

Connotations

A Journal for Critical Debate



Volume 11 (2001/2002) Numbers 2-3
Waxmann Münster / New York



Connotations: A Journal for Critical Debate

Published by *Connotations: Society for Critical Debate*

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Connotations is published three times a year. Private subscribers are welcome to join the *Connotations Society for Critical Debate*. Members receive the journal as well as invitations to the *Connotations* symposia. The suggested annual fee is € 40 (\$ 45, £ 27); reduced rate (e.g. for students) € 20 (\$ 22, £ 14). Please write to: *Connotations*, Department of English (4.3), Universität des Saarlandes, 66041 Saarbrücken, Germany. Email: editors@connotations.de.

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A selection of articles and responses is freely available on the internet (<http://www.connotations.de>).

Waxmann Verlag GmbH, Münster/New York 2003

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Printed in Germany

ISSN 0939-5482

Connotations is a member of the Council of Editors of Learned Journals.

Contributions are indexed, for example, in the *MLA Bibliography*, the *World Shakespeare Bibliography* and the *IBZ/IBR*.

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Foreign Appetites and Alterity: Is there an Irish Context for *Titus Andronicus*?¹

JOAN FITZPATRICK

This essay is concerned with foreign appetites, particularly those related to food consumption and sexual behaviour depicted as physically or morally reprehensible or strange. These appetites operate as distinct indications of alterity in the early modern period and symbolize individual degeneration and wider social corruption. I will compare Shakespeare's depiction of the Goths in *Titus Andronicus* with early modern English commentaries about the Irish in order to ascertain whether there are valuable and hitherto unexplored connections between the Irish and ancient Germanic tribes and, where the descriptions diverge, what that divergence may tell us about constructions of alterity in the early modern period. I want to begin however by considering a play that is set in England, *Sir Thomas More*, an inherently interesting text since it is likely that part of it represents the only piece of creative writing by Shakespeare that has survived in manuscript.²

Sir Thomas More features a dramatisation of the "Ill May Day" in 1517, when a group of Londoners rioted in protest against the presence of foreigners. Historically Thomas More's role in the incident was minimal and it did nothing to further his political career³ but the dramatized version shows Londoners being calmed by the reasoned arguments and assurances from Sheriff More of London. One of the complaints made by the Londoners is that foreigners "bring in strange roots" which cause disease and threaten to "infect the city with the palsy" (2.3.10, 14).⁴ The foreigners also behave with sexual impropriety, their targets being English women, but the Londoners' objections in 2.3 (thought to have been written by Shakespeare) centre on food: the foreigners will increase food prices because of their monopoly of

For debates inspired by this article, please check the Connotations website at <<http://www.connotations.de/debfitzpatrick01123.htm>>.

the market, they eat more in their own country than in England, and the importation of their strange and dangerous food will prove detrimental to the physical and economic well-being of the English.

In *Sir Thomas More* the foreigners are called "aliens," "strangers," "French," and "Lombards" by noblemen and rioters but the latter have a marked preference for the term "strangers." The word 'stranger,' or a slight variation on it, is used ten times in the opening scene of civil disturbance (lines 7, 26, 31, 42, 57, 73, 89, 94, 111, 131) and they are also referred to as "aliens" (line 120), but notably not accorded their nationalities or first names. Tilney, the Master of the Revels, was not happy with some aspects of the play, he began by crossing out single speeches in the first scene, and then marked the whole of it for deletion.⁵ Tilney objected to the use of the word 'straunger' in 1.3 and insisted it be replaced by 'lombard' (Italian); he also insisted that 'ffrencheman' be replaced with 'lombard' and 'English' with 'man.' The Revels editors, Vittorio Gabrieli and Giorgio Melchiori, claimed that "The purpose of these interventions is clear: to avoid allusions to public disorders against the authorities, and more particularly to any reason for resentment against foreigners"⁶ but this does not explain Tilney's request that 'straunger' and 'ffrencheman' be changed to 'lombard.' In 2.1 the foreigners are referred to as "aliens" (line 20) and as "outlandish fugitives" (line 26) by the rioters but again the favourite word is 'stranger' (lines 2, 22, 42, 46), another way of saying 'foreigner' (*OED* "stranger" *a. 1. a.*), rather than 'Frenchman' or 'Lombard.' In 2.3 the word "stranger" is again repeatedly used by the rioters to describe the foreigners (lines 5, 24, 76). The rioters, then, are unspecific and solipsistic ('not us') about their enemies. By contrast the nobles use a multiplicity of names when referring to the foreigners: in 1.3 they are called "aliens" (lines 11, 60), by their first names (line 17), "hot Frenchmen" (line 44) and "a French man" (line 53). The use of multiple names for the foreigners is also found in the section of Holinshed's *Chronicles* upon which 1.1 is closely based.⁷ This variety of nomenclature may be a way of indicating to the audience that the nobles have a more intelligent and informed understanding of the

situation, something reinforced in the play when, in their absence, More calls the rioters "simple men" (2.3.34) and "silly men" (2.3.36). More, like the nobles, does not refer to the foreigners as 'strangers' in private (he calls them "the amazed Lombards" at 2.2.7) but when trying to appease the rioters he slips into the rioters' nomenclature by using the word 'strangers' (2.3.80, 129, 150).

Although it is unclear why Tilney insisted that "straunger" and "ffrencheman" be changed to "lombard," the emphasis by ordinary Londoners on the foreigners as primarily "strangers" rather than Continental Europeans seems quite deliberate. It is less important where the foreigners come from than that they are foreign; the focus is on their alterity, their strangeness, primarily their un-Englishness. For an English audience 'strangers' might evoke not only Continental Europeans but those foreigners closer to home, namely the Scots, the Welsh and particularly the Irish since, quite apart from open rebellion, it was felt by English commentators that Ireland, unlike Britain (England, Wales, and to a lesser degree Scotland), had not experienced the civilising influence of Roman invasion and so was an especially uncivil environment. In *Titus Andronicus*, a play concerned with Germanic influence in the Mediterranean, the strangers are identified as Goths but in many ways resemble contemporary descriptions of the Irish. Might Shakespeare have been thinking of contemporary Anglo-Irish relations as well as using the classical source material which is undoubtedly integral to the play? It might be useful first to consider some early modern English commentaries on the Irish which may throw light upon the attitudes to strangers expressed in *Sir Thomas More*.

The Londoners in *Sir Thomas More* complain that the foreigners "bring in strange roots" and the focus on food as an indication of alterity in the play bears a marked similarity to early modern English writings on Irish culture. The desire to maintain homogeneity and define borders against the Continental Europeans, as figured in *Sir Thomas More*, ran contrary to the English desire for colonial expansion, with the first focus for England's colonial aspirations being Ireland.⁸

Recent postcolonial theory has tended to consider not only the phenomenon's effect on the colonized, but also its effect on the colonizer. It has long been observed that colonizers are influenced by the people they are colonizing, but since the rise of poststructuralism and deconstruction this observation has tended to be expressed in relation to the binary opposite Self/Other that colonisers take with them when they leave home. Homi Bhabha argued that the stability of this binary opposition is weakened by experience of alien cultures, and in particular hybridization is a recurrent feature of the colonial experience.⁹ England's colonial expansion into Ireland provoked anxieties about hybridity and the fluidity of cultural boundaries and so traditional dichotomising cannot adequately reflect the situation.¹⁰ Although nearby, the Irish were strange to the English. Like the rioters in *Sir Thomas More*, Fynes Moryson linked diet and disease:

Many of the English-Irish, have by little and little been infected with the Irish filthinesse, and that in the very cities, excepting Dublyn, and some of the better sort in Waterford, where the English continually lodging in their houses, they more retaine the English diet.¹¹

If left unchecked diet, an important index of civility, can effect English degeneration; early modern English commentators denounced those Old English (twelfth-century colonists) who had allowed themselves to be influenced by their colonised inferiors and thus stood as a warning to the New English against the threat of degeneration. Absorption of strange foodstuffs would, it was thought, make strange the English body and initiate a wider social corruption which will inevitably undermine English cultural superiority. The Irish diet consisted of what the English considered to be unusual foodstuffs. In his *Britannia* William Camden noted:

When they are sharp set [hungry], they make no bones of raw flesh, after they have squeez'd the blood out; to digest which, they drink *Usquebaugh*. They let their cows blood too, which, after it is curdled, and strew'd over with butter, they eat with a good relish.¹²

In *The Glory of England, or a True description of Blessings, whereby she Triumpheth over all Nations* Thomas Gainsford similarly claimed: "Both men and women not long since accustomed a sauage manner of dyet, which was raw flesh, drinking the blood, now they seeth [boil] it, and quaff vp the liquor, and then take *Vsquebath*."¹³ The distinctive characteristics of the Irish diet are raw meat, and a combination of the familiar, butter, with the unfamiliar, blood. "Usquebaugh" or "Usquebath" is, literally, 'water of life' or whiskey (*OED* "Usquebath" *sb.* 1.a.), the alcoholic beverage made strange by the Gaelic word used to identify it. Camden and Gainsford's descriptions of the Irish appetite for blood concur with what Richard Stanyhurst wrote in Holinshed's *Chronicles*:

Fleshe they deuour without bread, and that halfe raw: the rest boyleth in their stomackes with Aqua vitæ, which they swill in after such a surfet by quartes & pottels: they let their coves bloud, which growne to a gelly, they bake and ouerspread with butter, and so eate it in lumps.¹⁴

The niceties of English eating habits, that meat should be taken with bread and consumption should be leisurely, are neglected by the Irish and the effect of Stanyhurst's description is to align the Irish with the animals they "deuour" and so alert the reader to the brutishness of the Irish nature.

Detailed descriptions of the common Irish diet by Moryson, Camden, Gainsford, and Stanyhurst function as disturbing accounts of alterity primarily due to their emphasis on the Irish taste for raw flesh and blood which suggests a people capable of that most extreme form of uncivilised eating, cannibalism. Although contemporary English accounts of Irish cannibalism describe a people not naturally disposed to the practice but reduced to survival cannibalism as a result of war, the overwhelming effect of such accounts is the endorsement of English perceptions of the Irish as savage.¹⁵ In *A View of the Present State of Ireland* Irenius gives Eudoxus a detailed explanation of Irish ancestry which, as Richard McCabe has pointed out, reveals Spenser's intention to stigmatise the culture of the Irish through "a pseudo-anthropological investigation into its barbarous 'Scythian' origins."¹⁶

Evidence for this is that the Irish, like the Scythians before them, indulge in blood rituals:

Allsoe the *Scythians* vsed when they would binde anie solempne vowe of Combinacion to drinke a bowle of blodd together vowinge theareby to spende their laste blodd in that quarrell, And even so do the wilde Scottes as ye maie reade in *Buchannan* and some of the Northern Irishe likewise.¹⁷

The main emphasis of Spenser's explanation of Irish ancestry is that the Irish are descended not from the Spanish, as they like to think, but rather from the Scythians and another barbaric northern tribe, possibly the "*Gaules* or *Africans* or *Goths*, or some other of those Northern nations which did ouerspread all Christendome"¹⁸ with the Gauls being the likeliest candidates. Evidence for this is the Irish ritual of blood drinking:

Allsoe the *Gaules* vsed to drinke their enemyes blodd and to painte themselves therewith So allsoe they write that the owlde Irishe weare wonte And so haue I sene some of the Irishe doe but not their enemyes but friendes blodd as namelye at the execucion of A notable Traitour at Limericke Called murrough Obrien I sawe an olde woman which was his foster mother take vp his heade whilst he was quartered and sucked vp all the blodd rvnninge theareout Sayinge that the earthe was not worthie to drinke it and thearewith allso stepped her face, and breste and torne heare Cryinge and shriking out moste terrible.¹⁹

Such ritual cannibalism, as opposed to survival cannibalism in times of crisis, is evidence of unrestrained appetite. Spenser was particularly sensitive to perceived English degeneration in Ireland and his focus on blood rituals, passed on from one barbaric people to another, suggests unease that English men might become implicated in Irish cultural practices. Whilst there were European accounts of cannibalism amongst native American tribes, the distinction is one of proximity: barbarity might be expected in the unchartered territory of the New World but the prospect of cannibalism in Ireland, close to England and inhabited by English men, would have been especially disturbing.

English commentaries on the savagery of Irish culture are intriguing in the light of Shakespeare's depiction of the relationship between the

Romans and the Goths in *Titus Andronicus*. The story of the fall of Rome, an archetype of destruction, has parallels with the potential destruction that is closer to home. The danger presented to England by its expansion into Ireland is evident in the story of Rome which acts as a warning against a powerful state overreaching itself. England's expansion is likely to prove its downfall because, like Rome before it, it is incorporating dangerous areas of Germanic influence, namely Germanically-influenced Ireland. The Irish being descended from a powerful, civilised, and Christian people like the Spanish would undermine Spenser's focus on Irish savagery and his attempts to justify extreme measures against the Irish in order to enforce their conformity. Though the Irish and the Spanish share a belief in Catholicism, Irenius emphasises Irish ignorance of Catholic doctrine:

[...] they are all Papists by their profession, but in the same so blindly and brutishly informed, for the most part as that you would rather think them atheists or infidels; but not one amongst an hundred knoweth any grounds of religion and article of his faith, but can perhaps say his pater noster or his Ave Maria, without any knowledge or understanding what one word thereof meaneth [...].²⁰

A connection between the Irish and barbaric Germanic tribes—the “infidels” denounced by Spenser above—is also made in a particularly vitriolic text written by one of Spenser's contemporaries, “The Supplication of the Blood of the English most Lamentably Murdered in Ireland, Cryeng out of the Yearth for Revenge.”²¹ In outlining the atrocities committed by the Irish against the English the author of the “Supplication” aligns the Irish with barbaric tribes only to announce that the Irish are far worse:

Never shall you reade in the stories of the Gothes and Vandalles, in the records of The Turkes and Infidells, in the most barbarous and cruell warres that ever were, such brutishe crueltie, such mounsterous outrage. O that yore highnes might without hazard to yore royall person have seen the demeanour of those savage beasts, for men we can not call them, whose doinges shewe such Contrarietie to manhoode.²²

Nicholas Canny has noted that Henry Sidney, Elizabeth's Lord Deputy in Ireland from 1565 to 1570, compared the Ulster chieftain Shane O'Neill to Huns, Vandals, Goths and Turks and that Thomas Smith, who sponsored a colony in Ireland but never actually visited the country, considered the Irish to be particularly uncivilized.²³ For Smith, the English were like the Romans for their aim was to civilize the Irish just as the Romans had civilized the ancient Britons.²⁴ The Roman parallel had been drawn before by writers of the Italian Renaissance such as Machiavelli who contrasted medieval barbarism with the old Roman civilization in order to justify the destruction of the former.²⁵ England, as the new Rome, was thus the centre of civilization and although no other colonizer in Ireland put forward this view as clearly as Smith, anti-medievalism and the Roman parallel appears often in sixteenth-century English writings on Ireland.²⁶ As Richard McCabe has pointed out, Spenser employs etymological means to show that the Celtic language was spoken by the barbarous hoards that overran the Roman empire and this should function as a dire warning for the English.²⁷

The act which most clearly indicates Gothic savagery against Rome in *Titus Andronicus* is the violent rape and mutilation of Lavinia which takes place in the forest or woodland outside the city. That this is also the location of Tamora's sexual liaison with Aaron indicates its association with alterity via degenerate sexual appetites. The opportunities that the forest affords are recognised by Aaron who draws an important distinction between the court which is "full of tongues, of eyes, and ears" and the woods which are "ruthless, dreadful, deaf, and dull [...] shadowed from heaven's eye" (2.1.128-31). As Robert Miola has pointed out, Aaron considers the forest to be

a region of lawless freedom where one can transform imagined schemes into reality. Unlike the court, the forest has no laws of civilization, no obstructions of custom, no censoring public voices to regulate actions.²⁸

The traditional court/woodland dichotomy emphasised by Aaron exists in classical myth and folklore. In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, an im-

portant source text for *Titus Andronicus*, Philomela is taken by her attacker Tereus from her father's court to "a pelting graunge that peakishly did stand / In woods forgrowen."²⁹ Woodland is also particularly relevant in the context of empire and colonial expansion into Ireland. As Margaret McCracken and R. A. Butlin showed, woodland and bogland provided rich economic resources but also protection for the Irish rebel and hidden dangers for the New English colonist.³⁰ In the *View* Irenius refers to Ireland's "goodly woodes" and remarks that it is "a moste bewtifull and swete Countrie as anye is vnder heaven,"³¹ echoing Titus's reference to the woods as "green" (2.2.2) and Saturninus's reference to "this pleasant chase" (2.3.255). But Spenser's Ireland is also categorised as a land full of dense "wodes" and "perillous places" where travellers have been "Robbed and sometimes murdered,"³² echoing Aaron's estimation of the woodland as a terrible place.

Francesca T. Royster noted that Aaron, an outsider in Roman society, nevertheless speaks like a Roman³³ and it is fitting that this usurper of Roman rhetoric should find for himself an alternative court in the forest which is a locus of power in its own right and from where he can initiate acts of violence against the Roman centre. Rural Ireland similarly provided alternative courts for Irish rebels, places from which to launch attacks against the coloniser and into which English colonists could be lured. Ireland may have functioned as an alternative court on two distinct levels; it has long been considered that those English serving in the Irish colony would have felt themselves disempowered and, although geographically close to England, far removed from the centre of civility. However, this liminality has recently been questioned by Willy Maley, who argued that the viceregal political system in Ireland, unique in early modern Europe, complicated the relationship of court and colony and the choices of English colonists. The viceroy ruled as an absolute monarch and therefore Ireland really was an alternative court for English colonists, not an inferior location.³⁴ Aaron's governance within the woodland on the outskirts of Rome matches woodland as an alternative locus of power for those

alienated from the primary centre of government, both English and Irish and thus indicates a shared experience between coloniser and colonised.

Early modern English commentators on Ireland were preoccupied with degeneration not least because the hybrid (either the degenerate Englishman or the incompletely assimilated Irishman) challenged the strict demarcation between ontological categories. In *Titus Andronicus* boundaries are blurred between civilised Roman and savage Goth and Moor; as Royster has pointed out, it is Aaron who possesses self-discipline and moderation. Aaron is restrained in his sexual relationship with Tamora and his role in the rape of Lavinia is intellectual rather than physical.³⁵ Tamora also defies what might be expected of her as Queen of the Goths when she becomes Roman Empress, masking her savagery under the veil of Roman respectability. In his depiction of Aaron and Tamora, Shakespeare elides simplistic notions of what characterizes alterity. Although Tamora indulges in the barbaric act of cannibalism she eats with ignorant innocence while Titus's monstrosity is shown in the act of making the pie. Similarly, in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Philomela and Procne are innocent victims of Tereus's lust but their act of revenge via the innocent Itys barbarously mirrors that of Tereus on Philomela. The depictions of cannibalism in the *Metamorphoses* and *Titus Andronicus* diverge from Early Modern English accounts of Irish cannibalism in important ways: the Irish, though under extreme duress, are invariably aware that they eat human flesh, whereas those who eat in the *Metamorphoses* and *Titus Andronicus* are ignorant until after the fact. Accounts of Irish cannibalism feature uncooked human flesh, a clear indication of barbarity, whereas both Tereus and Tamora eat cooked human flesh presented in the formal setting of a banquet, perhaps indicating that the barbaric lurks just beneath the surface of the apparently civilized.³⁶ Titus brings Roman civility itself into question and any sense of innate Roman moral superiority is undermined by his involvement in an act that characterizes barbarity.

Before the rape of Lavinia, Titus refers to the woods as "green"

(2.2.2) but after the rape, and with reference to the story of Philomela, he describes the woods as “ruthless, vast, and gloomy,” echoing Aaron’s description of the woodland and effectively aligning Roman and Moorish opinion. Shakespeare’s problematizing of distinctions between the Romans and the Goths begins much earlier in the play, in Titus’s refusal to show mercy by sparing Tamora’s son (1.1.104-17) and in the killing of his own son who stands in his way (1.1.290-92). Tamora’s plea includes the reminder that “Sweet mercy is nobility’s true badge,” and that she is refused it reflects badly on Roman nobility. Whether mercy should be shown to the enemy was a key point of debate in discussions about warfare in Ireland and the promotion of unwavering military strength in the face of human suffering is a dominant feature of Spenser’s *View* where any compassion toward the indigenous population is denounced as weakness.³⁷ That Aaron and Tamora are neither entirely savage nor civilised and that Roman cruelty undermines its claims to civility indicates Shakespeare’s blurring of simple categories and highlights a shared experience between coloniser and colonised.³⁸

William Camden complained that Rome’s failure to reach Ireland made England’s job of civilizing the Irish more difficult:

I can never imagine that this island was conquered by the Romans. Without question it had been well for it, if it had; and might have civilized them. For wheresoever the Romans were Lords and Masters, they introduced humanity among the conquer’d; and except were they rul’d, there was no such thing as humanity, learning, or neatness in any part of Europe. Their neglect of this Island [Ireland] may be charged upon them as inconsiderateness. For from this quarter Britain was spoil’d and *infested* with most cruel enemies [...] [my emphasis].³⁹

The common confusion of ‘infest’ with ‘infect’ (*OED* “infest” v.² 1.b.) serves to draw connections between the perception that England will be overrun by foreigners and the perception that those foreigners will bring disease and cause degeneration. Shakespeare seems to want his audience to regard the Goths, not merely Aaron the Moor, as a different race; as Royster has pointed out, Tamora is represented as “hy-

perwhite" and in this sense her whiteness is "racially marked."⁴⁰ Having found herself at the centre of Roman authority as a result of her miscegenist relationship with Saturninus, Tamora undermines Rome's hierarchical and sexual order. Her relationship with Aaron, also miscegenic, violates social codes as does the interest she demonstrates in the sexual satisfaction of her sons, which Catharine Stimpson has suggested carries incestuous overtones.⁴¹ In Lavinia's rape, physical penetration of the chaste and civilised by the barbaric clearly constitutes an inversion of the colonial relationship and is an enactment in microcosm of the usual colonial situation, often expressed via the woman-as-land trope, since Rome (in the shape of Lavinia) is entered by its savage enemy. Rome's expansionist policy has incorporated savagery into what was an innocuous environment (a 'green,' or virginal, wood) and thus the politically triumphant Romans have provoked the violence which has been directed against them. That the savagery against Lavinia has been encouraged by a woman alerts the audience to the harmful influence of the sexualised foreigner in particular. I do not wish to suggest that Shakespeare is moralising here but rather that he is exploring the consequences of a country's expansionist policy which incorporates the means of its own destruction and thus provokes the violence directed against itself.

Tamora's sexual appetite for Aaron produces a direct threat to the state of Rome via a hybrid child. Aaron's plan to switch his black child with a local Moorish-white child and fool the Roman emperor into considering the latter his own (4.2.152-61) alerts us to the political ramifications of female sexual incontinence. Yet Saturninus is partly to blame for the harm that Aaron intends since he has allowed himself to be attracted to Tamora, the enemy within, choosing her over Lavinia and so leaving himself vulnerable to Moorish-Gothic machinations. As was the case with European reports from the New World, early modern English commentators on Ireland warned against the allurements of native Irish women. In the "Supplication" Irish women are depicted as dangerously seductive in their ability to make English men degenerate, John Derrick warned colonialists to beware of be-

witchment by Celtic women who he characterised as “dissembling elues”⁴² and Spenser advised against “licentious conversing with the Irishe or marrying and fostering with them.”⁴³ In *Titus Andronicus*, the local white child who is the product of a mixed-race relationship will undermine Roman racial purity. Nicholas Canny noted the perception amongst English commentators that Irish sexual behaviour violated the social codes of civilized English society: “Incest was said to be common among them, and Gaelic chieftains were accused of debauching the wives and daughters of their tenants [...]”⁴⁴ While incest is merely hinted in *Titus Andronicus*, the metaphor of Tamora’s voracious sexual appetite is made literal in the pernicious consumption that takes place in the final scene.⁴⁵ As in *Sir Thomas More* there is anxiety about foreign appetites and an association is drawn between strange foodstuffs, degenerate sexual behaviour, and the health of the nation since the foreigners who have been absorbed into native culture are responsible for all kinds of pernicious consumption.

The weak distinction between Roman and Goth, demonstrable in the lack of compassion shown by Titus against Tamora and his own son, begins when Lucius commands that Tamora’s son be burned and that his killers “hew his limbs till they be clean consumed” (1.1.129). His blood-thirsty appetite conjures images of cannibalistic feasts, as does the tomb of the Andronici which consumes human flesh and which Tamora notes will be stained with blood at the sacrifice of Alarbus (1.1.116).⁴⁶ That moral commentary should come from the Goth Chiron (“Was never Scythia half so barbarous” 1.1.131) further blurs the distinction between Roman civility and Gothic savagery. Comparing Lucius’s behaviour with Scythian barbarism prepares us for Lucius’s later hostility toward Rome and his confederacy with the Goths (3.1.298-99). Lucius becomes Rome’s governor but only by incorporating its old enemy, an action suggested by Titus (3.1.284-86) but which, ironically, nullifies his earlier triumph against the Goths and signals Roman degeneration. As governor, Lucius commands that Tamora’s body be abandoned for birds of prey to feed upon (5.3.195-99). This act, intended to mark Tamora’s foreignness by not allowing

her the dignity of a funeral, ironically serves to emphasize Roman savagery. The fate dealt out by Lucius to Aaron is even more telling:

Set him breast-deep in earth and famish him.
There let him stand, and rave, and cry for food.
If anyone relieves or pities him,
For the offence he dies. This is our doom.
Some stay to see him fastened in the earth.
(5.3.178-82)

Hunger, urged by Irenius in the *View* as a useful colonial tool in Ireland,⁴⁷ is here used as a means of punishing the barbaric Moor and, as in the *View*, pity toward the victim is to be severely punished. That Aaron's appetite for lust and murder should be punished by starvation constitutes an inversion of Tamora's cannibalistic feast and the pernicious consumption of her body by birds of prey after death. Aaron's defiant response to Roman justice "Ten thousand worse than ever yet I did / Would I perform, if I might have my will" (5.3.186-87) provides no hope for redemption but besides fixing him as an irredeemable villain his comment functions as a warning against the incorporation of foreigners whose appetites may provoke civil disorder.

In *Titus Andronicus* Shakespeare makes distinct connections between foreign influence and pernicious consumption but subtly undermines conventional depictions of alterity by raising pertinent questions about the nature of Otherness, colonial expansion and degeneration: the colonisers are as capable of savagery as those they colonise. In Camden's complaint about the Irish and in *Sir Thomas More* foreigners come to England against the will of the native inhabitants but in *Titus Andronicus* Tamora is brought as a captive to Rome against her will. Might Shakespeare be suggesting that colonial expansion carries with it the risk of incorporating the seeds of its own destruction? In *Titus Andronicus* imperial expansion's eating up of foreign lands includes the ingestion of poisonous strangers, yet simplistic notions of civility and savagery are problematized in the barbaric actions of the Romans. In *The Faerie Queene* Spenser refers to the civilising influence of Brutus on ancient Britain. Before the coming of Brutus the land was a

"saluage wilderness, / Vnpeopled, vnmanurd, vnprou'd, vnpraysd" (2.10.5.3-4) and its inhabitants were barbaric, "But farre in land a saluage nation dwelt, / Of hideous Giants, and halfe beastly men, / That neuer tasted grace, nor goodnesse felt," (2.10.7.1-2). England's savage past is a painful memory which undermines notions of inherent English civility and implies the need for constant vigilance against degeneration. This danger was particularly threatening given the proximity of Ireland which, unlike Britain, had not felt the influence of Roman invasion, a fact which was used by some commentators to explain Ireland's uncivil culture. In *Titus Andronicus* the traffic is in destabilizing and threatening figures whose behaviour undermines a precarious order. This might be read as a warning against unwise expansion abroad, and particularly the incorporation of foreigners, because classical history provides evidence of a particularly spectacular fall. Shakespeare's classical story of the Romans and the Goths is perhaps informed by the contemporary issue of English expansion into Ireland: if the English are not vigilant and if they do not guard against their appetite for unwise expansion they may find themselves at the mercy of foreign appetites which ultimately will consume them.

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NOTES

¹I am grateful to The British Academy for supporting this research with the award of an Overseas Conference Grant.

²The play exists solely as British Library manuscript Harley 7368, in several hands, and comprising 22 sheets. Most of the writing is in the hand of Anthony Munday, although additional sheets in different hands have been inserted. The front of the first sheet contains a provisional licence from Edmund Tilney, the state censor, requiring alterations before public performance. The additions might represent changes to the play made after Tilney's objections were known but this theory is difficult to sustain because in some ways the changes (such as the re-

writing of the scene in which More quells the rioters) make matters worse. This problem is treated in the Revels edition of the play (Anthony Munday, *Sir Thomas More*, ed. Vittorio Gabrieli and Giorgio Melchiori [Manchester: Manchester UP, 1990] and more fully in Scott McMillin, *The Elizabethan Theatre* and *The Book of Sir Thomas More* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1987).

³Munday, *Sir Thomas More* 6.

⁴All quotations of *Sir Thomas More* are from Munday, *Sir Thomas More*.

⁵Munday, *Sir Thomas More* 17.

⁶Munday, *Sir Thomas More* 18.

⁷Raphael Holinshed, *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, 1587, vol. 3 (London: J. Johnson, 1808) 617-20.

⁸Some critics have claimed that England did not have colonial aspirations. For example, Tobias Gregory maintained that men like Spenser, accused by Stephen Greenblatt and Simon Shepherd of being a poet of empire, were primarily motivated by personal ambition and international Protestant solidarity and that the period was one of perceived isolation and Catholic threat not expansion. Gregory goes on to assert that "Elizabethan England was no more engaged in empire-building in the New World than in the old. As Jeffrey Knapp has reminded us, English efforts at colonization in America were 'dismal failures' until the seventeenth century, particularly by comparison with the vast, lucrative colonies of Spain" (Tobias Gregory, "Shadowing Intervention: On the Politics of *The Faerie Queene* Book 5 Cantos 10-12," *English Literary History* 67 [2000]: 365-97). However, it is unreasonable to assume that failure implies the absence of what Tobias has called "an imperial impulse." It may not have been fulfilled but the impulse was evident nonetheless, as the American examples show.

⁹Homi Bhabha, "The Other Question: The Stereotype and Colonial Discourse," *Screen* 24 (1983), repr. *Twentieth-Century Literary Theory: A Reader*, ed. K.M. Newton (New York: St. Martin's, 1997) 293-301.

¹⁰Drawing upon the theories of Bhabha, David Baker noted that in Ireland the categories carefully created by the colonist—Old English, New English, or 'meere' Irish—were inherently unstable (David J. Baker, "'Wildehirisshe man': Colonialist Representation in Shakespeare's *Henry V*," *English Literary Renaissance* 22.1 [1992]: 37-61, here 38-40). Similarly Andrew Hadfield observed the difficulty in considering nationhood in terms of polarities since no identity—colonizer or native—is pure and both groups will be altered by contact (Andrew Hadfield, *Edmund Spenser's Irish Experience: Wilde Fruit and Salvage Soyl* [Oxford: Clarendon P, 1997], 1-4).

¹¹Fynes Moryson, *An Itinerary Written By Fynes Moryson Gent. [...] Containing His Ten Yeeres Travell Through the Twelve Dominions of Germany, Bohmerland, [...] France, England, Scotland, and Ireland [...]*. (London: J. Beale, 1617) sig. Sss2r.

¹²William Camden, *Camden's Britannia*, 1695: A Facsimile of the 1695 Edition Pub-

lished by Edmund Gibson; [Translated From the Latin], intr. Stuart Piggott, Bibliographical Gwyn Walters (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1971) 1048.

¹³Thomas Gainsford, *The Glory of England, or a True Description of Blessings, Whereby She Triumpheth Over All Nations* (London: E. Griffin for T. Norton, 1618) 151.

¹⁴Raphael Holinshed, *The Firste Volume of the Chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Irelande*, 2 vols. (London, 1577) sig. D4r.

¹⁵In *A View of the Present State of Ireland* Irenius describes the starving Irish in Munster as "Anatomies of deathe" that "did eate the dead Carrions, happie wheare they Coulede finde them, Yea and one another sone after, in so muche as the verye carkasses they spared not to scrape out of their graves" (Edmund Spenser, *Prose Works*, ed. Rudolf Gottfried, *The Works of Edmund Spenser: A Variorum Edition*, vol. 10 [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1949] 158). Writing on Ireland in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, John Hooker reported that after the defeat of the Papal force in 1580 the people of the area surrounding Smerwick ate the bodies of dead men washed up on shore from a shipwreck, so severe was the extent of the famine after the Desmond rebellion (see Raphael Holinshed, *The First and Second Volumes of Chronicles*, vol. 3 [London, 1587] sig. Rjv-Rjrr). Similarly Fynes Moryson claimed in his *Itinerary* that after the tactical destruction of Irish corn by English forces a group of soldiers returning home from an expedition against the rebel Brian Mac Art came across "a most horrible spectacle of three children (whereof the eldest was not aboue ten yeeres old), all eating and knawing with their teeth the entrals of their dead mother ." See Moryson, sig. Bbb2r.

¹⁶Richard A. McCabe, "Edmund Spenser, Poet of Exile," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 80 (1993): 100.

¹⁷Spenser, *Prose Works* 108.

¹⁸Spenser, *Prose Works* 84.

¹⁹Spenser, *Prose Works* 112.

²⁰Spenser, *Prose Works* 136.

²¹According to its transcriber Willy Maley, this anonymous text was written during November and December 1598 and is "a record of alleged Irish war crimes, written in the midst of the Nine Years War, and in the wake of the overthrow of the Munster Plantation." See "The Supplication of the Blood of the English Most Lamentably Murdered in Ireland, Cryeng Out of the Yearth for Revenge (1598)," ed. Willy Maley, *Analecta Hibernica* 36 (1995): 7-8.

²²The Supplication of the Blood of the English Most Lamentably Murdered in Ireland, Cryeng Out of the Yearth for Revenge (1598)" 18.

²³Nicholas P. Canny, *The Elizabethan Conquest of Ireland: A Pattern Established 1565-76* (Hassocks: Harvester, 1976) 126.

²⁴Canny 128.

²⁵Canny 129.

²⁶Canny 130.

²⁷Richard A. McCabe, "Translated States: Spenser and Linguistic Colonialism," *Edmund Spenser: Essays on Culture and Allegory*, ed. Jennifer Klein Morrison and Matthew Greenfield (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000) 73.

²⁸Robert S. Miola, *Shakespeare's Rome* (Cambridge: CUP, 1983) 51.

²⁹Geoffrey Bullough, ed., *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*, vol. 6. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973) 52.

³⁰Eileen McCracken, "The Woodlands of Ireland Circa 1600," *Irish Historical Studies* 11.44 (1959): 287; R. A. Butlin, "Land and People, c. 1600," *A New History of Ireland*, ed. T. W. Moody, F. X. Martin and F. J. Byrne, vol. 3 (Oxford: OUP, 1976) 162.

³¹Spenser, *Prose Works* 62.

³²Spenser, *Prose Works* 62.

³³Francesca T. Royster, "White-limed Walls: Whiteness and Gothic Extremism in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 51 (2000): 438.

³⁴Willy Maley, *Salvaging Spenser* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997) 99.

³⁵Royster 446-47.

³⁶The eating of raw meat is commonly thought of as an indication of barbarity, although Claude Levi-Strauss noted that myths may contrast natural transformations (fresh meat into carrion) with cultural transformations (raw meat into cooked meat) without necessarily privileging the latter. See Claude Levi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked: Introduction to a Science of Mythology*, trans. John and Doreen Weightman, vol. 1 (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1983) 134-43.

³⁷Spenser, *Prose Works* 163.

³⁸Deborah Willis has noted, in the context of modern trauma theory, that the Goths and the Romans share attitudes to honour and revenge and the actions of both are a response to war trauma (Deborah Willis, "'The Gnawing Vulture': Revenge, Trauma Theory, and *Titus Andronicus*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 53 [2002]: 21-52).

³⁹Camden 967-68.

⁴⁰Royster 432-33.

⁴¹Catharine R. Stimpson, "Shakespeare and the Soil of Rape," *The Woman's Part: Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare*, ed. Carolyn Ruth Swift Lenz, Gayle Greene and Carol Thomas Neely (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1980) 61.

⁴²John Derricke, *The Image of Ireland with a Discouerie of Woodkarne*, ed. John Small (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1883) 31.

⁴³Spenser, *Prose Works* 117.

⁴⁴Canny 127.

⁴⁵Incest is associated with unnatural consumption elsewhere in the Shakespeare canon, for example in *Pericles* where the incestuous relationship between Antio-

chus and his daughter is repeatedly imaged as parents eating their children and vice-versa.

⁴⁶I am indebted to *Connotations'* anonymous reader who pointed out that the tomb is cannibalistic.

⁴⁷Spenser, *Prose Works* 244.

Camusian Revolt and the Making of Character: Falconbridge in Shakespeare's *King John*

VAL MORGAN

If thou didst but consent
To this most cruel act, do but despair,
And if thou want'st a cord, the smallest thread
That ever spider twisted from her womb
Will serve to strangle thee. A rush will be a beam
To hang thee on. Or wouldst thou drown thyself,
Put but a little water in a spoon,
And it shall be as all the ocean,
Enough to stifle such a villain up. (IV.iii.125-33)¹

These words of Falconbridge to Hubert register a moment of Camusian revolt in which we hear a transformation of mere speaker into character. This paper will set out to argue that assertion by attempting to pin down a moment of mimetic transformation of persona, or speaker, into something we recognise as having interiority and depth. To do that it will propose Camusian revolt as a way of interpreting dramatic character and as a pattern of dramaturgical craft. Granted, it may seem anachronistic to apply a mid-twentieth century concept to Shakespeare's plays. However, Camus' metaphysical revolt is itself both a re-stated appeal to classical moderation, the Hellenic "tradition of *mesure*,"² and a secularisation of prior religious attitudes, thus reflecting what is inherent in the writings of earlier times. That, at any rate, is the line I will pursue in the following discussion. Firstly, a sketched summary of Camusian revolt will seek to establish a pattern or model which can be applied to the mimetic creation of fictional 'character.' Secondly, some critical responses to Falconbridge as a 'character' will be briefly reviewed. Thirdly, Camusian concepts will be applied to the figure of Falconbridge. Finally, an interpretation of

the nine lines quoted above will show why this moment of Falconbridge's utterance marks his birth as a character.

At the threshold of the post-modern era, Albert Camus' *L'Homme révolté* (1951) makes a reasoned argument for a common morality and a traditional concept of the stable self, which he designates by the constantly repeated word 'integrity.' A few years after the hallucinatory horror of the Nazi Armageddon, and the only too real results of an overdetermined mass application of cruelty, Camus is moved to think about what it is that people must do to avoid a repetition of the disaster of saying 'yes' to the seductions of mass ideological manipulation. This seems to me not something that belongs only to the last century, arising from Camus' personal mood of disillusion and an "attempt to understand the times I live in," but rather eminently topical, indeed pressingly so. We are poised on the edge of a war made for the ideological purposes of a Western plutocracy and its super-rich acolytes and about which many people have instinctive feelings of repugnance and revulsion. Perhaps we need urgently to re-think rebellion and the possibilities of saying 'no.'

Camus' advocacy of limit, measure, personal borderline and so on, is fundamentally an appeal to human nature—a concept now formally obsolescent among certain academic élites, although able to return in various guises and forms when called upon."³ An analysis of rebellion" writes Camus, "leads us to the suspicion that, contrary to the postulates of contemporary thought, a human nature does exist, as the Greeks believed."⁴ What an investigation of Camusian rebellion enables us to see is that, whether human nature exists or not, a pattern of portraying and evaluating human character is disclosed by the structure and process of rebellion which Camus describes in *L'Homme révolté*. Whether any continuities in evaluation, structure and process between the mimesis of character and the character of a real person experiencing Camusian rebellion argue for an essentialist continuity of human nature, recognisable both as a real phenomenon and a metaphysical postulate, is not the present object of investigation. However, in the following paper one thing that emerges very strongly

is that the pattern of Camusian revolt can be applied to dramatic characters produced in previous ages (and probably in any age although that needs to be investigated), giving it an ahistorical, supracultural quality. Camusian revolt can contribute to solving a problem of character and characterisation which has been noted by critics, especially critics of Falconbridge, and that is why I advocate it here, as a tool for analysing the representation of dramatic character and, secondarily, as a reminder that at times of ideological coercion there always remains the possibility of saying 'no.'

Saying 'no' is the initiatory act we find at the beginning of *The Rebel*:

What is a rebel? A man who says 'no' but whose refusal does not imply a renunciation. He is also a man who says 'yes' as soon as he begins to think for himself. A slave who has taken orders all his life, suddenly decides that he cannot obey some new command. What does he mean by saying 'no'. He means, for instance, that 'this has been going on too long,' 'you are going too far,' or again 'there are certain limits beyond which you shall not go.' In other words his 'no' affirms the existence of a borderline. He rebels because he categorically refuses to submit to conditions that he considers intolerable and also because he is confusedly convinced that his position is justified [...]. In every act of rebellion the man concerned experiences not only a feeling of revulsion at the infringement of his rights but also a complete and spontaneous loyalty to certain aspects of himself. Thus he implicitly brings into play a standard of values so far from being false that he is willing to preserve them at all costs. (19)

For the rebel, gaining integrity is an assertion of shared values:

The slave asserts himself for the sake of everyone in the world when he comes to the conclusion that a command has infringed on something inside him that does not belong to him alone but which he has in common with other men [...]. (22)

Revolt is therefore not just an egotistical act but projected towards the establishment of common ethical values. The rebel makes contact with "something inside," (quelque chose en lui) "the integrity of one part of his being," a personal "borderline" (une frontière) and realises that "there are certain things in him which are worthwhile [...] and which must be taken into consideration" (19). He discovers "a stan-

dard of values [...] he is willing to preserve [...] at all costs" (19). Camusian revolt is a limit-experience in one other important aspect: revolt contains within it a secular form of martyrdom.

If an individual actually consents to die, and, when the occasion arises, accepts death as a consequence of his rebellion, he demonstrates that he is willing to sacrifice himself for the sake of a common good which he considers more important than his own destiny. (21)

The question then arises, what connection can be established between Camusian revolt and the character of Falconbridge in *King John*? As suggested earlier, Falconbridge is recognised by many as Shakespeare's first 'character'; an individual with a personality, a psychology and an affective life. Some critics see Falconbridge as undergoing a process of maturation or ontological formation in the play. In the view of Larry S. Champion, he develops from a "cynical observer of a Commodity-driven world" to a spokesman "for the body politic in the face of foreign invasion."⁵ William Matchett sees him as changing from a "naïve enthusiast," merely following chance, "to a man of mature ability and insight."⁶ James L. Calderwood sees Falconbridge arriving at full maturity in the final moments when he withstands the temptation to usurp the right of the legitimate heir, Henry.⁷ Harold Bloom sees Falconbridge as the first Shakespearean character, a character who "possesses a psychic interior" and is the inaugurating figure of Shakespeare's "invention of the human."⁸ This is too bold for Frank Kermode who nevertheless sees him as a "complicated figure made up of incompatible elements, suggesting not a type but an individual."⁹

What all these critics seem to agree on is that Falconbridge has an incipient individuality insufficiently differentiated to free him up from the background of the play and make him stand out three-dimensionally as Hamlet, or Othello do from their tragedies, or even some of the lesser characters whom we regularly think and write about as having pre- and post-text existence. Unlike them, Falconbridge begins and ends in the play, and is of substance and interest

only there. This may have partly to do with trammels of medieval dramatic convention in the early scenes.

As a piece of theatre writing, Falconbridge can be seen as a vestigial medieval vice figure, associated in the early scenes with mad-cap hilarity and self-confessed calculation, delivering "Sweet, sweet, sweet, poison for the age's tooth" (I.i.213). In the opening scenes he seems to belong to an earlier drama, taking on the role of a comic character, the disruptor. In II.i, Austria asks Falconbridge: "What the devil art thou?" (II.i.134) as if recognising the features of an earlier drama. If not a Devil, he is a Minor Vice, a cracker, a boaster. The whole unwieldy scene is destabilised by the uncertainty of Falconbridge's comedy as it is criss-crossed with elements of proverb, baby-talk, song, jocular aside and slapstick.

While the exposition scenes fail to 'expose' Falconbridge's character, they are off-set by later episodes in which Falconbridge is highly individuated. One example is IV.iii where action and lines anticipate what is to come in the later tragedies. In this scene Falconbridge intercedes to break up a fight with the authority of an Othello: "Your sword is bright, sir; put it up again," (IV.iii.179) echoed, as Frank Kermode points out, by Othello's: "Keep up your bright swords for the dew will rust them" (I.ii.59). I will deal with this scene more fully later. But if we are seriously in search of character we have to start with soliloquy. Falconbridge's longest soliloquy is the famous Commodity speech:

Mad world, mad kings, mad composition!
 John, to stop Arthur's title in the whole,
 Hath willingly departed with a part,
 And France, whose armour conscience buckled on,
 Whom zeal and charity brought to the field
 As God's own soldier, rounded in the ear
 With that same purpose-changer, that sly devil,
 That broker that still breaks the pate of faith,
 That daily break-vow, he that wins of all,
 Of kings, of beggars, old men, young men, maids—
 Who having no external thing to lose
 But the word 'maid'—cheats the poor maid of that—

That smooth-faced gentleman, tickling Commodity.
 Commodity, the bias of the world;
 The world, who of itself is peisèd well,
 Made to run even upon even ground,
 Till this advantage, this vile-drawing bias,
 This sway of motion, this Commodity,
 Makes it take head from all indifference,
 From all direction, purpose, course, intent.
 And this same bias, this Commodity,
 This bawd, this broker, this all-changing word,
 Clapped on the outward eye of fickle France,
 Hath drawn him from his own determined aid,
 From a resolved and honourable war,
 To a most base and vile-concluded peace.
 And why rail I on this Commodity?
 But for because he hath not wooed me yet.
 Not that I have the power to clutch my hand
 When his fair angels would salute my palm,
 But for my hand, as unattempted yet,
 Like a poor beggar railleth on the rich.
 Well, whiles I am a beggar, I will rail
 And say there is no sin but to be rich,
 And being rich, my virtue then shall be
 To say there is no vice but beggary.
 Since kings break faith upon commodity,
 Gain, be my lord, for I will worship thee! (II.i.562-98)

Clearly Falconbridge does not say 'no' to Commodity. However, in Camusian terms, he registers a conviction about "the absurdity and sterility of the world"—"Mad world, mad kings, mad composition." In other words he begins the speech with a process of thought resulting in a conviction about the world. It is from just this point that Camus sees the spirit of rebellion starting:

Meanwhile we can sum up the initial progress that the spirit of rebellion accomplishes in a process of thought that is already convinced of the absurdity and apparent sterility of the world. (28)

Falconbridge's soliloquy goes on to observe a pattern of behaviour, recognising that the "vile-drawing bias" of the world—Commodity—infests every social level and renders an otherwise well 'peisèd' world

"Mad" as it takes "head from all indifferency, from all direction, purpose, course, intent." Falconbridge rails on Commodity yet his concluding remarks point towards a connivance with its practices. But, while seeming to embrace Commodity in his words, he rejects it in the action of the play. His action in the play does not develop out of the apparent inclination to embrace Commodity in the speech. He seems to be insufficiently formed as a character either to embrace it or reject it outright. The speech is inconclusive in that the character does not work through an inner *agon* towards a decision or a plan of action. Instead of rising to a decisive project for future action, the later stages of the speech drift from image to image toward the four rhyming lines at the end which seem to be more intent on delivering the cue for a scene change than in defining a plan of action for the character. I don't at this stage see Falconbridge as a 'character' in the sense of Ker-mode's 'individual' or an integrated self, but rather more as a locus of possible characters which is also reflected in the variety of his designations: Philip Falconbridge, Bastard, and Sir Richard Plantagenet.

According to Aristotle, character is revealed when a person makes an unobvious decision:

Character is that which reveals personal choice, the kinds of things a man chooses or rejects when that is not obvious. Thus there is no revelation of character in speeches in which the speaker shows no preferences or aversion whatever.¹⁰

Strong characters make unobvious decisions throughout Shakespeare's tragedies: Macbeth to murder Duncan, Othello to murder Desdemona, Lear to give away his entire Kingdom, Brutus to kill his friend, Hamlet not to take revenge. Falconbridge reveals very little character in the soliloquy in Aristotle's tragic sense. The speech ends not with a strong unobvious decision but rather a velleity, a drift, an inclination. While the convention assures us that he is telling the truth, insofar as he perceives it, there is little sense of *anagnorisis*, of discovery in the character, or a discovery of the character to us. So, if Falconbridge has insufficient 'character' to stand and say 'no' in a key soliloquy, how can there be any suggestion of Camusian revolt?

In order to make the Camusian connection we have to begin at the Arthur/Hubert scene (IV.i). John has indicated to Hubert that he wants the child Arthur killed. Later it appears that the sentence has been reduced. Arthur is to be blinded. The stage is, literally, set, the burning coals and instruments are brought in. What we are asked imaginatively to face is the malicious torture of a child, perhaps the murder of a child.

Here we come to a horrendous topos. It is the one Dostoevsky took as his primary example of the incomprehensibility of theodicy in *The Brothers Karamazov*. Cruelty to children, asserts Ivan, who were never occupants of the Garden of Eden and did not eat the apple, is a 'fact' which cannot be compensated for by any promise of eternal life or acquisition of truth. "The entire universe of knowledge is not worth the tears of that child. I say nothing of the suffering of the grown-ups, they have eaten the apple and the devil with them, the devil take them all. But the children!"¹¹

To Ivan it presents an obstacle to understanding, an impediment to access to the truth:

And if the sufferings of children have gone to replenish the sum of suffering that was needed in order to purchase the truth, then I declare in advance that no truth, not even the whole truth, is worth such a price.¹²

It is the topos that engaged Camus as he responded to Dostoevsky's writings¹³ and perhaps most famously it is the one Camus used in speaking to a group of Dominicans at the Monastery of Latour-Maubourg in 1948 on problems of faith.

The insurmountable barrier [to faith] does seem to me to be the problem of evil. But it is also a real obstacle for traditional humanism. There is the death of children, which means a divine reign of terror, but there is also the killing of children which is an expression of a human reign of terror.

It is the topos Camus used in *La Peste*, the suffering and painful death of Othon's child cannot be defended by Paneloux as a working out of the divine plan—of the divine reign of terror—which God

executes on Oran. The critic Ray Davison sees *La Peste* as designed to refute the idea of divine justice and to promote Doctor Rieux's own form of secular humanism. Yet even that humanism is challenged by the human reign of terror executed in a world where children are murdered.

The topos is a limit for each of them. The unbearable limit on which the gates of heaven shut for Ivan, the "insurmountable barrier" for Camus. The limits suggested here are moral and imaginative but also, more precisely, limits of mental function. In the case of Camus limits are set to a *volition* of the mind—faith; for Ivan/Dostoevsky limits are set to a *capacity* of the mind understanding. Such an interior limit, such a personal borderline (une frontière) is what the rebel must reach in order to stand and say 'no.' In other words his 'no' affirms the existence of a borderline (En somme ce non affirme l'existence d'une frontière).

The 'no' is not then a *creating* moment of the limit but an *affirming* moment of what has already been sensed. The pressure of the limit forces 'something inside' what may be called 'character' or integrity, to cohere into a stance that says 'no.' Here, I would recall some earlier quotations which have to be constantly borne in mind: "In every act of rebellion the man concerned experiences a complete and spontaneous loyalty to certain aspects of himself" (19). At the moment of revolt, the rebel not only has a "confused conviction that his opinion is justified," but he "refuses to submit to conditions that he considers intolerable" (19). And again: "He is fighting for the integrity of one part of his being" (23).

What is involved in this refusal to submit, as the rebel's opinions and judgements come into play, seems to be a departure from a pre-set script, from a prior subscription of beliefs in an ideology, a cultural dogma or thought-world, and from a discourse that sets their terms. For Camus the script from which he is departing, and is indeed antagonistic to, is Christian theodicy. For Ivan/Dostoevsky the script is Russian orthodox faith. In a moment I will put forward the view that there is a similar moment of departure from script in Falconbridge

which foreshadows the rebel's stance. But to arrive at that point Falconbridge has to develop by way of interaction with Hubert.

We first learn about Hubert's character from the decision he makes in the scene of Arthur's blinding. Affected by the boy's pleading he decides not to go through with it: "Well, see to live. I will not touch thine eye" (IV.i.121). And even to embrace Arthur's cause: "Much danger do I undergo for thee" (IV.i.133). Of course, an alternative view would be that this is not an unobvious choice which reveals character, in Aristotle's sense, but that this scene is simply too horrible to be enacted. In that case Hubert's mind-change would not reveal character but rather indicate a necessary limitation of the action. The action of the scene, as it were, says 'no' to the *topos*. There are grounds for seeing Hubert more precisely as a rebel who fits the Camusian pattern, largely because of the resonant way in which King John speaks of him as a 'slave.' I will return to this later after examining the crucial interaction between Falconbridge and Hubert which occurs at the scene of Arthur's death (IV.iii). The boy was not murdered but tried to escape his prison by jumping from a wall and died in the fall. Falconbridge and the barons who come across the child's body suspect Hubert. They all appear to think he has murdered the child. One of them, Salisbury, turns to Falconbridge, struggling to put his thought into words:

Sir Richard, what think you? You have beheld,
Or have you read, or heard, or could you think,
Or do you almost think, although you see,
That you do see? Could thought, without this object,
Form such another? This is the very top,
The height, the crest, or crest unto the crest,
Of murder's arms. This is the bloodiest shame,
The wildest savagery, the vilest stroke,
That ever wall-eyed wrath or staring rage
Presented to the tears of soft remorse. (IV.iii.41-50)

Salisbury refers to Falconbridge as Sir Richard, his knightly name, as if appealing to their shared status and ideological viewpoint. He seems to be assuming that Falconbridge will make a similar interpre-

tation of the scene, leading to an equally false judgement. It is an appeal for the same sort of endorsement and collaboration that Pembroke and Bigot give. To Salisbury, Hubert is obviously guilty and deserves to be executed on the spot. But Falconbridge doesn't react like Salisbury and his peers. He doesn't react like a *noble* as Salisbury expects, but like an *individual*, reaching his personal borderline while bringing his own opinions and judgements into play. His distinct individuation from the other characters in this scene, is marked in several ways:

- He does not participate in the superlative-laden language of Salisbury and the nobles.
- He does not speak to Hubert directly, in presence of the other characters.
- He is cautious where they are precipitate; he leaps to no conclusions.

But what is more striking is his comparative silence in this scene. Out of a total of 159 lines he has only 17. For a character who is given more lines than anyone else in the play, including King John, this can be heard as reticence. Falconbridge is silent on stage for a considerable period. Is this silence an indication of depth of character, of existential complexity? In this regard, it is interesting to note the way in which Sartre writes about silence in Camus.

In his essay of 1943, *Explication de L'Etranger*, Sartre invents the phrase *la hantise du silence* and quotes Heidegger's dictum that silence is the authentic mode of speech.¹⁴ *L'Etranger*, he suggests, demonstrates Camus's mode of keeping silent. And he quotes Camus' own remark from *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* that "a man is more of a man by the things he leaves unsaid than by the things he says."¹⁵ Sartre is associating silence with a mode of being: authentic, essentially augmented. Camus also sees silence as a prior condition of the moment of rebellion:

To keep quiet is to allow yourself to believe that you have no opinions, that you want nothing, and in certain cases it really amounts to wanting nothing. Despair, like Absurdism, prefers to consider everything in general and nothing in particular. Silence expresses this attitude very well. But from the moment the rebel finds his voice—even though he has nothing to say but 'no'—he begins to consider things in particular. (20)

With this in mind the silence of Falconbridge in this scene might be considered to signify the potential disclosure of character. When Falconbridge at last addresses Hubert directly he begins by taking up the language of the departed barons, adhering to the pre-set script of shared status and ideology to which Salisbury had appealed by calling him Sir Richard:

Beyond the infinite and boundless reach
Of mercy, if thou didst this deed of death,
Art thou damned, Hubert. [...]
Thou'rt damned as black—nay, nothing is so black—
Thou art more deep damn'd than Prince Lucifer.
There is not yet so ugly a fiend of hell
As thou shalt be, if thou didst kill this child. (IV.iii.117-24)

One might say that the silence of potential character has foundered in conventional utterances taking their tone from the script of Christian vocabulary and the superlative locutions of the barons. But then there is a startling modulation in Falconbridge's language when he speaks again:

If thou didst but consent
To this most cruel act, do but despair,
And if thou want'st a cord, the smallest thread
That ever spider twisted from her womb
Will serve to strangle thee. A rush will be a beam
To hang thee on. Or wouldst thou drown thyself,
Put but a little water in a spoon,
And it shall be as all the ocean,
Enough to stifle such a villain up. (IV.iii.125-33)

What happens in this language is crucial in terms of character. The speech signifies that a limit has been reached, there is a turning away,

a saying 'no,' a departure from the script as we hear a new and individual utterance—a voice has been found.

Falconbridge's language rushes away from the monstrosity of the presumed murder by inverting the proportion between the immense evil of the act and the reduced terms of expression. The result is a kind of inverted hyperbole, referring in extravagant conceptual terms to small, light and tiny objects: the spider's web, the reed, the spoon. These most insignificant things are imbued with repugnance of an act which outrages all order and justice. Although the verbs do not go as far as to suggest will and passion in the objects, they establish a kind of collaborative agency among them, brought together in the proleptic justice of "stifl[ing] such a villain up." But, noticeably, the abstract concept of Justice is absent. "Stifling" the villain foresees a specific end, asphyxiation, a choking-off of life, not anything done in the name of Justice. Although the speech begins with a string of abstracts familiar to Christian discourse: damnation, hell and Prince Lucifer, it then modulates to the pre-lapsarian, Adamic language of naming things: the thread, the beam, the cord.

Since the play as a whole treats religion as a mere instrument of political expediency, religious language would be inadequate to express the limit that Falconbridge has reached. In order to find an expression of moral power at this point Shakespeare borrows from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* vocabulary of spider's webs and reeds, of humble, rustic, mechanical objects: the beam, the thread, the cord, the rush, and renders it in terms that are pagan and magical, not Christian. If there is a religion here it is the pagan religion of *genii loci* rather than Christian doctrine.

This speech spurns orthodox language, renounces transcendent concepts and turns ethical thought empirically towards things, concrete, particular things. Having found his voice, then, Falconbridge is beginning to 'consider things in particular.' Thought is attached to particular objects: small, insignificant, common objects, inherently real and true. We do not at this point hear any more of God than we would hear from an easy atheist like Sartre or an uneasy one like Camus.

Christian concepts and abstractions give way to *genii loci*, the world will take its own revenge in the minutiae of things rebelling, not the divine *justitia*.

The speech implies 'revolt' in the sense that Falconbridge discovers something in himself which issues in individual utterance. He has encountered 'la frontière,' 'quelquechose en lui,' the limit which forces character to appear. This is the point which corresponds to the first movement of Camusian revolt, laying claim to the integrity that enables the rebelling subject to say 'no'—to find a voice. The integrity, individuality or 'character' is heard in Falconbridge's individuated language renouncing the pre-script of Christian abstraction and the lexicon of the nobles. Similarly, revolt forces an integration of self in the Camusian rebel, as a solid ground on which to take the stance of saying 'no.' These elements work to suggest that there is a correspondence between the moment of revolt in the Camusian rebel and the disclosure of 'character' in the fictional representation.

The scene is also interesting in terms of the Aristotelian definition of character. By the end of the interaction with Hubert, Falconbridge seems to have made an unobvious decision, unobvious certainly to Salisbury, Pembroke and Bigot, unobvious in terms of his ideological position as one of the nobles. He decides not only to let Hubert go but commands him to 'take the body up'—a charge he would hardly give to a man suspected of implication in the murder; in fact an exonerating charge. He has made the unobvious decision that Hubert is not guilty. The guilt, or not, of Hubert is also of interest to King John later in the play. Referring back to the moment when Hubert had perfectly understood his unspoken intentions, King John, like Henry IV at the end of *Richard II*, tries to dissociate himself from political assassination.

The mutual compact of thought is symbolised by the finely crafted division of a line:

King John: Death.

Hubert: My lord?

King John:

A grave.

Hubert: He shall not live. (III.iii.65-66)

Later King John denies the palpable intention behind the semantics of this line by claiming that he did not mean what he implied. In exonerating himself, John throws the blame on to Hubert whom he casts in the pre-rebellious role of 'slave.'

It is the curse of kings to be attended
 By slaves that take their humours for a warrant
 To break within the bloody house of life,
 And on the winking of authority
 To understand a law, to know the meaning
 Of dangerous majesty, when perchance it frowns
 More upon honour than advised respect. (IV.ii.208-14)

At this point John, convinced that Hubert carried out his orders, rebukes his servant for acting when he should have refused to act. This scene is a reverse parallel, or chiasmic inversion, of the episode between Pompey and Menas in *Anthony and Cleopatra*. Menas, observing that Pompey has the opportunity to do away with Anthony and Octavius at a stroke, by cutting the cable of the ship on which they are feasting, then slitting their throats, suggests the plan to Pompey who replies: "Ah, this thou shouldst have done / And not have spoke on't: In me tis villainy; / In thee 't had been good service" (II.vii.74-76).¹⁶

Here the servant is rebuked for not acting on his own initiative. So, the most loyal servants, whether failing to act without orders or being understood to have acted on orders, equally fail to please the superiors to whom they are loyal. Unfortunately for Hubert, his failure to carry out the killing of Arthur is not material to events for the boy dies accidentally and with him John's chances of survival. Nevertheless, Hubert's decision not to carry out orders, his revulsion at a scene of cruelty, his saying 'no' to participation in it and, tellingly, John's later reference to 'slave,' all indicate elements of Camusian rebellion which suggest 'character' in Hubert, indicating an inner life of thought and judgment. Hubert said 'no' to the slave's way of taking "humours for a warrant" which marked his moment of rebellion. We can assume that, under the pleading of Arthur, he 'thought for himself' and 'considered things in particular' which disclosed his 'integrity.' This is

Hubert's way of saying 'no' and equally of "say[ing] 'yes' as soon as he begins to think for himself" (19). For, although he can continue to serve John, he has found a point at which his 'no' becomes operative, when he reaches his personal borderline. Hubert and Falconbridge, the two characters who most exemplify Camusian elements, are the two most developed and complex characters in the play. Their shared penultimate scene (V.vi), though not profound, mostly consisting of reportage and commentary, is fraught with the background of human characters plunged into a shaky camaraderie on the edge of a 'Mad world.' They do not renounce this world, however, but remain actively engaged, *à l'existentialisme*, having succeeded in wresting from it some personal integrity.

In the final scene, something of the earlier Falconbridge is glimpsed. Less a character than a spokesman for England, a stock figure of reassurance, welcoming in the new order and uttering defiance, he fails to carry his 'character' to the end of the play, much less beyond it. In the final speeches, 'inwardness' lapses into Everyman or Epilogue; there is no complexity, little of that 'character' which had come to a climax in the scene with Hubert (IV.iii). But what broke through in that scene was something which numerous critics have recognised as new to Shakespeare, true interiority of character. Falconbridge's status as a character is crystallised in this scene and proceeds from the various factors discussed: silence, the collapse of abstract and transcendent language, a renunciation of a pre-set script, and a recourse to a referential system grounded in particulars: the reed, the spider's web, the spoon, the beam, the thread. In the constellation of these elements we glimpse the inwardness of Falconbridge as he arrives at the character-generating moment of the Camusian limit.

To develop this idea a little further: can a principle of characterisation be discerned here, a limited but recognisable instrument of character creation? Certainly a similar, but not exact, example is to be found in *Richard III* in a recurrence of the topos that haunts Dostoevsky and Camus: the murder of children. In IV.ii Gloucester, now King Richard, proposes to the Duke of Buckingham that the young

princes should be murdered. "Say, have I thy consent that they shall die?" Buckingham answers by keeping silent: "Give me some breath, some little pause, my lord / Before I positively speak herein: I will resolve your grace immediately" (IV.ii.24-26).¹⁷ We never know what Buckingham decides. Later on Richard cuts off his "My lord, I have considered in my mind / The late demand that you did sound me in" (IV.ii.84-85) with the dismissive "Well, let that pass" (86). However, we can note that silence surrounds Buckingham's decision, suggesting that he had to pause for a moment to consider 'the authentic' Buckingham. We cannot say his decision is an unobvious character-revealing decision because we do not ever know what he decides. But we can note the proximity of silence, in both Falconbridge and Buckingham, to the topos of child-murder. Buckingham does not get as far as the critical limit which forces 'something inside' (we may call it 'integrity' or 'character') to stand against the drift of unexamined moral actions, or what might be called unstructured interiority. In the rebel, prior unstructured interiority is forced to integrate itself into a principled structure that says 'no.' While we cannot say that happens to Buckingham, who distinctly fails to take his rebellious stand, there are clear indications that he has come within a hair's breadth of reaching a limit.

Some of the elements are present in *Othello* where, again, we find the topos of cruelty, the murder of an innocent. Emilia revolts against Othello: "I care not for thy sword—I'll make thee known" (V.ii.164).¹⁸ She will maintain her values at all costs. When she says of Iago "'Tis proper I obey him, but not now" (V.ii.195), the suggestion is that *now* she has brought her own opinions and judgments into play. She is no longer a Camusian 'slave' but has reached a moment of integrity. Now she finds a voice and an urgent need to speak: "I will speak as liberal as the north; / Let heaven, and men, and devils, let them all, / All, all cry shame against me, yet I'll speak" (V.ii.218-20).

Emilia is constructed from several of the elements:

— A topos of cruelty initiates her rebellion.

- A visceral revulsion causes her to find an individual voice.
- She displays a readiness to preserve her values at all costs—Iago offers violence so she is clearly in a perilous position 'au milieu des périls,' but she goes through with her rebellion, in defence of her new-found values.
- The values she 'brings into play' can be seen as common values in the sense that they are 'for the sake of everyone in the world,' i.e. the playworld is a better place because of her qualities.

Cornwall's servant in *King Lear* is a superb miniature version of a rebel. After a long period of silence, during which he witnesses the putting out of the first eye of Gloucester, the servant reaches his limit: "I have served you ever since I was a child, / But better service have I never done you / Than now to bid you hold" (scene 14, 70-72).¹⁹ 'Hold' is an activist version of 'no.'

Like Emilia, he makes a stand for everyone in the world, that is to say that the playworld is a better place because of his rebellion, since it leads to the sole *act* of heroism in a play full of passive suffering. He is not gaining anything for himself—he is really consenting to die. Even if he cannot foresee that Regan will stab him he must know that his insubordination invites the severest punishment. This is the 'slave' of Camus who has encountered the borderline, 'quelquechose en lui,' and has found a voice and taken his stance.

It seems that Camusian rebellion is an enormously efficient way of generating the mimesis of depth and interiority of character, to which an audience can readily respond with sympathy. It is efficient, elegant and economic. Great effects can be gained from a small expenditure of dramaturgical effort whenever the elements of rebellion are concentrated. What is required is a topos of cruelty, frequently preceded by silence, followed by saying 'no' and a willingness for the character to hold on to new-found values 'au milieu des périls.' Although speaking only a few lines in the play, Cornwall's servant is produced by a high concentration of the elements and in this way a small-scale but complete character is created.

NOTES

¹Quotations from the play *King John* are taken from the Oxford World's Classics' edition. William Shakespeare, *The Life and Death of King John*, ed. A. R. Braunmuller (Oxford: OUP; 1994).

²Herbert Read, foreword, *The Rebel*, by Albert Camus, trans. Anthony Bower (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971) 9.

³What is the human thing that Human Rights are grounded in? It must be something we all share as humans. If not human 'nature' is it something more like human artifice and an endless capacity for metamorphosis and construction? If so one can always say that is in the nature of human beings to be artificers of culture and self.

⁴Camus, *The Rebel* 22.

⁵Larry S. Champion, "The 'Un-End' of *King John*: Shakespeare's Demystification of Closure," *King John, New Perspectives*, ed. Deborah T. Curren-Acquino (Newark, Delaware: U of Delaware P, 1989) 178.

⁶William Matchett, ed., *King John, The Signet Classic Shakespeare* (New York: New American Library, 1966) xxxi-xxxii.

⁷James S. Calderwood, "Commodity and Honour in *King John*," *Shakespeare: The Histories*, ed. Eugene M. Waith (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1965) 85-101.

⁸Harold Bloom, *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human* (London: Fourth Estate, 1999) 52.

⁹Frank Kermode, *Shakespeare's Language* (London: Allen Lane, 2000) 35.

¹⁰T. S. Dorsch, ed., *Classical Literary Criticism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965) 41. Or again, "Character will be displayed [...] if some preference is revealed in speech or action" (51). Aristotle is discussing good and bad character, but the Greek is open to the interpretation that he is suggesting that the less obvious the preference, the more character will be revealed.

¹¹Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, trans. David McDuff (London: Penguin, 1993) 278.

¹²Dostoevsky 282.

¹³I'm following Ray Davison's line that Camus was working out his ideas in a close dialogue with Dostoevsky, the thesis of his book *Camus, the Challenge of Dostoevsky* (Exeter: U of Exeter P, 1999).

¹⁴Jean Paul Sartre, *Explication de L'Etranger, Situations I* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1947).

¹⁵Albert Camus, *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* (Paris: Gallimard, 1942) 102. My trans.

¹⁶Shakespeare, *Anthony and Cleopatra*, ed. Stanley Wells (Oxford: OUP, 1994).

¹⁷Shakespeare, *Richard III*, ed. John Jowett (Oxford: OUP, 2000).

¹⁸Shakespeare, *Othello*, ed. Norman Sanders (Cambridge: CUP, 1984).

¹⁹Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of King Lear*; ed. Jay L. Halio, (Cambridge: CUP, 1992).

Gilding Loam and Painting Lilies: Shakespeare's Scruple of Gold

GABRIEL EGAN

Unlike his contemporaries John Lyly (*Gallathea*), Ben Jonson (*The Alchemist*), and Thomas Middleton (*Anything for a Quiet Life*), Shakespeare wrote no play featuring an alchemist.¹ Renaissance alchemy had a practical end, the transmutation of cheap metals into gold, but it was underpinned by a complex and subtle model of the universe derived from Aristotle and significantly modified by Paracelsus in the early sixteenth century.² The philosophical purpose of turning base metal into gold was to prove a theory about the nature of matter, according to which "all metals are made from the same basic matter and grow within the crust of the earth like a giant tree or plant."³ Gold, in this model, is merely the most refined kind of metal, one that cannot be transmuted further, and hence unalterable even by fire. But it is also a fiery principle in itself:

In the microcosmic-macrocosmic law of correspondences, gold is the metallic equivalent of the sun, the image of the sun buried in the earth. The sun in turn is the physical equivalent of the eternal spirit which lodges in the heart (the 'sun' of the human microcosm).⁴

Such a correspondence is part of a supposed cosmological and ideological system shared by all educated Elizabethans that was outlined by E. M. W. Tillyard during the second world war.⁵ When first announced, Tillyard's model was widely criticized for its reductivism and its failure to credit dissent, and these shortcomings were explored again in the 1980s by critics in apparent ignorance of the success of their predecessors, as Robin Headlam Wells showed.⁶ Shakespeare certainly gives characters speeches about microcosmic-macrocosmic

correspondence, but far from validating the putative Elizabethan World Picture what happens to such characters as often as not indicates the inadequacies of their explanations of the universe. A mundane way of transforming ordinary materials into gold without recourse to alchemy—and one Shakespeare would have known from playhouse decoration—is the technology of gold-plating, the applying of a thin layer of real gold to the surface. By repeated hammering of a small amount of gold, ancient Egyptian goldbeaters produced gold leaf only 40 millionths of an inch thick for the purpose of luxurious decoration, and by the nineteenth century refinements of essentially the technique achieved 3 millionths of an inch thickness.⁷ The art of applying gold leaf (or 'gilt') is 'gilding,' and while Shakespeare shows little interest in alchemy itself, his plays contain a rich seam of imagery connected with gold in this attenuated and debased form. The interest is apparent in a fondness for playing on the words employed in this kind of working of gold, 'gild', 'gilt', and 'gelt,' by using them in contexts where the meanings of their homophones and near-homophones (such as guile, guilt, and geld) might also be understood by a playhouse audience. This essay will explore that imagery, starting and ending with *The Merchant of Venice* where tawdry gold-plating is masterfully linked to an exploration of notions of purity, commodification of flesh, and monetary inflation.

On the night of the elopement in *The Merchant of Venice*, Graziano, Lorenzo, and Salerio are on the main stage and Jessica (disguised as a boy) throws one of her father's caskets down from the stage balcony. Before leaving her family home for the last time, Jessica decides to "gild [her]self / With some more ducats," to which Graziano responds "Now, by my hood, a gentile, and no Jew" (2.6.49-51).⁸ Jessica's suspicion that Lorenzo loves her rich outside more than her inner self is signalled in her talk of gilding her exterior to make it more attractive. Matching the split between her 'inner' and newly-enhanced 'outer' selves is a split in Lorenzo, who identifies himself as "Lorenzo, and thy love" (2.6.28) as though the man were not the embodiment of the love but something apart from it. Yet Lorenzo has

full confidence in his own powers of perception and finds Jessica wise "if I can judge of her" and fair "if that mine eyes be true" (2.6.53-54), which solipsism is typical of the play's young Christian men. The casket that Jessica throws to Lorenzo, undoubtedly full of gold and a prerequisite for her planned escape, is a counterpart to the three caskets amongst which Bassanio has to choose. In both scenes is a barely-submerged problem of perception, for although the moral of the three caskets might seem to be 'judge not by external appearance,' this platitude is undercut by the prize in the lead casket being a picture, a representation of the external view of a woman.

As a young woman dressed as a boy, Jessica's decision to "gild" herself might mean somewhat more than simply stealing ducats. The verb 'to geld,' meaning to castrate, could be spelt 'gild' until the sixteenth century (*OED* "geld" *v.*¹), and the noun 'geld,' meaning an Anglo-Saxon tax on land, was in the seventeenth century "confused with *gelt* *n.*²," meaning money, "which is in fact identical in ultimate etymology" and thus 'geld' could be spelt 'gelt' (*OED* "geld" *n.*). As Caroline Spurgeon showed, Shakespeare made his own connections between phonetically similar words,⁹ and Ernst Honigsmann argued that even graphically similar words might cross-fertilize in Shakespeare's mind.¹⁰ I use this reproductive metaphor deliberately, for with gild/geld Shakespeare made a breed of barren metal and allowed 'gild' to suggest 'geld' in its sense of emasculation. Shakespeare's women refer to their lacking penises most often when engaged in cross-dressing (for example Viola's "A little thing [...] I lack of a man"; *Twelfth Night* 3.4.294), and the wordplay in Jessica's remark is picked up in Graziano's swearing an oath by his "hood." He might, of course, merely swear by his masque-costume, or perhaps his manhood, but we are warranted by the context—an eloping Jewish woman dressed as a Christian boy—to suspect that "hood" at least hints at his foreskin, which because he is not a Jew is intact. The foreskin is a small and relatively unvalued piece of flesh that substantiates religious and racial identity, and one of the play's characteristic inflations is this scrap's magnification (and Freudian displacement up-

wards) in the dangerously large chunk of the human body that Shylock tries to take from Antonio. This is a kind of forced adult circumcision of a Christian—Shylock gets to choose which part is cut and it is to be “cut off” not ‘cut out’—and in the popular imagination this was supposed to be a common desire of Jews, as James Shapiro showed,¹¹ and it is dramatically reversed when the Christians take their revenge upon the Jew with a forced conversion.

In alchemical science, gold is the most perfect of all substances and entirely untainted by imperfections. Most frequently Shakespeare has characters refer to personal imperfections as ‘spots’ that are “black and grained” for a self-reflecting Gertrude (*Hamlet* 3.4.80) and indelible for a psychotic Lady Macbeth (*Macbeth* 5.1.33). Just occasionally, however, spottedness can be a guarantee of identity, as with Innogen’s “cinque-spotted” mole that none but Posthumus should know (*Cymbeline* 2.2.38) and Mowbray’s insubordinate resistance to his king’s “Lions make leopards tame” with “Yea, but not change his spots” (*Richard II* 1.1.174-75). The idea of a leopard’s skin being the site of its unchangeable nature is somewhat in tension with our modern sense that identity is a matter of the internal and unseen (“that within which passes show”; *Hamlet* 1.2.85), but Mowbray insists that identity is necessarily outside the body in the form of “spotless reputation” without which “Men are but gilded loam, or painted clay” (*Richard II* 1.1.178-79). The choice here is between two forms of perfected outside, an immaterial representation in the minds of others (‘reputation’) and a mere covering of gold. Much of the play hinges on Richard’s spottedness, his failure to live up to the ideal of kingship (a perfected humanity), and characters repeatedly liken the monarch to the golden sun. This metaphor need not draw on alchemical thinking since ordinary ideas about value and purity are sufficient to explain it, but the alchemists’ understanding of the transformative power of the sun lent the sun/king association additional weight because the sun’s rays, penetrating the earth, were thought to provide “the generative warmth to ripen such imperfect metals as iron, copper and lead into the perfect metal, gold.”¹² When Richard’s Welsh followers give up on

his return from Ireland, Salisbury imagines that Richard's "sun sets weeping in the lowly west" (2.4.21), Bolingbroke in mid-rebellion sees Richard as a "blushing discontented sun" (3.3.62) about to be obscured by clouds, defeated Richard wishes Bolingbroke "many years of sunshine days" (4.1.211) before imagining himself a king of snow melting before "the sun of Bolingbroke" (4.1.251), and seeing in his reflection the face "That like the sun did make beholders wink" (4.1.274). But before this sun/king rhetoric has even got off the ground, it is undercut in the first act by Bolingbroke, who responds to banishment by observing that the sun will still shine on him and "those his golden beams to you here lent / Shall point on me and gild my banishment" (1.3.140-41). Thus Bolingbroke invokes the sun/king association before anyone else has a chance to use it, and by linking it with Mowbray's dismissal of mere gold-plating Bolingbroke slyly suggests that a king has only the exterior signs and golden trappings of power, which are available to anyone. For audience members who knew the ensuing history this was proleptic because Bolingbroke goes on to replace Richard and find the same danger alighting on himself: when kingship is treated as a possession not a right the institution is fatally weakened. The point of a king being like the sun and like gold is that these things were held to be unchangeable, having reached the state of perfection seldom attained in the sublunary sphere. As the rebellion gathers head an alternative, unflattering, sun/king rhetoric emerges: Northumberland invokes the gold-plated trappings of kinship as he exhorts his peers to redeem the "blemished crown" and "Wipe off the dust that hides our sceptre's gilt" (2.1.295-96). In spoken performance there is no way of distinguishing between this kind of 'gilt' and the 'guilt' of Richard's wrongdoing, and indeed the first five editions of the play spelt the word "guilt" and not until the 1623 Folio was it changed to "gilt."¹³

As well as kingship, Shakespeare's characters repeatedly associate gold with blood, especially in the form of thin layers coating weapons. In alchemy blood has strong associations with the principle that metals must 'die' in their original forms to be reborn as gold, and with the

life-giving red elixir (synonymous with the philosopher's stone) achieved after the white (silver) stage, the latter transformation featuring in alchemical treatises with the attendant associations of moon and sun, and of virginity giving way to fecundity, that one might expect.¹⁴ Of course, the word 'blood' itself is highly polysemous and when King John acknowledges that "There is no sure foundation set on blood" he immediately glosses his meaning as "No certain life achieved by others' death" (*King John* 4.2.104-05) but the opposite meaning is equally active: there is no certainty based on "lineage, descent" (*OED* "blood" *n.* 9.a). After the inconclusive offstage battle of the English and French between the first two acts of *King John*, the English herald sickeningly describes the once "silver-bright" armour now "all gilt with Frenchmen's blood" (2.1.315-16), and we might ask why Shakespeare likens gold-plating to painting in blood. An alchemical explanation is not necessary since there is an equally viable alternative in the inescapable 'guilt' of being caught red-handed, that is being caught in the act of murder with the damning evidence, the red blood of one's victim, still on one's hands. For the infamous 1981 Old Vic production of *Macbeth*, Peter O'Toole kept a basin of stage blood ready in the wings for use in the scene where Macbeth returns from killing Duncan. Out of sight, O'Toole would pour the entire basin load over himself and return to the stage soaked in gore from head to foot. If the audience kept their composure when Macbeth announced what is too obvious, "I have done the deed," they could be relied upon to lose it when Lady Macbeth reassured him that "A little water clears us of this deed" (2.2.14, 65).¹⁵ Of course, Macbeth should have merely bloodied hands to literalize the Scottish legal expression meaning "having the evidences of guilt still upon the person" (*OED* "red-handed" *a.*, "red-hand" *a.* and *n.*), which kind of 'guilt' suggested to Shakespeare's associative mind its homophone 'gilt' and hence he put together images of blood-painting and gold-plating. Thus we can explain Lady Macbeth's "I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal, / For it must seem their guilt" (2.2.54-55), although Macbeth's "His silver skin laced with his golden blood" (2.3.112) does also sug-

gest an alchemical influence in its linking of death, the transformation of silver to gold, and the red elixir.

The verb 'to gild' has virtually passed out of common usage except in the form of 'gilding the lily,' meaning "to embellish excessively, to add ornament where none is needed" (*OED* "lily" *n.* 5.). The phrase is Shakespeare's and it arises at the beginning of *King John* 4.2 after the king takes the decidedly unusual step of having a second coronation to make himself feel more secure in his possession of the crown. Salisbury thinks this the height of pointlessness and likens it to a string of other wasteful endeavours starting with gold and ending with the sun:

To gild refine gold, to paint the lily,
To throw a perfume on the violet,
To smooth the ice, or add another hue
Unto the rainbow, or with taper-light
To seek the beauteous eye of heaven to garnish, [...]
(*King John* 4.2.11-15)

The familiar phrase 'gilding the lily' is a corruption of Salisbury's speech, for he speaks not of adding gold to the flower, but of adding gold to gold (so, a patina made of the same substance as that it coats), which suits Salisbury's meaning that the second coronation is superfluous. Likewise perfuming the violet, smoothing ice, adding a colour to the rainbow, and illuminating the sun all connote the pointlessness of supererogation, of 'more of the same.' But painting a lily entirely changes it from pure white to impure colour, which is the opposite of Salisbury's meaning of 'more of the same'; it is, however, rather like Mowbray's sense of men being "gilded loam, or painted clay" (*Richard II* 1.1.179). The readiest examples of painted clay known to Shakespeare would have been the statue work of stone masons whose yards had become established near the Globe playhouse in Southwark. Late-sixteenth century statues were invariably painted as was the classical tradition (the continental fashion for unpainted statuary did not reach England until the 1610s or 1620s) and B. J. Sokol argued that the supposed statue of Hermione in *The Winter's Tale*—whose

still-wet painted lips Leontes is warned not to touch—shows Shakespeare's sensitivity to the continental art tastes of a circle of courtiers around Prince Henry.¹⁶ Hermione's supposed statue is, of course, exactly "gilded loam" and "painted clay," those things that Mowbray said were valueless without "spotless reputation." It is her reputation that is restored to Hermione by Leontes's acknowledgement of his guilt and by his sincere repentance for it.

The art of painting cheap things such as clay and wood to give the appearance of luxury is one with which Shakespeare had a long and lucrative business interest, via his one-tenth share in the Globe playhouse. The Burbage family failed in their efforts to establish an elite indoor theatre in the Blackfriars district in 1596, and the Globe was a decidedly second-best option that reused the main timbers (and presumably whatever else could be salvaged) from the dismantled Theatre in Shoreditch.¹⁷ The precise decoration of the inside of the Globe is uncertain but there was undoubtedly an extensive use of *trompe l'œil* painting to make wood and plaster resemble marble and gold.¹⁸ Hamlet's reference to the sky above him as a "majestical roof fretted with golden fire" (2.2.302-03) is perhaps the most famous moment that makes little sense to a reader thinking of the world of the play—why should the sky be "fretted" at all?—but is entirely clear if one thinks of the gilded fretwork of the underside of an amphitheatre playhouse's stage cover. Otherwise one might attempt to explain Hamlet's "golden fire" as the sun or the stars of a night sky, but this would seem as misguided as G. Wilson Knight's effort to make sense of Othello's "yon marble heaven" (3.3.463) by "watch[ing] the figure of Othello silhouetted against a flat, solid moveless sky"¹⁹ rather than thinking of the playhouse's eye-deceiving decoration. In such theatrical moments characters see through the imaginary world that they and the audience have been taking for reality and come up hard against the tawdry actuality of a gaudily-painted, neoclassical, wood-for-marble, London playhouse.

Even in our world of international standards for units of measurement, precious materials retain their own systems of weight such as

the carat, which has one meaning in relation to purity of gold, 24 carats being 100% purity, and another in relation to precious stones, one carat being 200 milligrams (*OED* "carat" n. 2., 3.). In Shakespeare's time a number of weighing systems were in use for different materials, and the dissonance created by not matching the unit to the material makes for *The Merchant of Venice's* most memorable expression, a "pound of flesh," which is so striking precisely because human flesh does not usually go 'by the pound.' There are two ways for Shylock to fall foul of his own bond, which Portia unreasonably determines has to be fulfilled to an impossible exactitude. The first is by cutting more or less than a pound and the second is by taking blood along with the flesh. The play leaves unstated what kind of pound the bond specifies, whether troy weight (used for precious metals and bread), apothecaries' weight (used for drugs), or avoirdupois weight (used for other materials). The subdivisions of a pound vary in each system, but the smallest unit, the grain, was uniform across all three. The troy pound and the apothecaries' pound weighed the same (5760 grains) while the avoirdupois pound was about one-fifth heavier at 7000 grains. There was, of course, no standard system for weighing flesh since it could not ordinarily be traded, but the basis of Shylock's legal argument is that since Venice permits the keeping of slaves it has already accepted the principle that flesh can be owned. The court upholds this principle and accepts Shylock's claim—"A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine" (4.1.296)—but punishes him for acting to enforce this claim since it is a crime for an alien to "seek the life of any citizen" (4.1.348). The pound of flesh, then, has already been alienated from the rest of the citizen who formerly owned it (but lost it by a contractual forfeit), and what catches Shylock is the act of trying to separate his property from Antonio's. This notion of inextricably linked properties extends to the pound of flesh itself, since the contents of the blood vessels in the flesh are not Shylock's and an overly-literal reading of the bond requires him to leave the blood behind. Negotiating his punishment, Shylock successfully pleads a similar inextricable link between his life and "the means whereby"

(4.1.373-74) he lives, his property, and although the terms of the final settlement are not clear he appears to be allowed to retain part of his wealth until he dies.

At the climax of the court scene Portia twice invites Shylock to take his forfeit. The first time she warns him only that if he also takes even one "jot of blood" (4.1.303) not mentioned in his bond, his lands and good will be confiscated by the state. Repeating the invitation twenty lines later, Portia inexplicably adds an extra stipulation and a new forfeit:

Shed thou no blood, nor cut thou less nor more
But just a pound of flesh. If thou tak'st more
Or less than a just pound, be it but so much
As makes it light or heavy in the substance
Or the division of the twentieth part
Of one poor scruple—nay, if the scale do turn
But in the estimation of a hair
Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate.
(4.1.322-29)

No further legal argument has been introduced, but Portia now claims that even taking too little of what is his own would trigger the punishment of the court and moreover the penalty has risen to include death as well as confiscation of wealth. This repetition might be due to the printing of imperfectly cancelled authorial first thoughts, with the second version of the warning ratcheting up the exactitude and the penalties, and prefiguring the Alien Statute trap to be sprung when Shylock attempts to leave.

The precision with which Shylock must measure his pound is clearly stated as one-twentieth of a scruple, and then obscurely stated as one hair. It is not certain whether the width or the weight of a hair is meant here, but in a parallel usage by Falstaff it is the latter: "the weight of a hair will turn the scales between their avoirdupois" (2 *Henry IV* 2.4.255-56). The word 'scruple' comes from the Latin 'scrupulus' meaning a small rough or hard pebble that came to be a standard unit in the apothecaries' weight system (but not the other two systems) in which it comprised twenty grains (*OED* "scruple" *n.*¹ 1.).

Thus Portia specifies the degree of accuracy Shylock has to achieve as one grain (0.017% of a troy or apothecaries' pound, 0.014% of an avoirdupois pound), which is a unit common to all three systems of weight. But she does so by its relation to the scruple, which exists only in the apothecaries' system. In alchemy the word 'grain' is used for "the seed of metals" as well as a unit of weight, and "It was said that just one grain of the elixir could transmute immeasurable quantities of base metal into gold,"²⁰ which suits the argument I am about to make regarding multiplication and division. But we can hardly expect a playhouse audience to hear the unspoken word 'grain' behind Portia's "twentieth part of one poor scruple" and then pause to ponder its associations, even if a dramatist in the act of composition might. Leaving aside an alchemical explanation based on 'grain,' we might still wonder why Portia avoids a word ('grain') that would make her stipulation independent of any particular system of weight and uses 'scruple,' which necessarily invokes the apothecaries' system. If Portia specified the troy weight system used for precious metals (including gold) and bread, say by referring to a 'pennyweight' (24 grains), which exists only in this system, she would perhaps evoke the anti-semitic 'blood libel' that Jews sacrifice Christian children at Passover to obtain blood as an ingredient for their unleavened bread, and this would hardly be consistent with her pretence at impartiality. And perhaps the avoirdupois system would seem too ordinary for the weighing of flesh, but in any case there was no unit that could identify it uniquely: its unit the 'dram' (roughly 27.3 grains) existed also in the apothecaries' weight system, albeit denoting a different weight (60 grains). Whatever other associations it might evoke, the apothecaries' system, which Portia uses, offers the polysemy of 'scruple' being a unit of weight and a thought that troubles the mind, "esp[ecially] one [...] which causes a person to hesitate where others would be bolder to act" (*OED* "scruple" *n.*² 1.). Such a finely balanced response from Shylock suits Portia's entrapment, for his crime against the Alien Statute is his being on the verge of taking the forfeit, but of course it is essential that he does not.

Creating for Shylock an anxiety of minuteness resulting from division upon division is Portia's new solution to the Christians' problem and it is the flipside of an inflationary mathematics that has signally failed. As Peter Holland noted,²¹ both sides are quick with their multiplication tables, from Portia's wish that she were "trebled twenty times myself, / A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times more rich" (3.2.153-54) to her "Double six thousand, and then treble that" to pay off Shylock rather than have Antonio "lose a hair" (3.2.298-300). A hair representing the smallest part of a person that could be harmed was proverbial,²² but for Shakespeare human hair was also an image for near-infinite multiplicity ("Had I as many sons as I have hairs"; *Macbeth* 5.11.14) and for unity-in-multiplicity (singular 'hair' comprised of many 'hairs') that may break down in time of stress, as with Hamlet's "each particular hair to stand on end" (*Hamlet* 1.5.19). Shylock reputedly swore to reject "twenty times the value of the sum" he is owed (3.2.285) and in the court he asserts that even if every one of 6,000 ducats "Were in six parts, and every part a ducat" (4.1.85), he would not accept them instead of his forfeit. Like a goldbeater adding value to his material by repeatedly subdividing it, Shylock rightly thinks of multiplication as a form of division (strictly, it is division of the inverse, since $A \times B$ is the same as A divided by B^{-1}), which is in keeping with Shakespeare's sense of hair as both singularity and near-infinitude. Portia's wealth is virtually infinite: as Holland noted 3,000 ducats is so much money that even Shylock cannot lay his hands on it right away, yet Portia offers 60,000 ducats (3.2.304-05), which Holland reckoned to be about £ 5.4 million in modern money.²³ The play's Venetian ducats were "almost certainly gold" according to Holland,²⁴ as of course is Portia's hair, providing a rather tidy link between the main images of wealth in the play. Bassanio pitches to Antonio his trip to Belmont by reporting that her "sunny locks" are like a "golden fleece" (1.1.169-70) and Graziano confirms the classical allusion with his cry "we have won the fleece" (3.2.239), to which Salerio responds with a near-homophonic wordplay on Antonio's

wealth-giving fleets: "I would you had won the fleece that he hath lost" (3.2.240).

As with Lorenzo in the casket-catching scene, Bassanio's sense of his wife's identity is shaped by solipsism regarding his own powers of perception, and confronted with the picture of Portia in the lead casket he wonders whether the liveliness of the eyes is inherent in the object or produced by the act of looking at them: do her eyes "riding on the balls of mine" (3.2.117) only seem to move? Her golden hair Bassanio sees not as a singularity but a multiplicity ("hairs"), and one that reverses the roles of subject and object, of seeker and sought-after: "Here in her hairs / The painter plays the spider, and hath woven / A golden mesh t'untrap²⁵ the hearts of men" (3.2.120-22). Here most plainly is visible Bassanio's mental work of making a unity out of parts (as a spider makes a web from strands), but we should note that Bassanio's comment on Portia's golden hair is preposterous, putting the multiplicity first and the unity last (from hairs to hair). Bassanio uses Petrarchan language—John Russell Brown found an analogue in Edmund Spenser's *Amoretti*²⁶—but his movement from parts to whole is in the opposite direction to the particularizing and disturbingly anatomizing trajectory of the poetic blazon identified by Nancy Vickers.²⁷ This is not to exculpate Bassanio, who can experience Portia only as a portion or dowry comprised of numberless parts that to him add up to a "full sum" rather greater than the "unlessoned girl, unschooled, unpractised" she claims (3.2.157-59). By imagery that yokes gold and blood with hair, multiplication (woolly breeders and golden ones), and the indivisibility of the human body (the impossibility of Shylock getting his pound of flesh), Shakespeare treats human 'subjectivity' rather more subtly than one would expect from the misleadingly simple three-caskets scene, which appears to credit the Christian aristocrat with a keen insight to the difference between that which is within and that which is without.

NOTES

¹Thomas L. Berger, William C. Bradford and Sidney L. Sondergard, *An Index of Characters in Early Modern English Drama: Printed Plays, 1500-1660*, rev. ed. (Cambridge: CUP, 1998) 16, 110-138.

²Allen G. Debus, *The Chemical Philosophy: Paracelsian Science and Medicine in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, 1:2 vols. (New York: Neale Watson, 1977) 63-126.

³Lyndy Abraham, *A Dictionary of Alchemical Imagery* (Cambridge: CUP, 1998), "gold and silver."

⁴Abraham, *A Dictionary of Alchemical Imagery*, "gold and silver."

⁵E. M. W. Tillyard, *The Elizabethan World Picture* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1943).

⁶Robin Headlam Wells, *Shakespeare on Masculinity* (Cambridge: CUP, 2000) 209-10.

⁷George M. Whiley, Cecil Whiley and H. L. Hunter, *Leaves of Gold: An Account of the Ancient Craft of Goldbeating and Its Development Into a Modern Industry*, illus. John Minton (London: Newman Neame, 1951) 20-23, 53.

⁸Unless otherwise attributed, all quotations of Shakespeare are from William Shakespeare, *The Complete Works*, ed. Stanley Wells, Gary Taylor, John Jowett, and William Montgomery. Electronic edition prepared by William Montgomery and Lou Burnard (Oxford: OUP, 1989).

⁹Caroline F. E. Spurgeon, *Shakespeare's Iterative Imagery: (1) as Undersong (2) as Touchstone, in His Work*, Annual Shakespeare Lecture of the British Academy (London: Milford, 1931).

¹⁰E. A. J. Honigmann, *The Stability of Shakespeare's Texts* (London: Edward Arnold, 1965) 71.

¹¹James Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews* (New York: Columbia UP, 1996) 113-30.

¹²Abraham, *A Dictionary of Alchemical Imagery*, "sun."

¹³William Shakespeare, [Richard II] *The Tragedie of King Richard the Second*, STC 22307 (Q1) (London: Valentine Simmes for Andrew Wise, 1597) D3r; William Shakespeare, [Richard II] *The Tragedie of King Richard the Second*. By W. Shakespeare, STC 22308 (Q2) (London: Valentine Simmes for Andrew Wise, 1598) D2v; William Shakespeare, [Richard II] *The Tragedie of King Richard the Second*. By W. Shakespeare, STC 22309 (Q3) (London: Valentine Simmes for Andrew Wise, 1598) D2v; William Shakespeare, [Richard II] *The Tragedie of King Richard the Second*. By W. Shakespeare, STC 22310 (Q4) (London: W. White for Matthew Law, 1608) D2v; William Shakespeare, [Richard II] *The Tragedie of King Richard the Second*. By W. Shakespeare, STC 22312 (Q5) (London: for Matthew Law, 1615) D2v; William Shakespeare, *Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies. Published According to the True*

Originall Copies, STC 22273 (F1) (London: Isaac Jaggard and Ed. Blount, 1623) C3v.

¹⁴Abraham, *A Dictionary of Alchemical Imagery*, "blood," "rubedo."

¹⁵For this anecdote I am indebted to my student Kevin Quarmby, who played the cream-faced loon in the production.

¹⁶B. J. Sokol, *Art and Illusion in The Winter's Tale* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1995) 58-65.

¹⁷Glynne Wickham, Herbert Berry and William Ingram, eds., *English Professional Theatre, 1530-1660* (Cambridge: CUP, 2000) 330-32, 493-94, 501-02.

¹⁸John Ronayne, "Totus Mundus Agit Histrionem [The Whole World Moves the Actor]: The Interior Decorative Scheme of the Bankside Globe," *Shakespeare's Globe Rebuilt*, ed. J. R. Mulryne, Margaret Shewring and Andrew Gurr (Cambridge: CUP, 1997): 121-46.

¹⁹G. Wilson Knight, *The Wheel of Fire: Interpretations of Shakespearean Tragedy with Three New Essays*, 4th ed., intr. T. S. Eliot (London: Methuen, 1949) 99-100.

²⁰Abraham, *A Dictionary of Alchemical Imagery*, "grain."

²¹Peter Holland, "The Merchant of Venice and the Value of Money," *Cahiers Elisabethains* 60 (2001): 13-30.

²²R. W. Dent, *Shakespeare's Proverbial Language: An Index* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1981), Appendix A, H26.1.

²³Holland 16, 25.

²⁴Holland 24.

²⁵The only substantive early text gives this as "tyntrap"; see William Shakespeare, [*The Merchant of Venice*] *The Most Excellent Historie of the Merchant of Venice*, STC 22296 (Q1) (London: J. R[oberts] for Thomas Heyes, 1600) F1r. It is often modernized to "t'entrap" and although the Oxford edition's "t'untrap" seems negative the required sense is of trapping not releasing.

²⁶William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, ed. John Russell Brown, The Arden Shakespeare (London: Methuen, 1955) 84.

²⁷Nancy Vickers, "'The Blazon of Sweet Beauty's Best': Shakespeare's *Lucrece*," *Shakespeare and the Question of Theory*, ed. Patricia Parker and Geoffrey Hartman (London: Methuen, 1985) 95-115.

Tragic Closure in *Hamlet*

LAURY MAGNUS

"A was a man, take him for all in all: / I shall not look upon his like again" (1.2.187-88).¹ Hamlet's thoughts about his departed father may well be recalled by many in the audience upon hearing Horatio's "Good night, sweet Prince." In taking our leave both of the prince and of the play, we are likely to feel that Shakespeare has broken all the molds, forging, in W. H. Auden's words, a "new style of architecture" in the tragic genre.² In our age, where most productions are constrained to considerably shorter playing time than *Hamlet's* almost four hours, the play stands as an enduring challenge. The powerful emotional impact of 5.2, its closing scene, is prepared for with sustained and consummate artistry, its final resolution building up over many earlier scenes.

With *Hamlet's* complex action, Shakespeare pushes to the limit an ambivalence toward closure inherent in classical tragedy's peripeteia and recognition, both of which have strong retrospective elements. In addition, classical forms of the genre frequently manifest an anticlosural recursiveness inherent in any sacrifice/revenge cycle.³ However, though peripeteia and recognition are crucial to tragedy's formal architecture, they are ultimately re-stabilizing forces. For the tragic outcome always returns us to our beginnings with a difference in knowledge and insight—with seeing restored—and the symmetries we as audience invoke in returning to points of origin are crucial to our sense of tragic resolution.

However, in Shakespearean tragedy—and especially in the great tragedies—a new, more jagged documentary style developed as part of the Elizabethan evolution of the genre. This uneven new style vies

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equally with the implied symmetries and homecomings of ritual design in classical tragedy, and it has important implications for both motivated action and resolution. As Clifford Leech reminds us,

Because of its closer approximation to the everyday appearance of things, there seems to be a greater degree of free will in Elizabethan than in Greek tragedy: it seems as if Hamlet could deflect the course of the action at almost any point if he wished [...] while clearly Orestes and Oedipus are bound to an established pattern. (16)

Nowhere is this documentary openness more evident than in *Hamlet* (even supposing that a definitive text of the play might ever emerge from its problematically divergent incarnations).⁴ It may be that in swerving from the Aristotelian mimetic mode, with its privileging of action over character, Shakespeare necessarily allows the fuzzier internal momentum of character dynamics to overwhelm the clearer forces of plot design in bringing the play to resolution, a swerve that goes far in explaining the play's sense of modernity. Indeed, much recent critical attention has fastened on the intricate character development of Hamlet as key to the play's structure, as exemplified in Harold Bloom's approach and adumbrated in such critical overviews as that of Jenkins (xii.157-59) and Kerrigan (1-32). This focus persists despite the idiosyncrasy of *Hamlet* noted by Granville-Barker that the prince disappears for some forty minutes prior to the play's final action (136). But the emphasis on Hamlet's character is not misplaced: Shakespeare absents him only to bring him back into the play with an astonishing sea change, a renewed vigor of complication that his newly heightened presence adds to both the plot design and the problem of closure.

Related to this encroachment of complexly-developed character upon plot dynamics is the play's persistent verbal mode of questioning and uncertainty, which in turn creates even further complexities of "doubling, oxymoron, and antithesis," as Harry Levin (among others) has cogently argued (51). Rather than balancing the play's inherent contradictions, the omnipresent interrogatives instead multiply

uncertainty not only about cosmology but even about simple causality and outcomes.

As if the closural questions raised by the documentary Elizabethan style of Shakespearean tragedy, the protagonist's complexities, and the unceasing interrogatives of *Hamlet* were not difficult enough, there are also multiple plots deriving from diverse sources with their diverse elements and often contradictory origins and motivations.⁵ These conflicts in turn resonate in realms that are personal, national, international, and cosmic.

Such complexities and multiple perspectives, along with the play's sheer length, create the need for a supreme closural design. On the face of it, it would seem impossible to address all the questions about being, seeming, and action that the play raises. But as any credible performance of the play makes clear, the final scene is a study in masterful artistic closure. Its powerful tragic irony inheres in its two crucial events: Hamlet's killing of Claudius and his own death in fulfilling his mission of revenge. If those two intertwined actions are the ones most crucial to the play's closure, they are surrounded by many other resolutions of varying magnitude that certainly invoke pity, terror, and an overwhelming sense of tragic grandeur. The intricate closural design of 5.2 resolves conflicts that have resonated long before they are brought to a head in the final scene, conflicts discernable for over a full act prior to this scene.

The critical scene in which we begin to descry the falling action is 3.4, where Shakespeare starts his preclosural work, disposing of or redirecting several important plot complications, including Polonius's death, Gertrude's reformation, the redirection of Fortinbras's political and martial ambitions, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's deaths, and Ophelia's death. The death of Polonius and the foreshadowed defeat and death of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are all outcomes of 3.4, a scene that also sets in motion the dynamics of Ophelia's madness and death and prepares us for Hamlet's vision of Fortinbras and his armies moving toward Poland. This vision and, in 5.1, the shock of Ophelia's death, are the necessary prelude to Hamlet's growing abil-

ity to perceive his "readiness" for whatever fate has in store for him, an ability crucial, in turn, to his taking up arms against a sea of troubles with heroic vigor in his final moments in the play.

After Polonius's death near the beginning of the scene, the queen becomes a horrified but contrite and determined ally who explicitly voices her new allegiance to her son. From this point on, the changes in the queen create great opportunities for performance, reaching a climax just before she dies in her attempt to expose her husband and save her son from poison. Thus, the extremity of Hamlet's behavior toward his mother in 3.4 is technically faithful to the ghost's second commandment—that Hamlet "Leave her to heaven, / and to the thorns that in her bosom lodge / To prick and sting her" (1.5.86-88). First, Gertrude has been the initiator, and Hamlet comes in answer to her summons; second, his intent in coming to "speak daggers" rather than use them is precisely in order "to turn [her] eyes into [her] very soul." This is ultimately an activity of inner conscience, however externally provoked. Kerrigan reminds us, in a whole chapter devoted to the often repeated words "good night," that the scene's closing lines of blessing and farewell convey the exorcism of her guilt (Kerrigan 35). Gertrude's pledge to him to keep Claudius in the dark, maintaining a vigil of silence and abstinence toward him, releases Hamlet from any lingering preoccupation with the ghost's second implied "commandment," so that only the first remains to be fulfilled.

As for Polonius, that meddlesome and hapless counselor, the problematic preclosure involved in his death is evident in the violent clashes of diction in Hamlet's final lines in the scene: the flagrant colloquialism of "this man shall set me packing" and "lug the guts" (3.4.213-14) jar violently against the sacramental overtones of Hamlet's further "good night" blessings (3.4.215; 219). Though seemingly outrageous in the extreme, Hamlet's callous punning and behavior toward Polonius—dragging out his body (and the related practical joke of subsequently hiding something rotten in the state of Denmark)—are nevertheless mixed with a strongly articulated sense of the full weight of his deed.⁷

This consciousness is not merely chagrin at having killed the wrong person who—we must agree with his rueful comment—now finds that “to be too busy is some danger” (3.4.33). Though at the end of the scene he may wryly blame Polonius for his own death, earlier he has voiced the recognition that the life he has taken will somehow be answerable only at the price of his own life. This recognition is set against one of several repetitions of “good night” to his mother:

Once more, good night,
And when you are desirous to be blest,
I'll blessing beg of you. For this same lord
I do repent; but heaven hath pleas'd it so,
To punish me with this and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him. So, again, good night. (3.4.172-79)

It can be argued that these lines simply show Hamlet's awareness of responsibility for Polonius's death, yet “answer well” conveys a clear sense that he means “requite with my life,” especially when coupled with his lament about being the scourge and minister of heaven. Even more significantly, he uses the figure of chiasmus in “punished me with this and this with me” upon discovering the murdered corpse's identity, implying his awareness that his miscarried revenge mission will exact its payment. Indeed, this verbal figure of chiasmus prefigures his crossing of swords with Laertes in the protracted duel of 5.2.

Hamlet's closing speech in 3.4 starts out as a prediction of the undoing of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and voices an important closural motif of 5.2. As he reminds Gertrude, these friends are about to accompany him to England, but, he informs her, he will trust them only as he would trust “adders fang'd.” Nevertheless, he entertains no doubts about his ability to outsmart them:

For 'tis the sport to have the engineer
Hoist with his own petard, and't shall go hard
But I will delve one yard below their mines
And blow them at the moon. O, 'tis most sweet
When in one line two crafts directly meet. (3.4.208-12)

Hamlet clearly recognizes his friends as "engineers" of a treacherous breach that threatens both himself and the kingdom, as the word "petard" implies. Actually, a petard is an explosive device used to blow through castle gates in an assault, so the metaphor carries with it the threat to Denmark. Hamlet confidently predicts the inevitable defeat of those who plot against others, whatever the instrumentality of that plotting or "craft." Ironically, as a result of this confident foresight, the subsequent lines in this scene suggest a certain dismissiveness as to Polonius's fate as well as to the fate that likely awaits him for having dispatched Polonius:

This man shall set me packing.
 I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room.
 Mother, good night indeed. This counsellor
 Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
 Who was in life a foolish prating knave. (3.4.213-17)

The closing sardonic epitaph blames Polonius's own meddlingness, again invoking the logic of the "engineer hoist with his own petard" and placing the counselor in the same league with Hamlet's viperous friends. As in 1.5 when the Ghost informs him of Claudius's fratricide, he has seen confirmation of the intuitive gifts of his "prophetic soul."

There is a rub, though, to his confidence in his gifts. Even as Polonius's death rids both the plot and Hamlet of the counselor's intrigues with Claudius, it sets in motion a heightened consciousness that there will be a price to pay for this murder, however unintentional. It also creates the further complication of placing Hamlet himself in the double role of avenger and murderer, with Laertes as avenging dramatic foil.⁸

Ophelia's death, like her father's, closes certain conflicts at the same time that it opens others, though if Polonius's death is clearly Hamlet's nemesis, Ophelia's could almost be seen as gratuitous. With the bitter dissolution of their love, no further development in their love relationship has seemed possible since 3.1, with Hamlet's challenge to her ("Where's your father?"), the utter cowardice of her reaction, and

his violent, definitive rejection of her. Her subsequent suffering may be pitiable in the extreme, but from the point of view of action, the ending of their love in a sense of betrayal is definitive midway through the play. Later on, this breach will add considerably to Hamlet's consternation and retrospective sense of loss as he belatedly takes in the enormity of her madness and death. However, in 4.5, Laertes's reckless and defiant response to Polonius's death is so extreme that he is willing to commit regicide there and then and is primed for Claudius's manipulations. There is no need for the additional goad of Ophelia's madness and drowning.

Though structurally gratuitous, however, the death and madness of Ophelia become major elements necessary for the further character changes Hamlet undergoes preparatory to undertaking the final challenges of action in 5.2. The other crucial element is his meditation on Fortinbras's maneuvers in 4.4 ("How all occasions do inform against me"). These character changes, in turn, are crucial to understanding the closure of the play's long and complex final scene, since they ready Hamlet to relinquish the claims of ego and revenge for higher claims of love and justice.

Paradoxically, these changes do not seem to be visible until after the tragic protagonist has been physically absent from the stage for several long scenes in Act 4 (4.2 and 4.5) as Shakespeare focuses on Ophelia's madness, Laertes's violent challenge to the throne of Denmark, Claudius's manipulation of Laertes and their plots against Hamlet, and Ophelia's death. But unlike the other preclosural elements in 3.4, Ophelia's death takes place outside of Hamlet's knowledge. Thus, the temporarily invisible Hamlet's changes in character are newly manifested as Act 5 opens by his meditations on the two invisible dramatic foils: Fortinbras, whose ambitions and fortunes have been the subject of Hamlet's meditations as he departs for England, and Ophelia, who, when he returns, has invisibly moved beyond all known frameworks. These exchanges between visible and invisible presences mediate the striking final changes in Hamlet's character prior to the duel scene.

As 4.4 opens, Fortinbras is moving his armies through Denmark to Poland, for which safe conduct has been promised by Claudius. Though Hamlet himself neither sees nor hears Fortinbras, the audience is finally able to size up the prince's Norwegian dramatic foil directly. Fortinbras's short speech conveys a character at dramatic variance with Horatio's portrait of him as a lawless, opportunistic hot-head in 1.1. In a few lines, Fortinbras dispatches his Captain to greet the Danish King and obtain "the conveyance of a promised march / over his kingdom" (4.4.3-4). Fortinbras's rhetoric stresses his conformity with the agreement reached by Norway with Claudius, as he continues to instruct the Captain: "If that his Majesty would aught with us, / We shall express our duty in his eye; / And let him know so" (4.4.5-7). The audience thus revises its earlier opinion of Fortinbras from the direct evidence of his present language and behavior. Even before we encounter the reckless, politically ill-advised internal rebellion of Laertes in the subsequent scene, we are already likely to concur with the important conclusion Hamlet draws in Q2 from his exchange with the sea captain, that Fortinbras is a

[...] delicate and tender prince,
Whose spirit, with divine ambition puff'd,
Makes mouths at the invisible event,
Exposing what is moral and unsure
To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,
Even for an eggshell. Rightly to be great
Is not to stir without great argument,
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
When honour's at the stake. (4.4.48-56)

The outcome of action might be but "a little patch of ground"; the *contemptus mundi* theme may receive an ever-increasing emphasis in Hamlet's reflections. But, as the repetition of "great," "greatly," "great" within a three-line span indicates, for once in all the action of *Hamlet*, the prince has found a paradigm for action that is corrupted neither by its genesis in suspect circumstances nor by its pollution from the something rotten in Denmark. In these lines of Hamlet's so-

liloquy comparing himself to Fortinbras, he seizes on Fortinbras's readiness to "make mouths at the invisible event." This contrasts profoundly with Hamlet's earlier soliloquy in which thought about "what's unsure" makes great enterprises "lose the name of action." Clearly, Shakespeare is preparing us for a nobler Fortinbras who will enter the visible stage and state again only after Hamlet has departed it forever; the playwright accomplishes this via an endorsement which is drawn from a more measured source within Hamlet's psyche.

Once Hamlet departs for England, the final preclosural issue is raised and resolved: the madness and death of Ophelia. Oddly enough, it is the bodily absence of the hero that is crucial to bringing about this change of Hamlet's consciousness; a striking dramatic irony results from the discrepancy between the hero's ignorance and the audience's consciousness of Ophelia's death during the gravediggers' clowning. Their banter bridges the dramatic hiatus between the end of Act 4, the queen's narration of Ophelia's dissolve into the watery element, and the opening of Act 5, her imminent burial in the earth they are digging.

Ophelia's transmigration is mimed by an intricate parallelism between things visible and invisible in 4.4 and 5.1. It is as though Ophelia now stands in to fill the void left by the ghost's disappearance from the play after 4.3. In 5.1, the invisible Ophelia presides over a newly present Hamlet, who is about to receive the spectacular, meta-physical knock-out punch that the playwright has in store for him.

As Act 5 opens, we hear the clowns quibble about the nature of Ophelia's final resting place. They question its appropriateness for a suicide and split hairs on questions of her sanity, speculating in their earthy terms about the relationship of action to reason and will. When the newly-returned Hamlet edges closer to that unknown disputed ground, he adds his own gallows humor and speculations upon the nature of ambition, death, and decay, with no idea that his foot rests at the door of his lady's chamber. He may still be suffering the grief of having lost his father—a "common" theme of human generation—yet he has not as yet

truly conceived of death as a personal matter that, having claimed his lady and contemporary, will necessarily come to him.

In fact, Hamlet's meditations on mortality earlier in the play have been spoken in generalizing terms (even in the famous soliloquy), or they have proclaimed the mortality of others. Before being sent away in 4.3, Hamlet has used the calculus of decay to throw Claudius's corruption back in his teeth. After having demonstrated to Claudius that Polonius is "at supper" by illuminating the progress of a king through the guts of a beggar, Hamlet says "Farewell dear mother" to Claudius because "man and wife is one flesh." He is intimating that Claudius's incestuous marriage, which has corrupted the flesh of his mother, has eliminated not only the dignity of hierarchical degree, but even the first differentiation of nature, gender differentiation. Hamlet himself equates this decay with Claudius's corruption and has removed himself from the fleshly mergers of "marriages." He thus distances himself from the universal fate of decomposition in store for Claudius by his ironic contempt for his already-corrupt interlocutor. When next we see Hamlet discoursing on this theme with the gravedigger, he remarks on the clown's literal-mindedness in denying gender to the unidentified corpse of "one who *was* a woman," as though he is surprised by a logic of universal decomposition that he himself has traced to its extreme end.

Yet, not having identified the person intended for the grave on which his foot rests, he continues to bandy jokes, circling back to the subject in his catechism of the gravedigger, perhaps needing to give that earth a more local habitation and a name, which the gravedigger then partially delivers by identifying Yorick. From the assault of this identification, Hamlet seems to take refuge in abstraction again, using Alexander of Macedon as the paradigm of earthy accomplishment. It is as though, like Tolstoy's Ivan Ilyich, he would hit upon the proper syllogism to drive home a personal comprehension of death's depersonalization. But this is still not enough, for from this declension upon Alexander's fate, Hamlet proceeds immediately to devise a quatrain upon the fate of Imperious Caesar, dwelling obsessively on what is

still the mere *thought* of death's obliteration—of distinction, of degree, of gender—of form of any kind. The verse is a climax to his grim, long-winded, obsessive but stubbornly abstract calculus, tracing Caesar's clay to that "earth" which "kept the world in awe" but which now is being used to "patch a wall t'expel the winter's flaw" (5.1.209-10). The verbal "patch" of the infinitive phrase recalls the "patch of ground"—the noun phrase the Captain has mentioned as the ambition of Fortinbras's maneuvers against Poland.

But even though he has looked into the eye-sockets of the long-dead Yorick, until Laertes's words suddenly identify the grave's tenant as Ophelia, the tracing of obliteration to its logical end in the existential shock of threatened personal annihilation and corruption has taken place only in an imagined time. When Laertes actually identifies the corpse as his sister, we get our first glimpse of a courageous Hamlet who, paradoxically, begins to build new meaning, indeed, new selfhood upon the patch of ground wherein all human ambitions are laid with the sexton's spade. Before our witnessing eyes, Hamlet's firm new sense of identity is rooted in the very bungle to which he has just physically traced the grinning humor of Yorick, the actions and ambitions of men such as Alexander and Fortinbras, and—now in the flesh as well as in theory—the beauty of Ophelia. And with this realization, perhaps as a counterweight to the shock of personal annihilation, Hamlet emerges from his post of secret observation to proclaim his new personal identity—tied to the specific name of a specific ground: "This is I, Hamlet the Dane." Moreover, naming himself in response to the naming of the annihilated Ophelia, he is also preparing himself to name Fortinbras as his successor—Fortinbras whose earthly ambitions he has both admired and connected to all human limitation. Hamlet is now almost ready to meet the Great Adversary.

With all the divisiveness of critical opinion in *Hamlet* scholarship, there is one assessment that is universal: the profound change Hamlet undergoes in this long scene both as he absorbs Ophelia's death and as he readies himself, with Horatio's aid, for whatever fate awaits him. Hamlet's revelation to Horatio of the king's intrigues shows us a

prince who is at once resigned and decisive. Instead of taking thoughtless action as epitomized by his killing of Polonius and Laertes' rebellion, in place of taking overstudied action, as epitomized by its failure in the prayer scene, Hamlet, as David Bevington so perfectly sums it up,

puts himself wholly at the disposal of providence [...] beyond the revulsion and doubt that express so eloquently, among other matters, the fearful response of Shakespeare's own generation to a seeming breakdown of established political, theological, and cosmological beliefs. Hamlet finally perceives that "if it be not now, yet it will come," and that "the readiness is all."
(1073)

With this new readiness, with Shakespeare's elimination of some of the play's loose ends and his assembly of hovering spiritual presences, the playwright has finally done all the preparatory work for the duel scene that closes the play.

Given the enormous complexity of conflicts as adumbrated above, it would seem that *Hamlet's* final scene rises to the occasion of its own complexity. To be sure, a certain jaggedness and interrogation remain, as in all great tragedies. The repentant queen, attempting to save her son's life, dies hideously, and the autonomy of the Danish kingdom, which has been cleansed of its corrupt monarch, is ceded to Norwegian rule. And yet the mirror symmetries within the text of 5.2 are astonishing in their abundance and finality. Their poetic justice repeatedly hammers home the completion of all long-delayed actions and undecided outcomes in the play, such as Hamlet's poisoning the already poison-stabbed Claudius with lethal drink. Apart from this act of revenge, a crucial generational chiasmus that moves Hamlet like a crab, both forward into completion and backward into self-immolation, some 400 lines and dozens of actions offer a dazzling potential for final closure. Four important symmetries of 5.2 achieve the sense of tragic closure so carefully prepared for:

1. The exterior framing motif of soldiering

The play opens with the question of "Who's there?" asked in the context of a frightening soldiers' watch when international and cosmic war is threatened, and it ends with the tribute to one honorable "soldier" by another: Fortinbras gives the command that Hamlet's passage be honored by a military salute. This is, of course, an immeasurably sad tribute. The very attempt to do honor to the fallen Prince of Denmark reveals Fortinbras as a man of quite limited understanding compared to the man whose crown he will now wear. In the same way, Fortinbras's observation that "The soldiers' music and the rite of war / Speak loudly for him" (5.2.404-05) heightens the pathos and the sense of tragic waste implicit in his attempt to pay what he considers a fitting tribute to the fallen warrior. Yet it is, after all, a tribute that affirms the value of Hamlet's final struggles.

2. The playing out of the Engineer-hoist-with-his-own-petard motif

This motif symbolically presides over the entire scene, though embodied in different but equally lethal instruments: the envenomed sword poised over every move of the duel-cum-wager—with the poisoned chalice as back-up. It is also embodied in the chiasmus of the crucial stage direction that after scuffling, the two dramatic foils will exchange foils, arming an unwitting Hamlet with the poisoned sword.

Before it kills Claudius, the poisoned sword will also fatally wound Laertes—who is yet another of the king's "instruments." However, the second instrument designed to kill Hamlet, the cup, will instead kill Gertrude, the object of Claudius's professed love, through Claudius's failure to prevent her from drinking. (Claudius's inaction—a final failure of will—is a diabolical mirror-image of Hamlet's prevention of Horatio from drinking.) Thus, Claudius will appropri-

ately be slain both by the sword and by the cup, as Hamlet taunts him for his murder of Gertrude: "Is thy union here? Follow my mother!"

Laertes, too, may be an agent who is "justly killed with his own poison," but his death, like the queen's, comes after a manifested penitence that begins when Laertes speaks his aside about hitting Hamlet with the poisoned sword, "And yet it is almost against my conscience" (5.2.300). Still, he is not strong enough at this point to resist the dual taunts of the king and of Hamlet, who calls him back into fatal play: "Come, for the third, Laertes, you but dally. / I pray you pass with your best violence. / I am afeard you make a wanton of me" (5.2.301-03). Laertes' attack on Hamlet follows immediately, as does the scuffle in which they exchange rapiers. Hamlet's subsequent mortal wounding of Laertes with his own sword is followed closely by Gertrude's swooning, all of which bring about Laertes's change of heart and exposure of the King.

That there is a higher justice in Hamlet's long-awaited act of revenge, whatever the theology behind the action, is dramatically driven home. And if there were any further doubt, Hamlet's exclamation makes it clear that though this action completes his revenge, the more immediate call for action is to make sure that Justice has been served: "The point envenom'd too! Then, venom, to thy work" (5.2.327). Though the court may be confused, we understand this as the clearest case of the engineer hoist with his own petard; Hamlet's running through of Claudius must be seen as an act sanctioned by some special Providence which insures an ultimate justice for evildoers.

It would seem that all the play's actions of revenge and intrigue are exhausted with the death of Claudius, since this action requites both King Hamlet's death before the play and the queen's death just minutes before Claudius's own; however, there is one more muted echo of Claudius's villainous intrigues reflected in lines that are spoken not with a bang, but with the whimpered announcement of the death of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern by the English Ambassador.

3. The ceding of revenge actions to actions of amity and love

The play's final emphasis upon many aspects and acts of love is no accident, certainly, since the central catalyst of its complex action has been the grossest violation of love: the fratricidal act of Claudius's murder of King Hamlet. In the final scene, Shakespeare creates a structural corrective to the fratricidal pollution at the play's center by placing all the treacheries involving revenge and intrigue at the beginning and middle of the scene and enclosing acts of revenge within the complementary balanced acts of love. Hamlet's final moments are splendidly concentrated on such acts, making him, as he is dying, "the most life-affirming of all Shakespeare's tragic protagonists" (Fly 273).

Whatever treachery Laertes has in mind, there is a fair-speaking in Hamlet that establishes a history of amity toward his "brother": In the graveyard, after their first struggle, Hamlet remonstrates with Laertes: "What is the reason that you use me thus? / I loved you ever [...]" (5.1.284-85). As the two prepare to duel at the opening of 5.2 Hamlet may manifest a certain disingenuousness in offering as apology the claim that his madness killed Polonius, but his attempt to make peace is in marked contrast to Laertes's vicious intentions and hypocritical acceptance of his "brother's love." However, the initial false apology sets up the urgent final exchange of forgiveness under the impress of that fell sergeant, Death.

A second act of love is Horatio's radical self-sacrifice in grabbing at the poisoned cup, an act which Hamlet interprets as one of ultimate fidelity. Hamlet's plea to his friend to forgo the poisoned cup echoes his earlier praise of Horatio as the elect of Hamlet's soul, and he urgently lays claim to Horatio's love: "If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart / Absent thee from felicity awhile" (5.2.351-52). The wording implies that the physically failing Hamlet cannot struggle for the cup and so demands of Horatio a more difficult act of love: remaining behind in this world. "Felicity" also implies a mutuality of love that confidently foresees a reunion after death. Thus, Hamlet's response is in part a counter to the re-"union" with Gertrude he has just thrown in

the teeth of the dying Claudius. Though it has been argued that Hamlet's concern is only for his "wounded name,"⁹ it is clear that both personal love and a shared higher love of truth have always united them and are therefore justifiably invoked "by Heaven." This higher warrant that guarantees their love will, Hamlet knows, stay Horatio's hand. Hamlet's dying request prepares the ground, in turn, for his friend's act of friendship, Horatio's final salute to the ascending spirit of Hamlet and his honoring of his friend's last wish.

4. The emphasis in 5.2 upon the exposure of Claudius's evil and the telling of the true story of Hamlet, as assured through the remaining witness of Horatio and as promised by Fortinbras

At first, the telling of the true story is not a sure outcome. This is clear from the logical but still unexpected court outcry of "treason, treason" when Hamlet stabs Claudius. The exclamation displays the Danish court's ignorance of the true story and the courtiers' intuitive disposition to obey an anointed king even when he is exposed as a murderer. Moreover, though Horatio remains in the world, there is much uncertainty attaching to Fortinbras's entry after the death of the queen, the king, Laertes, and Hamlet. Heralded by cannon and drum, Fortinbras's appearance might seem to have its questionable motives, especially since he soon speaks of his "rights of memory in this kingdom." Perhaps Fortinbras's rewriting of Danish history will now replace that of Claudius.

However, Shakespeare is quick to dispel this notion and display Fortinbras's character as a sympathetic man anxious to give ear to the true story. His opening question ("Where is this sight?") obviously follows some report of the slaughter that has taken place. Horatio's response is a challenge that strikes the note of pity and terror: "What is it you would see? / If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search" (5.2.366-67). Fortinbras immediately takes up the challenge:

This quarry cries on havoc. O proud Death,
 What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,
 That thou so many princes at a shot
 So bloodily hast struck? (5.2.369-72)

As a feast of cadavers, the spectacle may very well take in Claudius and Gertrude indifferently with Hamlet himself and threatens to cause the political havoc of uncertain succession. Unknown to Fortinbras, however, that gap in political succession has already been smoothed over by Hamlet's naming of him. Thus Hamlet's act of prevision, both anticipates and ratifies Fortinbras's closural last word on Hamlet.¹⁰ But for the moment, the spectacle of death strikes a much more primal note of pity and horror, and Fortinbras's reaction, like that of the tragic audience, is voiced from the empathic ground of brotherly love in which only death is the great enemy, vanquishing princes as well as commoners, the virtuous and the guilty. There is irony, too, in the metaphor Fortinbras uses. "Havoc," as Harold Jenkins reminds us, "was a battle-cry meaning 'No quarter' and inciting to slaughter and pillage [...]. The peculiarly Shakespearean use of a hunting metaphor [...] by imaging soldiers as hounds, intensifies the savagery" (416, note on line 369). The martial man is for a moment dumbfounded by the slaughter of court intrigue every bit as savage as that of the battlefield.

Horatio responds to Fortinbras's speech of amazement at this penultimate point in the amassing of closural symmetries. He is now the sole reliable witness, a stand-in for Hamlet, whose wounded name under the burden of censured speech and silenced tongue has called for Horatio's speech to set it right. Thus, Horatio now directs Fortinbras's expression of pathos towards its most worthy object amidst the carnage, with the promise that from the chaotic slaughter of "deaths put on by cunning and forc'd cause," of "purposes mistook / Fall'n on th' inventors' heads" (5.2.388-90), he (Horatio) can "truly deliver" the just report.

Once again, Fortinbras responds as we would wish him to:

Let us haste to hear it,
 And call the noblest to the audience.
 For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune. (5.2.391-93)

On this chastened note of sorrow, Fortinbras undergoes a subtle expansion in depth of character, drawing on Hamlet's prior praise of (4.4) and naming of him with his "dying voice." In this way, through a chain of affiliation still maintained by the intercession of the living Horatio, Hamlet empowers Fortinbras not only to rule Denmark but to voice the truth of what has occurred. By means of Fortinbras's audience, the rankly abused ear of Denmark will be healed.

Fortinbras's regal imperative, the play's last word, also takes its cue from Horatio in one last act of brotherhood, since Horatio has pleaded with Fortinbras for swift action. Calling for ceremony—the performative cue to a finale of visual spectacle—Fortinbras gives the last command:

Let four captains
 Bear Hamlet like a soldier to the stage,
 For he was likely, had he been put on,
 To have prov'd most royal; and for his passage,
 The soldier's music and the rite of war
 Speak loudly for him.
 Take up the bodies. Such a sight as this
 Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.
 Go, bid the soldiers shoot. (5.2.400-08)

Having reassured us, the "mute audience," that Hamlet's tale will be heard, Fortinbras speaks these last words of tribute calling for the loud but the wordless speech of music and of soldiers' ordnance, enacted in compliance with the unspoken stage direction that is the text's final word: "Exeunt marching, [...] after which a peal of ordnance is shot off."

Fortinbras's speech is a fitting close to the magnificent closural design of the play, its parting shot moving its auditors beyond *Hamlet's* relentless plenitude and complication of words, words, words. Through a different kind of speech, it points us past itself and beyond

the "stage" of the play's world where Hamlet's body will be placed—indeed, altogether past the stages of the known world. We move now in passage with the spirit of the departed prince, who has found his wordless rest on another shore.

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NOTES

¹All quotations and citations of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* are taken from Jenkins' Arden Edition. Because there is no indisputable single text of *Hamlet*, I have also relied on the ingenious accessibility of Bernice Kliman's variorum website, which reproduces Folio and Quarto versions of the play, an invaluable resource when the play's textual inconsistencies have substantial bearing on an interpretation of a line (as frequently they do).

²W. H. Auden's poem "Petition" is an extended prayer addressed to "Sir," asking Him to "look shining at / New styles of architecture, a change of heart."

³Mark Taylor forcefully argues this anti-closural element in classical tragedy, stating that "in a sense, no Greek tragedy is ever complete, however many may be dead and mutilated, because what has appeared on the *proskenion* to the spectators is always only part of the action" (123).

⁴The multiple incarnations of the text of the play are themselves proof of the ad hoc manner in which the Elizabethan/Jacobean genres evolved between publication and performance. For the general state of textual scholarship on *Hamlet*, see Ron Rosenbaum.

⁵What we do know about the multiple sources of *Hamlet* suggests that Shakespeare's wide borrowings and free modifications create clashing motivations that are grist for the mill of the play's ratiocinative style.

⁶Ruth Nevo traces in detail the general amplifications to tragic form that Shakespeare's great tragedies embody, rightly placing special emphasis on what I later refer to as "preclosural" character transformations involving ironic reversals of the protagonist's prior attitudes. These usually occur in Act 4, but in *Hamlet*, as Nevo points out (166-68), the signs of the transformation begin as early as 3.4.

⁷Kerrigan points out that Hamlet can scarcely bring himself to contemplate the man whose life he has just terminated until he has taken his mother fully to task. This would argue against the interpretation that he is leaving her to heaven. Ho-

However, her moral passivity has been such that she has summoned him to her with no sense of her own guilt, as Michael Long convincingly argues.

⁸Jenkins, both in his introduction and notes, forcefully argues Shakespeare's emphasis on this double role of avenger and murderer, but surely it is an unemphatic doubling—one of many doublings in the play. In performance, Claudius's conscious and premeditated evils are so different in nature from Hamlet's responses to treachery that the final act of revenge on Claudius is clearly an act of justice under higher auspices—as opposed to the “accident” of his own death.

⁹Most notably, by Harold Bloom, who cantankerously argues that Hamlet loves no one but himself. According to Bloom, Horatio's suicide attempt is “forestalled by Hamlet only so that his follower can become his memorialist” (392).

¹⁰I do not agree with the recent view of Hamlet's naming of Fortinbras expressed by Mark Taylor, who finds it “pointless” since “Hamlet knows well that Fortinbras will seize the Danish throne” (117). It may be that in the larger scheme of things the succession of Fortinbras is inevitable, but this is not certain knowledge to the dying Hamlet. In his few minutes as de facto head of state, Hamlet, like his friend Horatio, is anxious to avoid the anarchy that may come when “men's minds are wild.” Thus, he expends his dying breath to ensure that an honorable prince (as he has come to see Fortinbras) succeeds him.

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Milton and the Restoration: Some Reassessments

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Milton during the Restoration is usually seen as a distressed poet who, reeling from cultural shock, abandons public activity, especially political activity, to withdraw "into regions of the mind"?¹ My reassessment of this perspective is twofold. First, I will cite Milton's political prose to argue that he anticipated the monarchical restoration. On the contrary, this restoration, on the whole, confirmed his political expectations. Second, I will argue that there is much evidence to suggest the "Restoration Milton" was extraordinarily active—especially for a blind man—in a society that he very likely found more congenial than that of pre-war England. I will then examine how these reassessments impact the autobiographical passages of *Paradise Lost*, before concluding with a few tentative remarks on a "culture of loss" that seems to link the poet's political prose with his epic.

Christopher Hill has written that "the restoration then came about, in Milton's view, because of the avarice and ambition of the revolutionary leaders, because of lack of virtue and civic morale among the body of the people, and because of divisions among the godly themselves."² I suggest that these cultural failures would have been anticipated by, in Professor Hill's words, "no political innocent" who had recorded in his Commonplace Book (1640-41) that "anyone may learn with how much disturbance of conscience affairs of state are carried on."³ Milton's deeply skeptical and satiric temperament was strenuously exercised throughout the tumultuous 1640s and 1650s.⁴ The "Ha, ha, ha" of his early anti-prelatical tracts is quickly turned on his allies in this rancorous debate (*Animadversions*, CPW 1: 726). Presbyterians—among others—condemn his books and denounce him in

sermons, and his response is characteristically ferocious as he condemns those who have misled the nation into "all this waste of wealth and blood" (Sonnet XII 14; ca. 1646).⁵ In *Ad Ioannem Rousium* (January 1647), the central problem is attributed not to the Anglicans, or to the Presbyterians, or to the Sectaries. It is seen as the English themselves: "What god or what god-begotten man will take pity on the ancient character of our race—if we have sufficiently atoned for our earlier offenses and the degenerate idleness of our effeminate luxury—and will sweep away these accursed tumults among the citizens?" (25-29). "Milton's bitter perspective on the events of the late 1640s" clearly is evident in his *History of Britain*.⁶ It is even more clearly evident in the section censored from that work. In 1648 he excoriates the Parliament that chose to "hucster the common-wealth," involving the nation in "ridiculous frustration" (MS Digression, CPW 5.1: 445, 443). And it is then that he more obviously turns his attention to averting the reimposition of royal order. In *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, Milton warns "doubling Divines" (CPW 3: 198)—and the rest of those "who of late so much blame Disposing [...] the Men that did it themselves" (title page)—"not to fall off from thir first principles" by sponsoring a restoration—in 1648: "Let them, feare therfore if they be wise, [...] and be warn'd in time they put no confidence in Princes whom they have provok'd, lest they be added to the examples of those that miserably have tasted the event" (CPW 3: 238-39). Even with the execution of the king, too many of "the men that did it themselves" remain "an inconstant, irrational, and Image-doting rabble," the latest generation of the "race of Idiots" that slumbered in "slavish dejection" during the pre-war period. His countrymen, he writes in 1649, are characterized by "a besotted and degenerate baseness of spirit, except some few" (*Eikonoklastes*, CPW 3: 601, 344, 355).

His *Defenses* do not merely warn against a restoration of the monarchy. As pointed out by his anonymous biographer (and many others since then), they predict it. Aloof from "the corrupt designs of his Masters," Milton "little less than Prophetically, denounc'd the Punishments due to the abusers of that Specious name" of "Liberty" in the

"Perorations at the close of those Books."⁷ In each case, resounding the mighty *if* of *Ad Ioannem Rousium* (and the first word of the *Tenure*), he targets the vices that he had cited in his Digression as the sources for political reversal—"self-seeking, greed, luxury, and the seductions of success" (*First Defense*, CPW 4.1: 535) and "avarice, ambition, and luxury" (*Second Defense*, CPW 4.1: 680):

Unless your liberty is [...] of that kind alone which, sprung from piety, justice, temperance, in short, true virtue, has put down the deepest and most far-reaching roots in your souls, there will not be lacking one who will shortly wrench from you, even without weapons, that liberty [...]. (CPW 4.1: 680)

Milton here in the *Second Defense* again implies that his readers lack these virtues, that these virtues must be developed rather than retained. The English must "drive" from their "minds the superstitions that are sprung from ignorance of real and genuine religion [...]." They must "expel avarice, ambition, and luxury" from their "minds" and "extravagance" from their "families": "You, therefore, who wish to remain free, either be wise at the outset or recover your senses as soon as possible" (*Second Defense*, CPW 4.1: 680, 684).

This skepticism is heightened since these admonitions follow Milton's salute to England's liberator. This no longer is the English people—or at least the people whom Milton previously credited with having performed "it themselves." In the *First Defense* he tells the English that God "has wondrously set you free before all men"; and in the *Second Defense* he cites God's instruments as the radical, especially army, leaders—and, of course, himself (CPW 4.1: 535, 674-78). The chief is Cromwell: "Cromwell, we are deserted! You alone remain. On you has fallen the whole burden of our affairs. On you alone they depend" (*Second Defense*, CPW 4.1: 671). This statement should be read in light of what Milton writes six years later, after "a short but scandalous night of interruption" caused by England's reliance on Cromwell: "Certainly then that people must needs be madd or strangely infatuated, that build the chief hope of thir common happiness on a single person" (*Likeliest Means*, CPW 7: 274; *Readie and Easie Way* 7:

361). A statement in the *First Defense* is even more illuminating. Should the English return to monarchy (as the tract strongly suggests, even "prophesies"), "the worst expressions and beliefs" of the skeptics (such as evidently himself) "are all true" (*First Defense*, CPW 4.1: 536).

Another one of these skeptics was John Phillips, very likely the anonymous biographer who points out this "prophecy." If it were Phillips, he probably had many good reasons, other than the perorations, for his observation of his uncle's skepticism. Certainly, Milton not only foretells the restoration of the monarchy, he foretells it for largely the right reasons. The restored monarchy and the government that would evolve from it are more acceptable to the commercial interests in an England at the threshold of empire and vast commercial expansion. Milton succinctly summarized the alternatives at this pivotal moment. He proposes the virtues of republicanism, "to administer incorrupt justice to the people, to help those cruelly harassed and oppressed, and to render every man promptly his own desserts." Or the English could reveal themselves to be "royalists" as they pursue "the ability to devise the cleverest means of putting vast sums of money into the treasury, the power readily to equip land and sea forces, to deal shrewdly with ambassadors from abroad, and to contract judicious alliances and treaties" (*Second Defense*, CPW 4.1: 671).⁸ As the MS Digression clearly indicates, this choice had been made long before 1654.

In early 1660, Milton's political skepticism culminates in proposing his own restoration:

Free Commonwealths have bin ever counted fittest and properest for civil, vertuous and industrious Nations, abounding with prudent men worthie to govern: monarchie fittest to curb degenerate, corrupt, idle, proud, luxurious people. If we desire to be of the former, nothing better for us, nothing nobler then a free Commonwealth: if we will needs condemn our selves to be of the latter, desparing of our own vertue, industrie and the number of our able men, we may then, conscious of our own unworthiness to be governd better, sadly betake us to our befitting thralldom: yet chusing out of our own number one who hath best aided the people, and best merited against tyrannie, the space of a raign or two we may chance to live happily enough, or tolera-

bly. But that a victorious people should give up themselves again to the vanquishd, was never yet heard of; seems rather void of all reason and good policie, and will in all probabilitie subject the subduers to the subdu'd, will expose to revenge, to beggarie, to ruin and perpetual bondage the victors under the vanquishd: then which what can be more unworthie? (*Brief Notes upon a Late Sermon*, CPW 7: 481-82)

A saving remnant perhaps, but it is doubtful Milton ever believed that any place had worthies abounding. Of course there was Heaven, but then many of the angels fell—or so the poet was arguing in *Paradise Lost*. Nor is it likely that he had much confidence in the virtue of pagan Greece and Rome or Machiavelli's Catholic Italy: the positive side of his own republicanism is too deeply sourced in "the long-deferr'd, but much more wonderfull and happy reformation of the Church in these latter dayes" (*Of Reformation in England*, CPW 1: 519). Yet, virtuous men were even rarer in a "reforming" England that by 1648 had inflicted the most "ignominious and mortal wound to faith, to pietie [...] since the first preaching of reformation" (MS Digression, CPW 5.1: 449). So Milton argues not that the English have virtue, but that they have the opportunity to develop virtue in Milton's republic.

Woolrych writes that Milton's proposal implies "better, in fact, King George than King Charles" (CPW 7: 203). Why Monck rather than Charles II? "General Monck cheerfully changed from the King's side to Parliament's as soon as the latter was clearly winning; with equal lack of principle he changed back again in 1660 when Parliament in its turn was going under."⁹ This man would seem the king-nominee of an epic satirist rather than of a political idealist—and he was. Nearly every word of the proposal for the English to "sadly betake" themselves (including, rhetorically, himself) to "thralldom" is contemptuous: "raign or two," "chance," "happily enough, or tolerably." The climactic question of disgust not only restates Milton's previous satirical assessments but is in keeping with the epic that he was then writing.

If his countrymen were to have a king because of their own lack of virtue, men like the plain flexible opportunist Monck were, as successful politicians should be, more plainly fitted to the character of the degenerate governed and to the character of the ignoble government

that such a populace deserves. Certainly such figures were less dangerous than someone who—with astonishing success—appears to be a saint-martyr-king, dying for the principle of his status as God's anointed. This political choice between a purported semi-divinity and a man who could "walk the streets as other men [...] without adoration" in many ways had been made in 1654 (*Readie and Easie Way*, CPW 7: 360). Milton then gradually withdraws from public office, as Cromwell becomes increasingly authoritarian, opening his government to those (many of whom are former royalists) who will find an easy transition to the government of one who—unlike Cromwell—accepts their offer of the crown. "King-ridden" Cromwell himself is condemned by many as a betrayer of the Cause as he effects a religious policy from which it is but "a small step forward to the Parliamentary persecution of sectaries after 1660."¹⁰ Yet Milton responds to Cromwell's despoliations not with amazed and angry protests but with the same satiric, polite if not politic, silence that will comment on Monck's and Montagu's, and Ingoldsby's and Downing's among a multitude of others—restoration of the monarchy.

If Englishmen were to have kings—and the poem Milton was writing in 1660 suggests that autocrats fall into the same category as death, taxes, and sin—Charles II in many ways surpasses Monck as a Miltonic nominee. Milton, of course, could not endorse Charles II, but here at least was someone who confirmed that "the mystery of kingship was irreparably fractured" and "a sudden modernity had swept away the Renaissance state" and the semi-divine trappings that had lent an aura to "Heav'n upon Earth" of Caroline court culture (*Eikonoklastes*, CPW 3: 530).¹¹ The new king's "inclination towards the leisured lifestyle of a country squire came into conflict with his duties as a king. He found it difficult to look and act like a king, to maintain his dignity and keep his distance; too often he would let 'all distinction fall to the ground as useless and foppish.'"¹² As had his father James, Charles I acted the "politic parent," the *Parens patriae*. A triumphal restoration arch welcomed Charles II, too, as *Parens patriae*: "[...] later in his career when called the father of his country, Charles II

reportedly said, 'Well, I believe that I am, a good number of them.'¹³ Renaissance "humanists, poets, writers, and artists" had been so successful in creating an image of a divine king that James I had been able to declare that kings were as "the breathing Images of God upon earth": "Kings are not onely Gods Lieutenants upon earth, and sit upon gods throne, but even by God himselfe they are called Gods."¹⁴ And the "remarkable Renaissance" of Caroline court culture had promoted the idea that "Kingship, the rule of the soul over the body politic, might lead man back to his earthly paradise."¹⁵ In the shadow of these dangerous, dazzling arguments, Milton would have been heartened—by a not unimportant sense of triumph—to hear that the king and his courtiers were once again abandoning God's love for that of women, and not attempting to disguise their lasciviousness with talk of "love," except of the body. The poet was much less disturbed by courtiers flown with insolence and wine than by those who, intoxicated with philosophical idealism, quoted Plato and Ficino as they endorsed political absolutism, celebrating court men and women as "gods and goddesses, heroes and heroines, sun and stars," representing "the Renaissance belief in man's ability to control his own destiny."¹⁶ The mighty and great were now supposed (as they had always been by Milton) to get drunk and make noise—and not to pretend it was philosophy. Lusty courtiers, rolling in their brutish vices, Plato unquoted: this was how it should be—and seemed to be after 1660.¹⁷

Why then does Milton, about 1660, withdraw, more or less permanently, into "regions of mind"? I suggest that this assessment is not completely convincing. In December 1657 Milton had written that he had "very few intimacies with the men in favor, since" he stayed "at home most of the time, and by choice."¹⁸ And in 1659 he writes that his contact with public officials had been restricted to his "prayers for them that govern" (*Letter to a Friend*, CPW 7: 324). In 1660, however, there are so many persons possibly responsible for Milton's preservation that it is impossible to determine what precisely did happen. Edward Phillips tells us of "all the Power and Interest he [Milton] had in the Great ones of those Times," including "Friends both in [Privy]

Council and Parliament."¹⁹ Parker speculates that these powerful "Friends" might have included Monck, Montagu, Annesley, Sir William Morrice, Sir Thomas Clarges, as well as Davenant and Marvell. And of course there were the Joneses and Boyles, as well as other Fellows of the Royal Society.²⁰ Who among the great before the war, would have known the scrivener's son, much less have preserved him from the punishments prescribed for traitors?

Parker, arguing that during the 1640s and 1650s Milton's influence was "in the moulding of events [...] negligible," conjectures that after 1660 "living in seclusion, he probably became an almost legendary figure to those Englishmen who remembered but did not know him."²¹ Whatever was private about this "seclusion" would seem neither unnatural nor unwelcome to a blind man in his sunset years. But Milton continued to enjoy an extraordinarily busy and public "seclusion." His celebrity (he had little or none before the civil war) flared brighter, achieving if not exactly a radical chic, at least a radical fascination.

Milton's books are, of course, denounced (as they had been in 1643/44) and burned, but this adds "evidence for Milton's political reputation after the Restoration."²² The forbidden, then as now, exerts an irresistible allure, especially if you survive it: "visits to see Milton were part of the ordinary tourist route through London, and travelers from abroad were being shown [before the fire] the birthplace in Bread Street by the proud local inhabitants."²³ Nor is the prophet, though understandably unpopular with many, neglected by his more knowing countrymen. He is visited by "the Nobility, and many persons of eminent quality"—more than the blasé poet did desire, "almost to his dying day."²⁴ Witty stories are told about visits from the Duke of York (or according to Chateaubriand, the king himself)²⁵—who, made the butt of the poet's subversive repartee, indignantly tattles to his brother the king (*LR* 4: 389-91). In another anecdote that reveals Time busily vindicating the poet, when the King's Book begins to appear as not the king's book, the Earl of Clarendon writes to John Gauden, Bishop of Exeter, "Nobody will be glad of it but Mr. Milton"

(LR 4: 369). In a vein of similar hilarity, Warton tells us how King Charles II is informed of the quasi-regicide's mock funeral, a ruse to fool the authorities, and the Merry Monarch laughs heartily at the bard's prank (LR 4: 317).

Perhaps some of these anecdotes were invented after the poet's death. But several biographers (the anonymous biographer, Newton, and Richardson), relying primarily upon Milton's widow, even record that the *blind* man was invited by the King to write for the court, probably as Latin Secretary. He declines, unlike the vast majority of Englishmen (and many of his close acquaintances and former associates). But since Milton won't go to court, the court goes to him. Helmsmen of state seek to consult the sage on matters of which few people at that time are familiar, such as divorce, even royal divorce.²⁶ It is not known whether or how often Milton deigned to respond. After the poet is safely in the grave, his work is indeed appropriated by royalists. *Mr John Miltons Character of the Long Parliament and Assembly of Divines in MDCXLI* is published in 1681. The work—edited by Roger L'Estrange—is used by the Tories to attack the Parliament during the Exclusion Crisis.²⁷

And of course *Paradise Lost* is published in 1667 (and *Samson Agonistes* and *Paradise Regained*—and histories translations, polemical prose, a logic book, and other material).²⁸ Yet, even before that poem, Milton already had attained a literary reputation. His *Defensio* (when an unburned copy could be obtained) was still admired by many (including, of course, himself) as a literary masterpiece. Even his poetry, quite possibly, had been recognized by many contemporaries as masterful.²⁹ Burnet comments that Milton "lived many years much visited by all strangers, and much admired by all at home for the poems he writ" (LR 5: 116-117). In 1663, the immensely popular *Mask* is re-published—this time with the author's name prominently attached.³⁰ Though without Milton's name, Shakespeare's third folio is published with Milton's dedicatory poem. It was not only Thomas Ellwood who recognized the scrivener's son as "a gentleman of great note for learning throughout the learned world."³¹ In the same year,

the Comte de Cominges, French ambassador, wrote of the English "arts and sciences" to Louis XIV, "if any vestiges remain here (in England) it is only in the memory of Bacon, of More, of Buchanan, and, in recent times, of one named Milton" (LR 4: 393).

Paradise Lost, more than likely, becomes an instant classic, or at the very least, "at once made a very strong impression."³² Indeed, "almost every bookish or literary person in England had read or looked into *Paradise Lost* before 1669."³³ But it is not only the learned—Puritan or Royalist—whom the poem astonishes. Stories appear disputing which fashionable courtier was to receive credit for "discovering" the poem (LR 4: 439, 446-47). The plausibility of these stories is strongly indicated by a more documented example of the poem's success with the world of fashion. In search of an entertainment for the Duke of York's proposed marriage festivities, the poet laureate hastens (according to some reports, attended by Sir Edmund Waller) to a house near Bunhill Fields to request permission to turn *Paradise Lost* into that popular new court genre, an opera. With elegant and genial scorn, the author grants his leave for the Laureate "to tagge his Verses" as an entertainment at the Duke of York's marriage to Louis XIV's niece, to whom his work is, with much adulation, dedicated (LR 5: 46-47).³⁴

Milton had good reason to remain "cheerfull even in his Gowte-fitts" and generally "very merry" (LR 5: 83). As for his powerful enemies, apparently they were numerous enough to allow him to see himself as "the one just man" and ineffective enough to leave the one just man undisturbed to enjoy the happy fame, or infamy, or godly disrepute that he had gained, and continued to gain, through his role as civic sage.

Ironically, perhaps the most powerful source for creating the image of the reclusive, defiant Milton is *Paradise Lost*. Immediately following the account of the defeated angels, the epic poet tells us that he is

unchang'd

To hoarse or mute, though fall'n on evil days,
On evil days though fall'n, and evil tongues;
In darkness, and with dangers compass round,
And solitude; [...] (PL 7.24-28)

But this "solitude" (*PL* 7.28) is highly rhetorical. "Solitude" literally characterizes Milton in 1660 no more accurately than Marvell's "silence" characterizes a "retired" Milton in 1660-1674 (*LR* 5: 57). By his own admission the poet was "with dangers compass round" (*PL* 7.27). One can be alone, or one can be the center of oppositional controversy, but one cannot be both; functioning as an overt opposition, as we now realize, is a profound form of cultural participation. The poet seems to confirm this by imploring his muse to "drive farr off the barbarous dissonance" of a Restoration culture (*PL* 7.31). This threat is averted—not apparently by the muse—but by the author's numerous powerful friends.

Similarly significant is the assertion that the poet was "unchang'd." This usually is read as evidence of Milton distancing himself from the new cultural contexts. I suggest it indicates the opposite. Milton does not change because he, in many ways, if not the last poet of the English Renaissance (whatever that term might denote), was the first poet of the Restoration. *Paradise Lost*, in at least one spectacular way, vividly supports this perspective. The declaration that the poet is "unchang'd" at first appears obtuse, especially as he was writing such an innately political work as epic. The poem was certainly begun—and its blueprint most probably completed—before the Restoration, which did not occur, according to best guesses, until about mid-poem.³⁵ And then came no minor tap to the political world, requiring subtle shifts or limited modification of perspective. The divine course of history, much celebrated by godly polemicists (including, sometimes, Milton), had seemingly reversed itself. The political world was turned upside-down, winners and losers reversed places, and the events of 1640-1660 assumed a radically fresh significance. Some great thing would seem to have failed or succeeded. Some change—rethinking, modification, or capitulation—would seem to have been in order. Only Milton, and his poem, it seems, remained unchanged in 1660.

Yet, most astonishingly of all, Milton was right: no change was needed. The epic emerges from another revolution unaltered—and just as it should be. Far from becoming either a majestic relic or the

vanishing paradise created by a defeated Saint, *Paradise Lost* becomes the most influential English poem of the next 200 years. The immense event of monarchical restoration registers so faintly on an intensely political poem because it generally confirmed the author's political notions. And these notions were those of the present and future rather than of the past. *Paradise Lost* reflects, enacts, and extends the powerful cultural currents that shaped the Restoration era and would continue to shape English life for at least the next 200 years. It perhaps would not be excessive to suggest that the monarchical restoration and *Paradise Lost* shared similar determining contexts—crises—changes or “causes.” These possible intersections are suggested by another autobiographical passage (the poem's last) that is often cited as evidence of the poet's cultural unease. Beating steadily and consciously towards *his* triumphant conclusion, the poet raises the question if he lives in “an age too late” for epic (*PL* 9.44). It was Milton's genius to perceive that his times were antipathetic to successful traditional epic, and he writes instead anti-epic that was perfectly timed to—among many other things—inaugurate the great age of British satire. Satan, warrior-hero-voyager-discoverer-conqueror-sage-leader-politician-saviour, is a tremendous satire on the futility of the heroism celebrated in Renaissance epic. Readers of Butler, Dryden, and that mob of gentlemen who wrote with ease would have shared Milton's skepticism. Significantly, Milton's conjecture concludes a catalogue of rejected epic themes identified with romance and consequently with the Caroline court culture. It was for this that Milton perceived himself late, and he perceived himself late, very early.³⁶

Where Caroline court art, focusing on the living representative of divine authority, had celebrated why things were right, *Paradise Lost* returns to the beginning to explain what went wrong, why it went wrong, why it is right it went wrong, and what to do about it.³⁷ An examination of the politics of *Paradise Lost* is beyond the scope of this essay. However, I would, in conclusion, like to offer a suggestion about one way in which *Paradise Lost* intersects Milton's pre-1660 political notions and his perceptions of the monarchical restoration.

One of the poem's primary arguments, an argument that predetermines many of the poem's constructions, from the state to the self, is that humans, if they are given a paradise (whatever perfections that term is intended to encompass), will lose it. This theme, I will suggest, is the culmination of the tough satire of the political pamphlets who foresaw long before 1660 a looming monarchical restoration as a confirmation of his arguments for a culture of limitations.

This culture of human loss and failure, of human limitations, often surfaces in the powerful disruptiveness of Milton's republican, protestant arguments. Dr. Johnson, as so often in his criticism of Milton, is almost right:

He hated monarchs in the state and prelates in the church; for he hated all whom he was required to obey. It is to be suspected that his predominant desire was to destroy rather than to establish, and that he felt not so much the love of liberty as repugnance to authority.³⁸

There certainly was little positive, practical, or precedented in a "Commonwealth; wherein they who are greatest, are perpetual servants and drudges to the publick at thir own cost and charges, neglect thir own affairs; yet are not elevated above thir brethren" (*Readie and Easie Way*, CPW 7: 360). Yet this republican disruptiveness was not created by a sullen resentment of the great nor from a naïve confidence in the capacity of the average subject. Rather it was created by a profound awareness of the dangers of those who pretend to be great as they mislead the average subject. Even the early anti-prelatical tracts "are far more concerned with destroying episcopacy than with the details of the order that will replace it."³⁹ The details themselves, soon abandoned, seem to be generated by the deeper, more enduring purpose that resounds throughout the anti-monarchical tracts: a "rehearsal not of Republican argument, but of Republican values." Central to these values is the "demystification of kingship."⁴⁰ Milton repeatedly strikes at those who deftly exploit powerful arguments to deceive—and, worse, benefit, especially with riches—the degenerate governed as they endeavor to "be ador'd like a Demigod," setting "a pompous face upon the superficial actings of State" (*The Readie and*

Easie Way, CPW 7: 425-26). Government instead should be structured on the assumption of human limitations—of governing and governed.⁴¹ Milton consequently rejects the highly centralized Caroline state and church as he argues de-organization. Englishmen—men—do not need to be organized: they need the opportunity of a republic to make themselves fit to be organized, a chance to emulate others who “have strove for libertie as a thing invaluable, & by the purchase thereof have soe enobl’d thir spirits [...]” (MS Digression, CPW 5.1: 441).

Milton of course is not consistent in the expression of his views, but then few people are consistent, especially while experiencing the cultural kaleidoscope of civil war. The civil war shapes Milton much more emphatically than he shapes it. He seems most plainly to summarize his political position—or at least his position in 1660—in the unsent letter to Monck, proposing a means to elect a Grand Council:

Though this grand Council be perpetual (as in that Book [*Readie and Easie Way*] I prov’d would be best and most conformable to best examples) yet they will then, thus limited, have so little matter in thir Hands, or Power to endanger our Liberty; and the People so much in thirs, to prevent them, having all Judicial Laws in thir own choice, and free Votes in all those which concern generally the whole Commonwealth, that we shall have little cause to fear the perpetuity of our general Senat; [...]. (“The Present Means, and Brief Delineation of a Free Commonwealth, Easy to Be Put in Practice and Without Delay. In a Letter to General Monk,” CPW 7: 394)

Milton, arguing his republican ideal on non-government, privatizes politics and religion into subtle processes of private self-discovery in which the processes are as significant as the discoveries. These processes often are based not on the assumption that people will find the right answers but they should have the opportunity to find the wrong answer for themselves, learn from their inevitable mistakes, and develop their capacity to become virtuous citizens who might eventually be fit to participate in effective government—probably that of King Christ (*Readie and Easie Way*, CPW 7: 374-75). Without this virtuous populace—which, again, can be developed only in a citizen-centered (rather than government-centered) republic—organization

such as that "yoke" imposed by the Normans means activity, activity means, for an unregenerate humanity, damage. This damage—to others, themselves, or the environment, such as in the forms of empire, class-system, or industrialization—must be limited by the disruption, if not dispersal, of power.

This culture of loss would suggest that Milton would have been far from dashed by the return of a monarch to preside over the teeming and complex cultural negotiations of the Restoration—that "brief, uneasy settlement."⁴² For Milton, the overwhelming political fact of 1640-1660 was not the failure to establish a republic but the destruction of Caroline absolutism. This, unthinkable in 1632, in itself established a providential politics. On the other hand, the failure to capitalize on this opportunity in 1658-60 was no surprise: the English had been failing—as Milton tells us in his *History*—since there had been an England; and the human race, as he tells us in *Paradise Lost*—since there had been humans. Far worse than the loss of paradise would be the retaining of paradise by those unfit to live in paradise. Similarly, no one was fit to be a member of Milton's "free commonwealth" who could not be persuaded to create such a commonwealth. In politics (as in religion), if you have to be told, you are not fit to hear yourself convinced. That his advice would go unheeded was the surest evidence that it should be unheeded.

No wonder, then, that the epic, though only half-written, remained triumphantly unchanged. It is surprising that the poet did not attach a headnote to his epic—or at least to the first six books: "In this epic the author narrates Satan's conquest of paradise. And by occasion foretells the restoration of the king and his court, then in their exile." Englishmen's exit from the dynamic possibilities of Stuart monarchy into the uncertainty and vacillations of Republican experiment and finally into the experiment of Restoration political cultures is eyed by Milton with the same sublime and happy equanimity with which he escorts Adam and Eve from their would-be universal capital. Deorganization is good. And as raucous Restoration politics indicated, and the ensuing 300 years confirmed, the disruptive possibilities of

the democratic process were just beginning to be realized. Indeed, Englishmen—many of them citing Milton—were to move further from monarchy than Milton perhaps would have believed. And, among the wreckages of the Caroline monarchy, was much that could be repaired, or rearranged (an ambivalence evident in the fascinating Satan or in his similarly fascinating Eve). As his perverted angel(s) also suggests, Milton's concept of evil is not so much informed by fears of hostile opposites as it is by the threat of perverted parallels. Things misused by princes in their attempt to counterfeit the divine might prove useful by the wise and knowing in their attempt to become fully and virtuously human. Milton then appropriates many ideals, especially those attached to court culture, in a way that might be expected from a poet haunted by a sense of lateness: he gets there earlier, in his art. He does not reject court culture but rather pre-empts it, embodying it in an archetypal paradise whose destruction predetermined the perversions of its more recent imitators.

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NOTES

¹This is Mary Ann Radzinowicz's summary of "received opinion" with which she disagrees ("The Politics of *Paradise Lost*," *The Politics of Discourse: The Literature and History of Seventeenth-Century England*, ed. Kevin Sharpe and Steven Zwicker [Berkeley: U of California P, 1987] 204). "In the aftermath of the Restoration, Milton lived in obscurity and desolation" (*The Longman Anthology of British Literature*, gen. ed. David Damrosch, 2 vols. [New York: Longman, 1999]) 1: 1730). The Norton anthologies similarly assess Milton. Laura Knoppers discusses how the "Puritan Milton" (Masson, Barker, Wolfe) and the "Renaissance Humanist Milton" (Hanford, Daiches) work to make the "view of the blind and miserable Milton who writes despite his defeat, harkening back to the 1640s or finding solace in inner spirituality [...] a canonical article of faith" (*Historicizing Milton: Spectacle, Power, and Poetry in Restoration England* [Athens: U of Georgia P, 1994] 1-6, 164).

²*Experience of Defeat* (London: Faber, 1984) 282. Professor Hill nevertheless sees a "terrible [...] slow sapping of Milton's faith in the Revolution" (*Milton and the English Revolution* [New York: Viking, 1978] 198).

³Hill, *Milton and the English Revolution* 196; *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, gen. ed. Don Wolfe, 8 vols. (New Haven: Yale UP, 1953-82) 1: 65. I will cite this work as CPW within the text. Milton's example is one of the eminent Elizabethans, Walsingham.

⁴Certainly Dryden's—and Aubrey's and Toland's—observation that Milton was extremely "Satyricall" was based on more than his pronunciation of the "letter R very hard" (John Aubrey, "Minutes of the Life of Mr John Milton" and John Toland, "The Life of Milton," *Early Lives of Milton*, ed. Helen Darbishire [New York: Barnes and Noble, 1932] 6, 195).

⁵Citations to Milton's poetry, included within the text, refer to *John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose*, ed. Merritt Y. Hughes (New York: Macmillan, 1957).

⁶Nicholas von Maltzahn, *Milton's History of Britain: Republican Historiography in the English Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1991) 23. He argues in the late 1640s, "unlike the Levellers, Milton emphasizes the sad continuities in English history which reach back long before the Conquest. The chief purpose of history was to show the alarming recidivism of the English" (218). Parker similarly comments, "Milton took a cynical and disillusioned view of the national character, a view unquestionably influenced by the confusion of his own times and the general atmosphere of pessimism in 1648" (William Riley Parker, *Milton: A Biography*, ed. Gordon Campbell, 2nd ed., vol. 1 [Oxford: Clarendon P, 1996] 327). Blair Worden writes, "Throughout his work there runs a doubt, not about the healthiness of republican rule, but about the fitness of the English people to sustain it ("Milton's Republicanism and the Tyranny of Heaven," *Machiavelli and Republicanism*, ed. Gisela Bock, Quentin Skinner, and Maurizio Viroli [Cambridge: CUP, 1990]) 233). Gary Hamilton comments that "we might do well to consider the pessimism of the *History* alongside Milton's *Of Reformation*, a work which, though printed nearly three decades earlier, recounts a pattern of failures in England's past in such a way as to communicate little cause for optimism" ("*The History of Britain* and its Restoration Audience," *Politics, Poetics, and Hermeneutics in Milton's Prose*, ed. David Loewenstein and James G. Turner [Cambridge: CUP, 1990] 246). Also see "Milton's *History of Britain* and the One Just Man," *Arenas of Conflict: Milton and the Unfettered Mind*, ed. Kristin McColgan and Charles Durham (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna UP, 1997) 65-76.

⁷"The Life of Mr. John Milton by John Phillips," Darbishire 30.

⁸David Armitage cites this passage in arguing "John Milton: Poet Against Empire," *Milton and Republicanism*, ed. David Armitage, Armand Himy, Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: CUP, 1995) 214, 206-25. Hill comments that the attempts at republic failed partly because "the men of property refused to advance money to

any government they did not control" (Hill, *God's Englishman: Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution* [New York: Harper and Row, 1970] 253). J. G. A. Pocock also argues the decisive influence of commercial self-interest in *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1975). Milton's anti-commercialism may have been a primary element for his republicanism and the solid base behind the apparently flimsy defense of republics as "the most frugal government" (from John Toland's *The Life of Milton* 186). Conversely, the Royalists, even after the Restoration, often cited the country's material prosperity in explaining, not the failure, but the origin of the revolt (Andrew Lacey, "Elegies and Commemorative Verse in Honour of Charles the Martyr, 1649-1660," *The Regicides and the Execution of Charles I* [London: Palgrave, 2001] 225-46).

⁹Hill, *God's Englishman* 58.

¹⁰Hill, *God's Englishman* 187. "When did Milton's hopes of Cromwell end? Not many of them are likely to have survived September 1654, when the protector forcibly expelled the commonwealthmen from parliament, declared his resolve to suppress blasphemies and heresies, and publicly scorned critics of the established ministry" (Blair Worden, "John Milton and Oliver Cromwell," *Soldiers, Writers and Statesmen of the English Revolution*, ed. Ian Gentles, John Morrill, and Blair Worden [Cambridge: CUP, 1998] 261). Hill comments that "[s]ome time between 1649 and 1660 Milton must have realized that things had gone badly wrong. In retrospect he probably thought the decisive year was 1653" (*Milton and the English Revolution* 189).

¹¹Sharpe and Zwicker, Introduction, *Refiguring Revolutions: Aesthetics and Politics from the English Revolution to the Romantic Revolution*, ed. Kevin Sharpe and Steven Zwicker (Berkeley: U of California P, 1998) 4, 5. Kevin Sharpe, arguing a persistent, pervasive royal aesthetic, concedes that "if the English revolution never fully forged a republican culture and government, the republic nevertheless effected a radical transformation of royal culture and power" ("An Image Doting Rabble": The Failure of Republican Culture in Seventeenth-Century England," *Refiguring Revolutions* 56).

¹²John Miller, *Charles II* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1991) 31.

¹³Larry Carver, "The Restoration Poets and Their Father King," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 40 (1977): 333-34. Carver points out that the public focus on the king's sex-life created the attitude that "behind the trappings of the all powerful *pater patriae* lies a mere faulted, human being" (346).

¹⁴Roy Strong, *Splendor at Court: Renaissance Spectacle and Illusion* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973) 19; James I, "A Speech to the Lords and Commons of the Parliament at White-Hall On Wednesday the XXI. Of March. Anno 1609" and "A Remonstrance for the Right of Kings, and the Independence of their Crowns," *The Political Works of James I Reprinted from the Edition of 1616* (1918; New York: Russell and Russell, 1965) 248, 307. Strong comments that the deification of the monarch had been especially acute in an England—which witnessed the cult of

the Virgin Queen and the Stuart masks ("the Golden Age" an essential myth for each)—as the monarchy usurped the rituals and ceremonies of Catholicism (22). For this, also see Strong, *The Cult of Elizabeth: Elizabethan Portraiture and Pageantry* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977). For the divine right of kings as an argument developed to counter papal authority, see especially J. N. Figgis, *The Divine Right of Kings* (Cambridge: CUP, 1914) 81-106. Gordon Schochet discusses "the sudden appearance of patriarchal political theories in seventeenth-century England" (54) and their immense impact on pre-1688 political life in *Patriarchalism in Political Thought: The Authoritarian Family and Political Speculation and Attitudes Especially in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1974).

¹⁵Strong, *Splendor at Court* 213; Sharpe, *Criticism and Compliment: The Politics of Literature in the England of Charles I* (Cambridge: CUP, 1987) 197-211. Strong adds, "The Renaissance of the arts, the best-known aspect of the civilization of the court of Charles I, is a direct manifestation of this triumph of autocratic power" (227).

¹⁶Strong, *Splendor at Court* 219, 76.

¹⁷"Where once the Stuart court had been articulated through the codes and conduct of a rarefied Neoplatonism, pornography now inhabited its center" (Steven Zwicker, "Irony, Modernity, and Miscellany: Politics and Aesthetics in the Stuart Restoration," *Politics and the Political Imagination in Later Stuart Britain: Essays Presented to Lois Green Schwoerer*, ed. Howard Nenner (Rochester, NY: U of Rochester P, 1997) 181.

¹⁸"Letter to Peter Heimbach," *The Life Records of John Milton*, ed. John Milton French, 5 vols. (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers UP, 1949-58) 4: 89-90. I will cite this volume within the text as *LR*.

¹⁹"The Life of Mr. John Phillips by Edward Phillips," *Darbishire* 78, 74.

²⁰Parker 1: 571-72; also see Hill, *Milton and the English Revolution* 215.

²¹Parker 1: 664, 576. Parker prefaces the latter comment by claiming that "after the crowded year of the Restoration, Milton deliberately sought obscurity." Parker seems to have based this evaluation on the paucity of biographical material for this period (1: 588, 2: 1100).

²²Hill, *Milton and the English Revolution* 229.

²³A. N. Wilson, *Life of John Milton* (Oxford: OUP, 1983) 222-23.

²⁴"The Life of Mr. John Phillips by Edward Phillips," *Darbishire* 76. Also see *LR* 5: 116-117.

²⁵Parker 2: 1092. The King, purportedly, accosts Milton in St. James's Park. Parker's source is *Fraser's Magazine* 23 (1841): 301.

²⁶Parker 1: 612-13; *LR* 5: 11-15.

²⁷According to Edward Phillips, the Earl of Anglesey preserved the "digression" on the Long Parliament (*Darbishire* 75).

²⁸David Norbrook points out that Milton's "first post-Restoration appearance in print came in 1662, when the sonnet to Vane was printed in George Sikes's adula-

tory biography" (*Writing the English Republic Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1627-1660* [Cambridge: CUP, 1999] 435). He adds that "the normal assumption that the disillusioned Milton cannot possibly have been involved perhaps needs rethinking."

²⁹Hill, refuting Parker, argues that "Milton's poetic reputation was not negligible even before the publication of *Paradise Lost*" (*Milton and the English Revolution* 228). Also see George Sherburn, "The Early Popularity of Milton's Minor Poems," *Modern Philology* 17 (1919-20): 259-78, 515-40.

³⁰Parker 1: 587.

³¹Parker 1: 580. Parker quotes from Thomas Ellwood, *The History of the Life of Thomas Ellwood*, ed. Joseph Wyeth (London: Hunt and Clarke, 1714) 132-37.

³²David Masson, *The Life of John Milton, Narrated in Connexion with the Political, Ecclesiastical, and Literary History of His Time*, 6 vols. (London: MacMillan, 1881) 6: 628.

³³Wilson 242.

³⁴Parker notes that these words are Aubrey's, not Milton's, in the earliest account. It was not until 1713 that the phrase was attributed to Milton (2: 1148). Parker and most readers accept the phrase as Milton's.

³⁵Christopher Hill, of the scholars that I have read, most thoroughly accounts for the Restoration's impact on the poem. Hill reads in the poem "a shift of emphasis in the last six books of the epic," as Satan as perplexed grand rebel (pre-Restoration and often radical) degenerates into Satan as king (*Milton and the English Revolution* 366). He concludes that "in *Paradise Lost* Milton appears to envisage the possibility that mankind is entering into a new dark age" (412). When this pessimism is qualified by an observation that I will foreground I argue the poem's unaltered confidence. Since the English were unworthy of the blessings of Milton's republic, "it would have been *unjust* if the English Revolution had succeeded, just as Adam and Eve 'deserved to fall' (PL 10.16)" (Hill, *Milton and the English Revolution* 474).

³⁶Worden argues that Milton's "radicalism developed remarkably early" ("Milton's Republicanism" 233). David Norbrook argues that "Milton's early poetry is radical not only in its explicit political comments but in its underlying visionary utopianism" (*Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance* [London: Routledge, 1984] 283). Michael Wilding (*Dragon's Teeth* [Oxford: OUP, 1987] 7-88) and Christopher Hill (*Milton and the English Civil War* 41-52) also argue the radicalism of Milton's early poetry. For Milton's critique of court culture in his masks, see Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics* 245-66; Cedric Brown, *John Milton's Aristocratic Entertainments* (Cambridge: CUP, 1985); and Stephen Kogan, *The Hieroglyphic King: Wisdom and Idolatry in the Seventeenth-Century Masque* (Toronto: Farleigh Dickinson, 1986). Edward LeComte discusses Milton's belatedness in the first essay of *Milton's Unchanging Mind: Three Essays* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat P, 1973).

³⁷Paul Monod observes that much of the cultural tension of the period can be traced to the conflict between Calvinism's insistence on innate depravity and Charles' "envisaging a monarchy that was free of human weakness or confessional bonds": "Arminian political writings [...] raised the mystical claims of sacral kingship to dizzying heights" (*The Power of Kings: Monarchy and Religion in Europe 1589-1715* [New Haven: Yale UP, 1999] 108).

³⁸Samuel Johnson, *Lives of the English Poets*, ed. G. B. Hill (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1905) 1: 157.

³⁹Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic* 110. Also see Janel Mueller, "Embodying Glory: The Apocalyptic Strain in Milton's *Of Reformation*," *Politics, Poetics, and Hermeneutics in Milton's Prose*, 9-40.

⁴⁰Thomas Corns, "Milton and the Characteristics of a Free Commonwealth," *Milton and Republicanism*, 27, 25-42.

⁴¹In *Readie and Easie Way*, Milton explains commonwealths are preferable because of the ease with which "any governour or chief counselour offending, may be remov'd and punishd, without the least commotion" (CPW 7: 361).

⁴²Gerald MacLean, "Literature, Culture, and Society in the Restoration," *Culture and Society in the Stuart Restoration: Literature, Drama, History*, ed. Gerald MacLean (Cambridge: CUP, 1995) 3.

Conspicuous Leisure and Invidious Sexuality in Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*

LEONA TOKER

Twenty-first century readers are as divided on the subject of Jane Austen as their predecessors were for almost two centuries (see Halperin). Some are attracted to her novels out of antiquarian interests or because these novels offer an imaginative escape into a world that produces the (somewhat misleading) impression of cultural stability and order, with the same sets of significance and biographical patterns transmitted from one generation to the next.¹ Others appreciate her novels for their more purely aesthetic achievement—the subtlety of the style and technique, the coherence of character psychology, and the wit of plot construction. Yet still others—including some of those students of literature for whom her novels are a matter of a compulsory syllabus rather than of choice—resent the preoccupation with characters whose only occupation is visiting, parties, promenades, and picnics and whose petty concerns are remote from those of our workaday world.

The latter attitude, irrelevant in mainstream academic research, is not easy to dismiss in teaching practice. Austen's choice of materials can be partly justified by borrowing an argument from Dorothea Krook's discussion of Henry James (1-25): since affluence exempts the characters from the daily problems of making a living, it gives them the leisure to fine-tune those moral, psychological, cultural, and ideological issues for which working people have little space or time. Yet if Jane Austen does, indeed, present the (best?) values of what a century later Thorstein Veblen would call the "leisure class," she does not, I shall argue, do so uncritically.

Mansfield Park, Jane Austen's problem novel, was written in 1813, after a long pause during which Austen did considerably more revising than new composition.² The creative lull of 1807-1812 is usually explained by biographical complications, such as the Austens' move to Bath, the death of the novelist's father, and her move to Chawton. Yet it may also have been due to the internal dynamics of the creative process.³ *Pride and Prejudice*, "light, and bright, and sparkling,"⁴ a peak development of her earlier attitudes and methods may have a scorched-earth effect: it was hardly possible to continue in the same vein. Despite its gallery of critical portraits of the provincial gentry, despite its subscribing to the tradition according to which the course of true love never does run smooth, and despite (or because of) the occasional oppositionality of the characters' conduct, the happy ending of this novel celebrates the perfect synthesis of cultural discipline and individual energy (see Duckworth 132). Pemberley, Elizabeth Bennet's home after her marriage to Darcy, represents the ideal seat of a landed gentleman, with the master treating his estate not merely in terms of ownership but also in terms of "trusteeship" (Duckworth 129). Darcy and his family are, as it were, entrusted with the guardianship and perpetuation of the tradition of culture and rational benevolence that is expected to irradiate upon their environment (and be further promoted by a network of marriages and friendships—by way of a bonus rather than a goal). Less admirable exponents of the same ideal are Sir John Middleton of *Sense and Sensibility*, whose warmth and generosity are cloying since they are not accompanied and restrained by Darcy's intelligence and cultural sophistication. The gentry families of *Mansfield Park* suggest a falling off from the standard, a loss of the values that ennoble the status of the gentry. Treated satirically in the character of John Dashwood of *Sense and Sensibility*, the decline of the country-house ideal is studied earnestly in *Mansfield Park*, taking into account the possibility, and the costs, of its reclamation.⁵

Symbolically, the need for repair is suggested by the generally recognized fact that Mr. Rushworth's Sotherton mansion is in need of

improvements. During an inspection visit stimulated by this project, it is made clear to the characters that the glories of the estate are in the past: the kings will no longer visit; the tenants' homes are "a disgrace" (59); the chapel is in disuse (and becomes a site for a profane flirtation between the future lady of the house and a wayward friend); the abundance of rooms does not dispel the sense of suffocation that makes the characters wish to go outdoors, to "air and liberty" (64). The length of time that it takes Rushworth to fetch the key for the iron gate suggests a touch of entropy: the inept young landlord has failed to ensure a cheerful setting for the visit of his bride's party.⁶

Sotherton, however, is a decoy that channels the motif of deterioration away from the house referred to in the title. In his more affluent young days, Sir Thomas Bertram, Baronet, its master, married for love—the narrative makes this clear by noting that his bride's portion was only seven thousand pounds, which means that it fell three thousand pounds short of the ten-thousand-pound threshold of enhanced eligibility in the "tariff system" (Hammond 71) of the period. By the time his daughters reach the marriageable age, the estate is encumbered, and Sir Thomas has to travel to Antigua to protect his interests there (a convenient narrative device used in many a nineteenth-century novel yet clearly indicative of the fact that the family's welfare is based on slave labor overseas—and that at the period when slave trade is a much debated topical issue). In order to pay his oldest son's debts of honour Sir Thomas has to sell the Mansfield living to Dr. Grant instead of engaging a temporary curate until Edmund, the younger son, can be ordained—and Sir Thomas's reprimand of Tom for thus hurting his brother's interests tends to divert the reader's attention from the bland naturalness of this trade in preferments.⁷ Moreover, despite the sense of a populous neighbourhood (as Northamptonshire and other Southern counties actually were), none of the sons of the neighbouring gentry seem to present any interest for Julia and Maria Bertram: eventually the idea of involving one of them, a Charles Maddox, in the Bertram private theatricals is but barely, and temporarily, tolerated. The presence of the richest neighbour, Mr.

Rushworth, is not an asset either in company or on his own estate. It is little wonder that the dowager Mrs. Rushworth, whom we see dutifully guiding the Mansfield party through the relics of past greatness in her house, leaves for Bath soon after her son's wedding, "there to parade over the wonders of Sotherton in her evening-parties—enjoying them as thoroughly perhaps in the animation of a card-table as she had ever done on the spot" (139).

Another emblem of deterioration may be found in the progressing debility of Lady Bertram. After having borne four perfectly healthy, strong, and good-looking children, this handsome woman retires to her couch, to sit there with Pug, in preference to any activity, including annual trips to London. It is partly owing to her indolent egoism and partly, it seems, to the family's straitened finances, that Sir Thomas gives up his house in town and starts traveling alone to London (to attend sessions of parliament), instead of taking his daughters with him for the social season. Nor does the family ever seem to travel to any of the fashionable health resorts. The sons go off to university and on visits, but the adolescent daughters "can't get out, as the starling said" at exactly the most "interesting time" (25) of their lives when travel, movement, changes of scene are almost a matter of hormonal need. The interests of the children are thus blandly sacrificed to the comfort of the parents: indeed, though the narrator refuses to declare whether it is the "increase or diminution" of Sir Thomas's comfort that arises from his being in town alone (17), the reader is encouraged to regard the former case as the likelier of the two.⁸

The motif of deterioration raises the question of the ideal: has there ever been some golden age of the English gentry, from which the current state of affairs is a falling off? In the second half of the eighteenth century, well after the end of religious upheavals and before the social unrest that would arise with the Industrial Revolution, this class was indeed a prosperous cultural base for some of the best achievements of English arts and letters. A patrician like Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice* is supposed to be product of those prosperous times and of the ideal of benevolent upper-class rectitude (cf. Moller).

Darcy, however, has no equivalent in *Mansfield Park*. Edmund Bertram, for one, does not rise to his stature: his version of high-mindedness is largely a response to his underprivileged situation as a spendthrift's younger brother. Sir Thomas, the part-time slaveholder, is, among other things, deficient in intelligence: the impression produced by his self-delusions is, in the eyes of the modern reader, enhanced by his solemn "measured manner" (165) otherwise described as "slowness of speech" (189).

Judging by Austen's presentation of her own time and class, the cultural legacy of the Augustan age in the Regency period must have involved a hesitation between the values of the peaceful domestic Vicar-of-Wakefield ideal and those of a truculent ambitious quest for power and "consequence"⁹—between, that is, what in *A Theory of the Leisure Class* the American economist Thorstein Veblen would call the peaceable and the predatory cultures. Veblen, indeed, reduces the social hierarchy basically to two classes: the leisure class (scions of predatory culture) and the toilers, people who have to maintain themselves by their industry.¹⁰ Austen's characters belong to the former class, and the few working professionals among them (clergymen, a barrister such as John Knightley, or army and navy officers, governesses) are still closely linked to families in which primogeniture usually meant exemption from the need to make a living.

In times of peace the leisure class is characterized by what Veblen calls "invidious emulation," that is, a tendency to compare people "with a view to rating and grading them in respect to relative worth or value—in an aesthetic or moral sense—and so awarding and defining the relative degrees of complacency with which they may legitimately be contemplated by themselves and others" (34).¹¹ According to Veblen, invidious emulation commonly takes the shape of "conspicuous consumption" and "conspicuous leisure." In discussing Jane Austen's corpus, this scheme must be supplemented by conspicuous sexual charisma, or what may be called *invidious sexuality*.

The less demonstrative version of "conspicuous consumption" is behind the regularity with which an English gentleman, who can

pride himself on overcoming multiple hardships abroad, will tend to perceive minor hardships in his own home as indignities. The more demonstrative version is often resorted to by the *nouveaux riches* as well as by frauds and charlatans, such as Tigg with his Anglo-Bengallee Life-Assurance company in Dickens's *Martin Chuzzlewit* (see Toker) or Becky and Rawdon Crawley, who know how to live well on nothing a year in Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*. With the exception of Mrs. Elton in *Emma*, an upstart who takes vicarious pride in her brother-in-law's estate and barouche-landau and sneers at the small quantity of lace at Emma's wedding, Austen tends to delineate the former, the less showy version of the phenomenon. In *Persuasion*, despite his debts, Sir Walter cannot stoop to giving up his carriage or his servants while staying in his family mansion; and his daughter Anne, disinclined to invidious emulation of any kind, fails to understand that conspicuous wealth is her father's "spiritual" need¹²: he will not feel the discomfort of living in a much smaller house in Bath because there the relatively cramped quarters are not a "retrenchment" but a general rule. The motif of conspicuous consumption is not ample but still sufficiently symptomatic in *Mansfield Park*. It prominently includes Sir Thomas's sending Fanny to the Grants in his carriage—not because it may rain or because the order of the day is kindness to Fanny but because it does not suit his status to have a niece of his *walk* half a mile to a formal dinner engagement. Maria and Julia Bertram hold Fanny "cheap" on finding that she is not interested in music (musical training belongs to the semiotics of "conspicuous leisure") and has only two sashes (12). It is unthinkable in the Mansfield circle to make do without a necklace at a ball. If Henry Crawford makes his horses, carriage, hunting dogs, and jewelry available to his friends, he is, among other things, enjoying a benevolent version of conspicuous consumption: his friends' consumption of goods is an extension of his own. When Fanny meets her Portsmouth family's lower-middle class friends, she finds the men "coarse," the women "pert" (the latter may mean free from Evangelical self-effacing ways), and everybody "under-bred." The young ladies of this circle reciprocally

cate her dislike by regarding her upper-class manners as a false pretence ("airs") because she exhibits neither the expected signs of upper-class leisure (she does not play the piano-forte) nor the fashionable signs of conspicuous consumption, such as "fine pelisses" (268).

Veblen's theory does not describe all national leisure-class cultures in a uniform way. Among the English gentry, partly owing to Protestant suspiciousness of lavish display, consumption tended to be less conspicuous than the cultural signs of leisure. But then the semiotics of leisure entered into a dialectical tension with the negative view of "idleness," traceable in, for instance, the still current idiom about the devil taking those with idle hands. The resulting confusion is comically caricatured in Rushworth's disparagement of the theatricals: "I am not as fond of acting as I was at first. I think we are a good deal better employed, sitting comfortably here among ourselves, and doing nothing" (128). A more suave expression of a similar paradox is Henry Crawford's elegantly cynical remark that because he does not like "to eat the bread of idleness" (157) he will set himself the challenge of seducing the affections of Fanny Price.

A lady, in particular, needs always to be occupied, though, unlike the "spinsters" of olden times, not in a way that would increase the family's income. The "great deal of carpetwork" and "many yards of fringe" that Lady Bertram, the epitome of leisure, has made, Penelope-like, during her husband's absence are useful, in the first place, for demonstrating how "her own time had been irreproachably spent" (124). Even so, it is Fanny, essentially in her role of an errand-running dependant, who must prepare My Lady's "work" (i.e., needlework) for her, which would mean untangling knotted threads, laying out the materials, and such like. Veblen's remark that the servants' leisure is not their own but an extension of the leisure of their masters¹³ is foreshadowed in Henry Crawford's commendation of the "unpretending gentleness" with which Fanny takes it "as a matter of course that she [is] not to have a moment at her own command" (202). The conduct of a wife of a gentleman is expected to be in many ways analogous to

that of his upper servant. Fanny is trained accordingly while at the service of her aunts.¹⁴

As is well known, the main part of a proper young lady's education in eighteenth- and for the most part nineteenth-century England consisted not in academic or professional training but in the acquisition of "accomplishments," such as spelling, writing a small hand, decorative needlework, drawing, music, dancing, French, and (in the age of imperial expansion) geography. Excellence in drawing and musical performance could be real amenities in the times before photography and canned music, but in the absence of real talent or love of the art, the acquisition of "accomplishments" had little practical value apart from providing a decoy for minor vanity (see Poovey 29) and a way of passing the time¹⁵: the elegant constraint of Mrs. Grant's tambour frame (47) may supplement and attenuate the grimmer symbolism of the iron gate. The recoil of Austen's heroines from the prospect of working as governesses or schoolteachers may have to do as much with this curriculum as with the indignities of falling off from the leisure class. Fanny, whose happiest hours are spent in the East room with her geraniums and her books, seems to endow a selected part of her own "accomplishments" with a genuine spiritual significance, beyond the satisfaction of mastering the semiotics of conspicuous leisure. What Henry Crawford cannot know is that on colder days Fanny cannot command her own leisure because her bedroom and her day chamber (the East room) remain unheated: the by-product of her being treated as "the child of the attic whose wicked stepmother (Aunt Norris) allows her no fire to keep her warm" (Meyersohn 226) is the absence of privacy on cold days—Fanny has to go down to the well heated main drawingroom, and stay there in attendance on her aunts. It is only Henry's own courtship of Fanny that, by heightening her "consequence," will call Sir Thomas's attention to her and induce him to overrule Mrs. Norris's ban on fire in the East room.

Veblen's hypothesis is that the leisure class is an outgrowth of the bellicose *predatory* elements in primeval society, of the aristocracy of greedy merit which, by force or fraud, had made its fortune and won

positions of dominance over the peaceable population who eat their bread in the sweat of their brow (1-21). This poetic anthropology is in tune with the history of the distribution of landed estates among the kings' faithful warriors in the medieval past which Fanny nostalgically romanticizes when disappointed by Sotherton's modern chapel (61). Fanny's ideals of chivalrous generosity are associated with Walter Scott's characters and with romantic figures by the name of "Edmund," which her beloved cousin happens to share with the anti-Jacobine author of *Reflections on the Revolution in France*¹⁶ ("It is a name of heroism and renown—of kings, princes and knights; and seems to breathe the spirit of chivalry and warm affections," 145). The predatory ways of the distinguished ancestors of the older upper-class families occupy her mind as little as the Shakespearian use of the name "Edmund" in *King Lear* (though her own story develops as a cross between Cordelia's disposition to love and be silent and Griselda's patient resignation to mistreatment in expectation of reward). Nor does she recollect that for all the poetic cults of exalted ladies and damsels in distress, marriages in aristocratic circles were a matter of political alliance. Up to the early nineteenth century, the idea of marrying for love, a central novelistic convention, depended for its tolerably realistic implementation, if not on the characters (or masks) of "peaceable" arcadian peasants, then on chaste menials and unranked resident gentry (squires rather than knights). And yet, this idea was well in accord with sincere Christian beliefs: marriages, unlike mercenary calculations, are supposed to be made in heaven. When pursued by Crawford, Fanny expects her uncle, "a good man," to feel "how wretched, and how unpardonable, how hopeless and how wicked it was, to marry without affection" (220). Edmund, lost in his own emotional imbroglio, indignantly protests, "How could you imagine me an advocate for marriage without love?" (235) when, under the influence of his father, he has actually developed a double-standard position.

The ideal of marriage for love is, throughout the history of the novel, contrasted with that of mercenary or political marriages. In

Mansfield Park the latter two are conflated in the notion of an "advantageous" marriage, one that raises one's "consequence." The main and most unabashed spokesperson for this principle in marital choice is Mary Crawford—interestingly, not Maria Bertram, the provincial belle who eventually falls a victim to marriage in the service of Mammon, but this "worldling," whose better feelings conflict with her own maxims. Though quite wealthy herself, Mary desires a marriage that will bring social advancement ("every body should marry as soon as they can do it to advantage"; (32), and considers a clergyman ineligible because, in her economy, "a clergyman is nothing" (66). Her conscious agenda is thus in tune with gentry's politics of power expansion through a network of connections and alliances. Her best friends are women who have contracted loveless marriages and whom Edmund's letter defines in terms of invidious emulation:

I do not like Mrs. Fraser. She is a cold-hearted, vain woman, who has married entirely from convenience, and though evidently unhappy in her marriage, places her disappointment, not to faults of judgement or temper, or disproportion of age, but to her being after all, less affluent than many of her acquaintance, especially than her sister, Lady Stornaway, and is the determined supporter of every thing mercenary and ambitious, provided it be only mercenary and ambitious enough. (285-86)

Fanny and Edmund consider such a philosophy of life corrupt (286, 288). In their eyes, indeed, it is a falling off from a chaste Christian ideal rather than a natural if debased sequel to the predatory goals of the leisure class. What they do not realize is that in the class to which they belong, dynastic marriages have generally been the norm and not the corruption, and that their own ideal of a peaceable companionate marriage is, like that of Elizabeth Bennet or Anne Elliot, a liberal rather than a conservative aspiration. Fanny and Edmund, indeed, seem to strike the golden mean in the scale of the gentry's attitudes to labour and leisure. On one side of their unhurried occupations is Mrs. Norris's unseemly love of trafficking with her neighbours' housekeepers, gardeners, cooks, and coachmen. At the other extreme there is the Crawford siblings' impatience with productive labour and its

signs: Henry wishes to shut out the blacksmith's shop so that it might not be seen from Edmund's Thornton Lacey parsonage (166), and Mary is astonished that, contrary to the "London maxim, that every thing is to be got with money" (43), farmers will not spare a cart for transporting her harp. Though Mary's and Henry's urban sophistication should suggest advanced views and freedom from provincial inhibitions,¹⁷ actually the two display the dated mind-set of the predatory leisure class that rejects the progressive agenda of convergence with the peaceable pursuits of happiness.¹⁸

Yet Mary seems to be prepared to change her expectations when she falls in love with Edmund, though she keeps trying to persuade him to replace his determination to be a minister by more flashy ambitions. When at one point in their relationship she restates her maxim that it is "everybody's duty to do as well for themselves as they can" (198), she does so in the context of her ironic resentment of the Miss Owens in whose brother's house Edmund seems to be spending too long a time. Yet, as this episode suggests, jealousy, an unwelcome intruder in Fanny's inner life, is a legitimate participant in Mary's private psychodrama. One of the reasons why Mary is not redeemed by her love for Edmund is that she is shown extending invidious emulation to the war of all against all in marriage matters. Moreover, we find her thriving on invidious sexuality, that is, on competition for sexual power, both inside and outside the marriage market. Unable to imagine any different attitude in others, she thinks that Henry's having been coveted by many other women (in particular, Maria and Julia) should make his offer attractive to Fanny, who would thus triumph over them. At the end of the novel a similar attitude is ascribed to Maria Bertram: when in the course of her adulterous affair she "live[s] with him to be reproached as the ruin of all his happiness in Fanny," she is given "no better consolation in leaving him, than that she had divided them" (314-15). Invidious sexuality is, clearly, as important a semantic set in *Mansfield Park* as it is in *Pride and Prejudice* and, owing to the character of Lucy Steele, in *Sense and Sensibility*.

Whereas in critical discussions a touch of voyeurism is frequently imputed to Fanny (see, in particular, Auerbach), Mary Crawford is actually the more neurotically afflicted with this vice. When Crawford's courtship of Fanny is no longer a secret to any member of the Bertram clan, Mary seems to savor the opportunity of writing to Fanny about Maria's jealousy: "'Shall I tell you how Mrs. Rushworth looked when your name was mentioned? I did not use to think her wanting in self-possession, but she had not quite enough for the demands of yesterday'" (267). Mary derives voyeuristic enjoyment not from the love-scenes which Fanny observes during the rehearsals of "Lovers' Vows" but from the scenes of other women's defeat in invidious sexuality.¹⁹ This may be the less obvious of the motives for her interest in Fanny, her inferior at any social game. The causal plotting of the denouement suggests that the same feature actually leads to Mary's own defeat with Edmund. Indeed, she is partly to blame for Maria's elopement with Henry, because it is she who detains Henry in London when he is on his mission to Everingham (with the twofold motive of adjusting property relationships and preparing his world for Fanny). Mary's second letter to Fanny in Portsmouth mentions that Henry "cannot any how be spared till after the 14th, for we have a party that evening. The value of a man like Henry on such an occasion, is what you can have no conception of; so you must take it upon my word, to be inestimable.'" If the reader and Fanny think that this "value" consists in Henry's social skills and ability to enliven any dull gathering, Mary's next sentence suggests a second reason for his being wanted at the party: "He will see the Rushworths, which I own I am not sorry for—having a little curiosity—and so I think has he" (283). Fanny is always willing to see corruption in Mary; therefore she will not consider the possibility of randomness in the sequence of these sentences; for her, in this case, *post hoc* is *propter hoc*. Yet, for all we know, she may be right to translate the sequence into a sign of Mary's "endeavour to secure a meeting between [Henry] and Mrs. Rushworth." Without calling the little intrigue by its name, Fanny thinks it in Mary's "worst line of conduct, and grossly unkind and ill-judged"

(283). This is the closest she comes to regarding Mary, to whom she owes several minor favors, as "wicked."

It may be noted that in a conversation that Edmund holds with Fanny upon meeting the Crawford siblings, both comment on a flaw in Mary's manners, her harsh remarks, made to all too new acquaintances, about the uncle to whom she owes a debt of gratitude. Manners, according to Veblen, are a sign of conspicuous leisure because a great deal of time has been invested, unproductively, in acquiring them. Yet when ill manners on one occasion contrast with the perfect polish on all the others, when leisure-class flair is evident in sundry other details of character and conduct, a flaw in conventional manners—in Jane Austen at least—stands either for advanced liberal principles or for a moral flaw. Edmund is fearful that Mary's flaunting of emotional independence from her uncle is indicative of the latter; her own sense of her conduct is clearly associated with the former. The ending of the novel, in which Mary is not properly horrified by her brother's and Maria Bertram's affair, is a replay of the same situation—and it confirms Edmund's uneasy suspicions, much as it jars on the sensibilities of modern readers who might wish to applaud Mary's neglect of lip service to conventional pieties. Edmund does not realize that Mary's moral flaw lies not so much in her pragmatic attitude to the scandal but in her cultivation of invidious sexuality, a character trait which the causal connections in the plot present as conducive to Maria's adultery. One way or another, he takes her attitude to the debacle not as vicious in itself but as *symptomatic* of a viciousness which places her outside his ethos.

His decision is also indicative of the utopian element in Jane Austen's social vision. According to the novelistic convention within which Austen worked (and which she partly modified in the case of Charlotte Lucas of *Pride and Prejudice*), marriage without love was the worst sin a heroine can commit. The hero's worst sin (exemplified in Crawford's treatment of the Bertram sisters, in Richardson's rakes before him and Lermontov's after him) is courting a young woman without the intention of marrying her. In the works of some of Jane

Austen's precursors the latter kind of "wickedness" was frequently attributed to aristocratic villains, such as the Noble Lord in Fielding's *Amelia* and his younger counterpart in Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield*. By contrast, Jane Austen set her dramas of conjugal choice mainly among the unranked gentry. Like the protagonist of *Emma*, she was notoriously uninterested in members of the populous lower classes except as objects of charity, but she also seems to have shared most of her characters' cautiousness concerning the claims of the peerage (cf. Greene).²⁰ Sir Thomas Bertram, for instance, does not regard the Honourable John Yates, a lord's younger son with reasonably independent means, as a desirable connection.²¹ Sir Thomas himself has the title of a Baronet, only above the Knight. Ideally, people belonging to the stratum ranging from the Bertrams of *Mansfield Park* to the Bennets of *Pride and Prejudice* were in the best position to effect a convergence of the nobler traits of leisure-class culture with the values of the peaceable toiling class, especially since resident land-ownership imposed practical duties and counteracted the restlessness of unlimited leisure.

The idealized conception of the values of the rural gentry involved the cultivation of family pieties and the life of the spirit in which love, in every meaning of the word, would hold pride of place. True, Austen's "sensible" characters, such as Elinor Dashwood of *Sense and Sensibility* and Lady Russell of *Persuasion*, do not believe happiness to be possible, even in a most loving marriage, without financial "competence" (an income of at least £ 500 per annum). Still, opting for worldly interest rather than love in the choice of one's marriage partner is treated as a confusion of a goal and a bonus. Even Charlotte Lucas, whose choice of a marriage of convenience is not wholly condemned in *Pride and Prejudice*, is shown to be sacrificing part of her own potential and identity and deliberately blunting her senses in becoming Mrs. Collins. Indeed, when her husband speaks in a way offensive to her taste, she chooses not to hear it; in order to minimize the time in her husband's company, she chooses to spend her daytime hours in a room without a view which he is not interested in frequent-

ing. Amidst the rural gentry "the ideal of a companionate marriage" had by the end of the eighteenth century replaced the previous policy of "arranged and dynastic marriages" (Waldron 116), still all routinely practiced among the aristocracy. It is in the service of the latter predatory policy that in *Pride and Prejudice* Lady Catherine de Burgh travels all the way to Elizabeth Bennet's house in order to demand that she should not accept Darcy's proposal. The ideal of the companionate marriage was, in fact, much closer to the values of the growing middle class than to those of the Regency upper classes which the somewhat declassée Mary Crawford adopts. For Mary the aristocratic freedom from middle-class moral appearances is a matter of "improvements" introduced by each generation (such as liberation from family prayers in the chapel); for the novelist, however, it seems to be not a sign of progress but, on the contrary, a relic of the atavistic agenda of the upper class with its yet unreclaimed predatory culture.

Robert Polhemus has described Austen's novels as dreams "of individual integrity in which self-interest and morality coincide" (39). Such a reconciliation of virtue and its reward defines, first and foremost, Austen's variety of poetic justice. The utopian element in the world view staged in her novels, a dream best represented by the marriages of Elinor Dashwood and Emma Woodhouse, is one in which the best achievements of leisure-class cultivation are wedded to peaceable commitments and pursuits. Yet it is an open question whether one should grant priority to the fictional conventions used or to the ideology which grants them significance beyond entertainment value. However that may be, Austen's preference for the rural gentry as the social setting of her novels may have been motivated not only by her own place in and superior knowledge of this class but also by its relative preference for the peaceable Christian ideal of loving companionate matrimony which permitted a realistic implementation of a fictional convention too precious to forego.

NOTES

¹Cf. Claudia Johnson's discussion (99-100) of Austen's appeal to the soldiers presented in Rudyard Kipling's story "The Janeites."

²After Austen wrote "Susan," an early study for *Northanger Abbey*, in 1799, her only totally new work up to 1813 was the *The Watsons* (1804), which remained unfinished. In 1810-11 she retouched and published the 1798 *Sense and Sensibility* (the middle version of what had started as "Elinor and Marianne" a few years before) and revised the 1797 "First Impressions" into *Pride and Prejudice*.

³I agree with Kirkham (61-65) that the move to Bath may not have been as unalloyed a trauma as it is often believed. Austen fainted on being appraised of the move; yet this may well have been due to unexpectedness; and Bath itself could offer non-negligible cultural opportunities in addition to providing ample material for observation.

⁴*Letters*, 4 February 1913.

⁵Though *Emma*, Austen's next novel, celebrates the victory of a similar reclamation (see Pickrell on the ways in which the impoverished gentlemen's tendency to marry "new money" is indirectly reflected in *Emma*), her last completed novel, *Persuasion* signals grave doubts concerning the continuing viability of the ideal in the absence of reinforcement from outside the closed system.

⁶I suppress a Freudian comment on the latter issue (as well as on the spikes which threaten Maria's gown): in the Portsmouth episode, it is to highlight the sense of a household's confusion and inefficiency that a key is reported to have been "misaid" (259) exactly when it is needed for the hasty completion of William Price's packing.

⁷In *Sense and Sensibility* such a procedure is implicitly criticized by making the avaricious John Dashwood its advocate: Dashwood is astonished that Colonel Brandon has just *given* the living in his parish to Edward Ferrars instead of selling it. Sir Thomas does not seem to be aware of the touch of simony in what in his eyes is as standard a procedure as a purchase of a commission in the army or the navy. This suggests that his Evangelical preferences, including those relating to the need for a clergyman's residence in his parish, are motivated not only by genuine religious commitment but also by his tenacity in paternal control.

⁸During the evening party at the Grants', Sir Thomas recommends the game of Speculation to his wife as promising a great amusement—the narrator does not forgo a would be hypothetical comment on his double motive here: quite tellingly, Sir Thomas maneuvers his way out of being her partner at whist (164). The resulting mis-en-scène deployment of the characters makes further room for the maneuvers of Henry Crawford and even of William Price.

⁹"Consequence" is one of the insistently recurrent key words in *Mansfield Park* (see McKenzie), the way the derivatives of "exert" are in *Sense and Sensibility*, the derivatives of "exhibit" in *Pride and Prejudice*, and those of "perfect" in *Emma*.

¹⁰It should be noted that the English traditional view of social hierarchy—upper, middle, and lower classes—the subtleties of which were the daily substance of etiquette in Jane Austen's milieu, is not co-extensive with the Marxist nomenclature of the classes as related to the means and forces of production. Veblen offers a third alternative to the description of social stratification. In modern society his distinction between the leisure class (whatever the sources of its income) and the citizens who have to work in order to make a living is far from being watertight, but Veblen's theory is still illuminating in application to modern consumer culture, in addition to being useful for the analysis of the representation of society in realistic nineteenth-century fiction, whose authors responded to empirical data similar to those observed by Veblen himself.

¹¹Veblen here neglects the Kantian distinction between a person's "worth" and a person's "value" to others (see Kant 63-64).

¹²"Very much squalor and discomfort will be endured before the last trinket or the last pretence of pecuniary decency is put away. There is no class and no country that has yielded so abjectly before the pressure of physical want as to deny themselves all gratification of this higher or spiritual need" (Veblen 85; see also 167-68, 190).

¹³See Veblen 59-60 on "vicarious leisure."

¹⁴"The servant or wife should not only perform certain offices and show a servile disposition, but it is quite as imperative that they should show an acquired facility in the tactics of subservience—a trained conformity to the canons of effectual and conspicuous subservience. Even today it is this aptitude and acquired skill in the formal manifestation of the servile relation that constitutes the chief element of utility in our highly paid servants, as well as one of the chief ornaments of the well-bred housewife [...] trained service has utility, not only as gratifying the master's instinctive liking for good and skilful workmanship and his propensity for conspicuous dominance over those whose lives are subservient to his own, but it has utility also as putting in evidence a much larger consumption of human service than would be shown by the mere present conspicuous leisure performed by an untrained person" (60-61).

¹⁵Jane Austen's metaphor for her fiction as "little bits (two Inches wide) of Ivory" (*Letters*, 16 December 1816, 469) is more than a traditional "modesty topos": it may be read as a deliberate claim to inoffensiveness, such as of the ladies' recognized hobbies (see Gilbert and Gubar 107-09).

¹⁶For noting this connection I am indebted to Gary Kelly's discussion of the episodes of reading aloud in *Mansfield Park* (see Kelly 34).

¹⁷Many modern critics rather enjoy reading Mary's comment on Admirals, "Of *Rears*, and *Vices*, I saw enough. Now, do not be suspecting me of a pun, I entreat" as an "indecent [remark] about homosexuality in the Navy" (Hammond 78).

¹⁸Indeed, as Julia Prewitt Brown has noted (87), "Fanny and Edmund, not the Crawfords, are the children of the future, the Victorians. Mary Crawford in

particular is an eighteenth-century type, with her exuberance, wit, and Johnsonian preference for the city."

¹⁹Cf. Daleski 135 on Mary's and Henry's "predatory" self-indulgence and "need for a constant provision of amusements."

²⁰Austen "shows no love for the great aristocracy (as represented in Darcy's family) or for the very rich (the Rushworths); and pride of rank, whether in an earl's daughter or a baronet, is evidently anathema to her. Jane Austen's attitude to social distinctions in the upper reaches of society has been called that of a "Tory radical": which is accurate provided we recognize that over all in the novels her Toryism carries more weight than her radicalism" (Butler 165).

²¹See Fleishman 51-54 on the use of the words "evil" and "connection" in *Mansfield Park*.

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What's New in Mnemology

WILLIAM E. ENGEL

And therefore Hierome prescribes Rusticus the Monk, continually to read the Scripture, and to meditate on that which he hath read; for as mastication is to meat, so is meditation on that which we read. I would for these causes wish him that is melancholy to use both human and divine Authors, voluntarily to impose some task upon himself, to divert his melancholy thoughts: to study the art of memory, Cosmus Rosselius, Pet. Ravennas, Scenkelius' Detectus, or practise Brachygraphy [shorthand] &c. that will ask a great deal of attention.

Robert Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*, 2.2.4

This review-article seeks to initiate discussion about five books on early modern memory published in the new millennium and to invite comments about other recent contributions to this fertile area of study, which can be called mnemology.* Mnemology is concerned primarily with how the classical Art of Memory was figured and reconfigured during the Middle Ages and Renaissance. For Burton, writing in the first half of the seventeenth century, it is associated with meditating on scripture and studying shorthand as one of several ways to focus the mind and thereby avert melancholy. As such, it spans divine and

*Reference: Barbara Keller-Dall'Asta, *Heilsplan und Gedächtnis: zur Mnemologie des 16. Jahrhunderts in Italien* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2001); Daniel Martin, *Rabelais, Mode d'emploi: avec le plan du Pantagruel suivant les jours la semaine et des saints sacrements de l'Eglise* (Tours: A.-G. Nizet, 2002); *The Medieval Craft of Memory: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*, ed. Mary Carruthers and Jan M. Ziolkowski (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2002); *Writing on Hands: Memory and Knowledge in Early Modern Europe* (Seattle: U of Washington P, 2000); William E. Engel, *Death and Drama in Renaissance England: Shades of Memory* (Oxford: OUP, 2002).

secular concerns. Under the heading mnemology, then, we can juxtapose and align a wide range of topics and approaches pertaining to early modern efforts to counteract the effects of sinfulness, forgetfulness, idleness. Mnemology thus encompasses sacred meditative practices and visualization techniques as well as secular pedagogical uses of mnemonic schemes, and extends also to take into account Neoplatonic and pseudo-scientific treatises on recovering and interpreting, generating and deploying symbols, ciphers, and emblems so as to make things happen in the world.

Mnemology, therefore, with respect to literary criticism and intellectual history, concerns the various ways such systems of thought have been conceived, implemented, and discussed. Such a line of inquiry thus opens the way for contemporary critical assessments of the implicit social, political, aesthetic, and scientific ramifications of mnemonics, mnemotechnics, and the Memory Arts at particular times and in specific places. As a result, mnemologically oriented analysis complements and counter-balances some of the main myths and explanatory narratives that have come down to us, whether regarding assumed continuities in literary history, projected contiguities in cultural poetics, or source hunting in the visual arts. Mnemology, then, embraces all manner of mnemonics—those time-tried techniques used to aid, and perhaps to improve, the natural memory and leading to the creation of something new. As Frances Yates argued somewhat presciently in her still indispensable *The Art of Memory*, renewed attention to the memory arts is a prerequisite for advances in Renaissance scholarship. She was convinced that the history of the organization of memory touches at vital points on the history of religion and ethics, of philosophy and psychology, of art and literature, of scientific method. As the five books reviewed here make clear, Yates was spot on.

This comes into focus in a rudimentary way when we reduce specific aspects of cultural memory to their most elementary components, called "mnememes"—a term used to great effect by Daniel Martin in his groundbreaking mnemocritical study of image and place in Mon-

taigne and which, as we shall see in what follows, he has now applied to Rabelais (57). Both *imagines agentes* and *loci* are to be thought of as signs, pointing beyond themselves to, among other things, the relationship thus being forged between the two. These signs at the same time reflect a special kind of knowledge associated with a highly developed sense of visualization, like that required when using topical or artificial memory systems. Conceived of as mnememes, then, such fundamental units of expression in traditional disciplines, such as the *exemplum* of history and the *sententia* of philosophy—both of which are at home in the domain of rhetoric—, encapsulate and indicate something deemed worthy of being culled and recalled so it can be transferred and used in another context. Therefore, in order to be generally useful and ready-at-hand, such mnememes need to be stored and preserved in some sort of a repository. Finally, then, mnemology concerns the conceptualization and use of just such repositories, frameworks, and structures, as well as the specific ends to which they were put.

* * *

The five books discussed here make it clear that mnemology, as a field of study in its own right, is an international and transnational phenomenon, transcending political and even religious boundaries, and combining many traditional areas of inquiry. With this in mind, it is noteworthy that these studies were published in Germany, France, America, and England, and that they reflect different disciplinary approaches according to the subjects under investigation, and take into account a broad range of texts, images, and forms of cultural expression. Specifically, the first book, associated with the "Gedächtniskunst" network of Jörg Jochen Berns and Wolfgang Neuber, is a detailed analysis of the most influential of the early modern Italian memory treatises. The second, which builds on Guy Demerson's insights into mythology and those of Renaissance polymaths like Colonna and Cartari, resolutely demonstrates Rabelais's debt to the

Memory Arts. The third is a most welcomed anthology and translation of important and representative mnemological texts from the twelfth through fifteenth centuries, some of which have never before been rendered into English. The fourth, based on an exhibition, emphasizes the extent to which images of the hand played a vital role in interpreting the search for achieving knowledge of the self and interpreting universal human experience up through about 1700. The last book offers a novel way to understand, in their original contexts, aspects of English Renaissance mental life and letters by using the Memory Arts to explore issues of death and decline in exemplary dramas, dictionaries, and histories. Disparate as these studies may seem at first glance, they have at least one fundamental feature in common: they all assume the importance of Memory as a branch of rhetoric concerned, at least initially, with composition.

(1) But even beyond the strictly rhetorical focus, as Barbara Keller-Dall'Asta observes, memory studies are at the foundation of natural philosophy in the Renaissance, especially with respect to the doctrine of correspondences and what once was conceptualized as "the great chain of being." Moreover "Memoria" in particular overlaps with, and is at the very foundation of, many other areas, especially the pseudosciences, including alchemy, astrology, physiognomy, numerology and much of the mythographic writing and allegorical analyses of the day (15). Accordingly, it is with her book that we begin our itinerary of what's new in mnemology.

Heilsplan und Gedächtnis: zur Mnemologie des 16. Jahrhunderts in Italien grew out of her 1999 Heidelberg dissertation. It is an invaluable resource, bringing forward a vast array of citations regarding important work in mnemological studies, as well as carrying out a subtle and sustained analysis of three of the most significant mnemotechnical Italian treatises of the Renaissance, by Gesualdo, Rossellius, and Camillo. While primarily citing German sources, this work also brings together and critically mediates discussions that have been conducted in English, Spanish, French, and Italian. Indeed the easy dialogue impli-

plicitly carried on in the text with writers such as Isadore of Seville, Dante, Ficino, and Della Porta continues in the notes with respect to contemporary memory specialists such as Bolzoni, Blum, Rossi, and Carruthers.

I mention the notes because, as Anthony Grafton has pointed out, while they usually do not explain the precise course the scholar's interpretation of these texts has taken, they often give the reader who is both critical and open-minded enough hints to make it possible to work this out. Indeed, Keller-Dall'Asta's work demonstrates the secondary story told by footnotes; for in documenting the thought and research that underpin the narrative above them, footnotes prove that it is a historically contingent product, dependent on the forms of research, opportunities, and states of particular questions that existed when she began her work. In particular this study benefits immeasurably from the author's access to Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel and of course the world-renowned resources at Heidelberg.

Access to the former brought to the author's attention, and thus to my own by virtue of having read her account, the importance of the 1624 *Cryptomenytices et cryptographiae* with respect to the larger story of secret writing in the Renaissance. Additionally this book puts to new uses the anonymous *Steganographia nova* (1602), and, much to her credit as a meticulous scholar, with due reference and thanks to Gerhard Strasser who first brought out the importance of this book as pertains to the quest for a universal language (67). But perhaps the most exciting of her many references to archival materials is her eighteen-page photo-reproduction and discussion of a manuscript of Camillo's *Theatro della sapientia* (at the John Rylands Library, Manchester). The most important feature of the book by far though is the detailed and accurate analysis of Filippo Gesualdo's *Plutosophia* (1592), Cosmas Rossellius's *Thesaurus artificiosae memoriae* (1579), and Giulio Camillo's *Idea del theatro* (1550). For although I have worked with all three of these works and refer to them in *Mapping Mortality*, if Keller-Dall'Asta's work had been available to me a decade ago, I am sure I would have been able to make broader and less cautious claims re-

garding the persistence of memory and melancholy in the early modern period.

But to return for a moment to the notes, which reflect the author's wide reading and scrupulous sleuthing, *Heilsplan und Gedächtnis* brings together in one place many important studies being carried out as dissertations. The theses mentioned all are of the kind that show old texts in a new light. Her nearly fifty-page bibliography is worth the price of the volume. And while there is only a five-page index of people mentioned, this is a slight matter given the clarity, directness, and tight organization of the volume as a whole. What is more, the historical narrative is furthered by questions that exceed the bounds of being merely rhetorical. At important junctures she wonders about the relation of narrative discursivity and more foundational matters with respect to the uncovering of hidden knowledge in works such as Camillo's (223-24). Why a theatre and what can one do with it that cannot otherwise be accomplished? What lack is being addressed in and by virtue of such a construct? Along these lines, it is her careful attention to, and partitioning off of, the place of mystical matters that makes her project a significant advance beyond Yates's treatment of some of the same themes and texts. *Heilsplan und Gedächtnis* will set the agenda for how the main issues raised by Yates with respect to these three chief Italian writers hereafter will be framed and discussed in scholarly circles. Her extensive analysis of these three books, and of the related literature, brings forward in clear and distinct terms information that puts them justifiably at the forefront of Renaissance scholarship at a time when literary critics and historians of culture alike are coming to see the merit in applying mnemotechnical analysis to their own areas of study.

(2) At the lead of just such an initiative is Daniel Martin, whose new book *Rabelais: Mode d'emploi* sets out to clear up many "mysteries" in *Pantagruel* by way of what he calls *mnémocritique*. This book covers material from the century preceding Keller-Dall'Asta's study, most notably Colonna's *Hypnerotomachie ou discours du songe de Poliphile*

(1499) and the *Kalendrier des Bergiers* (1491). What links it to *Heilsplan und Gedächtnis* though is the detailed attention given to Camillo, especially his seven-sectioned Memory Theatre divided according to the seven planetary deities and cross-coded by related mnemonic figures taken from classical mythology.

To be sure, mythology, the allegorization of the pagan deities, and attributes of the Olympian gods have long been staples of Renaissance studies, especially in the light of the groundbreaking work carried out by Wind, Seznec, and Panofsky. But what Martin shows is the extent to which, heretofore largely unrecognized, the planetary deities also corresponded to and were understood to govern not only the days of the week but also the hours of the day. It is this later point, one brought up by Rabelais among others, which Martin clarifies with a chart, concerning a question that has baffled thinkers from Plutarch on regarding the astrological and numerical ordering of the days (41-44, 189).

Many critics have suspected there was some plan at work in *Pantagruel* and proposed various models (65), but, until now, none has satisfactorily accounted for the many mythological references. By using the order of the planets, as outlined in the Shepherd's Calendar, and their correspondent sacraments of the Church as specific *loci* in a vast Theatre of Memory, Martin makes a compelling case that Rabelais used this method for ordering his text (112-13). This is not to say that other plans cannot be in place as well, but simply that like all mnemonic schemes, this one, grounded as it is in rhetorical practices, concerns invention *and* composition. The *locus* comes before the text; it is dictated by the planetary program which would have been well known in the period—especially to someone with Rabelais's learning and sense of literary gamesmanship. Put simply: the plan precedes the text (50).

Among the boons that accrue from entertaining Martin's mnemocritical interpretation is that "The Fable of the Lion" in Chapter XV at last makes perfect sense. Once the simple layout of what chapters correspond to what *loci*, we learn that this chapter comes un-

der the heading of the sign of the Lion, the fifth sign, which enters the House of the Sun-Apollo in July; and taking into account that the Sun was the device of Pope Clement VII, Giulio de' Medici, each character in the fable corresponds to a specific person, group, or event relevant to the Church and politics of the day. This method of reading the fable is meticulously detailed in Martin's Chapter Eight, the final page of which gives us the code sheet to recover Rabelais's cleverly obscured message (119-30).

Because the validity of such a mode of interpretation involving chapter numbers hinges on identifying and using the source-text as Rabelais wrote it and wanted it published, Martin scrupulously provides, in Appendix "D," a rationale for choosing the Yale edition, and gives an account of the exemplars of Paris and of Lyon. And so even the reader who may not have a principal interest in Rabelais nonetheless will be delightfully instructed by the sections leading up to his compelling reading of *Pantagruel* along mnemotechnical lines. The book itself is based on a pattern [5 (5 + 5) 5] which thus reflects the main matter being discussed.

Specifically Martin begins by presenting five images that, in effect, tell the story he would narrate about Rabelais's reliance on a pentad structure for his book. Five, of course, from Cicero on, is a number historically valued in mnemonics; moreover, there is good reason to believe, following Luigi De Poli's analysis, duly cited by Martin (85), that the number five figures prominently in Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Moreover, there are five main planets in the old system, and, as we shall see in the fourth book of our itinerary, the hand's five fingers were used to organize many works during the time of *Pantagruel*. In line with this, Martin's appendix "C," on the mnemonic hand, is perhaps the best finding in the volume, for here he explains convincingly how seven hands, seven sets of five, mark the *loci*-chapters, thus governing and directing the organization of the text, as well as calling for certain kinds of inserted bits of information to mark them as such—like the Sun in conjunction with the Lion. The ten chapters of *Rabelais: Mode d'emploi* are followed by four appendices plus the bibliography

(an appendix in its own right) to make up the final set of five. The whole book thus has a symmetry, along the lines of what Martin discusses in his analysis and which Rabelais speaks about as well (120).

But the book is performative in other ways as well. Take for example the first five chapters, which are required reading for anyone wanting to learn the rudiments of the Memory Arts in the Renaissance and also to become acquainted with the critical debates surrounding its use. Martin begins by pointing out that there are two kinds of "à-propos," that of time and that of place, which find parallels in both artificial memory systems (that involve active or moving images and stable places) and also in astral-allegoresis (where time is sacred to Saturn, and place overruled by Mercury) (33). And so he gives us two chapters: "Avant-propos" and "De l'à-propos des images." As a further mirroring of this theme, in the "Avant-propos" there are two divisions as well, concerning time and place; the first for the reader in a hurry (15), and the other for the reader reticent about entering the world of "mnémocritique" (21). After reading this book though, whether or not you are convinced at every point by Martin's interpretation of the mnemotechnic chapter-heading schema of *Pantagruel*, there can be no question that this method must be taken seriously. Martin's endeavor, if nothing else, will inspire a new generation of scholars to recognize and rediscover similar such schemes that inform and animate involved works of authors other than Rabelais. For example, Isidoro Arén Janeiro has been collaborating with Martin to recover the astral-mnemonic plan of Book I of Cervantes's *Don Quixote*.

(3) Along these lines, scholars will welcome the fact that so many important books and treatises are resurfacing nowadays as facsimile-reprints, or are being translated for the first time. And this brings us to our third stop, the peak in our survey of the new trails blazed in mnemological terrain today: an anthology of texts and images edited by Mary Carruthers and Jan M. Ziolkowski, *The Medieval Craft of Memory*. This collection brings together the most important Latin texts on memory and presents them in a fresh and new form—and in English.

lish. Even Mary Carruthers's previous translation of Bradwardine presented here is updated and improved (207-14). Moreover, the wise editorial guidelines informing this volume allow for the occasional note about the trickiness of translation. For example, John Burchill clarifies several terms that historically have been central to mnemotechnical treatises: *phantasm* (which Thomas Aquinas takes from the Latin Aristotle), *motus*, and *passio* (160). Carruthers likewise acknowledges at one point that no English word captures the double and simultaneous meaning of the Latin *ornatus* and *ornamentum*, "equipment, adornment" (40).

The sparse five-page bibliography (like the six-page index) is extremely useful, covering only twenty-five texts and major surveys, and fifteen examples of methodological applications to different disciplines (including the next book to be discussed in our itinerary, *Writing on Hands*). For this reason the bibliography can be taken as definitive for anyone interested in recent trends in mnemology. It is noteworthy that, given the magisterial nature of this anthology, the translators span the academic spectrum. At the time of publication, of the eleven contributors, three were PhD students at Harvard, four endowed chair professors, one professor emeritus of classical studies, and an itinerant preacher.

Again, as was mentioned regarding my familiarity with the main books treated by Keller-Dall'Asta, while I have worked closely with two of the texts translated in *The Medieval Craft of Memory*, I would have very much welcomed this version of Publicius's *Art of Memory* when I was writing my dissertation. And while it was a good exercise for me to struggle with the idiosyncratic Latin typography of Anselm's *Ars memorandi* a decade ago when I was writing *Mapping Mortality*, my project surely would have benefited from consulting James Halporn's new, crisp translation of the anonymous *Method for Recollecting the Gospels*. I mention this because I suspect the same will hold for those who likewise have logged in long hours working on texts that, although existing in many forms, have yet to be translated. There is no reason to reinvent the wheel, and this anthology will allow many

to travel faster and farther along the road of mnemological studies than otherwise would have been possible.

The Medieval Craft of Memory is a truly representative anthology in that it concludes with the two books just mentioned, the last being a sixteenth century blockbook, and it begins with Hugh of St. Victor's *Three Best Memory Aids for Learning History* and his *Little Book about Constructing Noah's Ark* from the first half of the twelfth century. Among the schemes represented in this volume are architectural plans, the feathers on the six wings of a seraphic angel, a five-storied five-room section of a house, a columnar diagram, the stones in the wall of an urban tower, rungs of a ladder, rows of seats in an amphitheatre, and a world map. Whether discussing Albertus Magnus's commentary on Aristotle or Aquinas's treatment of the same (both of which are translated in the anthology), all of these mnemonic schemes can be thought of as tools that were deemed useful in the Middle Ages for "memory-making."

The General Introduction stresses that such "memory-making was regarded as active; it was even a craft with techniques and tools, all designed to make an ethical, useful product" (2). As an art, then, memory was most importantly associated in the Middle Ages with composition, not simply with retention. Accordingly the primary goals in preparing material for memory were flexibility, security, and ease of recombining matter into patterns and forms. What follows in the General Introduction is perhaps the best brief and thorough preface to the classical Art of Memory in the Middle Ages to date, especially as pertains to monastic traditions (17-23).

Specifically, as the editors explain, the materials in the collection, for the most part written down in the twelfth century, originally were designed to help people compose oral presentations such as sermons and prayers, school lectures and homilies. An account of the basic principles of *Memoria*, stressing its compositional aspects, is followed by an outline of what is meant by locational memory. There is an account of emotion and memory, and an appropriately short section explaining what is meant by "memory delights in brevity." Next, the

two kinds of remembering recognized by ancient rhetorical textbooks are outlined: *memoria verborum*, "remembering every word of a segment of text by associating each syllable with a particular visual cue," and *memoria rerum*, "remembering the chief subject matter of a sermon (for example) by associating each one with a summary image" (9-10). The ensuing section on memory and the visual reiterates that memories were thought to be carried in intense images and that memory depended on imagination, which is to say the image-making power of the soul. A discussion of the gaze clarifies that no memory picture should exceed what can be seen and kept easily in mind by virtue of a single "look" or conspectus. Sections are then devoted to *Memoria* in the Trivium and in the Quadrivium, and to mnemotechnic in the classical and monastic traditions. The General Introduction concludes by explaining the nature of the anthology and the drawings, again emphasizing that *memoria* is the craft of recollective composition (24). We are given the sound parting advice that, as students of these texts, we should strive to do what their original readers were asked to do—to draw and to paint and fashion the textual pictures in *one's own mind*. After all the pictures were intended by their authors to be literally "translated," carried over into the ruminating minds of their viewers and readers. This anthology thus provides a viable way to consider how each of these texts (with occasional pictures) fits into the history of *memoria*.

(4) While *The Medieval Craft of Memory* is concerned primarily with materials produced in learned, even academic circles for the purposes of reading and new compositions, the over eighty images in *Writing on Hands* "reacquaint the twenty-first century viewer with the role of the hand in early modern methods of calculation, anatomical nomenclature, solmization (sight singing), memorization of saint's days and feasts" (7). This anthology is based on an exhibition presented first at the Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, and then at the Folger Shakespeare Library. Werner Gundersheimer, then Director of the Folger,

praised Claire Richter Sherman for "the deftness with which she has picked ideas and images from a vast universe of possibilities, as well as for the clarity of her explanations and analyses." I would concur, and not only with respect to the images chosen, but also the contributors: Brian P. Copenhaver, Martin Kemp, Shiko Kusukawa, and Susan Forscher Weiss; and her co-editor, noted historian of art historians and Director of the Trout, Peter M. Lukehart.

The book has six major parts, which I shall treat in reverse order, for with any good mnemonic—like an exhibition—one should be able to revisit and consider the matter irrespective of the point of departure. Also, as Claire Richter Sherman points out, the "thematic organization should not obscure the overlapping nature of certain basic concepts. Teaching, learning, and remembering are functions common to all sections, but they differ in language, audience, patronage, popularity, and time frame" (18).

The works displayed in Part Six, "Guiding Hands," all concern religious and moral instruction; the last section, appropriately, focusing on the emblem book (a topic discussed at greater length at the final stop of our tour of what's new in mnemology, *Death and Drama*). Part Five initially investigates the traditional analogy of "The Body as Microcosm" to illustrate the principles underlying the harmony and order the universe. The brilliant section on theories and practices of divining character and fate in chiromancy (palmistry) contributed by Brian P. Copenhaver, along with the ensuing section on alchemy, bears out Keller-Dall'Asta's contention that these ancient and always popular arts are all part of the larger story of mnemonics in the West. Also reminiscent of Keller-Dall'Asta's book is the interest in cryptography and the mystical mnemotechnical traditions, for the works making up Part Four of *Writing on Hands* all employ coded systems of gesture as instruments of visual communication. The hand is shown to have been used as a teaching device, embracing arithmetic, calendrical calculation, instruction in music theory and practice with special reference to the Guidonian Hand. Part Three, "Messengers of the World," concerns the relationship of the hand to the brain, senses, and

memory. Part Two focuses on anatomical representations of the whole body as the highest invention of God or nature.

While the anthology contains many fields of culture, there is a pronounced affinity for the mnemological, especially in Part One, "Reading the Writing on Hands," beginning with the opening entries, "The Hand as a Mirror of Salvation" and "The Hands as Bodily Mnemonics." Other overtly mnemonic images, familiar to those who have worked with memory treatises, appear at the end of Part Three. For example, Petrus von Rosenheim's mnemonic figure from the Gospel of Saint John (an earlier version of which is featured in the blockbook treated in *Medieval Craft of Memory*, 263), Romberch's "Memory Tour of a City Street" (discussed in *Mapping Mortality*, 50-53), a visual alphabet following Rossellius (known to Burton) and "The Body as a Series of Memory Places" from Gesualdo (discussed also by Keller-Dall'Asta). The section concludes with Marafioti's extremely popular and much reprinted manual mnemonic yielding 92 places. And while Karol Berger provides a detailed account of the "Guidonian Hand" in *The Medieval Craft of Memory* (71-82), Susan Weiss presents a French version in *Writing on Hands* (182-83), with its ancient system of tetrachords and symbols and rhythmic durations in the surrounding borders.

The richness of such intertextual overlapping between these two new books indicates how the same sorts of images can be treated differently and how these mnemonic works appeared in many different forms during the period. The unique contribution that *Writing on Hands* makes to the field of mnemology however is the way the various renderings of the hand—metaphoric, emblematic, symbolic, pedagogic—illuminate early modern conceptual frame-works for learning, remembering, and recalling practical and abstract ideas. As a result the anthology illustrates the vital role of the hand, "as a meeting place of matter, mind, and spirit" (21), in the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge from such diverse realms as anatomy, psychology, mathematics, music, rhetoric, religion, palmistry, astrology and alchemy.

(5) My own recent contribution to the field of mnemology is more modest in scope than either of the two anthologies, though more inclusive than either Martin's book or Keller-Dall'Asta's three-author study. *Death and Drama in Renaissance England: Shades of Memory* uses the classical Art of Memory as an interpretive key to show how a great range of texts, from stage-plays to dictionaries and histories, deployed the emblematic to communicate special meanings. These various forms of cultural expression all shared a common principle of organization: each was decidedly at odds with oblivion, and each drew from reservoirs of the culture's collective memory—namely from emblems, proverbs, and *exempla*. These repositories of accrued commonplaces and perennial wisdom were staples of the classical Memory Arts, which enjoyed a revival during the period. This was especially the case with respect to theatre and its metaphors, as expressed through tragedies, foreign-language phrase books, and histories.

Part One of *Death and Drama*, with its main concern being emblems, demonstrates the instrumentality of the Memory Arts for reconstructing the aesthetic and affective conditions giving rise to certain framing mechanisms in English Tragedy that self-consciously extended the limits of theatre's magic. Special attention is given to scenes from *Friar Bacon*, *Doctor Faustus*, *Spanish Tragedy*, *Revenger's Tragedy*, *Bussy D'Ambois*, *Hamlet*, *White Devil*, and *Broken Heart*, which used cunning, initially mute, staged spectacles that evoked mnemonic images of fatal destiny. This part of the book establishes the extent to which dumb shows shared formal and aesthetic affinities with visual emblems, which were themselves part of the visual shorthand typically used in Renaissance Memory Theatres. For emblems, like their verbal counterpart, *sententiae*, together with other related mnemonically encoded devices, readily were transferred to the Renaissance stage. Such devices, by virtue of their underlying structural and aesthetic principles, conjured into being a special space from within the dramatic spectacle that enabled them to refer beyond what they were put in place simply, mimetically, to signify.

Part Two, whose main concern is proverbs, examines the mnemological and philological links forged by the Memory Arts. The focus is on John Florio, whose language books dramatized the double truth of simulated, mimetic, speech through highly mannered vignettes of a traveler's everyday routine abroad. He caters to, and further buttresses, a special kind of "artificial memory" popular during the day. The notebook method, of accumulating common-places, championed by Florio is characteristic of Renaissance attitudes toward the translation not only of words and ideas in everyday commerce, but also, of the body and soul on a journey toward death—and beyond.

Part Three, whose main concern is *exempla*, looks at how memorable metaphors of the stage were translated into a body of work which sought to characterize and record the soul of history. The focus here is on Walter Raleigh's *History of the World* and on Alexander Ross's efforts—using well known mnemonic principles such as the "decade" and architectural metaphors for organizing information—to digest and correct, and then to continue and complete, Raleigh's monumental project. The works discussed all contain resonant messages that would remain obscure were it not for the critical approach to encoded mnemonic designs that is developed and applied in this book. With the Art of Memory as our interpretive key, we can gain access anew to these exemplary works of Renaissance drama, the language arts, and history.

Death and Drama concludes with a parting glance at the monument scene in Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale* and at English translations of the classics concerning the restless dead, namely those who are apparently beyond life though not yet beyond the reach of art and language. This crystallizes how Renaissance memory images came to store and disclose, and to translate and revive, their symbolic contents and backlog of meanings. They did so, finally, I argue, with respect to an overarching Aesthetic of Decline. Seen in this way, we can recover, in their original contexts, certain shades of memory, from just this side of oblivion, and attend to what they have to tell us about living artfully in the face of death.

With works like the five just mentioned now in the academic mainstream, the future of early modern memory studies seems wide-open. Where will mnemology go from here? Let me close by offering three speculative, if hopeful, predictions.

First, it is probable we will be seeing more translations of neo-Latin texts, unique manuscripts, and incunabula recently brought out into the market—and this is a good thing. There are still many works waiting to be rediscovered and made more widely known and available, along the lines of the noble spadework carried out by *The Medieval Craft of Memory* and the imaginative juxtaposing of rare images in *Writing on Hands*. Archival visits may well become more difficult for scholars in these days of shrinking travel budgets and diminishing grant opportunities. Likewise the new and perhaps long-term restrictions on air-travel are already beginning to take their toll. In this regard though the Internet, with its ready-access to vast and distant treasure houses of information and new possibilities for databases, may well prove the best tool for furthering mnemological studies. For example, the Index Emblematicus, a series which aims to collect and edit important works of emblem literature, spearheaded by Peter Daly; Alciato on the web (with source material from among other works, the *Greek Anthology* and Whitney's *Choice of Emblemes* [1586]—a site that has been receiving around 3,000 visitors a month); and the various interdisciplinary research projects with which Peter Matussek is associated, most notably "Kulturen des Performativen," and especially "Computers as Theatre of Memory."

Second, and more topically oriented, the next decade will be ripe for a fresh study of talismans, commemorative tokens, and other aspects of what is now termed material culture, along the lines of the recent work of Sabine Mödersheim. Likewise studies of collections and collectors are taking on fresh life in the recent work by Ernest Gilman, and the editorial efforts of Simon Hunt and Patricia Fumerton are opening up new avenues of inquiry with respect to "vagrant aspects" of memorial aesthetics in everyday life. The groundwork has been prepared for similar studies in the future, and mnemology may well

be a reliable indicator of the shifting emphases in scholarly trends away from the referential dimension of culture to foreground the performative aspects.

Finally, and more conceptually, as the work of Harald Weinrich has shown, the time is ripe to remember forgetting. The aesthetics of loss has a rich history in the West, and, it will be meeting up soon with mnemology. I say this based on some of the recent conferences worldwide. For example the organizing rubric for the Australian and New Zealand Association for Medieval and Early Modern Studies in February 2003 was "Memory and Commemoration." Papers reflected on topics involving forms of commemoration and ways of remembering across time and space. Likewise the 2002 meeting of the Group for Early Modern Cultural Studies held in Tampa was given over to "Memory and Ritual"; sessions concerned such topics as theatre and culture, death rites, memory and legacy in the personal narratives of early modern women. The 2002 World Congress of the International Federation for Theatre Research met in Amsterdam to explore whether and the extent to which the performing arts can engage in a dialogue with cultural memory, and whether the mediatization of theatrical events can lead to performances becoming part of the collective consciousness and that, vice versa, the media can use dramatic techniques to stage our cultural memories. The prominence of the *Ars Memorativa* in meetings such as these, owes much to the foresight of Jörg Jochen Berns and Wolfgang Neuber, who, in 1995, organized "*Gattungstraditionen, Funktionen und Leistungsgrenzen der Mnemotechniken des 14. bis 17. Jahrhunderts*" in Vienna.

The need to remember forgetting was hinted at two decades ago in a clever piece by Umberto Eco. In his excursus on the "*ars oblivionalis*" he argued that when one wants to forget something, it happens not by cancellation but by superimposition, and not by producing absence but by multiplying presences. The creation of, and impetus to use, artificial memory "places" goes hand in hand with acknowledging—whether tacitly or as a conscious resolve—our mortal limitations, and recognizing the need to aid, strengthen, or extend our natural memo-

ries. Oblivion, as a memorable shade of near-forgetting, motivates our creation of Memory, both as a character and as a method. Memory, after all, is subject to the metaphoric processes that are part and parcel of how the rhetorical tradition has enabled—and taught—us to think through images. As I plan to argue more conclusively in the year to come, oblivion plays a necessary role in the dynamic depiction of memory by the seventeenth-century. Memory and oblivion exist in what can be thought of as a dialectical relation, allegorically as well as ontologically. Memory depends on Oblivion, and the allegorical presence, or absence, of either one does not diminish or compromise the status of the other. No simple set of binary opposites can be deduced from this nest of associations, for the story of memory and forgetting in the early modern era is subtler than that by far.

There is still much work to be done. In particular, as I have suggested tentatively, opportunities await, regarding translations and editions, online and in print; studies that bring back into memory's purview material artifacts such as coins, commemorative medals, currency, and other tokens signaling "the performance of culture"; and philosophically oriented efforts to remember forgetting. These things in mind, the future of mnemological studies seems bright.

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Beneath the Surface: Motives for Rhetoric and Action in *Troilus and Cressida* A Response to Vernon Loggins et al.

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In the final act of Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* Troilus agonizes over what to him seems actions of betrayal by Cressida. She had vowed to love only him and now Troilus spies on her as she involves herself with Diomedes. Troilus curses what appears to be incongruity between Cressida's words and her subsequent actions. He sums up the matter after reading the letter she writes to him that Pandarus delivers: "Words, words, mere words, no matter from the heart; [...] / But edifies another with her deed" (V.iii.109-15).¹ It is the theme of action contradicting rhetoric. The play is rife with examples of characters behaving in ways that seem to undercut the words they have spoken. In his article "Rhetoric and Action in *Troilus and Cressida*," Vernon Loggins points out numerous characters in *Troilus and Cressida* who do not seem to do what they say they will, or do what they say they will not. He cites example after example for what he calls the "pattern of rhetoric-action disagreement."² Troilus begins the first scene vowing not to fight and he leaves the scene heading to battle with Aeneas. He begins the play "weaker than a woman's tear" (I.i.9), as he claims, but finishes the play bent on revenge and battle. Cressida claims in her soliloquy that she will not capitulate to Troilus (I.ii.260-73), but the first time the lovers share the stage she "plunges headlong into a relationship with the prince."³ Hector begins the council scene opposed to keeping Helen and abruptly changes his position and continues to fight for her. Ulysses' famous speech on order and degree is, according to Loggins, only "lip service,"⁴ which he undermines by conspiring with Nestor. For Loggins, Ulysses' public position—his

rhetoric—is “diametrically opposed to his private one,” which we see in his action to “trick” both Achilles and Ajax.⁵

Numerous critics have noted that the major characters’ rhetoric and action do appear contradictory,⁶ or as Loggins puts it, “[...] what major characters say is undercut by the actions they later take.”⁷ Pointing this contradiction out, however, does little more than scratch the surface of what is really happening here. If we dig a little deeper we discover that the same motivating value or desire of the individual characters dictates both their rhetoric and their action. Loggins even seems to recognize that more than a surface contradiction is taking place when he mentions almost in passing “that the public actions taken by the characters [...] are in part determined by their private concerns.”⁸ What Loggins and most of the other critics⁹ fail to do is to develop the idea of “private concerns” determining both rhetoric and action. This idea of consistent motive for both rhetoric and action in the main characters can readily be seen in Ulysses.

True, Ulysses loves to talk and use elevated, over-blown rhetoric; it takes him sixteen lines to ask permission to speak (I.iii.53-68). Nevertheless if we can push aside the flowers of his language for a moment, we see that they stem and bloom from solid, logical roots. Ulysses calls for a return to the proper order in the Grecian army, for all nature even “The heavens themselves, the planets and this center / Observe degree, priority, and place” (I.iii.85-86). Agamemnon is the king and he should reassert his authority over the army, especially Achilles. By refusing to fight, Achilles creates discord within the army and encourages the “chaos” that Ulysses predicts follows the removal of “degree” or order.

Ulysses is right. Without proper order and place the army is not efficient or effective, and, as he points out, it is this lack of order that “keeps Troy on foot, / Not her own sinews” (I.iii.135-36). Ulysses’ argument is sound, and neither he nor Agamemnon nor the other generals present debate its validity. But the trouble arises when Agamemnon inevitably asks Ulysses that now that they know what is wrong with the army, “What is the remedy?” (I.iii.141). In response

Ulysses sets off on another long speech that is not really the solution but a more specific description of the "Achilles problem." This time, however, he departs from the high level of order of the planets and "the glorious planet Sol" (I.iii.89), and instead he talks about how Patroclus pretends to be Agamemnon and others in jest in order to amuse Achilles. How quickly the argument turns from noble concerns about the army to personal pride and having one's dignity and feelings hurt. Intuitively attuned to Ulysses' zigzagging, Nestor saves the original point of the argument by demonstrating how mockery infects others in the army and weakens the order Ulysses so eloquently argued for earlier. Agamemnon has not maintained the order he should have; but Ulysses is understandably cautious about how to address this issue. By focusing the argument on Achilles, and linking the appeal to Agamemnon's pride, Ulysses demonstrates he knows what his society values, and how best to motivate his leader to take control of the army. Ulysses, as well as Nestor, knows how to manipulate others. In this case by appealing to Agamemnon's pride.

But Ulysses' speech on order and degree goes beyond his desire to influence others. For Ulysses, order and degree are not only efficient and effective, they represent moral values.

Take but degree away [...] [and]
 Force should be right—or rather, right and wrong,
 Between whose endless jar justice resides,
 Should lose their names, and so should justice too.
 (I.iii.109, 116-18)

It is not true, as Barbara Everett claims, that "[...] Ulysses proposes a remedy as simply self-conscious as the malady: that Achilles should be triggered into action by vanity [...]." ¹⁰ In his suggestion to use deception and let Achilles' pride bring him back to the battle, Ulysses is not demonstrating values as selfish as Achilles'. Though the problem and the proposed remedy are built on the value the characters give to pride and outward honor, the remedy's foundation lies on the solid ground of understanding and reason. Ulysses knows both Achilles

and Agamemnon are prideful, and he logically reasons that pride should be used to motivate them both to action.

At the foundation level there is no conflict between Ulysses' rhetoric and his actions. As Troilus later states it, "We may not think the justness of each act / Such and no other than the event doth form it" (II.ii.118-19). The intent and not the means to the end, in this case, determine justice and injustice, right and wrong. Thus we can see Ulysses deliver a speech calling for order and degree and then immediately plan out a deception to be played on Ajax and Achilles, and still know that at the foundation level, the level of right and wrong, Ulysses does not consider himself hypocritical. He is able to align the motivation for his actions with the motivation for his rhetorical stance. Though the actions may seem less just than the rhetoric, the intent behind them both is the same. Gayle Greene notes that Ulysses' language may make "right and wrong [...] lose their names."¹¹ But it would be incorrect to conclude that right and wrong, thereby, lose their meaning.

In the Trojan council scene we see just how conscious, how public, the separation can be between rhetoric and action. Hector condemns the Trojans' continued seizure of Helen.

Let Helen go.

Since the first sword was drawn about this question
Every tithe-soul, 'mongst many thousand dimes,
Hath been as dear as Helen—I mean, of ours.
If we have lost so many tenths of ours
To guard a thing not ours—nor worth to us,
Had it our name, the value of one ten—
What merit's in that reason which denies
The yielding of her up? (II.ii.16-24)

Hector suggests they look seriously at not just the logic of the argument, but also the worth or value behind the argument. Hector is asking for a discussion of Trojan values. And Troilus answers that there is no value, only as given by the particular individual or individuals: "What's aught but as 'tis valued?" (II.ii.52). The two positions are irreconcilable. Hector claims objects, people, actions possess intrinsic

value; Troilus counters that all things are assigned value by individuals or society. Are they fighting for Helen because she is valuable? Or as Troilus would have it, is Helen valuable because they are fighting for her? Hector argues "'Tis mad idolatry / To make the service greater than the God" (II.ii.55-56). For him their reasons to keep Helen are neither logical nor moral.

The reasons you allege do more conduce
To the hot passion of distempered blood
Than to make up a free determination
'Twixt right and wrong; [...] (II.ii.167-70)

But then suddenly, in mid-sentence, he agrees to keep Helen: "—yet ne'ertheless, / My sprightly brethren I propend to you / In resolution to keep Helen still" (II.ii.188-90). Loggins makes the case that Hector changes his mind not because of some seemingly honorable gesture ("tis a cause that hath no mean dependence / Upon our joint and several dignities" [II.iii.191-92]), but because he needs to save face, to redeem himself from having suffered a blow from Ajax earlier in battle (I.ii.30-32). Hector, Loggins claims, cares little for whether they keep Helen or not, other than that she makes a good excuse to keep fighting. "He is willing to risk public destruction for private satisfaction."¹² But this is not necessarily so. I do not think the text supports the idea that Hector acts purely in self-interest or in opposition to his values as revealed in his rhetorical stance.

When Hector argues first to give Helen to the Greeks he acknowledges that this would be right and just, but we know that by this time he has already issued the challenge of combat that we are led to believe is for Achilles, and not Ajax, the one he logically would want to re-fight if his only desire was to "save face" for himself. "This challenge that the gallant Hector sends, / However it is spread in general name, / Relates in purpose only to Achilles" (I.iii.315-17). In order to stay true to his own set of values, Hector feels he cannot repent of the challenge and so he reverses his stance—he must agree in *resolution*, not principle, to keep Helen because he feels this is the only way to save his own and all of Troy's military and political dignity. It is the

prior vow made with words that prompts his action of continued fighting.

Now certainly the value of remaining true at all times to your vows is called into question, particularly after Hector's second vow to meet Achilles in battle. When Hector prepares to go out to battle, to "endeavor deeds to match these words" (IV.vii.143-44), his wife and sister try to talk him out of it. Andromache: "Do not count it holy / To hurt by being just" (V.iii.19-20); Cassandra: "It is the purpose that makes strong the vow, / But vows to every purpose must not hold" (23-24). Hector's reply reveals his motivating belief or value: "Life every man holds dear, but the dear man / Holds honor far more precious-dear than life" (27-28). Now while it may be argued that Hector has his values messed-up, it is nevertheless true that the *same* values motivate both his rhetoric and his actions.

Perhaps the strongest examples of characters seemingly not acting in accordance with their rhetoric are the two title characters, Troilus and Cressida. But again, taken at the fundamental level of intent or motivation it is the reasons *why* they say what they say and *why* they do what they do that is important, and it is not particularly helpful just to point out the fact that there is surface contradiction between their words and their deeds. In the first scene Troilus argues against the war and against its cause:

Fools on both sides. Helen must needs be fair
When with your blood you daily paint her thus.
I cannot fight upon this argument.
It is too starved a subject for my sword. (I.i.86-89)

After such a statement it is odd when next we see Troilus in the council scene argue to keep Helen, the cause of the war. Why the seemingly sudden change? Perhaps he "cannot fight upon *this* argument"—Helen, but he has found a new argument he can fight for. He is in love with Cressida, and seems to be willing to do much to go to bed with her. In his argument with Hector, Troilus seems to be referring to Helen, but he also may be projecting his own possible future with Cressida.

I take today a wife, and my election
Is led on in the conduct of my will;
My will enkindled by mine eyes and ears,
Two traded pilots 'twixt the dangerous shores
Of will and judgement. How may I avoid—
Although my will distaste what it elected—
The wife I chose? There can be no evasion
To blench from this and to stand firm by honor.
We turn not back the silks upon the merchant
When we have spoiled them; [...] (II.ii.60-69)

Cressida is the daughter of the Trojan traitor Calchas who is in the Greek camp. An end to the war would probably mean the departure of Cressida and the revelation of her relationship with Troilus. Troilus needs to keep the war going, and so he counters Hector's talk of reason with an appeal to his honor to ensure the continuation of the fighting.

Nay, if we talk of reason,
Let's shut our gates and sleep. Manhood and honor
Should have hare hearts, would they but fat their thoughts
With this crammed reason. Reason and respect
Make livers pale and lustihood deject. (II.ii.45-49)

It is the perfect argument to influence Hector, who, we have already seen, feels that his honor and all of Troy's honor has been threatened, and who sees honor and dignity as two of the most basic values of life. With Troilus we see another character who actually reverses his rhetorical stance: claiming the war is unworthy of his support and then arguing in favor of it. But it is not that the character's fundamental motivation has changed; it is a matter of taking the rhetorical position that best serves that motivation in a given situation.

In his love-sick moaning in the first act it is natural for him to play the broken-hearted lover who has no reason to fight outside the city walls when he finds such a cruel battle within his own heart.

Why should I war without the walls of Troy
That find such cruel battle here within?

Each Trojan that is master of his heart,
Let him to field—Troilus, alas, hath none. (I.i.2-5)

Then Aeneas enters, and Troilus is unable or unwilling to give him a good reason for not being on the battlefield. And in order to keep his desire for Cressida from becoming public knowledge Troilus must grab up his arms again and excitedly return to the battle with Aeneas. So even here Troilus is still acting according to the same motivation that prompts his words, though the two, actions and words, are in this case contradictory.

By the end of the play Troilus is thoroughly the crushed lover and he can find no other outlet for his emotions but the war, so he goes forth seeking revenge upon the man whom he supposes stole his lover. Once again being driven to behave in a manner contradictory to his original rhetoric, but in both his rhetoric and his behavior he is driven by the same passion.

Cressida could be viewed as the character most deserving of sympathy because she is the major character least in control of her own situation. In many ways her rhetoric makes no difference, she will be bartered with by the Greeks and the Trojans no matter what she says, or does for that matter. Still it is a little surprising to hear her speak as if she is not interested in Troilus, and that she will not give in to his advances in act one scene two, and then in act three she almost immediately gives herself to him. But, in the moment Cressida confesses her feelings to Troilus we learn the true nature of her previous rhetoric:

Hard to seem won; but I was won, my lord,
With the first glance that ever—pardon me:
If I confess much, you will play the tyrant.
I love you now, but till now not so much
But I might master it. In faith I lie:
My thoughts were like unbridled children, grown
Too headstrong for their mother. See, we fools!
Why have I blabbed? Who shall be true to us,
When we are so unsecret to ourselves?
But though I loved you well, I wooed you not—
(III.ii.106-15)

Here Cressida admits that she was lying to herself when she claimed to be uninterested in Troilus; she was, in fact, won over "With the first glance." And much later she seems to admit that she goes after whatever catches her eye:

Troilus, farewell. One eye yet looks on thee,
But with my heart the other eye doth see.
Ah, poor our sex! This fault in us I find:
The error of our eye directs our mind.
What error leads must err. O then conclude:
Minds swayed by eyes are full of turpitude.
(V.ii.107-12)

Thus, though at first her rhetoric is seemingly contradictory to her actions, she later reveals her rhetoric was not a true reflection of her desires, and so it should not surprise us when her true actions contradict her untrue rhetoric.

It could be argued that Cressida is all along playing the situation, that she only pretends to love Troilus because that seems the safest course to take for a young woman who must rely upon the mercy of others, and who has a father who is a traitor to her benefactor's cause. Perhaps her underlying motivating principle is simply self-preservation. This would account for her seemingly sincere confession of love to Troilus, as well as her words and actions in the betrayal scene with Diomedes. But I do not think this argument would effectively account for her dramatic lamenting in front of Pandarus when he tells her she is to be given to the Greeks. There does not seem any need for such a show, if it were a show, to be played out in front of him—unless it is her attempt to feed herself one of her own convincing lines. Of course, this makes her a much less sympathetic character than she would be otherwise.

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NOTES

¹All references to Shakespeare's texts are from *The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt et al. (New York: Norton, 1997).

²Vernon Loggins, "Rhetoric and Action in *Troilus and Cressida*," *College Language Association Journal* 21.2 (1991): 93-108.

³Loggins 100.

⁴Loggins 103.

⁵Loggins 104.

⁶For example, Stephen J. Lynch, "Hector and the Theme of Honor in *Troilus and Cressida*," *The Upstart Crow* 7 (1987): 68-79, points out the discrepancies between what Hector "advocates [...] in theory [speech]," and what he appears to favor "in action" (70); Jeffrey L. Porter discusses the failure of speech to remain consistent with action in *Troilus and Cressida* in "Shakespeare and the Motives of Rhetoric: The Failure of Speech in *Troilus and Cressida*," *Postscript* 4 (1987): 55-64; T. McAlidon claims that Hector's "greatest failures" are in the area of "establishing a proper relation between words and deeds" (31), see "Language, Style and Meaning in *Troilus and Cressida*," *PMLA* 84 (1969): 29-43; Lawrence D. Green analyzes the "inconsistencies between word and action" in *Troilus and Cressida*, and states that because of these "inconsistencies in the Trojan council scene" no sense can be made of the resulting action (32), see "'We'll Dress Him Up in Voices': The Rhetoric of Disjunction in *Troilus and Cressida*," *The Quarterly Journal of Speech* 70.1 (1984): 23-40.

⁷Loggins 95.

⁸Loggins 96.

⁹I must note that Lynch does introduce the idea of a consistent motive for both rhetoric and action, in Hector at least: "Thus, his apparently conflicting actions—his refusal to keep Helen as well as his agreement to keep Helen—issue from a consistent concern with self-glorifying appearances" (73). But he does not develop this though further, nor does he expand it to include any other characters.

¹⁰Barbara Everett, "The Inaction of *Troilus and Cressida*," *Essays in Criticism* 32.2 (1982): 123.

¹¹Gayle Greene, "Language and Value in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*," *SEL* 21.2 (1981): 174.

¹²Loggins 107.

"Invisible Bullets": Unseen Potential in Stephen Greenblatt's New Historicism

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In *Shakespearean Negotiations*, Stephen Greenblatt develops a praxis of literary analysis that attempts to rediscover literary texts as both the reflection and the creation of a given historical context. His intention, clearly, is "to look less at the presumed center of the literary domain than at its borders, to try to track what can only be glimpsed, as it were, at the margins of the text" (4). In his first chapter, Greenblatt defines this reciprocal process of historical influence and textual creation as the reflection of influences he identifies as "social energy" (4). He then applies this approach to seemingly unrelated texts, usually a chronicle and a play of the same period, to exemplify the trace of a particular form of social energy. It is very simple.

What is problematic about this approach is that its simplicity belies a much more complex historiography than Greenblatt's analyses will admit. It is not my intention to merely disprove parts of Stephen Greenblatt's theory and its application. Instead, I will attempt to refine his criteria for social energy and social practice by extending the conceptual and historiographical method. This will inform a more comprehensive reading of Greenblatt's primary examples, Thomas Harriot's *A Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* (1588) and Shakespeare's *Henry V*, both featured in his second chapter, "Invisible Bullets." Before a critique of Greenblatt's strategy can be made, it is necessary to understand his criteria for social energy and the appropriation of symbols.

In "Social Energy," Greenblatt confesses his desire to "speak with the dead" (1). He intends to recreate a historical moment through analysis of contemporary texts that operate synchronously. This mo-

ment of shared historical context manifests itself through an economy of linguistic and, as such, cultural currency and its consumption. Through the texts of a given period, one can trace the effects of social energy (6); that is, "a subtle, elusive set of exchanges, a net-work of trade-offs, a jostling of competing representations, a negotiation between joint-stock companies" (7). These traces are extant in metaphor, symbol, synecdoche, and metonymy (11). He is not so much interested in whether a play accurately reflects a social institution, but whether there is an exchange between the play and a given institution:

Inquiries into the relation between Renaissance theater and society have been situated most often at the level of reflection: images of the monarchy, the lower classes, the legal profession, the church, and so forth. Such studies are essential, but they rarely engage questions of dynamic exchange. They tend instead to posit two separate, autonomous systems and then try to gauge how accurately or effectively the one represents the other (11).

The exchange of social energy is limited by what he lists as "certain abjurations": "1. There can be no appeals to genius as the sole origin of the energies of great art. 2. There can be no motiveless creation. 3. There can be no transcendent or timeless or unchanging representation. 4. There can be no autonomous artifacts. 5. There can be no expression without an origin and an object, a *from* and a *for*. 6. There can be no art without social energy. 7. There can be no spontaneous generation of social energy" (12). Although this rubric seems plausible, it assumes relationships that are tenuous at best, or non-existent at the worst.

Greenblatt's statement disallowing genius as the only source of the energy of art is ambiguous, if not unreasonable. If there is reciprocity of energy between society and the artist, then one of the two needs to initiate a particular discourse. Even if one were to suppose that "agents of exchange [...] appear to be individuals," but are "themselves the products of collective exchange" (12), there is artistic singularity that differentiates authors and the texts they produce. Indeed, the concept of symbolic acquisition presupposes such an exchange through artistic representation:

Symbolic Acquisition. Here a social practice or other mode of social energy is transferred to the stage by means of representation. No cash payment is made, but the object acquired is not in the realm of things indifferent, and something is implicitly or explicitly given in return for it. The transferring agency has its purposes, which may be more or less overt. (10)

Greenblatt's implicit or explicit "transferring agency" further questions his concept of the somewhat neutral artist. He admits "[t]here can be no expression without an origin and an object, a *from* and a *for*" (12).

The complex logical attempt to formulate art as the equal influences of the artist and society ultimately returns to the primary role of the artist. Accordingly, his concept of a "transferring agency" that recognizes an origin of some sort ultimately asks the question of artistic intention. Again, Greenblatt compromises his balance between artist and society by stating that "[t]here can be no motiveless creation" (12). From this point forward he uses the concept of intention as the fulcrum to support his assertions of social energy in Harriot and Shakespeare. Before analyzing the intentions Greenblatt identifies in *A Brief and True Report* and *Henry V*, it is necessary to examine his perspective on Elizabethan theater companies and the role of intention in the exchange of social energy.

In the second section of "Invisible Bullets," Greenblatt states that "Elizabethan playing companies contrived to absorb, refashion, and exploit some of the fundamental energies of a political authority that was itself already committed to histrionic display and hence was ripe for appropriation" (40). Why would they, considering the dire consequences of such overt action? When John Hayward's *The First Part of the Life and Reign of King Henry IV* (1599) was published without having gone through the censor with a dedication to Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, both Hayward and Essex were interrogated by the Privy Council (Guy 447-48). Attorney General Edward Coke maintained that Hayward's interpretation of the overthrow of Richard II was "that of a King who is taxed for misgovernment, and his council for corrupt and covetous dealings for private ends" (Guy 449). John Guy states that "Elizabeth's most serious objection to the work was its

popularity among the Londoners, which she took to imply her own unpopularity" (448). Hayward's interrogation was to be the last event to take place before the Privy Council officially charged Essex with treason (Guy 448).

Shakespeare and his company were also honored with a Privy Council interrogation after the Essex faction commissioned them to perform *Richard II* on the eve of Essex's revolt. Subsequent quarto versions of the play were not allowed to include Richard's deposition (4.1) (Bevington 721). Certainly, this is an intense exchange of social energy, but it is doubtful that an Elizabethan theater company would purposely implicate itself in a potentially life and death controversy over treason. Nonetheless, Greenblatt is correct in identifying a transference of social energy between artist and society. Even without a clearly discernible intention, a work of art can both feed and consume such social energy.

Alternative Appropriations

Although Greenblatt denounces the notion of an "autonomous artifact" (12), and since he cannot accurately determine an artist's intention, there is a kind of artifact that bridges the gulf in explaining the creation of the artist's work and the society from which and for which it is produced. This artifact is not autonomous in the sense that it cannot be interpreted or traced, but rather its composition is the flint upon which both artist and society are kindled. For *Richard II*, this artifact is constituted by the previous histories and plays dealing with the career of Richard II. The story itself is loaded with potential controversy; the play was produced in 1595 and then used by the Essex faction six years later. David Bevington best explains Shakespeare's reworking of the story: "When he wrote the play, Shakespeare presumably did not know that it would be used for such a purpose, but he must have known that the overthrow of Richard II was, in any case, a controversial subject because of its potential use as a precedent

for rebellion" (721). This conceptual potential, or *Vorstellungsmöglichkeit*,¹ is that which an artist could use to create a work that is covert, yet socially *energetic* in Greenblatt's sense of an exchange between author and society. The frequency of this exchange has been explained best by Annabel Patterson in the second chapter of *Reading Holinshed's Chronicles*.

Although Patterson specifically focuses on the *Chronicles*, and I will be returning to her work for my discussion of *Henry V*, she utilizes an approach that is also useful for the discussion of Harriot. She identifies Jürgen Habermas' concept of communicative reason that occupies a region between the mind and the external world. In its final phase, it is termed *Öffentlichkeit* (openness)² and it features an internal communicative function as well as an externalized influence upon the social institutions of government and economy (20). Patterson appropriates Habermas and the concept of *Öffentlichkeit* in a very pragmatic way:

Sites of *Öffentlichkeit* work, Habermas claims, in two directions; the one internal, a kind of gathering and strengthening process for the opinions of their members, a process which he elsewhere calls, more strikingly, "radical democratic will formation"; the other external, by way of bringing influence to bear on the seemingly immune, self-regulating and self-sufficient systems of power and money, or government and the economy. (20)

Patterson points out that, although Habermas has a modern, if not post-modern world in mind, his concept can and should be applied to Renaissance studies. Indeed, for Habermas, most contemporary thinkers "have lost all sense of historical perspective by forgetting their origins in early modern Europe" (20). It is no accident that Patterson's chapter is titled "Intentions." This brings us back to Greenblatt's preoccupation with authorial intention. It is not that the authorial intentions identified by Greenblatt are necessarily wrong, but they exclude the potential of *Vorstellungsmöglichkeit* and the flexible interplay of *Öffentlichkeit*. To illuminate these dynamic exchanges, I will focus on some unexamined segments of Harriot's text. Regarding Shakespeare's *Henry V*, the historiography of *Holinshed's Chronicles* (1587) serves as the primary catalyst.

Greenblatt begins "Invisible Bullets" by citing the trial of Christopher Marlowe and the inclusion of Thomas Harriot as a possible atheist (21). Although he cautiously qualifies the charges as possible "smear tactics used with reckless abandon" to discredit Harriot, he follows Harriot's possible connection with the blasphemous School of Night to posit a thesis of political subversion. Greenblatt admits that "the historical evidence is unreliable; even in the absence of social pressure, people lie readily about their most intimate beliefs" (22). He does, however, equate atheism with political subversion as impacting sixteenth century society. Greenblatt formulates a model of interpretation that focuses on the "relation between orthodoxy and subversion in Harriot's text" (23). He then proposes the application of this model to Shakespeare's history plays in general and *Henry V* in particular.

Reading Between the Lines: Thomas Harriot's *A Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*

At the heart of Greenblatt's approach is a comparison between Machiavelli's view of religion as *realpolitik* and Harriot's questioning of Christian rulers and the operation of the state. He implies that religious leaders use religion and the fear of the unknown to maintain civil order. "The *Discourses*," claims Greenblatt, "treats religion as if its primary function were not salvation but the achievement of civic discipline, as if its primary justification were not truth but expediency" (24). Greenblatt also traces this idea in *The Prince*. For historian Tom McAlindon, Greenblatt's reading of Machiavelli leaves much to be desired.

The religion-as-politic, or "juggling Moses"-theory which takes its name from the reported blasphemy of Marlowe, and its identity with Machiavelli is, according to McAlindon, "circuitous and entirely incorrect" (414):

[T]he relevant chapter in *The Prince* does not say, as Greenblatt claims it does, "if Moses' actions and methods are examined closely," which implies

the unmasking of deceptive appearances. Nor is it concerned with religion. Its theme is that leaders who endure longest are those who rely least on fortune and most on strength of mind and on armed self-defense. (414)

Even if one dismisses McAlindon's statement as inflexible and not befitting the concept of *Öffentlichkeit*, Greenblatt omits Machiavelli's qualification of Moses as a representative who is also a leader. "Turning to those who have become princes by their own powers [virtu] and not by accident," writes Machiavelli, "I would say that the most notable were Moses, Cyrus, Romulus, Theseus, and a few others. And though we should not consider Moses, because he was simply an agent sent by God to do certain things, he still should be admired, if only for that grace which made him worthy of talking with God" (16). Moses, then, does not quite fit the mold of the pragmatic politician; he is, as attested by Machiavelli, an agent of God and separate.³

Greenblatt's possible misinterpretation of Machiavelli and his intention concerning Moses leads to an interesting reading of Harriot. Before analyzing *A Brief and True Report*, he reiterates Harriot's association with Sir Walter Raleigh, who was accused of treason. He refers to Raleigh as a "poet and a freethinker" and the charge of treason makes it easier for Greenblatt to lump the charge of atheism on top of it. He justifies this with a very tidy syllogism; he asserts that "no one who actually loved and feared God would allow himself to rebel against an anointed ruler, and atheism, conversely, would lead inevitably to treason" (25). Greenblatt takes the figure of the monarch as God's anointed representative and makes that monarch God. St. Augustine, who was utilized by both Catholics and Protestants in the sixteenth century, clearly sets God apart from both man and angels: "there can be no unchangeable good except our one, true, and blessed God" (XII. 245). The closest that man can achieve is a poor image of God. "We ourselves can recognize in ourselves an image of God [...] of course, it is merely an image and, in fact, a very remote one" (XI. 235). Aside from his exclusion of degrees of sin and the nature of conscience, Greenblatt would require some evidence that Elizabeth I considered herself to be God and not just the representative of God.

Were that true, courtiers in disfavor would have been treated as traitors. All the same, for Greenblatt, Harriot's association with Raleigh makes him suspect despite his qualification that "Harriot does not voice any speculations remotely resembling the hypotheses that a punitive religion was invented to keep men in awe and that belief originated in a fraudulent imposition by cunning 'jugglers' on the ignorant [...]" (26). Harriot's report on Virginia "seems to be virtually testing the Machiavellian hypotheses" (26).

Greenblatt equates Harriot's description of native society with English social structure. "There is an easy, indeed almost irresistible, analogy in the period between accounts of Indian and European social structure, so that Harriot's description of the inward mechanisms of Algonquin society implies a description of comparable mechanisms in his own culture" (27). He then segues into the Algonquin religious system and its class of priests and their deference to the English; this becomes "the very core of the Machiavellian anthropology that posited the origin of religion in an imposition of socially coercive doctrines by an educated and sophisticated lawgiver on a simple people" (27). Greenblatt's identification of Harriot's description of Algonquin society and its seemingly suspicious English analogues is the first misuse of *Öffentlichkeit* and *Vorstellungsmöglichkeit*.

It must be remembered that Harriot prefaces his report as a correction to other reports of Virginia which "have not done a little wrong to many that otherwise would have also favored and adventured in the action, to the honor and benefit of our nation, besides the particular profit and credit which would redound to themselves [...]" (1). Harriot is setting out to entice investors and farmers into settling the territory in the New World. Harriot would most likely persuade such "adventurers" by using recognizable metaphors; it makes more familiar what is seemingly foreign. Furthermore, Greenblatt concentrates on Harriot's account of the natives, but neglects the first three-fourths of the text in which Harriot speaks in detail about what he calls "merchantable goods." Certainly, this much of a given report cannot pass for nothing in terms of *Vorstellungsmöglichkeit*, at least not for its in-

tended audience. Greenblatt, however, insists that the core of Machiavellian theory, although commanding the least amount of Harriot's attention, is in his final comment on the natives.

Greenblatt infers that Harriot sees the natives as simplistic with regard to religion because they saw European technology as divinely inspired (27). Although I agree that Harriot saw their religion as incorrect, I question Greenblatt's reliance on the technological disparity between the natives and Harriot as the grounds for Harriot's statement, especially in the light of contrary textual evidence. Just prior to this comment, Harriot compares the natives with the English in relatively generous terms:

In respect of us they are a people poor, and for want of skill and judgment in the knowledge and use of our things, do esteem our trifles before things of greater value: Notwithstanding in their proper manner considering the want of such means as we have, they seem very ingenious; For although they have no such tools, nor any such crafts, sciences and artes as wee; yet in those things they do, they show excellency of wit. (31)

Harriot could be speaking from a Christian perspective that would naturally be chauvinistic in viewing any other belief system as inferior. Indeed, Harriot, an Englishman, is seemingly more tolerant of the Indians than he would be of Catholics. In the face of Greenblatt's inconclusive statements concerning Harriot's alleged atheism, Harriot could, in fact, be devout in his religious practice. Although Harriot's name was used in conjunction with an atheistic epithet at Raleigh's treason trial in 1603, there was never any conclusive evidence against Harriot in 1593 at the Cerne Abbas Inquiry into atheism (Rukeyser 139). Harriot claims to have "[...] made declaration of the contents of the Bible; that therein was set forth the true and only God, and his mightie works that therein was contained the true doctrine of salvation through Christ" (34).

Although Greenblatt tries to piece together other textual betrayals of Harriot's alleged atheism and thus political subversion, his argument fails. In speaking about Harriot's supposed proclivity for the "juggling Moses"-theory of religion as *realpolitik*, Greenblatt states that "it

is misleading [...] to conclude without qualification that the radical doubt implicit in Harriot's account is *entirely* contained. After all, Harriot was hounded through his whole life by charges of atheism [...] (34). Once again, this argument faces its toughest opposition from Harriot himself who closes his *Brief and True Report* by thanking God for the opportunity to serve his country through his exploration and report. His pronouncement echoes Augustine with regard to the singularity of God. What is remarkable is that Harriot couches his praise in terms that most resemble the words of a subject addressing a lord: "Thus referring my relation to your favorable constructions, expecting good success of the action, from him which is to be acknowledged the author and governor not only of this but all things else, I take my leave of you, this month of February, 1588" (41). Harriot maintains a position that is self-righteously, and appropriately, Christian and nationalistic. He defers to his social superiors yet keeps them temporally separate from Godhead. In a period that actively sought out atheism and sedition and was, itself, unable to convict Harriot, it is hard to accept Greenblatt's conviction that Harriot was hatching and promulgating atheistic and treasonous statements. What is remarkable, however, is Greenblatt's construct of a text that is covertly subversive.

Alien Voices: Shakespeare's *Henry V*

Greenblatt traces two discourses throughout *A Brief and True Report* and *Henry V* that contribute to the circulation of social energy; these are "the testing of a subversive interpretation of the dominant culture" and the "recording of alien voices or, more precisely, of alien interpretations" (35). These operations serve a paradoxical function. They enforce the official ideological position of a society while subverting it at the same time. For Greenblatt, Harriot's Machivallian reasoning tests the idea that religious idealism is the core of society by admitting the voices of the Indians as signifiers of both English and

Indian culture. The facets of Indian culture, in this case religion, are wrong because they are not Christian. Those similarities in the English religion, though not wrong, are questioned because of the comparison to Indian culture.

The recording of alien voices, their preservation in Harriot's text, is part of the process whereby Indian culture is constituted as a culture and thus brought into the light for study, discipline, correction, transformation. The momentary sense of instability or plenitude—the existence of other voices—is produced by the monolithic power that ultimately denied the possibility of plenitude, just as the subversive hypothesis about European religion is tested and confirmed only by the imposition of that religion. (37)

Greenblatt's operation of conceptual testing through the recording of alien voices which produces and circulates social energy would be effective if it did not rely on problematic assumptions of authorial intention. As pointed out, one highly questionable interpretation, in this case Greenblatt's reading of Machiavelli, is enough to endanger the entire analysis.

The *Vorstellungsmöglichkeit* that Greenblatt uncovers cannot, however, be denied. The key to unlocking the subversity within the careful, officially recognized text lies within what is *not* said, rather than what is stated. Annabel Patterson's reading of *Holinshed's Chronicles*,⁴ which is Shakespeare's main source for *Henry V*, incorporates subversity through other voices without relying upon an identifiable authorial intention as the motivation. Patterson identifies the necessity of multiple voices to represent various opinions. These voices are, themselves, representative of various socio-economic levels.

Given the nature of post-Reformation experience, which set Protestants and Catholics against each other in changing patterns of domination and repression, a national history should not and could not be univocal, but must shoulder the responsibility of representing diversity of opinion. Wherever possible, moreover, diversity should be expressed as multivocality, with the *Chronicles* recording verbatim what they found in earlier historians or contemporary witnesses. A corollary of this principle was that although the individual chroniclers might hold and express strong opinions of their own, especially on religion, the effect of the work *as a whole* would be of incoherence [...]. (7)

In addition to this, Patterson defines what she calls the "anthropological level" of the *Chronicles*. "Not only were they produced by middle-class citizens self-consciously acting as such," states Patterson, "but they registered, as part of the drive toward completeness and multivocality, a greater interest than we have supposed in the voices and views of the groups below them, the common people, the artisanal and laboring classes" (7).

Layered within this multivocality is the voice of authoritative erudition. In the margins of the *Chronicles* lie learned references to past recordings of the history. This strategy allows an individual chronicler to fit within an officially recognized precedent, but at the same time break from that tradition by blending the past account with the contemporary account. Patterson states that "[...] the typographical strategy of the *Chronicles* was to indicate the source of a particular passage in the margin, although it is not clear when an older authority is no longer speaking, and the convention is not scrupulously observed" (35). It is this very process that Greenblatt touches upon but does not fully explore in his analysis of *Henry V*.⁵

In looking at Shakespeare's *Henriad*, Greenblatt puts the reader in the position of a Harriot, "surveying a complex new world, testing upon it dark thoughts without damaging the order that those thoughts would seem to threaten" (56). Regarding *Henry V*, Greenblatt correctly states that "we have all along been both colonizer and colonized, king and subject" (56). I differ from Greenblatt's view of the play as a register of "every nuance of royal hypocrisy, ruthlessness, and bad faith—testing, in effect, the proposition that successful rule depends not upon sacredness but upon demonic violence [...]" (56). Greenblatt's quick evaluation that the king's authority is based upon bad faith and falsification (63) is problematic. For Greenblatt, the king's actions are periodically and momentarily questioned, but are subsumed and thus resolved by the larger enterprise of war and England's right to the French throne.

Although Greenblatt begins his analysis with Fluellen's comparison of Henry with Alexander the Great and comes to the chorus only later,

it is necessary to work the play chronologically to better understand the manifestation of social energy through *Vorstellungsmöglichkeit* and Patterson's appropriation of *Öffentlichkeit*. Regarding the chorus, Greenblatt points to the fact that the audience is

prodded by constant reminders of a gap between real and ideal [...] the ideal king must be in a large part the invention of the audience [...]. *Henry V* is remarkably self-conscious about this dependence upon the audience's powers of invention. The prologue's opening lines invoke a form of theater radically unlike the one that is about to unfold: "A kingdom for a stage, princes to act, / And monarchs to behold the swelling scene!" (3-4). In such a theater-state there would be no social distinction between the king and the spectator, the performer and the audience; all would be royal, and the role of the performance would be to transform not an actor into a king but a king into a god. (63)

He puts his finger on the very quintessence of the Pattersonian model of subversity, the "gap between real and ideal." Shakespeare's chorus is not unlike Holinshed's preface in that Holinshed had "rather chosen to shew the diversitie" of opinion among his predecessors than "by over-ruling them [...] to frame them to agree to [his] liking" (Patterson 35). This "choice" of Holinshed's provides the gaps between the earlier accounts and his contemporary narratives of history, thereby leaving room for the reader's interpretation. Shakespeare's appeal to the audience to "[p]iece out our imperfections with your thoughts; / Into a thousand parts divide one man," (23-24) accomplishes a similar effect. Greenblatt, however, takes this appeal to the audience to an extreme by suggesting that "all kings are 'decked' out by the imaginary forces of the spectators [...]" (64). This echoes his earlier equation between king and God.

This equation is questionable in Shakespeare's play and plainly denied in the *Chronicles*. After the English victory at Agincourt, Fluellen professes his allegiance to the king as long as the king remains an honest and thus God-fearing man, "I need not to be ashamed of your Majesty, / praised be God, so long as your Majesty is an honest man" (4.7.113-15). Henry exclaims, "God keep me so" (4.7.116). The notion

that the king and God are two different entities is clear. Holinshed's account of the terms of surrender also exemplify this separation between temporality and the divine. In reference to Charles and Isabel of France, Henry states that he honors them "as it fitteth and seemeth so worthie a prince and princesse to be worshipped, principallie before all other temporall persons of the world" (115). Once again, Greenblatt has taken a conceptual potential to a monolithic, if not dubious conclusion. His reference to the chorus' reliance on the audience, however, informs a fruitful record of alien voices.

Greenblatt states that "by yoking together diverse peoples—represented in the play by the Welshman Fluellen, the Irishman Macmorris, and Scotsman Jamy, who fight at Agincourt alongside the loyal Englishmen—Hal symbolically tames the last wild areas in the British Isles [...]" (56). What is remarkable is the fact that Holinshed does not comment on the tribal mixture of the army; they are all "Englishmen" (60-115). Greenblatt takes advantage of this departure from Holinshed to analyze the recording of the various dialects of the represented tribes. He is, however, mistaken when he claims that "the verbal tics of such characters interest us because they represent not what is alien but what is predictable and automatic" (57). He points to Fluellen's comparison of Henry and Alexander the Great regarding Alexander's drunken murder of his best friend and Henry's symbolic murder of Falstaff. Greenblatt states that "the moment is potentially devastating" (57). He points to Henry's coldness in rejecting Falstaff, a coldness that was affirmed in an earlier act. In the second act the hostess summons Falstaff's friend and simply states, "[t]he King has kill'd his heart. Good husband, come home presently" (2.1.88-89).

For Greenblatt the potential devastation is thwarted by Fluellen's approval of the king who, "[...] being in his right wits and his good judgements, turn'd away the fat knight with the great belly doublet" (4.7.46-48). As soon as Fluellen finishes his analysis, the king triumphantly enters. Greenblatt also sees the hanging of Bardolph as another incriminating moment that is subsumed within the greater political event of war (58). For these reasons, he concludes that "nei-

ther the English allies nor the low-life characters seem to fulfill adequately the role of aliens whose voices are 'recorded'" (58).

One must, however, remember Fluellen's injunction—"[i]t is not well done, mark you now, to take the tales out of my mouth, ere it is made and finished. I speak but in the figures and comparisons of it [...]" (4.7.42-43). Because Greenblatt cannot discern authorial intention behind the dialogue between Fluellen and Gower, he assumes that subversion was not complete. Understandably, Greenblatt sees negation of that subversity in Fluellen's recognition of Bardolph's hanging as justice, "[...] for if, look you, he were my brother, I would desire the Duke to use his good pleasure, and put him to execution; for discipline ought to be used" (3.6.54-56). This reaction of Fluellen's should not be surprising since the *Chronicles* provide the precedent. "[...] [A] souldier tooke a pix out of a church, for which he was apprehended, and the king not once remooved till the box was restored, and the offendor strangled. The people of the countries thereabout, hearing of such zeale in him, to the maintenance of justice, ministered to his armie victuals, and other necessities, although by open proclamation so to doo they were prohibited" (77). The marginal notations beside this account read, "Justice in warre" and "Note the force of justice." In the Pattersonian mode, subversion has been achieved.

There cannot be open antagonism toward the monarch, either in the play or in reality; it has to come in the "gap between the real and ideal" (Greenblatt 63). As Fluellen points out, he speaks in figures and comparisons. Like the marginalia in the *Chronicles*, Fluellen uses a reference to the past as a springboard into a commentary on the present. He begins by asking Gower the name of the town in which "Alexander the Pig" was born (4.7.12). Gower quickly corrects him only to find that Fluellen meant *big* "or the great, or the mighty, or the huge, or the magnanimous" (4.7.16). The joke seems to be on Fluellen who mispronounces English through his Welsh dialect, but is it? He raises the comparison between Alexander and Henry with regard to murder:

If you mark Alexander's life well, Harry of Monmouth's life is come after it indifferent well, for there is figures in all things. Alexander, God knows, and you know, in his rages, and his furies, and his wraths, and his cholers, and his moods, and his displeasures, and his indignations, and also being a little intoxicates in his prains, did, in his ales and his angers, look you, kill his best friend, Clytus. (4.7.31-39)

Gower is quick to correct him by insisting that "our king is not like him in that; he never kill'd any of his friends" (4.7.40-41). Fluellen then instructs Gower not to interrupt him, and makes it clear that Henry's rejection of Falstaff, whose name Fluellen cannot remember, was the right thing to do.

Despite Fluellen's departure from his own comparisons between Henry and "Alexander the Pig," the comparison is nonetheless present even as a denial or emendation to the comparison. As a scrupulous, loyal subject, Gower is quick to correct Fluellen's tangential if not tedious comparison of Alexander and Henry. When it comes to the murder or rejection of friends, Fluellen can retreat into ignorance of the identity of the rejected companion, "he was full of jests, and gipes, and knaveries, and mocks—I have forgot his name" (4.7.48-50). Surprisingly, Gower knows the identity and quickly fills in the blank of "Sir John Falstaff" (4.7.51) and completes Fluellen's comparison that first mentions murder and then denies it. Fluellen then affirms Gower's answer, "that is he" (4.7.52). The king then enters triumphantly.

As Patterson points out, the *Chronicles* utilize marginal references to past works but then depart from those citations in an inconspicuous way; an official representation is maintained even as a subjective departure is made (7). Fluellen raises the issue of betrayal while never once betraying his own loyalty to the king. Like the readers of the *Chronicles*, Gower can and does pick up on this comparison that is only present in the marks of its own erasure. Despite Greenblatt's elimination of Henry's low-life friends as part of the record of alien voices, their voices register most loudly and most clearly. They make up, as Patterson defines it, the "anthropological level" (7) of the play. The hostess' affirmation of the cause of Falstaff's death, the king's

betrayal, is reiterated by Fluellen. Subversity is registered from the lowest levels of society to nearly the highest. Yet, both speakers are loyal subjects. The subversity lies within the *Vorstellungsmöglichkeit* of the text. The *Öffentlichkeit* exists within the very "gap[s] between the real and ideal" that Greenblatt identifies.

The last problematic portion of Greenblatt's analysis of *Henry V* is his analysis of Henry's explanation of war to the soldier Williams in act four. Williams states "[...] if the cause be not good, the King himself hath a heavy reckoning to make [...]" (4.1.134-35). Greenblatt responds from a perspective that once again equates the king with Godhead:

To this the king replies with a string of awkward "explanations" designed to show that "the King is not bound to answer the particular endings of his soldiers" (4.1.155-56)—as if death in battle were a completely unforeseen accident or, alternatively, as if each soldier killed were being punished by God for a hidden crime or, again, as if war were a religious blessing, an "advantage" to a soldier able to "wash every mote out of his conscience" (4.1.179-80). Not only are these explanations mutually contradictory, but they cast long shadows on the king himself. (61)

For Greenblatt, the inconsistency is really not so much in what Henry says but by his actions following the English victory. "If by night-fall Hal is threatening to execute anyone who denies God full credit for the astonishing English victory," he writes, "the preceding scenes would seem to have fully exposed the ideological and psychological mechanisms behind such compulsion, its roots in violence, magical propitiation and bad conscience" (62). For Greenblatt, a king who can say that for the soldier who has washed "every mote out of his conscience" death "is to him advantage" (4.1.179-80), and then threaten a punishment of death to whomever "take that praise from God / Which is his only" (4.8.115-16) assumes Godhead.

This would be consistent with Greenblatt's "juggling Moses"-theory of religion as *realpolitik*. Unfortunately, the paradigm is too tightly linked with the intention to deceive to allow Greenblatt's analysis the flexibility of *Öffentlichkeit* that is so essential. If the king's power relies

upon "bad conscience" and falsification, why then would Henry upbraid the Archbishop of Canterbury to advise him honestly:

My learned lord, we pray you to proceed, / And justly and religiously unfold / Why the law Salique, that they have in France, / Or should, or should not, bar us in our claim; / And God forbid, my dear and faithful lord, / That you should fashion, wrest, or bow your reading, / Or nicely charge your understanding soul / With opening titles miscreate, whose right / Suits not in native colors with the truth. [...] Therefore take heed how you impawn our person, / How you awake our sleeping sword of war— / We charge you, in the name of God, take heed. (1.2.9-23)

What is interesting is that the layman is reminding the clergyman of his religious obligation. This is hardly the speech of a "juggling Moses." Greenblatt's example of the king's speech to Williams contains the formulation of hierarchy with which Henry is consistent throughout the play: "Every subject's duty is the King's, but every subject's soul is his own" (4.1.175-76).

Steven Greenblatt has identified a reciprocal exchange of social energy between theatrical texts and historical, non-literary documents. His attempt to find an authorial intention and then trace that intention from a subversive text to its social context is, however, problematic. Greenblatt's insistence upon a singular motive behind both *A Brief and True Report* and *Henry V* renders implausible readings of both texts. By applying Annabel Patterson's appropriation of Habermas' *Öffentlichkeit*, through a multivocal text, Greenblatt's original suggestion of social energy is not only more easily identified but more accurately posited. Indeed, *Vorstellungsmöglichkeit* manifests itself in both the historical, non-literary documents such as *Holinshed's Chronicles* as well as Shakespeare's *Henry V*.

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NOTES

¹My coinage.

²My translation.

³For comparison of Greenblatt's misreading, see Vickers, 249-50.

⁴I shall use the third volume of the Ellis edition of the *Chronicles*. All page citations are taken from this third volume.

⁵I shall use *The Riverside Shakespeare*.

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A Response to Neal R. Norrick*

RONALD CARTER

Neal Norricks' paper provides a lucid and convincing account of the extent to which ordinary language is far from ordinary and of how what is conventionally seen as literary language pervades many everyday language events. His work in this tradition is oriented largely to research in conversation analysis and is highly innovative because within the field of applied linguistics in general the range of work along parallel lines, though rich, is mainly focussed on written text (e.g. Cook, *Language Play, Language Learning*). In this regard I was especially impressed with Neal Norrick's attention to prosody and with his cogent demonstration that it is crucial to a poetics of conversation (see also parallel work on English and German data by Couper-Kuhlen and Guenther).

Norrick covers a wide range of creative patterns in his analysis of conversational data and I find his analyses perceptive and revealing. He is in this paper particularly alert to uses of humour (see Norrick for a much fuller study) and bases most of his examples on naturally-occurring narrative events recorded mainly within family and generally within domestic settings. It is crucial to Norrick's method that he is able to utilise his own knowledge of the participants and of the context of the recordings as in so doing he overcomes one of the main difficulties in analysing such data: the danger of ascribing intentions and uses of language to speakers who may have not intended such effects as well as the danger of interpreting listeners' or co-conversationists' responses in ways which may distort the data. In

*Reference: Neal R. Norrick, "Poetics and Conversation," *Connotations* 10.2-3 (2000/2001): 243-67.

For the original article as well as all contributions to this debate, please check the Connotations website at <<http://www.connotations.de/debnorrick01023.htm>>.

fact, Norrick is especially convincing when writing about methodology and his sensitivity to the need for constant alertness to contextual factors is eloquently displayed. I took away from his paper a clear sense of the extent to which literary uses of language in conversation are regularly co-produced and are not in any simple sense the work of a single, verbally gifted speaker, that, therefore, creativity in everyday talk is a natural social and interpersonal activity and that literary uses of language are not a capacity of special people but a special capacity of all people. In this regard Norrick's work is profoundly democratic.

My own work in this field complements that of Neal Norrick, though I have given less attention to prosodic factors and more attention to lexico-grammar and 'figures of speech' (ironically features which are all too rarely investigated in 'speech'). I too have worked with a corpus of naturally-occurring conversation (in my case the 5 million word CANCODE corpus)¹ and I and my close colleague and co-researcher Michael McCarthy have adopted throughout a mainly sociolinguistic perspective on the data. The CANCODE data have been recorded in a wide variety of different social contexts so in addition to narrative we have examples of service encounters, work-place meetings, people engaged in tasks such as cooking or dressing a shop-window together, colleagues delivering a formal report at a group meeting as well as data from more intimate and family encounters. One conclusion we are drawing is that creative literary language use may not be not limited to any one social occasion but appears to pervade all areas of our corpus. However, the more familiar and informal the social context, the more likely it may be that such uses of language are co-produced by speakers or activated by an individual speaker. Our conclusions underline the importance of Norrick's findings that creativity occurs where risk is reduced, that is, when participants in a speech event feel relaxed and socially at ease with one another (see, in particular, Carter, *Investigating English Discourse* chs 6 and 8; Carter and McCarthy). Like Cook and Chiaro, we find ourselves stressing the elements of (re)creation or play more extensively, acknowledging the

extent to which all literary forms depend on existing forms for their (intertextual) effects.

There is space only for a brief illustration from our corpus and not possible to cite the full version of the extract used because it runs to several minutes of recording. Analysis of the transcript accounts for what we call "professional and transactional information provision." The extract is selected for its contrast with the more intimate encounters explored by Neal Norrick and to underline that word play is pervasive and does not only occur in more intimate domains.

[Contextual information: The primary purpose of the meeting is an examination of the legal particulars of documents relating to Credit Security. The extract here is taken from the end of the meeting: <S01> manager: male (55); <S 02> company representative: male (40s); <S 03> company representative: male (40s). Speakers <S02> and <S03> report to the manager, speaker <S01>. The extract here occurs when the meeting is coming to a close]

<S 03> But the release now of savings is going to be an issue all right isn't it.

<S 02> Yeah.

<S 01> Yes.

<S 02> How is it approved. And can the board delegate that authority to somebody. To to release erm can, yeah that's right. Can the board delegate it?

<S 03> Well I [unintelligible] Well my reading of that would say that that is quite specific.

<S 02> Yeah.

<S 03> You don't know whether there's provision for the appointment of loan officers and credit officers and all this kind of.

<S 02> Mm.

<S 03> I wouldn't. There doesn't seem to be anything there except to say that the board must approve this.

<S 02> But but in accordance with the registered rules.

<S 03> [unintelligible]

<S 02> That's the only pos=, so it's, the question is thirty two three B. What's the inter=, can that, can the board delegate its authority under that section Geoff.

<S 01> Yeah.

<S 02> Thirty two three B.

<S 03> Or I wonder is that a limit according to the registered rules. Monitoring of it.

<S 01> [unintelligible]

<S 03> [whistles]

<S 02> I know.

<S 01> I used to [unintelligible].

<S 03> [unintelligible]

[laughter]

<S 01> I used to think I was a pair of curtains but then I pulled myself together.

[laughter]

<S 01> I used to think I was being ignored but nobody still talks to me.

<S 02> [laughs]

<S 01> Cowardly [unintelligible] this morning. What was in the tea? It's that s=, it's that bloody foreign coffee [laughs] that's what is it.

<S 03> Foreign coffee?

<S 01> That's that foreign coffee [unintelligible].

After a long period of time in which documents are pored over and during which time the main purpose of the exchanges has been to transmit or obtain information, the meeting finally erupts in a kind of carnivalesque spirit, in which the speakers take a holiday from information transfer and joke and banter their way through to the end of the formal proceedings of the meeting (ll. 20-28). The business done, it seems, they are free to play with words and the labels for what is in their immediate environment. The speakers pun on the idea of curtains being 'pulled together' (a phrase which of course also means 'to put oneself in a better or more positive frame of mind') and this is in turn creatively extended when the same speaker jokes on the fact that in spite of this no-one talks to him. Other speakers then feel free to joke on stereotypes of what is 'foreign' being of inferior quality, referring in the process to an inability to distinguish between tea and coffee.

It is clear that context and interaction type restrict opportunities for such uses of language and in this particular instance an increase in creativity seems to coincide for all the speakers with points of release from their institutional roles. There are numerous similar instances in our corpus of a cline from informality to formality with creative humour and word play and joke telling being used for purposes of topic-switching, for use by a (work-related) superior to make others feel at

ease and for language play and (re)creation. It is interesting, too, that the uses of humour are not unconnected with the institutional power of the speakers (note here that humour is initiated by the company manager and only subsequently picked up and developed by other speakers). Relationships between the gender of the speaker and their interaction with creative utterances are, however, still being explored. For example, it seems that female speakers sometimes use creatively marked language as a means to break into male-dominated talk. Indeed, in our data word play appears to be more common in female talk than in male talk. Men prefer rehearsed joke telling and often rather stagy sexual puns or, as indicated in the above extract, are often initiated by conventional locutions or preformulated sayings, e.g., "I used to think I was a pair of curtains but then I pulled myself together."

In fact, when compared with women, men may not be particularly spontaneously creative in talk, although women do appear to very successfully manage sexual banter, especially in all female company (Eggins and Slade). The Nottingham CANCODE team is also currently exploring how non-literal hyperbolic speech acts such as "Why don't you just cut my throat?" are used for humorous effect and how these speech acts are distributed according to different social and gender roles.

As I emerged from reading Neal Norrick's excellent paper I am left, however, feeling that there is still much to do to reverse existing paradigms in both linguistic and literary studies: namely, the deeply embedded paradigms that literary language has to be motivated against a background of non-literary language and that non-literary language is therefore by default of less value to us in reading the language of the world.

For example, in at least the following domains there remains much research to do: further studies of the talk functions of conventional poetic parts of speech (Cameron; Clift); fuller studies in relation to problem-posing and problem-solving practices in the work-place, not least in the areas of HIV and psychotherapeutic counselling where

creative language choices can create paradigm shifts in awareness and perception and in the relationship between professional and patient (Candlin et al.; Garbutt; Ragan); more contextually-appropriate theories of value, especially aesthetic value (Armstrong); further cross-lingual and cross-mode studies building on data such as email/chat-room corpora but also looking more closely at the subtle creative relationships between the 'creative' and the 'critical'—that is, using poetic language for antagonistic, non-collaborative purposes (Rampton; Boxer and Cortes-Conde); taking fuller research cognisance of the different ways in which creativity is contextually and culturally shaped in and through language in different parts of the world (Fabb chs 9 and 10; Lubart).

In his work and not only in this paper, of course, Neal Norrick has, however, provided this research community with templates and insights for further exploration as well as a model for how literature and language, areas of work in poetics so often kept separate, may be brought into greater and more mutually beneficial synthesis.

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NOTE

¹CANCODE stands for 'Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English.' The corpus was developed at the University of Nottingham, UK between 1994 and 2001, and was funded by Cambridge University Press ©, with whom sole copyright resides. The corpus conversations were recorded in a wide variety of mostly informal settings across the islands of Britain and Ireland, then transcribed and stored in computer-readable form. The corpus is designed with a particular aim of relating grammatical and lexical choice to variation in discourse context and is used in conjunction with a range of lexicographic, grammar and vocabulary teaching. In spite of trends to ever larger, multi-million-word corpora and associated quantitative analysis, in the case of CANCODE the main global aim has been to construct a corpus which is contextually and interactively differentiated and which can allow more qualitative investigation.

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Comment on Neal R. Norrick, "Poetics and Conversation"

MAURICE CHARNEY

I was fortunate enough to hear Neal Norrick's talk at the Gleimhaus in August of 2001, and now it is with renewed pleasure that I read the written version in *Connotations*. It is very ingeniously and professionally put together. It presents a systematic, linguistic way of looking at conversations. The only thing I disagree with is whether it constitutes a poetics of conversation. It seems to me to have nothing to do with poetics at all. The word "poetics" appears to be inherited from Roman Jakobson in the article cited, "Closing statement: Linguistics and Poetics." Norrick seems to be stuck with this term—he uses "poetic language" as an equivalent of Jakobson's "poeticity"—and his stated purpose is "to demonstrate just how poetic our everyday talk can be at times." From the examples of everyday talk he quotes in his article, it is definitely not poetic at all, even though the example that Norrick cites, "*boys and toys*," would score high on Jakobson's scale of poeticity, due to its alliteration, assonance and end rhymes.

This is the heart of the matter. Why does the use of devices connected with poetry like alliteration, assonance, and end rhyme make a text poetic? The poetry doesn't come out of the devices, and it is easy to imagine excellent poetry with no traditional poetic devices at all. Some of the conversational poetry discussed in the same issue of *Connotations* could certainly provide excellent examples of this.

To take a fuller sample from Norrick's transcripts, "HURRY AND GET RESTED," the pun and wordplay on "oxymoronic" have nothing specially poetic about them. I think Norrick is overly enthusiastic

*Reference: Neal R. Norrick, "Poetics and Conversation," *Connotations* 10.2-3 (2000/2001): 243-67.

For the original article as well as all contributions to this debate, please check the *Connotations* website at <<http://www.connotations.de/debnorrick01023.htm>>.

when he says that "the two speakers here conspire to co-create a highly poetic little composition." Brandon says about his own phrase "Hurry and get rested": "That's oxymoronic." Ned, laughing, answers: "Can you imagine the ox?" and Brandon quips: "No, but I've spotted the moron." This is a little joke, but not a little poem.

Again, it is difficult for me to follow Norrick's reasoning when he says that "Conversation is the natural home of storytelling, and so it comes as no surprise that conversational narratives rate high on the scale of poeticity." Maybe Norrick is cleverly forcing me to argue with an unseen higher authority, since the whole linguistic idea of "poeticity" comes from Roman Jakobson. I can't fathom why conversational narratives should rate high on the scale of poeticity. Is there something inherent in conversational narratives that I am missing? The TWINS fragment that Norrick quotes is lively and witty, but it has no imaginable connection to poetry.

Of course, Norrick could argue that I am merely airing my arbitrary opinions about what poetry is and is not. There are no agreed on criteria, although the lines quoted from Frost's "The Figure a Poem Makes" on pp. 155-56 of *Connotations* 10.2-3 offer some stab at a definition. I could go on to suggest definitions from the history of the criticism of poetry—like Wordsworth's "emotion recollected in tranquillity"—but these would turn into a collection of solemn platitudes. Instead, I would like to offer, with sincere apologies, an exercise that I am sure Norrick would not approve of: to turn one of these sample conversations into a semblance of what I think of as poetry. I hope Professor Norrick will indulge my flight of fancy.

BIG BUG

[...]

Frank: It had a fuselage like *that*.

Ned: {laughs}

Frank: And a wingspan like *that*.

Oh man.

Never seen one like *that*.

Ned: So we're talking primordial here.

Frank: It was just slightly smaller than a hummingbird.

BIG BUG REVISITED

Not a hummingbird, but almost a hummingbird,
The hyperbolical big bug swam into view.
Its fuselage, its wingspan, its hubris—
An aerodynamic display ready to take off
 with a payload of twenty tons.
What shall we call this big bug?
It is an aviary hapax legomenon,
Primordial.

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Conversation and Poetics: A Response to Neal R. Norrick*

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As an advocate of increased interaction between literary scholars and language scholars, I was pleased to read Neal R. Norrick's contribution "Poetics and Conversation." Certainly, no one would disagree that "conversation illustrates many features we generally associate with poetry and literary texts" (265). However, I would contend that for a "complete, well-grounded consideration of 'the Poetics of Conversation in Twentieth-Century Literature and Criticism'" (266), we need not only a "fuller description of the structures found in spontaneous everyday talk" (*ibid.*) but also an understanding of how everyday conversation is becoming increasingly important in literature and why this is so. This will therefore form the main thrust of my response which I will try to put across in three main points.

Firstly, the issue of "literariness," as pursued by the Russian formalist tradition of literary criticism including Jakobson, as a marker of literary works has proved to be difficult to maintain. Whilst patterning in the Jakobsonian sense is prevalent in poetry, this seems to be less discernible in fiction or drama in the naturalist mode. There are exceptions of course. Dickens could make a highly patterned rhetorical narratorial voice serve his purposes, satirical and otherwise, as can be seen in this passage from the opening of *Hard Times*.

The scene was a plain, bare, monotonous vault of a schoolroom, and the speaker's square forefinger emphasized his observations by underscoring every sentence with a line on the schoolmaster's sleeve. The emphasis was

*Reference: Neal R. Norrick, "Poetics and Conversation," *Connotations* 10.2-3 (2000/01): 243-67. I am grateful to the anonymous editorial readers for their suggestions made on an earlier version of this article.

helped by the speaker's square wall of a forehead, which had his eyebrows for its base, while his eyes found commodious cellarage in two dark caves, overshadowed by the wall. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's mouth, which was wide, thin, and hard set. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's voice, which was inflexible, dry, and dictatorial. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's hair, which bristled on the skirts of his bald head, a plantation of firs to keep the wind from its shining surface, all covered with knobs, like the crust of a plum pie, as if the head had scarcely warehouse-room for the hard facts stored inside. The speaker's obstinate carriage, square coat, square legs, square shoulders—nay, his very neckcloth, trained to take him by the throat with an unaccommodating grasp, like a stubborn fact, as it was—all helped the emphasis. (9)

The repetitive use of the structure "The emphasis was helped by the speaker's [...]" is easily noticed. Dickens also uses the three-adjective formula a number of times: "plain, bare, monotonous"; "wide, thin, and hard set"; and "inflexible, dry, and dictatorial." Finally, we also notice the three-part structure with the repetition of *square* in "square coat, square legs, square shoulders."

The style is highly patterned and declamatory, exposing the hollowness and inflexibility of Mr. Gradgrind's rhetoric. The manner of describing the speaker's appearance ingeniously represents the speaker's style. Its repetitiveness, which could almost be considered a parody of Jakobson's criteria, thus becomes an effective means of characterization.

Other literary texts, however, fail to show the linguistic patterns that Jakobson deems to be the essence of literariness. This apparent lack of patterning is seen, for example, in the opening of Welsh's *Trainspotting*.

The sweat wis lashing oafay Sick Boy; he wis trembling. Ah wis jist sitting thair, focusing oan the telly, tryin no tae notice the cunt. He wis bringing me doon. Ah tried tae keep ma attention oan the Jean-Claude Van Damme video.
(3)

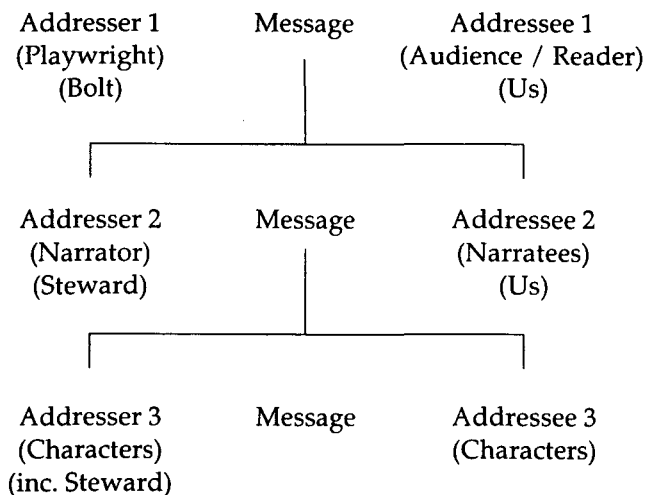
The narrator's voice is more demotic, and if there is patterning, it is certainly not as obvious as in the Dickens passage. (We might note the insistent use of the progressive aspect: *wis lashing*; *wis [...]* *sitting*; *tryin*; *wis bringing*.) The text does not strike one as being immediately literary. And of course what Welsh is doing is also to deliberately not conform to

the literary standard by manipulating the orthography (though not always consistently) and to suggest the Edinburgh accent (*wis* for *was*; *oafay* for *over*; and the like).

If we use the Jakobsonian notion of *literariness*, Dickens' representation of a character by imitating his style might seem *more* literary. But here is the problem: should literariness be a gradable item (there can be either more or less of it, like the quality of maturity) or an absolute quality (either it applies or it does not, like the state of being married)? Or perhaps both concepts should exist alongside of each other?

We usually have no problems distinguishing a literary work from an accident report or an advertisement; Welsh's reader would not mistake the passage as a diary entry, for example. The context in which the work was found presents a strong clue towards disambiguation. The *Train-spotting* passage on its own, presented in a decontextualised manner, would certainly be ambiguous with regard to its literary status. If, however, it is read as a paragraph from a printed book which receives the label *fiction* on its back cover, the work becomes unambiguous as literary. Notice, however, that it is only *usually* that we have no problems in identifying a work's status as literary. We can easily think of texts that pose themselves as other categories of texts (for example, advertisements disguised as drama) as exceptions.

Nonetheless, the argument that literariness could be seen as an absolute quality has strong merit. As the Dickens example shows, however, we should not simply see literariness in the kinds of tropes employed or the parallel structures used. Rather, literariness can be seen in the complex discourse situation, in the manner that Short (172), for example, describes the situation in Robert Bolt's *A Man for All Seasons*. Here is his diagram.



What Short's diagram tries to get across is this: the playwright communicates with the audience *through* the narrator; and the narrator communicates to his or her audience *through* the characters communicating with each other. Short is talking about drama, but we could easily extend this to poetry and fiction when we consider how the persona or the narrator cannot be easily equated with the poet or author in a straightforward fashion.

Literariness therefore seems more usefully conceived not in terms of linguistic patterning only but also in terms of the complex communicative situation which constitutes literary discourse. Conceptualising it thus has the added advantage of including more of what would be considered literary and excluding some other texts that contain highly patterned language such as advertising jingles. (This is not to say that this definition is completely unproblematic because one could read Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* or the Bible as literary texts; indeed they are not infrequently regarded as such. Such cases would, however, be exceptions to the norm where texts are used differently from how the original authors intended them to be used.)

Whilst I have presented the two views of literariness—the relativist and absolutist views—as competing ones, it does not necessarily follow that one must jettison one in order to appropriate the other. Jakobson and others working in his tradition are proof of the viability of the relativist tradition. What it fails to account for, though, are literary (in the absolutist sense) texts that are not particularly literary (in the relativist sense) in nature. An account of literariness that combined Jakobson's notion of linguistic patterning with Short's notion of discourse complexity allows us to accept both *Hard Times* and *Trainspotting* as literary.

In the rest of the article I will use the shorthand *literary(a)* to refer to the absolutist notion of literariness where the focus is on the status of the text; and *literary(r)* to refer to the relativist one when the focus is on textual characteristics.

Indeed, there is a logical relationship between the two, which is why we need to take on board both definitions: literary(r) features are those features that typically or frequently occur in literary(a) texts, so that one is closely associated with the other.

In a *prototypical* literary(a,r) text, therefore, we might expect linguistic patterning and literary vocabulary (for English, typically items derived from French). Similarly, in a prototypical conversational text, we might expect loosely joined sentences, colloquial and vague vocabulary (*lousy, sort of*, etc.) and the like. We could even extend to non-textual situations, such as one's marital status which is an absolute state; however, a married or unmarried person can also take on fewer or more of the characteristics associated with the married state, such as the wearing of wedding rings, having children, having a joint bank account with another person and so on.

My second point is that genre distinctions are fluid rather than rigid. (I use the term *genre* in the way used by discourse analysts rather than by literary scholars and include non-literary genres. See, for example, Wales [176–78]). Ellis and Ure, for example, talked about “residual register features” some decades ago. By this they mean that linguistic features associated with particular registers (i.e., roughly, genres in the sense I use the term) could be appropriated or “borrowed” by other reg-

isters. In particular, features associated with literary(a) genres and conversation are prone to be borrowed by other genres. The tendency to "quote," sometimes unostentatiously, other texts, registers and genres fudges the clear demarcation between registers and genres.

Furthermore, as Swales points out, individual works in genres can vary in their typicality in the same way that, in biological classification, animal species which belong to a group can also vary in their typicality. Whilst individual species of birds (e.g. robin, sparrow, penguin and ostrich) are members of the same group (*Class Aves*), the atypical species (the penguin and ostrich) may contain characteristics such as flightlessness or large size that make them resemble members of another group such as mammals (*Class Mammalia*). Individual texts may therefore be typical and clear-cut exemplars of particular genres; and yet other individual texts may be less so. The boundaries are unclear and one genre might fade into another.

Norrick's original article points to the presence of literary(r) features in everyday conversation, suggesting that the two genres are allied with the latter employing features associated with the former. Another genre that seems closely allied to literature is the advertising genre. Advertisements are interesting because they can share many literary(r) features of literary(a) texts. They are particularly prone to using prosodic features of poetry (see Cook), like "Beanz Meanz Heinz" or to incorporating narratives in the manner of, say, a short story, as in the following print advertisement as part of the recruitment drive for the Royal Navy.

After two weeks at sea the call for help came. A typhoon had hit the mainland blocking all roads to rescuers, leaving the only route in from the sea. We flew in emergency supplies with Lynx helicopters, our Medics took care of the wounded and bad cases were flown out to the ship. We restored power, erected temporary shelters and set up teams to prevent looting. A task as tough as Disaster Relief Training back at home. (Reproduced from Cook 199)

Without contextual cues, this could easily be the opening paragraph of a short story or even a novel.

Some observers and scholars have commented on how public dis-

course, including advertisements, can adopt a more colloquial style associated with conversation (Leech 75), so that it is now possible for British discourse analyst Fairclough to talk about *conversationalisation* which for him is "to do with shifting boundaries between written and spoken discourse practices" (Fairclough 260). Clearly, Fairclough's point could well be applied to literature and conversation because literature is still associated with writing and conversation with speech. Once again, advertising discourse in being open to the influence of conversation has similarities to literary(r) discourse. If we accept Fairclough's notion of conversationalisation, we must also accept that literary(r) discourse is also pulled in some way towards the conversation style. Indeed, the *Trainspotting* passage above is a case in point.

The pull of the conversational style must be particularly significant, given the fact that this is a style acquired by *all* speakers of language, and is acquired first. Other styles such as report writing, academic writing or poetic writing are only acquired by a proportion of the population, and some of them only acquired imperfectly. Conversational style, seen as the primordial style, as it were, must surely be a key element in influencing other styles. Which brings me to the third and final main point.

I have already commented on how literary(r) discourse has much in common with advertising discourse: both make use of other texts and genres. The reason for this is to do with the complex communicative situation outlined above, and the author's voice is hardly ever heard directly but filtered through the voices of narrators, personae and characters. (This is also true of advertising discourse, but the reasons are more to do with the greater distaste for hard-sell methods in today's culture.) Seen in this light, literary(r) discourse is bound to make use of the language of everyday conversation, the language of business transactions, the language of academic discourse and so on. So there are not only, as Norrick shows, so many features of literary(r) language in everyday conversation; there is also so much everyday conversation in literary(a) works. Thus, what is happening in the *Trainspotting* passage is that as readers, we are put in the position of eavesdroppers listening to Mark

Renton apparently narrating his story in an informal fashion in a strong Edinburgh accent. In the same way, readers of Richardson's *Pamela* were put in the position of reading letters not addressed to them. The *Hard Times* passage makes use of the public address genre—in the manner of, say, Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address of 1863 (therefore from roughly the same period as *Hard Times*). Here is the last sentence.

It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honoured dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.

This sentence is highly patterned in the Gradgrind manner; we note the three-part formula in the *that* clauses: *that from these honoured dead [...] that we here highly resolve [...] that this nation*. (I exclude *that government* because *that* functions as a determiner here and is therefore modifying the following noun rather than introducing clauses). And of course we note the well-known triple characterisation of the government as being *of the people, by the people, for the people*.

Therefore, literary(a) works take on linguistic features associated with other genres very easily; given the importance and centrality of informal conversation, I would suggest that this will be an increasingly important influence on literary(r) discourse and we will continue to see the conversationalisation of literary(r) discourse. Some of the influences that gave rise to the conversationalisation of advertising discourse—democratisation and the increased value accorded to spontaneity, informality and intimacy—could also very well be at work in literary(r) discourse. Hence my reversal of Norrick's original title "Poetics and Conversation" to "Conversation and Poetics" in my response.

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Conversation, Poetics, and the "Found Poem": A Response to Neal R. Norrick*

JOHN WHALEN-BRIDGE

1. Low and Rustic

Norrick emphasizes the literariness of conversation rather than the fidelity of literature to "true conversation" (244) and asks for "a good description of everyday talk" (243). Like Wordsworth's "real language of men",¹ everyday talk and normal (meaning non-heightened?) language reflect the criteria we must (artfully) establish in order to define our wild garden of language. If we set "poetic diction" and other heightened linguistic effects against what we call "everyday talk," we set up a *trompe l'oeil* picture of sorts. Everyday conversation is what *seems* to be relaxed or otherwise free of constraint, at least when compared to forms of communication that foreground the rules producing intelligibility. Norrick calls for a description of "everyday talk" that collects the salient conventions of such a form, but the heightened formalization of this procedure (e.g., presenting the conversation in carefully transcribed visual units of which an actual listener would not be cognizant) *produces* an effect it seems to *find*. As Norrick argues, the observer's paradox will not go away. Norrick persuasively argues that people within the conversations he records become less concerned with the tape recorder in the room as time goes by, but the pressure of observation upon meaning returns when we recall that Norrick's transcriptions of "everyday talk" are hardly the same as the communication experienced by his original speakers.

A nice circularity enters here, and we might think of Wordsworth's "low and rustic life"² when considering this problem: "rustic" has be-

*Reference: Neal R. Norrick, "Poetics and Conversation," *Connotations* 10.2-3 (2000/2001): 243-67.

For the original article as well as all contributions to this debate, please check the Connotations website at <<http://www.connotations.de/debnorrick01023.htm>>.

come, through disuse in ordinary conversation, a word to describe a heightened appearance rather than an ordinary one beneath notice. But for Wordsworth it was meant as the antithesis of flagrantly artificial language.

2. Alas, poor Norrick!

Hamlet, leaping into the middle of things, expostulates on the skull of Yorick, and what we are most amused by is the transformation of death into lively memory. Clearly the transformation (or, actually, the illusion of such a transformation) could not occur if the two phases Death and Life, which as words can strike us as pure opposites, did not share common elements. Death is composed of non-death elements, life is composed of non-living elements, and so, with a bit of dusting and the polish of words, the skull of Yorick becomes an emblem of life. When we look to the transformations between ordinary, lowly conversation and the heightened state of poetry, we will, in a mock-epic way, leap into the grave of conversation and discover there emotion recollected in tranquility fashioned out of "the real language of men."

Let us jump into the middle of things. The middle of Norrick's paper concerns the "found poem" (a bit of language that is taken out of its worldly context and repackaged, with a hefty mark-up, as Literature) entitled "HURRY AND GET RESTED."³ By looking at the literary features of everyday speech, by giving one line to each intonation unit (thus making it look like a poetic verse), and by using indentation on the page to give the language the appearance of an actual poem, Norrick challenges us to see the ways in which "poems" exist in our everyday lives, though they are undetected. Thus, a snatch of speech can be read as a poem:

HURRY UP AND GET RESTED

Lydia: We had such a nice day today,
 so you hurry and get rested.
 Because you're going to have
 a nice day tomorrow.

Brandon: Hurry and get rested.
 Ned: {laughs}
 Brandon: That's oxymoronic.

Ned: {laughing} Yeah.
 Can you imagine the ox?
 Brandon: No, but I've spotted the moron.
 Ned: I see. {laughing}
 You'd think as dumb as oxes are,
 to call one a moron
 would be tautological. (Norrick 254)

The mother's repetition of "nice day" sets up a pattern from which Brandon departs, and Ned engages in the competitive and playful spirit. When Brandon says "I've spotted the moron," we do not know for sure if he is looking at his mother (Lydia) or if the competition is now between the two brothers. Ned responds "I see" and may be looking at Brandon, just as the cursed child in the movie "Sixth Sense" is looking square at the camera when he says "I see dead people. All the time." The meaning becomes fluid; it begins to extend from the original text and into the reader with continued attention.

3. Turning Words

Dance, we may say, is a patterned fall. We usually expect a beginning, a middle, and an end in the formal version. The slip on a theatrical banana peel will have these parts, as will the retelling of my Fall or yours. To create surprise out of the cloth of sameness, we sometimes mix things up, such as when we begin in the middle and end in the beginning.

Middles. Have you noticed how Annie makes extensive contributions but receives corrections from Lynn on almost every detail she adds? Norrick has noticed this, on page 265 of his essay, among other conversational switches and reversals. Meanwhile, "Lynn further cements her own authority as teller by strategically deploying details only she could have access to, for instance the bag thrown up the stairs" (265). Like "HURRY AND GET RESTED," "POODLE" has both competitive and cooperative elements, but the greater stress in Nor-

rick's treatment is on the cooperative element: "collaborative narration serves to ratify group membership and modulate rapport in multiple ways" (265). We recall that "con-versation" is "turning together." As Norrick points out in several of his readings, conversation is a kind of verbal dance; it begins, has crescendos, and moments of clear punctuation to signal an end, at least temporarily.

Endings: Conversations do not have explicit agendas (the proverbial "woodshed" talk or the experience of "being read the riot act" are two-party communications with explicit agendas; they are not conversations), and a conversation need not have a clear "sense of an ending." One of the transformations we notice in the conversational portions Norrick has presented in his article is the punchline ending. Consider the last seven lines of "BIG BUG":

Frank:	It had a fuselage like <i>that</i> .
Ned:	{laughs}
Frank:	And a wingspan like <i>that</i> .
	Oh man.
	Never seen one like <i>that</i> .
Ned:	So we're talking primordial here.
Frank:	It was just slightly smaller than a hummingbird. (256)

The concluding line of this found poem shifts the register, abruptly turning away from the "crescendo sequence" (250) into a strictly literal and precise description of the size of the insect in question. Gary Snyder's poem "Elwha River," a poem which mixes up the real and the imaginary, ends similarly with a percussive ecological fact to take us, at least in an imaginative sense, beyond the mindset in which everything is subject to conversational or imaginative reevaluation: "There are no redwoods north of southern/ Curry County, Oregon."⁴

Beginnings. In my end is my beginning. Where does poetry begin? In conversation? The language samples that Norrick and his colleagues have transcribed do not seem like poetry "at first glance." One might say they do not exist at all "at first glance," and the act of transcription is the beginning of a set of transformations, or ritualizations, or, my spell-checker suggests, reutilizations. As Gertrude Stein once

said, "Hemingway, remarks are not literature." But in contextualizing this comment as she did, what was once a remark became "literature" and is thus rescued from the grave. The bit of conversation that was taped has undergone a formal change in being prepared for the written page, and the line breaks especially are significant in our recognition of poetry. Are they Norrick's impositions on the text? He might argue they are not, and that he has merely expressed intonation units that can be found in the taped discourse. But in my rewriting of the poem above, I have broken "HURRY UP AND GET RESTED" into two stanzas, each of which is seven lines long and ends with shift from low and rustic language (oxes [sic], morons) into the highfalutin discourse of oxymoron and tautology. Through such formalities do we help remarks along in their quest to become literature.

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NOTES

¹"Preface to *Lyrical Ballads, with Pastoral and Other Poems* (1802)." *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, ed. Vincent B. Leitch (New York: Norton, 2001) 648-68, here 648.

²Wordsworth 650.

³See for an example of a "found poem" Annie Dilliard's "Mayakovsky in New York: A Found Poem," *The Atlantic Monthly* 274.3 (September 1994) 64. Dillard's poem is a reshaped prose text, and the poem begins with this headnote: "Lifted, with permission, from Vladimir Mayakovsky's 'My Discovery of America' (1926), in *America through Russian Eyes*, edited and translated by Olga Peters Hasty and Susanne Fusso."

⁴Gary Snyder, "The Elwha River," *Mountains and Rivers Without End* (Washington, D.C.: Counterpoint Press, 1996) 32.

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