't run smack into Miss Nina herself in the corridor of Jasper Hall just as lost as she could be. I figured I'd sail right on by and not embarrass her, you know. Besides, as far as I knew she was at home tidying up her green trailer. But she ran me down wanting to know how to find Dr. Morris' classroom So in my kindest voice I turned and gave her the best college-level advice I could. I said, 'Honey, if you can't find the classroom, you sure can't get the degree.' After all, people in college have to show some initiative. Well, she up and quit, just like I told Mama she would--and blamed me, naturally.

"So, next comes Christmas of 1977. Oh, I remember this very well, but it's all down in my *Jealousy Book.* We all met at Mama's on Christmas Eve,

like we always do, and had our big dinner. Nina didn't bring a thing in this world but half of a store-bought angel food cake, but law did she ever eat. And she was careful to dress up to, knowing full well Mama wouldn't let her help with the dishes in her good clothes. So she sat in the living room with all the men and rocked just as pretty as you please while Mama and me washed and dried about a thousand dishes. By the time we finished she'd had polaroids made in all positions--beside the Christmas tree, under the mistletoe, sitting in Granddaddy's lap holding a big fat present. She even played Santa Claus and gave out the presents when Granddaddy has done that all my natural life. She gave everybody as high as three and four presents before she ever gave me the first one, and then she picked out the tiniest little ole package she could find. But that didn't bother me one bit. I knew she'd just get down to the end and very blessed one left would be for me. So I took my precious time with that present. I read the card, which said 'Merry Christmas to Gayle with love from Sonny.' and I saved the red ribbon and was careful not to tear the gold foil paper. All the time Nina was eying me with a silly grin, just tickled to death that she was running the show. Finally, impatience got the best of her, and she threw up her hands on her fat hips and she said, 'Well my goodness, I thought Christmas was slow, but I believe Gayle's got it beat. Hurry up Gayle and let us see what you got!' So I lifted the lid on that tiny little box, and there laid the most gorgeous two-carat diamond cluster ring you've ever seen. I screamed my head off and ran right over and let Sonny slip it on my finger. Then I smacked him square on the lips and started making the rounds showing off the new family jewels. Everybody was oohing and aahing, like anybody in their right mind would, but when I got to Nina, she just threw her brand new chenille robe in Pete's face and stalked right out of the room, plain forgetting about her responsibilities as Santa Claus. She laid in that trailer for three weeks and cried like a baby. Pete told everybody that came to the door that they'd best not come in 'cause Nine had a bad case of the Asian flu, but I knew better. Before long Pete started eating all his meals at Mama's and even bringing his wash; I knew then she's done quit being a wife and was holding his feet to the fire.

"So time went by and she finally did come out of mourning, and we thought that crisis was over. But the very next year she strolled into the Christmas dinner wearing a mink coat. I had to turn my head and laugh. She looked like an Eskimo streetwalker, and who in the world needs a mink coat in Mississippi? Why, it was seventy-two degrees outside and her trying to play chilly. But there was no way in the world she could blame me for what happened next. After all, children will be children, and my two have never been any exception. Just as soon as little Marcy and Jennifer saw her standing there in that full-length mink, they made a bee-line for her and buried their heads in that soft, furry mink, runny noses and all.

"After that things went downhill fast. When I crowned my two front teeth, she went right out and had braces put on hers--at thirty-six years of

age, mind you! Now I had no idea that my girls would call her 'metal mouth.' but law have I ever paid for it. To this very day if there's anybody else within earshot she'll turn to me and ask in her most innocent voice, 'Gayle, don't I recall that you have some false teeth across the front there somewhere?'

"When I purchased a used spinet piano so little Marcy and Jennifer could become accomplished pianists and play 'Moon River' for their grandmother, she went right out and bought a white baby grand on time payment. Then she sat on her own front steps and bawled like a newborn calf after Pete and the delivery men had twisted the legs off of it and everything and still couldn't fit it through her tiny trailer door. I witnessed the whole thing from my porch swing, and I've even got a telephoto photograph of that poor mutilated instrument scattered all over her front lawn.

"Now she knows good and well that I'm a size eight, but every Christmas she gives me some cheap twelves and fourteens just for spite. I don't do a thing in this world but turn them over to the Salvation Army and take it off my income tax. I've got itemized records of all of this.

"When we started adding on to our modest three bedroom house to accommodate a growing family, she had Pete shove that trailer back and build her a five bedroom mansion with a full basement, and not a child in sight. I have endured six solid years of Nina's jealousy, so I didn't even flinch when Reverend Martin announced one morning in opening assembly that my very own sister-in-law was adopting two girls. I just smiled and nodded to everyone around me like I already knew it and was proud for her.

"You see, that's been one of the main problems all along. In addition to everything else I've got, I have these two beautiful daughters and she can't have any. Now is that my fault? Can I possible help it if my very own Mama chooses to wallpaper every inch of her living room with photographs of her only two grandchildren? Is that any reason for Nina to lay awake nights trying to think up ways to spite me? Well, so now she's figured out a way to even the score on that, too. She's gone out and adopted two ready-made girls, aged four and six, without even the grace to advise her own family. Some of us had to learn about it during church prayer requests. But I did not get upset about that. I have constantly held myself above her level, and I certainly proved how gracious I can be when I threw a big 'Welcome Party' for those two poor, unannounced, orphan children. And we were having a find time, too, until she stood up under my own roof and introduced those two peeked, nappy, orphan girls to this whole community as 'little Marcy and Jennifer.' Now, hopefully, I do not have to remind you whose names those really are? Well, I ran straight in the bedroom, grabbed my *Proof of Jealousy* book, and drove here as fast as I could. I know my rights, and if you're half the lawyer they say you are you'll see to it that Nina Perkins goes to jail before I do!"

Poems

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The Greater Dark

Not the ordinary shade blotching the ground
Under every tree   the clover there

Lost from the heyday of a summer sun
Not your shadow from the tips of your shoes

Bent at the edge of each stair   and descending
Or that dark intruded upon by doors

Opening onto the vacant   a cool cellar
Or the absence of light   common for storage

The deep shelves of the forgotten
That boarder the edge of a candle's glow

Not the rusted nails and their sudden arrival
Years ago   at the heart of the wood

The shine of their heads not in remission
Not the straw broom and its last pile of dirt

Waiting to be swept away   or the dust
Like a film on everything left uncovered

Dulling all presence and color
Not the clouding of small windows at ground level

The persistent loss of their transparency
Or the trees beyond   growing faint

Along the hills and in the valley
Some greater dark   deeper   lasting

Tales of Grief and Destruction

I am watching my hands closely today
Sometimes they want to fly   like birds
North   south
It's a problem   to which everyone has an answer

Put your hands in your pockets they say   wash them
Pet your dog   he has come home at last
But things are not so simple anymore
My dog died during yesterday's hurricane
Strangled by a scarf from a neighboring town

I sat in the corner of the room   hands over my eyes
Thinking of wheelchairs careening down rain-soaked streets
There was a loud siren   from the hat of a passer-by
My dog was thrown from a sinking ship by a reluctant sailor
And I could not get my hands to do what I wanted them to

It has been raining for days
My dog licked my hands feverishly   circled the room
I thought about moving south   or north
I whistled an hour on the veranda
A distant roar crept through the suburbs
My dog was struck by a bus and died in the hands of a tearful passenger

Loving a killed dog involves the hands
It can't be helped
Folded hands like a haystack in one's lap
All night I was thinking to the sound of crickets
The hollow whistle of nighthawks overhead

Whenever my hands are those tame pigeons in the front yard
I am sad
Though I've grown used to the tame pigeons
The way I've grown used to my tired feet
The summer swings on my weak legs running after my dog

In the distance there was a tail of smoke   rising
My dog ran into a burning house and could be seen dashing from room to room
He licked the windows wildly for hours
I wore gloves and felt hopeful

Hands in the guise of hands appear subdued   harmless
Though capable of imaginative acts

The men who pulled my drowned dog from the river wore gloves
I watched from the road hands in my pockets
A neighbor's scarf around my neck
Buildings tumbled along the surface of the earth

World Effects

When the world woke up
It was locked inside a jar
Until a very smart dishtowel found it
And let it out
Which was good since its lakes were starting to smell

Two cows were watching however
And refused to leave the balcony
Even for a phone call

Sunlight washing over their bodies
Was what they had come for
That and a sudden gust of wind through the valley
To dry the dew from their noses

At their feet
The shadows of their horns made an "X"
On which they attempted to stand
If only briefly

While contemplating the meadows
And the tufts of fresh like offerings
They would consume by day

Before the sun settled behind the hills
And again the world
Fell into its deep modern sleep

The Lively Metaphor, the Deadly Metaphor: The Soul, the Mind, the Matter according to Plato and Aristotle

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A few chance questions brought to mind the thoughts which are the framework of this paper. A thorough friend of mine, who has read both in English and French Paul Ricoeur's *La metaphor vive,* noted that the translator had give the title as *The Rule of Metaphor*. The friend asked, rhetorically, how anyone could start with something like the living, lively or alive metaphor and transform it into the rule of metaphor. I long ago renounced the explanation and/or defense of the vagaries of all translators except myself. Whether my motive is professional courtesy or professional collusion, I won't say. Be that as it may, I answered that I didn't know. The question, however, stuck in my craw.

A few weeks later, I was ending a series of talks which are an introduction to Greek philosophy that I give from time to time. I asked the listeners for any questions or comments they might have, and this is what I got from one of them: "If you had to give the difference between the thought of Plato and the thought of Aristotle in a few words, what would you say matters most?" Well, being an academic of sorts, I'm not used to saying things in a few words. I paused for a (pregnant) moment, took a deep breath and waited for inspiration. And inspiration came: "When I think about Plato, I get an image, an analogy, a metaphor as the matter. When I think about Aristotle, I get an argument, some logic, a syllogism. Just plain matter.

Although chronologically Plato precedes Aristotle, because of the historical accident of transmission of texts, Aristotle's mindset, his mentality, dominated discussion of metaphor in the West. Aristotle isolates the individual word as the fundamental unit of investigation in metaphor, a decision which specifies the metaphor only as the displacement and/or extension of the sense of the individual word. The upshot of this understanding is that metaphor is explained by a principle of substitution rather than one of creation. The metaphor is not intrinsic, but extrinsic.

This radical limitation, even isolation, of meaning is one manifestation Aristotle's no-nonsense, almost dowdy, methodology. In the *Nichomacian Ethics* (1095 a-b) he observes that what constitutes happiness is a matter of contention. Ordinary people tend to equate it with pleasure, money, etc, but:

> At other times, feeling conscious of their own ignorance, men admire those who propound something grand and above their heads; and it has been held by some thinkers [e.g. Plato and his

Academy] that besides the many good things we have mentioned, there exists another Good that is good in itself, and stands to all those things as the cause of their being good.

The "something grand and above their heads" is, of course, the answer Plato proposed to the perennial conundrum of the one and the many: the idea. Aristotle obviously feels that the matter is beyond the experience of mankind and, having felicitated Plato for raising the question "whether the right procedure was to start from or to lead up to first principles," observes shrewdly:

> No doubt it is proper to start from the known. But the "known" has two meanings – "what is known to us" and "what is knowable in itself," which is another. Perhaps then, for us at all events, it is proper to start from what is known to us.

Aristotle's preference for the deductive argument – which starts from first principles – over the inductive argument – which leads up to first principles (as practiced by Plato anyway) – shows through plainly. One understands how he became the father of the syllogism. In the question of metaphor, it is clear that everyone knows words, and that words, therefore, should be the starting point of the understanding of metaphor. The methodology of the advance from the common notion to the philosophical concept predicates this. The assumption of individual words as the primary element of investigation also appealed to Aristotle's preference for reductive methodology as shown in a locus classicus from the *Politics* (1252 a):

> And a proof of what we assert will appear if we examine the question in accordance with our regular method of investigation. In every matter it is necessary to analyze the composite whole down to its uncompounded elements (for these are the smallest parts of the whole) . . .

The "regular method" of the Peripatetics was reductive, that is, it tended to focus on the elements of a structure, blurring the structure itself into the background. In this passage, Aristotle mentions a second method:

> The best method of investigation is to study things in the process of development from the beginning.

For one reason or another, Aristotle did not employ this "best method" in his investigation of the question of metaphor and treated it, in small at least, rather in the manner of Plato in that it did not "become" as was the nature of an entelechy, but simply *was* and *had been*, it seem, forever.

Plato in the *Timaeus* (47a) presents the contrasting view: that our understanding comes not from the bottom up, but from the top down:

> Vision, in my view, is the cause of the greatest benefit to us, inasmuch as none of the accounts now given concerning the universe would ever have been given if men had not seen the stars or the sun or the heavens. But as it is, the vision of day and night and months and circling years has created the art of number and given not only the notion of Time, but also means of research into

> the nature of the universe. From these we have procured philosophy in all its range, than which no greater boon ever has come or will come, by divine bestowal, unto the race of mortals.

This passage is interesting in that it suggests that the understanding of the whole precedes and, at least, inspires the understanding of the parts, an understanding which is reached in any case only in terms of the whole. It is the accounts given concerning the paradigm or metaphor which make possible the "research into the nature of the universe." So, it is the *entire* universe which is the object of study of philosophy. It is the vision of the order inherent in time which is the progress of the seasons.

A weakness of Aristotle's "usual method" in the study of metaphor is exactly the failure to note that the words of a language represents not only an "object" to the intellect, an identity, but also a structure, both internally and externally. The universe which is perceived in Plato's exordium by vision is a vision made up not only of objects -- stars, sun, heavens, etc. -- but also of the relation between these objects, a structure which affords a means of inference and comparison with the rest of our experience. In short, meaning.

In a more mundane sphere, the vision identifies the whale not only as an object, an animal that lives in the sea among the fishes, but also as a structure to let us understand that, for example, the fin of the whale is like the leg of the elephant, the basic analogy which enables the mind to "carry over" (*meta-phorein*), information and experience gained in one area to another, providing at least a basic structure of inference for investigation.

It would be useful to reserve the word analogy for the basic structural relations, that is, the aspect of information, and metaphor for this same relation when the aspect of experience, attitude or emotion predominates. For example, the comparison of the anatomy of the whale and elephant in no way intends to influence anyone's feelings about either whales or elephants. However, if one came up with the analogy that the whales have the same relation to man as the elephants on land and that therefore we ought to protect them because we are all mammals, you have something more in the way of a metaphor. The classical example is "My love is a red, red rose." Or to put it in the form of a proportion, my reaction to my love is the same/similar to my reaction to a rose. From a formal standpoint, this proportion demonstrates that the number of terms, here three, not four, is less important than their distribution in the structure.

The foregoing examples illustrate the use of internal structure in comparison as well as the aspects of information and emotion, aspects of central importance in the construction of analogy/metaphor. The analogy/metaphor is virtually inductive argument, one which tries to persuade the listener that, because he or she accepts the relationship between two or more things, he or she "ought" to accept an analogous other relationship between two or more other things. A classical example is Plato's anthropological principle: the polis is mankind written large. The acceptance of the parallel of the order of the macrocosms of the polis and the

order of the microcosms of the soul – besides providing evidence that there is such an order -- would involve, for a fifth-century BC Athenian at least, the acceptance of a number of principles of organization. Above all, the life of the mind is the highest good; therefore, the mind should rule the will which in turn should rule the drives. The hierarchy of, to put it in modern terms, the cognitive over the conative over the emotional or appetitive would be self-evident to anyone who accepted the analogy/metaphor of polis/man.

In fact one can well make the argument that what most distinguishes Plato's work from Aristotle's is just the preponderance of persuasion -- metaphor -- as opposed to demonstration. The relationship of dialectic, and therefore dialog, to rhetoric is obviously much closer than that of lecture notes -- the form of Aristotle's work as we have it -- to rhetoric. One of the principle ironies of classical studies is that Aristotle is generally considered to be a much more "practical" thinker than Plato. Yet, Aristotle goes on writing about the polis as though it were flourishing when, in fact, after the victories of Philip of Macedonia and Alexander, the polis was a dead letter. The multi-cultural empires of the Hellenistic period were the wave of the future.

Plato, on the other hand, was well aware that the polis was in its agony when he wrote. This fact explains the form that his work takes of discussing and dismissing the old analogy/metaphors which formed the life of the polis, attempting to reformulate them in the interest of reforming and rescuing the polis. This undertaking failed at the political level, literally at the level of the polis, but succeeded brilliantly in that it provided us with the psychological model which we are basically still using, the triadic model still present -- for all its modifications and perversions -- in Freud's superego-ego-id model (i.e. mind-will-drives). Freud had received a thorough classical education in a Viennese gymnasium.

The fundamental difference in motive and intention between the works of Plato and Aristotle shows up in the structure of the *Republic* which begins as a discussion of the polis and a criticism and rejection of its Homeric aspects followed by the formulation of a new myth, that of Er. The *Timaeus* continues this trend with an attempt to integrate the polis of the *Republic* into the mathmatico-astronomical world of Pythagoras and that into a sort of universal historical version of the history of Athens. The *Phaedrus* represents a particularly spectacular attempt to free the individual from the mediation of the *polis* and its *sophrosune* --its sense of limit and discipline which had become an often all-too-utilitarian calculation. An elaborate classification of kinds of madness culminates in divine madness of which the Olympians, dragged off Olympus to be the incarnation of arete or virtue -- something which they had never been before -- becomes the object. The central image of the *Phaedrus* is the soul as a winged chariot – something similar to the winged victory of Samothrace -- in which the driver represents mind and the two horses, one good and one bad, represent will and drives. The gods have chariots pulled only by good horses and lead an

enormous procession parading up to the rim of the universe -- Pythagoras again -- while the good- and bad-horse souls struggle to follow them. The foregoing should illustrate the nature of Plato's undertaking and the nature of metaphor as he employs it.

Aristotle on the whole was not concerned with persuading anyone to do anything, particularly anything in the interest of the polis, either specifically or generically. He wrote about persuasion -- rhetoric -- as a disinterested and dispassionate observer, a standpoint which gives his work an objective cast, but often at the expense of the understanding which the passion of participation brings.

The entelechy -- the *en-telos-chein*, that which holds its end in itself -- is his model, a model which, unlike the crumbling polis, did not demand a reaching out beyond itself for some experience around which and in the pull of which to reorder the life and soul of the individual. Whereas Plato sought to use the cosmos to reorder the polis, it is in Aristotle that we first see the life of contemplation overtake the life of action, making the ideal of the stoic possible. The cosmopolitan replaces the "politan." This development had a decisive effect on the position of analogy/metaphor in the thought of the time, because the role of emotion -- Plato's divine madness in the *Phaedrus* -- was more and more excluded from contemplation and, later, scientific invention. In the progress from *philosophy* to *natural philosophy* to *natural science* to *science* "pure and simple" the role of metaphor gave way to analogy and became embellishment, impoverishing the life of the soul.

The translation of the title of Ricoeur's book *La metaphor vive* is a textbook example of this "progress" which is more like the triumphal exhibition of a prisoner. The title is *The Live or Lively Metaphor*, something he discusses in a number of places. One wonders whether the translator has read the book when one sees the translation as *The Rule of Metaphor*. This is particularly true in chapter 8 which is more or less a polemic against Derrida based on Derrida's refusal to accept the concept of the dead or deadly metaphor. The "dead metaphor" -- better, analogy -- is one that is so usual or conventional that it is no longer felt to be a metaphor. A trivial example of this would be the legs of a chair for the sticks which hold it off the floor. Only two- or three-year-olds find it amusing, i.e. have some reaction to the analogy. The Victorians, though, referred to the *limbs* of the chair rather than to its *legs*. In point of fact, most of language consists of dead metaphors and there are few words which in terms of historical linguistics can be shown to mean "x" or "y" rather than to be a more or less analogous application in a semantic field. Ricoeur's onus against Derrida is that the speaker or writer does not have to bring to mind every single analogy/metaphor that has to do with a given word when he or she uses it. Derrida professes to believe that every time he uses a word like, for example, *leg* every use of this word, no matter how distant from the immediate context, rushes unbidden into his mind. This is, of course, a perversion of Saussure's emphasis on the importance of underlying struc-

ture of language of which the speaker is unaware. Ricoeur points out that it is quite possible to let dead metaphors lie.

Ricouer wants to counter the theories of metaphor which ultimately derive from Aristotle with a semantic viewpoint which puts metaphor back into the framework to the sentence and ultimately into the framework of the discourse in its entirety, be it poem, essay, philosophy. This action would constitute the return of the awareness of Plato's live metaphor. One feels, however, that recognize as we may the metaphor in the Platonic sense of the paradigm of ultimate truth, we are dominated by the reductive interpretation introduced by Aristotle which has so long been influential in the Western tradition. According to Aristotle, the mind must see the matter at hand. According to Plato, the matter is that, to use his metaphor, the mind is the eye of the soul.

Risk-Taking in the Genre: A Look at Lazarillo and Huck

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There is no doubt that *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is an American product of the unbroken line of the originally Spanish picaresque novel. Twain himself acknowledged his debt to *Gil Blas* and *Don Quixote,* that curious and chimerical yet near-perfect blend of the Spanish chivalric romance and the *novela picaresca;* and various studies have shown Cervantes' work's influence on *Huckleberry Finn.* Olin Harris Moore's work of more than a half-century ago has shown that "the association Twain and *Don Quixote* has been solidly, if not carefully, established" (Powers 159). However, *Don Quixote* is not the first picaresque novel; that honor belongs to *Lazarillo de Tormes y de sus fortunas y adversidades,* [*Little Lazarus of Tormes and About his Good Luck and Setbacks*], anonymously published in three separate editions in 1554. Though it is a masterpiece of satirical comedy, no authorship of Lazarillo has been successfully attributed (Jones 66-7).

By examining the first picaresque novel, a work free of the potent philosophical and moral significance of *Don Quixote,* we see further into Twain's masterpiece as a work of sequences: perhaps better stated by my own belief that fiction represents a series of risks taken by characters, which the reader shares vicariously for the sake of understanding more about human life. This is not to say that works of fiction should lack cohesion and unity, because all good fiction has those features. What I mean is that life itself has no such cohesion; it is a series of incidents--in casual relationships, sometimes--but with no cohesion other than the personalities of the people involved in it. Risk and character, then, are just about everything: chance puts us in demanding situations, and our personalities frame our inclinations. Risk-taking allows us to move (or not move) along those inclinations. The struggle to understand *Huckleberry Finn* becomes more sharply defined when we see it through a determined attempt to place the Twain novel within the genre as suggested specifically by *Lazarillo,* rather than by *Quixote,* and through the lens of risk-takings presented episodically, which teach Huck--and us--about our essential natures and the world we find ourselves in.

A brief review of *Lazarillo de Tormes* might be helpful. Arranged in seven tratados, or treatises, the book shows little Lazaro learning how to make his way in the world. Like Huck he loses a parent (Lazaro's father) and must live with the morally corrupt remaining parent. When Lazaro is fairly grown, his mother apprentices him to a blind man who tries to starve the boy, as does Lazarillo's next master, a stingy priest. Third treatise finds

Lazarillo wandering around Toledo and taking up with a young nobleman, thinking he will at last find food and employment. However, the nobleman (a squire somewhat like Chaucer's in *The Canterbury Tales*) is penniless,and it is Lazarillo's begging that provides the nobleman with food because the nobleman is too proud to beg.

When the nobleman flees his debts, Lazarillo, after a brush with the law, is hired by a *buldero*, an issuer of papal bulls (in this case phony) and a con-artist extraordinaire who with a shill makes the gullible Toledans think he can perform snake-oil miracles. The buldero is most like the King and the Duke in the Wilks episode of *Huckleberry Finn*, who prey on people's fear of death and need for reassurances. A kind chaplain next hires Lazarillo as a water-carrier, and from there the young man ends up as a servant of an archpriest who gives Lazarillo his former mistress to wed. Thus, little Lazaro finds himself accepted by society at last. He attains at least some of the stability of quotidian social life.

Easily seen is the episodic nature of this first picaresque novel--and some say the first true novel in Europe. Like *Huckleberry Finn, Lazarillo* is written in first person and shows the psychological changes of the narrater, his original thoughtlessness and innocence, then his growth to maturity and acceptance of his circumstances.

Quite frankly, the *Lazarillo* does not easily lend itself to comparison with *Huckleberry Finn*. Its outcome is an assertion of social life's rightness, no matter how corrupt the individual society. It is not a rejection of common social values, as *Huckleberry Finn* seems to be. For example

> . . . *Lazarillo de Tormes* ends with Lazarillo a cuckold and still carrying the scars of his unfortunate life thanking 'God and Your Worship' for all the bounty that has befallen him. Though he is but a town crier, remembrances of things past make Lazarillo feel blessed by comparison. (Shaw 43)

But most picaresque novels, according to Patrick Shaw who cites novels from *Lazarillo* up to *Huckleberry Finn*, end in some kind of eventual "fitting in" of the picaresque character into society (43). However, more than any previous picaro, Huck refuses to compromise and return to civilization. He refuses congress and intercourse with "the community" (as Thomas Blues uses the term) and instead "lights out for the Territory . . ." (Twain 281). The more traditional picaros want to fit into society though they may have differing social ambitions. After *Huckleberry Finn*, though, the picaro changes: he rejects part or all of society, whether he be Augie March, Holden Caulfield, or Ellison's Invisible Man (Shaw 42-3). The desire to fit in, to be accepted congenially by society has thus been consciously rejected. Huck Finn as a picaro (the closest English approximation is "scamp"), then, is a conscious shift away from the picaro as object of comedy and toward the picaro as antihero, fomenter of conscious rebellion, a Camusian protagonist. To Patrick Shaw, Huck is ". . . a literary Janus, looking backward into the picaresque tradition of Lazarillo, Tom Jones, and other European rogues, but simultaneously facing forward into the picaresque

tradition that followed" (43), a tradition of the rejection of the limits on the rogue's personal freedom to make his own choices (43).

Huck Finn, a watershed character, has taken a heretofore unheard-of risk--that of simple though not hateful rejection of the fatuous pillows and sweets of domesticity. And although the ends and means are different in *Lazarillo*, we still see the same peculiar lack of hate for the world as in *Huckleberry Finn*. Even in its apparent anticlericalism and superficial disenchantment with life, *Lazarillo de Tormes* managed to obtain a *nihil obstat* from the Office of the Holy Inquisition (Blecua 36-37).

How is it that we may include *Huckleberry Finn* with the likes of *Lazarillo*? Lyall Powers tells us, "*[The] Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* exhibits most of the features of the true picaresque form. It is Huck's autobiography and thus has the typical dual-time sequence. . ." (160), the same first-person relation of past incidents from the stance of the present. The novel assuredly fits the picaresque tradition according to other sources. Lionel Trilling's famous introduction to an edition of the book tells us that "(t)he form of the book is based on the simplest of all novel-forms, the so-called picaresque novel, or novel of the road" (326). But Trilling makes a potent distinction between a *Lazarillo*-style book and Twain's novel by noting that the "linear simplicity" of the *novela picaresce* is rearranged to have a dramatic form: "a beginning, a middle and an end, and a mounting suspense of interest" (326). Thus the complexity of style in *Huckleberry Finn* here seems much more akin to *Don Quixote* than to *Lazarillo*.

Other authors include *Huckleberry Finn* in the genre quite readily. William Dean Howells averred:

> . . . *Huckleberry Finn* takes itself out of the order of romance and places itself with the great things in picaresque fiction. Still, it is more poetic than picaresque and of a deeper psychology. (281)

Twain himself in a letter to Howells admits Huck Finn's picaresque parentage: in discussing Tom Sawyer's limitations as a character, Clemens says he cannot take Sawyer beyond boyhood without doing it "in any shape but autobiographically--like Gil Blas. . . . By & by I shall take a boy of twelve and run him on through life (in the first person) but not Tom Sawyer--he would not be a good character for it" (282).

There is another reason to include *Huckleberry Finn* in the picaresque tradition besides its episodic structure, "I" narration and authorial intent, and this reason should be mentioned in passing--the use of vernacular language. Huck's thoroughly accurate Southern white dialect, as well as Jim's Afro-American slave talk, is a reflection of the author's desire to show the characters as real, within real cultural settings. Having them speak like Deerslayer and Chingachgook (that is, to speak like escapees from some Romantic monstrosity like Keats's *Otho the Great*) would destroy the mordant zeal of the picaresque style. Any brief look at the Spanish spoken in *Lazarillo* will immediately show its slangy, even ungrammatical nature. Edward Wilson points out that "country idioms have reinforced some of the finest Spanish dialogue in *Lazarillo de Tormes* and in the *Quixote*" (163).

The same is obviously true for the language of Huck and the other characters.

There are two other justifications--one literary and the other historical --for including Huck within the picaresque tradition: both *Lazarillo* and *Huckleberry Finn* were written in eras of grave disillusionment with romantic notions. In his book *The Golden Tapestry*, Dale Randall sees poor little Lazaro as a foil to the ornate and summarily ridiculous Spanish chivalric romances such as *Amadis de Gaula* and others of the extreme idealistic ilk. The *Lazarillo* author was no doubt tired of them (60), much as Twain hated Sir Walter Scott and lampooned romance in Tom Sawyer's romantic rescue of Jim. Similarly, Randall says that the widespread debt, disillusionment and famine following the reign of Charles V of Spain vastly increased the number of poor and paved the way for Spain's downfall (60-1). So it is with Southern society's finally realizing that the shopworn Scottian romanticism of unquestioning loyalty to God, nation, and ideology have no point in a discredited civilization. The delusions of church and state have in both Spain and the South led to corruption, war, and devastation; Huck and Lazarillo are but two little results of the wisdom of these pseudo-chivalric ideals.

Perhaps in no other sense do the paths of *Huckleberry Finn* and *Lazarillo de Tormes* part company so widely as in their moral and ethical implications. They do have some features in common, such as their means of exposing the guilt and fraud of a hypocritical society. Speaking of the Spanish picaresque, Gerald Brenan relates matters as true as of *Huckleberry Finn:*

> The aim of the picaresque writers is to make us look at the world without our usual rose-tinted spectacles. They strip life of its pleasant coverings and show us the naked struggle that goes on underneath.... But the peculiar merit of *Lazarillo* is that it does not do this by broadening its view to include disagreeable and sordid details ... but by concentrating it so as to get a greater penetration. (170)

Twain never shows us the depressingly sordid parts of river life, though Twain certainly had some knowledge of them. We are not made privy to prostitution, gruesome murders, or wholesale starvation or slave-beatings. Instead, we are shown rather lesser representatives of those squalid evils, men like the King and the Duke. We do not have to see them kill to know they are evil, much as we do not have to see the violence of sixteenth-century Castilian society to know that the archpriest and the buldero are bad.

In a special way, Huck remains untouched by his experiences. In a moral sense he is still an innocent because he listens to his heart instead of his social training when deciding whether or not to turn Jim over to the authorities, despite the fact that he still half-believes in the moral dogma of returning runaway property. He says, "All right, then, I'll go to hell--and tore it [the letter to Miss Watson] up" (Twain 208).

In high relief here is the dimension of risk-taking mentioned earlier in the paper: Huck has opened his eyes, sees the Emperor is naked, and he can never return to the moral bankruptcy of servitude to the society that gave him its medieval moral code. The risk that he takes is of thinking for himself, an act which necessarily makes him a pariah. Lazarillo, on the other hand, finds his way from the fringes of society to a secure, if low, place within the pale of respectability. R. O. Jones notes

> Lazaro . . . equates God with luck: the name has no moral connotation for him whatever. . . . He shares the hollow piety of a hollow society. His references to God are another aspect of the opportunism he has learnt from everyone about him. Lazaro is a victim of a society whose religion is a cloak for self-seeking. (71)

Instead of rebelling against the moral order, Lazarillo fights his way into it. Lying among the ruins of his childhood innocence, the boastful Lazarillo, now a cuckolded town crier, has put on wholeheartedly the masks of his nation and culture. The author makes it clear, however, that our man is a victim, not the source of evil. He is to be seen with pity as well as with sarcasm (71).

Huck Finn seems to be reserved for a different fate. He appears to come off more admirably than Lazarillo, and to modern eyes, he does. We must remember, though, that Huck's story, like the Spanish scamp's, ends unhappily:

> The difference is that while the Spanish picaro is finally victim of the socializing process and has surrendered whatever 'self' he began with, Huck is 'lost' because he cannot finally be false to himself. Huck's driving independence is truly Emersonian; he must abide by the voice within him (i.e. expressly *not* his conscience--the voice of *learned* duty), which he all too readily admits to be the voice of the Devil but is at last the only voice he knows. (Powers 161)

Huck's struggle to puzzle out the vagaries of existence is not an ideological one, however. To his mind, he is merely trying to survive, and a new moral order seems to be the best thing to ease his mind, although he ironically feels guilty for having done the right thing (161). And as Twain farms out the "rewards" at the end of the novel, he finds "there is nothing to give to Huck" (Kastely 436). Instead of refusing take a risk and grow, Huck has eaten the apple of the knowledge of good and evil. He will be dissatisfied with the contentments of civilization which Lazarillo cannot see beyond. James Kastely says "[Huck's] journey is to a true wilderness. . . . [T]he goal of any free person . . . is not to achieve a particular end but to struggle in a battle that cannot be conclusively won in order to keep alive the humanity he has discovered" (435).

Huck has grown from innocence to wisdom; he has savored civilized society and rejected it. The final risk has been taken, and as is often the case with real life, virtue is its own reward--and its only reward, except that Huck now faces even greater unknowns (and possible greater rewards) by

finding out that society can and often does lie. Huck can stand to see himself apart from society because his personal identity no longer craves the acceptance he desired at the beginning of the novel. His acceptance of Jim as another human being, an equal, has freed him from the coils of social propaganda and helped to sever his ties from all other bogus social relationships. True friendship--that is to say, love--is possible for him now without the trappings of religion or social convention. Huck has "won his moral struggle; innate goodness has triumphed over the internalized mores of [his] civilization; through losing his soul, Huck has saved it" (Shockley 79).

Through a series of risks taken and not withdrawn from, Huck has transcended the day-to-day, incident-to-incident darts of fortune of the picaresque character Lazarillo. Lazarillo cannot see any reason for his own behavior beyond his immediate survival. But that may be a function of *Lazarillo de Tormes*'s place in literary history: the picaresque world view was "realized in that series of novels that, following *Lazarillo de Tormes,* employed its original metaphor to give formal expression to the dilemma of the strife between individual integrity and social demands for conformity" (Powers 173). Moreover, the desperation of Lazarillo's life may have made necessary the boy's more materialistic outlook on life.

Twain may not have outdone Cervantes, but he did provide his Huckleberry Finn with the moral courage to take dangerous risks and the brains to realize what he had accomplished. Huck has transcended Lazarillo and taken his place alongside the Knight of the Doleful Countenance and Sancho Panza, both known for taking a fair number of risks. Lazarillo may have had a young life crowded with incident, but there is nowhere left for him to grow. Huck on the other hand, has opened a magic box and has found in it, of all things, a mirror.

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A Wrong Turn: Exposing Hemingway's Ineffectual Frederick Henry

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In Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*, Frederick Henry tells the story of his tour of duty in the Italian army as an ambulance driver and his subsequent desertion to Switzerland with the English nurse, Catherine Barkley. In the course of his narrative, we discover many things about Henry that he also seems to learn and then attempts to camouflage. That this revelation does not occur until over half-way into the novel leads us to reconsider Henry's reliability as a narrator. In addition, we are compelled to reevaluate how we have been misled about his role in the action of the first half of his story.

Integral to this revelation about the true nature of Henry's character are the sequence of events that occur during the retreat of the Italian army from the approaching German and Austrian forces. On the day of that retreat, Henry finds himself burdened with the task of getting three ambulances loaded down with equipment from a field hospital to the army headquarters at Udine. Henry takes this responsibility seriously; and when the mass exodus of troops and artillery from the front slows the progress of his journey, he decides to take an alternate route through the countryside. He tells us: "I knew there were many side-roads but did not want to take one that would lead to nothing" (198). His choice of an unmapped route, however, causes all of his fears to be realized, because this little road leads to nothingness. Henry loses one of the ambulances when it becomes buried up to its differential in the soft, sandy road. After abandoning this vehicle, he decides to take the other two vehicles across a field which lies at the end of the road. In his explanation of this failure we can detect his burgeoning need to defend his decision because of his recognition of his own inadequacies: "If we could get across, there was a road on the other side. We could not get across. It was too soft and muddy for the cars" (206). On the open muddy field near the Italian front, Henry's mission has ended as an abysmal failure.

During this odyssey, Henry displays other forms of behavior that call into question his ability to make rational decisions and to conduct himself according to the situation in which he finds himself. When the convoy stops at an abandoned farmhouse, the men pillage the premises for food, finding some wine and cheese. An Italian sergeant who has hitched a ride with the ambulances also searches through the house, emerging "with a clock in his hand" (200). Henry exerts his authority by ordering the man to return the clock to the house. It appears to be a magnanimous gesture on Henry's part, but an empty one considering that large numbers of enemy

limitations and try to make up for them through the strengths of others. Frederick Henry does something similar to this following his desertion from the Italian army and eventual escape to Switzerland because he comes to realize that he does not possess the ability to act on his own.

Following the series of failures that beset his mission to Udine, two things become apparent in the story. First, Henry's narration seems to reflect his efforts to rehabilitate his reputation because the account of many of his actions borders on the heroic. For example, he makes the valiant escape from the Italian authorities to escape his inevitable execution and finds his way to Catherine in Stresa. Second, we see that the succession of events that lead to Henry's escape to Switzerland could not have been possible without the help or direct intervention of others, especially the bartender at the hotel in Stresa who not only warns him that the authorities are after him, but also gives him the boat in which he and Catherine make their escape. He has finally learned to heed the warnings of others, which he failed to do with the Italian sergeant during the retreat. After reaching Switzerland, when he and Catherine are in a carriage heading to a hotel, she asks to see his hands, which have become severely blistered from rowing the boat all night. Henry explains:

> I put them out. They were both blistered raw.
> "There's no hole in my side," I said.
> "Don't be sacrilegious." (254-5)

Without any intention of being sacrilegious, Henry has come to realize his own limitations, knowing that he must rely on the strengths of others to effectively engage in life.

The person to whom Henry now clings is Catherine. During their stay in Switzerland, he rarely makes a decision without consulting her (even though he does attempt to disguise it in his narrative). As they contemplate the move from the mountains to Lausanne, we are never sure how the decision is made nor who makes it. Henry begins the conversation:

> "Do you think we ought to move into town?"
> "What do you think?" Catherine asked.
> "If the winter is over and the rain keeps up it won't be fun here. How long is it before young Catherine?"
> "About a month. Perhaps a little more."
> "We might go down and stay in Montreux."
> "Why don't we go to Lausanne. That's where the hospital is."
> "All right. But I thought maybe that was too big a town."
> "We can be as much alone in a bigger town and Lausanne might be nice."
> "When should we go?"
> "I don't care. Whenever you want, darling. I don't want to leave here if you don't want." (306-7)

Besides being disgustingly precious, this exchange reflects Catherine's continual manipulation of Henry, as well as his desire to make us believe that he holds some control over his life.

With Catherine's inevitable death, we sense the isolation and fear that grip Henry because he has again been left to fend for himself. In the hospital room, he finds that saying good-by to her is "like saying good-by to a statue" (332). She may appear statue-like in death, but she has also been a monumental influence on his life, guiding him to that point in time in which he once again finds himself without the support and guidance he needs.

In *A Farewell to Arms,* Hemingway does not present the story of a tragic romance in war-torn Europe. Instead, he gives us a story of an American who has not been equipped to take control of life and make it his. The tragedy exists in that Frederick Henry eventually recognizes his ineffectual nature and works to hide it. But this type of life, as Hemingway suggests in the novel's final line, will eventually leave one isolated and unfulfilled.

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Absorbing Faulkner: A Comparative Study of *As I Lay Dying* and Louise Erdrich's *Love Medicine*

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Native American novelist Louise Erdrich writes with a startlingly fresh and clear voice, yet her work resonates with the richness of other American fiction--from that of Herman Melville to William Faulkner to Toni Morrison. Of Faulkner Erdrich says, "I guess I can't really pin down what his influence is. I think one absorbs him through the skin. He is just such a wonderful storyteller" (Wong 203).

It is clear that Erdrich has "absorbed" Faulkner "through the skin." In her first three novels she has created a Yoknapatawpha-like world where the characters are rooted in a sense of place. Erdrich's fictional world mirrors a reality that is besieged by outside forces, is threatened by change, and is slowly losing a unifying identity--a world not unlike Faulkner's. Like Faulkner, Erdrich boldly experiments with narrative technique. These similarities are enough to place her in the Faulknerian tradition. However, given the orality of the Native American culture and of the Southern culture--and in turn, the indebtedness of Southern culture to both Naive American and African orality--it could be said that Faulkner owes as much to Erdrich's tradition as she does to his. That possibility aside, there are similarities to Faulkner in Erdrich's work. Critics have noticed especially the connection between *Love Medicine* and *As I Lay Dying*, but for the most part, their focus has been on narrative concerns.[1] Indeed, both novels use the first person narrations of several different characters (fifteen in *As I Lay Dying* and six in *Love Medicine*), and the narrative distance provided by the non-Bundren narrators is matched in *Love Medicine* by the inclusion of a narrator of limited omniscience.

Beyond narrative polyphony, the most significant intersection of *As I Lay Dying* and *Love Medicine* is at the point of story. By "story" I mean narrative in its most elemental form. There is a finite pool of stories about the human experience, but these stories are played out in an infinite variety. Of "story" Erdrich says,

> The story starts to take over if it is good. You begin telling, you get a bunch of situation characters together, but if it's good, you let the story tell itself. You don't control the story. (Bruchac 86)

The story that tells itself in *Love Medicine* is the same story as that of *As I Lay Dying*--a woman dies, and in the process of putting her to rest, her sons struggle to understand their places in both a familial and cosmic order. What makes the parallel between *As I Lay Dying* and *Love Medicine* so interesting is that while the "story" is essentially the same, the novel that is

refracted from Erdrich's artistic lens is strikingly different from the novel refracted by the lens of Faulkner's art.

In pyrotechnic displays of skill, both Faulkner and Erdrich create an amazing presence-by-absence in the characters of Addie Bundren and June Kashpaw. Both women appear only briefly in the initial segments of the novels, and then they die; nonetheless, they provide the narrative impulse for the novels. Addie extracts a promise from Anse that he will take her back to Jefferson when she dies, and thus she puts into motion her revenge on Anse. "[M]y revenge," she says, "would be that he would never know I was taking revenge" (*As I Lay Dying* 159). Addie's revenge is singularly ill-planned, though: for Anse, in his characteristic bumbling way, never realizes that he is the object of revenge; his luckless children bear the brunt of Addie's revenge, paying an extraordinary price.

June Kashpaw's presence hovers over *Love Medicine* just as Addie Bundren's does over *As I Lay Dying*. The narrative of *Love Medicine,* however, is not predicated on such a deliberate, and even evil, machination as Addie's revenge. June is a benign character who is more pathetic than Addie for she never learns to exert her voice, and thus her personhood. She drifts from an abusive marriage to prostitution to a resigned and passive suicide. Though we hear Addie speak two-thirds of the way through *As I Lay Dying,* we never hear June's first-person account of her life.

In a perverse show of personal strength, Addie breaks the silence of her life and even the silence of her death. Because her pent-up voice erupts in bitterness and violence, she creates a danger for her sons that finds no parallel in the experience of June Kashpaw's sons. Therefore, the nature of the struggle that their sons must endure differs in degree, though not in kind. Certainly there are similarities between Addie's sons Darl and Jewel and June's sons Lipsha and King. Both pairs of sons are struggling to establish an understanding of their relationships to their mothers and to their world, but the quest of Darl and Jewel bears the violence we have seen in Addie's coming to words, and the quest of Lipsha and King shares a measure of June's passivity.

For Darl and Jewel, the struggle for ascendancy smolders in dormacy for a long time, and only the occasion of Addie's death brings it into focus. As Irving Howe has noted, Darl is obsessed with Jewel and the first word of his initial narration (indeed, the first word of the novel) is "Jewel" (183). Throughout the novel Darl taunts Jewel with increasing intensity: "Jewel, do you know that Addie Bundren is going to die? Addie Bundren is going to die?", and "Jewel, she is dead, Jewel. Addie Bundren is dead" (36, 48). On their return from delivering the load of wood, Darl says, "It's not your horse that's dead, Jewel" (84). With the same sixth sense that tells him that Dewey Dell is pregnant, Darl makes the connection that Jewel's violent love for his horse is somehow linked with his love for his mother and his inadequate understanding of who is father is. As the conflict between the brothers escalates, Darl needles Jewel: "Jewel, whose son are you? . . . Your mother was a horse, but who was your father, Jewel?" (195). Though it may

be unintentional on his part, Darl's probing into the secret selves of Dewey Dell and Jewel prompts them to instigate his institutionalization, thus shielding themselves from his psychic gaze. This is not achieved though without a violent scuffle where Dewey Dell is "scratching and clawing at [Darl] like a wild cat" and Jewel is throwing and holding Darl to the ground while shouting, "Kill him. Kill the son of a bitch" (220, 221).

The conflict between King Kashpaw and Lipsha Morrisey, the sons of June Kashpaw, is not clouded by this type of violence. We learn from Lipsha that once, when he and King were out hunting, as boys, King "hid in the bushes and took a potshot" at him (*Love Medicine* 35). At the core, King is a weak and cowardly young man, and beyond the half-hearted potshot and some jeers, his hatred for Lipsha never manifests itself in violence. Lipsha learns early on to "steer clear of King" (35). At the end of the novel when Lipsha learns that June is his mother and that he rightfully owns a share of her legacy (the car bought with her insurance money), he goes to the Twin Cities to find King. "Maybe things would change now that we were formally brothers," he hopes (248). Lipsha finds King unchanged in attitude, but looking haggard:

> His bones had sunk back in his flesh. The booze was telling on him. Wear and tear of being mean had worn his temper so it balanced on a sliver. His eyes had a strange mocking glint. (249)

Because of King's cowardliness and Lipsha's basic sweetness, the two do not fight, but rather play poker, using the marshmallow bits from Lucky Charms as chips. It is not until Lipsha's father, Gerry Nanapush, enters the room that the tension mounts and the childlike poker game becomes real. No longer playing for pieces of cereal, the brothers, along with Gerry, play for ownership of June's car. With marked cards, Lipsha and Gerry play a royal flush into Lipsha's hands and he wins possession of the car. Without the violence that marks the struggle of Darl and Jewel, Lipsha's battle for sonship is over; he is recognized by his father, and June's car becomes his.

In telling the story of sons and their mothers, Faulkner and Erdrich focus on the responses of grieving sons. Both Jewel and King respond in violence and with a transfer of their affection for their mothers to an object. Jewel's metonymic association of his horse with his mother is different only in degree from Vardaman's confused assertion that "My mother is a fish" (*As I Lay Dying* 74). We see the same kind of transfer of lavish, violent, and inexplicable love in King's devotion to the car bought with June's insurance money. Both King and Jewel are unable to negotiate the middle ground of love. For them, love can only explode in violence or passion. In *Love Medicine*, King can relate to his wife Lynette only by verbal and physical abuse, or in impassioned love-making. And in grieving for his mother, June, he attacks the car that is so reverently called "June's car" by all the family members, even though it was never actually hers:

> King . . . threw his whole body against the car, thudded on the hood with hollow booms, banged his way across the roof, ripped at antennae and side-view mirrors with his fists, kicked into the

broken sockets of headlights. Finally he ripped a mirror off the driver's side and began to beat the car rhythmically, gasping. (32)

Jewel, too, shifts erratically from violence to passion in his otherwise inexpressible love and grief for his mother. We see him beating his horse on the face with a curry comb at one point; and later we see him, in passionate fury, sacrificing his horse so that Anse might buy a pair of mules from Snopes and continue the burial journey. It is Jewel's passion that leads him to this ennobling sacrifice. Capable of one great heroic act (because he has only one great passion), Jewel selflessly rises to the occasion in a way that the weak-willed and self-centered King Kashpaw never can.

The list of narrative coincidences in the two novels could go on and on, but one last example is worthy of note. Darl and Lipsha are both similar and dissimilar, and perhaps in the playing out of these two characters we can see the greatest difference in the visions of Faulkner and Erdrich. Darl and Lipsha are sensitive characters who are never fully understood by those around them. Of Lipsha, Albertine Johnson narrates, "Lipsha knew surprising things. . . . Sometimes he used words I had to ask him the meaning of, and other times he didn't make even the simplest sense" (36). Cora Tull says that Darl is "the one that folks say is queer, lazy" (*As I Lay Dying* 22). Furthermore, both characters share an artistic sensibility; there is a sensitivity and certain poetry in the sections of the novels narrated by Darl and Lipsha. The artistic temperament causes trouble for both characters, though. Lipsha's gift of healing fails miserably when he is conjuring the love medicine for his Grandpa Kashpaw, and his grandfather dies as a result. Darl's artistic temperament only serves to alienate him from his family and his immediate community. If sanity is the ability to order one's cultural and social environment so that one can exist, then Darl truly is insane, for he is not able to fit into the disordered world of the Bundrens. He is the quintessential modernist hero--alienated from his society. But, in a larger sense, he is the only sane one among the Bundrens, for the very fabric of their universe is ill-woven (warped, if you will). It is because Darl recognizes this that he is out of step with his family and his community, and that he will be forever denied a place in both.

Lipsha is able to recover from his blunders and the emotional scars of his early life, and he comes to an understanding of himself and his world by the end of the novel. The last we hear from Lipsha is affirmation. "The morning was clear. A good road led on. So there was nothing to do but cross the water, and bring her home" (*Love Medicine* 272). The last words we hear from Darl are "Yes yes yes yes yes yes yes yes" (*As I Lay Dying* 236), but this is not a positive statement. Darl is caught in a topsy-turvy world where his "yes" only affirms the fact that "no" is the only option open to him. Darl realizes that to be fully aware and sane in his world is to be counted insane, and beyond the fact that he becomes a convenient scapegoat for the barn-burning, Darl is unable to integrate himself into his world in the way that Lipsha does.

Both Faulkner and Erdrich are wonderful storytellers. In *As I Lay Dying* and *Love Medicine*, they begin with very similar stories, but in the spinning, they create radically different novels. In his Nobel Prize acceptance speech, Faulkner has said that "man will not merely endure: he will prevail." Certainly, in *As I Lay Dying* his characters endure, but we must wait for Erdrich's "retelling" of the story to see any characters prevail.

Footnote

[1]For comments concerning the connection between *As I Lay Dying* and *Love Medicine* see the following sources: Ainsworth, Linda. In *Studies in American Indian Literatures*. Ed. Karl Kroeber, 9. 1 (1985): 27. Flavin. Louise. "Louise Erdrich's *Love Medicine*: Loving Over Time and Distance." *Critique: Studies in Modern Fiction* 31. 1 (1989): 56. Hanson, Elizabeth I. *Forever There: Race and Gender in Contemporary Native American Fiction*. New York: Peter Land, 1989. Silberman, Robert. "Opening the Text: *Love Medicine* and the Return of the Native American Woman." *Narrative Chance: Postmodern Discourse on Native American Indian Literatures*. Ed. Gerald Vizenor. Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 1989. n.4., 116.

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