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ARTICLES and DISCUSSION

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Vol. 9.3 (1999/2000)

Response to Christopher Wessman, "Marlowe's *Edward II* as 'Actaeonesque History'"*

FELICIA BONAPARTE and JAKOB STERN

If Christopher Wessman is right in his suggestive and enlightening essay, and we are convinced he is, one way to describe what Marlowe does by embedding the myth of Actaeon in his historical play is to say, as might Walter Benjamin, that Marlowe uses the myth of Actaeon to turn a *trauerspiel* into a tragedy. According to Benjamin in *Der Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels*, tragedy is grounded in myth, *trauerspiel* in history. Fulfilling a sacrificial design, tragedy is universal, transcendent. The *trauerspiel*, on the other hand, is bound to this world, tied to the fact, often tied to the particular. The protagonist of a tragedy, above the gods in his realization that he is greater than his fate, has no one to whom to lament his destiny. In contrast, the making of a lament is the very point of the *trauerspiel*.[1] This appears to be a distinction Marlowe, in Wessman's reading, intuits. The title identifies Edward's death not as tragic but as "lamentable" and it is only near his end, when he faces the fulfillment of his mythic sacrifice, that he confers a tragic status retrospectively on himself by saying to Lightborn: "I see my tragedy written in thy brows" (V.v.76).

As Wessman observes, this act of embedding myth into historical fact is projected at the beginning when Gaveston describes the entertainments he will devise to delight his Edward. But it is important to stress that the myth of Actaeon is to be performed in a way very different from the rest. "Italian masks" are planned "by night" (I.i.55). Clearly, these are dramatic performances at which Edward will make the audience. The myth of Actaeon, however, is to be dramatized "in the day" and not on a stage

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*Reference: Christopher Wessman, "Marlowe's *Edward II* as 'Actaeonesque History'" *Connotations* 9.1 (1999/2000): 1-33.

but when Edward "shall walk abroad" (I.i.57), going about his daily business. Thus, as Gaveston envisions it, this mythic reenactment, like none of the other distractions he projects for Edward's pleasure, is precisely analogous to the structure of the play, which embeds the myth in fact, in reality, in history.

But it is also, it seems to us, an analogue to a confusion that is one source of Edward's tragedy.

The myth of Actaeon is apparently one of the most archaic in the Greek corpus. It is one of those myths that belong to the pre-agricultural stratum and that include a number of uncanny elements. Such myths speak of inadvertent, catastrophic human error, of youths seized by nymphs who dwell in the woods and springs of which they are embodiments, as Hylas, for example, is seized by the nymphs of the pool.[2] A familiar aspect of these myths as well as one of their oldest features is that very sense of sight that Wessman has described so well in his essay, sight as dangerous penetration, a motif that is grounded in the ancient belief that sight is physical contact. It is this very seeing/touching, defiling/raping of what ought not to be seen or touched (Artemis and Athena, for instance) that typically produces either blindness, as in the Callimachean myth of Teiresias, or death by being rent apart (*sparagmos*), as in the myths of Pentheus and Actaeon.

Modern readings of Actaeon tend to take his myth—the myth of the hunter, the marginal figure of the wilderness—as a typical representation of an initiation rite, one that must take the youth from adolescence, associated with the wild, the world especially of Artemis, to adulthood, the world of Zeus and Hera, which is associated with civic life.[3] Many mythological heroes (Theseus and Jason, for example) make the transition with heroic success. Others (such as Daphne and Hylas) are either captured in the wild or are literally torn apart in attempting the transition (Hippolytus and Actaeon). A specific characteristic of this mythological pattern is that the transition is frequently defined in sexual terms as a passing from a homosexual to a heterosexual relationship. The marginal figure of the wild—especially the figure who fails to accomplish the passage to adulthood—may be portrayed as either sexless (Hippolytus) or as the homosexual beloved of an older lover (Ganymede/Zeus, Hylas/Herakles).[4] And this again is something Marlowe appears to have intuited, for he

alludes not only to Actaeon but to Hylas (I.1.144; I.iv.395) and Ganymede (I.iv.181), understanding, it would seem, that they constitute a category.

Not everything here applies to Marlowe's play. What does apply, in our opinion, is the fundamental distinction between the wilderness and the state, and the life appropriate to each. Edward in choosing Gaveston and rejecting Isabella can be understood as choosing to remain in the wilderness rather than accepting his responsibilities in the life of the state and of history. It is interesting that the peers do not object to his having a minion, whom they accept with modern aplomb. Indeed, the Elder Mortimer offers a cluster of antecedents which bunch together myth and history: Alexander and Hephaestion, Hercules and Hylas, Patroclus and Achilles, Tully and Octavius, Socrates and Alcibiades (I.iv.393-99) and Young Mortimer replies: "Uncle, his wanton humour grieves not me." What they object to is the introduction of Gaveston into affairs of state. The state, the making of history, is the business of civic life, a world to which the relationship of Edward and Gaveston does not belong. It is not insignificant that Marlowe reminds us that it is Isabella who is England's link to France, to international relations. Gaveston is clearly drawn as someone who can only function in Edward's mythological wilderness. By bringing him into civic affairs Edward confuses the two worlds precisely as Gaveston had confused them in his paradigmatic projection of the myth into Edward's daily life.

Kept to the wilderness, myth is a figurative, not a literal truth. The entertainment Gaveston plans is delightful because Actaeon in it will only "seem to die" (I.i.70). But enacted historically, Marlowe appears here to suggest, it can only be realized literally. Carried into affairs of state, those who embody Actaeon are required to die in fact. And this translation of figure to fact has the effect of turning the myth into a parody of itself. As the hunter becomes the hunted—and Actaeon and Diana, as Wessman shows, play both these parts, as do Edward and Gaveston—Edward, in what can only be a grotesque parody of Diana standing in the sylvan pool, is found "in a vault up to the knees in water / To which the channels of the castle run" (V.v.23).

Although Edward is not torn asunder, his surrogate, Gaveston, is in part, at least in that he is beheaded, and Young Mortimer is completely. Mortimer is the only character described as "tragicall" in the title but he

does not begin his tragedy until Edward has ended his. As Isabella sees her son come to take vengeance on the two of them, she bestows a tragic status on the remainder of their lives: "Now, Mortimer, begins our tragedy" (V.vi.23). Marlowe has clearly continued the tragedy by passing it on to Mortimer and he has done so by letting Mortimer experience the final phase of the myth: "Bring him," orders Edward III, "unto a hurdle, drag him forth; / Hang him, I say, and set his quarters up: / But bring his head back presently to me" (V.vi.54-56). And the fact that Edward III arrives with the peers and not with a minion signals that he has already entered the civic duties his father disdained.

Postscript: In the progress of discussing the relationship between Marlowe's play and the myth of Actaeon as Christopher Wessman's essay develops it, we thought of what seems an odd coincidence. Everyone knows that Marlowe died under somewhat mysterious circumstances in a brawl at Deptford Inn. Many believe his death was an accident, the end of an unfortunate scuffle. But there has always been speculation that Marlowe was a government agent and that, knowing too much perhaps, he was killed for political reasons. In this connection it is interesting that, in his effort to explain his own mysterious exile at the hands of the Emperor Augustus, Ovid in his *Tristia* refers to the myth of Actaeon and to Actaeon's seeing Artemis naked, implying that he too had peered unwittingly into what should not have been seen (an imperial scandal?):

> Cur aliquid vidi? Cur noxia lumina feci?
> Cur imprudenti cognita culpa mihi?
> Inscius Actaeon vidit sine vesta Dianam.
> Praeda fuit canibus non minus ille suis. (2.103-06)

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NOTES

[1]Here we are summarizing (and, necessarily, simplifying) the argument of the second section, "Trauerspiel und Tragödie," of Walter Benjamin's *Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1963).

[2]For the myth of Actaeon and its archaic nature see P. M. C. Forbes Irving, *Metamorphosis in Greek Myths* (Oxford: OUP, 1990) 80-90; 197-201; K. Dowden, *The Uses of Greek Mythology* (London: Routledge, 1992) 127 ff.; T. Gantz, *Early Greek Myth* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1993) 478-81. For the myth of Actaeon in Callimachus (and the parallel myth of Teiresias and Athene) see *Callimachus: The Fifth Hymn*, ed. A. W. Bulloch (Cambridge: CUP, 1985) 22 *passim*. Marlowe, of course, would know the myth from Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 3.138-252, the fullest ancient version. For the myth of Hylas see Theocritus, *Idyll 13* and Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica* 1.1207 ff.

[3]The 'initiation school' has now won the day in mythological theory—the names of H. Jeanmaire, A. Brelich, W. Burkert and C. Calame come to mind—although skeptics, among them Forbes Irving (above, note 2), can still be found who stress the infrequency of good evidence from Greek rituals of the classical period. For a reasoned and sane evaluation see H. S. Versnel, "What's Sauce for the Goose is Sauce for the Gander: Myth and Ritual, Old and New," in *Approaches to Greek Myth*, ed. L. Edmunds (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1990) 23-91. The essential problem is well stated by Dowden (above, note 2) 102, who, although he subscribes to the initiation-theory, nonetheless states: "[. . .] even if the method does deliver results, it tells us about the prehistoric significance of the myth and not what it meant to Greeks of classical times." For the application of this approach to the myth of Actaeon see B. Sergent, *Homosexuality in Greek Myth*, trans. A. Goldhammer (Boston: Beacon P, 1986) 228-34 and more generally for such hunters as Hippolytus, Melanion and Atalanta see P. Vidal-Naquet, *The Black Hunter*, trans. A. Szegedy-Maszak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1986) 117-22.

[4]It is noteworthy, as Sergent (above, note 3) has discussed, that the myth of Actaeon can also be found in antiquity in a rationalized, historicized version. The text, in Pseudo-Plutarch's *Love Stories* 2 (*Moralia* 772D-773B), tells the story of a certain Actaeon—not in this case the famous Actaeon of Boeotia to whom Marlowe refers, but rather an Actaeon of Corinth, the son of Melissus. The tale narrates how a Corinthian named Archias of an influential noble family became enamored of the young and modest Actaeon and set out one day with a group of his drunken friends to kidnap the young man. But Melissus and Actaeon's friends resisted, until, as the story specifies, Actaeon suffered a *sparagmos*, being torn limb from limb by the two groups pulling him apart as they strove to possess him. Thus the mythic ritual is transformed into a realistic event. Melissus later displayed his son's torn body and ultimately committed suicide by hurling himself down a cliff. There followed a plague and consultation of the oracle which led to the exile of Archias. Indeed, homosexual passion of an elder for a younger man becomes a stock motif in Greek history and pseudo-historical narrative in stories telling of the overthrow of tyrants: the case of the regicides Harmodius and Aristogeiton in Athens (Thucydides 6.54 ff.) is the most famous instance. In the case of Actaeon of Corinth it is no longer hunting dogs, but rather his lover—his *erastes*—by whom he is torn apart. The parallel to Edward II and Gaveston is not exact, but in structural terms this rationalization of the myth does at least clearly demonstrate that homosexuality can replace in the historicized version the visual rape of Diana in the myth. And that ultimately is the basis of the connection between Actaeon and Edward.

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Identifying Marlowe's Radicalism: A Response to Christopher Wessman*

ANTHONY DIMATTEO

Marlowe's *Edward II* offers as ripe a work of drama as one can imagine for bringing into the light of day how political theatre, that is, the politics of theatre and the theatre that is politics, functioned in early modern society. Through elaborate analogy and metaphor that regards Edward's body as symbolic of the sovereign body as such, Marlowe painstakingly penetrates the ruling fictions or fictions about the right to rule of his own day, tantalizing and nauseating audiences with an insider's view of how political power works (Fred Tromly). Christopher Wessman has amply identified one significant thread of this symbolism.

According to Wessman, Marlowe is writing "Actaeonesque History," not only a personal tragedy about one lamentable king. He exploits the multivalence of the myth of Actaeon to reveal "the supposedly pristine bodies natural and politic of the ruler" (7) as vulnerable, in conflict, and ideologically constructed. The play takes up this myth because Queen Elizabeth had become so conspicuously linked to the iconography of Diana. Edward, both an Actaeon and a Diana figure in the play, opens himself and the realm to penetration and transformation, "mutilation and dismemberment" (11). Wessman's reading richly indicates that the playwright was an astute observer of how early modern metaphors of the unity of state can become undone or parodically redone during times of political crisis. Marlowe thus possessed, according to Wessman, "a coherent political vision" (30). Grand affairs of the royal state are revealed as sordid affairs of human, all too human desire. Edward's lust for Pierce of Gaveston

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*Reference: Christopher Wessman, "Marlowe's *Edward II* as 'Actaeonesque History'" *Connotations* 9.1 (1999/2000): 1-33.

appears more than the tragic flaw of a king. It "pierces" or "overpeers" the state, with the language and props of the play creating complex, suggestive puns from the beloved Pierce's name (Wessman 19-23). The king's desire overdetermines affairs of the realm, as the dissenting nobles recognize, and threatens to expose the state as a misgoverning of the common weal. The sovereign body metaphorically makes a minion of the body politic. Not only Edward's will but royal sovereignty itself appears imposed from above, that is, without any weight in natural law.

In this essay, I would like to pursue Wessman's idea that Marlowe has a political vision. I will explore how the play subjects to a caustic dramatic process the metaphors that surround the conventional idea of the sovereign in his own space, "princeps in suo regno." The process brings into view a submerged network of relations that form a sexual and political economy of social practices, ceremonies and beliefs. Politics appears a form of sex, and sex an extension or victim or frustration of politics. By summoning this complex into the light of day, Marlowe appears a radical reader of sovereignty. His play seems "anti-Oedipal," to draw upon another ancient myth, supplementing Wessman's Actaeonesque reading, in the sense that it exposes the basis for political supremacy as imaginary and unnatural, stemming from "over-civil" or "over-civilized" constraints and taboos placed upon sexual desire. Sexual desire, however, "overpeers" the state the way Pierce of Gaveston "overpeers" the king and the nobles on account of the power that he obtains from the king's sexual desire for him. The real power is the power that desire has over all the characters in the play. Its frustrations and enablements turn all the characters into puppets or slaves of passion. The play implies that Pierce's power over the sovereign body of the king (and Mortimer's over the Queen) stems from the power that sexual desire or erotic love has over politics. Furthermore, and this is where the prospect of an uncanny or negative sublime comes into view, sexual desire in the play has its true domain like death in "countries yet unknown," as Mortimer terms his voyage into death out of the life dominated by "base fortune" (V.vi.59, 67). The fortune or political career of the mighty proves prey to the larger powers of sex and death, both of which beset and topple the sovereign body literally into mire. The body

natural is a far more mysterious and terrifying thing in this play than anything that the state can control or manage. Sex and death shred any sense of a providential course of things. In this way, the play makes us see history through a glass so extremely dark that it begins to look back at us, showing us the vanity of our own faces in its mirror of magistrates when we thought perhaps we could make providential sense of it after all.

One might object here that to speak of Marlowe's supposed coherent political vision in terms of its focus upon psycho-political discontents is hopelessly anachronistic. On the other hand, how much theory would Marlowe have needed beyond Marsilio of Padua's denunciation of tyranny or Machiavelli's handbook for the Medici to have realized that the state is a kind of political "family romance," a relentless, strangely eroticized quest for the securing or "immortalizing" of power, an obsession for a phallic signifier or dynastic marker to outlast the corruptions of time? In Marlowe's own day, there were frequent articulations of a grand policy of the state to accredit itself with an absolute power through "translatio imperii," that is, to stake out or make real the claims of an imaginary though "legal" empire that stemmed from Alexander the Great to Caesar to the medieval Popes and Emperors and eventually to the absolutist kings of early modern Europe. This translation had its explicit early modern spokesmen. The important royalist historian Charles Du Moulin, for example, observed of the French monarch, "It is certain that the King of France, sovereign lord in his kingdom, has no less power than had Justinian the Great or other Emperors in their Empire" (quoted by J. W. Allen 285).

As double agent for Spain and England, playwright, scholar and rebel with notorious causes, Marlowe would have gotten to eat from all sides of the political table and learned the "kingly" truth of what it is to be made a subject and minion of such imaginary or "more than natural" power. Of all the Elizabethan poets and playwrights, it seems safe to say that he would have been the least intimidated by the idea of revolution as an unnatural upheaval, by what would have been called in his time "innovation." So many Marlovian creatures are, "surcharg'd with surfeit of ambitious thoughts" (*The Massacre at Paris* V.ii.24) and aware of how

"policy hath fram'd religion," to quote the Guise (*The Massacre at Paris* I.ii.65). Marlowe's Guise was far from alone in understanding the need to veil and exploit the arbitrariness of political power in order to gain and hold it. As Machiavelli first described it and Giovanni Botero first named it, the state in the form of an absolute power to dispense privilege, tantalizing subjects into submission, had no other imperative than its own survival. This political imperative of the state as it applied to monarchy put the king above even his own laws, a long-lived imperial legal legacy in the West that I believe the play overtly calls into question. We see how Edward II and the nobles in the play act as if above the law, "soluti legibus," as Roman Law described the emperor's power, with disastrous consequences at all social levels for England's governance.

Marlowe's play through Mortimer Senior provides us with a convenient list of famous examples of the operations of such imperial privilege, suggesting a repetitive, uncanny pattern of sexual indulgence and abuse at the heart of royal or even aristocratic prerogative:

> The mightiest kings have had their minions,
> Great Alexander lovde Ephestion,
> The conquering Hercules for Hilas wept,
> And for Patroclus sterne Achillis droopt. (I.iv.391-94)

Such careers pierce the image of a unified nation or "family" of people with a mighty patriarch at the center, summoning into disturbing awareness the unnaturalness of how a nation is supposed to be a "living body, compact or made of sundry estates and degrees of men" (Elyot 1). That Mortimer's (and Marlowe's) examples are homoerotic of course would no doubt have met official legal scorn in late-sixteenth century English society. The great jurist Edward Coke spoke of non-reproductive sex as "that detestable abominable sin, amongst Christians not to be named" (quoted from Alan Bray by Tromly 123). In sharp contrast to this severe moral and legal climate, Claude Summers describes as unique in sixteenth-century English drama, "Marlowe's presentation of homosexual love in casual, occasionally elevated, frequently moving [. . .] terms." To Summers, Marlowe's "resolute failure to condemn homosexuality" appears more

heterodox than his indifference to "comforting Tudor political myth" regarding sovereignty (222). Yet Marlowe's play seems bent not only at inviting stern indictments of "rugged foreheads" regarding questionable loves of the kind administered by Lord Burleigh, according to Spenser, to *The Faerie Queene*. It arguably appears determined to bring into shamefaced view what Tacitus termed the "arcana imperii." In other words, the play is fixed on, loosely speaking, deconstructing the royal prerogative itself. To do so, it dwells on, rather than glosses over, what Keith Wrightson has identified as a fundamental disunion of early modern English society, "its high degree of stratification, its distinctive and all-pervasive system of social inequality" (17).

This sovereign or imperial *voluntas* circulated in early modern Europe with a life of its own in the form of weighty Roman legal maxims that came to describe what kings thought they had the legal right to do: to cite two of many, "Quod jura in scrinio principis," and, "Quod principi placuit, legis habet vigorem" (Kantorowicz 146, 150, 153). Mortimer Senior precedes his list of famous minions with nearly a translation of the Roman formula by way of pointing out what Edward II as a king "solutus legibus" had the right to do anyway: "Let him without controulement have his will" (I.iv.390). Mortimer's son, having been, in his own words, "thrust" upon the Protectorship, echoes this line of his father, following it with a Latin aphorism:

> And what I list commaund, who dare controwle?
> Major sum quam cui posset fortuna nocere.
> And that this be the coronation day,
> It pleaseth me. (V.iv.68-71)

Such sovereign power or access to it, to no surprise, expressed itself in a range of legal and political fantasies, most notably in England with its strange but telling jurisprudential myth of the king's two bodies, one natural, one civil.

Marlowe's play works rather hard to induce embarrassment in its audience regarding this legal theory of the king's two bodies. It dramatizes the imperial pleasure principle that acted as the foundation of sovereign

rule as a shameless indulgence in power. For example, Edward tells the nobles,

> Make several kingdoms of this monarchy,
> And share it equally amongst you all,
> So I may have some nook or corner left,
> To frolic with my dearest Gaveston. (I.iv.70-73)

The king appropriates the right to disunite the kingdom to salvage what he really wants, a place to frolic, suggesting that England was already far from being what John of Gaunt phrased, following official Tudor propaganda, "This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars" (*Richard II*, II.i.41). If the king had his way, it would be a bower of bliss for the pleasure of his own natural body. Edward II thus criminally violates what was in fact a traditional part of a king's coronation oath, a non-alienation pledge legally obliging kings, "to conserve the rights of their realm and the honor of their Crown," to use the formula of Baldus, influential commentator on the Roman Digest (Kantorowicz 357). Kantorowicz notes that the historical Edward II "seems to have referred, on one occasion, to an 'oath by which he had sworn to maintain the laws of the land and the estate of the Crown'" (357).

Through such frequently made expressions of the king's deepest desire, to serve only himself, the drama appears to reverse the imaginary process rooted in ceremony and decree through which the rights of sovereignty were created in early modern Europe. In other words, the play dispossesses kingship and nobility of natural and legitimate supremacy over the land that they are entrusted with as stewards of the realm. This symbolic approach opens up the play to a deep structural reading of its plot, language and imagery. The instrument of the king's horrid death, for example, can be read as an inverted stake to sovereign claim, a kind of negative "padrões," to use the Portuguese term for pillars of demarcation that usually bore the king's sign, designating "legal" claim to "virgin" land, described in European law as "res nullius" or "terra nullius" (Keller et al. 24-25). At his career's end, however, King Edward's body, specifically his fundament, appears capable of being wickedly seized by just about

anybody, making the king seem the reverse of "princeps in suo regno." The point is underscored by Marlowe's assigning the assassination by anal insertion to one "Lightborne," a character without precedent in Raphael Holinshed's account of the king's death. The closest we come to a description of Lightborne's "degree of person" is when he tells Mortimer,

> I learned in Naples how to poison flowers,
> To strangle with a lawne thrust through the throte. (V.iv.31-32)

Considering how he applies these "Spanish" skills to an English king's body, one can appreciate how they have prepared Lightborne for his own style of sovereign dispossession, a kind of negative variation on the "turf and twig" ceremony that was the customary English practice of taking sovereign possession over "unclaimed" bodies of land (Keller et al. 56-57). In Lightborne's case, he comes to take charge of a sovereign body not on a map or table of the world but under one. "Lay the table downe, and stampe on it," he instructs Matrevis and Gurney.

Tromly notes (114) the many exits in the play of the king, nobility and prelates taken off stage to prison, torture or worse by low-ranking soldiers, "masterless men" or even "natural born slaves," to invoke Aristotle's idea of political hierarchy. The low-born, thus, like Lightborne, have a signifying power to "pierce" the body politic. In other words, Marlowe's play attempts to decapitate the legitimacy of kingship and court, to expose its joint hierarchical assumptions as a political body unnatural. The King's relation to Pierce is a synecdoche for how the state loves its own powers, "unnaturally" divorcing itself from a productive stewardship of the nation and nature.

Ironically, Edward's spurned queen of royal blood, Isabella, sister of a Valois King of France, makes the justification of kingship in terms of a sustained use of the political discourse of magistracy. As the proverbial mother of the nation, it seems fitting that she be assigned this role. As mother of Edward's son, she advanced the course of the Plantagenet dynasty that would last beyond Marlowe's own Queen, Elizabeth I. Yet she is a very questionable speaker of the traditional discourse of English sovereignty. The fact that she is French, of course, and accused of having

Mortimer as her lover perhaps would have called to the minds of Marlowe's contemporaries the not-so-long-ago aborted match of Queen Elizabeth with the French nobleman who had courted her, Alençon, Duc d'Anjou. Possible contemporary allusions aside, in the play, the queen's foreignness and her eventual betrayal of Edward to Mortimer, allowing her husband to be killed, and not assisting her brother-in-law Kent's attempts to free him from the dungeon, implicate her and the conventional discourse she speaks. Her sustained speech comes at a point in the play when she has finally abandoned Edward for Mortimer:

> When force to force is knit, and sword and gleave
> In civill broiles makes kin and country men
> Slaughter themselves in others and their sides
> With their owne weapons gorde, but what's the helpe?
> Misgoverned kings are cause of all this wrack,
> And Edward thou art one among them all,
> Whose loosnes hath betrayed thy land to spoyle,
> And made the channels overflow with blood,
> Of thine own people patron shouldst thou be. (IV.iv.5-13)

She is appealing to the traditional theory of sovereignty and the king's rights and duties through a just dominion over his land and people. She takes up this theory again shortly afterwards when she offers a providential reading of the violence in the play, addressing Mortimer and her son:

> Succesfull battells gives the God of kings,
> To them that fight in right and feare his wrath:
> Thankes be heavens great architect and you.
> Ere farther we proceede my noble lordes,
> We heere create our welbeloved sonne,
> Of love and care unto his royall person,
> Lord warden of the realme. (IV.vi.18-25)

Yet this providential reading rapidly comes undone when her "welbeloved sonne" has her taken off to the Tower and her beloved Mortimer beheaded, with his head placed atop that of the coffin of his father, a grotesque emblem of the dead body politic that has tortured the body natural, the common weal, throughout the play.

The fact that her son, King Edward III, commits her to the Tower, it can be argued, furthers the sense of the unnatural effect of the sovereign body upon that of the natural body and its natural kin relations. The King acknowledges this natural body and the emotion it rouses in his last words in the play:

> Awaye with her, her wordes inforce these teares,
> And I shall pitie her if she speake againe. (V.vi.84-85)

Of course, Isabella does speak again. She asks if she could, "with the rest accompanie him [Edward II] to his grave" (V.vi.88). Her son Edward, however, does not grant the pity that he just said he would and asserts his own "innocencie," the purity of his grief for his father, not her's. He claims the right to frustrate her Antigone-like natural right to bury and mourn for kin. The play subjects him to a risk in doing so. He is in danger of seeming most tyrannical just after the ceremony of his coronation or "apotheosis" as king has occurred. This ceremony theoretically bestowed upon his natural body a "legally" deathless body.[1] However, just when this sovereign body of a king is supposed to be assumed by the Prince, we find him frustrating the social rights of maternal mourning.

One can read this as Marlowe's attempt to make visible a mechanism at the heart of the political body that alienates a person from his or her own natural body, replacing it with an imaginary "body without organs," a politicized "desiring-machine" that cannot weep or leak in any way (Deleuze and Guattari 9-15, 309, 326). In the early modern terms of the play, there is a perceivable wedge or divide or piercing in which the natural and the sovereign body exhibit a conceptual and emotional conflict between themselves. In his first act as king, the new king is worried that he appears to act unnaturally. Just after the time he has taken on his sovereign body and in his first use of it, he disallows or nullifies a natural right of maternal mourning and sends his mother off to the Tower, summoning up memory of how his other parent died and why. Perhaps, Marlowe is indicating a poison at the root of sovereignty which is being exposed as a strange family romance at the top of society and thus throughout the body politic.

This is one way to read why the play ends the way it does. The newly enthroned king has apparently violated one of his own mother's natural rights, a human right to mourn that Hugo Grotius in *De Jure Belli ac Pacis* would soon recognize as one of the principle laws of nations (Grotius 450-461). This is certainly how Mortimer would have argued legally had his voice survived his beheading. The close of the play is part of a drama-long process representing what David Bevington and James Shapiro call, "the decay of ceremony." Death and decay are symbolized by a breakdown of ceremonies in the play, prominent among which is "ceremonial mourning and the ways in which it is violated" (273). At the close of the drama, the sovereign body cannot seal itself off from death, cannot seal off from itself or appropriate for itself all the power of mourning despite the legal fiction regarding sovereignty that claims it is without death.

However, Bevington and Shapiro would seal off Edward III's final act in the play from such sovereign erasure. They argue that the play's end symbolizes how Edward III restores order and ceremony by conspicuously directing attention to the inner purity of his mourning for his dead father. He welcomingly restores an imperial order of things. His act has an Aeneas-like quality to it in its pure filial piety that pays reverence to the deceased father. His act of mourning, supposedly, is more natural and pure than his mother's. The pollution at the heart of the sovereign family has been expurgated or expunged, and thus the play conserves finally what it had been attacking or calling into corrosive questioning all the time.

If one wants to argue that Marlowe's play conservatively focuses on just the sorry plight of one individual king, not impugning the very concept of a sovereign body, then indeed, one would presumably point to the promise at the end of the play when the successful King Edward III becomes sovereign of the realm. In this reading, the play "places strong visual emphasis on [Edward's] proper mourning" (Bevington and Shapiro 274). One could say he has remained a touchstone of filial piety in the play, only his nonage preventing him from playing the role of an Aeneas to his father, rescuing him from the burning flames of a ruined empire to "translate" or carry on his paternal will beyond what fortune has wrought. As Prince, he remained loyal to his father, repeatedly worried over his

absence, and most concerned, also, about the welfare of his father's brother, Kent. Despite these natural feelings of love for his father, Edward as Prince and King is forced until the very end of the play to support Mortimer by his mother. She has been the unnatural one all along. When he finally asserts himself and orders the death of Mortimer, he breaks free from his mother's control over him and rescues sovereignty from those unworthy of it. An Elizabethan audience would remember how his "sacred blood" would be well preserved in his own seven sons, one of whom, the first Duke of York, would be the ancestor of Elizabeth I. Thus, the sovereign body phoenix-like has reinstated itself. And Marlowe's apparent radicalism has been purged from the literary canon of masterpieces.

Yet the cost of such dynastic continuity Marlowe has most memorably inscribed in blood, misery and tears in this canon. Indeed, Edward III walks off the stage with, "teares distilling from mine eyes" (V.vi.101). He asks his tears to, "be witnesse of my greefe and innocencie." He symbolically appeals to the body natural to give evidence of the purity of his sovereign intent and will. But with this "innocencie," the play's last word, the audience has to entrust the king because his words alone cannot make it appear. In other words, the apparent unnatural cruelty to his mother can be "over-ruled" only by appeals to natural-law or international standards of human behavior outside what the king alone can will. The king's body appears decidedly bound by natural and "international" laws that no man can legislate into being.

At the play's end, a king's body stands mute before us. We have to feel and judge its innocence. The sovereign cannot decree this innocence into being. Nothing, apparently, can give indelible proof of the superior virtue that the king theoretically and legally was assumed to possess in the "apotheosis" of his sovereign political power. Nothing can because it is utterly imaginary and yet legal, or, to restate the contradiction, both legal and unjust like "legal" theft. Without the arbitrary entrustment or conspiracy of his audience, the king's moral legitimacy appears to end, or at least his sovereign justice and innocence can go no farther. It stands circumscribed and it leaks, going off into mourning outside its will to control.

Through such stress on the natural opacity of the body that requires shared or recognized feelings for it to be perceived as natural in the social view, the play's ending is consistent with what the drama has been doing all along. It exposes the high degree of vulnerability the sovereign body has to forces that can plague and upend us all, from the lightly to the weightily born. Political hierarchy appears a very questionable thing in view of what nature has wrought inside the obstructing bodies of men that no sovereign gaze can pierce, finding its natural limit there.

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NOTE

[1]On the legal historical pedigree of this peculiar English understanding of the king's "encoronation," see Kantorowicz cited below; for its literary configurings and the kind of imagining it enabled or disallowed Queen Elizabeth to have, see Marie Axton; David Lee Miller.

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Edward II, "Actaeonesque History," Espionage, and Performance*

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Christopher Wessman relates the Actaeon story from classical myth to the concerns of Marlowe's *Edward II* in terms of metaphor, history, tragedy, and politics. Richly textured and informative, his argument along mythological lines reveals much about the compelling power of this play, and of Marlowe's dramatic effects generally, placing him in good critical company. In 1952 Marlowe studies received a critical boost with Harry Levin's *The Overreacher* which argued powerfully for the centrality of the Icarus myth to Marlowe's aspiring heroes. More recently Fred Tromly, in *Playing With Desire: Christopher Marlowe and the Art of Tantalization* (1998), argues the centrality of the Tantalus myth to Marlowe's effects of frustration on characters and audience. Wessman's essay on "Actaeonesque History," especially in relation to *Edward II*, reflects greater dramatic sensitivity than Tromly and fuller political possibility than Levin. Complex, versatile, powerfully suggestive and multivalent—the Actaeon myth involves sexualized power struggle, terrible personal recognition, and a paradoxical transformation of the hunter hunted within a political culture of punishment. Wessman convincingly argues "Actaeonesque History" as unstable, amoral, and transformative.

I would like to respond by suggesting a wider context in terms of power dynamics. In *Edward II*, as in the paradigmatic Actaeon myth, power relations combine and transform themselves through punishments that can be seen in Foucauldian terms of political allegiances,

*Reference: Christopher Wessman, "Marlowe's *Edward II* as 'Actaeonesque History'" *Connotations* 9.1 (1999/2000): 1-33.

inversions, and ironies. As source of power and site of contention, Edward's body is especially invested with extreme and paradoxical meanings. At once private man and public symbol, at once beloved king and tormented other, Edward II enacts and partakes of the contradiction described by Foucault: "In the darkest region of the political field the condemned man represents the symmetrical, inverted figure of the king" (29). In what follows, I will debate Wessman's sense of "spying" in *Edward II* by relating it to issues of self realization, personal punishment, and performative retribution, as informed, in historical and cultural terms by Foucault, Girard, and Kantorowicz and in performative terms by the profoundly doubled interactions of Edward and Gaveston within the drama.

Gaveston's action within the play does not so much involve espionage as it does *performance*. Nothing about him or his language is covert. If it were, the nobles and the Queen might understand it. He does "stand aside" I.i.72) at the outset of the play, but does so for purposes of exposition as he eavesdrops and comments on the King and assorted nobles. These comments, variously snide and joyful, effectively characterize both Gaveston's contradictions and the others' hypocrisies. He does not need to spy on these characters because, as his comments show, he knows them all already. His Actaeonesque spying is more a matter of infiltration, invasion, and performance—"Actaeonesque intruding" as Wessman observes (9). Disgruntled, Mortimer condemns Gaveston as inappropriately "pert," protean, a "dapper jack" (I.iv.403, 411), before indulging in a fantasy of inverted hierarchy and shame:

> Whiles other walk below, the king and he
> From out a window laugh at such as we,
> And flout our train and jest at our attire. (I.iv.415-17)

Feeling personally and politically upstaged, Mortimer excoriates Gaveston's showy behavior. Openly insouciant, Gaveston conveys disrespect from an elevated position (literally and figuratively), a position of comfort combined with jocular, even complacent, élan.

Gaveston's intrusion registers itself with the King in terms of mutual personal endearment and political confidence. Who needs to spy when the King himself is Gaveston's political source? In a short scene that confirms his inside political information as well as his arrogant self-assurance, Gaveston drops names familiarly and sarcastically without fear of retribution:

> Edmund, the mighty prince of Lancaster,
> That hath more earldoms than an ass can bear,
> And both the Mortimers, two goodly men,
> With Guy of Warwick, that redoubted knight,
> Are gone towards Lambeth. There let them remain. (I.iii.1-5)

Mortimer might well threaten, "We will not thus be faced and overpeered" (I.iv.19), his sense of injury reinforcing Warwick's acrimonious observation of Gaveston: "Ignoble vassal, that like Phaethon / Aspires unto the guidance of the sun" (I.iv.16-17). Gaveston's political aspirations are extreme and Phaethon-like replete with mythological associations of open challenge and personal disaster. He knows the political secrets of the King personally—all-too-personally. As Leonard Barkan observes in his study of the Actaeon myth within the Theban group of the *Metamorphoses*: "Each of the mortal figures in this group has an encounter with a mysterious emanation of divinity that is simultaneously beautiful and terrifying" (319). If Gaveston were more secret about his intelligence, he could easily and secretly be liquidated. But Gaveston's public intrusion at the highest level of political affairs ensures—as such an intrusion did for Actaeon (and will for Edward II himself)—terrible self-realization, physical torment, and destruction.

Classical myth conveys emotional, psychological, and political distress with compelling power. Marlowe stresses and sexualizes this multivalent power, with all of its attendant confusions, most especially within the Actaeon-Diana myth in relation to the controversy of Gaveston and Edward. Wessman links the myth to the medieval political theory of the "King's Two Bodies," as outlined by Ernst Kantorowicz, observing that "the Diana myth and the monarch's roles are opened up, profoundly

unsettled and destabilized by Marlowe" (10). But this destabilized situation occurs openly in terms of performance and posturing, political challenge and open disregard, not strictly in terms of clandestine stealth and covert deception. The standard interpretation of the myth cautions that the secrets of Princes are dangerous. But they are also intensely desirable, and once gained are to be indulged in and enjoyed despite their treacherously short and intense duration. Wessman cogently argues that the myth of Diana and Actaeon empowers the play of *Edward II*, but both the ancient myth and the political drama thrive on mimetically contrived performance of punishment.

Foucault and Kantorowicz, even Gaveston, and Edward and a whole host of medieval and renaissance political theorists—they all know that power is written on the body through the genetic information passed on to lineal inheritors of kings and nobles. But power is also inscribed through voice, presentation, celebration, finery, and show. Elizabethan sumptuary laws followed medieval precedent in regulating personal display to ensure recognized stratification of rank in society. A powerful person must "look" and "act" the part. This, Gaveston understands implicitly and performs publicly, eliciting Mortimer's antagonized condemnations above. Gaveston knows that his actions define him more thoroughly than preconceptions of class. And he does *act*—ironically, Mortimer's linking him to "Proteus, god of shapes" (I.iv.410) represented the acme of praise for Elizabethan performers. In emphasizing his external actions along with internal consciousness, Gaveston presents himself as dangerously self-aware. Edward too. As King, his every action is a public, political action. He necessarily *lives* the realization mirrored in Gaveston's experience. Barkan's observation is revealing: "As Actaeon faces his own dogs unable to prove his own identity, we begin to see that the secret he witnessed when he saw Diana bathing is the secret of self-consciousness" (322). Just as Edward, in Wessman's view, manifests simultaneous mythological power as Actaeon and Diana, so too does he mirror Gaveston in power and performance, affirming himself as "Thy friend, thy self, another Gaveston!" (I.i.142).

A king's body is always invested with sacred associations that have their genesis in the mists of mythological etiology and anthropological rite. Hence the suggestive power of Wessman's argument. René Girard, too, in *Violence and the Sacred* (1977) suggestively analyses kingship across cultures as generated by the unifying ritual of sacrificing a surrogate victim, a scapegoat. Here, the King/victim is target for a unifying violence in which all subjects participate as in the Actaeon myth. Just as the King's body politic never dies in the mythological formula "The King is Dead, Long Live the King" so too the King *ever* dies in the sacrificial personal body subject to age and change and assassination. This paradoxical violence relates to Kantorowicz's findings as well when he quotes Richard II's famous speech in Shakespeare's play beginning, "For God's sake let us sit upon the ground / And tell sad stories of the death of kings" (III.ii.155-56). The sad stories, all ending in deposition and death, are mere chapters of the Actaeon story of which Edward II's experience is exemplary. Kantorowicz's observation on the necessary expendability of Richard II is synonymous with that of Edward II: "The king that 'never dies' here has been replaced by the king that always dies and suffers death more cruelly than other mortals" (30).

Such substitution of meanings has special relevance for Wessman's approach when he relates the undignified shaving of the King as prefiguring Edward's later, literal ripping apart in torment. But the shaving incident suggests more than brutality. It also ritually and symbolically figures the King as prey. The Revels editor quotes Stowe's account which Marlowe no doubt knew: "diuising by all meanes to disfigure him that hee mighte not be knowen" (Appendix B, 360). But the rough treatment meted out to Edward within the play—"They wash him with puddle water, and shave his beard away" (V.iii.36, *sd*)—disfigures him in a way that he *can* be known. He is the sacred prey, the ultimate target, the surrogate victim, the condemned man, the shameful scapegoat, hounded forever and always by his own. In this regard, he certainly experiences Actaeon's confusion and distress as he too is tormented like an animal but still has voice to protest in nostalgic humanized pathos: "Tell Isabel, the queen, I looked not thus / When for her sake I ran at tilt

in France / And there unhorsed the Duke of Cleremont" (V.v.66-69). Ultimately though, like Actaeon, Edward cannot make himself understood to his tormentors.

Wessman conveys typically strong argument when he writes of "Edward's real transgression" as comprising both "the wrong kind of accessibility and the ways in which it exposes the body politic, the 'land'" (12). Edward's rending of the land is a decentralizing policy that prefigures Actaeon-like dismemberment in personal and political terms. After all, Edward's two bodies as King represent both his personal body and his body politic. Both will be pierced within the play, as suggested by Wessman in the punning chiastic structure: "Piers peers; the peers pierce" (19). But Piers Gaveston pierces too as he punctures authority and twists terms from the very first, countering Isabella in mimicry—"Madam, 'tis you that rob me of my lord" (I.iv.161)—and publicly confuting the nobles with a pointed verbal stab: "Base leaden earls that glory in your birth, / Go sit at home and eat your tenants' beef" (II.ii.74-75). *They* are the kept men of the realm. Gaveston represents an autonomously wild force that savages their domestic corruption. Royal venison takes precedent over tenants' beef. At all points, Gaveston over-peers the peers in terms of brazen disregard for authority and innovative public performance. Rather than spy on them, he superciliously *overlooks* them because they are so predictable with their phony impresa, legal technicalities and blustering protests before the King. To them, public performance means heraldry; to Gaveston, it means unsentimental political action. To gain the King's love is to gain power at the court of Edward II. Gaveston does so, literally and publicly.

Profoundly resonant in terms of renaissance culture, politics and morality, the myth of Diana and Actaeon conveys and conflates differences between hunter and hunted, between external perception and internal consciousness, between forms of permission and insinuation. Wessman's connecting of the Actaeon myth to the violent political actions of Marlowe's *Edward II* returns us to the roots of discipline, punishment, and power. But power in *Edward II* is not so much equated with sight and spying as it is with insight and performance. Gaveston

literally and figuratively "looks down" on Mortimer and the nobles but does not attempt to do so in any clandestine manner. His constant one-upmanship is all-too-public. Wessman quotes Baldock and Spencer as literal spies within the play. But Spencer's inside information sounds more like administrative gossip than espionage. When he counsels Baldock on performance, however, he gets closer to the Actaeonesque proportions that Wessman argues: "You must be proud, bold, pleasant, resolute— / And now and then stab, as occasion serves" (II.i.42-43). Stunning in its moral indifference, such advice sums up the imperatives of power suggested in Marlowe's paradigmatic Cynthian mythology so well observed and argued by Christopher Wessman as "Actaeonesque History."

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Well-Wishing Adventurers: *Shakespeare's Sonnets and Narrative Poems* by A. D. Cousins and Recent Responses to Shakespeare's Non-Dramatic Verse

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Although the Fair Youth is not Hamlet, the ageing Speaker not Lear, and the Dark Lady (anxiety-inducing though she be) not Lady Macbeth, Shakespeare's Sonnets have reaffirmed in the last five years of the twentieth century their enduring attractiveness to editors and critics. A surge of new editions in the mid 1990s has been followed by a slew of fresh critical analyses in the final years of the century. Indeed, it is well beyond the scope of this review to note all the critical responses to Shakespeare's non-dramatic verse in the past five years, but suffice it to say the most recent work shows the poems still have much to offer the well-wishing adventurer in setting forth.

With older editions of the Sonnets, such as Stephen Booth's and John Kerrigan's, still very much in use, 1996-1997 saw three new and substantial editions. G. Blakemore Evans produced the New Cambridge Shakespeare edition in 1996 with a 164-page commentary that displays a vast knowledge of early-modern texts, highlights countless Shakespearean analogues, and attempts clear explanations of often complex critical debates that have arisen in regard to certain poems. In the following year (1997) the so-called 'Arden Three' edition of the Sonnets appeared under the editorship of Katherine Duncan-Jones with a detailed and up-to-date, 105-page introduction that gives much space to issues of dating and publication history. In the same year (1997), Helen Vendler's massive tome, *The Art of Shakespeare's Sonnets*, appeared (672 pages), complete with facsimile reproduction of the 1609 quarto text, the editor's modernised version, and a CD of Vendler reading selected sonnets.[1] We may conclude, therefore, that the recent major editions of the Sonnets remain firmly in the hands

For debates inspired by this article, please check the Connotations website at <http://www.connotations.de/debsemler00903.htm>.

of well-established and conservative textual, historicist and formalist scholars. Not so the criticism.

In 1999, *Shakespeare's Sonnets: Critical Essays*, appeared, edited by James Schiffer and containing a broad spread of critical essays from the 1990s.[2] This lengthy collection (474 pages) begins with Schiffer's well-researched survey of criticism of the Sonnets and then reprints four recent essays on the Sonnets including influential work by Peter Stallybrass (1993), Margreta de Grazia (1994), and Heather Dubrow (1996). The remainder of the collection is given over to fifteen new essays from a variety of perspectives. Schiffer's volume is, as he claims, *the* Sonnets volume for the 1990s (xiii) and illustrates three things. First, it demonstrates the substantial influence on modern Sonnets criticism of earlier works by Heather Dubrow (*Captive Victors*, 1987; *Echoes of Desire*, 1995) and Joel Fineman (*Shakespeare's Perjured Eye*, 1986).[3] Second, it reveals the diversity of critical response in our day, extending from formalist, thematic and historicist close readings of particular poems, through discussions of Shakespeare's authorisation, ordering, and autobiographical presence in the 1609 quarto, to feminist, queer and poststructuralist discussions of homosexuality, misogyny and academic prejudice. Third, one sees that while enduring critical questions of Time, Petrarchism, loss, symbols and structure are capable of being usefully reworked, much recent analysis centres upon questions of sexuality. In Appendix 1 of Booth's edition (1977) he writes wisely (if cagily): "William Shakespeare was almost certainly homosexual, bisexual or heterosexual. The sonnets provide no evidence on the matter" (548). Schiffer's collection indicates how prevailing attitudes have developed since then by including an essay on Oscar Wilde's "The Portrait of Mr W. H.,"' and essays dealing with homoeroticism, homosexuality (as opposed to homosociality), sodomy (in regard to the Dark Lady, not the Youth), and the homophobic sexual politics of Sonnets criticism.

A. D. Cousins' new addition to the Longman Medieval and Renaissance Library, entitled *Shakespeare's Sonnets and Narrative Poems*, is "the first comprehensive study of the Sonnets and narrative poems for over a decade" (jacket blurb) and takes its place as a valuable third term in a critical equation including Dubrow's *Captive Victors* and Fineman's *Perjured*

Eye.[4] It will therefore be the focus of the rest of this review. Unaware of Schiffer's collection as his is of Cousins' book (for both were in press simultaneously), and closer to Dubrow's style than Fineman's, Cousins' monograph takes the reader into a thick textual forest of interwoven discourses. The study is the product of a mature and well-read literary scholar and has the effect of entering the reader into the Sonnets and narrative poems as poems of creative genius and also as together constituting a complex rhetorical matrix. Cousins is aware of recent theoretical focal points but he finds too much of interest in the discursive fabric of the poems to be side-tracked into bending Shakespeare's words and phrases into service of modern politico-theoretical agendas.[5] Neither is this a work of arch-formalism like Vendler's. Cousins' management of historical concepts and texts, and his sharp eye for the intricate turns of various theses developed in and across Shakespeare's poems, leaves Vendler's New Criticism for the 1990s far behind.[6]

The result is that one comes away with a complex sense of what the poems are about, how they are comprised and even (what is rarer) a valuable summation of how the interests of the Sonnets overlap with those of the narrative poems. The first half of the book is divided equally between *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*, the second half addresses the Sonnets. The extra-textual history of each work is addressed and English and Continental generic precursors are noted, but these factors are dealt with concisely and do not impede discussion of the primary texts in themselves. Also, Cousins doesn't let himself get bogged down in questions of dating, ordering, authorship, authorisation or autobiography.

What, then, are the character and preoccupations of Shakespeare's non-dramatic verse according to Cousins? Unlike some recent studies that consider "A Lover's Complaint" as the final stage in a poetic work commencing with 154 sonnets,[7] Cousins focuses on Sonnets 1-154 as a complete set in itself and discusses its thematic connections with *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*. Those in favour of the "Complaint theory" may be disappointed but Cousins is in the majority in assessing the Sonnets as a single work and his discussion of the other poems usefully adds to our understanding of the ties that bind all three major poetic works.

In regard to Shakespeare's first-published poem, *Venus and Adonis* (1593), Cousins takes note of Lodge's introduction of the neo-Ovidian epyllion ("minor epic") into English poetry (*Scillaes Metamorphosis*, 1589), and concludes that Shakespeare, taking up the opportunity afforded by Lodge's innovation and the plague-closed theatres, "in his new role as non-dramatic poet wrote for a new audience—particularly including the Earl [of Southampton] as (possibly) a patron—a new poem of a new kind" (14). Cousins then demonstrates via detailed close reading of the poem how the various mythographic forms of Venus are invoked and parodied by the narrator. To oversimplify an intricate argument, he identifies Venus as an ironised amalgam of *Venus mechanitis* (rhetorician of love), *Venus vulgaris* (goddess of wholly sensual love) and *Venus verticordia* (goddess of chastity). She fails as a rhetorician by not matching her discourse to her audience and thus repels Adonis. This failure hinders the expression of her desire as *Venus vulgaris* and the result is the promotion of chastity in Adonis in ironic parody of her *verticordia* role. Complex and detailed reading of the main characters and their words also demonstrates Shakespeare's ironic treatment of Venus' other roles: *Venus genetrix* (goddess of generative power), *Venus apaturia* (the deceiver, of herself and Adonis), *Magistra divinandi* (the instructor in prophesying), *Venus meretrix* (the prostitute), and *Venus victrix* (the conqueror). Shakespeare's Venus is, therefore, "diverse, unstable yet not incoherent [. . .] her almost infinite variety is nonetheless held together by the force of her self-centred sexual desire" (28). Cousins concludes, "the reader sees the goddess of love, and so erotic love itself, as discordia concors, centred upon desire's selfishness" (28). And if her inconsistencies and egocentrism do not adequately humanise the goddess of love, Shakespeare's alignment of her with the unrequited Petrarchan lover does.

Adonis responds with a complex "rhetoric of chastity" that resists Venus' "assertive (male) rhetoric of seduction" by the employment of a "female rhetoric of rejection" and a "Platonic male rhetoric of love" (29). Venus' attempt to coerce the non-compliant Adonis by declaring his dangerous emulation of Narcissus is superseded by Adonis' refusal to accept her offer of self-knowledge by sexual union desiring instead to pursue his own sense

of his developing subjectivity without losing his self and becoming merely her "concupiscent prize" (33). Adonis, then, may be seen as something of an anti-Narcissus because he seeks self-knowledge only as it remains distinct from sexual experience and thus ironically dies in "parodic sexual encounter with the boar" (33). The narrative establishes Adonis as object of desire for the male gaze to Venus' detriment and Cousins notes Shakespeare's sceptical response to the varied rhetorics of desire and chastity in a poem that indicates "love's multiplicity by no means excludes homoerotic desire" (40). Cousins concludes: "Shakespeare's first poem, inventively ludic, sceptical, emphatically various in its representations of sexuality, and meta-Ovidian in its sophisticated self-awareness [. . .] reveals how shrewdly he understood the rhetorical possibilities of the epyllion and, in doing so, its social possibilities as a means for displaying his virtuosity as a poet in the competition for patronage" (40).

Having noted that Shakespeare's second narrative poem, *Lucrece* (1594), is a tragic tale of female violation as opposed to the earlier poem's comedic account of sexual harassment of the male, Cousins develops the continuities between the poems even as he introduces the new ideas of history and exemplarity. *Lucrece* is established as another minor epic (emphasising the epic aspect more fully than its precursor) and is related to both *de casibus* and tyrant tragedies as well as self-consciously revitalising the genre of the complaint (62). A useful complement to Cousins' discussion is Mary Jo Klietzman's essay (1999) which compares *Lucrece* and *Hamlet* as explorations of the complaint as a means of self-definition and self-determination.[8]

Cousins examines "the reciprocal formation of consciousness and of role among Shakespeare's Tarquin, Collatine and Lucrece" (63). Tarquin is a "Platonic type of tyrant" and a "demonic parody of the Petrarchan lover" who "violates the Petrarchan discourse of love" even as he violates Lucrece in her dual role as Petrarchan lady and chaste Roman matron (63). Collatine is guilty for his hubris which has catastrophic results: his "boastful vying with the proto-tyrant redirects Tarquin's violence and desire from the enemy/foreign/public to the kindred/Roman/private" (63). The result is new rendition of the Fall as Collatine, a self-betraying Adam, brings the

Satanic Tarquin into his private Eden and tempts him to violate his unwilling Eve (Lucrece) (64). Lucrece senses that her identity is imposed from without and therefore fears its possible erasure from without. Her sense of self is inseparable from her "profound consciousness of herself as an exemplar of chastity and her profound fear of becoming an exemplar of unchastity" (67). Overcome by desire, Tarquin embodies Cicero's pre-civil humanity (89) and Lucrece's self-defensive oratory fails to civilise and deter him (90) as also her delimited cultural roles as chaste Roman matron and *mulier economica* do not equip her with "prudence," the ability adequately to read his evil (91). Her dire action after the rape is consequent upon her sense of the power of future history to rewrite actuality and her knowledge of how fragile she is as a good exemplum (67). Her suicide and the subjectivity it strives to preserve become malleable in the politically adept oratory of Brutus who turns Lucrece's personal tragedy to his political advantage (102-03). Thus, Cousins shows how the poem treats exemplarity sceptically: "It works and it does not" (80), it is secure and yet needs constant shoring up. Recent feminist readers of the poem, such as Coppelia Kahn and Margo Hendricks, also raise questions of Lucrece's voice and power, and should find much that is useful and acute in Cousins' analysis of female subjectivity even if the prevailing tone of his discussion is not committed to feminist politics.[9]

The analysis of the Sonnets commences with discussions of Petrarch's *Rime*[10] and Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* and leads into examination of Sonnets 1-19 via the Narcissus myth which is seen, significantly, to interweave all the narrative poems along with issues of desire, self-knowledge and prudence. While Lucrece's role automatically denied her the practical wisdom of Ciceronian prudentia, the Youth is urged to show such wisdom by the Speaker who marshals the figure of Father Time in an attempt to counsel the Youth to engage in the economy of nature, to marry and reproduce (135). The Speaker fails as counsellor, turns to elaborate praise and dispraise of the Youth, and in the process indicates that he himself figures Narcissus also (144). Sonnets 20 and 53, which are discussed in some detail, are crucial in the construction of the Youth as androgyne (147-57). Cousins demonstrates how the Speaker's language

of friendship (with its homosocial and homoerotic associations) ends up merging together in the Youth the issues of androgyny and misogyny, Petrarchism and Ciceronian friendship (152-53). However, in Sonnets 20-126 the Speaker repeatedly destabilises the ideal fiction of the Youth with the result that his "implicit transcendence of Laura becomes doubtful" because every aspect of his harmonious androgyny is rendered precarious and difficult to sustain thereby resulting in a sceptical vision of contraries (154-55). The Speaker also "fictionalises himself" as complexly and unstably as he does the Youth (161), the portrait of both figures arising via a sceptical maintenance of opposites. The Speaker's doubt grows, the Youth's duplicity accentuates, and the Speaker's self-consciously paradoxical devotion and self-praise intensify.

Sonnets 20 and 127 are usefully described as pendant histories of the Youth and the Dark Lady, the latter figure arising as a demonised and misogynist Laura and double to the Youth who complexly (and sceptically) transcends Laura (189-92). Cousins gives account of the "speaker's self-division between those two flawed objects of flawed desire" (199). There follows an analysis of the later sonnets in which the Speaker depicts vividly his self-divisive desire, misogyny, friendship and self-disgust, and the Cupid poems are discussed as an authentic conclusion to a sonnet sequence that has begun with desire and ended with the Speaker "resigned to domination by desire" (208).

The book ends with a conclusion that usefully identifies the concerns of the non-dramatic verse as a whole and gives insight into Shakespeare's primary preoccupations in his poetry. These issues include the relation of prudence to time; the nexus of self-knowledge, sexuality and death epitomised in the Narcissus myth; the matrix of homoerotic, homosocial and misogynist discourses; and the disturbances of desire, history, discourse and sceptical method. It is no exaggeration to say the conclusions of *Shakespeare's Sonnets and Narrative Poems* arise easily from the robust gains made by its penetrating analysis of the fabric of Shakespeare's poetry and that such gains are the more durable for not succumbing to over-theorised or politicised assaults on the poems.

Any well-wishing adventurer setting forth this year on a study of Shakespeare's non-dramatic poetry would do very well to read Schiffer's collection and Cousins' monograph to see the spread and quality of the most recent responses to the playwright's verse. Both works will not lack favourable citation in the next decade's criticism the form of which they will in part determine.

The University of Sidney

NOTES

[1]Shakespeare's Sonnets, ed. Stephen Booth (New Haven: Yale UP, 1977); *The Sonnets and A Lover's Complaint*, ed. John Kerrigan (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986); *The Sonnets*, The New Cambridge Shakespeare, ed. G. Blakemore Evans, intro. by Anthony Hecht (Cambridge: CUP, 1996); *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, The Arden Shakespeare, 3rd Series, ed. Katherine Duncan-Jones (Thomson Publishing Company, 1997); Helen Vendler, *The Art of Shakespeare's Sonnets* (Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard UP, 1997). See also, *The Norton Shakespeare: Based on the Oxford Edition*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard and Katherine Eisaman Maus (New York: Norton, 1997).

[2]*Shakespeare's Sonnets: Critical Essays*, ed. James Schiffer (New York : Garland 1999). Two other recent readings of the Sonnets (and there are many more I do not have space to refer to) are: Alistair Fox, *The English Renaissance: Identity and Representation in Elizabethan England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997) 83-91; and David Schalkwyk, "What May Words Do? The Performative of Praise in Shakespeare's Sonnets," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 49.3 (1998): 251-68.

[3]Heather Dubrow, *Captive Victors: Shakespeare's Narrative Poems and Sonnets* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1987) and *Echoes of Desire: English Petrarchism and Its Counterdiscourses* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1995); Joel Fineman, *Shakespeare's Perjured Eye: The Invention of Poetic Subjectivity in the Sonnets* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1986).

[4]A. D. Cousins, *Shakespeare's Sonnets and Narrative Poems* (Harlow, Essex: Longman, 2000).

[5]For example, Cousins situates his study in relation to recent work on early-modern homosexuality (11), the gaze (33-40, 45-46), scepticism (10), Lucrece's subjectivity (63, 107-08), and Renaissance sonnets (138-39).

[6]I am thinking of A. D. Nuttall's apt appraisal of Vendler's book in, "Vendler and Shakespeare's Sonnets," *Raritan* 17.4 (1998): 131-40: "This is New Critical close reading in a late 1990s mode, every poem treated separately, allowed its proper autonomy. The criticism is correspondingly minute, specific, *local*" (133).

[7]See Katherine Duncan-Jones, 'Introduction' to *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, 88-95. Duncan-Jones' edition includes "A Lover's Complaint" (429-52) but does not mention it in her edition's title. This fact, together with her introductory remarks, means her edition explicitly and implicitly asserts the "Complaint" is a formal counterpart and conclusion to the sonnet sequence. Other recent supporters of the "Complaint theory" include: Ilona Bell, "'That which thou hast done': Shakespeare's Sonnets and *A Lover's Complaint*," *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, ed. Schiffer, 455-74; and MacD. P. Jackson, "Aspects of Organisation in *Shakespeare's Sonnets* (1609)," *Parergon* New Series 17.1 (July 1999): 109-34. One might contrast the view of Douglas Bush and Alfred Harbage in their Pelican edition of the Sonnets (1961; rev. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970). They note that the 1609 quarto contains "in addition to the 154 sonnets, a poem of doubtful authenticity (*A Lover's Complaint*. 'By William Shakespeare')" (17) and they do not reprint it. "A Lover's Complaint" is included in *The Riverside Shakespeare* ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974), and Hallett Smith's non-committed (almost uninterested) introduction concludes: "If it is by Shakespeare, it neither detracts from his achievement nor adds anything to it" (1781). Walter Cohen provides a slightly more favourable introduction to the "Complaint" in *The Norton Shakespeare* (see note 1) where it appears directly after the Sonnets.

[8]Mary Jo Klietzman, "'What Is Hecuba to Him or [S]he to Hecuba?' Lucrece's Complaint and Shakespearean Poetic Agency," *Modern Philology* 97.1 (1999): 21-45.

[9]Coppelia Kahn, "The Sexual Politics of Subjectivity in *Lucrece*," *Roman Shakespeare: Warriors, Wounds and Women* (London: Routledge, 1997) 27-45; Margo Hendricks, "'A word, sweet Lucrece': Confession, Feminism, and *The Rape of Lucrece*," *A Feminist Companion to Shakespeare*, ed. Dympna Callaghan (London: Blackwell, 2000) 103-18.

[10]Cousins' discussion of Shakespeare's Petrarchism would be complemented usefully by Gordon Braden's essay, "Shakespeare's Petrarchism," *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, ed. Schiffer, 163-83. Braden argues, interestingly, "that Shakespeare's sequence is in certain ways one of the most Petrarchan sequences of the age—that some of its most distinguishing marks are not mockeries or refutations of Petrarchism, but fulfilments of some of that movement's original potentialities" (171).

Connotations
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Making Friends of Stage and Page: A Response to Alan Rosen*

JUDITH ROSENHEIM

In his "Impertinent Matters: Lancelot Gobbo and the Fortunes of Performance Criticism," Alan Rosen addresses the continuing interest that Launcelot, the clown in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, generates in his apparent remoteness from the main action of this play. Rosen is interested in how Launcelot's marginal status as clown makes him a prime subject for critics wishing to isolate a purely theatrical dimension in drama, a dimension, moreover, that they see as challenging the play's definition as a text. C. L. Barber and Robert Weimann had seen the clown as invested with the inversionary energies of popular festival and thus as licensed to challenge authority. Taking their cue from Barber and Weimann, these critics see Launcelot as bringing his inversionary energies into the play in a manner that challenges its textual authority. It is their interest in this challenge that prompts performance critics to accord Launcelot a new importance, effectively moving him from the margin of the play to its center. And focusing on three such critics, Walter Cohen, David Wiles, and James Bulman, Rosen sees them as identifying three not altogether incongruent ways in which Launcelot compromises the play's textuality: by undermining its aristocratic discourse; by breaching its formal integrity; and by flouting its restraint upon his improvisational freedom.

Rosen's purpose in adducing the compromising functions thus ascribed to Launcelot is to impugn the arguments supporting them. Rosen sees Cohen as claiming that "Lancelot's erratic language actually and purposefully demystifies the play's dominant aristocratic discourse" (Rosen

*Reference: Rosen, Alan. "Impertinent Matters: Lancelot Gobbo and the Fortunes of Performance Criticism." *Connotations* 8.2 (1998/99): 217-31.

220). Rosen answers that Cohen bases this claim upon a close reading of the text, which, as a conservative critical method, endows the text with just the authority and stability that Launcelot is purportedly undermining (220-21). Rosen sees Wiles to suggest that Launcelot's identity as clown gives him a lecherous bent that he expresses not in the play but rather in the bawdy jig that he performs after its conclusion (Rosen 222-23). Thus for Wiles, Launcelot not only widens our critical focus from "the unity of the text" to "the unity of theatrical experience," but also shows this wider unity to incorporate an amoral sexuality that challenges the play's romantic idealism (Wiles 56). Rosen answers that Wiles contradicts his description of Launcelot as lecherous by seeing the deferral of his sexual gratification to a point beyond the play as making him a Lenten figure within it (223). Rosen sees Bulman to further enhance the destabilizing power of Launcelot by observing that, as clown, he would have evinced a heightened capacity for improvisation, which enabled him "to move in and out of character" and thus to function "outside of and unconstrained by the text or even the play" (Rosen 225). Rosen answers that Bulman's approach, while not inconsistent, impoverishes the play by severing its theatrical understanding of Launcelot from meanings contained in the text (225).

Though Rosen thus rejects the shared impulse of these critics to oppose the play's theatricality to its textuality, he too suspects that theatrical and textual considerations are not invariably congruent. And like the critics he censures, Rosen too focuses his attention on Launcelot, and specifically on a consideration of how Launcelot's "table" (2.2.158)[1] (the palm of his hand) instances an opposition of performance to text. For Launcelot views his palm as a text in which he reads the promise that unhindered sexual freedom will flow from his entrance into Bassanio's employ:

> Go to, here's a simple line of life. Here's a small
> trifle of wives! Alas, fifteen wives is nothing!
> Eleven widows and nine maids is a simple coming-in
> for one man. (2.2.160-63)

Yet Rosen also observes that Launcelot cannot perform his text, as Lorenzo intimates (3.5.38-39) in censuring the clown for a single transgressive conquest that will probably be punished. And the unperformability of Launcelot's text is seen by Rosen to cast doubt upon "the notion of a text-driven drama" (227).

Rosen's own wish, however, is to see "the revisionary practices" of performance critics coexisting with the ability of texts to "infiltrate, if not prescribe performance" (228). And so, while he finds Launcelot to adduce evidence of disharmony between text and performance, he also finds Launcelot to provide evidence of an alternative cooperation between these dramatic elements. Rosen observes that Launcelot's "table" or palm is not just a text but an embodied text. But Launcelot also refers to his "table" as an embodied text, "which doth offer to swear upon a book" (2.2.158-59), the book in question being the Bible as an unembodied text. By seeing hand and Bible to constitute two kinds of texts, one embodied, the other unembodied, Rosen makes these terms equivalent to "actor and script, theatre and text" (227). But in putting his hand on the Bible, Launcelot is also joining these two kinds of texts, and Rosen sees this joining to suggest that these texts are meant to be read together. Thus Rosen finds Launcelot to introduce a "striking image of creative interdependence" between the realms of performance and text (227). I find his observation interesting and highly suggestive. For in his offhand juxtaposition of an embodied text to an unembodied text that is specifically biblical, Launcelot appears to adumbrate what I am about to find Shakespeare doing more extensively: which is to introduce a specifically biblical textuality into this play that he integrates with meanings specifically theatrical. I shall adduce further evidence to reinforce Rosen's expectation that a closely considered textuality can cooperate with an historical awareness of performance meanings; that this cooperation enhances the clarity of both these meanings and by so doing, enables them to illuminate larger issues in the play.

I locate these meanings in the 2.2 dialogue between Launcelot and his father, Old Gobbo, a dialogue whose textual complexity I have elsewhere investigated.[2] But this dialogue clearly offers striking performance meanings as well, meanings so apparent that it becomes appropriate to

begin by addressing them. And doing this causes me to notice that this extended dialogue has been very lightly treated, if not ignored, by all three of the performance critics who focus on Launcelot, as well as by Rosen himself. Why they have scanted this dialogue seems to emerge in the recognition that, while inscribing many of the potentially extra-textual signs that pertain to performance, it also seems to strike at the basis of performance criticism by evincing a tone that invites description as failed festivity. This dialogue exhibits Launcelot fooling with Old Gobbo, who is his father. As a father, Old Gobbo assumes an authority that would ordinarily make him an appropriate target for the inversionary energies that Launcelot evinces as clown. Yet this father is marked by the conspicuous vulnerabilities of age and blindness, which cast doubt on the appropriateness of attacking him. Thus when, with Vice-like glee, Launcelot invites the audience to watch him goad his blind father to tears with the report of his own death, his mirth comes across as dubious if not cruel: "Mark me now, now will I raise the waters" (2.2.49). Even if Launcelot's festive identity as clown prepares the audience to laugh at his fooling, it is a laughter that would likely have been uneasy and abortive. No doubt this remains a guess; one cannot be certain of such a claim. At the same time, we should notice that Launcelot soon comes to suspend his mirth: "Pray you let's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing" (2.2.83-84). These words may register Shakespeare's expectation that the audience will recoil from Launcelot's fooling, or even that Launcelot himself recoils from this fooling. Thus while Launcelot's cruel mirth shows him expressing the clown's rebellious festivity, it is a festivity that Shakespeare may well be inviting us to question and even blame. Intending to make us laugh at his old father, Launcelot causes us to pity him, thereby invoking his festive transgressiveness only to overthrow it. With one turn of the screw, Shakespeare is causing a figure of festive subversion to subvert himself.

What Launcelot himself impugns we can hardly validate. Thus rather than valorizing him as a critic, we might observe that he registers a change in the traditional function of the clown, that the purpose of this change remains undisclosed, and that it may nonetheless be important in

illuminating his function in the play. It thus behooves us to discover what this change imports, and doing this directs us toward the text. The text may supply the terms that enable Launcelot's atypical self-subversion to make sense. And indeed, these terms appear to be anticipated in evidence adduced by Dorothy Hockey (448) and René Fortin (265-66) to the effect that Launcelot's father, Old Gobbo, invokes a biblical text by alluding to blind Isaac in Genesis 27.

As Hockey convincingly shows, Old Gobbo typifies the Old Testament figure of blind Isaac, thus introducing the realm of biblical typology into the play. And in being shown to engage the realm of biblical typology, this play emerges as doubly textual in constituting a text that refers to yet another text, indeed, to a text whose very name means "book." But if the play thus assumes a textual complexity in introducing the Old Testament figure of blind Isaac, it also contains numerous references to the New Testament figure of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15. And while, as son to Old Gobbo's Isaac in Genesis 27, Launcelot ought to assume the role of Jacob, and to some extent does assume this role, a consideration of Launcelot's behaviour when we meet him in 2.2 shows four ways in which he also and more prominently invokes the Prodigal. As the Prodigal rebels against his father by running away from him, we meet Launcelot in the rebellious act of running away from his master, Shylock. As the Prodigal solicits his father for money, Launcelot solicits his father for a "blessing" that the play elsewhere expresses as money. As the Prodigal's rebellious flight torments his father in causing him to think that his son is dead, Launcelot casually torments his father with the false report of his own death: "Talk not of Master Launcelot, father, for the young gentleman . . . is indeed deceas'd, or as you would say in plain terms, gone to heaven" (2.2.60-65). And as the Prodigal flees in anticipation of a profligate life that disappoints him, Launcelot flees Shylock's employ in a similar hope that is similarly disappointed. These correspondences broach the possibility that just as Old Gobbo clearly typifies blind Isaac, Launcelot typifies the Prodigal Son.

It now becomes appropriate to observe that Launcelot as Prodigal Son bears some resemblance to Launcelot as clown. If Launcelot as Prodigal is his father's social inferior, Launcelot as clown is the social inferior of

his master, Shylock. If Launcelot as Prodigal rebels against his father, Launcelot as clown defects from Shylock. What we have here, then, are two meanings that pertain to Launcelot, one textual and one theatrical. These meanings are similar in that both put Launcelot in a negative light. Yet the first is less obvious than the second. And their disparity in this respect emerges with special force in the observation that Launcelot becomes cruel in clowning at his father's expense. For in so doing he seems to educe a more subtly dubious meaning in prodigality that Launcelot does not otherwise express but which, as we shall shortly see, is important to the play's wider meaning. Not only rebelling against his father, the Prodigal also solicits him for money that he then uses to facilitate his revolt, thus using his patrimony to revolt against the very father who gave it. In clowning at his father's expense, Launcelot invokes the Prodigal's literal rebellion at *his* father's expense. By thus having Launcelot's clowning adumbrate his prodigality, Shakespeare appears to be using the overtness of his theatrical meaning to gesture toward his more obscure and highly freighted textuality, yet with sufficient subtlety to hide that textual meaning from the notice of the censors.[3] Launcelot's theatricality enables Shakespeare to say something about his textuality without quite saying it. But if Launcelot's theatricality gestures toward his textuality, that textuality also clarifies the uncomic and disturbing character of his theatricality by disclosing its true purpose, which is not only to reinforce his prodigality but also to emphasize its moral dubiety. It thus emerges that Launcelot's theatrical and textual meanings collaborate so as to clarify them both. And these collaborative meanings extend, as I think, beyond Launcelot.

For as types of blind Isaac and the Prodigal son, Old Gobbo and Launcelot invoke figures that derive from the Old and New Testaments and thus may advert to the religious quarrel that this play depicts between a Jew and a Christian as respective advocates of these scriptures. Thus it becomes likely that the typological affiliations investing the play's marginal characters are ultimately directed to these central characters. Indeed, Dorothy Hockey has aptly suggested that Old Gobbo's invocation of Isaac reflects on Shylock (449), even if the reflection appears to be more serious

than she thinks. For Old Gobbo is like Isaac in two ways that invoke certain theological meanings reposed in Shylock's Jewishness. As his name suggests, Old Gobbo is like Isaac in being old. But Shylock too is old, as he invites us to notice in referring to himself as "Old Shylock" (2.5.2). And Shylock's oldness may pertain to his Jewishness in its comparable derogation as the outworn Old Covenant that is superseded by the New. Old Gobbo also invokes Isaac in his blindness, a blindness that likewise has a theological resonance. For in accordance with the *adversos Judaeos* tradition of Christian exegesis, Calvin refers Isaac's blindness to Judaism itself (2: 50), thus characterizing the old faith as symbolically blind to the spiritual truth of the new. And as a symbol of blind Judaism, Isaac can characterize the Judaism of Shylock as comparably blind. Yet Shakespeare also introduces a complication into the age and blindness of the Isaac typified by Old Gobbo. For Old Gobbo is also like Isaac in being a father, and Shylock too is a father. If, then, Shylock's age and blindness can refer to his Jewishness, his paternity may likewise refer to his Jewishness, which he now expresses as an old, blind father. Yet to characterize blindness as paternal is implicitly to direct that blindness toward an unknown son: Isaac's blindness makes him unable to recognize his son, and Old Gobbo's blindness likewise prevents him from recognizing Launcelot as his son. Is Shylock also blind to a son? This is what Launcelot seems to suggest in telling his old father, "Nay, indeed if you had your eyes you might fail of the knowing me; it is a wise father that knows his own child" (2.2.75-77). For Launcelot here defines blindness as a psychological defect that may well apply to Shylock as a father whose psychological blindness or unwisdom prevents him from knowing his own child. And hazarding a collective identification of this unrecognized son, Fortin defines him as the Christians (267). The Isaac in Old Gobbo is thus said to define the Jewish Shylock as psychologically blind to the paternal nature of his relationship to the Christians.

Yet if Shakespeare thus connects Shylock to Isaac through Old Gobbo, he also makes this connection in a manner that, if just as subtle, is more direct. For in 1.3, Shakespeare has Shylock reflect on Jacob as "The third possessor" of what can only be Abraham's blessing. And this reflection

includes a parenthetical reference to Genesis 27, the biblical story that tells how Jacob acquired this blessing from his blind father, Isaac:

> This Jacob from our holy Abram was
> (As his wise mother wrought in his behalf)
> The third possessor; ay, he was the third—(1.3.72-74)

Shylock here invokes the same father Isaac that Old Gobbo typifies. And in so doing, Shylock subtly reinforces the appropriateness of seeing him as the ultimate referent of Old Gobbo's Isaac. Yet just as Launcelot invokes the Prodigal in a manner that preserves his obscurity, Shylock obscures his own invocation of Isaac. For even as Shylock names Jacob as the third possessor and Abram as the first, he omits to name Isaac as the second. And the reason for this omission may well emerge from a consideration of how far the paternity of Isaac that Shakespeare imparts to Shylock's Jewishness diverges from the view of Judaism regnant in the Renaissance, and how far this paternity, like Launcelot's prodigality, had to be hidden from the recognition of the censors. Shakespeare might candidly make Isaac express the age and blindness of Shylock's Judaism; he might not so candidly use Isaac to characterize Shylock's relation to the play's Christians as paternal.

Once granting, moreover, that Shakespeare characterizes Shylock's Jewishness as paternal, we are prompted to ask if the play directs his unknowing paternity not merely to the Christians but to one Christian in particular. For if there is reason to think that the Isaac in Old Gobbo refers specifically to Shylock, there is also reason to believe that Launcelot's prodigality may have a comparably specific referent, a referent who, in contrast to Shylock's Jewish paternity emerges as a Christian son. And if we proceed to ask who this son might be, one character falls under immediate suspicion. For if Shylock is this play's exponent of Judaism, Antonio is its exponent of Christianity. And once suspecting Antonio, we become aware of how the prodigality invoked by Launcelot is also exhibited in him. Like the Prodigal, whose rebellion harbors the connotation of insult, Antonio insults Shylock. Like the Prodigal, who demands his father's money, Antonio peremptorily demands to borrow Shylock's

money. Like the Prodigal who uses his father's money to rebel against his father, Antonio uses the money he borrows from Shylock to insult him with his own superior generosity toward Bassanio in the eschewing of usury. And like the Prodigal, who squanders his patrimony and beggars himself, Antonio loses the money he borrows from Shylock and beggars himself. Indeed, Shylock identifies the self-beggared Antonio as the Prodigal even while comparing him to his own prodigal daughter: "There I have another bad match. A bankrout, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto; a beggar . . ." (3.1.44–46). It thus seems reasonable to propose that if Old Gobbo typifies blind Isaac in order to project that identity onto Shylock, Launcelot typifies the Prodigal Son in order to project that identity onto Antonio, the Jewish Shylock and the Christian Antonio emerging as blind father and Prodigal Son. And if Shakespeare invokes the *adversos Judaeos* tradition to apply Isaac's blindness to Shylock's Judaism in its relation to the Christians, Shakespeare may well be using this same method of textual self-invalidation to apply Antonio's prodigality to Christianity in its relation to the Jews. For in evoking the Prodigal's use of his father's resources to insult him, Antonio recapitulates the Christian tendency not only to appropriate the Jewish scriptures but also to mine these scriptures for texts purporting to show Judaism as abrogating itself. It thus emerges that Shakespeare invokes this exegetical method in two ways: by adducing an Old Testament text against the Jews and by adducing a New Testament text against the Christians, his likely purpose in these invocations being to censure the play's principal Jew and Christian for defects that thwart the true relation of their faiths as father and son.

If it is to Antonio that Launcelot's prodigality ultimately refers, it is to Antonio that Launcelot's atypicality as self-subverting clown may likewise refer. For Launcelot's cruel clowning with his father resonates suspiciously with the fleering contempt that Antonio earlier demonstrates toward Shylock. And if Launcelot's clowning enhances the negativity of his identity as Prodigal, its resonance in Antonio may enhance the negativity of Antonio's prodigality as well. It thus becomes plausible to suggest that by causing Launcelot's clowning to indict him as the Prodigal, Shakespeare makes Launcelot a vehicle for his own identical indictment of Antonio.

And in facilitating the moral definition of Antonio, Launcelot serves the larger meaning of this play. As above suggested, Launcelot does this through the cooperative interaction of his theatrical and textual meanings. It is as a theatrical meaning that Launcelot's clowning informs his prodigality. And it is as a textual meaning that Launcelot's prodigality explains why his clowning undermines itself. Yet it should also be noticed that the parity of these mutual influences is not absolute. For in Launcelot, Shakespeare distorts the traditional derisiveness of the clown by having that derisiveness recoil against him; by contrast, his prodigality is represented in a manner that is true to its textual source. It thus appears that Shakespeare bends the traditional meaning of Launcelot's theatricality into the service of his more importantly textual meaning. In drawing upon a dramatic tradition in order to flout it, Shakespeare allows us to suspect that its general signs assume value in their adjustment to the particularities of his text. Yet even if ancillary in one way, Launcelot's clowning displays the ability of its expressive theatricality to draw our attention beyond the borders of the play to its author. For in pointing to his identity as the Prodigal, Launcelot's theatrical clowning enables us to consider that this biblical figure, as also the Isaac in Old Gobbo, were intentionally chosen by Shakespeare. Indeed, it is hard for me to see them in any other way. And as intended by Shakespeare, these meanings cannot but reflect upon the innovative and independent power of his mind to transcend the limitations of his culture. Rather than regarding the poet as a passive conduit of dramatic and cultural traditions that dictate what his comedy could say, we come to see him as molding these traditions into the vehicles of his own thought.

The foregoing summary of the 2.2. dialogue barely begins to unpack its densely compressed meanings. It does no more than glance at the proposition that this dialogue tends, by conflating two biblical stories about fathers and sons, to give both Shylock and Antonio not one typological meaning but two. It does not extend to the way in which this dialogue transforms Launcelot into a type of the returned Prodigal, or how this transformation enables him to insinuate an alternatively positive ending to the Shylock/Antonio quarrel, which Shakespeare does not allow his

play to achieve. Nor does this rendering pause to consider extensive evidence suggesting that the theme of money in *Merchant*, and more specifically of usury, is not ultimately engaged in its literal and economic meaning, but rather symbolizes a spiritual wealth greater than itself that is Abraham's blessing. Incomplete as they are, however, the textual meanings here adduced are likely to comprise the kind of interpretation that Richard Levin censures as an ironic reading of the play (546). They do indeed change our view of both antagonists by making one of them better than he seems on the stage and one worse. And this change cannot but imbue the argument with a certain inconclusiveness. Even in combining with the overt theatricality of the clown, Launcelot's typological textuality, as the heart of his meaning, remains obscured. And while the obscurity of this meaning may reflect Shakespeare's need, as with Shylock's paternity, to evade recognition by the censors, that need, however plausible, cannot cancel an awareness that Launcelot's identity as Prodigal is founded on imaginative connections that remain oblique. In the end, this argument becomes effective only in the ability of its associations to resonate in the mind of the reader, at least so far as to prompt further thinking on the issues it raises.

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NOTES

[1]All Shakespeare quotations are from *The Riverside Shakespeare,* Ed. G. Blakemore Evans et al. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974).

[2]Judith Rosenheim, "Allegorical Commentary in *The Merchant of Venice*," *Shakespeare Studies* 24 (1996): 156-210.

[3]See Annabel Patterson, *Censorship and Interpretation: The Conditions of Writing and Reading in Early Modern England* (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1984) 63.

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Some Notes on the "Single Sentiment" and Romanticism of Charlotte Smith[1]

SANDRO JUNG

Canon revision has not only established that there is a Romantic novel in general but it has also re-established Charlotte Smith's achievement as a novelist as well as a poet. My paper is to deal with Charlotte Smith's very successful and characteristically Romantic *Elegiac Sonnets* (1784) as well as with the revival of the sonnet as a form. By writing poetry reflecting the hardships she had to endure, Smith produces poems that might be understood as a 'poetical diary' but at the same time show her interest in the theory of the sublime and Romantic *sujets* such as solitude and nature. Since Smith, like Ann Radcliffe, produced extensive descriptions of landscapes which centre on the sublimity and awe-inspiring grandeur of nature, I shall refer to her novel *Emmeline; or the Orphan of the Castle* to support my points of Smith's understanding of the sublime.

Her autobiographical persona is prominent in all her sonnets except for her sonnets on Petrarch and Goethe's *Werther*.[2] Charlotte Smith (1749-1806) combined the description of landscapes with an interest in meteorological phenomena, and, moreover, a serious concern for woman's emotional life, especially her personal coping with the problems of marriage.

I. Smith and Nature

Melancholy Nature and the River Arun

Charlotte Smith was very much interested in the capacity of nature as a vehicle for "plaintive tone[s]."[3] This is comparable to Thomas Warton's *The Pleasures of Melancholy*, and his sonnet "To the River Lodon," which propagates the speaker's awareness that he has undergone many an

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unpleasant situation, that he has run "a weary race"[4] since he last frequented the banks of the Lodon but that he has succeeded in re-animating his recollections and impressions first received on visiting the Lodon which now console him and bring back to him the impression of youthly pleasures and happiness.

The preface to the sixth edition of *Elegiac Sonnets* alludes to and thematises Smith's personal hardships which induced her to strike the "chords of the melancholy lyre":

> I wrote mournfully because I was unhappy—And I have unfortunately no reason yet, though nine years have since elapsed, to change my tone.[5]

Her writing poetry is not merely the result of her serious financial difficulties, or her fear to suffer persecution by her creditors, but it also reflects an escapist element in that she attempts to flee to a world of harmonious melancholy which is so dear to her. Her "extreme depression of spirit"[6] and her need to provide for her children have worn out her health, so that she sees the necessity of defending herself against those who have been responsible for her "pecuniary distress."[7] W. L. Renwick goes even so far as to say that "her strong sense of grievance dictat[ed] her theme"[8] and that therefore the term "elegiac" is completely justified. "Many of Smith's poems might well be called elegiac because the protagonist looks to death as an end to a helplessly sorrowful life."[9] Smith, however, departs from the common elegiac stanza[10] although she preserves the iambic pentameter of it. Her sonnets—far from following the tradition of love poetry in sonnet form—are mostly in a "mournful and pensive style"[11] and attempt to convey one "single sentiment,"[12] either that of the *Angstlust* of the sublime or the personal unhappiness of the persona. How touching her "appeal to the emotions [of her readers] by the method of suggestion"[13] was is expressed in contemporary reviews whose writers hope that the sorrows depicted in Smith's sonnets are merely fictitious. And since the "financial and marital problems behind her habitual gloom were not at first explained, [. . .] reviewers tended to be both sympathetic to, and worried by, her melancholy."[14]

SONNET XXVI.
TO THE RIVER ARUN.

ON thy wild banks, by frequent torrents worn,
No glittering fanes, or marble domes appear,
Yet shall the mournful Muse thy course adorn,
And still to her thy rustic waves be dear.
For with the infant Otway, lingering here,
Of early woes she bade her votary dream,
While thy low murmurs sooth'd his pensive ear,
And still the poet—consecrates the stream.
Beneath the oak and birch that fringe thy side,
The first-born violets of the year shall spring;
And in thy hazles, bending o'er the tide,
The earliest nightingale delight to sing:
While kindred spirits, pitying, shall relate
Thy Otway's sorrows, and lament his fate!

Sonnet 26 ("To the River Arun") opens with an invocation of the "wild banks" which have been made wild by "frequent torrents" that have "worn" out the stone and the sand. By describing the water's force on the stone, Smith rejects the artificiality and constructedness of "glittering fanes." The "wild banks" as expressions of the wildness of nature are far superior to the "marble domes" in which the very precious raw-material marble has been used for the erection of a man-made monument.

The river is not polluted by human civilization, yet, and therefore "the mournful Muse," the only intruder on the banks of the Arun, is to "adorn" its "course." A profound desire for emotionalism and pastoral idyll is expressed in the "dear rustic waves" in which the past of the Arun and of those frequenting the river can be recollected. Otway, the playwright, is introduced in that he spent his childhood in the proximity of the Arun, whose "low murmurs sooth'd his pensive ear." The river, fringed with "oak and birch" and richly adorned with flowers in early spring, will inspire "kindred spirits" to "relate" the sorrows and pitiable fate of Otway.[15] We are left wondering whether we are to interpret these spirits mythologically (as good-natured dryads or naiads, for example) or as manifestations of a natural sympathy inspiring, for instance, a Charlotte Smith to writing this sonnet.

Sonnet 30 is a further example of just such a kind of sympathy.

SONNET XXX.
TO THE RIVER ARUN.

Be the proud Thames of trade the busy mart!
Arun! to thee will other praise belong;
Dear to the lover's, and the mourner's heart,
And ever sacred to the sons of song!

Thy banks romantic hopeless Love shall seek,
Where o'er the rocks the mantling bindwith flaunts;
And Sorrow's drooping form and faded cheek
Choose on thy willow'd shore her lonely haunts!

Banks! which inspired thy Otway's plaintive strain!
Wilds!—whose lorn echoes learn'd the deeper tone
Of Collins' powerful shell! yet once again
Another poet—Hayley is thine own!
Thy classic stream anew shall hear a lay,
Bright as its waves, and various as its way!

Comparing the Thames with the Arun, the speaker points out how dear a subject she is to deal with and what her personal feelings for this river are. In the first quatrain the three kinds of people attracted by the river are enumerated: lovers, mourners, and the "sons of song." The second quatrain and the sestet elaborate this pattern. All the three groups are in sympathy with the floating river and its banks with their simple and natural as well as typical vegetation ("bindwith" and willows). Lovers and mourners "seek" and "choose" this river, and poets, remembered by their names, have found in it their inspiration. As in the "kindred spirits" of Sonnet 26, here too, human sympathy with nature gets a mythological touch when "Sorrow" as well as "Love" are personified. Moreover, this nature-choosing "hopeless Love" in line 5 is expressly called "romantic." Or is this term applied to the "banks" of the Arun? Thanks to this double attribution it links nature with man's feelings in mutual sympathy.

Perhaps Charlotte Smith echoes Warton's *Pleasures of Melancholy*, in which solitude is considered essential for melancholy's musings and reflection, which makes the soul "secure" from any intrusion or harassment and

"self-blest" because it knows that the "wild uproar of fleets encountering" does not concern it:

> Few know that elegance of soul refined,
> Whose soft sensation feels a quicker joy
> From Melancholy's scenes, than the dull pride
> Of tasteless splendour and magnificence
> Can e'er afford. (ll. 92-96)[16]

Smith continues the tradition "of prizing melancholy as a contemplative mood"[17] for it enabled her to "seek [. . .] relief"[18] in the solitary panoramas she developed in her sonnets. The sestet of Sonnet 30 turns the general reflection on the visitors of the Arun into a homage to Otway and William Collins, who are supposed to have also indulged in the beauty of the river. "Otway's plaintive tone" as well as the "deeper tone / Of Collins' powerful shell" took their inspiration from the banks of the river on which they used to dwell. The third poet in this triad is Hayley, who does not have anything in common with the other two except that his inspiration and poetic power is also indebted to the sublimity of the Arun. The couplet concludes with the hope that "Thy classic stream anew shall hear a lay, / Bright as its waves, and various as its way."

Another sonnet, whose subject is the melancholy solitude Smith longs for, is 32, with the Arun shown in autumn at the fall of night.

> SONNET XXXII.
> TO MELANCHOLY. WRITTEN ON THE BANKS OF THE ARUN, OCTOBER 1785.
>
> When latest Autumn spreads her evening veil,
> And the grey mists from these dim waves arise,
> I love to listen to the hollow sighs,
> Thro' the half-leafless wood that breathes the gale:
> For at such hours the shadowy phantom, pale,
> Oft seems to fleet before the poet's eyes;
> Strange sounds are heard, and mournful melodies,
> As of night-wanderers, who their woes bewail!
> Here, by his native stream, at such an hour,
> Pity's own Otway I methinks could meet,

And hear his deep sighs swell the sadden'd wind!
O Melancholy!—such thy magic power,
That to the soul these dreams are often sweet,
And soothe the pensive visionary mind!

"Autumn spreads her evening veil" whilst "grey mists" arise from the moving and flowing waves of the river. The speaker is fascinated with the sounds produced by the dashing waves, which she does not perceive as mere clashes but as "hollow sighs." Even more than in the former examples nature here seems personified, i.e. imbued with human qualities.

The tone of the second quatrain resembles the mood of William Collins's "Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland" (1749), e.g. when the poet as the gifted seer perceives "the shadowy phantom pale" rise from the mist of the water. The poet is not afraid of the "strange sounds" and "mournful melodies" which seem to be produced by "night-wanderers, who their woes bewail!" The enchantment created by these unearthly sounds prepares the reader for the poet's imagined meeting with sad Otway and her praise of Melancholy's "magic power."

In Sonnet 33, Smith clearly confesses to mythology when she deals with the "Naiad" and other beings that dwell in or near the river.

SONNET XXXIII.
TO THE NAIAD OF THE ARUN.

Go, rural Naiad! wind thy stream along
Thro' woods and wilds: then seek the ocean caves
Where sea-nymphs meet their coral rocks among,
To boast the various honours of their waves!
'Tis but a little, o'er thy shallow tide,
That toiling trade her burden'd vessel leads;
But laurels grow luxuriant on thy side,
And letters live along thy classic meads.
Lo! where 'mid British bards thy natives shine!
And now another poet helps to raise
Thy glory high—the poet of the MINE!
Whose brilliant talents are his smallest praise:
And who, to all that genius can impart,
Adds the cool head, and the unblemish'd heart!

In addressing the "rural Naiad," the poet wants her to follow the windings of the Arun which lead "Thro' woods and wilds" and then culminate in "ocean caves" which are inhabited by the naiad's sisters, the "sea-nymphs" who "boast the various honours of their waves." The naiad can be proud of the Arun, for apart from the few vessels with which "toiling trade" burdens the river, the river and its surroundings have been the ideal places for "laurels [to] grow luxuriant." In addition to the fame "British bards" have already brought the Arun, "the poet of the MINE," John Sargent, has immortalised its beauty and calm sublimity. But of course no reader will fail to see in "MINE" a pointer to Smith's own sympathy and poetic achievement.

Smith and the Sea

Similar to Goldsmith in, for instance, "The Deserted Village" (1770), Smith favours and prefers the rural country to urban settlements. The same holds true for her love of the sea, which functions in her work as a metaphor of absolute and unlimited freedom.

Each of the following sonnets is concerned with the different (psychological) effects the sea may have on the spectator. The speaker tries to convey a psychological process which is initiated by being exposed to the sea's tranquillity as well as destructive powers.

SONNET XLIV.
WRITTEN IN THE CHURCH-YARD AT MIDDLETON IN SUSSEX.

PRESS'D by the Moon, mute arbitress of tides,
  While the loud equinox its power combines,
  The sea no more its swelling surge confines,
But o'er the shrinking land sublimely rides.
The wild blast, rising from the western cave,
  Drives the huge billows from their heaving bed;
  Tears from their grassy tombs the village dead,
And breaks the silent sabbath of the grave!
With shells and sea-weed mingled, on the shore
  Lo! their bones whiten in the frequent wave;
  But vain to them the winds and waters rave;

They hear the warring elements no more:
While I am doom'd—by life's long storm opprest,
To gaze with envy on their gloomy rest.

The first quatrain shows the effect of the moon on the swelling of the sea-water, i.e. the tide. The flood is personified in that it, like a hunter, "o'er the shrinking land sublimely rides." The waters move majestically and sublimely over the country and, by attributing sublimity to the waves, the speaker alludes Edmund Burke's theory of the sublime and the beautiful in which only the grand and the infinite is capable of producing an emotion of awe and being overwhelmed. Yet, this sublimity is connected with the thought of destruction in that the water floods a graveyard.

The second quatrain deals with the violent forces of the water which not only remains at the surface of the ground but which also penetrates the various tombs of the graveyard. By invading the sacred place of the graveyard, the sea disturbs and breaks upon the "silent sabbath of the grave." The water enters the tombs by "wild blast[s]" and "tears" the dead from their graves. This act of trespassing on the sacred monument of the tomb enlarges the notion of the wildness of the water. Repeatedly, the dichotomy of life and death is pointed out, here represented, on the one hand, by the "shrinking land" and the swelling sea and, on the other, by the tombs that are flooded. The function of the water is ambivalent, however, for although the sonnet does not explicitly refer to the destruction of human habitations, the water may be responsible for the killing of those that are unable to escape. The quatrain follows a cyclical structure in that the floods spring "from the western cave," thus from the dark, and pour all their destructive and violating forces into the graves of the dead. Thus, the water not only destroys and makes the people who live on the surface of the earth suffer but it also dissolves all the material remembrances of the dead.

In the third quatrain, the sonnet reaches its turning-point because all endeavours to destroy the graves and the dead have been in vain, for those whose bones were carried away "hear the *warring* [my italics] elements no more." Only the final couplet introduces the speaker, who considers herself "doomed" to be subject to "life's long storm" and also to the

inundation which has proved so fatal to the graves and the remembrances of the deceased. This awareness of a doomed life makes her glance enviously at the dead who have found peace in "gloomy rest."[19]

SONNET LXXXIII.
THE SEA VIEW

THE upland Shepherd, as reclined he lies
  On the soft turf that clothes the mountain brow,
Mars the bright Sea-line mingling with the skies;
  Or from his course celestial, sinking slow,
  The Summer-Sun in purple radiance low,
Blaze on the western waters; the wide scene
  Magnificent, and tranquil, seems to spread
Even o'er the Rustic's breast a joy serene,
  When, like dark plague-spots by the Demons shed,
Charged deep with death, upon the waves, far seen,
  Move the war-freighted ships; and fierce and red,
  Flash their destructive fire[.]—The mangled dead
And dying victims then pollute the flood.
Ah! thus man spoils Heaven's glorious works with blood!

"The Sea-View" opens with a rather untypical panorama of the sea meeting the horizon, for the sea is seen from a mountain perspective. This at the same time implies the contrast between the high and perpendicularly rising mountains and the horizontal sea-line. A country-shepherd is lying "on the soft turf" and watches the mingling of the blue sky with the blue sea. The scene appears sublime, "magnificent and tranquil" and has a psychological effect on the rustic. The shepherd is overwhelmed by the grandeur of the sea and so this image of the scene produces "a joy serene" in the "rustic's breast."

In contrast to "Sonnet Written in the Church Yard at Middleton in Sussex," there is no syntactic division into quatrains and sestet. Perhaps this continuous movement of language parallels the emotional tenor of this sonnet, which does not emphasise the destructive powers of the sea but stresses the tranquillity it "seems to spread." Despite this calm, the water is a vehicle for approaching evil and death, for it transports the various "war-freighted ships" that are "Charged deep with death." On

sea, ships are "fierce and red," "fierce" because they threaten and destroy the ships of enemies and "red" because the fights will imply fire and bloodshed. The red "destructive fire" is contrasted with the "purple" "summer-sun" which reddens the sea-water naturally. Its antagonism to nature is summed up in the final couplet, where it is said to spoil "Heaven's glorious works with blood."

II. Romanticism

Smith's sonnets are very often representations of the "single sentiment" of melancholy but also laments of the vanity of human life as well as the inevitability of human hardships. This recalls, for instance, the final couplet of Thomas Gray's "Sonnet on the Death of Richard West,"[20] for Smith also

> . . . fruitless mourn[s] to him that cannot hear,
> And weep[s] there more because [she] [. . .] weep[s] in vain.[21]

In a similar vein, Wordsworth thought that poetry was "truth [. . .] carried alive into the heart by passion"[22] and that "poetry sheds [. . .] natural and human tears"[23] for what cannot be changed or brought back.

The title of Sonnet 53 ("The Laplander") testifies to Smith's Romanticism in that it reveals her interest in Laplandic culture. The interest in the far away and the popular introduced by William Collins and James Macpherson is here focused upon a culture supposed to be still in accordance with nature.

In Sonnet 54 ("The Sleeping Woodman"), the speaker seeks shelter and isolation from "human converse" in a natural sanctuary which she calls the "pathless bowers" of the "wild copses." Similarly Mary in Ann Radcliffe's *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* "lulls her mind into a pleasing forgetfulness of troubles."[24] Mary's escapism, however, is based on a deliberate decision whilst the woodman simply goes to sleep where his exhausted body may find rest and recreation:

> His careless head on bark and moss reclined,
> Lull'd by the song of birds, the murmuring wind . . .

The woodman's near-symbiosis with nature is another typical romanticist trait, as is the speaker's envy of such perfect tranquility and harmony, far from the Neo-classical "antagonism to 'feeling' and the [. . .] championing of reason."[25]

> Ah! would 'twere mine in Spring's green lap to find
> Such transient respite from the ills I bear!

By classifying the woodman as "unthinking" it becomes evident that the constraints of contemplation and reflection prevent the speaker from experiencing the woodman's refreshing sleep.

This, however, is granted to her only in death, the "long repose" in which she will no longer have to think of terrestrial problems that had formerly made her uneasy. This "last sleep" is therefore seen as a relief from all the confinements of human life.

Sonnet 55 ("The return of the nightingale." Written in May 1791) is, perhaps, most richly charged with romanticist motifs.

> Borne on the warm wing of the western gale,
> How tremulously low is heard to float
> Thro' the green budding thorns that fringe the vale,
> The early Nightingale's prelusive note.
>
> 'Tis Hope's instinctive power that thro' the grove
> Tells how benignant Heaven revives the earth;
> 'Tis the soft voice of young and timid Love
> That calls these melting sounds of sweetness forth.
>
> With transport, once, sweet bird! I hail'd thy lay,
> And bade thee welcome to our shades again,
> To charm the wandering poet's pensive way
> And soothe the solitary lover's pain;
> But now!—such evils in my lot combine,
> As shut my languid sense—to Hope's dear voice and thine!

The nightingale is considered a mediator between terrestrial and celestial existence, for it "Tells how benignant Heaven revives the earth." The bird's "melting sounds of sweetness" are called forth by "the soft voice of young and timid love" which is still pure and able to renew the innocence of those

who listen to its message that is transported by the nightingale's song. It is to restore the natural goodness of Rousseau's *état naturel,* which enables human beings to forget ambition and self-love. The sweetness of the song will make evil and egoism melt and will evoke the powerful "overflow of [. . .] feelings" which came to be of central significance in Wordsworth's poetry.

The sonnet ends, however, on a note of melancholy: to the speaker the divine nightingale's song has lost its healing powers for she is deaf "to Hope's dear voice and thine!" The evils still to be faced (and there might be an autobiographical reference here) have hardened the speaker's sensibility to such a degree that she is no more able to indulge the sweetness and sanative powers of the nightingale's song.

IV. Sublimity

In *Emmeline, the Orphan of the Castle* (1788) Smith includes some landscapes of profound sublimity and grandeur. At the beginning of the novel, the heroine is introduced as living in a old castle in Wales. The mere mention of Wales evokes an idea of a rough and inaccessible kind of landscape. On parting from Mowbray Castle, the protagonist is overwhelmed by the grandeur of the towers under whose roofs she used to dwell.

> It was venerable towers rising above the wood in which it was almost embosomed, made one of the most magnificent features of a landscape, which now appeared in sight.[26]

The man-made towers are, for all their sublimity, almost completely absorbed by nature and thus very much resemble the ruins overgrown with moss and ivy in John Dyer's *Grongar Hill.*[27] Nowhere in Smith's *oeuvre* will there be an exclusive attribution of sublimity to a man-made artefact but there will always be either the synthesis of art and nature or the glorification of the uncontrollable forces of nature. When the towers of Mowbray Castle are an example of the first type, here is one of the second:

> Early the next morning, Emmeline arose; and looking towards the sea, saw a still increasing tempest gathering visibly over it. [. . .] even amid the heavy gloom

> of an impending storm, the great and magnificent spectacle afforded by the sea [was to be clearly perceived]. By reminding her of her early pleasures at Mowbray Castle, it brought back a thousand half-obliterated and agreeable, tho' melancholy images to her mind; while its grandeur gratified her taste for the sublime.[28]

Here it is the grandeur of the sea that appeals to Emmeline's "taste for the sublime," which is affected easily and deeply by the wild scenes of nature. Modern criticism argues that Emily, the heroine of Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* was modeled upon the plan of Emmeline's sensibility and her interest in the natural sublime.

The sublime, however, is also subject to gradation and Smith's descriptions succeed in being most intense when it comes to an outbreak of the natural forces:

> The gust grew more vehement, and deafened with it's fury; while the mountainous waves it had raised, burst thundering against the rocks and seemed to shake their very foundation. Emmeline, at the picture her imagination drew of their united powers of desolation, shuddered involuntarily and sighed.[29]

V. Romantic Nature

In her descriptions of natural sublimity, Smith foreshadows Wordsworth's conception of nature as well as continues the tradition of natural description of Thomson and Collins, but she also introduces a fusion of elements nobody had attempted before. This is a "distinctive blend of natural description with an intense but mysterious melancholy"[30] not to be found, for instance, in Wordsworth. What Smith has in common with him is, rather, enjoying nature and trying to model moral growth on the growth of nature.

Though both poets attempted to counteract the "vulgarity and meanness of ordinary life"[31] by applying "inherent and indestructible qualities of the human mind,"[32] Smith redefines the "epistemological relationship of the perceiving mind to the object of perception"[33] in that she depicts her own sorrows in terms of uncommon natural phenomena. Equally, to her the impact of nature comes first where her "environment" is concerned.[34]

Smith's sensibility is of a melancholy kind as regards her own personality as well as mankind in general but "[i]n nature [Smith] [. . .] found a solace which gave stability and purpose to the chaos of feeling."[35] The elegiac tone of Smith's compositions seems to attack the cult of sensibility that is so prominently shown in Charlotte Lennox' *The Female Quixote* in which Arabella's hypersensitivity leads to her illusions.

Perhaps it gives Smith's Romanticism the final touch that she combines "the evocation of natural scenery with a [positive] melancholy and escapist recollection of childhood."[36] Having become a poet she has realised the "insights of childhood"[37] which are usually worn out and forgotten in adulthood. She propagates the intense and unspoilt "language of [a child's] [. . .] heart,"[38] for she is convinced that every child like Wordsworth's *The Idiot Boy* has a natural openness and good-nature that will be lost in growing up.

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NOTES

[1]Earlier versions of this paper were delivered at Kellogg College, Oxford and at the University of the Saarland. I would like to thank Dr Jem Poster, Oxford and Dr Monika Gomille, Saarbrücken, for inviting me to their respective courses on English Romanticism.

[2]Cf. Todd 61. Todd defines eighteenth-century women poets and their attitude towards an autobiographical *persona* as follows: "On the whole female poets avoided the aggrandizing self-consciousness of the male poets; they rarely assumed the stance of the suffering artist or praised the tradition of despised poetic worth."

[3]Charlotte Smith, "Preface to the Sixth Edition of *Elegiac Sonnets*," *Poems* 5.

[4]Warton 271.

[5]Smith, "Preface to the Sixth Edition of *Elegiac Sonnets*," *Poems* 5.

[6]Smith, "Preface to Vol. II," *Poems* 7.

[7]Smith 8.

[8]Renwick 68. Cf. also Fry (e.g. 19 on the "sad musings of the persona") and Labbe.

[9]Kennedy 46.

[10]For the elegiac stanza cf. Jung, *Poetic Form*, as well as *250 Years, alas*.

[11]"Elegiac," *The New Shorter OED*.

[12]Smith, "Preface to the First Edition of *Elegiac Sonnets*," *Poems* 3.

[13]Beers 13.

[14]"Charlotte Smith," Lonsdale 365.

[15]The first great disappointment in Otway's life was that he was not successful in his becoming an actor, after he had experienced great esteem as a playwright for plays such as *The Orphan* (1680) and *Venice Preserved* (1682). Finally, he was "unable to secure a patron" and "died in poverty." See Ousby 744.

[16]Warton 181.

[17]Kennedy 44.

[18]Kennedy 44.

[19]Kennedy 47.

[20]Cf. Jung, "Zur Deutung von Thomas Grays 'Sonnet to Richard West.'"

[21]Gray 64.

[22]Wordsworth 15.

[23]Wordsworth 11.

[24]Radcliffe 13.

[25]Foster 464.

[26]Smith, *Emmeline* 37.

[27]Cf. Jung, *John Dyer*.

[28]Smith 313.

[29]Smith 314.

[30]Lonsdale 365.

[31]Wordsworth 12.

[32]Wordsworth 7.

[33]Mellor 85.

[34]Cf. Smith's realistic (naturalistic) descriptions of nature, particularly in her posthumously published *Bleachy Head*. "Smith's poetic descriptions of the natural world possess the exactitude of a naturalist's field notes; hers is a poetry of close observation characterised by an attention to organic process in all its minutiae" (Pascoe 193).

[35]Plumb 164.

[36]Cruttwell 35.

[37]Harding 38.

[38]Plumb 164.

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A Response to Sandro Jung, "Some Notes on the 'Single Sentiment' and Romanticism of Charlotte Smith"*

MONIKA GOMILLE

During recent years, the poems of Charlotte Turner Smith (1749-1806) have, after almost two centuries of neglect, come to be recognized as belonging to the most important poetry of the late eighteenth century.[1] *Elegiac Sonnets* (1784), her first volume of lyrics, made her famous almost overnight;[2] it is considered to have given a fresh stimulus to the English sonnet tradition which, with the sonnets written by William Wordsworth, reached a new pinnacle at the turn of the century. By its abundance of, for instance, apostrophe, personification and the conventional elements of the pastoral, Smith's poetry still participates in the neoclassical tradition, which was then in the decline;[3] at the same time, however, she established new figures of thought and poetic devices, so that Stuart Curran was able to describe her as "the first poet in England whom in retrospect we would call Romantic" (Curran xix). Both her ideas about the correspondence between nature and the poet's mood and the notion of nature's simplicity and healing power were often associated with Wordsworth's poetry, who was perhaps the most important romantic influenced by Smith.[4]

Smith's genuine achievement is the revitalization of the sonnet structure in the eighteenth century. Traditionally (though not quite aptly) the sonnet is seen as a love poem. Smith, who was of course well acquainted with the Petrarchan tradition, did not, however, use the sonnet for love poetry; because, as Fry observes, "the reading audience of her day would surely have found a sequence of love sonnets inappropriate for a woman writer" (17). She therefore makes personal feeling and melancholy caused by the

*Reference: Sandro Jung, "Some Notes on the 'Single Sentiment' and Romanticism of Charlotte Smith" *Connotations* 9.3 (1999/2000): 269-84.

conditions of her female existence the main subject of the sonnet (Fry 18). Curran sees her most important achievement in the fact that, using the sonnet form and thus exploiting a time-honoured poetic form for the expression of frustrated masculine desire for her (feminine) purposes, she reverses traditional gender roles.[5] As regards the sonnet *form*, Smith, however, did not subscribe to the Petrarchan model but instead adopted the Shakespearean sonnet structure with three quatrains, followed by a couplet offering a summary statement of the preceding twelve lines.

Charlotte Smith's poems posthumously published under the title *Beachy Head* (1807)[6] have been the subject of a seminal article by Judith Pascoe dealing with the 'female gaze' in poetry, where it has been claimed that, in these poems, Smith focuses on the details of plants and flowers traditionally associated with the feminine. It has been argued that the main focus of Smith's poetry is on the close description of the fauna of her immediate surroundings and maintained that "the nature she experiences seems to be much more an intimate acquaintance than an awe-inspiring force" (Pascoe 203). This seemed to be a natural perspective for a female writer of the late eighteenth century, as a mountain top perspective seemed, as Marlon Ross put it, "not an easy one for a female poet to assume" (44).

Sandro Jung's essay concentrates on some of Smith's descriptive lyrics that focus on landscape. Smith was rightly called "a regional poet,"[7] as she celebrates the beauties of the Sussex landscapes. A considerable number of her *Elegiac Sonnets* focus on the South Downs region. She particularly celebrates "Aruna," the river Arun, which flows south to the sea a few miles east of Bignor Park near Bignor, the village where she had spent her early years. As Jung observes, in her poem "Written by the Sea Shore—October, 1784" Smith relies heavily on the aesthetic category of the sublime, as in poems such as Sonnet 26 ("To the River Arun").[8] Jung, however, identifies a series of typical romanticist traits in Smith's "sublime" poetry, too. His findings, therefore, support Judith Pascoe's observation that Smith "moves quickly from the majestic to the minute, from the sublime to the beautiful" and that she "refus[es] to reinscribe her contemporaries' hierarchization of these terms" (Pascoe 204).

In my opinion the most interesting trait of Charlotte Smith's poetry, brought to the fore in Jung's article, is the fact that she writes from the position of the borderline. He situates her in the context of a profound poetical transition in the late eighteenth century. He writes that Smith's poetry "foreshadows Wordsworth's conception of nature as well as continues the tradition of natural description of Thomson and Collins" (281) and observes "a fusion of elements nobody before had ever attempted" (281). Furthermore he addresses her variation of the elegiac stanza, which means that she uses the sonnet form as a generic hybrid, exposing the mix of lyrical genres associated with the early history of this poetic form.

To conclude, Smith's poetry is interesting in its own right, as it develops a poetics of border crossing. It uses male-gendered poetical forms such as the sonnet and inverts the gender code traditionally associated with it. It exploits the flexibility of the sonnet structure and manipulates the poetic form as a generic hybrid. Smith's descriptions of natural scenery oscillate between the aesthetic categories of the beautiful and the sublime and refuse to accept the gendered epistemologies traditionally associated with these hierarchizations. Finally she invests the time-worn conventions of eighteenth-century Augustanism with new meanings and thus creates something radically new.

In-between spaces have, in the wake of contemporary cultural theories and post-colonial studies, attracted great interest during recent years. These new approaches in literary and cultural studies have opened our eyes for mixed forms and concepts of hybridity. Therefore I would suggest that rather than argue about Smith's achievements as a more or less orthodox (pre-)romanticist, we should rediscover her writings in the context of the contact zone and the notion of transitions and transgressions.

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NOTES

[1]See e.g. Fry vii.

[2]Fry vii. The popularity of Smith's poetry becomes, perhaps, most obvious by the fact that by 1851 eleven editions of *Elegiac Sonnets* had been published; cf. Brooks 13.

[3]Fry 14 ff.

[4]Curran xix.

[5]Curran xxv.

[6]*Beachy Head* is considered to reflect her mature poetic voice; cf. Fry 32.

[7]Fry 19.

[8]Cf. Fry 23.

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Performing Gender and Genre in Miles Franklin's *My Career Goes Bung*[*]

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Gender and genre are issues at the heart of both *My Brilliant Career* and its sequel *My Career Goes Bung*: both novels chronicle their heroines' rebellion against "prescribed femaleness" (*Bung* 447)[1] and contest the gendering of genre by calling into question the distinction between supposedly superior Australian 'masculine' realism and imported British 'feminine' romance. In his article "*My Career Goes Bung*: Genre-Parody, Australianness and Anglophilia," Sanjay Sircar discusses the tension between realism and stylization in Miles Franklin's novel, with particular regard to genre-parody of cheap English serialized formula fiction as represented by the *Penny Post* novel, and he analyses the way in which they correspond to "the tensions between literary and social Australian [sic] and anglophilia" (200). While Sircar draws attention to the continual slippages between the two modes of writing, it seems to me that he retains the distinction between realism and stylization, as well as the distinction between "naive narrated self" and "the more aware narrating self" (185). This essentialism results in repeated insecurity about which passages are actually authorially and/or narratorially conscious or unconscious (175, 187, 191, 194, 196, 197), and leads Sircar to conclude that *Bung's* "parodic retention of its English prototype's traces may signal the unconscious continuation of that prototype's power" (200).

Rather than attribute unconscious slippages to either author, narrator or heroine, I would like to show that *Bung* programmatically sets out to parody prescribed literary discourse by marking the frequently cited laws

[*] Reference: Sanjay Sircar, "*My Career Goes Bung*: Genre-Parody, Australianness and Anglophilia," *Connotations* 8.2 (1998/99): 175-200.

of gender/genre identity not as being essential but as the result of a deliberate choice of social roles to enact and literary modes to employ. In other words, they are not "natural," as the male characters would repeatedly have it (310, 326, 362, 441), or representative of "God's will," as the female characters, above all Sybylla's mother, believe (270), but performative. In a recent article on *Bung's* prequel, *My Brilliant Career*, Ian Henderson, with reference to Judith Butler's widely discussed theory of gender as performance,[2] has pointed out that through a complex weaving of realist and romance structures, Sybylla I's narrative "offers a model of identity based not on a single gender/genre identity, but on a process of performing gendered genre roles in a manner that never quite matches the ruling prescriptions." Sybylla, he maintains, "delivers a self-conscious performance of her displacement in either gendered mode, preferring to role-play.[3] This process of displacing gender and genre by staging both can be shown to determine the narrative of Sybylla II as well, with respect to heroine, narrator and author.

Although *My Career Goes Bung* was not published until 1946, a first draft of the novel was conceived as early as 1902, one year, that is, after the publication of *My Brilliant Career*.[4] Like Sybylla I, Sybylla II is a consummate actress. On leaving school, she realizes with a shock that "WOMANLINESS was to be our stock-in-trade," and straightaway voices her contempt for "the cunning girls who found no trouble with their role" (*Bung* 270). Yet in her encounters with men, and especially with her suitors, she continually role-plays, resisting—and complying with—the conventions of gender. While she simply hides from repulsive Old Grayling in a pig-sty, on her first encounter with Harold Beecham she tries to make at least her outward appearance agreeable to him, anticipating his view of her ("I did up my hair in order to look grown-up in readiness to meet him"; "I hoped he would not miss my complexion, which is one of my unassailable points," 318), and for the rest of this encounter she hides behind her housework. Women's concept of themselves as the Other, their consciousness of the way in which men view them, which is highlighted in these scenes,[5] is, of course, closely linked to the problematic status of the woman writer in a male-dominated society, in which "a woman with brains" is considered

a "monstrosity" and in which the woman writer is compared to a "performing bear," only that "the bear's performance would be more natural" (362). Sybylla is advised to "leave scribbling to men or to those women who couldn't catch a man" (366), so that despite all her defiance she comes to see herself as "a girl so unsexed as to write books" (414).

Play-acting becomes even more prominent when Sybylla enters the Sydney "SOCIETY scene" (390) where everybody seems to play "games" (406). Not unlike the grand entries of Edmée, who "adopts the public persona of innocent *Post* heroine" (Sircar 189), Sybylla refrains from enlightening Big Checks as to her true identity ("I could talk his pidgin while thinking about something else," 362). The best examples, however, are the meetings of Sybylla and Goring Hardy, "one of the most successful playwrights of the day" and "a social lion" (384), with whom she eventually plays "the most magic game known" (407). Again, just before their first encounter, she looks at her reflection in a mirror—"like a doll in the white dress and Gad's big sash" (388)—, anticipating his appraisal and debating with herself which role to adopt. Reflecting that "a man who had sipped deeply of forbidden women would like thoroughly untried soil," she sits down "primly in the full bloom of conventional innocence and [waits] for him to play first" (388)—successfully so, as a later exclamation of Hardy's confirms: "Such innocence! Such inconceivable innocence!" (410). In the ensuing conversation her answers or comments are "breathed ecstatically" (388), she rebukes him, and answers "staunchly" or "like a child" (389). Two meetings later, Sybylla again "[dives] into [her] rôle of girly-girly bushkin from Possum Gully" (399), and if occasion demands gazes at him "in an owl-like fashion, which I suddenly found most effective" (400). Role-playing is continued in their final encounters, in a chapter entitled "A Game for Two," in which Sybylla sees herself as "a scientist with her first case, terrifically interested and as clear-headed as a cucumber" (404)—again looking mousy (405), gurgling inwardly (409) or taking refuge in "recipes" of behaviour: "If a young woman in her teens wishes to pile on innocence one of the surest recipes is to murmur something about MOTHER." (412, cf. 413). Sybylla's performance of gender accords with Judith Butler's model of subversion: "Performativity," Butler has pointed out, "is a matter of

reiterating or repeating the norms by which one is constituted,"[6] and its subversive potential lies in the ways in which the parodic 'quoting' of gender binaries can work to decentre defining discourses.

That masculinity, too, is a matter of performance becomes clearest in Goring Hardy's role-playing, despite all his "unalloyed maleness" (388). He is interested in and amused by Sybylla "whom he estimated as without the defence of social *savoir faire*" (389), but when Edmée enters the room, he "instantaneously changed into a different man" (389), making "orthodox remarks with orthodox politeness" (390). On one occasion he assumes "his public shell towards [Sybylla], which was brisk and ignoring" (398), and the next moment he "[acts] like a boy leaving school" (399). In the Houses of Parliament, "Hardy acted as though I were a child he was indulging" (401), while in private he adopts the role of stern literary instructor and at the same time offers her "pretty things" in order to render her appearance more seductive. Goring Hardy's performance of masculinity is reflected in his performance as a writer: a native of Australia and one of its "great literary men," he had moved to London, we learn, where he "quickly renounced all Australian crudities" and "played the game along London lines," writing successful comedies about "duchesses and high ladies who knew all about extracting the erotic excitement from *amour*" (385). Interestingly enough, he replicates in his plays the stock roles and formulaic plot which, according to the genre/gender binaries displayed in the novel, would be associated with "feminine" romance and therefore more appropriate to a woman writer.

On the level of narration, this displacement of the borderlines of gender and genre is continued by a deliberate choice and fusion of romantic and realist modes. Sanjay Sircar has provided a detailed analysis of the parodic employment of the romantic mode, especially of the model of the *Penny Post* novel, with regard to plot, character and code-switching, which is rejected in *Bung* as a valid model yet permeates the purportedly realist "yarn" offered. At the same time, realism is devalued as a newer, better, genuine Australian mode of writing, most obviously in those passages in which the narrator comments on the public misunderstanding that "an autobiography was a device for disseminating personal facts straight from

the horse's mouth" (279) or rejects the identification of real people with characters from her first, also supposedly realist, novel, *My Brilliant Career*: "The book is not real. The girl is only make-believe, and Harold Beecham a figment of imagination" (335)—a reaction, of course, to the reception of *Career* as pure, factual autobiography. The attempt at "Realistic Australianism" is eventually called a defeat (438), and the novel closes with dreams of an idyllic rural England complete with brooks and ivied towers, whose images are derived from "song and story" (448). Significantly, the final lines are devoted to the depiction of a sunset in Australia, which in the Preface to *My Brilliant Career* had been rejected as romantic "trash" (*Career* 2) inappropriate to a "*real* yarn" (*Career* 1)—also in sharp contrast to the many sunsets actually described in *Career*. I do not agree with Sanjay Sircar's view, though, that the slippages between *Bung's* nominal adherence to realism and its actual stylization are narratorially unconscious, and that therefore both author and narrator disingenuously claim the realism of *Career* to be tongue-in-cheek (Sircar 191). To my mind, the slippages serve instead to highlight the explosion of the conventions of both the romantic and the realist modes, calling into question the existence or mere possibility of a unified genre in the same way that the existence of a 'core' gender is debunked through the characters' role-playing. Sybylla II, like Sybylla I, is thus positioned outside the gendered debate of appropriate national literary expression—quite unlike Tom Collins, the narrator of Joseph Furphy's Australian classic *Such is Life* of 1903, who also claims to write his autobiography in opposition to custom and literary propriety, to present no more than a yarn, yet no less than "a fair picture of life,"[7] and who admits to having "a peculiar defect—which I scarcely like to call an oversight in mental construction—[which] shuts me out from the flowery pathway of the romancer" (1-2; cf. 64-65, 163). While Furphy's narrator places himself firmly in the Australian masculine realist tradition, Franklin's heroines pose as "splendidly isolated literary outsider[s]."[8]

This leaves us with the author herself, who, because of the handicaps involved in being a female writer, also took to a life of role-playing. "Women must conform to the well-established masculine patterns," Miles Franklin wrote at some time in the 1920s, "Otherwise they must write for

their own recreation."[9] Her realization of the patriarchal nature of the literary world and the awareness of the social mores of the time are reflected in the use of her fourth name, Miles, with its masculine aura. About the time *My Brilliant Career* was to be published, she wrote in a letter to her agent: "Please on no account allow 'Miss' to pre-fix my name on the title page as I do not want it to be known that I am a young girl but wish to pose as a bald-headed seer of the privileged sex."[10] She was immediately found out, though, and the reception of her first novel left her without doubt about the existence of a double critical standard that categorized and criticized a piece of writing by the sex of its author. This, as well as the knowledge that female experience was often undervalued or, worse, ignored, made her, like Sybylla II, adopt "a carefully guarded" *nom de plume* (*Bung*, 446), Brent of Bin Bin, besides a number of others. Valerie Kent has presented an impressive record of the double literary life Miles Franklin created, juggled and sustained, also pointing out "the sheer cheek that often accompanied it"[11]—and all this in order "to succeed and survive as an Australian writer"[12] in the early decades of the twentieth century.

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NOTES

[1]References are to Miles Franklin, *My Brilliant Career and My Career Goes Bung* [1901, 1946], introd. Elizabeth Webby (North Ryde, NSW: Angus & Robertson, 1994).

[2]*Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990); cf. also her *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'* (New York: Routledge, 1993), and "Critically Queer," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 1.1 (1993).

[3]Ian Henderson, "Gender, Genre, and Sybylla's Performative Identity in Miles Franklin's *My Brilliant Career*," *Australian Literary Studies* 18.2 (1997): 165-73, 165.

[4]For a history of the publication of the two novels, see the introduction by Elizabeth Webby.

[5]Frances McInherny has commented on the significance of the mirror image in *My Brilliant Career* in "Miles Franklin, *My Brilliant Career* and the Female Tradition," *Australian Literary Studies* 9. 3 (1980): 275-85, esp. 283-84.

[6]"Critically Queer" 22.

[7](North Ryde, NSW: Angus & Robertson, 1987), 2.

[8]Fiona Giles, "Romance: An Embarrassing Subject," *The Penguin New Literary History of Australia*, ed. Laurie Hergenhan (Ringwood, Vic.: Penguin, 1988) 223-37, 231.

[9]Quoted from Valerie Kent, "Alias Miles Franklin," *Gender, Politics and Fiction: Twentieth Century Australian Women's Novels*, ed. Carole Ferrier, 2nd ed. (St. Lucia, Queensland: U of Queensland P, 1992) 44-58, here: 47-48.

[10]Quoted from Kent 45.

[11]Kent 50.

[12]Kent 58.

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Female Histories from Australia and Canada as Counter-Discourses to the National*

MARION SPIES

(1) Transnational Female Historiography

This is a reply to and a continuation of the articles by Sanjay Sircar, "*My Career Goes Bung*: Genre-Parody, Australianness and Anglophilia" and by Barbara Korte, "Survival of the Nation(al)? Notes on the Case of English-Canadian Literary Criticism." Sircar illustrates that in the fictitious autobiography *Bung* the Australian writer Miles Franklin, who can be regarded as an early feminist, decidedly moves away from conventions of the genre, as they were upheld in her British mother country. And at the end of her article, Korte asks: "Should and how can literary criticism engage with the national discourse(s) of the societies in which it is practiced?" (Korte 371). On the basis of Sircar's arguments the following contribution is trying to answer Korte's questions by demonstrating with the help of five fictitious (auto-)biographical works, Franklin's *My Career Goes Bung* (written in 1902, publ. in 1946), Margaret Atwood's *The Journals of Susanna Moodie* (1970), Daphne Marlatt's *Ana Historic* (1988), Kate Grenville's *Joan Makes History* (1988) and Drusilla Modjeska's *Poppy* (1990), that especially in relation to national history a female counter-discourse has established itself in Australia and Canada, which manifests itself in a criticism of national historiography as well as in a specifically female way of representation. The novels and the poetry cycle *Journals* have been chosen because each of them discusses different aspects of history.

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*Reference: Sanjay Sircar, "*My Career goes Bung*: Genre-Parody, Australianness and Anglophilia," *Connotations* 8.2 (1998/99): 175-200; Barbara Korte, "Survival of the Nation(al)? Notes on the Case of English-Canadian Literary Criticism," *Connotations* 8.3 (1998/99): 362-73.

In postcolonial societies the national never is or was the only discourse—although it was at times dominant. But rather, nationalistic notions have always provoked other discourses; in Australia and Canada, for example, feminism was always very pronounced when nationalism was clamorous as well. According to Stephen Alomes (1987), the 1890s, 1940s and 1970s were "... a time of national self-consciousness ...." (Alomes 3) in Australia. The same is true for the time around 1988, when Australia celebrated the 200th anniversary of the arrival of the First Fleet (see e.g. Whitlock, "Introduction" xxix). At these times feminism was also very prominent in Australia (see e.g. Sheridan 29-30). For Korte, the heydays of Canadian nationalism are the years about 1867, the establishment of the Dominion of Canada, the 100th anniversary in 1967, and in a modified way the late 1980s and 1990s. And at these heights of nationalism the female discourse was also particularly strong in Canada.

The national and the female discourses do not always, but sometimes, see issues from a different angle. One area in which they differ significantly, is the interpretation of history and historiography. Generally speaking, in a colonial context a nationalistically inclined interpretation of history is fixed upon progress and sees the opening up of the country and its socio-economic development under the aspect of achieving political independence, in Canada by propagating the "'National Dream' of a Coast-to-Coast link" (New 82) of the Canadian Pacific Railway, for example, and in Australia by glorifying discoverers, cartographers and settlers as national heroes (see e.g. Coungeau; Eden). Such a kind of historiography worships men of an unusual psychic or physical stature and of public interest or those with political visions of an Australia or a Canada which is independent of the mother country. By contrast, female historiography wants to re-evaluate either conventional female tasks—like the raising of a family—or the life of a simple pioneer woman. It also strives to point out that a woman's influence is not restricted to the home, since she can also be active in the church and even in local politics. Beginnings of such a literary female historiography can already be found in the nineteenth century, in Canada for example in Elizabeth Lichtenstein Johnston's *Recollections of a Georgia Loyalist* (written in 1838, publ. in 1901), in Australia

it is represented by the suffragette, social worker and novelist Catherine Helen Spence. A first climax of female literary historiography is reached with Louisa Lawson and Miles Franklin (for more details see Sheridan). Fundamental female attacks on male constructions of history, however, are only to be found since the 1970s, when women have developed the concept of "transnational feminist subjects." What exactly is meant by this is to be shown in the following with the help of the texts already mentioned, which could be classified more precisely as postmodern feminist meta-fictional historiography.

Thanks mainly to Hayden White and Roland Barthes, since the late 1960s both literary theory and historiography have upgraded the narrative element in historical documentation. A historical presentation, says Barthes, is no objective reproduction of facts, but a narrative, which does not essentially differ from a fictional narration in literature (see "Le discours de l' histoire," quoted. in White 68). Neither in history nor in literature—for example in an historical novel—has the writer direct access to the *res gestae* (cf. Hutcheon, "History" 173). Rather, historical 'reality' always is a mediated story, embedded in a narration. In their works the women writers mentioned above present a gender-specific reconstruction of history as—according to them—it could or should have happened. They project their feminine perspective onto certain points in history. To achieve this, they avoid traditional forms of autobiography, which to readers having in mind famous Western models like St. Augustine's *Confessiones* or Rousseau's *Confessions* might be expected to feature a male narrator, a linear narrative, a unified, individual subject and an (allegedly) objective rendering of historical facts. Postmodern female writers, on the other hand, can be said to interpret a subject as multi-layered, as constructed, even as inconsistent, having several identities and they question the ability of language to reproduce reality (cf. Prain 43; Neuman 34). In "Resisting Autobiography[:] Out-Law Genres and Transnational Feminist Subjects" (1992) Caren Kaplan points out that writing women in the postmodern age deliberately deconstruct former "master genres" such as the autobiography; for Kaplan the now relevant former "out-law genre" is transnational feminist literature, which she subdivides into prison memoir,

ethnography etc. To Kaplan's mind, the writing subject is in the first place a woman, only then a prisoner, black, and so on. Consequently, a woman's nationality is only *one* component of her identity. In the texts which are to be discussed in the following sections, gender is the most important issue. In the spirit of Kaplan's female transnationalism, the writers of these texts oppose certain elements of national historiography and propagate their counter-models.

(2) Miles Franklin, *My Career Goes Bung* (1902/1946): Deconstruction of Historical Female and Literary Role Models without a Counter-Model

In *Bung* the narrator Sybylla comments on the effects of her recently published "fictitious autobiography" *My Brilliant Career* (1901) on her neighbours and acquaintances. As one consequence, Sybylla leaves her parents' farm for Sydney, because she feels persecuted by prospective suitors. As a young, successful author, she is lionized in Sydney society. But her hopes of finding some kind of employment in which she can use her talent as a writer, remain unfulfilled, and thus she has to go back to the farm. Nevertheless, she still dreams of becoming a famous writer in London.

In this book Franklin's rebellious tendencies already become visible, since the narrator Sybylla revolts against various conventions: as Sircar points out, Sybylla rejects English literary models, especially the form and content of the Penny Post Novel, a type of romance which calls for an English setting, a plot set in High Society, a knightly hero and a submissive, rather naive heroine. But Sybylla is more radical than Sircar admits: she also demands equal rights for women and polemicizes against "artificial womanliness" (Franklin 20), which wants females to be silly and passive, uncritically accepting the physical and spiritual superiority of males (see e.g. Franklin 12). Sybylla advocates equality in all areas of private and public life; among other things she is all for women's right to vote, their free choice of a career and equal pay (see Franklin 27). Living in Sydney, she storms at the male notion that she has to be formed both as a woman

and an author (see e.g. Franklin 180, 186, 226). But her protest is not very successful: Already in *My Brilliant Career*, says Sybylla, she tried to parody traditional, i.e. male, forms of autobiography (see e.g. Franklin 31, 34, 54-55) and to cast her energetic heroine as an "antithesis of conventional [English] heroines" (Franklin 37). But she has to realize that her readers do not understand that her first book is meant to be both fictitious and parodistic.

In addition to certain literary conventions, Sybylla also criticizes the structure of British society as it is aped in Sydney. She does not accept British "society pretensions" (Franklin 138, 148), which judge people, and especially women, according to their family connections, money and influence. Since she does not possess any of these 'qualities,' and also does not present herself to the world as a subservient little woman, she is not very much in demand on the Sydney marriage market. Additionally, or so Sybylla thinks, a woman is supposed to be religious. Since she is a fierce critic of the Church of England (see e.g. Franklin 19, 47, 219, 221), potential suitors like Big Ears are scared off.

Ultimately, Sybylla paradoxically fails because of her strength of character. She rebels against the traditional 'task' of women to submit to men as a matter of course. Rather, she delights in making fun of harmless little faults of character in her suitors Gaddy and Big Ears (see e.g. Franklin 220). Thus, she does not experience a romance. Her dreams of a career as a writer in London do not come true because she disdains to play-act and flatter men who could possibly take her to London (see e.g. Franklin 195, 201). Hopes of a marriage with Henry are not fulfilled because Sybylla is afraid that he might ask her to stop writing novels (see Franklin 232). Her plan to live from her earnings as a writer does not materialize, because Sybylla declines as demeaning the only job offer she gets in Sydney, that is to work as a "society gossip" for a newspaper. Thus, *Bung* does not fit into the pattern of a conventional autobiography, mainly because an autobiography often is a teleological success story. Sybylla's life, however, runs in a circle: the heroine vehemently protests against social conventions, but because of her position as a moneyless woman in Australia she cannot realize her dreams of a life as a single woman writer in London. Thus, she has to go back to her parents' farm.

(3) Margaret Atwood, *The Journals of Susanna Moodie* (1970): Deconstruction of British Culture—Construction of the Unity of Woman and Nature

In Atwood's *The Journals of Susanna Moodie*, Franklin's discrepancy of male and female role models is narrowed down to a gender specific interpretation of personal development and history. In her cycle of poems Atwood uses material from the autobiographies *Roughing It in the Bush; or, Life in Canada* (1852) and *Life in the Clearings versus the Bush* (1853) by the British immigrant Susanna Moodie. Atwood's cycle is subdivided into three parts: Susanna's arrival and her first few years in a log cabin in Upper Canada, life of the Moodie family in a little town, and the disorientation of old Susanna as well as her 'surfacing' in Toronto in 1969.

Arriving in Canada, Susanna at once realizes:

> We left behind . . .
> . . .
> one by one our civilized
> distinctions
>
> and entered a large darkness.
>
> It was our own
> ignorance we entered (Atwood 12).

For the Moodies, emigration to Canada sets a development in motion which begins with the shedding of British culture. But whereas Lieutenant Moodie and other men, immigrants and pioneers, try to overcome the difficult situations they have to face in the wilderness by working with all their might for the development of the country, by serving the country as soldiers, and by dreaming of a glorious future (see Atwood 16-17), Susanna tries to adapt herself to the new country and not to subject it to her will as the men try to do. During this process she has to learn to live without social amenities, female society, fine clothes, art, i.e. all the privileges she enjoyed as an officer's wife in England. In Canada she no longer yearns for urban culture, but for the union between woman and nature (see e.g. Atwood 21). Such a union is possible, because in women organic and

cyclical nature very much comes into its own (cf. Groening 173-74). As the years pass by, Susanna has to realize, however, that even the primitive civilization of Canada with its log cabins and garrison towns is a "prison" (see e.g. Atwood 22), which impedes and delays the union with nature. But since she is nearly always in close contact with natural forces, Susanna finally achieves the desired symbiosis:

> Looking in a Mirror
>
> It was as if I woke
> after a sleep of seven years
>
> to find stiff lace, religious
> black rotted
> off by earth and the strong waters
>
> and instead my skin thickened
> with bark and the white hairs of roots
>
> My heirloom face I brought
> with me a crushed eggshell
> among other debris:
> the china plate shattered
> on the forest road, the shawl
> from India decayed, pieces of letters
>
> and the sun here had stained
> me its barbarous colour (Atwood 24).

Such a unity is not reached without a struggle; whereas Lt Moodie distinguishes himself in the putting down of the Riel rebellion, Susanna fights against bush fires and loneliness and learns to get over the death of some of her children.

In the last poems Susanna appears in 1969 as an old woman on a Toronto bus: She accuses twentieth-century Canadians of trying to supplant the natural wilderness by their mistaken settlement policy instead of simply accepting it. This subjection of nature is supposed to be the consequence of a brutal, male, expansionist view of history. Accordingly, immigrants did not create a Paradise in the new land, but a Babylon of stone; nowadays,

they do no longer know how to use their senses and have thus remained "invaders" (Atwood 57), who barricade themselves in their cities[1] and only feel safe there. But this sense of security is a fallacy:

> Turn, look down:
> there is no city;
> this is the centre of a forest
>
> your place is empty (Atwood 61).

In the afterword Atwood explains this pessimistic ending of her cycle of poems in the following way: "we are all immigrants to this place even if we were born here: the country is too big for anyone to inhabit completely, and in the parts unknown to us we move in fear, exiles and invaders"(Atwood 62).

According to Atwood, the national history of Canada is split into male[2] and female. The male history of conquests has prevailed, and thus one nowadays finds concrete deserts such as Toronto. But the female history, though repressed up to now, also exists. At its centre is the personal quest of each woman, like Susanna's. Therefore, the female variant of Canadian national history consists of a conglomerate of individual destinies, which, however, have a common denominatior, since some basic women's experiences (like menstruating, being pregnant, grieving for a dead child) repeat themselves in a cyclical way. This is a typically female view of history, which—according to Atwood—should prevail. In those poems in *Journals* whose action takes place in 1969 Atwood demands this outright, and in the nineteenth-century episodes she suggests it. Lt Moodie and other male immigrants, for example, are not mentioned any more after their participation in suppressing the Riel Rebellion. Thus, Atwood implies that the male teleological view of history is wrong, since the justifiable claims of Louis Riel and other Métis, who were robbed of their hereditary rights by white invaders and their urge for expansion, were brutally suppressed by Canadian-English troops. Especially the figure of Riel was used by some Canadian writers of the 1970s in order to criticize past and contemporary Canadian imperialistic policy.[3] It is quite possible to interpret Atwood in

this way as well, since for his share in suppressing the rebellion Lt Moodie was rewarded with a government job in the town of Belleville. And Atwood interprets this phase of Susanna's life as a setback in her personal development. Therefore, it may be concluded that in *Journals* Atwood criticizes the national imperialistic myth of Canadian history and instead pleads for individual histories, thus representing the development of each woman's character as historically significant (see Atwood, Epigraph of *Journals* n. p.).[4]

(4) Daphne Marlatt, *Ana Historic* (1988): Deconstruction of Pre-Postmodern Historiography—Construction of an A-Historic, Cyclical Variant of History

It is Marlatt who proceeds from female individual history to female national history. In "Women's Autobiographical Selves: Theory and Practice" (1988) Susan Stanford Friedman wrote:

> . . . alienation from the historically imposed image of the self is what motivates the writing, the creation of an alternate self in the autobiographical act. Writing the self . . . breaks the silence imposed by male speech (41).

Marlatt's *Ana Historic* indeed breaks the silence and newly defines the role of women in Canadian history and historiography. In her metafictional text the narrator Annie reconstructs with the help of just a few facts and a rich imagination the life of Mrs. (Ana) Richards, who has taught school since 1873 in the place which later became Vancouver. During and by her writing process Annie emancipates herself from her husband Richard, who is a historian, and she also reconsiders her problematic relationship to her dead mother. In this process she contrasts male and female notions of history as well as gender-specific nineteenth-century concepts of women's roles with each other. Whereas in Atwood's *Journals* the male view of history was only expressed by Lt Moodie's fight for the glory of Canada and later by the failure of Toronto citizens to feel at home in Canada, in *Ana* female history is contrasted with male history throughout.

Before Annie got married to Richard, she was one of his students. Both as a student and as his wife, it was her task to type up Richard's notes and do similar unproductive jobs. Marlatt implies that during this time Annie uncritically adopted Richard's attitude towards history, and especially his conviction that historiography is only built on facts (see e.g. Marlatt 134) and that Canadian history was made by men of action.[5] Annie says:

> i learned that history is the real story the city fathers tell of the only important events in the world. a tale of their exploits hacked out against a silent backdrop of trees, of wooden masses. so many claims to fame. so many ordinary men turned into heroes. (where are the city mothers?) the city fathers busy building a town out of so many shacks labelled the Western Terminus of the Transcontinental, Gateway to the East—all these capital letters to convince themselves of its, of their, significance (Marlatt 28).

In this history women appear as mere appendages to their spouses; they are utterly silent (e.g. Marlatt 75). Even the teacher is only mentioned in the town chronicle as the widow Mrs Richards; it is Annie who invents a first name for her, toying with the various meanings of the Greek word 'ana':

> ana
> that's her name:
> back, backward, reversed
> again, anew (Marlatt 43).

She also lets Ana write a diary, in which her protagonist really lives up to her name and invents both the history of Canada and her own history anew. And—probably inspired by Hayden White—Annie, Ana's imaginative chronicler, realizes that historiography is not the reproduction of facts, but a coherent and interpretative narrative. She thus complements male history with female history (e.g. Marlatt 39), filling the holes in Canadian historiography (Marlatt 26) with up to this time unwritten stories by women (e.g. Marlatt 109). This historiography is comprised of both the private life of women, their fate and dreams (e.g. Marlatt 35), and also of bits and pieces of the political female history of Canada (e.g. Marlatt 30). Since women cannot recognize themselves in the narrative which male

historians have invented and perpetuated, they create a different image of the female self in history. Thus, Ana, for example, is not only the self-possessed teacher Mrs Richards, but also a passionate woman who dreams of dancing, giving private music lessons in order to be independent from the school board, going on a journey around the world, and having a female lover instead of being obliged to marry a second time just to have a "protector" in the Canadian wilderness.

The Canadian history with which Annie comes up, is a genealogy of interconnected women's lives: Annie tells the story of Ana's mother, of Ana, of herself and of her mother Ina. These women create one another and the stories which they write without the help of men:

> we give place, giving words, giving birth, to
> each other—she and me. you. hot skin writing
> skin (Marlatt 153).

The master narrative which is thus created, is "a-historic" and a-teleological, because the fictitious historical and contemporary women characters basically always have the same kind of experience (e.g. Marlatt 121, 129). Marlatt invents female protagonists in order to show that their personal stories (e.g. 90), their wishes and sexual longings principally stay the same throughout the centuries, the only difference being that in the late twentieth century women voice their needs much more directly. With this personal history, an outer female cultural history of Canada is correlated (cf. Marlatt 22). However, the latter is a bit sketchy, because Marlatt only says that whereas for men events like the completion of the railroad are important, women set store on other things: for them, civilization means to continue in the Canadian wilderness the kind of life they were used to lead in England; consequently, in their letters and diaries they celebrate the buying of a piano, ladies' meetings with "English china, Scotch shortbread" (Marlatt 118) and the birth of the first white baby as historically important events.

This specific version of history in contrast to traditional history is made possible in *Ana* by foregrounding female writings, i.e., diaries and narratives about the cultivation of Canada by women; by rendering stories

which combine fact and fiction. Taken together, they do not comprise a linear narrative, but something like a kaleidoscope with bits of coloured glass, representing events which are especially important for women.[6] In such a way, women belatedly, a-historically, write themselves into the history of Canada (e.g. Marlatt 47), in which there still is enough "... space for stories forgotten or not yet imagined ..." (Curran/Hirabayashi 111).

(5) Drusilla Modjeska, *Poppy* (1990): Deconstruction of the Irrelevance of Private Female History—Pledge for the Equality of Private and Public

As Alison Bartlett pointed out in "Other Stories: The Representation of History in Recent Fiction by Australian Women Writers" (1993), since the 1970s Australian feminists have been increasingly concerned with the roles and the representation of women in history and literature. In this context they redefine what is historically significant, doubting the necessity of the separation of public and private spheres (see Bartlett 166), which was still important for Atwood and Marlatt. Both Modjeska's *Poppy* and Grenville's *Joan Makes History* belong to this new tradition.

In *Poppy* Lalage, who lives in Australia in the 1980s, retells in non-chronological episodes the biography of her British mother Poppy, who got married during the Second World War, gave birth to three daughters, left her husband Richard after she had a breakdown, managed a centre for young offenders for a long time, had a love affair with a priest, travelled to India and died of cancer at the age of 60. The name 'Lalage' comes from the Greek, one meaning is 'literary narration.' Consequently, in her "Acknowledgements" Modjeska—just like Lalage throughout the novel—emphasizes the fictitious character of her history:

> The resulting *Poppy* is a mixture of fact and fiction, biography and novel .... The evidence I have used, the diaries and letters, the conversations and stories, come from memory, the papers I have been given, and from the imagination I have inherited (Modjeska 317).

How and what a woman writes is one important theme of this text, which, however, can only be mentioned here. The second major theme is the

education of women, or, more precisely, the questions of when, how, and why a woman learns that she is a political being, that she has a voice and that her voice counts. Modjeska shows that this process is closely connected with British social history, because it is only through changes in law that women are finally allowed to vote; thus social and political history directly influence individual history.

Right from the beginning, Lalage repeatedly emphasizes that the experiences of women in all English-speaking countries are similar, because they have had a similar education and read the same kind of books; feminists, for example, are acquainted with works by Ursula Le Guin, Luce Irigaray, and Marianne Moore (see e.g. Modjeska 198 and "Sources Quoted" 319-20). British culture in all countries belonging to the Terranglia influenced the emancipation of women (see e.g. Modjeska 250, 253). Here, Modjeska expands Kaplan's concept of a transnational women's literature into that of a transnational women's culture.[7] Writings by well-known feminists on changing role models are to prove the existence of a common female culture: "Doris Lessing, Elizabeth Jolly [sic] and Nadine Gordimer were born within five years before Poppy. Consider them" (Modjeska 90). Modjeska argues that in the Second World War both the British Empire and a rigidly patriarchic society came to an end,[8] a society which had tied women to their families. As a consequence, women were now more and more looking for work outside the home, and social customs, services and divorce laws changed for their benefit. Just as in *Ana Historic*, these improvements are illustrated with the help of a female genealogy: China, Poppy's mother, still is a completely helpless creature, who from her birth to her death needs to be taken care of. The young Poppy also is seen only in typical female roles:

> . . . I piece together the story of Poppy who was born in 1924 and died in 1984, daughter of China and Jack, wife of Richard, lover of Marcus, mother of May and Phoebe and me. That is how we mark a woman, by her kin and progeny (Modjeska 12).

She does not yet have any kind of political awareness; world history hardly seems to touch her private history, her little family world:

> When I [i.e. Lalage] asked Poppy to remember the crises of the fifties she'd reply with domestic details.
>
> 'Do you remember the outbreak of the Korean War?' I asked.
>
> 'Yes,' she said. 'I was pregnant with May.'
>
> ....
>
> 'What about the day Nasser refused to accept the UN's proposal for the international board to run the canal?' I tried ....
>
> 'Yes, as a matter of fact I do,' she said, looking pleased with herself, as if she'd trumped me. 'It was the beginning of September. The school holidays were about to end. It must have been a weekday. Julia Jensen had asked us to lunch ...' (Modjeska 64).

It is only when she goes into a psychiatric clinic after a breakdown and thus severs herself from her family, that her emancipation process from a rather narrow family life begins. The reasons for her breakdown are not explicitly given, but the narrator insinuates that Poppy has realized that there is a life outside the family bonds, that not only her own, but world history in general is important. The reason why Poppy recovers also remains largely in the dark. But it has something to do with finding her identity: "The best I [i.e. Lalage] can do is to say Poppy recovered because she found her voice" (Modjeska 93). Poppy begins to read newspapers and books, goes back to school, starts to work, becomes independent and as a lover also learns to enjoy her body and her sexuality, which she didn't when she was only a dutiful wife. Lalage comments upon a difficult meeting in the Day Centre during which Poppy spoke up for herself:

> She was working out of the labyrinth of her own femininity. At this most public moment of her life, I see her vulnerable and exposed, for what she stood accused of was that for which she had struggled so long: the ability to speak freely, and as a woman (Modjeska 150).

Modjeska's Poppy embodies the aims of early feminists (cf. Levy 165): Women free themselves from their private world and learn to speak in public. But nevertheless, Poppy's political self-awareness is still very slight; she rather shows a social than a political commitment. This is also true later, during her stay in India (see e.g. Modjeska 273). It is left to her daughters, especially Lalage, to inform themselves thoroughly about world

politics and to be politically active. It is only Lalage, a woman of the third generation, who realizes rather late in life, i.e., towards the end of the writing of *Poppy*, which represents her process of emancipation from her roles of daughter and wife, that private and public discourse can indeed be linked. She describes this insight with terms by Ursula Le Guin, who talks about "father and mother tongue." By "father tongue" she means public discourse, by "mother tongue" instinctive, emotional utterance. Lalage hopes that she has found for herself ". . . Le Guin's third term: a native tongue, a dialect that accommodates learning with blood and heart, father tongue perhaps with mother tongue" (Modjeska 152). That Lalage is able to finish her book about Poppy, which combines fact and fiction, closeness to reality and emotions, historiography and metahistoriography, that she is also teaching at a university, and can finally straighten out her tumultuous private life, is supposed to prove to the reader that she—and with her every woman of the 80s—has successfully finished her emancipation process and is both a private and a public person: ". . . breaking down dichotomy and refusing splits . . ." (Modjeska 151).

(6) Kate Grenville, *Joan Makes History* (1988): Deconstruction of Biased Feminist Historiography—Synthesis of Male and Female History Making

For the female protagonists discussed so far, men only live on the outskirts of their world and are not only unimportant for their development, but downright impeding. This is very different in Grenville's *Joan Makes History*. This historiography is much more conciliatory, perhaps pointing to an impending change: from the militant feminist or female studies of the 1970s and 80s to the more relaxed gender studies of the 90s.[9]

The narrator Joan is born in 1901, the year in which Australia also becomes an independent nation. Joan is convinced that she is predestined to make history. To her mind, this right has so far been denied to women—not only in Australia. In eleven scenes, interrupted by episodes from the life of the contemporary heroine, Joan imagines eleven predecessors, who are also called Joan and who are present at events which

are important for Australia as a nation, like the Depression around 1890 or the opening of the first Australian Parliament in 1901. These historical Joans either comment on the political events or directly interfere in politics, using the vocabulary and voicing opinions of the late twentieth century. Thus, Grenville wants to illustrate that a consequently female view of history is only possible since then.

Of the texts under discussion, *Joan* is the most outspoken and critical one. Grenville mainly undermines three conventional notions about history (cf. Haynes 74-75):

(1) Like Marlatt's Annie, she refuses to accept that historiography is only an enumeration of facts. Much more elaborate than Annie, Joan invents instead historical episodes which could have happened. So, her second Joan is a prisoner, who in 1788 jumps from one of the ships of the First Fleet into the water and swims ashore, thus being the first white person to touch Australian soil. This shows that in spite of its inherent objective factuality, for Grenville the historical discourse is always dominantly subjective and heavily determined by imagination (cf. Goulston 24); accordingly her book begins:

> In writing this work of fiction, the author has made use of real historical events only when it suited her purposes. She gladly acknowledges historical inaccuracies (Grenville n. p.).

Joan's historical awareness spans the period from the discovery of Australia to its independence; she invents female protagonists who at the beginning of the novel make history in the place of men, and later together with men, or who correct the male concept of history.

(2) Thus Grenville undermines the view that in history only male heroism counts, as demonstrated e.g. in battles or great political decisions.[10] So, the only event in the novel which, seen from a male point of view, is politically important, the opening of parliament, appears in the self-critical words of Joan, the wife of a mayor who witnesses it, as an insincere half-truth:

> We [i.e. Joan and her husband] were happy enough to be Mayor and wife of Mayor: we stood, fleshy ourselves, listening to other fleshy folk speak of

> *opportunity* and *freedom*, when we knew it meant their own opportunity, their own freedom, to do nothing but make profit on profit and let the rest go hang (Grenville 258).

In this quotation an aversion to the wealthy upper classes makes itself felt which can be observed in the whole book. Grenville's 'historical' Joans almost always belong to the lower classes, they are washer-women or the wives of poor settlers.

(3) With this Grenville tries to contradict the notion that only the aristocracy was of any consequence in history. Joan, the mayor's wife who passes on her interpretation of historical events and her democratic world view to her little granddaughter, is more important than the Duke of York, although it is he who makes a pompous public speech and officially opens the first Australian parliament. Grenville's female figures fight for a democratic and egalitarian ethos, which also includes non-whites, since two of her most resourceful Joans are Aborigines.

But in spite of its vehement protestations, the novel is not a feminist, egalitarian manifesto. This is so, because the narrator Joan undergoes a development and because the various 'historical' Joans are portrayed less and less grimly feministic. As already mentioned, at the beginning of the novel the Joans make history instead of men, and the young narrator Joan also thinks that she has to decide between a family and a career. But in the course of the book Grenville makes her female protagonists see more and more reason; they learn, for example, that although ambition is important, there are various kinds of ambition, in politics and in the family. It is Grenville's credo that women should not try to step into men's shoes and make history as they would,[11] but that they should either 'de-masculinize' historiography or try to make history in their own sphere, in the family. They should try to create a happy home for children and keep the family together. Consequently, *Joan* ends with a pledge of the narrator, who is by now a grandmother, to her family:

> Stars blazed, protozoa coupled, apes levered themselves upright, generations of women and men lived and died, and like them all I, Joan, have made history (Grenville 285).

Although the programmatic title of the book is *Joan Makes History*, Grenville's message is much more conciliatory: All over the world, both men and women together make history, each in his or her own way.

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NOTES

[1]Here Atwood alludes to the Canadians' "garrison mentality" as criticized by Northrop Frye.

[2]Even in 2000 Paul Goetsch still reads Atwood as a literary nationalist. In connection with *Journals* this is only possible because Goetsch exclusively refers to Lt Moodie's relationship to his surroundings; he does not mention Susanna's. Neither does he seem to realize that the attitude of Atwood's Susanna towards Canada (which changes) is not identical with the attitude of the historical Susanna Moodie (which always remains double-edged), see Goetsch 168 and 173.

[3]For examples see New 234.

[4]According to Hutcheon, *Postmodern* ix, in Quebec as well feminism has replaced nationalism as the political basis of writing.

[5]"Dominance" and "mastery" are keywords, see e.g. Marlatt 25.

[6]Cf. Curran/Hirabayashi 110-11; Marlatt calls this "a piecemeal form," qt. in Curran/Hirabayashi 114.

[7]Both the text of *Poppy* and the "Sources Quoted" demonstrate that this transnational women's culture is not confined to the Terranglia, but that France and Germany are included.

[8] For more details see Bowers 55.

[9] For more information see Osinski 120-24.

[10]In an interview in 1994 Grenville criticizes: "... the assumption that the only history worth talking about is the kind where someone discovers something, or leads an army, or rules a country" (Turcotte 152).

[11]Grenville explains: "When I began *Joan* what I was going to do was pretend that a woman was actually there at the great achievements of Australian history: that a woman was really the one to discover Australia, that a woman was really the first one to step ashore. In other words, I had women simply stepping into the shoes of men, dressing up in drag if you like .... As I went further with the book I realized that what I wanted to say was, those things [i.e. discovering something, leading an army or ruling a country] matter, but what also matters are the humble things, and the people who do them. The person who 'just' brings up the kids and washes the socks is as necessary to the whole picture as the kings and explorers. She, or he, is also making history in the sense that they are creating the climate in which humanity lives" (Turcotte 152).

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Spinell and Connie: Joyce Carol Oates Re-Imagining Thomas Mann?

ALAN D. LATTA

I

Joyce Carol Oates's widely-anthologized story "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" has attracted considerable attention since its initial publication in the fall of 1966.[1] Despite its relatively short length, critics have proposed a variety of readings and have adduced a number of sources and intertexts for it. The author herself added impetus to the latter activity when she talked about the genesis of the story: a song by Bob Dylan, "It's All Over Now, Baby Blue," reading about a killer in the American Southwest, and thinking about the legends and folk songs connected with the subject of "Death and the Maiden" had given her the idea for the story (Knott/Reaske 19).

Oates is known for her wide reading and her knowledge of literature and literary tradition, and intertexts for "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" can be found in a variety of places and even media. One of them was the case of Charles Schmid, who in the winter of 1965-66 murdered three girls in Tucson, Arizona. The case was widely reported, particularly in *Time*, *Life*, and *Newsweek*, and Oates transformed certain details of Schmid's behavior, bizarre appearance, and apparent charisma for her portrayal of Arnold Friend (Schulz/Rockwood 155-56, Quirk 413-16).

In addition to life (or *Life*), and the legends and folk songs, other areas of culture have also provided intertexts. Noting Oates's dedication of her story to Bob Dylan, some critics have proposed links with Dylan songs[2]; others have gone further and suggested interfigural links with either Dylan himself or with Elvis Presley.[3] Schulz and Rockwood confronted Oates's story with the texts of eight different fairy tales and found similarities in

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motifs, figures, and themes (158-62); Robson and Wegs drew on Christian religious tradition in their readings; and Easterly returned to Greek myth for a comparison.[4] Two critics have suggested specific works of literature as intertexts: Hawthorne's "Young Goodman Brown" (Winslow) and Flannery O'Connor's "Greenleaf" (Dessommes).

However, for a reader familiar with the German writer Thomas Mann, "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" contains a detail which triggers an immediate recollection: the description of Ellie Oscar. Arnold Friend's taciturn accomplice is hardly a paragon of masculinity, with his "bright orange shirt unbuttoned halfway to show his chest, which was a pale, bluish chest and not muscular like Arnold Friend's" (*Wheel* 45). Moreover, "Connie saw with shock that he wasn't a kid either—he had a fair, hairless face, cheeks reddened slightly as if the veins grew too close to the surface of his skin, the face of a forty-year-old baby" (46). "Ellie's lips kept shaping words, mumbling along with the words blasting in his ear" (46). In 1903, Thomas Mann published the novella "Tristan," set in an alpine sanatorium. The protagonist is Detlev Spinell, a writer of sorts. The narrator describes him in part as follows: "his looks were quite out of the common. Imagine a dark man at the beginning of the thirties, impressively tall, with hair already distinctly gray at the temples, and a round, white, slightly bloated face, without a vestige of beard. Not that it was shaven—that you could have told; it was soft, smooth, boyish, with at most a downy hair here and there" (Mann, *Death* 326).[5] "His voice was mild and really agreeable; but he had a halting way of speaking that almost amounted to an impediment—as though his teeth got in the way of his tongue" (328). One of the other patients, "a cynic and ribald wit, had christened him 'the dissipated baby' . . ." (326).

Could Mann's "Tristan" be yet another intertext for "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" One should be cautious in answering: there are undoubtedly other literary figures with this unusual combination of older years and immature physical features. Did Oates even know Mann's novella?

An answer to the last question begins with the information that Joyce Carol Oates has on numerous occasions expressed her admiration for

Thomas Mann's literary work in general. In an interview from 1969 Betty Lee quoted her as saying, "And: 'I admire Thomas Mann very much. Mann is one of those extraordinary people. You can lose yourself forever in Mann'" (23). Three years later, Oates remarked on Mann and, one might say, on intertextuality, to Joe David Bellamy: "'I am always rereading Mann in utter admiration, in love. Ah, to be able to write like Thomas Mann . . . or even to write a novel that Mann might approve of, even mildly . . . . When I write a story or a novel I don't feel that I am any particular person, with a particular ego. I seem to share, however vaguely, in the "tradition"—the tradition of literature, of all that has been done that I know about and love'" (Bellamy/Milazzo 23-24).[6]

Oates's concern with Mann is evident in other ways as well. Her fine critical study of his 1947 novel, *Dr. Faustus*, shows quite clearly that she had already read a number of works by him.[7] In addition, *The Wheel of Love*, the first collection to include "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" contains other stories with definite and probable references to works by Mann. In "The Heavy Sorrow of the Body," Nina picks up a copy of *The Magic Mountain* and asks Conrad about it, who replies with an approximate quotation (316).[8] The female protagonist of "How I Contemplated the World from the Detroit House of Correction and Began My Life All Over Again" divides the patients into the slightly sick, the sick, the deathly sick, and the unsick, with differing doctors or procedures for each category (173). This is strongly reminiscent of the division early in "Tristan" between Dr. Leander, who heads up the sanatorium, and Dr. Müller, "who takes care of the slight cases and the hopeless ones" (321-22). Less certain, but still possible, is a detail in "Demons," where the father is described as "the attractive cold man with bluish veins streaking his forehead like cobwebs" (240, 241). This recalls one of the most striking features of Gabriele Klöterjahn, the female protagonist of "Tristan." She is an attractive woman, but the narrator notes, in his initial description of her, "an odd little vein branched across one well-marked eyebrow, pale blue and sickly amid all that pure, well-nigh transparent spotlessness. That little blue vein above the eye dominated quite painfully the whole fine

oval of the face" (323). This vein is mentioned five more times in the novella (333, 334, 336 twice, 346), eventually taking on leitmotivic function.

Joyce Carol Oates told Michael Schumacher in 1986, "'Only in my late teens and 20s did I read Lawrence, O'Connor, Thomas Mann, Kafka—yet these influences are still quite strong, pervasive'" (Schumacher/Milazzo 143). This suggests that she began reading Mann during, or just after, her university years (Syracuse University 1956-60, University of Wisconsin 1960-61), i.e. the late 50s and the first half of the 60s. Johnson notes that she was asked to teach an upper-level course in European literature, including Dostoevsky, Mann, Kafka, and Camus, at the University of Detroit, probably in 1964-65 (112). Thus biographical evidence, the traces of Mann in *The Wheel of Love*, and the essay on *Dr. Faustus* all point to a particularly strong concern with Mann and his works in the middle and later 60s. This, and the fact that "Tonio Kröger," "Death in Venice," and an early version of "Felix Krull" all appear in the same collection with "Tristan," establishes the possibility that the latter novella was indeed an intertext for "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?"

II

Because of Joyce Carol Oates's voracious reading, her solid grounding in English and American literature, her familiarity with many of the great figures and works of other world literatures, her oeuvre is an intertextualist's dream come true. Nevertheless, a single detail, even combined with the virtual certainty that she was familiar with "Tristan," is not yet enough. A closer look at both texts is necessary, beginning with brief plot summaries.

In "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" fifteen-year-old Connie has a strained relationship with her parents and her older sister June. She prefers hanging out with her girl friends at a nearby shopping center, listening to popular music, and interacting with boys of her own age in a relatively innocent fashion. One summer Sunday, she is home alone, when a grotesquely-decorated jalopy pulls up in the driveway. The

driver is Arnold Friend, whom she does not know but recalls having seen previously in a parking lot, along with his buddy Ellie Oscar. Arnold proceeds to try and convince Connie to come for a ride with them, using a combination of music, charisma, and gradually increasing threats. Connie is at first puzzled and amused, then concerned, and finally terrified. In the end, she acquiesces.

In "Tristan" Detlev Spinell has already been a patient in the sanatorium "Einfried" for some time when a new patient arrives, the young woman Gabriele Klöterjahn. Even though she is married, Spinell is immediately smitten, and he begins to befriend her in his own clumsy, but not unsuccessful way. Both share a love of music, although Gabriele has been explicitly forbidden by her doctors to play any instrument, because the physical exertion could harm her. One day, however, when most of the patients are gone on a sleigh outing, Spinell persuades her to play a few pieces by Chopin on the sanatorium piano. Once started, there is no stopping, particularly when the music for Wagner's *Tristan* turns up. Gabriele plays selections from the opera, including the Prelude, the Lovers' Idyll (Act 2), and the Love-Death (Young 25-26). At the end Spinell falls on his knees before Gabriele, in a silent gesture of desire and imploring. As Gabriele stares at him, they hear the sounds of the other patients returning from the outing. The incident is not without its consequences, however: Gabriele's condition takes a turn for the worse, and Herr Klöterjahn is summoned from his Hamburg home to the sanatorium.

Thus the basic motif informing both stories is the same: a young woman is seduced away from her family by a male who desires her, using the power of music as a weapon. The result is in all likelihood her death. Both Gabriele and Connie are lured away, the one from her husband and robust infant son, the other from her parents and older sister, with music playing a key role: Richard Wagner in one case, Elvis Presley and/or Bob Dylan in the other.[9] On the level of realism, Gabriele, weakened by the physical stress occasioned by Spinell's seduction, probably dies of tuberculosis; on the same level, Connie is probably raped and then murdered.

There are also secondary motifs common to both texts. Isolde's "Love-Death" in Wagner's opera, one of the pieces played by Gabriele, is

potentially present in the open ending of Oates's story, in the brutalized form of rape and murder. Critics have pondered Arnold Friend's surname, with Wegs noting that it was phonemically very close to "Fiend," and A. F. could be "Arch Fiend" (69). Robson went even further, deleting "r" and obtaining "an old fiend" (Robson 1985, 99). However the opening words of "Tristan" are "Einfried, the sanatorium" (320), not unlike "Arn-old Friend."[10]

Another secondary motif is what one might call a tactic for getting acquainted. Spinell visualizes an incident in Gabriele's life and paints for her a verbal picture of it. She mentions summer days spent with girl friends around the fountain in the garden behind the family home, and Spinell immediately enhances the scene by making her the queen, with a little gold crown (335-36). Gabriele responds, "Nonsense, there was nothing of the sort" (336), but the stylization catches her imagination, as a question two weeks later demonstrates: "'Is it really true, Herr Spinell,' she asked, 'that you would have seen the little gold crown?'" (338). Similarly, when Connie warns Arnold Friend that her father could come home, he responds, "'He ain't coming. He's at a barbecue,'" and then proceeds to paint a verbal picture of the scene, complete with names and descriptions of the people there (46-47). His uncanny, detailed knowledge of Connie's life is one of the traits which led Wegs to identify him as a devil figure (69), and Connie's reaction betrays uncertainty and disorientation: "She felt a little light-headed. Her breath was coming quickly" (47).

Finally, there is the light at the end of each text. Spinell leaves the sanatorium to go for a walk "in the splendid colourful afternoon light, strong shadow and rich, golden sun" (358). He rounds a turn in the path and comes face to face with the Klöterjahn nanny and young Anton Klöterjahn Jr., in his baby carriage. Behind them the setting sun "set the tree-tops aglow and poured its red-gold radiance across the garden" (359). The symbolism of the light is clear, if ambivalent: it both frames that hyperactive embodiment of Life, young Anton, and as the *setting* sun it is simultaneously an omen of death for Gabriele. At the end of "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" Arnold Friend is also framed by light: "the vast sunlit reaches of the land behind him and on all sides

of him—so much land that Connie had never seen before and did not recognize except to know that she was going to it" (54). Here the significance is less easy to determine. Reading the story positively, it could be a sign of enlightenment, or maturation, perhaps.[11] However Quirk noted that this vast sunlit land assumes a macabre significance when one knows that Charles Schmid raped, killed, and buried his victims in the desert (419).

III

Given Joyce Carol Oates's likely familiarity with Thomas Mann's novella, and given the identity of the basic motifs informing the two works, along with a number of secondary motifs in common, it seems reasonable to consider "Tristan" as yet another intertext for "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" But there may be more to say about the two texts and Oates's productive reception of Mann's work.

Mann's "Tristan" was the latest in an already lengthy "intertextual serialization" (Plett 23-24), a chain which had started with the medieval Tristan and Iseult, and the 1903 text could be read as a dialogue with Richard Wagner's opera. The question arises: is Joyce Carol Oates's story another link in the chain, a dialogue with Mann's novella? The question is all the more appropriate because of five stories which appeared in Oates's 1972 collection, *Marriages and Infidelities*, which she has called "re-imaginings."[12] Each has for its basis an earlier story by an American or European writer: "The Metamorphosis" (Kafka), "Where I Lived and What I Lived For" (Thoreau, *Walden*), "The Lady with the Pet Dog" (Chekhov), "The Turn of the Screw" (James),[13] and "The Dead" (Joyce). In each case, Oates transformed the original text in varying ways, creating new texts which could stand on their own as independent stories.

Joanne Creighton devotes five pages to the "re-imaginings" in her book on Oates. She sees "The Metamorphosis" and "The Lady with the Pet Dog" as close parallels to their originals, while others, such as "Where I Lived and What I Lived For," "bear no thematic or formal resemblance to the originals and could only have been envisioned as startling ironic contrasts"

(131). She then looks at four of the five stories and at Oates's transformations. In "The Lady with the Pet Dog," the setting is changed to contemporary America, the narrative perspective from male protagonist to female, and some details are changed, others added; plot and theme remain essentially the same. The result is a story "less imagined than transposed" (132). In "The Metamorphosis" the setting is again changed to the United States, and details and characters are added, with the reactions of the family given additional prominence. However the "phantasmagoric" aspect of the original (Gregor's transformation into a huge insect) is dropped, and the result, in Creighton's view, is inferior to Kafka's story (132-33). More successful is "Where I Lived and What I Lived For," even though its link with the original is not immediately obvious.[14] Here Oates *adds* a phantasmagoric aspect and combines it with a protagonist who is the very antithesis of Thoreau. "To contrast this self-victimized man with nineteenth-century Thoreau highlights a shocking loss of independence, optimism, and joy" (134). In "The Dead," structure, theme, and some language and symbolism are parallel with Joyce's original, as is the emotional sterility of the protagonist, and the "dead" environment. Setting and plot are different, and the point of view is female rather than male. Although Oates does not, in Creighton's view, attain Joyce's eloquence, she "invites the reader to reexperience the Joycean story, while she offers a contemporary re-creation of it" (136).

Creighton's analyses are presented here as examples of the kinds of transformations which can produce a "re-imagining." Subsequent critics deal with these texts (including "The Turn of the Screw") in greater detail, looking at additional transformations, and sometimes reaching interpretative and evaluative conclusions different from Creighton's.[15]

Confronting "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" with "Tristan," some transformations are immediately obvious. Again Oates has changed the setting from Europe to America, in this case from a turn-of-the-century Alpine sanatorium to a location in the American Southwest of the 1960s; and again she has changed the male protagonist into a female protagonist. The structure of "Tristan" (exposition, followed by chronological action) has been retained, but shortened. The basic motif underlying

the two texts is the same, but numerous details of plot, action and conflict have changed. In "Tristan" the action takes place primarily on the intellectual and the emotional/spiritual levels, in Oates's story on the emotional and physical levels. The motives of the seducers are different: Spinell wants to win Gabriele back to an affirmation of her earlier artistic self, which she had put aside in order to marry Herr Klöterjahn. In so doing, he hopes to strike a blow at her businessman husband, whom he despises as a petit-bourgeois representative of Life.[16] Arnold Friend, in contrast, is simply after Connie's body. The ending is also transformed and simplified. Mann leaves Spinell in an ambivalent "win/loss" situation: he may have won Gabriele back over to the "Art" side of the Art/Life polarity,[17] but at the end he blunders into a confrontation with the robustly healthy Anton Klöterjahn Jr. and is forced to flee before this infant embodiment of triumphant Life. Arnold Friend, again quite simply, is left as the unambivalent victor.

Common to both texts is the power of music and its use as a weapon of seduction. Gabriele loved music, and before her marriage she played the piano (335). Thus it required only relative solitude, a piano, and the fortuitous presence of music by Chopin and Wagner for Spinell to make effective use of this weapon. Connie also loves the popular music of her time, and Ellie's transistor radio happens to be tuned to the very same station she was listening to when the men arrived (41). The music creates a bond of shared interest between the two men and Connie, and it can be heard constantly in the background throughout Arnold Friend's seduction attempt. Nevertheless, changes were necessary, even here. The transformation of setting and protagonist brought with it the change from Wagner to Presley et al, and from actively playing the piano to passively listening to a radio. Ellie Oscar, in charge of the radio, embodies this transformation exactly: he combines the appearance of Detlev Spinell with a clothing style and a first name similar to Elvis Presley's (Petry 155-56).

Because of Oates's transformed narrative situation, this was still not enough. Spinell was no satyr[18]; and although both Gabriele and he were aware that there was danger in yielding to the seductive call of the music, the doctors could be wrong: playing the piano might not harm her after

all. In contrast, Friend faces a more difficult task than did Spinell. His desires are decidedly carnal, and the element of danger for Connie in going for a ride with the men is far more tangible and immediate than playing the piano in the sanatorium drawing room. How then to convince her? Oates solves the problem by splitting Mann's seducer into two figures. Ellie Oscar, with Spinell's appearance, suspect masculinity, and the music, is simply not enough, so Spinell's ability to persuade is amalgamated with that of Charles Schmid in the charismatic masculinity of Arnold Friend, who then takes center stage, opposite Connie.

IV

Thomas Mann's novella is clearly an intertext for "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" but is it also possible to position Oates's story as an early "re-imagining" of "Tristan"? At first, it might seem doubtful. There is no explicit link to "Tristan," no "signpost" for the general reader, who would not likely notice, for instance, the description of Ellie Oscar. In addition, all five "re-imaginings" in *Marriages and Infidelities* first appeared in 1970-72,[19] and the interview with Bellamy in which Oates talked about them probably took place in the spring or summer of 1972. "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" dates from a few years earlier (1966).

Nevertheless, along with the similarities in motif and detail, the transformations of protagonist, action, and setting are well within the limits of what constitutes a re-imagining, as Creighton's examples demonstrate. Even the missing link need not be a problem,[20] as it was not, for instance, with the story "Where I Lived and What I Lived For." Moreover, it is unlikely that the five stories explicitly mentioned exhaust Oates's category of "re-imaginings"; Herget points out that other stories in *Marriages and Infidelities* may also be intentionally related to specific literary texts.[21] In the end, the weight of the evidence suggests that Oates's dialogue with Mann's novella may indeed be a re-imagining: Spinell's turn-of-the-century, genteel, asexual seduction of Gabriele Klöterjahn is transformed into

Arnold Friend's probable rape of Connie in the later twentieth century. Richard Wagner, Spinell's "virtual accomplice," is replaced by Elvis Presley and/or Bob Dylan. But whether in the European sanatorium or the American Southwest, the end result is the same: the probable death of a young woman.

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NOTES

[1]Joyce Carol Oates, "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?," *Epoch* 16 (Fall 1966): 59-76. Through 1999 there have been at least 23 articles which focussed primarily on it.

[2]Mike Tierce and John Michael Crafton found three songs, quoting from them to demonstrate similarities: "It's All Over Now, Baby Blue," "Like a Rolling Stone" and "Mr. Tambourine Man" (223-24); and James Healey added "A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall" (Item 5).

[3]Arnold Friend has been seen as a Dylan figure (negatively: Robson 1985, 101-02; positively: Tierce/Crafton 220-21), and Friend's sidekick, Ellie Oscar, as an Elvis Presley figure (Robson 1985, 102; Petry).

[4]Robson (1982, 1985). Wegs began the interpretive chain with her 1975 article and a figurative reading of Arnold Friend: "Arnold is far more than a grotesque portrait of a psychopathic killer masquerading as a teenager; he also has all the traditional sinister traits of that arch-deceiver and source of grotesque terror, the devil" (69). In contrast, Easterly compared Friend with the satyr, pointing out that while Satan was traditionally interested in souls, Friend is after Connie's body (539).

[5]All quotations from "Tristan" are from the paperback edition of the English translation, by Helen T. Lowe-Porter. Although Oates knows some German, it is more likely that she read Thomas Mann in translation, and the Vintage paperback edition, *Death in Venice and Seven Other Stories*, first published in 1954, was very popular for use in university courses, or as a source of representative short works by Mann for the general reader.

[6]Additional examples are found in Clemons/Milazzo (5) and Avant/Milazzo (29).

[7]Oates 1969. On the basis of this article, it is quite certain that Oates had read, in addition to *Dr. Faustus*, the essay "Freud and the Future," the novellas "Tonio Kröger" and "Death in Venice," very likely *The Magic Mountain*, and perhaps part or even all of the *Joseph* tetralogy (378, 379, 382, 386). See also Friedman (116n26) and Dörfel (267n4) for evidence relating to Oates's familiarity with *Felix Krull*.

[8]Conrad says, "'What is man, tell me, what is man?—*man is water, mostly, and cellulose.* Are you made of water and cellulose, my dear Nina?'" (316). Presumably, Conrad is having some fun with Nina (or Oates with Conrad!); his words are paraphrased from the chapter "Research," in *The Magic Mountain*, but Mann does not mention cellulose as a component of human beings. Mann, *Magic* 174-76.

[9]Healey and especially Tierce and Crafton (220-21) and Robson argue for Dylan. Indeed, Robson insists that Oates's dedication to Dylan "is an ironic dedication, as he—or, rather, the type he represents—is responsible for the lack of morals in society" (Robson 1985, 101). Quirk argues for Presley et al: "It is the gyrating, hip-grinding music of people like Elvis Presley, whom Schmid identified as his 'idol,' which emanates from Ellie's transistor radio, the 'hard, fast, shrieking' songs played by the disc jockey 'Bobby King' rather than the cryptic, atonal folk music of Bob Dylan" (417-18), and Petry agrees (156-57).

[10]"Einfried" was recognized very quickly by critics as an allusion to Richard Wagner's home in Bayreuth, "Wahnfried."

[11]For Tierce and Crafton, Connie "broadens her horizons to include the 'vast sunlit reaches of the land' all around her" (223). G. J. Weinberger writes, "Realizing then, if only in a hazy way, that each person must undergo the rites of passage alone, with only one's other self to help, Connie, brushing the hair out of her eyes in order to see more clearly, crosses the threshold and goes out into the sunlight, into the vast, threatening adult world" (213-14). Marilyn Wesley concedes that, "although she will probably be raped and killed . . ., the diction of light and open space of the final words of the story implies positive value . . ." (145).

[12]She first mentions these and describes what she means by the term in the interview with Bellamy: "'These stories are meant to be autonomous stories, yet they are also testaments of my love and extreme devotion to these other writers; I imagine a kind of spiritual 'marriage' between myself and them, or let's say our 'daimons' in the Yeatsian sense—exactly in the Yeatsian sense, which is so exasperating and irrational!'" (19).

[13]There may be as much or more of Thomas Mann in this story than Henry James, since it has strong similarities with "Death in Venice" (Creighton 159n13).

[14]Explicit links, signposts for the reader, are scarce. Herget notes that the title comes from the title of the second chapter of *Walden*, but otherwise he finds only the common date of July 4 as an intertextual link (370). Had Oates not specifically mentioned Thoreau in the interview, it might have been some time before it occurred to anyone that the story could be read as a re-imagining of *Walden*.

[15]Cf. particularly Bastian, who treats all five stories, and Herget, who focuses on "The Dead."

[16]In his letter to Klöterjahn, a masterpiece of invective, Spinell writes, "'Kindly permit me to tell you, sir, that I hate you. I hate you and your child, as I hate the life of which you are the representative: cheap, ridiculous, but yet triumphant life, the everlasting antipodes and deadly enemy of beauty'" (353).

[17]Even before the piano-playing incident, but after she has got to know Spinell, Gabriele has grown strangely unconcerned about her husband and infant child back

in Hamburg (338), and shortly before her final hemorrhage she is heard humming a piece of music, presumably from *Tristan* (357).

[18]A number of critics have theorized from his physical appearance that he was impotent. For a thorough medical diagnosis, see Olsen.

[19]Oates, *Marriages*. The date of first publication for each of the stories appears on the Acknowledgments page, except for "The Turn of the Screw"; however in the Bellamy interview Oates says that this one will be "out soon" (19).

[20]For Oates to have entitled her story "Tristan," for instance, would have led most of her readers back to the medieval epic, rather than to Mann and Wagner.

[21]Herget links "The Sacred Marriage" with Henry James's "The Real Right Thing" and "The Aspern Papers," "By the River" with Sherwood Anderson's "Godliness," and "Night Music" with the German work by Eduard Mörike, "Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag" (371). "Night Music" definitely has a link with Mozart, at least. In a letter to Joanne Creighton, Oates acknowledges that the story "'is loosely based on Mozart's life—very loosely'" (Creighton 159n13).

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