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Cover: On the centennial of the death of Tennyson, Carlo Pellegrini's caricature from *Vanity Fair* 1871.

"No Originals, Only Copies": Pre-Raphaelite Images of Belatedness and Innovation*

Elliot L. Gilbert

I

The development of a rigorous historiography in the nineteenth century inevitably led, as one of its major consequences, to a crisis of creativity. The era was the first with a full enough and accurate enough historical knowledge to arouse in its thinkers and artists what Walter Jackson Bate has called an "accumulating anxiety" surrounding the question "what is there left to do?" (3). John Stuart Mill's fear, expressed in his *Autobiography*, that all the best combinations of musical notes must "already have been discovered" (123) was one contemporary example of this anxiety, an anxiety that inevitably follows from the idea that history, when it comes to be known too accurately and in too much detail, must inevitably leave its readers with a deep sense of their own belatedness and impotence.

In this context, any consideration of the painters who called themselves the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood must begin with the name those painters chose for themselves. Such a name clearly implies a certain consciousness of—and attitude toward—history, and, in particular, a proto-modernist concern about originality. Raphael is, of course, associated with High Renaissance art, an art whose glorious achievements appeared, to some nineteenth-century painters, to have left them little to do but admire and imitate. One embodiment of this sense of belatedness during the period was Charles Blanc's *Musée des Copées* in Paris, a gallery devoted to facsimiles of Renaissance masterpieces. Blanc justified his museum on the grounds that art had reached its peak during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and that copies of the great pictures of that period were much to be preferred to original works by contemporary painters.[1]

Raphael was himself seen as a belated artist by some Victorian commentators. The American sculptor W. W. Story, for example, wrote, in 1866, a Browningesque dramatic monologue in which the speaker of the poem says of the painter:

> . . . what in him I blame
> Is that he travels in his master's track
> With such a slavish, imitative aim.

Nor does having this belatedness called to his attention do Raphael any good. "Lately he's striven to effect a change," the monologuist continues, "but still an imitator he must go" (130-31). For nineteenth-century artists to declare themselves Pre-Raphaelites, then, was for them to express, at least symbolically, a desire to have lived in an era when originality was still possible, when the great accomplishments of the Renais-sance all lay ahead, when the glory of that period might still be seen as an inspiring promise for the future rather than as an enervating burden from the past.

If the theme of belatedness really did concern Pre-Raphaelite artists as much as their name suggests it did, we might reasonably expect to see some representations of that theme in Pre-Raphaelite paintings. That is, we should be able to find at least some of these works depicting the relationship of the past to the present and future, and in particular showing ways in which the past *controls* and *limits* the present and the future.

This is rather a lot to ask of the graphic arts. Fiction and drama, because they make their effects through the passage of time—that is, because they have a beginning, a middle, and an end—are the art forms most appropriate for dealing with the relationships of past, present, and future. Painting, a spatial medium, is less well-suited to the representation of chronology. Where painters have attempted such chronological projects, they have generally had to move beyond the frame of a single picture and produce a series: a "Stations of the Cross," for example, in several tableaux, or such an extraordinary achievement as Giotto's many-paneled "Life of Christ" in Padua.

The most familiar solution to the problem of chronology in painting has been the triptych, traditionally portraying the key Christian events of Annunciation, Nativity, and Crucifixion in three separate though linked panels. But even here the spatial tends to win out over the chronological, with the Crucifixion, the last event in terms of historical order, nevertheless occupying the central or second panel as the most spiritually significant of the three incidents.

The real difficulty in depicting time in the graphic arts arises for artists who wish to convey some sense of chronological development within the space of a single canvas. To be sure, one might arbitrarily designate, as some artists have done (perhaps through analogy with reading), the left side of a painting as the past, the center as the present, and the right as the future, and on this premise proceed to create a symbolic chronology within a single frame. But the problem with this device is that viewers would find nothing inevitable or intuitive about such a spatial arrangement, an arrangement which, in addition, fails to make expressive use of the three-dimensional configuration of nineteenth-century realistic paintings.

It is, in fact, just this three-dimensional configuration that provides the solution to the problem. For one method the Pre-Raphaelite artists developed to help them depict chronological sequences within single works was to establish a time line in their paintings running not from one side to the

other across the surface but, so to speak, perpendicular to the plane of the picture. Interestingly, the moment this is done, the spatial nature of the graphic arts, instead of fighting the artist's chronological intentions, assists them.

It is easy enough to see how this works. We are all accustomed, under certain circumstances, to using spatial imagery when we speak of time: we say, for instance, that the past is "behind us," that the present is "here," that the future "lies ahead." When an artist establishes a time line perpendicular to the plane of his painting, he is able to take advantage of these familiar figures of speech, allowing the picture's background to represent the past while the foreground depicts the present. For any elements occupying the foreground, the background, being literally behind them, can, without any abuse of the spatial genius of the graphic arts, also represent the past as a true chronological concept.

This still leaves the problem of how, in such a scheme, the future is to be depicted. Logically, if the foreground of the painting constitutes the present, the future would have to lie still further forward, as it were in the space between the surface of the painting and the viewer. But how, given the physical parameters of the genre, could such an effect be achieved? The solution to this problem can best be understood by examining a number of nineteenth-century pictures that do indeed achieve that effect and that, in the process, allow Pre-Raphaelite painters to record their concern about the past as a burdensome constraint on the present and the future.

II

The first of the pictures to be examined is one called, appropriately enough, *Past and Present*.

It was painted by Augustus Egg and first exhibited in 1858. Egg was not himself a member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, though he was a close friend of Holman Hunt, one of the group's founders. *Past and Present* was much influenced by the work of Hunt in particular and by Pre-Raphaelite principles of social realism in general.

On one level, *Past and Present* constitutes an old-fashioned solution to the problem of representing chronology in the graphic arts since it is a triptych. The large central panel, which depicts an event supposed to have occurred in the recent past, records a domestic scene in which a husband has just discovered the infidelity of his wife. The man sits there in disbelief and dismay, holding in his hand the letter that has revealed his wife's secret to him. The woman lies in abject disgrace at his feet, her despair all the confession that is necessary. At the left, their two daughters look up nervously from their play. They have, with unconscious insight, been building a house of cards, using an unnamed novel by the always scandalous Balzac as the foundation of their shaky edifice.

The two smaller side panels show two scenes occurring simultaneously in the present, five years after the first event. We know that five years have passed not from any clues in the paintings themselves but rather from a letter Egg wrote to help explain the situation. And we know that the scenes are occurring simultaneously because the two pictures contain the identical moon and accompanying cloud.

The first side panel shows the two daughters of the earlier scene, now young women, in mourning for their recently dead father (this is another fact we learn from Egg's letter) as well as, perhaps, for their absent mother. The portraits of the two parents we noticed in the main picture hang now on the wall of this much less opulent room. One daughter is wearing a simple black dress, the other seems already to have changed for bed. Through the window the two can see, as we can, a gibbous moon underlined with a little bar of cloud. That same moon, with its cloud, appears in the second side panel, which depicts the disgraced mother, reduced to living under one of London's bridges. The woman is in shadow in the bottom left foreground, clutching a child to her breast, its little legs exposed.

At first, given our interest in the representation of chronology in the graphic arts, we might be inclined to characterize Egg's performance in this triptych as unusually naive, reducing the great issue of the past's influence on the present to a simple matter of Victorian morality and resorting to a *series* of pictures, and even to an extraneous letter, to convey the passage of time. In fact, however, Egg's treatment of both the metaphysical and the aesthetic implications of chronology in *Past and Present* is much less mechanical, much more sophisticated, than a quick summary of the triptych suggests. Indeed, taken by itself, the central panel, though apparently recording a single dramatic moment, is an extraordinarily complex chronological study, one that might appropriately be renamed, *Past, Present and Future*.

The present of that new title is, of course, the moment of horrified discovery painted in the foreground, a foreground that is, therefore, the literal conflation of the spatial and the chronological: the picture's "here and now." But the background of the painting also performs both a spatial and a chronological function, located as it is behind both the "here"

and the "now" of the foreground. The two small frames on either side of the fireplace contain portraits of the husband and wife in earlier times, and both of these pictures are overshadowed by larger ones portraying past versions of the present domestic tragedy, one entitled "Abandoned" and the other showing Adam and Eve being driven out of paradise.

Perhaps most interesting as a device for converting the spatial into the chronological is the mirror painted over the fireplace on the rear wall.[2] In it we see reflected an open door which we are certainly meant to understand exists in the space between the surface of the painting and the viewer and which therefore represents, through such spatial means, the chronological fact of the future. For it is obvious that through this open door the unfaithful wife will, at some future moment, be passing on her way to the bridge under which we will find her five years later.
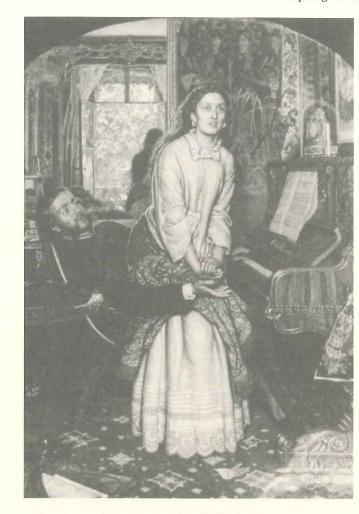
But there is more to the mirror than that. It is, after all, spatially a part of the background of the picture; therefore the open door reflected in it, because it too is literally in the background, must be understood to exist in the past as well as in the future. In that past, the door is obviously the one through which the woman originally strayed from home and husband, embarked on the act of infidelity that, ironically, is to lead to her future ejection through the same door.

This irony permits Egg's painting to address just that issue of the burdensomeness of the past that helped lead the Pre-Raphaelites to choose their name. If the second exit through the door follows so inevitably and unavoidably from the first—is so completely determined by it—what freedom from the dead hand of the past can the present and future be said to enjoy? How far back into history must one travel to find that freedom from the past? Is there some pre-Pre-Raphaelite regress that would, at some point, make possible a genuinely original act, unshadowed by a precursor?

To the extent that Egg's painting answers these questions, it answers them in the negative. What the picture of Adam and Eve on the rear wall of the room seems to suggest is that the only way to avoid being belated, the only way to perform an act that is not anticipated in some degree by the past, is to be the first two human beings who ever lived. But even such a circumstance does not provide a sufficient rescue from belatedness. For the expulsion from Eden is itself only a replica, a second-hand version, so to speak, of the Satanic fall from grace. What Egg's painting appears finally to declare, then, is that in any situation in which human action is defined by history, there can be no such thing as originality since every response, however fresh and creative it may appear to the individual making it, has necessarily been anticipated.

III

The second painting to be examined here is one that might itself have been the precursor of Egg's *Past and Present*, Holman Hunt's well-known portrait of a fallen woman called *The Awakening Conscience*, which the artist was in fact encouraged to paint by Egg.

When it was first completed in 1854, the picture had a somewhat different title, *The Awakened Conscience*. But the work's owner, Thomas Fairbairne, was disturbed by what was for him the unpleasant intensity of the woman's expression, and in 1856 he asked Hunt to modify that expression. That Hunt agreed to do so suggests the power of art collectors at this time, collectors who, among other things, fed artists's anxieties about the burden of the past by often commissioning them—in the spirit of the *Musée des Copées*—to paint not new and original pictures but instead facsimiles of their own previous successes. (To be sure, most artists were happy enough to pocket the income they derived from such "potboiler" copies.)

Having softened the look of the woman in *The Awakened Conscience*, Hunt altered the title to suit the figure's new appearance, calling the work now *The Awakening Conscience*. This is, for our purposes, a particularly suggestive change. For by substituting the present participle "awakening" for the past participle "awakened," Hunt was not merely commenting on the changed moral implications of his protagonist's new expression. He was also, in effect, announcing that the subject of his picture, rather than being some static event, already *completed* in the recorded scene, is instead an ongoing process, a complex chronology of past, present, and future all depicted in a single canvas.

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[2] For a study of the use of mirrors in the graphic arts, see Hartlaub.

The Awakening Conscience achieves this effect of movement through time in much the same way Egg's *Past and Present* does. In the foreground of the picture we see a situation as it occurs at a particular point in the present: the kept woman, her condition signaled by the absence of a wedding ring, is caught at a moment of sudden insight as she rises from her lover's lap; the indolently lounging young man is shown playing the piano, never a truly respectable activity for a Victorian male; a cat toys symbolically with a dead bird under the table at the left; one of the young man's gloves, soiled like the woman, has been casually tossed onto the carpet, the sheet music on the floor is a setting of Tennyson's "Tears, Idle Tears," a poem that speaks of "the days that are no more" and suggests, according to one commentator, "the idea of the heroine's having irrevocably lost her innocence" (Warner 131).

As in *Past and Present*, the mirror on the rear wall reflects what exists in the space between the surface of the painting and the viewer, in this case a garden, the light from which we see illuminating a portion of the room in the lower right hand corner of the picture. This spatial forward extension is, again, also a chronological one, since the painting clearly means to suggest that any hope the woman may have of escaping from the illicit love nest of the picture's present lies in her passing through the open door in front of her into that light-providing garden, a garden which is, thus, the locale of her own possible future.
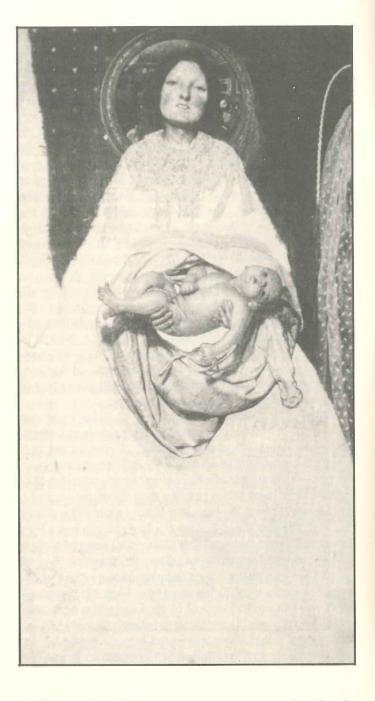
But again, as in Egg's painting, that "future" garden, appearing as it does in a mirror that is spatially a part of the background of the picture, must be understood to be a part of the past as well. Indeed, the fact that the woman herself can be seen from the back reflected in the mirror heightens the illusion that she has turned around to look behind her into the garden of her own past, a past which thus becomes an image of the early Edenic innocence she abandoned when she entered upon the scene of her present fallen state. And one inevitable effect of this mirror image is to define as *already belated* any future state of grace that may be implied in the protagonist's dawning consciousness of sin. *The Awakening Conscience* is a marginally more optimistic picture than *Past and Present*, but at the heart of the two works is the same dark insight, the impossibility of the present and future producing anything unanticipated by the past. It is as if history itself were an overbearing art patron decreeing that there should be no originals, only copies.

IV

The last picture to be considered is, in a number of ways, the most complex of the three. It is an unfinished painting by Pre-Raphaelite artist Ford Madox Brown entitled *"Take Your Son, Sir."*

Brown worked on this picture off and on for a dozen years, enlarging it at one point with strips of paper along the sides and on the bottom as if he had some quite specific plans for it, but finally leaving it in its present state.

Like the paintings by Augustus Egg and Holman Hunt, this one employs a time line perpendicular to the plane of the picture to suggest chronological movement within a single frame. In the foreground, the area of the painting representing

the "here and now," is a contemporary woman peering directly out at us and thrusting an infant toward an unseen recipient, the child's father, as Brown's title makes clear.

On the wall behind the woman, the domain of the past in the works we have been considering, are several elements to be found in traditional depictions of the "Madonna and Child," of which this painting constitutes an up-to-date version. The circular mirror, for example, is so placed that its frame provides a halo for the woman's head, and the stars decorating the wallpaper suggest the cosmic dimension of this classic religious subject.

As for the future, once again a mirror becomes the means of introducing into the picture a space that, in three-dimensional reality, lies between the painting's surface and the viewer and therefore provides a locale for actions that are yet to occur. In this case, the mirror shows us an image of a man standing with arms extended ready to receive the infant, a spatial phenomenon whose chronological implications include the

familiar *rite de passage* of the male child from the present custodianship of the mother to the future control of the father.

It would be difficult to find a Pre-Raphaelite painting the interpretation of which has changed more radically since its first appearance. Early viewers of *"Take Your Son, Sir"* saw in it a father's loving celebration of his wife and child. It was known that Brown had used his own wife and new-born son as models for the woman and the infant in the picture, and had painted a likeness of himself in the mirror, and this knowledge probably helped to produce the benign response of the first critics to what has since come to be thought of as a highly problematic painting[3]

More recent interpreters have seen in *"Take Your Son, Sir"* a powerful and even an angry portrait of a woman forced to give up her child to the man who has, either in wedlock or outside of it, exploited her. In support of their thesis, these interpreters point to a number of suggestive elements in the picture: the disturbing face of the woman with its hectic flush and bared teeth; the fact that the infant is being delivered out of a womb-like configuration of clothing which, because it is the only part of the dress fully painted in, seems to be sardonically defining the woman's sole function; the brutish appearance of the man in the mirror; the bitterness of the phrase that supplies the picture's title.

If we accept this more modern interpretation of the painting, we can see Brown using the spatial / chronological structure of his picture to make the same point about belatedness that Egg and Hunt make in their works. Again, the key to this effect lies in the mirror, which here, as in both *Past and Present* and *The Awakening Conscience*, presents the future as inevitably an aspect of the past. True, the mirror shows us the future life, controlled by the father, to which we see the infant being consigned in the picture's foreground or present. But because the scene in the mirror is also literally a part of the painting's background and therefore of the past, it reveals that the world of the father that lies in the infant boy's future is only a belated replica of the ancient world of the father that has already produced, among other things, the desperate situation recorded in the picture's present.

V

If the analyses offered here of these three pictures seem reasonable, it would be hard to avoid concluding that the principal theme of each of these works is the difficulty, if not the impossibility, of achieving anything really new in the modern world, shadowed as it is by a burdensome history. For as the discussion thus far has made clear, all these paintings, through their structures, seem to reply to Walter Jackson Bate's question: "What is there left to do?" with the dispiriting answer: "Nothing of any consequence." Yet there is a very striking irony here. For these three paintings, whose structures appear to deny the possibility of innovation in the modern world, all have as their subjects what is perhaps the most innovative

social development of the nineteenth century, the revolutionary change in attitude toward the condition and role of women.

The pictures themselves all take more or less unconventional positions about this subject. The draconian fate of the unfaithful wife in Egg's painting, for example, seemed, even to many early viewers, as much excessive as cautionary, as if the triptych had been deliberately contrived to suggest its own absurdity; the tale of suburban seduction in Hunt's picture indicts the man as well as the woman; most of all, what seems to modern critics the bitterness of Brown's vision, a vision that contains no hint of disapproval of its contemporary Madonna / Magdalene, condemns a whole society and, indeed, a whole religion. And the fact that Brown left his painting unfinished, after laboring for a dozen years to enlarge and complete it, suggests that the issues the picture raises were *so* new that the artist could not even imagine their resolution.

We need not make too much of the coincidence that all three of these "mirrored" pictures treat the same general subject. The so-called "woman-question" was, after all, a matter of universal interest during the mid-nineteenth century, and the bohemian proclivities of all three of these artists were, in any case, likely to have inclined them to support less traditional attitudes towards women. Thus, they could have been expected to paint pictures about this subject whether or not their works also addressed the issue of belatedness.

Still, it is reasonable to wonder whether there might not be more than a purely coincidental relationship after all between the two themes. One such possible relationship is suggested by a certain familiar polarizing of elements generally associated with the concepts of male and female, a polarizing made explicit in the title of Sherry Ortner's useful essay "Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?"

Studies like Ortner's of gender-identity in Western civilization routinely link the male with such things as linear time, culture, and history and the female with recurrence, nature, and myth. To the extent that the nineteenth century took for granted such clusters of associations, it is possible to see, in the pictures we have been discussing, dramatic confrontations of these polar principles, with each of the three works juxtaposing the belatedness of patriarchal history implicit in its structure with the potential resurgence of female energy suggested by its subject.

From this drama emerges an important Victorian response to the problem of how, in a world burdened by too much knowledge of the past, the new can ever be achieved. What all these paintings seem to suggest is that one cure for a society dessicated by masculine historiography is to open itself to the creative elan of a too-long-suppressed feminine, especially the feminine as associated—by the nineteenth century in general and by Pre-Raphaelite artists in particular—with whatever is natural and mythic. For if events in history, taking place as they do in linear time, must always have precursors and must therefore always be belated, events in myth, which occur in an eternal present, in what Mircea Eliade

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[3] As recently as 1980, this position still had its adherents. See, for example, Marks 135-41. Marks uses biographical information and documentary evidence to argue against the "fallen woman" interpretation of the painting and in favor of the picture as a celebration of marriage.

calls "illo tempore," are always new, always happening for the first time. Thus where, in this view, history and patriarchy decree that there shall be no originals, only copies, myth and the *Ewig-Weibliche* declare that there can be no copies, only originals.

What we have in these paintings, then, is an even more striking spatial representation of chronological development than was suggested earlier. For while these works do succeed in conveying the progression of past, present, and future appropriate to their own specific dramatic situations, they all accomplish something even more ambitious. At a kind of meta-level, and within the frames of three seemingly static pictures, they also portray the general cultural movement from fear of belatedness to hope of innovation, a movement that, to a greater or lesser extent, preoccupied every artist during the Victorian period.

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Gadamer's Hermeneutics and Newman's Illative Sense: Objectivism, Relativism, and Dogma

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Richard J. Bernstein in *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism: Science, Hermeneutics and Praxis* argues that the defining poles of philosophical debate since Descartes have been those of objectivism and relativism. He defines his terms as follows:

> From a manifest perspective, many contemporary debates are still structured with traditional extremes. There is still an underlying belief that in the final analysis the only viable alternatives open to us are *either* some form of objectivism, foundationalism, ultimate grounding of knowledge, science, philosophy and language *or* that we are ineluctably led to relativism, skepticism, historicism and nihilism. (3-4)

He points out that this dichotomy takes other forms that indicate the same underlying tension: "rationality versus irrationality, objectivity versus subjectivity, realism versus antirealism" (1). However, as Bernstein's book attests, some thinkers have begun to assert that this dichotomy has too long dominated Western thinking. Pragmatic phenomenologists such as Hans-Georg Gadamer have begun to argue that there is a way of thinking that goes beyond relativism and objectivism and "explores an entirely different notion of knowledge and truth" ("Problem" 113).

But the process of devising this "different notion of truth" was already begun in the nineteenth century in the writing of John Henry Newman. In his new book on Newman, Ian T. Ker writes that in the present philosophical context, with its emphasis on existentialism, phenomenology, and the ideas of Wittgenstein, "[t]he time is ripe for a reappraisal of Newman's philosophical significance" (73). Newman's philosophy has always created misunderstanding. Because he worked in "an intellectual climate in which post-Enlightenment rationalism [was] presumed to be normative for the exercise of human rationality," Newman's apparent opposition to reason leads some readers to charge him with irrationalism.[1] Nicholas Lash, Martin Svaglic, and Ian Ker have clearly set the record straight by showing that while Newman did reject rationalism he did not oppose reason. But if Newman opposed rationalism and can yet not be called irrationalist, how can his position be characterized? Following the combined suggestions of Ker and Bernstein, I will look at Newman's philosophy as a phenomenological attempt to find a middle way between a nineteenth-century British example of the objectivist-relativist split. Thus I will argue here that if one reframes the thinking

of Newman in the *Oxford University Sermons*, the *Grammar of Assent*, the *Apologia*, and the *Essay on Development* according to the pragmatic ideas of Gadamer, it is possible to see that Newman, in his effort to define a *via media* between liberal rationalism and evangelical emotionalism, attempts to navigate between these two dominant but opposing currents of nineteenth- and twentieth-century thought: objectivism and relativistic subjectivism. Comparing Newman with Gadamer allows us to see most clearly how Newman's theory of mind eschews the conclusions of the rationalist and the empiricists and yet establishes a kind of knowledge that cannot be called subjectivist. Moreover, it shows that in Newman's theory of non-dogmatic authority, he establishes a Gadamerian optimism about the possibility of knowledge.

Only a few readers have been willing to see Newman in this way, and no one has gone beyond mere notice of the relation between Newman and Gadamer. C. F. Harrold does offer observations about Newman's pragmatism, equating Newman's idea of the reasoning process with Dewey's idea that "judgment is not logical at all, but personal and psychological" (qtd. in Harrold 140), but he does not develop them. More recently, Nicholas Lash, also calling Newman's theory phenomenological (5) has pointed out how "fundamental shifts" in the "assessment of the range and variety of modes of human rationality" should bring about a new evaluation of Newman's philosophical significance, and he mentions Gadamer as one source of this new emphasis (20-21). In the important *Rhetorical Thought of John Henry Newman*, Walter Jost has suggested some connections between Newman and the hermeneutics of Gadamer, but Jost's strict focus on the rhetorical components of Newman's thought prevents him from unfolding the philosophical connections explicitly. Moreover, Jost refers only glancingly to the pragmatics of Newman's ideas.[2] Most recently, in *The Achievement of John Henry Newman* (1990) Ker describes Newman as a phenomenologist in that Newman attempts to account for both the logical mind and the imagination, but Ker does not go beyond this suggestion (69-70). Thus no scholar has really worked out the Newman-Gadamer relationship in any depth. The significance of the connection is both philosophical and literary: 1. It shows Newman to have gone beyond the purely polemic thinking of his philosophical contemporaries, avoiding skepticism without collapsing into mere philosophical dogma. 2. It provides new language (Newman's useful terms) for describing the problems of hermeneutics, and supplies new insights about the workings of the human mind and the possibilities of knowledge.

Thus the connection between the two is a consequential one. Ed Block has pointed out in an important article that the significance of Gadamer's hermeneutics for religious thought has remained unnoticed. Conversely, I will argue here that the ramification of Newman's thought for general hermeneutics has also gone undetected. Citing Newman, Ker says that Newman's arguments about faith apply equally to "other kinds

of intellectual activity where 'we must assume something to prove anything'" (41). Since in Gadamer's theory, all knowledge is based on "prejudgments" or assumptions, "assuming something to prove anything" is a central component of his theory. Thus Newman's theory, like Gadamer's, attempts to make room for a kind of knowledge that is neither purely subjective nor narrowly scientistic. If Gadamer's hermeneutics is relevant to a discussion of how religious thought functions, clearly Newman's arguments about the way human beings arrive at religious belief have powerful implications for the study of how we arrive at conclusions regarding non-religious objects of interpretation, such as historical documents and literary texts.[3] As Lash suggests, "For Newman, the structure of personal religious faith is the structure of 'personal knowledge' in respect of any subject whatsoever" (5).

Before we begin observing some important ways in which Newman's thought can be seen to be moving in the same direction as Gadamer's, we need to observe one important difference between them: their theories of language. Gadamer views "linguisticality" as the defining element of human beings. All thought, for Gadamer, is primarily linguistic (*TM* 364-65). Newman, conversely, holds the instrumentalist view of language (a view Gadamer has singled our for criticism [*TM* 364 ff]), that language is necessary for the expression but not the conception of thoughts. This will have important ramifications for the function of what Newman calls the "illative sense."[4]

The general descriptive aims of the two writers are similar. Newman's *Grammar* is an attempt to describe the psychology of religious belief. But another way of viewing Newman's project is to see it as a sort of pragmatic phenomenology of belief. He desires to describe how people come to believe. There is little normative force to Newman's argument. As he says, "I am not proposing to set forth the arguments which issue in the belief of [Christian] doctrines, but to investigate what it is to believe in them, what the mind does, what it contemplates, when it makes an act of faith" (69). Likewise Gadamer's project is descriptive rather than prescriptive epistemology. He attempts to set out the circumstances under which human beings can be said to have knowledge. The work of hermeneutics, Gadamer argues, "is not to develop a procedure of understanding, but to clarify the conditions in which understanding takes place" (*TM* 263). This descriptive quality has tended to turn philosophers away from Newman. The new interest in Gadamer's similarly pragmatic, descriptive aims should lead them back to him.

But similarities go far beyond this descriptive quality. A second important characteristic is the peculiar awareness of historicity on the part of both writers. Both Newman and Gadamer hold the historicist view known as perspectivism, but neither finds that position to exclude the possibility of apprehending historical or interpretive knowledge. In other words, he holds that "truth" changes through time, that as time passes one's view of any historical event will change. Such

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[1] For a good summary of this tradition and the reasons behind it, see Lash (8-9).

[2] For example, Jost draws compact parallels between Newman's theory of tradition and Gadamer's (235) and briefly attempts to exculpate Newman from the charge of dogmatism. I treat these subjects in more detail.

[3] I do not attempt to argue here that Newman influenced Gadamer.

[4] In an unpublished essay I attempt to show how Newman's instrumentalist view of language allows him to escape Derrida's criticism of intuition as caught in a web of indicative language. Gadamer is unable to fend off this charge so readily.

historicist thought usually leads to the charge of relativism or subjectivism. E. D. Hirsch, for example, ranks phenomenology among those theories that have created a climate of relativism in modern culture. In *The Aims of Interpretation* Hirsch argues that "perspectivism, the theory that interpretation varies with the standpoint of the interpreter, is a root form of modern skepticism" (45). In making this argument Hirsch targets, among others, Gadamer (39). Not surprisingly, in this climate of polemical debate, Gadamer finds the opposite charge also leveled against him. Critics of a persuasion opposed to Hirsch's, far from fearing Gadamer as a left-tending advocate of historical subjectivism, see him instead as promoting hermeneutics of the reactionary right wing.[5] However, as some more irenic theorists are beginning to understand, Gadamer's theories cannot be so easily pigeon-holed. His complex historicism retains a belief in the possibilities of meaning in history and literature, and even in religious thought (see Block). Thus Gadamer's complex blend of historicism and faith in the possibility of knowledge show him to be resisting the tempting dualism of his time.

It has long been known that Newman held perspectivist views, but as we have noted, many critics have been very careful to avoid linking Newman's perspectivism with historicist relativism. Coulson, for example, notes that Newman views knowledge as an accumulation of partial images leading towards but never reaching final truth (62). Sillem observes Newman's contention that it is impossible for any human being to see all the aspects of any idea (99 ff). And Boekraad shows that Newman believed "our idea of man [is] more or less unreal; we do not take in the whole of him" (179). Thus the implications of relativism are there, but Newman's general thought prevents the conclusion that he is radically historicist. Like Gadamer's historicism, Newman's position grows from his sense of the inevitability of perspectival limitations and of the pointlessness of trying to define knowledge in a way that does not account for perspective, but it retains a sense that despite the limitations of perspective people are still able to attain knowledge.

Newman clearly expresses his theory of perspective or aspect in the *Grammar of Assent*. In the chapter called the "Illative Sense" Newman seeks to demonstrate how people arrive at similar conclusions from widely varied paths and that people view the world in a subjective manner: "The aspect under which we view things is often intensely personal; nay, even awfully so, considering that, from the nature of the case, it does not bring home its idiosyncrasy whether to ourselves or to others. Each of us looks at the world in his own way, and does not know perhaps that it is characteristically his own" (240). Further Newman writes: "If we so variously apprehend the familiar objects of sense, still more various, we may suppose, are the aspects and associations attached by us with one another, to intellectual objects" (241). Human subjectivity makes the complete knowledge of intellectual objects impossible. Note again that Newman's observation does not limit the problem of subjectivity to religious questions but has relevance to general hermeneutic problems as well.

Such a view, like Gadamer's, would seem to lead to radical historicist relativism. That is, if one is limited to a given perspective, how is it possible for one to gain accurate knowledge about the world? Newman answers this question in an interesting way. He does not try to say how one arrives at the truth. Instead he pragmatically describes the process by which human beings come to feel that they have knowledge. Newman insists, despite his confirmed perspectivism, that human beings can reach a state of certitude regarding human and divine knowledge. It is the complexity of the human mind that allows human thought, despite its limitations, to arrive at the conviction of truth.

Of course certitude and knowledge are not always identical. In order to find a way out of what many still look to may like the dead end of subjectivism, both Newman and Gadamer turn to Aristotle. Gadamer's view of the reasoning process has been heavily influenced by Aristotle's idea of *Phronesis* (Hoy 57-58). To make a distinction similar to that which we shall see in Newman between the "real" and the "notional" in the actions of the human mind, Gadamer seizes on the Aristotelian distinction between *techne* and *phronesis*, between technical, scientific reasoning and practical wisdom. Like Newman, Gadamer wishes to avoid the scientistic blind alley of arguing that *techne* is the only source for real information about the world (*TM* 21-22). For Gadamer, practical judgment is required to make decisions in concrete matters of interpretation and morality. *Phronesis* is the power of mind that allows for mediation between the general and the concrete, the universal and the particular, the tradition and the individual text. Gadamer calls this complex non-scientific moral reasoning "understanding." As we shall also see with Newman, in Gadamer's view there is no way to detach the knowledge gained through this process from the person who performs it. "[T]he person with understanding does not know and judge as one who stands apart and unaffected" (*TM* 288).

Newman's theory of the human apprehension of truth, like Gadamer's, is deeply indebted to Aristotle's idea of the practical, personal functions of the mind as distinguished from its purely logical functions. While Newman concentrates on religious matters, it is clear from his discussions that his theory of mind has wider hermeneutic applications. Religious positions, much like philosophical positions, require logical expression, but, Newman argues, all followers of a position need not understand the complexities involved in it. For example, one might believe in the freedom of the will but lack the ability to demonstrate it logically. Newman first develops these ideas in his *Oxford University Sermons*:

> Nothing would be more theoretical and unreal than to suppose that true Faith cannot exist except when molded upon a creed, and based upon evidence; yet nothing would indicate a more shallow philosophy than to say it ought carefully to be disjoined from argumentative and dogmatic statements. To assert the latter is to discard the science of theology from the service of religion. To assert the former, is to maintain that every child, every peasant, must be a

theologian. Faith cannot exist without grounds or without an object; but it does not follow that all who have faith should recognize, and be able to state what they believe and why. (253-54)

Newman establishes that "[t]rue Faith, then, admits, but does not require, the exercise of what is commonly understood by [explicit] reason" (253). Thus Newman, like Gadamer, stresses the importance of *phronesis* and insists less on *techne* in the complex actions of the human mind, but it is also important to notice that Newman does not say that faith can exist without evidence. This is his middle ground, knowledge not opposed to reason but not utterly dependent on it.

To illustrate the contrast between the two types of rationality more fully, Newman moves to another example. He notes that all people, in thinking and even in physical activities such as climbing, "commonly use reason,—not by rule, but by an inward faculty" (257). But some are dissatisfied with this inward process and wish to formulate rules. To do this they use *techne*, logical language. Thus Newman argues, there are two kinds of reason: the spontaneous energy within, and the act of reflecting on that energy. Moreover, while all people reason, only a few can take part in the latter process. "In other words," he continues,

> all men have reason, but not all men can give a reason. We may denote, then, these two exercises of mind as reasoning and arguing, or as conscious and unconscious reasoning, or as Implicit Reason and Explicit Reason. And to the latter belong the words science, method, development, analysis, criticism, proof, system, principles, rules, laws, and others of a like nature. (259)

For knowledge and faith, human beings need both kinds of reason, but Newman cautions against the view that only technical reason can provide the grounds for faith. It can be easily seen how this same distinction can apply to matters not explicitly religious, such as the more general kinds of hermeneutic judgments with which Gadamer is primarily concerned.

If the real reasons for belief are too subtle to be apprehended and described using explicit logic, then it is important to discover how we acquire these reasons. In the *Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent*, Newman drops the term "implicit reason" and develops the idea of the "illative sense." In the section on the "Nature of the Illative Sense" Newman begins by re-emphasizing that the illative sense is a natural process of the mind. "It is the mind that reasons . . . not any technical apparatus of words and propositions." Here he formally defines for the first time the subject of the chapter: "This power of judging and concluding, when in its perfection, I call the Illative Sense" (227-28). Newman illustrates the illative sense by the use of parallel cases, and his first example is from morality, where he refers, like Gadamer, to Aristotle's doctrine of *phronesis*, or judgment, because, he argues, Aristotle was right in directing all moral judgments not to any

explicit code or ethical treatise, but to the judgment of individual minds. How do we determine the Golden Mean? To what source can we turn to judge in ethical matters? "The authoritative oracle, which is to decide our path, is something more searching and manifold than such jejune generalizations as treatises can give, which are most distinct and clear when we least need them" (288). Newman does not wish to argue here that the determining of right and wrong is a purely individual matter, but to suggest the complexity and necessary individuality of the processes of mind leading to the decision. *Phronesis* is akin to the illative sense and to Gadamer's concept of "understanding" in that both processes require complex practical judgment, and both are called upon to make decisions in a bewildering variety of situations.

The *Grammar* provides a useful illustration of the way the illative sense applies not merely to religious judgments but to interpretive historical judgments as well. Newman first analyzes the differing opinions among five classicists about the historical foundation of the Trojan war. As Newman illustrates, there are many disputes among the scholars, but he does not attempt to settle the arguments. His concern is rather to analyze the cause of their conflicting views. These conflicts, he contends, can be traced to the fact that each scholar, in forming his conclusions, employs the illative sense: "The conclusions with the particular writer, for each writes from his own point of view and with his own principles, and these admit of no common measure" (237). He goes on to cite the writers' references to their own assumptions, called variously by them "opinions," "critical feeling," "reasonings," "absolute persuasions," to show that no argument can persuade the other, because no amount of logic can "reach and effect what is so intimately bound up with the mental constitution of each" (237). Thus scholars admit that it is their "personal view of things" which causes the differences between them. And as Newman says, "men become personal when logic fails; it is their mode of appealing to their won primary elements of thought, and their own illative sense, against the principles and judgment of another" (238). The illative sense, Newman argues, leads human beings to the primary assumptions they make about the world, the assumptions upon which logical arguments are built. The process by which they gain these assumptions, however, is non-verbal and beyond the reach of analysis. But do not these assumptions make Newman's position, and the positions of his five classicists, purely subjectivist ones?

To answer this question it is necessary to look more closely at the idea of presupposition or assumption in both Newman and Gadamer. The problem of assumptions forms an important component of the thinking of both writers. Gadamer too holds that no knowledge is possible without prejudgment or presupposition. In fact, Gadamer argues, meaning is impossible without a meeting of the reader's expectations and the context of the text in question. Gadamer even goes so far as to term these presuppositions "prejudices," and he calls some of these prejudices "justified" (*TM* 247).[6] It is the job of readers to use their own unavoidable "enabling"

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[5] See Block for a discussion of this phenomenon.

[6] Gadamer's complex notion of "prejudice" deserves more discussion than I can afford here. Let it suffice to say that he uses the term in what he calls a "pre-Enlightenment" sense that is not necessarily pejorative (*TM* 238 ff). The

fact that Newman uses the term in a pejorative sense implies only a semantic difference between the two.

prejudices to discover the prejudices of the tradition and to become as aware as possible of their own disabling or "blind" prejudices, and to rid themselves of them. Present prejudices will then be unmasked by later writers (*TM* 238 ff).

Knowledge for Gadamer is factual, empirically verifiable information arrived at through *techne*, Newman's explicit reason. "Understanding," on the other hand, is "more" (Hoy 46-48), a process of practical judgment, much like Newman's illative sense, that allows human beings to bring their assumptions to bear on the world and thus to mediate between these presuppositions and the "text" before them. Thus while all knowledge is bound up with our prejudices, these prejudices make it possible for us to have some contact with the world, to experience it. This process involves a transformation of the hermeneutic circle. Bernstein explains this process productively:

> On the one hand, Gadamer stresses that we must always temper our understanding to the "things themselves"; we must listen to them and open ourselves so that they can "speak to us"; we must be receptive to the claims to truth they make on us. But on the other hand, we do not do this by bracketing or forgetting all our prejudgments and prejudices. On the contrary, it is only because of the play of these prejudgments that we are enabled to understand the "things themselves." (138)

Like Gadamer, Newman argues that at the bases of all arguments are unprovable assumptions. After establishing that the illative sense leads to presuppositions, unlike Gadamer, Newman moves to a careful consideration of just how these first principles are arrived at. His point is to establish that presuppositions are more than mere prejudice in the pejorative sense of the word, but the necessary building blocks of all knowledge. Though individual cases are too complex and subtle for analysis, he provides examples to show how what he calls "antecedent probabilities" might lead to intellectual acceptance and belief. His view of "probability" requires more explanation. For Newman, everyday life is based upon our tacit acceptance of concrete probabilities. For example, it has never been proved logically that the sun will rise tomorrow, but people live with the assumption that it will. It is only a probability, but we accept it as knowledge. The same is true of our acceptance of the proposition that Great Britain is an island (191-92). At first glance such a view may seem to be empirical. But while the influence of empiricism is identifiable here in Newman's thinking about probability, his probability theory does not fall into the empirical trap of insisting on scientific verification. It is not logic that has led us to believe these propositions; it is an act of faith to go to bed at night assuming that the sun will be up when we awake, and unless we have personally circumnavigated Great Britain, our feeling of certitude that it is an island is based on probability. These are presuppositions, and daily life is based on a multitude of them. In more complex matters, like religious faith or historical interpretation, one builds intellectual arguments on the convergence of many probabilities. The difference between believers and non-believers to Newman does not lie in the logical arguments they make, but in the degree to which they accept probabilities that lead to faith. The faithful

believe in God in much the same way people believe in mortality, or that the earth is round. These ideas can never be demonstrated categorically, but people accept them as indubitable fact because of probability. Thus for Newman, while logic forms the exterior descriptive framework of human beliefs, the basis of belief and non-scientific knowledge lies at the level of presupposition. Without falling into the *cul de sac* of requiring empirical verification, Newman, like Gadamer, can argue that assumptions are a form of knowledge.

While Newman does not emphasize the structuring function of our prejudgments, it is clear that he is attempting to move in a direction similar to Gadamer's when he uses the illative sense as an organ for determining truth outside of purely logical means. For Newman, there are two kinds of inference, formal and informal. Formal inference is the act of mind whereby it recognizes the logical consistency of a proposition. One makes a formal inference, in Newman's view, when one moves from the minor premise to the conclusion of a syllogism. In other words, as Zeno writes in *Newman: Our Way to Certitude*, "formal inference is the conditional acceptance of a proposition, viz., a conclusion in relation to other propositions" (139). Thus formal inference functions in the realm of logic or explicit reasoning or, in Aristotle's term, *techne*. Informal inference, on the other hand, operates on the implicit level of reasoning. Informal inferences are made from the convergence of probabilities and cannot be analyzed or reproduced with language. It is informal inference that leads to presuppositions, the "prejudgment" on which all scientific knowledge is based.

"Assent" grows from inference, and there are two kinds of assent, "notional" and "real," corresponding to the two kinds of inference and the two kinds of reason. Accession to a syllogism is an inference probably leading to a notional assent. That is, when one accepts the conclusion to a syllogism one admits its logical consistency with its premises. Real assent, on the other hand, does not necessarily accompany a formal inference. Notional assent is abstract. Real assent is tied to concrete reality and involves real conviction. The abstractness of notional assent allows it to be accepted without real conviction. Though both assents are unconditional, notional is cold and ineffective. It does not engage the imagination as real assent does. As Newman observes, "Many a man will live and die upon a dogma: no man will be a martyr to a conclusion" (*Grammar* 66). Real assent then relies on presuppositions and therefore involves human subjectivity. Thus for Newman, the five classicists can maintain their positions as knowledge consistent with the presuppositions or prejudices they take with them to the problem. To some, however, this still looks like pure subjectivity. After all, if the conclusions of the historians are in conflict, so probably are their presuppositions. Can such conflicting views all be called "knowledge"?

Thus this subjectivity leaves a fundamental question still unanswered: How can one practically distinguish between true and false perceptions? What practical method do people actually use in order to determine the reliability of their perceptions? Or as Newman poses the question, "what is truth, and what apparent truth? what is genuine knowledge and what is its counterfeit? what are the tests for discriminating

certitude from mere persuasion or delusion" (*Grammar* 129). It is important, if Newman's theory is going to have any validity, that it define certitude carefully enough to account for the possibility of delusion and prejudice in the pejorative sense of the word. For Newman, one's beliefs are finally justifiable in rational terms, but they are not based on technical reason alone. Delusions, on the other hand, are rejections of reason altogether, beliefs utterly contradicted by reason (*Lecture* 291). Thus Newman says that since certitude is based on assumptions which arise from inner, implicit, inexpressible reasons, the illative sense, it is therefore rational, not mere delusion or prejudice in the pejorative sense. Certitude is based on "first principles." Yet while Newman carefully defines his idea of certitude to invalidate the charge of pure subjectivity, his theory of personal conviction runs aground in the very problem it seeks to overcome, since the organ he says must be used to arrive at certitude is the individual conscience, a "private guide" (*Grammar* 251).

The Protestant form of "private judgment" comes under Newman's strict censure because of the dangers of subjectivity.[7] But it may be hard for the reader to see how conscience does not fall under the same charge. That is, even though Newman's notion of certitude is designed to exculpate his general theory from the charge of pure subjectivity, it is still possible to read Newman's theory of certitude and conscience without seeing clearly how it avoids the charge of subjectivism or irrationality. How, one might legitimately ask, can one come to believe through this private process without ultimately using the private judgment of one's conscience, which is in Newman's own terms fallible? (*Grammar* 152-53). I believe that the best answer to this question lies not in the *Grammar* itself but in Newman's theory of authority as defined in various of his writings. But in order to see Newman's theory of authority in a phenomenological perspective, I would like to turn first to Gadamer's theory of tradition, which faces a similar subjectivist dilemma.

To escape the problem of subjective judgment, Gadamer holds, in fact, that the regulative principle of "tradition" will help to decide between sound and unsound interpretations. Tradition is an authority based on "what any rational being in that particular situation would think" (Hoy 110). Thus Gadamer is able to maintain his historicist-perspectivist position and yet claim that interpretations are not purely subjective. By comparing their findings with those of the tradition surrounding them, interpreters can test the truth of their interpretations. This "community of interpretation," or tradition as he calls it, is the grounding of all knowledge.

For Newman no proper religious judgments can be made without attention to church authorities. In fact the existence of authority is one of the elements leading to faith in the religious mind. In using this appeal to authority, Newman follows Aristotle, who also felt that people making moral decisions need to rely on their elders to help them. Newman cites Aristotle's *Ethics* (6.11) on the importance of learning from authorities, and then develops the thought himself:

> Instead of trusting logical science, we must trust persons, namely, those who by long acquaintance with their subject have a right to judge. And if we wish ourselves to share in their convictions and the grounds of them, we must follow their history, and learn as they have learned. We must take up their particular subject as they took it up, beginning at the beginning, give ourselves to it, depend on practice and experience rather than on reasoning, and thus gain the mental insight into truth, *whatever its subject matter may be*, which our masters have gained before us. (*Grammar* 220-21, emphasis added)

We see here that such a system of belief goes well beyond mere "private judgment." Anyone seeking knowledge will rely on his own sense of things so long as that sense does not directly contradict traditional belief systems. Church authority can exceed the authority of the individual consciences under certain circumstances (*Apologia* 222-23). (I emphasize the phrase "whatever its subject matter may be" to observe that Newman sees his theory as having application beyond religious questions.) The important thing to notice here is that like Gadamer, Newman notices the need for an authority against which to balance the perspectively limited insights of the individual. Without an authority to back judgments, one can never distinguish between valid and invalid interpretations of any moral, religious, or purely intellectual question.

While the move to reliance on authority may be one way to escape the charge of pure subjectivism and relativism, to most readers it creates a new, even more serious, problem; an appeal to authority can appear to be a collapse into dogmatic principle. Both Newman and Gadamer face this charge. Gadamer handles the problem this way. He first assumes that any argument for the possibility of attaining truthful (or authentic) interpretations must rely on some form of authority. But this reliance does not mean blind faith. Gadamer's theory insists that while tradition is the guide to knowledge, authentic interpretations will always question that tradition. While we rely on tradition, we are also aware that tradition has, like ourselves, been subject to certain prejudices, and as we have seen it is the job of the interpreter to continually unmask these prejudices through the dialectical interplay of his own prejudices and those of the tradition he criticizes (*TM* 238 ff).

Gadamer's idea of the movement or revision of tradition involves a neverending process of interpretation and reinterpretation of texts. He writes, "Tradition exists only in constant alteration" (qtd. in Hoy 127). Thus Gadamer sets up tradition as pragmatic rather than dogmatic. Gadamer's nondogmatic reliance on authority is indebted to Aristotle, as is Newman's. For all three we rely on tradition to help us guide our own judgments because the wisdom and the experience of the authority may be greater than ours. As Gadamer says,

> [T]he recognition of authority is always connected with the idea that what the authority states is not irrational and arbitrary, but can be seen, in principle, to be true. This is

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[7] For Newman's discussion of "private judgment" see his *Essays Critical and Historical* (341 ff).

the essence of the authority claimed by the teacher, the superior, the expert. The prejudices that they implant are legitimized by the person himself. Their validity demands that one should be biased in favor of the person who presents them. (*TM* 249).

Elsewhere Gadamer makes a similar point even more sharply, when he says that authority gets its power "not from dogmatic force, but from dogmatic acknowledgment . . . . One concedes to authority a superiority in knowledge and judgment and on that ground believes that it is just. On that alone authority 'rests.' It prevails, therefore, not because it is blindly obeyed, but because it is 'freely' acknowledged" ("Rhetoric" 285). Thus Gadamer's theory of authority allows for a healthy critique of tradition qualified by respect for it.

One does not think of the Roman Catholic Church as being flexible on the subject of dogma, and in fact Newman defends the dogmatic principle as an article of Roman Catholic faith, but he does not, any more than Gadamer does, view dogma as a necessarily capricious and arbitrary body of beliefs, nor is he the follower of tradition for Newman a mere passive receptor of it. For Newman Christian dogma is the collection of thoughts from all those throughout history who have most authority to speak on matters of faith. Thus like Gadamer Newman sees no reason not to respect the voice of authority. But this respect does not entail blind allegiance. The Catholic position on dogma is that it is infallible, but Newman's carefully qualified theory of infallibility and his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* suggest that his attitude towards dogma is less strictly "dogmatic" than is usually assumed of Catholics. Newman holds that the body of truths which compose the dogma of a community must also change or develop through time. In the *Essay on Development*, Newman describes the growth of an influential idea. It begins by confusing people, and much argument and discussion will ensue. It will be "interrogated and criticized by enemies, and defended by well-wishers." Much sifting and separating follows. If it is a vigorous idea, it will after much time "introduce itself into the framework and details of social life, changing public opinion" (60-61). Ideas come into the mind after being submitted to this culture-wide scrutiny. The point here is that the result is a "development" or growth in tradition or dogma. The process includes a built-in flexibility. Thus dogma for Newman is not inflexible and arbitrary but subject to development just as Gadamer's "tradition" invites criticism.

This emphasis on growth, development, and criticism ensures that reliance on tradition does not, for Gadamer or Newman, destroy the freedom of the individual thinker: The question is, Newman writes, "whether the belief in an infallible authority destroys the independence of the mind; and I consider that the whole history of the Church, and especially the history of the theological schools, gives a negative to the accusation" (*Apologia* 204). The process is a dialectic of new ideas weighed against the authority of tradition, and sometimes these new ideas win their place:

> Many a man has ideas, which he hopes are true, and useful for his day, but he is not confident about them, and wishes to have them discussed. He is willing, or rather would be

thankful, to give them up, if they can be proved erroneous or dangerous, and by means of controversy he obtains his end. He is answered, and he yields; or on the contrary he finds that he is considered safe. (205)

Thus dogma exists not in an untouchable vacuum, universal and unchanging, but in a real, dialectical relationship with those who think and reason on religion. In his *On Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine*, Newman expresses most clearly the way in which one must base judgments in concrete matters not on doctrine alone but on a combination of doctrine and *sensus communis fidelium*, the common sense of the faithful (66). Gadamer too relies on what he calls *sensus communis*, derived from Vico, a belief in a community sense of right and wrong (*TM* 19 ff). Thus for Gadamer, as for Newman, freedom and authority are not in conflict. Gadamer holds that obedience to authority is based "not on subjection and abdication of reason, but on recognition and knowledge" (248). While philosophy is always critical of the tradition, always unmasking its prejudices, it must realize that it owes its ability to interpret from the presuppositions it has gained from the tradition itself.

To sum up then, Newman and Gadamer have as primary projects the creation of an epistemology that seeks a non-dogmatic middle ground between excessive reliance on technical reason and collapse into total relativism and subjectivism. While the infallible authority of the Catholic church is an extreme form of Gadamerian "tradition," we see that it bears certain important resemblances to Gadamer's. The views of both Newman and Gadamer on authority and tradition owe much to Aristotle's theory of moral authority. One must rely on authority, but authority does not destroy one's freedom of inquiry. Thus by appealing to authority of tradition, both Gadamer and Newman escape the charge of pure subjectivity and also avoid the censure of those who might accuse them of dogmatism. Like Newman, Gadamer uses the idea of tradition as a source for verification of ideas. Both develop a concept of reason adapted from Aristotle's notion of *phronesis*, which allows them to retain a historicist view of knowledge without relying on scientistic rules of verifiability; but most important they maintain the possibility of knowledge. Both hold that all knowledge flows from presuppositions adopted from traditional or authoritative sources. And finally both Newman and Gadamer see the possibilities of communication, understanding, and belief as growing out of a community of authoritative or traditional agreement about what is possible, what is rational, what can be known. Both suggest that the relationship between the tradition and the individual thinker is dialectic rather than dogmatic.

Jost calls Newman's theory of authority "vague and recondite" (103), but if seen in light of Gadamer's idea of tradition, it achieves clarity and significance. Though Newman seldom wrote about matters of intellectual interest as divorced from religious interest, his view on the flexibility of human reason, and the mind's ability to gain knowledge through a combination of reason and reference to authority makes his thought significant for an understanding of the philosophical issues of hermeneutics today. His theory's historicist base, its reliance on *phronesis*, and its admitted dependence on the presuppositions of authority suggest impor-

tant Gadamerian implications about the possibilities of knowledge for general hermeneutics, especially in the important effort of modern hermeneutics to resolve the present relativist-objectivist dilemma.

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Harriet Martineau in America:
Gender and the Discourse of Sociology

Maria H. Frawley

> I, for one, do not acquiesce. I declare that whatever obedience I yield to the laws of society in which I live is a matter between, not the community and myself, but my judgment and my will. (1: 204)

So wrote Harriet Martineau in 1837 in *Society in America*, one of early Victorian England's most important attempts to apply the as yet undefined principles of sociology to the study of foreign culture. Significantly, Martineau embeds her proclamation within the ostensibly objective treatise of *Society in America*, not within her more personalized travel account of America, *Retrospect of Western Travel*. In essence, she positions the personal as the professional and

gives her declaration the legitimacy she believes is accorded to the rational discourse of social study.

Harriet Martineau believed that such overt statements of female independence might compromise the seriousness with which her newly discovered role as social scientist would be taken. She was right. Consider, for example, her representation in "Blue-Stocking Revels; or, the Feast of Violets," a satiric poem written by Leigh Hunt, who at the time was editor of *The Monthly Repository*:

> Ah! welcome home, Martineau, turning statistics
> To stories, and puzzling your philogamystics!
> I own I can't see, any more than dame Nature,

Why love should await dear good Harriet's dictata-
ture!
But great is earth's want of some love-legislature.
(183)

Hunt published the poem in 1837, just after Martineau had
returned from her two-year trip to America. A critic in
Fraser's Magazine welcomed her home with the following
warning:

> If Miss Martineau, therefore, or any other maiden mal-
> content, should again venture to assert the equality of man
> and woman, our only advice to whomsoever that lady may
> be, is to turn, before sitting down to her task to the book of
> Genesis.[1]

Martineau's work in social science—as these comments sug-
gest—was viewed as an implicit challenge—and threat—to
womanhood.[2] Her status as a single woman was both con-
demned and explained by her status as a working woman.

Out of her experiences in America, Martineau wrote
several travel accounts both in focus and in method very dif-
ferent from the kinds engendered by travel to other parts of the
world. America seemed to have a more expansive, more
accessible public sphere than any she had experienced or
imagined. Nineteenth-century travelers in general perceived
America's essence to be housed in its institutions,[3] but
Martineau in particular endowed these institutions with the
power to give the country's citizens a public voice. "The
voice of a whole people goes up in the silent workings of an
institution," she wrote in *How to Observe Morals and Man-
ners* (73), a book sketched out en route to America and com-
pleted after her trip was over. The absence of authority that
Alexis de Tocqueville decried in *Democracy in America* was
to Martineau evidenced by the clamoring of voices all claim-
ing an equal opportunity to be heard in America. America, it
seemed, offered everyone—including women—a chance to
participate in public life, to be a citizen. Its schools, churches,
lecture halls, and newspapers flaunted the liberties assumed by
public voice, and Martineau listened with intense interest.

She also recorded. Her travel accounts are replete with
lengthy extracts from newspapers, portions of conversations
both engaged in and overheard, recollections of lectures and
public speeches, paraphrases of sermons. In experimenting
with ways to represent the variety of voices that made
America, Martineau adopted—and developed—the methods
of social study. She located informants, conducted interviews,
inspected facilities, asked questions, and pursued answers.
She compared America's men to its women, its north to its
south, its cities to its country, its ideals to its reality. In offer-
ing up instances of the American voice as evidence with
which to predict the outcome of the democratic experiment,
Martineau changed the function and shape of the travel

account. Much of her work reads less like conventional travel
literature and more like investigative reporting. America, she
reasoned, demanded a new, more studious approach. Accor-
dingly, Harriet Martineau wrote two separate accounts of her
American experience, one (*Society in America*) to speculate
rationally about its society and the other to encompass her per-
sonal impressions (*Retrospect of Western Travel*).

Taken in its entirely, Martineau's work on America com-
promises an important piece of the development of social
study in England. It helped to define the province and meth-
ods of sociology, what Martineau, following Auguste Comte's
lead, defined as the science of society. A complete account of
the impact of travel writing on the development of Victorian
sociological discourse would also take into account such
influences as that of positivism on Victorian ways of thinking
about the wider world, the rise of statistical research, and
growing concern over the living conditions of the working
class both at home and abroad. Such complexities also sug-
gest the extent to which the boundaries of what many Vic-
torians considered sociology overlapped with other developing
social sciences—most notably political economy and
anthropology. Travel writing provided a convenient and logi-
cal way to bring these interrelated concerns into focus and was
for the most part considered an acceptable form in which
women could publish. Furthermore, nineteenth-century
America—with its claim to be a "new world" and its
abundance of institutions designed to ensure its democratic
ideals—was ripe for just the sort of investigative approach that
the developing discourse(s) of sociology provided. In short,
the New World offered new discursive possibilities.
Martineau capitalized on these possibilities to transform the
travel account into social investigation.

Martineau brought two fundamental assumptions to her
study of American society: that it had to be done systemati-
cally and that it was of utmost importance. As she notes in
How to Observe Morals and Manners:

> Many may object that I am making much too serious a mat-
> ter of the department of the business of travelling . . . .
> They do not pretend to be moral philosophers;—they do
> not desire to be oracles;—they attempt nothing more than
> to give a simple report of what has come under their notice.
> But what work on earth is more serious than this of giving
> an account of the most grave and important things which
> are transacted on this globe? (28)

Martineau believed that the rational way to approach the
country was to test its reality—the everyday working of its
institutions and the condition of its peoples—against its ideals,
which she assumed to have been articulated by the Founding
Fathers. From this test, she reasoned, she could objectively
assess the "moral progress" of the nation.

Insofar as she attempted to adhere to a systematic and

unbiased methodology in her investigation, her works
represent a major early contribution to the development of
sociology as a science. Many critics have argued that what is
most noteworthy about Martineau's scheme to examine the
country from this standpoint is that she concocted it well
before the sociological theories of Comte and, even later,
Spencer had been articulated and studied. In *Harriet
Martineau: A Radical Victorian* R. K. Webb claimed that "for
years she had been preaching sociology without the name"
(308). Alice Rossi wrote "The First Woman Sociologist: Har-
riet Martineau" to pay tribute to her groundbreaking mode of
analysis. Seymour Lipset credited her as "the first person to
introduce sociology into England" (7). And Michael Hill
brought out the only edition of *How to Observe Morals and
Manners* since its original publication in 1838 because of its
status as "the first substantive treatise on sociological meth-
odology" (xi). Though correct in their attributions, these
studies assume that Martineau's significance derives from her
anticipation of a male line of social scientists that includes
Comte, Marx, Durkheim, and Weber. More importantly, they
neglect to address two essential dimensions of Martineau's
approach—why the discourse of sociology appealed to her
desire to solidify the authority brought to her work in political
economy and how she integrated a concern for the domestic
and feminine into a discourse conceived to be primarily
oriented toward the public and, at least by implication, male.

Martineau traveled to America after having achieved
widespread public recognition for her popular series, *Illustra-
tions of Political Economy* (1832-34), fictional stories she had
designed to exemplify the principles of political economists
like Malthus, Ricardo, and Bentham. Though she claimed
both in her autobiography and elsewhere to have traveled
merely because the opportunity had presented itself, she had,
with her individual tales of political economy, launched a very
successful career as an interpreter of social ills, a popularizer
rather than inventor of social theory.[4] From its very
beginning, Martineau's career was marked by what Robert
Colby calls a "zeal for documentation" (56). She enjoyed the
new kind of auxiliary authority that documentary study of
political economy had provided her and carried this
enthusiasm with her across the Atlantic.

Martineau traveled to America neither as an explorer nor
as a tourist, but as a social investigator and a professional
working woman. To an extent, her orientation reflects some-
thing of the particular imaginative investment that she and
other Victorians made in America. America was less a place
to be enchanted with than a place to scrutinize and assess. To
Martineau, this "New World" demanded a new form of travel
account, one that measured, studied, assessed, and predicted.
It demanded scientific method. The new kind of sociological
travel account that she developed to accommodate these
beliefs not surprisingly assumed a different kind of traveler,
one whose competence was based less on intensity of impres-
sion, or ability to look inward, than on the skill with which she
could describe those outward features of society that would

reveal the essence or "meaning" of the country. To cultivate
this skill, Martineau argued, the traveler should strive for dis-
tance, detachment, "the general view." As she wrote in *How
to Observe Morals and Manners*, "To stand on the highest pin-
nacle is the best way of obtaining an accurate view, in con-
templating a society as well as a city" (60). Martineau was,
however, careful to create a vision of the ideal traveler that
women could readily fulfill: "The observer must have
sympathy; and his sympathy must be untrammelled and
unreserved" (52). Although these ideas—the makings of the
ideal traveler—were not put into print until *How to Observe
Morals and Manners* was published in 1838, they were
fleshed out on board a ship to America. Martineau went to
America determined to fulfill the ideals set forth in *How to
Observe Morals and Manners* and to show the exceptional
capacity of women to be investigators of society.

Martineau explains in the beginning of *Retrospect of
Western Travel* that she went to America with "a task to do,"
and after two years abroad she came home with material for
three books based on her experiences, *Society in America*
(1837), *Retrospect of Western Travel* (1838), and *How to
Observe Morals and Manners* (1838), as well as for a series of
articles later republished as *The Martyr Age of the United
States* (1839). She intended her first book to be an investiga-
tive inquiry into the theory and practice of American society,[5]
and only after having returned to England did she decide also
to publish a second version of her experiences there, one
embellished with more "personal narrative" and peppered with
her impressions of the "lighter characteristics of men"
("Preface" to *Retrospect of Western Travel*). Even if America
did not respect the proper divisions between public and pri-
vate, she urged that her books would. In her introduction to
Society in America Martineau explained that her object was to
"test" America's "Institutions, Morals, and Manners" and that
insofar as she had to discuss the people with whom she had
become personally involved, her modus operandi was "to
speak of the public acts of public persons, precisely as if I had
known them only in their public character" (55). On the other
hand, *Retrospect of Western Travel* would, Martineau
imagined, "supply to the English what the Americans do not
want—a picture of the aspect of the country, and of its men
and manners" (3). *How to Observes Morals and Manners*
would chart the way through still different "departments of
inquiry," instructing the traveler-reader on the "habits of meth-
od" prerequisite to apprehending what Martineau called "the
science of Morals" (13-15 passim) as well as theorizing about
the public/private distinctions on which her other studies were
built.

The kind(s) of authority that Martineau sought to estab-
lish through these works are more complicated than her divi-
sions into separate books would suggest. Alice Rossi claims
that what distinguishes her work is the "self-consciousness
with which she advocated the view that the study of societies
constitutes a separate scientific discipline" (119). Yet her con-
cern for these separations stemmed as much from a concern

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[1]*Fraser's Magazine* (19 May 1839): 557-92. The critic responsible for this
passage has not yet been identified in the *Wellesley Index.*
[2]A derogatory portrait of Martineau was featured in *Fraser's* "Gallery of
Illustrious Characters," a series of satirical biographies that were accompanied
by a caricature. For further discussion of this "ad hominem attack based on a
prevailing distrust of the bluestocking," see Marks.

[3]See Peter Conrad's *Imagining America* for an elaboration of this theme. He
focuses on the English traveler who was also a practiced novelist—e.g.
Frances and Anthony Trollope and Charles Dickens. As trained "anatomists
of society," they were already predisposed to explain and explore the social
structures they encountered.

[4]Deirdre David argues in *Intellectual Women and Victorian Patriarchy* that
Martineau's career was "defined by her auxiliary usefulness to a male-
dominated culture" (31).

[5]Harriet Martineau wrote in her autobiography that *Society in America* was
intended by her to have been called *Theory and Practice of Society in America*
but she acquiesced to the demands of her publisher.

for her own status as a woman writing in a field more traditionally male as from an awareness of the merits of sociology as a discipline. That she sensed a disjunction between the institutional America that demanded theory and the country's "lighter characteristics" that asked for narration—and that she apportioned her books accordingly—is in part indicative of her evolving sense of the seriousness of her chosen profession as investigative social scientist, and she thought of her travel writing as an off-shoot of this mission. Martineau wanted to avoid tagging her social study of America as too identifiably female, i.e., as too "light," unscientific and unprofessional. She appears to have believed that the more anecdotal, narrative, and hence domesticated approach her readers called for could compromise the high seriousness with which she wanted to be read. In her preface to *Retrospect of Western Travel* Martineau concedes that "There seems no reason why such a picture should not be appended to an inquiry into the theory and practice of their society" ("Preface"). By describing the second study as a "picture" that has been "appended to" the more rigorous "inquiry," she unambiguously places her allegiance with the first. She sought to safeguard her public identity as rational, masculine social investigator by overtly separating the spheres of her travel writing and by suggesting that the "lighter" and hence more feminine book, *Retrospect of Western Travel*, was written only to satisfy the less serious-minded reading public.

To an extent, Martineau wanted to disassociate not just her allegiance but also her authority from *Retrospect of Western Travel*, centering them instead in *Society in America*. As an "inquiry into the theory and practice" of society, this volume promised more to solidify the professional reputation she had already commenced. But some evidence suggests that she was never entirely comfortable with her decision to partition her books into separate domains of inquiry. Indeed, to reinforce the binary oppositions of public and private, description and narration, serious thought and light reading, was to subvert one of Martineau's central missions in all of her work on America—to argue that Morals, a feminine domain, was not just compatible with the scientific method, but that it depended upon it. To appreciate the extent to which Martineau's sociological study of America lent credence to this argument entails looking first at her methodological assumptions.

Martineau wrote *How to Observe Morals and Manners* to detail what she regarded as the "philosophical," "moral," and "mechanical" requisites to social study. Her intention was to lend to the study of morals and manners the weight of science, and by implication of public, masculine, and serious discourse. As she argues in the opening section, "In physical science, great results may be obtained by haphazard experiments; but this is not the case in Morals" (23). The gist of this sentence sets the stage for the entire treatise. Throughout the work, Martineau peppers her discussion with comparisons between the work of the traveler and other "scientists," among them the geologist and the physiognomist. She rhetorically equates morals with other areas of scientific inquiry and goes one step further by suggesting that the student of morals in fact requires more rigor, discipline, and systematic method than does the physical scientist. Martineau's strategy is simple. She wanted to map out an area of inquiry for which

she as a woman is uniquely qualified, and she wanted that area to have the same credentials, to be as legitimate, as those from which she would by virtue of her gender be disqualified. To accomplish this end, she proceeds throughout her work on the assumption that travel is scientific investigation. She notes, for example, that "Above all things, the traveller must not despair of good results from his observations" (20). She speaks of the institutions within a social system as "agents . . . known in the gross" and writes: "it is not their nature, but the proportions in which they are combined, which have to be ascertained" (24). Later in her treatise she notes:

> A traveller must inquire for any public registers which may exist in all districts, and note and reflect upon the facts he finds there. In case of there being none such, it is possible that the physicians of the district may be able to afford information from private documents of the same nature. If not, there remain cemeteries. (171)

Using the language of science enables Martineau to represent America as a laboratory, the Americans as subjects, and, most importantly, her project as professional work. The traveler who aspires to Martineau's ideals is not just systematic, but also untiring, relentless, ardent.

Martineau not only wanted to establish the import of travel as investigation, but also to suggest that by implication the woman travel writer was performing a useful function and that her work was both necessary and consequential. To her, the critical work of the investigative travel writer was to provide data—data that others were perhaps more qualified to interpret. In her avowal that "every observer and recorder is fulfilling a function," for example, one can sense the boundaries of Martineau's theory of the function of the investigative traveler. As a contributing member of his or her society's intellectual community, the traveler that Martineau delineates in *How to Observe Morals and Manners* fulfills an ancillary role, one that serves, not directs, social progress. Thus, she believes that "it ought to be an animating thought to a traveller that, even if it be not in his power to settle any one point respecting the morals and manners of an empire, he can infallibly aid in supplying means of approximation to truth" (21). Although couching her comments in the form of inspirational message, she was also arguing for the fundamental value of auxiliary work. She wanted to ensure a place for the work of the woman traveler within the field of sociology.

Having implicitly established the act of travel as systematic investigation, Martineau positions morals as the essence of democracy: "It is the traveller's business to learn what is the species of Moral Sentiment which lies deepest in the hearts of the majority of the people" (113). It follows from her argument that morals, as the center of democracy, are the supreme object of scientific inquiry in democratic society: "To test the morals and manners of a nation by a reference to the essentials of human happiness, is to strike at once to the centre, and to see things as they are" (26).

Although never explicitly saying so, Martineau's supposition is that women, as both guardians of and experts in the moral, are singularly qualified to be investigative travelers. Consider, for example, the way in which she justifies her contention that the ideal traveler approach everything encountered

with sympathy. Without sympathy, she argues:

> He will be amused with public spectacles, and informed of historical and chronological facts; but he will not be invited to weddings and christenings; he will hear no love-tales; domestic sorrows will be kept as secrets from him; the old folks will not pour out their stories to him, nor the children bring him their prattle. (54)

Martineau's point is less that the ideal traveler must be female than that the domestic sphere to which she pays tribute is the essence of society, and hence that no social scientist can call his or her study authoritative without having fully investigated the domestic.

Martineau invokes two voices of authority throughout *How to Observe Morals and Manners*. She legitimizes morals by virtue of their status as supreme objects of scientific inquiry and positions travel as the appropriate medium through which inquiry should take place. By pursuing this argument through the rhetoric of science, Martineau in essence validates it; the credibility of her argument derives from the status accorded by her culture to discourse considered public, rational, and male. At the same time, though, she redirects the weight of her argument toward the feminine. She centers morals as the object of her investigation and implies that women bring to the inquiry a level of understanding many believed to be exclusive to their gender. Throughout the work, her argument proceeds upon the assumption that these two directions are theoretically compatible. Both *Society in America* and *Retrospect of Western Travel* were, in a sense, Martineau's testing of her own hypotheses.

The identity Martineau sought to establish with *Society in America* is evident in the way she introduces her mission: "I determined to go to the United States, chiefly because I felt a strong curiosity to witness the actual workings of republican institutions" (50). By explaining her attraction to America as one of intellectual curiosity, she unwittingly aligns her motives to those of Tocqueville, who had traveled to the United States just one year ahead of her. In the first of his two-part *Democracy in America*,[6] Tocqueville explains the predispositions that he took abroad: "In America I saw more than America; I sought there the image of democracy itself, with its inclinations, its characters, its prejudices, and its passions, in order to learn what we have to fear or to hope from its progress" (15). His remarks provide instructive insight into the kind of liberty he enjoyed as a male travel writer visiting America at almost the same time as Martineau. He enjoys the imaginative flexibility to move his focus from the actualities of democracy to their more emotional counterparts—inclination, prejudice, and passion. Martineau, on the other hand, is more insistent upon the necessity of paying attention to the everyday, the "actual workings" of the democratic experiment. Her concern is founded on an assumption that the traveler who aspires to pronounce a theory of the society she visits must protect herself from just the sort of predisposition

that Tocqueville readily admits to. As she cautions in *How to Observe Morals and Manners*, "The traveller must deny himself all indulgence of peremptory decision, not only in public on his return, but in his journal, and in his most superficial thoughts" (17). Martineau's approach to travel is excessive in its asceticism and reflects more than her professed concern to enunciate the "science" of observation. One can sense in such comments a fear of the impressionistic, the immediate, the spontaneous. These and other qualities—the prejudices and passions that Tocqueville admits to—are anathema to Martineau, both because they fall short of the scientific standards she believes she should stand by and because she believed they would implicate her position as a woman.

Society in America was to be Martineau's exercise in applying the principles of observation she had sketched out in *How to Observe Morals and Manners*. What is most noteworthy about this inquiry is that she attempts to maintain the balance between the rational observer who systematically examines American society to obtain "results" and the investigator who relies upon her familiarity with the domestic to give the fullest and most accurate account of the country's moral essence. Aware that her gender would compromise rather than enhance her authority, she writes:

> I am sure I have seen much more of domestic life than could possibly have been exhibited to any gentlemen traveling through the country. The nursery, the boudoir, the kitchen, are all excellent schools in which to learn the morals and manners of a people: and, as for public and professional affairs, those may always gain full information upon such matters, who really feel an interest in them,—be they men or women. (Lipset 53)

In part Martineau protests too much. Her need to defend herself in anticipation of rather than in reaction to criticism reflects a certain fear of the very domesticity that she claims to appreciate. In characteristic fashion, though, she overcomes her own hesitation within the same breath. She brings America's standards of free and open inquiry to her own defense, arguing that her authority extended equally in both public and private directions.

Martineau follows the standards she had elaborated in *How to Observe Morals and Manners* in other ways as well. To accommodate her belief that "the institutions of a nation" and "records of any society" both "afford more information on Morals," she took on an exhausting and stringent schedule of activities while abroad. In the introduction to *Society in America* she provides her readers with evidence of the breadth of her experiences:

> In the course of this tour, I visited almost every kind of institution. The prisons of Auburn, Philadelphia, and Nashville: the insane and other hospitals of almost every considerable place; the literary and scientific institutions; the factories of the north; the plantations of the south; the farms

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[6]In an essay in *Reconsidering Tocqueville's "Democracy in America"*, Robert Nisbet reports that Tocqueville refused to read Martineau's *Society in America*, published three years before the second portion of his work.

of the west. I lived in houses which might be called palaces, in log-houses, and in a farm-house. I travelled much in wagons, as well as stages; also on horseback, and in some of the best and worst steam boats. I saw weddings, and christenings; the gatherings of the richer at watering places and of the humbler at country festivals. I was present at orations, at land sales, and in the slave market. I was in frequent attendance on the Supreme Court and the Senate. Above all, I was received into the bosom of many families, not as a stranger, but as a daughter or sister. (52-53)

By providing her readers with a condensed inventory of her experiences, Martineau argues that her authority derives from the extent to which she investigated all facets of society. The best traveler, she reasons, is the most democratic traveler—the one as comfortable in the presence of the humble as the rich, the one as concerned with the goings on at the slave market as the Supreme Court. Yet, as with so many of her observations, she steers her reader toward a recognition of the value that she brought to the investigation as a woman. The last "institution" she catalogs is the domestic sphere; there, "above all," she is received "as a daughter or sister." In *Society in America*, as in *How to Observe Morals and Manners*, Martineau makes her authority depend equally on her ability to play the detached observer of society and the daughter or sister who warms her way into the homes and hearts of the families who greet her.

It would do Martineau's efforts as investigative author of *Society in America* and narrator in *Retrospect of Western Travel* a disservice to imply that her agenda as a working woman was limited to finding a place for the domestic within the developing discourse(s) of sociology. Rather she sought to represent morals as the all-encompassing context within which to place sociological or political investigation. Although her contemporary Frances Trollope chose to refrain from overt political commentary, Martineau structures her study around it. *Society in America* investigates what she calls "the morals of politics," an orientation which leads her to such topics as "newspapers," "apathy in citizenship," "allegiance to law," "citizenship of people of colour," and "the political non-existence of women." By rewriting the political as the moral, she appropriates these and other sensitive topics for her own use.

In both *Society in America* and *Retrospect of Western Travel*, Martineau sought to represent herself as a public spokesperson for democratic values; the oppressed position of women as democratic citizens was one of several issues on which she spoke and wrote eloquently. She made her voice heard in America. In one of the most vivid and theatrical essays of *Retrospect of Western Travel*, for example, she recounts for her readers an episode in which she magnanimously took the stage in defense of the abolitionist movement—amidst a crowd of angry listeners. In "Signs of the Times in Massachusetts" she appropriates Carlyle's language to her own use, clearly reveling in the role of the passionate defender of the oppressed. Remembering the motives that prompted her rise to the occasion, Martineau ruminates:

If I had been a mere stranger, attending with a mere stranger's interest to the proceedings of a party of natives, I might and ought to have declined mixing myself up with their proceedings. But I had long before published against slavery, and always declared my conviction that this was a question of humanity . . . . Having thus declared on the safe side of the Atlantic, I was bound to act up to my declaration on the unsafe side." (163)

Martineau collapses the boundaries between objective data gatherer and humanitarian emissary and in doing so takes recourse to both her humanitarian convictions and her status as a published opponent of slavery. Although she chastises America as "the unsafe side" on which to proclaim her position, she clearly feels authorized to do so. Here, as elsewhere, she willingly—even eagerly—assumes public responsibility for her public writings. In *Retrospect of Western Travel* she recounts her "First Sight of Slavery" and concludes: "I . . . was glad that my having published against its principles divested me altogether of the character of a spy, and gave me an unquestioned liberty to publish the results of what I might observe" (140). Here she openly embraces the "cultural capital" her published work has brought her, using its authority to legitimize her status as an investigative traveler. She is as much reminiscing about how she felt at the time of her "first sight" as reminding her readers of her authority as a professional working woman, authority that she intends to extend in new, more political directions.

One of the most compelling reasons that Martineau felt appalled with American slavery was that she saw it as analogous to America's treatment of women. American women and slaves were akin in that their status as democratic citizens was withheld. In *Society in America* she dismisses many of the issues with regard to the position of slaves in American society with the following: "The common argument, about the inferiority of the coloured race, bears no relation whatever to this question. They are citizens" (100). To Martineau, the black woman was doubly oppressed. In *Retrospect of Western Travel* she finds "something inexpressibly disgusting in the sight of a slave woman in the field" (218). Elaborating on her reaction, she writes: "I do not share the horror of the Americans at the idea of a woman being employed in outdoor labour . . . . But a negro woman behind the plough presents a very different object from the English mother with her children in the turnip-field, or the Scotch lassie among the reapers" (218).

To address more fully the analogy, she devotes a section of *Society in America* on "the political non-existence of women" to a comparison between the condition of women and slaves in the United States. Though Martineau pays homage to the middle-class domestic ideal in much of her work, her impulse to conformity was almost always at odds with what Deirdre David labels her "spirited confrontation of male privilege" (32). Nowhere was this impulse so tried as when she was abroad; in America and elsewhere she saw and felt acutely the limited power of women to voice their opinions, to exercise their minds. America everywhere offered evidence of its failure to live up to the principles of equality on which the country was founded. After accusing America of having "fallen below" the standards of "the Old World," Martineau

scathingly writes:

While woman's intellect is confined, her morals crushed, her health ruined, her weaknesses encouraged, and her strength punished, she is told that her lot is cast in the paradise of women: and there is not a country in the world where there is so much boasting of the chivalrous treatment she enjoys. (291)

She notes further that America, like England, has created a situation in which marriage is the only reasonable "occupation" available to women and concludes that in America "the morals of women are crushed" (Lipset 293).

Here, as elsewhere, Martineau was careful to place her highly charged polemic in the context of the moral investigation that she was presumably conducting. Though she claims to have exposed herself to a wide range of American people and institutions in conducting her study, she in fact draws upon those institutions and people selectively. In *How to Observe Morals and Manners* she asserts "that the Marriage compact is the most important feature of the domestic state on which the observer can fix his attention" (172). Although she couches her claim in the language of science, she does little to hide her predisposition "If he be a thinker, he will not be surprised at finding much imperfection in the marriage state wherever he goes" (173). Similarly, in the portion of *Society in America* devoted to a study of "Civilisation," Martineau chooses as her focal points the "Idea of Honour," "Woman," "Children," "Sufferers," and "Utterance." Women, children, and sufferers were all, to Martineau, special populations whose lack of "utterance," or liberty of speech—and, by implication, power—reflected poorly upon that civilization's idea of honor.

To Martineau, all of America's great expectations were centered in its promise to give it citizens the power to express themselves. The judgment that she, in the end, renders ("The civilisation and the morals of the Americans fall far below their own principles") was in large measure due to what she saw as its failure to live up to its promise, the promise to grant all citizens—men and women, blacks and whites—utterance. As a deaf woman, she felt more acutely than most the necessity of this power, and, to pay homage to its personal significance, claimed in a self-prepared obituary: "Her stimulus in all she wrote from first to last, was simply the need for utterance."[7] She began her work on America assuming that its authority would derive from one voice, the voice of the social investigator who knew how and what to observe. But in the end America inspired in her not one but many voices, and her authority derived less from the dominance of one than from the skill with which she projected many. In creating a sociology that allowed for—indeed demanded—an interplay of voices, Martineau's project provided a paradigm on which future women sociologists (e. g., Emily Faithfull and Beatrice Webb) sought to build.

It is worthwhile in this regard to note that Harriet

Martineau was also prompted by her experiences in America to rethink the assumptions of separate spheres. In her examination of the position of American women in *Society in America*, she writes:

The truth is, that while there is much said about "the sphere of woman," two widely different notions are entertained of what is meant by the phrase. The narrow, and, to the ruling party, the more convenient notion, is that sphere appointed by men, and bounded by their ideas of propriety;—a notion from which any and every woman may fairly dissent. The broad and true conception is of the sphere appointed by God, and bounded by the powers which he has bestowed. This commands the assent of man and woman; and only the question of powers remains to be proved. (154)

Martineau legitimizes her reinterpretation of separate spheres by positioning it as that "appointed by God." She believes in a conception of womanhood that is broader—that allows for a wider range of interpretation—than that under which she currently lives. What is equally interesting to consider, though, is that she embeds her speculation on the highly controversial issue of separate spheres within her social investigation of America. That she does so is to an extent a reflection of the flexibility of travel writing to encompass a variety to narrative strategies and narrative voices. It also suggests, though, that she found in travel to America the liberty not just to open herself up to the new, but also to reconsider the old. She made in America a declaration of independence not just for herself but for all women—really for all men and women.

Harriet Martineau redirected her travel account from a record of private experience into a document of public study, a declaration of her independence from the ideologies that positioned her as a woman and writer outside of social study. She found within the discourse of sociology the capacity to cultivate—and market—a professional self, and though the process entailed a good deal of what one might call "gender anxiety," the experience ultimately proved liberating. The study of society enabled her to see more clearly the extent to which she was a product of society—and to see her womanhood as at least in part socially, not essentially, constructed. Doing so opened new ground for alternate readings—of America, of society, and of herself.

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[7]To Martineau "utterance" was also connected to her sense of self control. Thinking that she was going to die, she prepared her obituary for the *Daily News* nearly twenty years before she actually did pass away. It is a measure of how much "utterance" meant to her that she kept what she had originally written and insisted that it be used.

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Thomas Hardy's *A Pair of Blue Eyes*: The Heroine as Text

Jo Devereux

Hardy's third published novel, *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, marked several important beginnings for him. It was the first of his novels to be published in serial form, the first to appear under his own name, and—I believe—the first to deal with the problems specifically associated with writing by men about women. Although his two previously published novels, *Desperate Remedies* (1871) and *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872), also involve female protagonists, neither concerns itself with the problems of writing about women to the extent that *A Pair of Blue Eyes* and the later novels, especially *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, do. Simon Gatrell has noted the suspicious and fearful attitude toward women in the pastoral idyll *Under the Greenwood Tree*; in that novel women are almost invariably referred to as mysterious and dangerous beings who embody some sort of threat to men: "Shall anything saucier be found than united 'ooman?" (44) and "Doom is nothing beside a elderly woman" (99) are examples of comments by the male characters about their female adversaries (as they see them) (Gatrell xix). This attitude of distrust undergoes some revision in *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, and this process of revision may account for some of the novel's unsureness of tone and direction.

While Hardy could put these sentiments of distrust into the mouths of rustics in *Under the Greenwood Tree*—people who were essentially *not like* his audience of educated readers—in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* this distrust is transmuted into a radical disjunction between educated male observers and female subject of observation. In an article entitled "Geographies of Hardy's Wessex," John Barrell examines the disjunction between the experience of place of the educated, middle class narrators of *Tess* and of *The Return of the Native*, and that of the characters who are represented, observed features *in* the scene, as well as observers *of* that scene. In *A Pair of Blue Eyes* a dislocation occurs between the position of the active male figures—including the narrator—as observers of the limited, childish heroine and her position as passive object or figure of observation which is external to and "other" than the male observers in the novel. Elfride's inferior status as other, as the property of one male or another, is evident in her relationship with her father and with her two rival suitors, Stephen Smith and Henry Knight, none of whom sees her as a thinking and independent individual; and her relationship with Knight is further complicated by his self-consciousness as both lover of Elfride and writer about her.

Knight's relationship with Elfride actually begins in print, in his scathing and ideologically determined review of her pseudonymously published novel, *The Court of King Arthur's Castle: A Romance of Lyonesse*, by Ernest Field. This review is particularly revealing of Knight's own position in what it singles out for praise in Elfride's romance: "where matters of domestic experience, and the natural touches which make people real, can be introduced without anachronisms too striking, she is occasionally felicitous" (165). Knight manages at once to damn the book with faint praise and to put its (obviously) feminine author in her place. In his view, Elfride is not to be the creator of her own fictions, but the passive receptacle of his. The appearance of this early Hardy novel well before the emergence of the "New Woman" on the literary scene tends to preclude Hardy's exploration of the problem of women in the working literary world. It is perhaps for this reason that Elfride's "effusion" is a strictly amateur affair, something that "young ladies" may be allowed to recreate themselves with harmlessly. Nevertheless it seems enough of a threat in its naive way to cause Knight to write his patronizing and defensively motivated review.

What Knight chiefly fears is not however an intellectual challenge, but the potentially disruptive power of Elfride's female sexuality. As his relationship with her shifts from print into "life," his sexual repression and moral fastidiousness, proleptic of Angel Clare's difficulties in *Tess*, cause him to project his own vision of a virginal Eve onto Elfride, who is apparently the only available vestal known to him. Once he sees her as fallen, however, she becomes an evil seductress: "Having now seen himself mistaken in supposing Elfride to be peerless, nothing on earth could make him believe she was not so very bad after all" (390). Knight's difficulty in accepting or even comprehending Elfride's transgression lies not only in his wholehearted espousal of the mid-Victorian double standard (after all, he is pure himself), but also in an obsessive desire to be the first and only man to possess Elfride. When Knight confesses himself "distracted by discovering [that his] idol was second-hand" (366), he reveals the extent to which he is distanced from Elfride, at the same time as he betrays his desire to appropriate and dominate her. In this he is like Angel, seeing one woman before knowing of her past, and another when that past is revealed to him: "You were one person;" says Angel to Tess after her confession, "now you are another" (*Tess* 292). Like Angel, Knight sees the woman he loves as entirely different as soon as he discovers her previous indiscretion, although in Knight's case, he is imposing a conjectural interpretation upon Elfride's words and inferring conclusions about her conduct from her silence, conclusions that have no basis in fact.

The alteration in Knight's feelings and his belief that the former Elfride has ceased to exist the moment her "impurity" is discovered forcefully suggest his reliance upon a male and textual construct of the ideal woman. Because the Elfride produced by the text does not match his own reading of woman, she must be put down, suppressed, or at the very least, avoided and forgotten. As far as Knight is concerned, Elfride's history is to become a blank to him, seeing that he has no place in it. His inability to allow her even to have a past which is distinct from and independent of himself and his violent reaction to her confession of having an earlier lover (or two) demonstrate just how far he is from any real human relationship with her. In fact, Knight's pathological concern with Elfride's virginity—to the point where he can't even accept her having kissed other men before knowing him—is an interesting problem in itself. Elfride actually tries to save him through her own healthy sexuality, in the famous cliff-hanging scene, when she significantly if somewhat absurdly uses her underclothes as a rope to pull him to safety. Unfortunately, though she succeeds in saving his life, she cannot save him from his own sexual repression nor herself from male oppression (Manford xv). As John Goode remarks, "It will take Hardy until *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* to find a heroine who can emerge from this narrative silencing of female sexuality" (10).

Unable to establish an equal relationship with Elfride, instead, Knight finds his own writings about women to be personified by her. The idea that he may in fact be projecting these written views onto the nearest convenient object never, of course, occurs to him:

> It was very odd to himself to look at his theories on the subject of love, and reading them now by the full light of a new experience, to see how much more his sentences meant than he had felt them to mean when they were written. People often discover the real force of a trite old maxim only when it is thrust upon them by chance adventure; but Knight had never before known the case of a man who learnt the full compass of his own epigrams by such means. (213)

Essentially it is the other way around: Knight reads his new experience by the light of his own epigrams. All before him seems to conform to his own prior understanding of women and love; wherever anything seems not to fit, such as Elfride's love of vain ornament, he simply ignores the anomaly or rationalizes it as charming female weakness, tending to support his vision of male superiority. Like Angel Clare in *Tess*, Knight is guilty of a kind of selfish naivete which refuses to see anything beyond the desired object, and like him, Knight draws upon literary models of women in such a way as to diminish their human worth and individuality to the point of nullity.

Moreover, Elfride, "so entirely had she sunk her individuality in his," devotes herself to Knight as to a creator. In spite of her valorizing of him, however, she innocently undercuts his own vision of himself as hero by making remarks about his bald spot and round shoulders, remarks which not only deflate his self-image, but also reveal the frightening possibilities of an unbiased look at Knight in all his potentially ludicrous and pathetic humanity. This turning of Knight's critical eye back on himself disturbs and unsettles his complacency as he worries about his own competence in reading women—texts which he believes will prove problematic when transformed from words into flesh. As the narrator comments, "[Knight] could pack [women] into sentences like a workman, but practically was nowhere" (193).

At the same time and in contrast to this, Elfride's inarticulateness dramatizes her enforced exclusion at the level of language from the "male" realms of thought and action. In speaking to Knight at one point she reveals her frustration due to her lack of adequate language to convey her thoughts:

> Because I utter commonplace words, you must not suppose I think commonplace thoughts. My poor stock of words are like a limited number of rough moulds I have to cast all my materials in, good and bad; and the novelty or delicacy of the substance is often lost in the coarse triteness of the form. (207)

Evidently, Elfride sees her own dilemma as originating in language. The same self-conscious concern with the suppression of female speaking appears again in *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874), the novel which immediately followed *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, where Bathsheba Everdene says, "It is difficult for a woman to define her feelings in language which is chiefly made by men to express theirs" (405).

Meanwhile, the language of the narrator of *A Pair of Blue Eyes* tends to construct Elfride as an observed subject and to invite the reader to join in the observation. This is done by isolating pieces of the heroine in the same way that one would isolate passages in a text. Even the initial description of Elfride encourages the reader to view her as a textual object, by focusing on the eponymous pair of blue eyes:

These eyes were blue; blue as autumn distance—blue as the blue we see between retreating mouldings of hills and woody slopes on a sunny September morning. A misty and shady blue, that had no beginning or surface, and was looked *into* rather than *at*. (1-2)

Like a text, Elfride is not to be read by her surface alone, but by the meanings which lie buried beneath that surface, which the ingenious reader may discover (or put there) himself. While the narrator presents one part of Elfride's anatomy as a kind of text open to interpretation, he also fixes the heroine at one particular moment in time:

Every woman who makes a permanent impression on a man is usually recalled to his mind's eye as she appeared in one particular scene which seems ordained to be her special form of manifestation throughout the pages of his memory. (18)

In this passage, woman is specifically imaged as text, and in this early novel, as in Hardy's late novel *The Well-Beloved*, the male character seeking the perfect object of his desire will find her embodied only in one fleeting moment, in one transitory manifestation. The well-beloved will be reduced to a purely fictive being, a fading picture of the past in the artist / observer's mind and, like a figure in a painting or a character in a book, an ultimately unpossessible and impenetrable object of desire.

If Elfride is reduced to a mysterious text open to male exegesis because of her gender, she is also to some extent reified as both market commodity and instrument of social-climbing because of her class. For example, although Stephen respects Elfride more than Knight does, his respect is based almost entirely on her social status relative to his. As Michael Millgate points out, "Neither Stephen nor Knight in fact wants Elfride for herself . . . . Each seeks an adjunct to his own personality: Stephen a Queen, Knight a maiden of spotless purity" (76). As far as Elfride's own economic and social position goes, we can see that at the opening of the novel, Elfride, though very young, is approaching the age when a woman of the middle class must find herself a suitable husband and respectable "settlement." Stephen's mother acerbically comments upon the situation of most women in Elfride's class at that time:

Every woman now-a-days, . . . if she marry at all, must expect a father-in-law of a rank lower than her father. The men have gone up so, and the women have stood still. (99)

Essentially, Elfride occupies the same position on the social scale as Mercy Chant in *Tess*, which means that she has some social height to fall from. The scope of her marital choice is therefore very limited, and she is in danger of "standing still," as Mrs. Smith would say, or even going down if she marries Stephen, unless her father's ambitiousness wins the day, as of course it does. She is, in fact, little more than a commercial property to be sold to the highest bidder in the eyes of her father, perhaps the most unappealing clergyman in all English fiction: "With your good looks," Mr. Swancourt tells her, "if

you now play your cards well, you may marry anybody. Of course, a little contrivance will be necessary; but there's nothing to stand between you and a husband with a title, that I can see. Lady Luxellian was only a squire's daughter" (134-35).

In marrying Lord Luxellian, a man who, unlike Knight, is frankly attracted to her and, unlike Stephen, is her superior in rank, Elfride would seem to be fulfilling her function as a romantic heroine as well as a nineteenth-century middle class woman. (Certainly she has progressed in her suitors, from "smith" to "knight" to "lord.") Yet this ominously foreshadowed match actually ends up killing her. The resilience which the narrator speaks of so ambivalently at several points in the novel fails her in this virtually suicidal marriage to Lord Luxellian. Seen throughout in very mid-Victorian terms as a kind of "child-mother," Elfride ultimately cannot fulfill her fictive biological function. Her death at the end of the novel may indicate Hardy's awareness of the fictional bind in which he has placed his heroine: that is, that nineteenth-century morality dictated that any woman who strayed, however slightly, from the path of propriety must pay the price in order to maintain the status quo of a stable society. Unlike Tess, Elfride cannot be permitted to survive her early indiscretion, even thought hers is no real indiscretion at all, only an assumed one. Lacking the vitality of a Daisy Miller, Elfride is nevertheless equally innocent and misunderstood.

The story of Elfride's death, told retrospectively by her maid, appears, like Tess's, to be ordained by fate in the shape of popular legend: Elfride seems predestined to act out her part in fulfilling a local legend, as is made evident by her similarity to Lady Luxellian and to the erstwhile Lady Elfride, whose fate was so eerily similar to her own. Again reified to the level of commodity, Elfride is finally seen as the common property not of a private textual world, but of public oral tradition. Even before her death she is spoken of by the other characters in terms of those women who went before her. This kind of literary determinism, if we may call it so, also appears in *Tess*, for example in the d'Urberville legend, but then with many more mitigating factors. In *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, Elfride's death and the close of the novel may seem contrived and poorly handled; however, the final treatment of the heroine is interesting in the shift from the gently tragic or even nostalgic story of her death to the almost farcical and grotesque behavior of Stephen Smith and Knight. The two men carry on their rivalry even after her death, arguing about who was the first to win her love, all the while riding in the same train in which, unbeknownst to them, the dead Elfride in her coffin is traveling to her final resting place. While it may be reaching too far for excuses for the weaknesses in this early Hardy novel, it seems not entirely far-fetched to suggest that Hardy was actually experimenting here with various narrative and generic strategies. In fact, Hardy's narratives often develop along these self-consciously artificial lines, especially though not exclusively in novels such as this one, subsumed under the heading of "Romances and Fantasies" in the Wessex Edition of 1912. It is this self-reflexive aspect of Hardy's narrative, combined with his concern with the relations between men and women, and between the male novelist and his female subject, that leads him in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* to explore the idea of the heroine as text.

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King's College

New Light on Arthur Hugh Clough's Eight-Year Poetic Silence

Janice E. Keller

Frederick L. Mulhauser's *The Correspondence of Arthur Hugh Clough* has been a foundation of Clough scholarship since its publication in 1957. In his introduction Mulhauser cites two stressful periods of Clough's life as those in which most of his major poetry was written, 1839-40 and 1849-51, the first during his undergraduate years at Balliol College, Oxford, the second while he was struggling to find a professional career (1: xvi). However, a third period of stress, which Mulhauser seems to misinterpret, occurred in 1852-53. In that period, in addition to the problem of finding employment, Clough found himself embroiled in a difficult courtship with Blanche Smith, whom he eventually married. Except for some conventional lyrics to Blanche, little poetry resulted from this stressful time, and up to now no satisfactory explanation for this lapse has been put forward.

In his introduction Mulhauser regards Clough's relationship with Blanche Smith as untroubled, and his choice of excerpts from Clough's and Blanche's letters almost fully supports this viewpoint. However, the full correspondence between Clough and Blanche shows a shifting pattern of attraction and retreat between them. Furthermore, an analysis of the manuscript letters, now in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, shows that Mulhauser, perhaps unintentionally, spliced two letters into one in a way that does not reflect the actual relationship of the two at this time. Mulhauser also seemed not to realize, along with other Clough scholars, that an 1853 letter to Blanche, from which Mulhauser gives an excerpt, helps to explain Clough's inability to write poetry during the period from May, 1853, until just before his death in November, 1861.

Clough's eight-year silence lasted more than one-third of his adult life, dating his maturity, as Clough did, from the age of 20. This period of silence, in a poet who had been so prolific that in his 42 years he wrote almost as many lines of poetry as his friend Matthew Arnold did in his 66 years, has intrigued almost all writers on Clough. Lytton Strachey blamed Florence Nightingale, whom Clough helped from

1857 to 1859 to produce her report on improving army medical practices, portraying her as an unmerciful taskmistress (169-82). Robindra Biswas conjectures that Clough's avoidance after 1853 of any intellectual work more demanding than reading newspapers, writing impersonal letters to his friends, and drudgery for Florence Nightingale served to sublimate undesired sexual thoughts (443-61). Chorley attributes Clough's silence to unspecified personal tensions which led to his acting as factotum to Miss Nightingale (318). However, blaming Miss Nightingale does not account for Clough's poetic silence from 1853 to 1857.

Clough's poetry, as we know, explored, often satirically, contemporary religious and social problems, including the role of women and the alienation of the intellectual in a mercantile age. Sometime in 1850 he met Blanche Smith, the eldest child of Samuel Smith, a wealthy Unitarian of Combe Hurst, Surrey.[1] Clough had just published two volumes of poetry, *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich* in 1848, and, with Thomas Burbidge, a Rugby friend, *Ambarvalia* in 1849.

Eighteen fifty was a low point in Clough's life. He was unhappy with his position as principal of University Hall, a residence for students at University College, London, recently founded by the Unitarians and Presbyterians, finding that the requirement of religious conformity which had caused him to give up his Oxford fellowship had only been metamorphosed from Anglican to dissenting orthodoxy. Further, after eleven years as undergraduate, fellow, and tutor at Oxford, Clough missed the intellectual life and his friends at the older university. While he was expansive and articulate with old friends, he found himself shy, reserved and often lonely in London society. Nevertheless his two years at University Hall were productive of some of Clough's best poetry: *Amours de Voyage*, written during his 1849 stay in Rome at the time of the short-lived Mazzini republic, and *Dipsychus*, in which a fastidious young English intellectual in Venice is tempted by a worldly alter ego. Seeking more congenial employment, Clough first vainly tried to obtain a post in a new college pro-

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[1] Clough was introduced to Blanche Smith by Richard Monckton Milnes, author, politician, friend of Tennyson and Thackeray and, for nine years, a suitor of Florence Nightingale. Ironically, Milnes was also a collector of erotica.

posed for Dublin and then, in late 1851, became a candidate for the positions of principal and classics professor at a college in Sydney. The prospect of putting half the globe between him and his friends and family seemed to have been the catalyst in his relations with Miss Smith. The correspondence between Clough and Blanche starts off at the point when he is waiting to hear from the college in Australia. On Clough's part the correspondence is from the first passionate, headlong, and so uncharacteristically candid that he expresses his hesitancies and hostilities. While initially formal—addressing him for the first few months mostly as "Dear Mr. Clough"—and puzzled by his epistolary barrage, Blanche shortly was equally, and devastatingly, honest.

Blanche Mary Shore Smith came from a family which moved in the highest social circles in England. She was a double first cousin of Florence Nightingale, her mother being Florence Nightingale's redoubtable "Aunt Mai," who accompanied her niece to Turkey during the Crimean War. Blanche herself was more conventional. A traditional upper-middle class Victorian daughter, she dutifully obeyed her parents, travelling with them even after her marriage to Clough. However, Blanche had a firm sense of her own importance. A short "chronology" of her life which she sent Clough in March, 1853, shows that as a child she was spirited and self-willed. The contrast between Blanche's willfulness between the ages of seven and nine and Clough's premature seriousness at the same age is marked. Blanche at that age: "Once stole a gingerbread out of a shop; another time struck a respectable governess . . . Used to enjoy life pretty well on the whole . . ." (Mulhauser 2: 619). Clough, however, under the age of ten refused to remove his shoes and stockings at the beach and join his brothers and sister in paddling in the water.

As an adult Blanche was, behind a facade of traditional female passivity, both strong-willed and competent. While during their courtship Blanche was loath to follow Clough's urging that she practice translating the French historian Guizot, in the years following Clough's death she not only edited his works, arranged for their publication, and wrote a memoir of him, but she also published her translation of Jacob Burckhardt's *The Cicerone*.

By failing to include a representative selection of the letters which show Clough, possibly unconsciously, attempting to extricate himself from his engagement to Blanche, Mulhauser allies himself with the bulk of Clough criticism. Most of the extensive commentary published on Clough since his death has tended to accept Blanche's rather self-serving account of Clough's relationship with her, based mainly on the memoir she wrote for the 1869 *Poems and Prose Remains of Arthur Hugh Clough*, which she edited with the aid of John Addington Symonds. Only a few critics, such as Dennis Enright, have doubted that Clough unhesitatingly embraced matrimony, and Blanche. But a close look in the Bodleian at the stiff ecru-tinted sheets of the letters which Clough and Blanche wrote in England and the flimsy blue tissue on which

Clough, in America, scribbled both horizontally and vertically—"crossing" to save paper—shows Clough as highly ambivalent about marrying Blanche and Blanche as initially cool but ultimately determined to possess her evasive suitor.[2]

In the first letter, on December 30, 1851, Clough tells Blanche: "You must not believe me too much . . . I do talk too pretty when I am sitting by you. . . . I was given to that vice. . . and then took to holding my tongue . . . . You must let me say bad things when with you, to make sure of my not saying them when I leave you—for I have a most terrible reluctance to give pain . . . ." By "bad things" Clough presumably means those words which Blanche regarded as too explicitly sexual. He jokes that it was the "devil" which prompted him during a recent walk to say a word to her from which she recoiled, but, more seriously, he explains that the cause of his offense is their age difference. "At the age of 33 men are to [sic] bad, and at 23 girls are so unprepared for it." He asks Blanche whether she wants him to address her as he had spoken during their walk or in "the sycophantic, wheedling, caressing, self-bepraising tone more familiar to you? It is because you will hate all this that I write it." He adds a postscript, "There my dear Blanche, I have kissed the paper that is to go to you. What other piece of sentimentality could I commit?" The next day he again apologizes for having shocked her and, alluding to the story of the Gadarene swine, assures her he has "exorcised the ill spirit though this kind cometh not out in a hurry and I have been sitting among the tombs and in desert places pretty well two years now," a reference undoubtedly to his two years at University Hall.

In Blanche's first note, dated January 1st, she apologizes for having scolded him. "I may have been too hard in giving you such a bitter return for your honesty." He replies the same day that she *was* "too hard," but insists that even if she or all other womankind together cast him off he does not care.

> I ask no girl to be my friend that we may be a fond foolish couple together all in all each to the other. I will ask no one to put off her individuality for me; nor will I, weak and yielding as I am, if I can help it, put off mine for anyone. We are companions—fellow labourers—to the end of our journey here . . . . (qtd. in Mulhauser 2: 301)

Then Clough's honesty is only too revealing: "Don't be frightened, for I am a horrid coward at bottom, and you will be able to hen-peck me in no time." But immediately he reverses field and lashes out at her. He would not have written so "fiercely" if her letter had not upset him. He thinks she denies the doctrine of "fellow service" and prefers sentimental love, which he abhors. "It was the thought, I think, that you denied this doctrine . . . which made me write the other sheets [defending himself and reproaching her for rebuking him]—and made me do much more than that, let me tell you, but what, I will not tell you . . . ." But introspective honesty leads him to all but tell her.

If you will not look at things in this way . . . I must even go my ways and seal myself up again. Was it this thought do you think or mortified vanity that made me after writing these 2 sheets go up and down the dark walk in St. James Park three-quarters of an hour or more tonight doing what I have hardly done since the year 1837?

While the implication of his soliciting a prostitute is inescapable, what is less clear is whether or not he expected sheltered, highly proper Blanche to catch his meaning. At any rate she seems not to have done so.[3]

The next day Clough admits to Blanche that he doubts as to whether they should marry and insists that every man contemplating marriage has such doubts. "If I have been ashamed to conceal mine from you, is that an insult to you? I think not."

After Clough was rejected for the Sydney post—his Oriel College provost would not recommend him because of his religious skepticism—Clough admits to Blanche that before he had applied for the position he had planned a solitary life in order to achieve "elevated action." But even though his purpose in approaching her has vanished, he still wants a life with her. He starkly explains in his Feb. 7th letter, "There has never been in my whole life . . . *any act* of mine, sealing either friendship or love." A month later he writes her that he fears that, in his anxiety to win her before going to Sydney, he was "somewhat brutal" toward her in his "precipitation and necessity."

However, despite impassioned, almost daily, letters to Blanche, Clough characteristically draws back. On Feb. 19th he suggests she might find someone else and states that: "I, for my part, *look about* but do not, *yet* see anybody . . . who . . . may understand things in me better than . . . ." and he trails off. Unsurprisingly, in her answer to this, Blanche writes flatly: "I don't know why I always feel spiteful when I write to you." Clough is not deterred. He concludes a letter: "When you next dislike me mind and let me know. Ever yours all the same AHC."

In general, though, Blanche seems content to play the role that the early Victorians assigned to unmarried, middle-class young women: naive, pious, passive, childlike, and, paradoxically, seeking guidance from males and acting as their moral guides.[4]

Although Clough is wildly miscast in the part of masterful male, he attempts to fill the role, addressing her as "my dear child" and pretending to chide himself for not preferring her cousin Florence Nightingale, who is "more sensible and practical (and indeed! more generally intelligent) than B. M. S. S." Ironically Florence is the Victorian woman probably most frequently cited as the antithesis of paradigmatic Victorian femininity. Even more ironic is Blanche's attempt to reverse Clough's dislike of Florence—he found her too intellectual and hard—in light of his later selfless, and self-

destroying, overwork for Florence's proposals to reform British military medical practices.

Blanche, unlike Florence, observes the conventions assigned to early Victorian women. She writes to Clough:

> I always wanted somebody else to do for me, to teach me and keep me up, and punish me when I do wrong, instead of having to do it wearily oneself. While you do some of that for me, dear—I know it is childish, but there, you know, that is a settled thing . . . I like better to be comfortable than almost anything else is not that selfish . . . I am too lazy even to read, which is one reason why I never know anything . . . .

During an April, 1852, visit to Rugby, Clough first jocularly notes the resemblance between the local geological formations and the appearance of the peasantry and then pedantically remarks that place names ending in -by were of Norse derivation. "Read, my dear child, Yes, and elevate yourself now and then . . . ." Obviously unaware that he has been hectoring, he then asks innocently: "What is it that you sometimes feel spiteful at me about?" Her mocking response is to address him as "My dear old man."

Clough's tendency to quote himself—*Dipsychus* opens with lines from "Easter Day, Naples 1849"—appears in his correspondence with Blanche. In response to her questioning whether her "mysticism" repels him—it does not, but it does "pain" him—Clough writes: "It seems His newer will we should not think at all of Him, but [turn?] and of the world that He has given us make what best we may." This is, of course, almost word-for-word the religious philosophy of the eponymous hero of *Dipsychus* in Scene 10. 11-14.

A page later Clough is ironically skeptical and then breaks off as he realizes Blanche cannot follow him. "Good truth, I suppose, must relate to things in heavenly places and have no plain or intelligible reference to fact and reality . . . (no, it is a shame to taunt you with that!)." Soon after, in response to a letter in which Blanche asked what the "objects of life" were, Clough replies: "(a) work for others (b) personal relations and (c) making books, poems, music, etc." His role as a maker of poems seems to have been Clough's major attraction to Blanche. In an early April, 1852, letter in which she discusses a number of his published poems she for the first time calls him "my darling." By mid April Clough, who, up until then, had been unwilling to use the word "love," also has advanced to avowals, writing to her "I love you very much my dear child." (Clough's favorite pet name for Blanche is "dear child," and almost every letter closes with "God bless you, my dear child.")

Perhaps it is Blanche's increased ardor that sparks Clough's immediate retreat, or perhaps his own declaration of love frightened him. Whatever the reason, in mid-May (Mulhauser dates Clough's letter May 14th), Clough wrote Blanche

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[2] Except where noted, the sections of letters excerpted are not included in Mulhauser's *Correspondence*. While most are headed only by the day of the week, some can be dated by internal evidence. The excerpts appear in the chronological order determined by the Bodleian, which received the correspondence in 1959.

[3] In his introduction to *The Oxford Diaries of Arthur Hugh Clough*, Anthony Kennedy conjectures that obscure references in the diaries may indicate Clough had sexual relations with perhaps two country women living in towns near Oxford (lxiii).

[4] See essays in *Suffer and Be Still: Women in the Victorian Age*, ed. Martha Vicinus, especially the essay by Peter T. Cominos, and Nina Auerbach's *Women and the Demon: The Life of a Victorian Myth* 67-73. Also, in her multifarious writings, Blanche's friend Harriet Martineau frequently expressed the archetypal Victorian view that women were expected to set the pattern of morality and guide men.

to suggest they separate, citing his inability to find employment. While Mulhauser excerpts this letter, he does not mention its successor of the following day. In it Clough admits that his decision to write the previous day's letter, suggesting they separate, resulted from his discovering that the decision to marry was his and Blanche's—not her parents' as he had thought. "Do you not see too that it was not until I knew that your father and mother would leave it to us, that the question came properly before me?" This letter is followed in the manuscripts by the one Mulhauser dates as May 17th (2: 313). In it Clough asserts that he sought "life-companionship" with Blanche when he expected a "career"—in Sydney—but he no longer has that prospect. He holds out the chill hope that even if they are parted in this world they will be joined in some future existence and adds: "It is no selfish weariness of hoping against hope or prospects of other happiness, surely, that has led me thus far on the track that leads away . . . ." But here Mulhauser prints three sentences from a letter that was written on May 21st, according to a penciled notation, in which Clough announces that he is thinking of going to America. The unwarranted implication of Mulhauser's combining of the two disparate letters is that Clough's "track that leads away" takes him across the Atlantic to find a job so he can marry Blanche, which is not, in fact, the actual case.

The letters between the two conflated sections show Blanche skillfully trying to retain Clough and yet acting within the role of "proper" Victorian female. (The excellent British postal system enabled them to exchange letters two and three times daily.) First, in response to her sending him rhododendrons and scarlet azaleas, Clough self-deprecatingly begs her not to send him flowers as "they are a great deal too beautiful for me." He insists that only by renouncing her will he be able to find profitable work. In her response Blanche hopes that if they separate Clough will "keep generally good." She asks him to meet her the next day in a London park and concludes by pleading: "Let me stay with you, dear." He declares in his reply, "I must *go away* in order to work." While he concedes the life together she sees is possible, he thinks "it would be best preceded by some interval of absence." He suggests they tell her mother he has no prospect of an income and refuses to meet her in the park because it is raining and his pupil is still with him, the latter a disingenuous reason since he earlier had postponed pupils and cut short their lessons in order to see her. After the appointed meeting time passes he sends Blanche a note defending his refusal to meet her: If he had gone and she had not, she would have been sorry! Furthermore their meeting in the park without her mother's knowledge would have been improper.

Blanche's masterly handling of this temporizing forecasts who will predominate. She had gone to the park, but had not expected him and was sure he had thought of her. It was not raining hard, and the flowers she had bought for him she gave to an old woman. Blanche then shrewdly combines bullying and flattery.

It is difficult not to feel insulted when you do not respond . . . . If we do go on together I shall . . . be willing to learn strength of you. This is the greatest comfort to me to feel you strong and determined to do the right thing.

To further cajole him, Blanche resorts to standard elements of the myth of female inferiority: that women live for love and that meaningful work is solely the province of men. She argues that their being together would not hinder his working and wishes that she could do great work. "Is work the object of life? . . . Sometimes I am terribly inclined to think that love is the object of life. I am afraid it is the weakness of my sects [sic]." She cannily concludes by proposing that they not enjoy each other but that each help the other to work.

Clough is at a loss to answer this masterly assault, admits his nature is perverse, and rejoices that she calls him "'Dear boy,' which is the appellation dearest to me in the whole world."[5] In his next letter to Blanche he has pulled himself together and announces he will not expect to meet her for a month. Blanche responds by praising the concept of work. "I should think I was cruel and wrong besides if . . . for my sake [you] languish in inactivity instead of doing some good work." Then, using a revealing adverb, she states: "I do love you so much now, dear boy . . . ."

In reply Clough admits he is selfish and in the wrong, but he pleads for "Time, time." It is then that Clough first announces that he may go to America, 70 folio pages later than Mulhauser places Clough's initial mention of his plan to leave England: "It seems to me that at the present the natural course is to take it quietly and patiently. I will wait—perhaps go over to America first—You shall see." He adds:

[Y]ou might within two or three years see someone you should like more than me. I have felt this all along. I have checked you through my own coldness perhaps . . . . Under such circumstances . . . I do not think we are arrived at the moment for union.

The summer of 1852 finds their correspondence increasingly disjunctive. Traveling in Devon with her family, Blanche writes to Clough: "I do wish you were here my darling—you can't think how I want you—." Clough writes: "Believe me, if you feel me doing you harm . . . I will leave you at your slightest indication of the wish—for whatever length of time you please."

But in July Clough's reluctance to commit himself begins to be interspersed with expressions of physical passion: "I must stop a bit, take you into my arms, as it were, and give you a few, few kisses." A letter from Blanche also shows their relationship is growing warmer.

I like you so much, my darling. I wish you were here. Do you think you would like me as much afterwards. Indeed I'm afraid not . . . . it's only yesterday morning I was sitting

on your knees being scolded for being cross but I had to box your ears for it. My own darling.

From the time he embarked in November, 1852, for Boston, Clough wrote voluminously to Blanche. In America although he was lionized by Boston's literary and social leaders, Clough was miserably lonely, recapitulating his boyhood experience of separation by the Atlantic from those he loved. In addition his indecisiveness not only kept him from starting proposed schools in Concord and in a southern Boston suburb, but even prevented him from deciding whether to stay in America or return to England. Financially he was no better off than he had been in London. He tutored a few pupils in Greek, wrote some magazine articles and poems, and started a painstaking revision of Dryden's translation of Plutarch's *Lives*. But from the sheer quantity of his letters to Blanche, Clough must have spent much of his time writing to her.[6] Pages in each letter are devoted to assertions of love, even lover's babytalk—Clough wants to talk to her a "little-ittle-bit." He shows his characteristic self-deprecation in November when he writes: "I only fear I shall be too happy with you." A few days after Christmas, 1852, he complains to Blanche that his friends have not written to him and encloses the poem "That out of sight is out of mind." In January, 1853, he fears he shall be *almost unwisely* fond of her. Constantly he implores her to join him in America, about which he is ambivalent. "I am sometimes a little tired, a little sick, sometimes perhaps of the people, who are good enough, but strange to me and not at bottom quite like English people—." On the other hand, responding to Blanche's question as to why he was eloquent by mail but tongue-tied when he was with her, he writes:

[H]aving come across the water, which I didn't like the thought of, makes me think myself to have done something—so as to loose my tongue. Another thing is that this country is so much more hopeful *for me*, and the people so much more so than London people—

The emotional firestorm which led Clough to abandon poetry for eight years began to build up shortly after he departed from England, leaving boxes of his manuscripts and letters with Blanche. Mulhauser quotes the pertinent elements of Clough's and Blanche's interchanges. In early December Blanche writes for permission to read *Dipsychus*.

Will you please to give me leave to read Dipsychus, for I want to. I have put some of my books in that box . . . so please write and tell me to read it all . . . . (Mulhauser 2: 350n)

With justifiable anxiety, Clough replies: "[P]lease don't read Dipsychus yet—I wish particularly not. You shall see it sometime—but not now, not, please—dear, I beg not . . . ." Of all Clough's poems the one most likely to offend Blanche was *Dipsychus*, in which a Mephistophelian Spirit tries to

seduce a chaste young man with Venetian prostitutes. Then, on January 8, 1853, Blanche assures him:

I won't read Dipsychus, dear Arthur, don't be afraid, you know I will do whatever you tell me; it was mere chance that I stumbled on that one poem, and I only just glanced it over, pray forgive me. . . . (Mulhauser, 2: 350n)

But like another young woman, Blanche could not resist opening the forbidden box. In early March she wrote that she had dipped into the manuscripts and was appalled by what she found:

It is strange those peeps and reminders of your old times and thoughts and your other sides always upset me . . . . it is horrid—they seem to me full of honest coarse strength and perception . . . but I don't like it. I don't like men in general; I like women—why was not the world made all women . . . . I did hardly know that good men were so rough and coarse. (Mulhauser, 2: 402-03n)

Blanche's thunderbolt devastated Clough, lonely, in a foreign land, and without means of support. He hysterically both complains and capitulates to Blanche in a 5,300-word letter which he wrote over a six-day period that included Good Friday and Easter Sunday. While much of the letter is excerpted by Mulhauser on pages 402-05, some of Clough's self-flagellation that Mulhauser does not include is worth quoting:

You are above me—better than me. I am soiled—why should I therefore try and come near you . . . . If I had worked more quietly and diligently at my regular work, the feelings you abhor so would not have come upon me perhaps . . . .

The implication is that if Clough had confined himself to tutoring and not written poetry he would not have felt, much less written about, the horrid, coarse masculine emotions that repelled Blanche.

By Easter Sunday Clough is incoherent and defensive.

Truly it is possible that without a loss of your own self to pity from afar off those aberrations which indeed it is very very hard for anyone who does not shut himself from the life of men and their words to keep wholly clear of . . . . O my dear Blanche, I hope without taking one step downward you will be able to reach our your hand to me . . . . Cannot you do so, cannot you take me up . . . .

Easter Monday he continues:

Your letter gave me the feeling that if you knew (as you say) all my ideas you would have nothing to say to me . . . that you should be *revolted* . . . . you don't know how horrible such thoughts are to me . . . if a few words sufficed . .

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[5] Katharine Chorley in her biography theorizes Clough had an unresolved Oedipal complex (352-54). Clough's preference for being considered a "dear boy" might support this view.

[6] For details of Clough's experiences in America in 1852-53 see *Correspondence* 2: 329-453 *passim*, and Levy's chapter 9: 139-162.

. to *take away every feeling of tenderness* . . . . Do you think there is no change in me since I used to write letters to Tom Arnold [Matthew's next youngest brother] or whoever else it might be . . . . Did you ever express any dislike that I did not submit to, at least, and respect and learn to understand?

Clough's panic in response to Blanche's censure is understandable, but now seems both ludicrous and pathetic. Blanche, a product of an era in which Mrs. Grundy and Podsnap were unassailable, was indeed formidable, and Clough himself knew that his poetry was too avant garde in its discussion of sexuality and morality for him to finish, much less publish, *Dipsychus*. It also was Clough's misfortune that in his emotional neediness he was overmatched by someone as implacable as Blanche. Shortly after Clough's outburst of self-abnegation, Blanche continues excoriating him about what she had seen in his boxes of letters and manuscripts, but simultaneously retains her stance of childlike dependence on him.

I felt very hard and angry at first—with the ideas it put into my head . . . . I could not suppose you did not know about wrong, but to be thinking, speaking . . . of things in any way but the highest it incensed me as if you really thought so. Is it necessary for men to coarsen their imaginations. It is curious how very seldom you read any poems, any book of any kind that does not in any degree offend . . . . I hope you are not angry with me . . . .

Whipsawed between the loving, clinging Blanche and the stern, admonishing Blanche—the split angelic / demonic personality types which Victorians contradictorily expected in their women, according to Auerbach—Clough capitulated. Since he could not, like Browning's character, compartmentalize his life between his lover at night and "a world of men" by day, he gave up the poetry that offended his fiancèe, returned to England in July, 1853, for a government job found through Carlyle, and married Blanche the following June. Except for "O ship, ship, ship," which Clough wrote for Blanche on May 6, 1853, and which he described as "a doggerel ballad all about nothing," and possibly three other poems which were published in an American magazine in the summer of 1853, Clough abandoned writing poetry from Easter 1853 until a few months before his death in 1861.

Blanche gives her own explanation of the silent years in the memoir she wrote for *The Poems and Prose Remains of Arthur Hugh Clough*. (Indeed, Blanche was indefatigable in organizing editions of Clough's works posthumously, beginning only two weeks after his death.) Blanche's explanation is both disingenuous and confused. She begins:

It has often been a subject of surprise, that with such evident powers and even facility of production, Clough should have left so little behind him, even considering the shortness of his life, and that for such long periods he should have been entirely silent. (1: 40)

Since there had been no previous mention of "such long periods" of silence, Blanche seems to be trying to distract

attention from the only actual period of silence. Then she alleges that Clough wrote only during "short intervals" when he was free from "the pressure of constant and hard practical work" (1: 40). But Clough's job as an examiner in the Privy Council Education Office was not demanding. Until he added his unpaid labors for Miss Nightingale to his workday, Clough's hours were from 10 to 4 with eight weeks annual vacation.

When Blanche, as the unacknowledged memoirist, describes Clough's life after marriage, her explanations of his poetic silence becomes defensive.

[I]n June 1854 he married. For the next seven years he lived quietly at home . . . . No events of any moment marked this period; but it was one of real rest and contentment . . . . he was able . . . to devote his great faculties freely to the service of others. Up to this date we may almost say that he had been too free from active and absorbing employment for his own happiness. (1: 44)

Now Blanche implies that when Clough wrote before his marriage he was too *unoccupied* to be happy. To her it was only when he was occupied—and not writing—that he was happy. While a bachelor Clough had time to speculate, but marriage ended vain, solitary philosophizing.

[T]he want of definite and continuous occupation left his mind free to deal restlessly with the great insoluble problems of the world . . . . After his marriage there was none of this enforced and painful communing with self alone. He had plenty to do; and the close relations . . . with his wife's family kept him actively employed . . . . (44-45)

According to Blanche marriage for Clough had blunted the irritating aspects of his character and molded him into perfection. His humor, which had tended to "irony and sarcasm," now was "natural and healthy." His home life "made many perplexed questions, both social and religious, clear and simple to his mind" (1: 45). She delicately hints that to her goes the credit for Clough's transformation and that an epiphany was about to occur:

The close and constant contact with another mind gave him a fresh insight into his own, and developed a new understanding of the wants of other people . . . . it is quite certain, from little things which he was in the habit of saying, that, had he been permitted, he would have expressed his mature convictions in works of a more positive and substantial kind. (1: 45)

While it is simplistic to portray Blanche as a succubus, draining Clough of his poetic power, the record of their correspondence and Blanche's memoir indicate a dialectic between them that resulted in his poetic stasis. Only in the last few months of his life did Clough return to poetry, three short poems and *Mari Magno*, a long poem modelled on *The Canterbury Tales*, in which travelers on a ship bound to Boston from England exchange stories about love and marriage. Probably awareness that his life was ending enabled Clough to drop his self-imposed ban and create tales that

extolled natural love and sexuality, defying the restrictive morality of both his wife and his time. The one *Mari Magno* tale which critics find embodies conventional prudery may be read as a fantasy of revenge against Blanche for her and his doctors' having exiled him to the south of Europe for his health. It is to Blanche's credit that she did not try to suppress this tale or the others in *Mari Magno* which she found objectionable, although she did argue against including some of them in his collected works.

Indeed in Clough's last days his revived poetic impulse seems to have been sustained by Blanche's love and care. In Florence, on his deathbed, Blanche aided him as he struggled to write the last *Mari Magno* poem, "The Lawyer's Second Tale," although later she expressed distaste for the story. The tale endorses the love idyll of Christian, a symbolically named Scots girl, with an Oxford fellow. When the Oxford fellow returns briefly to his college, Christian, pregnant, is taken unwillingly to Australia by her uncle and aunt. Years later, happily married to a wealthy man, Christian returns to England and gives their child to the former Oxford fellow, whose marriage to a barren English aristocrat is also symbolic. This seems to be a further, and most daring, development of a theme that often engaged Clough: love between an unspoiled, sensitive, yet hard-working country girl, usually Scottish, and an Oxford fellow or student. But only in *Mari Magno* does Clough advance far beyond the conventional views of contemporary writers: a woman who by all the rules of Victorian society would be considered "immoral" is, unlike Lady Dedlock, not only *not* punished, but is rewarded. She is truly worthy of her name: loving, non-judgmental both of her lover's leaving her and her relatives' forcing her to leave him, and self-sacrificingly willing to give her son up to his father.

The social, sexual, and religious concerns of Clough's productive period seemingly had simply lain fallow during his eight-year drought. Clough's probing mind, which questioned the validity of all *a priori* givens, except truth itself, had refused to be quelled. *Mari Magno* is a poignant reminder that Clough, before his inner tensions caused him to surrender to Blanche's prudery and cease writing poetry, was among the few Victorian poets whose sole interest was grappling with the pressing concerns of his era.

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SUNY College at Farmingdale

A Reading of Swinburne's "A Leave-Taking" in Light of Arnold's "The Forsaken Merman"

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Until the posthumous publication of Arnold's letters, which contained references to Swinburne that wounded his vanity and caused him to revise his opinion of Arnold sharply downward, Swinburne had been, for the most part, Arnold's earnest admirer.[1] In his essay entitled "Matthew Arnold's

New Poems," first published in the *Fortnightly Review* in October 1867, Swinburne was particularly lavish in his praise, generously acknowledging a grateful debt to the older poet. "The Forsaken Merman" especially elicited his profound admiration. It was, he recorded, among the poems by Arnold

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[1] See Sidney Coulling's essay on the relationship between Swinburne and Arnold.

which he "had mainly by heart in a time of childhood just ignorant of teens" (15: 66), and he confessed preferring it even to "Thyrsis," which he considered the better work (94). For the space of some three hundred words he paid an elaborate and impassioned tribute to the poem: "No man's hand has pressed from the bells and buds of the moors and downs by cape or channel of the north a sweeter honey than this"; it is "a piece of the sea-wind"; it has "an inexplicable inevitable sweetness" and "a tender, marvelous, simple beauty" (95).

Swinburne's homage to "The Forsaken Merman" did not, however, begin with the paean in the *Fortnightly Review*. We believe that it had already found poetic expression in the slight lyric entitled "A Leave-Taking," which had been published in *Poems and Ballads* the year before. But, although the correspondence between the two works seems deliberate, systematic, and pervasive, involving not only diction and imagery but also theme, so far as we know it has not been commented upon except, in passing, by Ross C. Murfin, who has noticed a similarity in the poems' "seaward movement" (41).

In fact, "A Leave-Taking" has attracted very little comment of any sort, evidently for two reasons. First, it is generally understood to refer to the conclusion of the unhappy love affair, probably with his cousin Mary Gordon, that Swinburne memorialized more impressively and at greater length in "The Triumph of Time."[2] That poem has eclipsed "A Leave-Taking." Second, there is the matter of Swinburne's sexual peculiarities, which have tended to render doubtful the sincerity of the complaint behind either poem. Swinburne's rejection by Mary Gordon may have been more convenient than otherwise and his disappointment more theoretical than real.[3]

Nevertheless, that "A Leave-Taking" has not received more attention seems to us an important critical oversight. For comparison with "The Forsaken Merman," to which it bears striking resemblances, suggests that Swinburne's neglected lyric may have been much closer to his lasting personal and poetic concerns than has been recognized. "The Forsaken Merman" appealed to Swinburne not merely because it combined an exquisite lyricism with an exotic subject matter, but because it juxtaposed several issues that lay at the painful center of his existence. Among these were, first, sexual love; second, the conflict between the "natural" and the "unnatural"; and third, the alienation of the individual from society. And all of these themes are evident either on or just beneath the surface of "A Leave-Taking."

It should be noted that in their juxtaposition, at least, these were themes even more important to Swinburne than they were to Arnold, for to Swinburne they were not just intimately but causally related. Love for Swinburne was almost exclusively sexual, and, particularly in its perverse manifestations, it occupied him from his school days at Eton, when he discovered the delights of the flogging block, until

his old age, a discreditable portion of which he devoted to writing poetry of a dubious nature to the child Bertie Mason.[4] Between his early masochism and his late pedophilia, Swinburne's prurient imagination reveled at one time or another in every "unnatural" manifestation of sexuality that comes readily to mind: hermaphroditism, male and female homosexuality, voyeurism, incest, bestiality, necrophilia. Such preoccupations—especially in combination with the oddities of his physical form, the dismaying eccentricity of his mannerisms, and, perhaps, with the "feebly developed" sexual impulse suggested by Gosse[5]—worked to alienate Swinburne not only from women and from family life, but from the general run of humanity altogether.

In addition to the important thematic correspondences between "A Leave-Taking" and "The Forsaken Merman," which we will consider at greater length below, there are also a number of more superficial but nevertheless suggestive parallels between the poems. Both, for instance, arise from the rejection of the speaker by a beloved woman. The speaker's attitude is one of melancholy resignation, although in both cases he seeks a sort of cold comfort in the hope that he will be regretted. And in both cases he expresses his hope by imagining that the beloved woman will turn seaward toward him and sigh. Arnold's merman imagines Margaret gazing "over the sand at the sea" from her window; then, "anon there breaks a sigh, / And anon there drops a tear." Swinburne's narrator (probably with less reason) imagines of the beloved that

> surely she,
> She too, remembering days and words that were,
> Will turn a little toward us, sighing.

Additionally, both poems take the form of an address by the speaker to a third party; the merman addresses his "dear children," and the poet-persona of "A Leave-Taking" addresses his "songs." The burden of both addresses is a plaintive call to withdraw to the sea. The first, third, and eighth of Arnold's stanzas begin with a call: "Come, dear children, let us away"; "Come, dear children, come away down"; "Come away, away children; / Come children, come down!" Similarly—in fact, insistently—each of Swinburne's stanzas begins with a summons: "Let us go hence, my songs"; "Let us rise up and part"; "Let us go home and hence"; "Let us go hence and rest"; "Let us give up, go down" (cf. especially Arnold's "come away down"); and "Let us go hence, go hence."

In the third stanza of "The Forsaken Merman" Arnold gives the reason for flight: "She will not come." Swinburne gives a similar and identically phrased reason after each and every call: in the first stanza, "Let us go hence, my songs; she will not hear," and then, in successive stanzas, "she will not know," "she will not weep," "she will not love," "she will not

care," "she will not see." Additionally, Swinburne concludes each stanza with a reassertion emphasizing the woman's determination, her participation in a deliberate act of will: "She would not hear," "She would not know," etc. Swinburne's meaning is clearly that the lady dispassionately *chooses* not to respond. She would persist in her indifference even if her reasons for doing so were obviated: "Love is a barren sea, bitter and deep," but even if that were not the case, even if "she saw all heaven in flower above, / She would not love"; she would continue as impervious to the persuasion of heaven as she is to the poet's songs. She would be similarly willful in resisting any appeal to love made by the beauties of nature:

> Though all the stars made gold of all the air,
> And the sea moving saw before it move
> One moon-flower making all the foam-flowers fair,

the lady would remain indifferent. Finally, in fact, she is as inexorable and pitiless as nature itself, for even death could not move her:

> Though all those waves went over us, and drove
> Deep down the stifling lips and drowning hair,
> She would not care.

That Swinburne had felt the icy inexorability of Margaret's will in "The Forsaken Merman" seems unmistakable. Margaret, of course, offers a clearly stated motive for her behavior: "I lose my poor soul, Merman! here with thee," whereas in Swinburne no motive is given, although weariness of the narrator on the lover's part seems suspect. But even with her motive—perhaps because of it—Margaret, like Swinburne's lady, is preternaturally cold:

> "Dear heart," I said, "we are long alone;
> The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."
> But, ah, she gave me never a look,
> For her eyes were seal'd to the holy book!

Margaret is intent on her own salvation, her own good, her own holy passion. In her self-absorption she is remote and inaccessible, she is deaf to the most moving prayers for pity. The "cold strange eyes of a little Mermaiden" are the type of her own eyes, because in their frozen focus on self they are inhuman and unnatural.

The dialogue between "natural" and "unnatural" is a rich and integral part of "The Forsaken Merman," a fact that was not lost on Swinburne and that he indirectly acknowledged in the opening sentence of the panegyric in the *Fortnightly Review*: the poem "has in it the pathos of natural things" but also "the wail of something lost . . . filling with glad and sad spirits the untravelled ways of nature" (15:95, emphasis added). In the poem the merman and Margaret, the land and the sea, even Christianity and paganism have identifiably natural and unnatural characteristics, some of them literal and

some metaphorical, and all of them interacting dialectically.

The merman, for instance, is "unnatural" in that he is an "extra" natural creature, but at the same time he is more natural (and more human) than Margaret both in his sensuality and in his relationship with his children. Margaret is natural in her literal humanity; "As a beloved, as a sexual object, as a mother, [she] belongs to the seascape of nature" (Johnson 88-89). But, although she is a mother, she is an unnatural one in her willingness and even determination to forsake her children. And she is further unnatural in embracing the gray asceticism of the town to the exclusion of the pleasures of beauty and sensuality offered her by the merman and the sea. The sea itself is "unnatural" in that it is the "natural" element of fabulous creatures—the merman and his children—and also, perhaps, in that the underwater places, the "sand-strewn caverns" where "the spent lights quiver and gleam," are unfamiliar and eerie. But in a much larger sense Arnold's sea is truly an aspect of nature. It is, in fact, the fountainhead of nature, because it is the element not only of love but of generation; it is

> Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round
> Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground;
> Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
> Dry their mail and bask in the brine;
> Where great whales come sailing by,
> Sail and sail, with unshut eye.

Arnold's sea is teeming with life. Swinburne's, notably, is not. The sea in which his narrator seeks solace, although it is, like Arnold's, identified with love, is nevertheless at odds with both life and generation, for "Love is a *barren* sea, bitter and deep" (emphasis added). The sea that is at odds with life is also at odds with nature, and the solace that the narrator seeks in it is the unnatural solace of dissolution. The sea is love, but it is also death, with "stifling lips and drowning hair."

Like Margaret, Swinburne's narrator is natural in his mortality, and like the merman he is natural in his possession of sensuality. He even seems to be identified with one of the natural elements, for he wishes to "go seaward as *the great winds go*"[6] (emphasis added). But other evidence suggests that the narrator is in a different sense "unnatural," and for the same reason that the sea is barren: "A Leave-Taking," even in memorializing the romance that constituted Swinburne's best claim to normalcy, may well contain a subtle acknowledgement of his unconventional sexuality. The third stanza is particularly at issue:

> Let us go home and hence; she will not weep.
> We gave love many dreams and days to keep,
> Flowers without scent, and fruits that would not
>   grow,
> Saying "If thou wilt, thrust in thy sickle and reap."
> All is reaped now; no grass is left to mow;

[2] Cecil Yelverton Lang in his 1959 *PMLA* article "Swinburne's Lost Love" was first to identify Swinburne's inamorata as Mary Gordon. Earlier, in his life of Swinburne, Edmund Gosse had identified her (although not by name) as Jane Faulkner (78).

[3] Donald Thomas in *Swinburne: The Poet in His World* notes "the disdain for marriage in which Swinburne was able to indulge in consequence of his

rejection, and the *pretext* which it gave for 'The Triumph of Time'" (77, emphasis added).

[4] See Jean Overton Fuller on the poems to Bertie (244-532).

[5] Gosse, in a letter to Thomas Wise published in an appendix to Lang's edition of the letters, remarked, "I believe the generative instinct was very feebly developed in Swinburne" (243).

[6] Note, by the way, that the language is the language of the merman when he tells his children that "Now *the great winds shoreward blow*" (emphasis added).

And we that sowed, though all we fell on sleep,
  She should not weep.

The flowers and fruits, which are in apposition with "dreams and days," identify the stuff that the narrator's lover is invited to reap as being in some way false and sterile. To the extent that the poem is straightforward and a woman its subject, the deficiency in the narrator's proffered love may have to do with Swinburne's homosexual inclination or his conjectured impotence—and to the extent that the subject is Mary Gordon, the imperfection of love may refer to the astonishingly close ties of blood between the cousins. Not only were their mothers sisters, so were their grandmothers, and their fathers were cousins—both to each other and to their own wives (Leith 2). The family was already too inbred, a circumstance which has more than once been blamed for Swinburne's oddities, and upon which he may have counted if he actually proposed to Mary Gordon. He could be almost certain of a refusal.

But despite the pronoun "she" and despite the poem's reference to Swinburne's ill-fated romance with Mary Gordon, "A Leave-Taking" evidently contains a homosexual undercurrent. As in that exquisitely ambiguous stanza of "The Leper,"

  Sometimes when service made me glad
    The sharp tears leapt between my lids,
  Falling on her, such joy I had
    To do the service God forbids,

two things seem to be going on here at once. The "Flowers without scent," the "fruits that would not grow," and the sickle image seem at least as appropriate to a male as to a female lover. It seems to us entirely possible to read the sexual identity of the narrator's lover in two ways—and perhaps at the same time, for the lover may exist at the more or less hermaphroditic confluence of two independent streams of thought and imagery.

The same imagery of barrenness, flower, and fruit that seems to suggest a homosexual or "unnatural" element in "A Leave-Taking" also came readily to Swinburne's mind when he was explicating other sexual ambiguities—specifically, those of lesbianism and hermaphroditism. He used it of Faustine to describe her Sapphitic incarnation:

  And when your veins were void and dead,
    What ghosts unclean
  Swarmed round the straitened barren bed
    That hid Faustine?

  What sterile growths of sexless root
    Or epicene?
  What flower of kisses without fruit
    Of love, Faustine?

And the same imagery appears in "Hermaphroditus":

  To what strange end hath some strange god made fair
    The double blossom of two fruitless flowers [,]
  .   .   .   .

Given all the gold that all the seasons wear
  To thee that art a thing of barren hours?

More impressive is the fact that the same images appear in "The Triumph of Time." In the second stanza the narrator asks,

  Is it worth a tear, is it worth an hour,
    To think of things that are well outworn?
  Of fruitless husk and fugitive flower,
    The dream forgone and the deed forborne?

On one level, of course, fruitlessness here results only from the fact that "the deed" has been "forborne." That another level of meaning exists is suggested, however, by the fruitlessness in the tenth stanza—that of the "weeds of the wave, without fruit upon earth." Here the wave is part of the ocean of love, and what grows from love, a "weed," is something unwanted and rank. Also, given that fruit has in the third stanza been clearly identified with love (as the "fruit of my heart," which "will not grow again"), it is distinctly odd, astonishing, in fact, that the narrator should suddenly announce, in the fourth stanza,

  I have given no man of my fruit to eat.

Clearly, analogy with "The Triumph of Time" cannot summarily dismiss the likelihood of a homosexual element in "A Leave-Taking."

In both "The Forsaken Merman" and "A Leave-Taking," the dialectic between the natural and the unnatural is integrally related to the theme of alienation. Arnold's merman is alienated from the socially cohesive force of Christianity, and therefore from Margaret and from human society, by his very nature; he is *created* a pagan, and a condition of his "unnatural" bodily existence is exclusion from Christianity. "Loud prays the priest," but "shut stands the door" of the church; the merman and his children must "[stand] without," and even the windows through which they peer are "small leaded panes." The merman exists under a dispensation different from that of humankind.

The narrator of "A Leave-Taking" is similarly alienated by his bodily nature from the different but even more fundamentally cohesive forces of procreation and domesticity. His sexual abnormality (whatever it is) is as much a part of his nature as mer-ness is of the merman's and is as much a condition of his existence. And it alienates him from his lover and from society not only if the lover is a woman and the narrator's abnormality is, say, impotence, but also if the lover is a man. For the ideal union of lovers in not only private and sexual, it is also public and ceremonial, and part of the perceived public good.

One difference between Arnold's poem and Swinburne's may be as telling as the similarities. In Swinburne we have no hint that the lover shares the narrator's sense of alienation; the lover has no discernible individuality and exists principally as an object of frustrated desire. But in "The Forsaken Merman" Margaret is as alienated from the sea of love as the merman is from the land. In that poem the mutuality of alienation on the part of the lovers amounts to a split in a single personality, a

split into parts that can be variously characterized as the pagan and the Christian, the Hellenic and the Hebraic, or the id and the super-ego—so that ultimately "The Forsaken Merman" can be read as a poem in pursuit of the integration of personality, which is to say, in pursuit of wholeness. But because alienation in "A Leave-Taking" is sensed only by the narrator, as a theme it lacks the dynamic and dialectical qualities that in "The Forsaken Merman" are sources of many layers of rich meaning. Arnold's poem seems endlessly expansive; its appeal is to universals. Swinburne's, especially to the extent to which it is about abnormality, seems exclusive and essentially reductive.

Nevertheless, considering "A Leave-Taking" in terms of "The Forsaken Merman" demonstrates that it is a more complex and revealing poem than is evident from treating it as a postscript to "The Triumph of Time." "The Forsaken Merman" is not representative of Arnold's poetry, and despite his assertions to the contrary, that Swinburne should have been much influenced by the main body of Arnold's work is unlikely. But it seems that this uncharacteristic departure of Arnold's into a predominantly lyrical mode spoke intimately and urgently to the young Swinburne, engaging his imagination for many years. "The Forsaken Merman" clearly remained in Swinburne's literary consciousness and on his pulse until the influence it exercised found expression in a poem that resembles it in a number of meaningful ways.

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Narrative Disfigurement and the Unnamed Friend in Tennyson's *The Lover's Tale*

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Tennyson's *The Lover's Tale* (1879), which was composed at different times in his life (Parts I, II, and III in 1827-28, Part IV in 1868),[1] has either been ignored or written about in a highly exaggerated moralizing discourse. Clarice Short argues that the poem's theme is "the disastrous effects of complete submission to passion" and refers to Julian's "one noble deed," his return of the resurrected Camilla to her husband as being "a brief respite from his self-indulgent brooding" (81). More recently, Herbert Tucker describes Julian as "an emotional cripple" and identifies the theme of the poem as "the addictive narcissism of erotic idealization" (1988, 97). Even the technical experimentation of the poem has been moralistically characterized as "a virtually endless substitution of set-

ting for event, imagination for action, figural representation for literal presence" (Tucker 1988, 87).

I shall argue instead that Tennyson's *The Lover's Tale* is an attempt to lyricize narrative, to translate the pure third person narrative of Boccaccio's *Decameron* 10, 4[2] into a dramatic lyric in which the voice of Julian, in Parts I-III, figuratively represents not so much Camilla but his own absent self. Instead of action, character-agents, and the explicit theme of "those who acted generously or magnificently in affairs of the heart" (1982, 600), the constituents of Boccaccio's narrative, Tennyson's first-person lyric narrative seeks, in Parts I-III, to make present the distant, absent self of the speaker. It is this submerged subjectivity, variously designated in the poem as

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[1]For the publication history of the poem see Short and Ricks introduction in Tennyson (299-301).

[2]The Lincoln trial edition of 1869 introduces the poem as "founded upon a story of Boccaccio," (qtd. in Tennyson 300). Also see Wright 437-38.

memory, vision, soul, mind, spirit, or *heart* that *The Lover's Tale* seeks to represent and make present through Julian's voice, his metaphors for *vision, soul, spirit, mind,* or *heart,* and his dream enactments of this inner power of vision, soul, spirit, mind, or heart. Furthermore, the conclusion of the narrative in Part IV in which Julian abandons his native country with his unnamed male rescuer, friend, and the narrator of Part IV suggests that this absent self or deep subjectivity is distanced and exiled from his speaking voice because it is imperiled by the heterosexual story that is imposed, externally, on this voice, Julian's voice seeks to evade Boccaccio's heterosexual narrative by disfiguring, lyricizing, and hallucinating the transparent clarity of the earlier text. Through what Tucker refers to as "the paralysis of the narrative faculty" (1982, 22), *The Lover's Tale* figures not Camilla but the heterosexually imperiled subjectivity of Julian. The conclusion of Tennyson's poem is a flight from the heterosexual resolution of *Decameron* 10, 4, in which *messer* Gentile remains with the reunited couple as both friend and an heroic example of amatory generosity.

Much of *The Lover's Tale* consists of metaphoric attempts to name Julian's distant, absent, virtually unnameable self, a self that can neither enact or narrate the poem's heterosexual intertext, *Decameron* 10, 4, and whose failure to do so allows it, paradoxically, to become present and articulated. At the very outset, Julian's description of "Lover's Bay" and its "pleasant breast of waters" is interrupted by a strange telescoping of the Aeolian harp and sail as metaphoric sources for the target of the speaker's heart, inspired by memory.[3]

> Even now the Goddess of the Past, that takes
> The heart, and sometimes touches but one string
> That quivers, and is silent, and sometimes
> Sweeps suddenly all its half-mouldered chords
> To some old melody, begins to play
> That air which pleased her first. I feel thy breath;
> I come, great Mistress of the ear and eye;
> Thy breath is of the pinewood; and though years
> Have hollowed out a deep and stormy strait
> Betwixt the native land of Love and me,
> Breathe but a little on me, and the sail
> Will draw me to the rising of the sun,
> The lucid chambers of the morning star,
> And east of Life. (1: 16-29)

By narrating the past, Julian discovers the music of his heart and feels its sail-like motion that propels it pastward to a distant time and distant emotions. The metaphoric sailing of the inspired heart evokes for Julian in "the horizon of the mind" (1: 47) the image of Camilla and himself sailing on the bay, "Beneath a low-browed cavern."

> The slowly-ridging rollers on the cliffs
> Clashed, calling to each other, and through the arch
> Down those loud waters, like a setting star,

> Mixt with the gorgeous west the lighthouse shone.
> (1: 54-58)

The metaphoric source for the power of memory acting upon the heart thus converges with the actual images of what is remembered. The narratized images of sailing, recalled by a remembering heart / self, become images of the remembering heart / self. Images from a distant past conflate with images of a distant self as a lyricized narrative becomes an enactment of self.

It is this self that is discovered, metaphorically figured, and enacted by resisting the inherited heterosexual narrative, the story of Julian's love for Camilla. Camilla is a threat to this submerged self. Through no action of her own, she causes the sexually ambiguous lover to lose himself.

> She was dark-haired, dark-eyed:
> Oh, such dark eyes! a single glance of them
> Will govern a whole life from birth to death,
> Careless of all things else, led on with light
> In trances and in visions: look at them,
> You lose yourself in utter ignorance;
> You cannot find their depth; for they go back,
> And farther back, and still withdraw themselves
> Quite into the deep soul, that evermore
> Fresh springing from her fountains in the brain,
> Still pouring through, floods with redundant life
> Her narrow portals. (1: 71-82)

To discover her soul is for Julian to lose himself. She is perceived as a "deep soul" that both entraps and erases / floods Julian's imperiled self. It is, therefore, not insignificant that Julian remains nameless in *The Lover's Tale* until his unnamed male friend identifies him in Part IV, at the end of which he will become "my Julian" (4: 385).

These metaphoric source images of heterosexual menace coexist in *The Lover's Tale* with more conventional source images of heterosexual ardor.

> Thou art light
> To which my spirit leaneth all her flowers,
> And length of days, and immortality
> Of thought, and freshness ever self-renewed.
> (1: 99-102)

Both the young Julian and the older Julian as narrator are conflicted: unable cleanly to resolve the conflict between submission to the heterosexual plot and the desire to fail it, to fail both to enact and narrate. In *The Lover's Tale,* Julian will finally fail as both lover of Camilla and teller of their tale. What he does achieve is to find and express his distant, repressed self and to join it with the unnamed friend of Part IV.

In *Decameron* 10, 4, the inner experience of the lover—*messer* Gentile—is not the subject. It is designated merely by a relative clause: "*al qual giovane d'una gentil*

donna chiamata madonna Catalina, moglie d'un Niccoluccio Caccianimico s'innamorò" (1974, 857). In Tennyson, Julian's experience of love is indeed the focus; in fact it is his experience rather than Camilla, his inamorata, that becomes the subject of the text, to the displeasure of Tucker, who feels uneasy because of the absence of her literal presence (1988, 97). Julian's presence as narrator erases Camilla, as her soul, as beloved, erases him as lover. If Camilla is a sweet fountain in which you can "lose yourself in utter ignorance," a drop of this fountain can be less perilously extracted and carried in the camel-like spirit of the self-figuring male narrator; instead of losing himself in Camilla, she can become part of his body, a drop of sustenance that can be assimilated and thereby erased in the body of the self-figuring, self-regarding male imagination.

> And like the all-enduring camel, driven
> Far from the diamond fountain by the palms,
> Who toils across the middle moonlit nights
> Or when the white heats of the blinding noons
> Beat from the concave sand; yet in him keeps
> A draught of that sweet fountain that he loves
> To stay his feet from falling, and his spirit
> From bitterness of death. (1: 132-38)

When Julian discovers that Camilla loves Lionel rather than himself, he figures Camilla's "innocent heart" and "maiden empire of her mind" as a map ruled by another. Gazing into her heart, he discovers (and the text italicizes this) *Another,* whom, we assume, on a literal level is Lionel, though in a text in which most metaphorical figuration refers back to the narrator, the *Another* may be seen as Julian's distant, estranged, and imperiled self. The young Julian, at the point of fulfilling his role as heterosexual lover, discovers instead another self, and, as the cataleptic Prince in *The Princess,* passes out in a panic.[4]

> There, where I hoped myself to reign as king
> There, where that day I crowned myself as king,
> There in my realm and even on my throne,
> *Another!* there it seemed as though a link
> Of some tight chain within my inmost frame
> Was riven in twain: that life I heeded not
> Flowed from me, and the darkness of the grave,
> The darkness of the grave and utter night,
> Did swallow up my vision; at her feet,
> Even the feet of her I loved, I fell
> Smit with exceeding sorrow unto Death. (1: 580-90)

The "entrapment" (1: 615) that follows is, we assume, a result of Julian's discovery of Camilla's love for Lionel, when in fact it can be seen as a form of psychic paralysis that follows upon Julian's discovery that he is unable to fulfill the romantic heterosexual plot. His discovery of his unfitness for the role of lover, an unfitness evident in his repeated "failure to speak

to Camilla about his love" (Tucker 1982, 24), suggests to him that he is unfit for life, that he has no proper role, no story to enact, and little story to tell.

> Dead, for henceforth there was no life for me!
> Mute, for henceforth what use were words to me!
> Blind, for the day was as the night to me!
> The night to me was kinder than the day.
> (1: 597-600)

In Parts II and III of *The Lover's Tale,* the "dream-dramas" (Short 83) foreground the submerged, distant self of Julian as subjectivity rather than his explicit narrative topic. The male subject, "brain" (2: 9, 49) becomes the focus in three dream-narratives in which Julian both anticipates and desires the death and burial of Camilla.

In the second of these dreams, Julian is with Camilla in a summer house, admiring with her their collaborative painting of "a vessel in mid ocean / Clambering" and "the ravin wind / In her sail soaring" (2: 166-68). As the two gaze upon the painting, the vessel begins "to heave upon the painted sea" (2: 189). At this point, Julian, in the dream, falls into a seizure-trance as he did when he discovered Camilla's love for Lionel. In the dream Julian and Camilla enter into the represented storm of their painting, the psychic earthquake within Julian merging with images of the pictorialized tempest.

> An earthquake, my loud heart-beats, made the ground
> Reel under us, and all at once, soul, life
> And breath and motion, past and flowed away
> To those unreal billows: round and round
> A whirlwind caught and bore us; mighty gyres
> Rapid and vast, of hissing spray wind-driven
> Far through the dizzy dark. Aloud she shrieked;
> My heart was cloven with pain; I wound my arms
> About her: we whirled giddily; the wind
> Sung; but I clasped her without fear. (2: 190-99)

Nowhere more clearly do we see how what Tucker refers to as "the power of doom" has "taken up residence" within Julian's self (98). But this power of doom is, in *The Lover's Tale,* associated with those moments when Julian imagines a profound psychic disability that, for the reader, prevents him from fulfilling the romantic heterosexual plot of *Decameron* 10, 4. It is this source of doom that surfaces, at these moments, and articulates itself in the dream-dramas which disrupt and dismember narrative continuity in Parts II and III of *The Lover's Tale.* In *Maud* these disruptive lyrical moments will free themselves from narrative to become discrete, autonomous lyrics, but the movement to lyric autonomy begins in *The Lover's Tale.* The effect of this narrative disruption is for Julian's absent, suppressed self, his "innermost brain" (2: 94), to become the dominant presence in the text that contains what we might identify as Tennyson's sense of

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[3]For the target-source analysis of metaphor, see Lakoff and Turner.

[4]For an analysis of the Prince's catalepsy in relation to his homosocial feelings, see Sedgwick. Craft foregrounds the homoerotic themes in *In Memoriam* and Dellamora demonstrates the role of male desire in the culture of the Cambridge Apostles. Tennyson began and wrote much of *The Lover's Tale* in the intense homosocial culture of Cambridge in 1828-1829.

Julian's "homosexual" doom. Thus it is significant that Julian abandons Camilla, in the dream-seizure, to the jaws of Death. For Julian's absent, repressed self she has become an "empty phantom."

> her weight
> Shrank in my grasp, and over my dim eyes
> And parted lips which drank her breath down-hung
> The jaws of Death: I, groaning, from me flung
> Her empty phantom: all the sway and whirl
> Of the storm dropt to windless calm, and I
> Down weltered through the dark ever and ever.
> (2: 199-205)

Written in 1868, forty years after Parts I, II, and III, Part IV of *The Lover's Tale*, entitled in 1869 as "The Golden Supper," is both cooler in tone and closer in narrative event to Tennyson's source in Boccaccio. What is curious is that Julian can narrate his visions, such as that of the resurrection of Camilla from the dead which concludes Part III—"But she from our her death-like chrysalis, . . . Leapt lightly glad in bridal white" (31: 39, 141)—but flees from "the event," leaving these events to be narrated by the unnamed male friend. These events, involving the actual recovery of Camilla from the tomb, her pregnancy, and the golden supper at which she is restored to Lionel, are narrated by the friend in a disciplined blank verse rather than the spasmodic, perfervid verse of the first three parts. But though the narrative is more controlled and closer to the source in Boccaccio, there are several significant departures from the source.

The first involves Julian's discovery that Camilla is alive. In *Decameron* 10, 4, *messer* Gentile (the Julian analog) kisses Madonna Catalina (the Camilla analog) and is sexually aroused, overcome by appetite, to the point of placing his hand on one of her breasts: "*Vinto adunque da questo appetito, le mise la mano in seno, e per alquanto spazio tentalavi, gli parve sentire alcuna cosa battere il cuore costei*" (1974, 858).[5]

In *The Lover's Tale*, Julian embraces Camilla's neck and then her heart and experiences the "dream-dramas" of Parts II and III as actualities.

> But, placing his true hand upon her heart,
> "O, you warm heart," he moaned, "not even death
> Can chill you all at once": then starting, thought
> His dreams had come again. "Do I wake or sleep?
> Or am I made immortal, or my love
> Mortal once more?" It beat—the heart—it beat:
> Faint—but it beat: at which his own began
> To pulse with such a vehemence that it drowned
> The feebler motion underneath his hand.
> But when at last his doubts were satisfied,
> He raised her softly from the sepulchre
> And, wrapping her all over with the cloak

> He came in, and now striding fast, and now
> Sitting awhile to rest, but evermore
> Holding his golden burthen in his arms,
> So bore her through the solitary land
> Back to her mother's house where she was born.
> (4: 74-90)

In a passage that echoes both Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale" (Tennyson 341) and Poe's "Tell-Tale-Heart," Boccaccio's matter-of-fact awakening of the sexual appetite is transmuted into a complex, rarefied experience of self. Furthermore, Tennyson invents the splendid Gothic *tableaux* of Julian's carrying of Camilla from out the tomb, which in Boccaccio is tersely narrated as *messer* Gentile "as gently as he could, assisted by a servant carried her from the tomb" (1982, 618).

When the resurrected Camilla discovers that Lionel, her husband, has gone away and cannot be summoned, she wails and assigns Julian the right and responsibility of returning her to her husband, whereas in Boccaccio it is *messer* Gentile who proposes the scheme that he return *madonna* Catalina to her husband. She agrees, in return for his promise not to assault her sexually. In Tennyson, where appetites are rarefied to emotions, Julian, "our lonely lover," rides away after the birth of Lionel's son. It is at this point that the unnamed narrator friend of Part IV meets Julian at "a dismal hostel" and nurses him through a malarial fever. Figuratively, Julian is cured of the fever of his unactualized, self-thwarted heterosexuality by the ministrations of homosocial friendship.

> A dismal hostel in a dismal land
> A flat malarian world of reed and rush!
> But there from fever and my care of him
> Sprang up a friendship that may help us yet.
> (4: 140-43)

The unnamed friend accompanies a recovered Julian back to Camilla and experiences himself her seductive, maddening power.

> Yet when I saw her (and I thought him crazed,
> Though not with such a craziness as needs
> A cell and keeper), those dark eyes of hers—
> Oh! such dark eyes! and not her eyes alone,
> But all from these to where she touched the earth,
> For such a craziness as Julian's looked
> No less than one divine apology. (4: 162-68)

The unnamed friend-rescuer confronts his antagonist, a *femme-fatale* of domestic heterosexuality and bourgeois marriage,[6] to which Julian is culturally impelled, but for which he is unfit, sick both in terms of his cataleptic seizures and his malarial fever.

Julian is thus rescued by his male friend not only from the sickness of his grief that he is unable to enact his culture's prescribed text, but from the burden of narrating his story with it uncontrollable divigations from Boccaccio. It is this unnamed friend who assumes the responsibility of narrating when the narrative appears to approximate for the first time the precursor narrative and it is he who displaces Camilla to become Julian's intimate friend.

Significantly, the "weird and wild" banquet (4: 223) Julian prepares at which Camilla will be restored to Lionel is a detailed amplification by Tennyson of the episode in *Decameron* 10, 4. The banquet over which Camilla's draped portrait presides (she will later descend from it) and which provided the title of Tennyson's 1869 poem becomes a symbol of the conventional bourgeois marriage that Julian, now recovered from his illness, will not partake of. The "strange feast" not only restores Camilla to Lionel but is the prelude to Julian's "self-exile" (4: 208) from the territory of Lionel and Camilla's heterosexual marriage to residence in the land of his unnamed friend.

> The guests,
> Wondered at some strange light in Julian's eyes
> (I told you that he had his golden hour),
> And such a feast, ill-suited as it seemed
> To such a time, to Lionel's loss and his
> And that resolved self-exile from a land
> He never would revisit, such a feast
> So rich, so strange, and stranger even than rich,
> But rich as for the nuptials of a king,
>
> And stranger yet, at one end of the hall
> Two great funereal curtains, looping down,
> Parted a little ere they met the floor,
> About a picture of his lady, taken
> Some years before, and falling hid the frame,
> And just above the parting was a lamp:
> So the sweet figure folded round with night
> Seemed stepping our of darkness with a smile.
> (4: 203-19)

The Lover's Tale ends not as *Decameron* 10, 4, with the generous friend and lover living in close unity with the married couple whose marriage he has restored in a public act of unparalleled and selfless generosity, but with Tennyson's Julian cured of his sickness, his inability to narrate and enact the heterosexual intertext, and ready now to begin a new life with his unnamed friend in his friend's native land. Tennyson takes Julian to the frontier of a new narrative, one that grows from his decomposition of *Decameron* 10, 4, one in which homosocial intimacy is seen as curative and restorative, a native land that can only be named at the close of Tennyson's disturbing and disfiguring narrative by a voice in which Julian, the diseased exile of *The Lover's Tale*, finds health and home.

> There were our horses ready at the doors—
> We bad them no farewell, but mounting these
> He past for ever from is native land;
> And I with him, my Julian, back to mine. (4: 382-85)

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[5]Wright notes that in Boccaccio's narrative of the kiss "there is more of passion than of reverence" (437).

[6]Adams's study of Tennyson's use of feminine personification in *In Memoriam* and his association of science and nature with "feminine betrayal" (17) there and in *The Princess* suggests how pervasive the *femme-fatale* figure is in Tennyson. In *The Lover's Tale* it is, however, domesticity, not its absence, that is a threat to the male protagonist.

Cultural Cartography: A. S. Byatt's *Possession* and the Politics of Victorian Studies*

Louise Yelin

A. S. Byatt's *Possession* is a novel about the discovery of an affair between a hypermasculine Victorian poet reminiscent of Robert Browning (with a bit of Tennyson and Meredith) and an unconventionally feminine Victorian poet compounded of Emily Dickinson and Christina Rossetti. The discovery by a jobless young scholar of a draft of a letter from the male poet, Randolph Henry Ash, to the female one, Christabel LaMotte, sets in motion both a romantic plot that connects the Ash scholar, Roland Mitchell, and Maud Bailey, a feminist critic of LaMotte who teaches women's studies in a red brick university, and a detective plot that involves English and American scholars and critics of both genders and many critical persuasions in a search to uncover hitherto unknown secrets. Having spent their careers variously trying to possess the lives and work of Ash and LaMotte, the critics and scholars must now alter their views to assimilate the new disclosures.

Possession is a clever and compelling narrative. Designed, as Byatt put it, to resemble "the books people used to enjoy reading when they enjoyed reading" (qtd. in Rothstein 17), it is stuffed with descriptions of how its characters look and what they wear, the houses they live in and the books they read and write: that is, with the kinds of metonymic details that constitute what, in an earlier, less self-conscious critical era, one would have called *the* Victorian novel. If *Possession* gives its middlebrow readers a hefty dose of Literature and especially Poetry tempered by an abundance of plot and the seductions of romance, it has a slightly different appeal for the culturally literate—those of us, say, who were reading it on the airplane to and from the last MLA. It entices us with its depiction of scholarship as a detective game (258-59), and it flatters us by offering us the pleasures of recognizing the intertextual allusions and revisionary rewritings out of which it is made.

Although, I confess, I find *Possession* extremely seductive, I want in this paper to read Byatt's novel against the grain of the substantial pleasures it offers those of us who work, like Roland and Maud, "in" the Victorian period and to examine it as an instance of cultural cartography, a simultaneous mapping of Victorian culture and contemporary Victorian studies. Like any map, Byatt's distorts, displaces, and excludes as much as it reveals; as an alternative to hers, I look at just two Victorian maps and mappings that allow us to see what her map omits or ignores.

Possession represents Victorian England as Victorian culture, and especially literature: the best that was thought and said in the published and unpublished writings of LaMotte and Ash, Jane Welsh Carlyle and John Ruskin, Charlotte Brontë and Charles Dickens, and the diaries, memoirs, letters, poems, and novels of figures that, like Ash and LaMotte, Byatt invents. Although Matthew Arnold is not mentioned in *Possession*, one of Byatt's projects is to recuperate an Arnoldian notion of culture: Roland and Maud choose to work on the only poets who "stayed alive when [they'd] been taught and examined everything else . . . . What could survive [their] education" (62). But Byatt's cultural map, unlike Arnold's, accommodates, even privileges, the feminine, and not just the conventionally feminine. The discovery of Ash's affair with LaMotte forces critics to reread and re-evaluate both poets and to acknowledge the influence of LaMotte, and hence the feminine, on Ash, who has traditionally been regarded as quintessentially masculine. (As a figure whose encyclopedic range of interests—Norse epic to geology—makes him a Victorian version of the Renaissance Man, Ash represents a cultural life unavailable to the specializing late twentieth century).[1] Moreover, in the healthy and robust sexuality of Christabel LaMotte, namesake of Coleridge's Christabel, Byatt rewrites Coleridge, dismantling his association of same-sex female eroticism with demonic possession of a passive victim. (The aggressive sexuality of Coleridge's Geraldine does, however, resurface in one of the twentieth-century characters, the aggressively lesbian American Leonora Stern.) In fact, *Possession* reworks one of the commonplaces of Victorian literature, the critique of Romantic excesses, rewriting it as a critique of Romantic androcentrism: Byatt's Ash departs from such romantic precursors as Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Byron in not regarding female exotics simply or even mainly as the matter of poetry, as in "The Solitary Reaper," to take just one example (301).

Byatt's recuperation of Victorian humanism is self-conscious, if not self-consciously postmodern. Byatt draws attention to both the textuality and the historical contingency of the best that has been thought and said and therefore calls into question the universalizing values of Arnold. What we know, Byatt suggests, we know from reading or misreading texts about which we are more or less ignorant—as, for example, the world is ignorant of the relationship between LaMotte and Ash and thus ignorant of the sources of his poetry until Roland finds the draft of the letter in Ash's copy of Vico. Moreover, the texts we read and the ways we read them rewrite other texts, as *Possession* itself is Byatt's reading and rewriting of "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came," *Maud*, *Modern Love*, and "Christabel," among other nineteenth-century classics. So even as Byatt seems to be inviting us to look beneath or beyond the world of appearances and to seek after secret truths like the truth about what really happened between Ash and LaMotte, and even as she plays on our desire to possess both the texts we read and their authors, she insists, in up-to-date critical fashion, that the only truths to which we can gain access are the partial truths of history and textuality and that texts, like the truths they tell and the truths they withhold or distort, are ruptured readings of referents ever receding. The inexorably partial truths of textuality are ironically dramatized in the way that at Maud's urging the rather prosy and extremely English Roland learns about LaMotte by reading an American Lacanian feminist study of her poetry, while Roland gives Maud a crash course in Ash by having her read the standard biography, the work of a misogynist voyeur (265-72).

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Byatt's map of Victorian culture is echoed in her map of recent and contemporary scholarship and criticism. As Byatt unites, if only for a brief moment, the mid-nineteenth-century poets Ash and LaMotte, she dissolves the antagonism between different, indeed conflicting late-twentieth-century critical positions and practices, while giving the privileged places on her map to those identified as English. And, running parallel to, or cinematically intercut with, the fictional revision of literary history that recuperates Arnoldian humanism by making it accommodate the feminine is a rewriting of the history of post-war criticism that restores to prominence scholarly labors regarded as feminine and accordingly undervalued or, conversely, deemed of little value and accordingly assigned to women. Among the positions charted on Byatt's critical map are Roland Mitchell's old-fashioned textual scholarship (but he is also presented as a latecomer who has missed out on the '60s and therefore "trained in the post-structuralist deconstruction of the subject" [56, 13]); the French-inflected criticism of Maud Bailey, whose insistence that "you can be psychoanalytic without being *personal*" (230) will yield, when she falls in love with Roland, to an acknowledgement that the personal is inevitable; the extravagantly dotty Lacanian lesbian feminism of the American Leonora Stern, who in learning about LaMotte's affair with Ash will be forced to revise her view of the poet as a lesbian foremother; the solid biographical scholarship of Roland's mentor (and oedipal antagonist) James Blackadder, who turned to biography in part because of the oedipal antagonism of his mentor, F. R. Leavis; the drudgework of the aging Beatrice Nest, who, after being discouraged by her misogynist doctoral adviser from pursuing her scholarly interest in Ash and inhibited by the institutional misogyny of English universities, wrote a book on the wives of genius and now struggles to edit the journal of Ash's wife, Ellen (126-29); the voyeuristic dilettantism and connoisseurship of one Mortimer Cropper, an American who interprets *possession* literally and materially as the collecting and cataloguing of things that belonged to Ash (Ash's ashes); and the hypertheoretical critical writing of Roland's departmental nemesis and romantic rival Fergus Wolff, who operates in several different and competing theoretical modes, ventriloquizing all of them with equal facility.

Fergus, the main target in *Possession* of Byatt's theory-bashing, is discredited as a power-tripper. (Leonora, the other target, is redeemed by romance, or heterosexuality.) But his effective ventriloquism links him with his author, with Ash, and with the principal model for Ash, Robert Browning. Indeed, in drawing attention both to her own ventriloquizing of Victorian and (post)modern voices alike, in inventing a range of critics who differently ventriloquize the voices of Ash and LaMotte, and in making Ash's poetry a series of monologues in voices tried on for different topics and occasions—that is, an art at once Victorian and postmodern, a cross between Cindy Sherman's self-portraits and Sloppy's rendering of the police in different voices—Byatt makes ventriloquism the exemplar of literary art in general. Yet at the same time, Byatt suggests that Victorian literature is an inscription of value—an Arnoldian best that has been thought and said—that makes it more enduring, more worthy than its ventriloquizing, belated, postmodern epigones.[2] Throughout the novel, the notion of ventriloquism, and its concomitant, the idea that subjectivity is unstable, produced in discourse, are played off against some notion of essence, or secret, or origin that the ventriloquizing scholars and critics and the ventriloquizing poets alike are trying to possess.

These two positions are never reconciled, or more precisely, the desire to grasp an essence is treated as the ground or condition of ventriloquism. But the novel does resolve at least provisionally its version of the contest of the faculties. The end of *Possession* romantically unites critics of different genders and persuasions, not only Maud and Roland, but also and more improbably Leonora and Blackadder. Like the coupling of LaMotte and Ash, which occurs on a journey from which Ash's wife, Ellen, and LaMotte's life companion, Blanche Glover, are excluded, the romantic unions of the Lacanian Leonora and the biographical Blackadder and Maud and Roland entail exclusions and transformations: Leonora (re)turns to heterosexuality, and Roland's neglected girlfriend Val, who supported him before he had a job, now takes up with a wealthy lawyer. Not only heterosexual romance but also culture, or cultural change—specifically the work of the woman-manly Ash—is made possible, Byatt seems to be suggesting, by money and by a suppression of homoeroticism or a redirection of women's desire from women to men. Leonora Stern turns this transformation to her own comic account, and Christabel LaMotte transcends it, but it results in Blanche Glover's tragic suicide. Yet the homophobic implications of this plot, and also of the innuendoes about Cropper's penchant for looking at dirty pictures of children and the coding of his connoisseurship as a displacement of homosexual desire, are left unexamined.

As this brief summary might indicate, Byatt sketches some of the ways that a dominant culture appropriates and transforms what it also excludes, subordinates, or displaces. But her critical and cultural cartography is nevertheless shaped

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[1]See Rothstein interview. Byatt does not regard Browning as masculine; this view, held by one of the characters in the novel, is discredited (23-24). In making Ash echo Tennyson, Browning, and Meredith but not Arnold, moreover, Byatt invents a masculine poet whose writing is not exactly androgynous but who could be considered, in Woolf's terms, woman-manly (102). Thanks to Rachel Brownstein for suggesting the part played by Meredith in the depiction of Ash.

[2]I thank Hilary Schor for urging me, at the MLA session at which this paper was presented, to think through Byatt's ambivalence about ventriloquism.

by a significant set of exclusions. Missing from the "Mortlake Conference," a meeting of scholars and critics that sets in motion the denouement of the novel and unites its diverse protagonists, is theory, in the person of Fergus Wolff, and, more important, Marxism or new historicism—indeed any kind of oppositional criticism or cultural materialism. What is excluded, apparently, is politics; as Roland puts it in a remark that the novel endorses, "It's exhausting when everything's a deliberate political stance" (295). But perhaps it is more accurate to say that Byatt elides politics and sexual politics, for Roland's remark occasions in Maud and assertion that "celibacy [is] the new *volupté*" (295): indeed, sexual politics stands (in) for the other kind, in the versions of feminist criticism represented in the work of Maud and Leonora, in the stories of women like Beatrice Nest and Ellen Ash, and in the attempt of Blanche Glover and Christabel LaMotte to share an autonomous life together and thereby avoid dependence on and subjection to men. The material world makes a brief metonymic appearance in *Possession* in the deus ex machina that makes possible the end of the novel, the money of Val's boyfriend Euan MacIntyre, a poetry-quoting yuppie who brings all the protagonists together and ensures that Ash's remains remain in England. Euan, culturally literate even though he is rolling in dough, is a sanitized figure for the England and especially the Tory Victorian revivals of Margaret Thatcher. In making the resolution of the novel depend on and flow from Euan's money, Byatt recalls but also revises—by reversing the gender-coding of—the ending of another postmodern Victorian text, *Nice Work*. In Lodge's novel, a rewrite of *North and South* among other books, the inherited wealth of the feminist critic Robyn Penrose—read: a culture that accommodates the feminine—revives the dormant masculinity of an industrial manager named Vic Wilcox, underwrites Vic's transformation from manager to entrepreneur, and thus rekindles the moribund entrepreneurial energies of England itself. Culture in both Byatt and Lodge is variously androgynous and feminine; it revives a social order ignored by Byatt and represented by Lodge as variously masculine and decadent; but it does so by excluding or co-opting the oppositional, by rewriting material and ideological contradictions as ideal reconciliations, by muting the critical, and by embracing an English industrial spirit whose decline is lamented in the work of such Thatcheristic Victorianists as Martin Wiener.

Byatt's cultural cartography mystifies past and present alike. The distortion of the present enacted in the reconciliation of mutually antagonistic critical positions and practices is echoed in a distortion of the past encoded in secrets that only the omniscient narrator can tell us. One of these secrets is Ash's meeting, unknown even by Christabel LaMotte, with the daughter she bore him. (This daughter, May, turns out to be Maud's great-great-great grandmother; because May was "illegitimate," Maud is not the heir of Ash's literal remains—the Ash / LaMotte letters and any money their sale might bring. Rather, she is the spiritual heir of the *real* estate of LaMotte and Ash, English poetry.) The other secret—the story of the sexless marriage of Ellen and Randolph Ash—is

contained in a journal that Ellen Ash burned. Like Ash's meeting with his daughter, Ellen's story will never be known by the scholars and critics who occupy the twentieth-century time frame. If, on the one hand, Byatt is drawing attention to the historical contingency of such textual conventions as omniscient narration and urging us to be modest about our endeavors and to humble ourselves before history, on the other hand she represents the Victorian period as an essence unavailable to the grasping moderns and postmoderns—us—who only want to possess it. In other words, she locates Victorianists—those in her novel and those of us "outside" its pages—in a critical wilderness from which we cannot escape. But at the same time, she makes at least an implicit claim to possess Victorian secrets known or knowable by no one else. In the inability of the novel's (post)modern scholars and critics to enter the Victorian promised land, moreover, Byatt reinstalls Arnoldian notions of literature, compensating, perhaps, for the exclusion of Arnold himself from her novel. Indeed, in a return of the Arnoldian repressed, she holds out a promise that poets—or novelists?—if not critics, might someday cease wandering and leave the academic wilderness behind. Unlike the narrator / hero of Tennyson's *Maud*, who is reborn in consecrating himself to fight the Crimean War, or Browning's Roland, who arrives at the dark tower and blows his horn, Byatt's Roland ends the novel on the verge of chucking criticism altogether and writing poetry inspired by the lovely Maud Bailey—on the verge, that is, of doing what for Byatt as for Arnold is the real or at least the right thing.

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As an alternative to the mystifications that Byatt purveys, I would like, in closing, to mention two instances of Victorian cultural cartography that suggest directions that our work might take. The first is the Copernican revolution effected in *Dombey and Son*: "The earth was made for Dombey and Son to trade in and the sun and moon were made to give them light. . . ; stars and planets circled in their orbits, to preserve inviolate a system of which they were the centre," says Dickens in the first chapter, and the rest of the novel not only decenters the "one idea of Mr. Dombey's life" but also exposes its dependence on the bourgeois, patriarchal, and colonial economies that underwrite Mr. Dombey's ascendancy. The second example comes from *Kim* and it literally maps the transformation of cultural and material life alike by the exigencies of empire. Explaining the "advantages of education" to the recalcitrant Kim, Hurree Chunder Mookerjee, the Babu whose "name on the books of . . . the Ethnographic Survey was R. 17," commends Kim's attention to Wordsworth and Shakespeare—the best that has been thought and said, at least in English. But more important even than Wordsworth, Hurree asserts, is "the art and science of mensuration," a branch of knowledge useful in the mapping—surveillance—of India for empire (167-68). Kim's education at St. Xavier's dramatizes what contemporary critics unnoticed by Byatt have demonstrated in a more analytical mode: the conscription of culture in an imperial cartography that is anything but disinterested.[3]

What *Dombey and Son* and *Kim* represent and Byatt represses is the implication of the best that has been thought and said by women as well as men in a material ensemble in which knowledge and power are always in contention. As practitioners of cultural cartography, we need not only to recover, as Byatt does, what Victorian maps efface, but also, like Dickens and Kipling, to expose the complicity of those effacements in the larger order that they simultaneously distort and reproduce.

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"Experiments Made by Nature": Mapping the Nineteenth-Century Hysterical Body*

Dianne F. Sadoff

On October 15, 1886 after returning to Vienna from the Salpêtrière in Paris, Freud read a paper titled "On Male Hysteria" to the Society of Physicians. Freud's lecture provoked sharp criticism because he had presented no original research, seemed to assume his mentors ignorant of theories beginning to fall into disrepute, and sided with Jean-Martin Charcot in a hotly contested argument among German, French, and American physicians about "railway spine."[1] Members of the Society thus challenged Freud to *present* a case of male hysteria, he said in his autobiographical study, and on November 26, 1886, he did so (*SE* 20:15-17). He began by reporting the patient's "family history" and "life story," and then, on to the hysterical body:

> The examination of his internal organs reveals nothing pathological apart from dull cardiac sounds. If I press on the mental nerves on the left side, the patient turns his head with an expression of severe pain . . . . The cranial vault too is very susceptible to percussion in its left half. The skin of the left half of the head behaves, however, quite differently to our expectation: it is completely insensitive to stimuli of any kind. I can prick it, pinch it, twist the lobe of the ear between my fingers, without the patient even noticing the

touch. Here, then, there is a very high degree of anaesthesia; but this affects not merely the skin but also the mucous membranes, as I will show you in the case of the patient's lips and tongue. If I insert a small roll of paper into his left external auditory meatus and then through his left nostril, no reaction is produced . . . . In accordance with the anaesthesia, the sensory reflexes, too, are abolished or reduced. Thus I can introduce my finger and touch all the pharyngeal tissues on the left side without the result being retching . . . . If we now proceed to an examination of the trunk and extremities, here again we find an absolute anaesthesia, in the first place in the left arm. As you see, I can push a pointed needle through a fold of the skin without the patient reacting against it. The deep parts—muscles, ligaments, joints—must also be insensitive to an equally high degree, since I can twist the wrist-joint and stretch the ligaments without provoking any feeling in the patient . . . . I bandage his eyes and then ask him what I have done with his left hand. He cannot tell . . . . We have observed anaesthetic patients at the Salpêtrière who, if their eyes were closed, retained a much more far-reaching control over a limb that was lost to consciousness. (*SE* 1: 27-30)

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[1] Jones 1:228-33; Ellenberger 437-42. Kenneth Levin argues (42-63), against Ellenberger, that Freud presented a "functionally" rather than "anatomically" based hysteria, which the Viennese doctors, not knowing Charcot, failed to understand. Although no text is extant, in Jones's account the lecture resembles the encyclopedia entry, "Hysteria," in which Freud described the disease's history, symptomatology, and treatment (*SE* 1: 41-57).

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[3] Two examples are the recent work of Gauri Viswanathan and Deirdre David.

While all medical interventions invade the body's privacy, the examination this text documents places Freud squarely in the nineteenth-century practice of medical observation.

S. Weir Mitchell's, Charcot's and Pierre Janet's patients' bodies, no less than Freud's, were submitted to the procedures of pricking, twisting, and poking. Janet reported that when he and the Salpêtrière staff had tested a patient named Bertha for hemi-anesthesia by pricking her forehead, its right side bled "small red dots" while the left "remained perfectly white" (*Mental State* 11). The patient M responded to Janet's questions about her hemi-anesthesia, "You are pricking me, touching me on the shoulder, arm, wrist, knee, ankle," but she could not tell which wrist he had pricked or which side of her chest, pinched (62-63). Although pin pricks sufficiently measured deep-seated anesthesias, Janet instructed physicians to measure medium insensibility with the aesthesiometer, being careful to correlate results obtained by assessing both sides of the body. To examine an eighteen-year-old anesthetic patient, Mitchell used electricity; he "appl[ied] to the nipple the bare metal poles of the secondary current of an induction coil—a severe test—no signal of pain appeared; but, when two needles were carried through the skin, and a strong current passed between them, some pain was felt." On the spine, however, "pin-pricks could be readily felt. Elsewhere the needles used caused no more expression of pain than if the woman's flesh had been a pincushion" (Mitchell 23-24).

This poking and pricking of the hysterical body mapped its surface so as to make anesthesias indirectly observable. Clinical physicians, according to Michel Foucault, exercised a "suzerainty of the visible," applying a triad of sensorial modes of examination—sight, hearing, and touch—subsumed under the "dominant sign" of sight (166). But to locate the body's diseased organs or systems, medical men hammered, touched, and listened to the body to bring its secrets to the skin's surface for viewing. This mapping troped the malfunctioning body. At his clinic, Charcot sketched and mapped insensibilities of limbs or parts as, Janet reported, "*anæsthesias in geometrical segments*": "anæsthesia 'in shirt-sleeve,'" for example, or "'leg-of-mutton sleeve.'" The Salpêtrière's staff observed "sharply defined spots, islets of anæsthesia . . . scattered irregularly over the body without any apparent order." Janet's discourse figured the body's as-yet-unknown geography and "clothed" its terrain, created a topography of the hysterical body, a picturing of internal bodily disorder. The hysteria diagnosis not only statistically correlated symptoms or deciphered the symptom as sign, but subsumed both as it figured the body. The body's organic volume had become a representational space mapped by dispersed areas functionally—or dysfunctionally—distinct from one another, separated by virtue of differences from a norm and one another, and definable by particularized laws of operation.

Charcot theorized these spots and islets or leg-of-mutton sleeves as hysterogenic zones which, from the first, however, were characterized by a certain terminological ambiguity. They refused to obey the laws of organic nerve injury: while a paralyzed hand should have produced anesthesia on the forearm, where the muscles didn't work, it nevertheless desensitized the hand and wrist instead (Janet, *ME* 10). Such hystericized zones, Freud would later say, represented

"tactile" and "visual perceptions" of the familiarly known body—for patients did not, after all, know neuroanatomy as did the physician (Warrington 113-14). The seat or original site of attack, hysterogenic zones might also cause its cessation; they might locate anesthetized areas or spots of heightened sensation; demarcated from the remainder of the spatial body, they might through the *aura* (a sensation that rose around the body prior to the attack) become complicitous with other apparently segregated places on the body. Mapped by these zones, this geography could account step by step for the necessary successions and concomitances of an hysterical attack. In the reading of hysterogenic zones, the body's already delineated surface charted its future actions and constellated its past events. The hysterical body had become at once a surface to be read semiologically and a spacio-temporal structure through which deformations could be calculated and bodies positioned and located. Hysterogenic zones represented a set of readable figurations—spoken, as Freud would later say, in the "common language"—that not only represented the body but produced it *as* representation, as an animated structure made by the human industry of medicine.

But Freud, Charcot, and Mitchell also probed as they scrutinized the body. And although both male *and* female bodies had become available for physical inspection, as Freud's presentation demonstrated, the female body seemed to solicit even as it prohibited such intervention. By the 1830s, the speculum—designed to map and make visible to direct physician observation the hidden female reproductive organs—aroused some medical men's indignation while it enjoyed growing acceptance among others. Before the speculum's deployment in medical practice, the internal female sexual organs had been examined only by "taxis"; in the 1854 American *Obstetrical Catechism,* this "touch" was *defined* as "examination per vaginum"; it was *the* technology by which the doctor practiced his craft and charted his diagnostic course: as "important to the accoucheur, as the lever to the mechanic, and the compass to the mariner." Culturally coded by then-current assumptions about feminine modesty and chastity, physical examination of internal female organs provoked anxiety about physician access to and intimacy with the female body. Physicians deployed the touch because the necessity not to view the genitals had disarticulated sight from the sensorial triangulation in physical examination of female bodies suffering diseases localized in or sited on—even thought to be linked by reflex action to—the female sexual and reproductive organs.

The accoucheur thus observed certain rules during physical examination. He should "properly" raise the woman's hem with his left hand, and pass his right hand "cautiously up under the clothes without uncovering the patient." The "lubricated index finger" should enter "the genital fissure" via "the posterior commissure, avoiding contact with the mons veneris if possible" (Warrington 113-14). Thus before midcentury, British and American doctors, schooled by French gynecological textbooks, examined a standing, fully-clothed woman by raising her skirts while glancing away from her; or a recumbent, bed-linen-draped woman while looking into her eyes so as to signify he could not see her sexual organs (Wertz 78-85). Indeed, the speculum's instrumentality altered medical, especially gynecological, practice by placing the physician in the

"lithotomy" position between a woman's raised and spread legs rather than in the left lateral or "Sims" position, where he could see her only from behind. And exposure of the female genitals to the medical man's gaze, necessitated by the speculum's entrance to the vagina through the vulva, had been accepted by both physicians and patients primarily because instrumentally assisted observation had sustained such gains in other specialized medical practices. Precisely because it mapped the vagina's invisible surface (a topographical paradox), the speculum focused questions about the intrication of "the touch" with the physician's representation of otherwise unobservable and so enigmatic female body parts.

The speculum debate turned up, too, in the literature on female insanity. Hoping to capture a lucrative new market for his gynecological services, Horatio Storer recommended that all women confined in American asylums be examined by speculum-bearing gynecologists. Robert Brudenell Carter vowed that "indiscriminate employment" of the speculum disgraced female "chastity and modesty" and physician professionalism (67). For the speculum appealed, he said, to especially "lascivious" hysterics who, willing to pretend to backache and a little leucorrhoea, to offer blushing affirmatives to leading questions, could trick the unsuspecting doctor into "an examination of the sexual organs"; to these patients' passions, it was scarcely, Carter said, the physician's proper office to minister. Worse yet, repeated examination reduced unmarried, middle-class women to the "mental and moral condition of prostitutes." The speculum destroyed the "peace of the husband's home," Marshall Hall proclaimed in *The Lancet*, broke the "family circle" and betrayed the "domestic hearth" (660-61). Fears about the fragility of middle-class economic arrangements, displaced and described as anxiety about female sexual morality, had made women's hitherto hidden bodily spaces the focus of this medical debate that mapped not only the individual but the social body.

For this discreet medical man examined his middle-class patient at her home, or she visited his office-based private practice. In the teaching hospital, private tutoring situation, or asylum, however, the female body was exposed differently. As Charcot's iconographies showed, when the researcher mapped the working-class female body in the public, state-supported hospital reserved primarily for charity and incurable cases, different tropes and assumptions governed medical practice. Charcot preferred, he said, to examine all patients nude—if modesty permitted; he could thus observe their bodies at his leisure, without having to worry about treating them inhumanely. Yet many opportunities for a variety of mistreatments occurred routinely at the Salpêtrière. Here's a small—or not so small—example. At the Tuesday lessons, Charcot presented cases from among outpatients who had not previously consulted him and improvised his symptomatologies, diagnoses, and treatments. He tested reflexes, mapped anesthetic areas, determined the extent of paralyses; he also "interrogated" patients and family members (*L'hystérie* 96-98).

(To the patient): Close your eyes and try to seize your paralyzed arm.
The patient: I don't know where it is; that gets on my nerves.
Charcot: She feels nothing; I might twist it, I might break it rather than awaken sensitivity in her. But as you see, these subjects aren't docile.
The patient: Oh no!
Charcot: They're very difficult to manage, but they're adaptable. [To the audience]: Thus, loss of muscular sense, complete loss of sensitivity. Here is the circular line that separates the insensitive from the sensitive part.
(To the patient): So, move your fingers.
(The patient show signs of bad humor.)
Charcot: So, don't show me your bad character.
The patient: Hey, someone pricks you and you're supposed to be pleased. (*L'hystérie* 105)

Although Charcot's outpatients were usually more grateful than was this young woman, this dialogue staged not only the teacher's skill at medical mapping, but his power to control the body's insertion into institutionalizing observational practices.

Like other contemporary researchers, Charcot invoked the "claims of science" to justify his clinic to the "medical public." In his 1882 inaugural address as occupant of the Chair of Clinical Diseases of the Nervous System, Charcot recalled his project to make "this great emporium for human suffering" a "regularly organized teaching and research center for diseases of the nervous system" that could routinely "produce [scientific] evidence."[2] By pressing hysterogenic sites on the body, the physician could "provoke" and so "artificially reproduce" hysterical seizures. According to Paul Richer, ovarian compression regularly produced the grand attack for observation; researchers applied shocks or blows, pressure, kneading, and massage to the body so as to chart its reflex actions; they touched, pricked, and pinched to test cutaneous and subcutaneous conditions; they electrically excited localized muscles to sketch arm and facial physiology (89-112, 535-75). To verify mysterious stigmata, Janet reported, staff members used particularly inventive procedures. Taking patients by surprise during the night and using precaution not to wake them, researchers would pinch or prick to map sensibility, and would base conclusions on somnambulous groans or speech. Injecting morphine, applying chloroform, and forcing ingestion of alcohol tested whether insensible patients could be rendered sensible (104-05, 168-69). Yet even Janet admitted, in his 1906 lectures to Harvard medical students, that the clinic's experimental results had been thoroughly managed in Charcot's research emporium.

Scientists articulated as a research goal the demographic and ideological function of mapping the social body, of protecting the middle and upper classes from those identified as abnormal individuals. Yet this function clearly served to justify the use of impoverished and incarcerated patients as

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[2](*Lectures* 1: 1-10) Also in Guillain 50-54, 49, with slightly different translation; "great asylum for human misery."

research subjects in European hospitals (Castel 137-42). Freud understood what Charcot called the clinic's "full value." Since a researcher waited years to prove organic change in nervous diseases that were not immediately fatal (and therefore did not quickly provide a body for autopsy), "only in a hospital for incurables like the Salpêtrière was it possible to keep the patients under observation for such long periods of time" (*SE* 3: 14). John Hughlings Jackson's phrase, "experiments made by nature," was widely cited and repeated in the scientific literature to endorse patients as living experimental subjects. "Mais ç'est une malade," Charcot said at the 1881 International Medical Congress about David Ferrier's experimentally brain-lesioned monkeys (Spillane 393-99). Manipulating the resemblance between convulsive human and motor-impaired animal subjects, Charcot announced that disease "daily produce[d]" and spinal cord topographic anatomy precisely localized such lesions. Charcot claimed superiority for his "experiments made by nature," which took place "spontaneously" and "in the human subject"—an "inestimable advantage," he said, in making scientific research socially "useful" (*Lectures* 2: 9). And although in his published lessons and lectures, Charcot demonstrated and mapped male and female outpatient bodies afflicted with a variety of nervous disorders, his clinic documented experimentation only on inmate women. As Donna Haraway argues, although the nature / culture and sex / gender research and discursive fields are not identical, they intersect, especially in nineteenth-century sciences in which the "female animal emerged as condensed focus of medical and other practice," and "as the nub of social theory." Where the "organism is the historically specific form of the body as scientific object of knowledge," the female became the "locus" of "productive" research discourses and practices (287-90). In the nineteenth-century hospital or state-supported asylum, the female experimental subject had become more "valuable" to the project of knowledge production and social mapping than were Ferrier's monkeys.

Yet when Freud presented a *male* hysteric's body to the Society of Physicians, he attempted to demonstrate—as had Pierre Briquet in 1859, as had Charcot after him—that hysteria was not solely a female disease (see Briquet v-vii). While mapping the hysterical body, Freud had introduced not only the question of limbs lost to consciousness, but, later, in an encyclopedia essay on hysteria, had proposed "psychical disturbances" as objects of medical observation. Although he proposed a neurologized rather than a structural unconscious, this invisible, hidden bodily "cavity" had never previously been subject to observation. How could instrumental intervention, physical examination, or physiological experimentation ever "see" it? While observing the middle-class female hysteric in his private consulting room, Freud did so, and thus revised the rules of medical observation, inadvertently inventing in 1889 a clinical procedure based on the rules of tactile abstinence and discursive non-omission (see Anzieu). Entering into discourse, the body altered its status. No longer the physiological body, the subject of experiments made by nature, the analyzable erotogenic body emerged from the practices of medical mapping.[3]

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The Birth of Culture from the Spirit of Cartography *

David Faulkner

The following sentence might appear anywhere in *Culture and Anarchy*: "It may be taken as man's rule of duty in the world, that he shall strive to know as well as he can find out, and to do as well as he knows how." Surely here is the union of Hellenic intelligence and Hebraic virtue that "culture" seeks? Actually, I've quoted E. B. Tylor's *Primitive Culture* (1871) (1: 28), a founding text of anthropology. Why should an idea of "culture" have coalesced so powerfully around 1870? My hypothesis is this: the explosive growth and transformation of the world economy was opening up a whole new experience of geographical space around the perceiving (British) subject, which I will call "global space"; the concept of "culture" arose as a way of mapping this *terra incognita*. An emergent global dimension subtends and marks both Arnold's and Tylor's germinal versions of "culture."

In order to evoke a dimly-perceived global conceptual space, I will glance briefly at the infrastructures of industrial capitalism being decisively established as a worldwide system, and then at three major consequences for "culture": 1) the erosion of free-trade liberalism; 2) incipient problems of imperial cultural policy; and 3) wildly uneven economic development.

Eric Hobsbawm argues that by 1870 industrial capitalism had become "a genuine world economy and the globe was therefore transformed from a geographical expression into a constant operational reality" (47). The world market consolidated rapidly after 1850—as Hobsbawm puts it, "partly due to the railway, the steamer, and the telegraph . . . the geographical size of the capitalist economy could suddenly multiply as its business transactions increased" (32). In 1869 alone, the North American railway was completed, and the Suez Canal opened; the second half of the 1860s witnessed "a burst of international cable-laying which . . . virtually girdled the globe" (60). In a word, the extent and density of global intercommunications had grown dramatically, drawing practically the whole planet into Britain's ambit.

We need only consider the small, local character of the early Victorian life-world in order to grasp the magnitude of changes impinging on the individual consciousness. Arnold wrote, "is not the close and bounded intellectual horizon within which we have long lived and moved now lifting up . . . [?] Now, then, is the moment for culture to be of service" (92, 93). Charles Wentworth Dilke's popular book *Greater Britain* (1868) hints at an emerging global perspective generally—Dilke liked to boast, iambically, of "the Anglo-Saxon highway round the globe" (1: 269). A working notion of the world as a single unit furnished the minds of the era's visionary engineers and financiers: as Hobsbawm says, "the horizons of business were like their dreams world-wide" (58). C. A. Bodelsen notes that many 1860s writers stressed modern technology's virtual annihilation of time and distance (84); Dilke stated flatly that "in 1870 we shall reach San Francisco from London in less time than by the severest travelling I can reach it from Denver in 1866" (1: 98). The concrete development of a global regime of thought and action, then, was transforming traditional notions of geography by about 1870. "Culture" would become a way of cognitively segregating and mapping this fluid new space.

Explosive economic growth had some unforeseen consequences, however: its very dynamism undermined its domestic political culture of confident liberalism. Free trade legislation and railway investment had empowered Arnold's Philistines, but expanding industrialization also nurtured *rival* powers like Prussia and the USA. By 1869, political opinion registered this threat to British commercial supremacy, (Bodelsen 84-89 *et passim*), a threat which perforated the consensus on those same free-trading, doing-as-one-likes policies that Arnold skewered in *Culture and Anarchy*. Arnold forged his notion of culture in declared hostility to a *laissez-faire* ideology: "And where is this great force of Philistinism now? It is thrust into the second rank, . . . it has lost the future. A new power has suddenly appeared" (107). Typically, Arnold only names what this "new power" is not—he never sets these sea-changes in the global context I'm sketching here. He does say that this new force "has mined the ground under the self-confident liberalism of the last thirty years, and has prepared the way for its sudden collapse and supersession" (107). Arnold's long discussion of free trade in *Culture and Anarchy* rarely makes the anthologies; we're not used to thinking of his "culture" as being tied to an emerging global system. Arnold thought he was talking about mass democracy, and so has almost everyone else. It's hardly an exaggeration to say that free trade suddenly collapsed in 1869-70—a widespread political shift did occur then, away from Free Trade towards an actively protectionist policy (Bodelsen 8, 79-141). This shift was governed by the imperatives of a globalizing economy. In a harsh new environment, Arnold offered the sweetness and light of "culture," which hails the death of Philistine machine-worship.

The second consequence of establishing a global spatial matrix is its phenomenal expression in the British Empire, which underwent decisive structural and cultural changes in the third quarter of the century. Large annexations in Asia and Africa, and the post-Mutiny status of India as a Crown Colony, raised new administrative difficulties. As the Empire became increasingly tropical, "native"-inhabited, and globally articulated, the British had to reconsider their motives and methods. An intensifying contact with other societies had, crudely, two possible outcomes: ethnocentrism and relativism. For contemporary observers such as Dilke or J. A. Froude in the West Indies, the colonial encounter simply validated Britain's obvious racial superiority (Thompson 1-106). This strain of bias structures Tylor's evolutionary framework, in

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[3]On the erotogenic body, see David-Ménard.

which the gentlemanly ethnographic observer deploys cultural data at a glance: "Few would dispute that the following races are arranged rightly in order of culture:—Australian, Tahitian, Aztec, Chinese, Italian" (1: 27). Similarly, Arnold can tell that a Philistine possesses neither sweetness nor light simply by looking at him (97-98). But the colonial encounter also could radically dislocate Western assumptions, most notoriously in the case of John William Colenso, Bishop of Natal. He lost faith in the validity of the Pentateuch while translating it into Zulu in the 1860s. He wrote, "I have acquired . . . intimate communion with the native mind . . . . [A]midst my work in this land, I have been brought face to face with the very questions which I [once] put by" (qtd. in Haight 389). Colenso's scandalous religious crisis derived from a dawning cultural relativism. Arnold loved to satirize Colenso, yet for Arnold, this corrosive defamiliarizing of received values is the supreme function of "culture" itself. The "believer in culture," he says, must dissolve Liberal complacency, and "get the present believers in action . . . to make a return upon their own minds, scrutinize their stock notions and habits much more" (226). And Tylor salutes the morally bracing results of contemplating the *correspondences* of civilized and savage cultures, which imply that there is "scarce a hand's breadth difference between an English plowman and a negro of Central Africa" (1: 7). The putatively self-evident hierarchy of "culture," as well as its pluralistic relativity, made most sense around 1870 in terms of a burgeoning cultural confrontation along a global frontier.

The third major consequence of a global system is uneven development. The gaps in wealth and power were increasing visibly—between industrialized nations and peripheral colonies, but also, crucially, between "advanced" and "backward" areas of Europe itself. Those groups left behind were moved to struggle for autonomy in the face of Britain's and others' dominance. Such struggles were often justified by a new idea of *national culture* (Wolf 387), or, at least, an older idea which breathed new life in global space: the claim that a nation-state should be the politico-geographical expression of an inward spirit—and further, that distinct, language-based "national cultures" inhered in certain peoples, and were internally constituted, bounded, homogeneous and totalizing—in short, the claim that cultural aggregates were so many billiard balls colliding in the political arena.

Tylor, for example, gestures toward

that remarkable tacit consensus or agreement which so far induces whole populations to unite in the use of the same language, to follow the same religion and customary law, to settle down to the same general level of art and knowledge. . . . There is found to be such regularity in the composition of societies of men, that we can drop individual differences out of sight. (1: 10-11)

Tylor shows the relative novelty of this idea by recognizing that such internal homogeneity is "a remarkable fact, which we notice so little because we have lived all our lives in the midst of it" (1: 12). Arnold laments the fact that Englishmen "have not the notion of *the State*, the nation in its collective and corporate character" (117). He bolsters his arguments for

"culture"—which he calls "an inward operation" (234) radically to be distinguished from material development—through an appeal to the "best self" that transcends individual differences of class or education (134-35). This "best self" postulates some essential unitary Englishness as the invisible yet unassailable ground of State authority (224). Here Arnold veers toward Tylor's famously ambiguous definition of "Culture or Civilization" as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (1:1). These proto-anthropological culture-concepts arguably participate in the rearticulation of a new global order.

The apprehension of uneven development also underwrites the epistemology of Tylor's "comparative method." Only when palpable material differences stratify societies is it possible to draw any comparative conclusions; only when those societies are placed in direct contact, not merely imaginative apposition, is it plausible to posit them as linked stages in a single evolutionary pattern. Tylor declared that "in such comparisons,"

Little respect need be had . . . for date in history or place on the map; the ancient Swiss lake-dweller may be set beside the medieval Aztec, and the Ojibwa of North America beside the Zulu of South Africa. (1: 6)

His method implies a totalized *global* context for "Culture," a *spatialized* sense of juxtaposed practices, and virtually unlimited *access* to the data. This method actually produces new knowledge based on new assumptions and standards of proof. Tylor's approach requires him to postulate a "hypothetical primitive condition" (1: 21) roughly corresponding to contemporary primitive cultures. This assumption reflects what George Stocking has described as the changing status of "contemporary savagery" (77, 111, 172, 185): if previous ethnology had been a science of "residuals," studying the marginal or leftover aspects of human diversity (102, 312), then Tylor's notion of "culture" brings contemporary savagery back into a totalizing global system which, by definition, leaves nothing out. Tylor also inscribes an alternative epistemology when he lauds the tendency of his global comparative framework to self-correct against unreliable ethnographic observation: two otherwise questionable cultural facts glimpsed at the antipodes "incidentally supply proof of their own authenticity" (1: 9)! For the comparative method, then, evidence is, in a sense, self-evidence.

An analogy may help to sharpen a sense of the cartographic imperative posed by global space. In 1883 John Robert Seeley argued that the linear, ontogenetic, Parliament-based narrative of domestic history inadequately described an emerging global history. He advocated a kind of structuralist historiography that traced events not chronologically but "by internal affinity of causation" (99), a history that saw causalities radiating inward from the peripheries as well as outward from the center. Seeley urged his students, faced with England's dizzying expansion, to "break the fetters of narrative"—essentially, to think globally and act locally:

If the States seem to you so large, the Ocean so boundless, and the settlements so scattered that you cannot bring them

into view, make an effort, bring them into the same map and draw the map on a small scale. (99)

When in doubt, make a map. Similarly, Tylor wrote of "the bewildering complexity of the problems which come before the general historian" :

If the field of inquiry be narrowed from History as a whole to that branch of it which is here called Culture, . . . the task of investigation proves to lie within far more moderate compass . . . . The evidence is no longer so wildly heterogeneous, but may be more simply classified and compared . . . stage by stage, in a probable order of evolution. (1: 5-6)

Tylor glimpsed the mutual necessity of global and local outlooks. In mythological exegesis, for instance, "Interpretations made to suit a narrow view reveal their weakness when exposed to a wide one" (1: 281-82); in etymological analysis, the global comparative perspective actually corrects unreliable speculation and *produces* local knowledge: "By simply enlarging the survey of language, the imagination is brought within narrower limits" (1: 162). Amid the overwhelming flood of information about other societies, the anthropologist wields "culture" to subdivide the sublimity of global space. Indeed, in 1869 the Ethnological Society of London commissioned a series of actual maps detailing the conjectural distribution of cultural stages across the globe (Stocking 108).

Let me hastily conclude with a glance at our own tumultuous cultural moment and its distant mid-Victorian mirror. Daily, we hear of the stressful new global environment for our economy, politics and culture; whole countries dissolve and recombine before our eyes, and one pities, in fancy, the crisis-management task force at Rand-McNally. "Culture" is a fighting word as never before, even as it shifts under our postcolonial, multinational feet. We sometimes seem faced with the equally unlivable alternatives of militant cultural-nationalist separatism on the one hand, and the shining utopia of a capitalist New World Order without difference on the other: either Yugoslavia writ large, or the United Colors of Benetton. In a postwar sonnet, William Empson foresaw a world in which "The gigan- / -tic anthropological circus riotously / Holds open all its booths." This world "can then all be taught / And reconverted to be kind and clean." Here, in the center ring of the anthropological circus, perhaps we should, with Empson, feel fortunate that "A more heartening fact about the cultures of man / Is their appalling stubbornness" (83).

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"What Cannot Be": John Addington Symonds's *Memoirs* and Official Mapping of Victorian Homosexuality*

Joseph Cady

The volume of *Memoirs* that John Addington Symonds drafted between 1889 and his death in 1893 and that remained unpublished until 1984 is unique for the period, but has received no significant attention in the discussions of nineteenth-century homosexuality that have been most influential with literary academics to date. In my discussion here I want to recommend the book as a central and indispensable text for the study of Victorian homosexuality. As reflected in the titles of Symonds's own poems "What Cannot Be" (1861) and "L'Amour de l'Impossible" (1882)

and in Lord Alfred Douglas's famous 1894 description of same-sex love as "the love that dare not speak its name," Victorian culture officially held that homosexuality "could not be" in the phenomenal sense—that is, that homosexuality literally "did not exist" in human experience and "was not there" in the Victorian social world—while at the same time implicitly acknowledging that homosexuality was indeed "there" in Victorian society and had to be rigorously contained, by, among other means, the preservation of a strict public silence about it.[1] (I am limiting my specific comments here to male homosexuality, since that was the form of same-sex attraction Victorian culture was manifestly concerned about, as suggested by the exclusion of women from the 1885 Labouchere Amendment. However, the intense public response to *The Well of Loneliness* a generation later suggests that Victorian culture could not have been completely ignorant of lesbianism, a point further supported by the fact that Havelock Ellis and Symonds included a chapter on female homosexuality in their 1897 *Sexual Inversion*).

As the frank and purposeful autobiography of a Victorian homosexual, Symonds's *Memoirs* clearly contests this official Victorian mapping of homosexuality. Defying his culture's insistence that his feelings remain "unutterable," Symonds presents himself in the book as having what we would now call "a homosexual orientation" from birth, an "inborn craving after persons of my own sex" that persists throughout his life (273, 63). One level of the *Memoirs* is a tracing of Symonds's most intense same-sex attractions, experiences, and relationships, from the Clifton youths Willie Dyer and Alfred Brooke, to his first experience of genital male-male sex with the student Norman Moor when he was thirty and Moor nineteen, to his first, liberating visit to a London male brothel in 1877, to his final long-standing attachment to the Venetian gondolier Angelo Fusato. Another level depicts Symonds's repeated efforts to "suppress and overcome" this "love which most people regard as abominable and unnatural" (152, 265), efforts that brought him close to physical and emotional breakdown shortly after his marriage, but whose epitome was that marriage itself, which he calls "the great mistake—perhaps the great crime of my life" because of the double "deceit" involved, of both himself and his wife (184, 185). But perhaps the book's most telling dimension is Symonds's portrait of his growing awareness of what he calls his sexual "nature" (213), which he maintains "sprang up spontaneously" (96) and was first suggested to him in childhood by "certain visions, half-dream, half-reverie . . . which recurred frequently just before sleeping," particularly one about naked Bristol sailors which "afforded me a vivid and mysterious pleasure" (62). Reading influences Symonds's "absorbing passion for persons

of his own sex" (282), but only as self-clarification and self-confirmation, as when he found himself, after first reading *Venus and Adonis* before the age of ten, "yearn[ing] after [Adonis] as an adorable object of passionate love" (63) and when he "discovered . . . the revelation I had been waiting for, . . . the sanction of the love which had been ruling me from childhood" on first reading the *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium* at Harrow (99).

Symonds's *Memoirs* has several frustrating and disappointing features that would certainly have to be addressed in a longer discussion of the book. One that clearly merits special attention is the unresolved tension in Symonds between an insistence that his homosexuality is "natural, instinctive, healthy" (182) and a continued introjection of his dominant culture's condemning views. On the closing page, for instance, he calls homosexuality a "besetting vice" that has plunged him into a state of "perpetual discord" and suggests that "The only exit for a soul thus plagued is suicide" (283). Still, as an extended effort to "speak" the existence of homosexuality in the face of Victorian culture's double-binding contention that it both did not exist and "had to be . . . kept out of sight" (217), Symonds's *Memoirs* should be required reading in Victorian sexuality studies. Its indispensability would emerge in bold relief, for instance, were it placed in a syllabus next to W. E. H. Lecky's signature remark in his widely-read *History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne* (1869), where, speaking for the period's official culture, he declared that the "unnatural passion" of male-male desire was "totally remote from all modern feelings" (311).

Symonds's *Memoirs* is also subversive of the other official mapping of Victorian homosexuality that exists at present. This is the current contention in sexuality studies that homosexuality is a late nineteenth-century "invention," a view that I have elsewhere discussed as "new-inventionism" and that is voiced so regularly now that it may be called the official position on the subject among contemporary vanguard academics.[2] This current dominant mapping of Victorian homosexuality concurs with the official Victorian mapping of the subject in several unintended and ironic ways, most prominently in also maintaining that homosexuality "cannot be" in the period, or, in its case, for most of the period. Because Symonds's challenge to official Victorian culture is obvious from a reading of his text, I want to devote the longer remainder of my discussion to this other, less easily noted, subversiveness the *Memoirs* has in our current academic climate, a feature that only makes the book more crucial as a document in Victorian and modern sexuality studies. New-inventionism attributes "the invention of

homosexuality" in the late nineteenth century chiefly to what it calls "the medicalization of homosexuality" that occurred at that time and maintains that a key element in that "invention" was the coining and promulgating of our contemporary terms for sexual orientation, "homosexuality" and "heterosexuality," by the age's new medical / sexual science.[3] It is otherwise difficult to define new-inventionism's basic claim, since it is often unclear what it actually means by "the invention of homosexuality" at this time—for instance, commentators sometimes seem to be discussing the emergence of individual homosexual self-consciousness, sometimes of broad cultural awareness of homosexuality, sometimes of organized homosexual subcultures, and sometimes of de facto homosexuality / homosexuals themselves.

It is easy to see how Symonds's presentation of his "persistent passion for the male sex" in the *Memoirs* (182) conflicts with the ultimate new-inventionist contention that even a de facto homosexual orientation did not exist until the late nineteenth century, a view whose frankest expression so far is David M. Halperin's recent *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality*.[4] Let me confine my discussion here to the relatively more limited new-inventionist suggestion that a sense of individual homosexual difference was impossible before the 1890s and was largely dependent on the period's new sexological literature and its new scientistic vocabulary of "homosexuality." As suggested in every quotation so far, Symonds's *Memoirs* is pervaded with a sense of homosexual difference, a sense he also reveals quite explicitly elsewhere. For example, Symonds indicates that from an early age he knew his physical desires were not those of what he variously calls "ordinary passionate relations" (109), and he sees that the possession of those desires earned him a unique social and cultural stigma, a stigma that not only affected him individually—"The sort of love I felt for Alfred Brooke . . . was regarded with reprobation by modern society" (128)—but that also branded him categorically, placing him in "a class abhorred by society" (283).

Though in the *Memoirs* Symonds indicates an awareness of this difference long before the new sexological literature at

the end of the century, he certainly could have been influenced by that literature in his self-presentation in the book. He began the *Memoirs* in 1889, three years after the first German edition of Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis*, the event that can be considered the start of new, widely-read sexology, and he did become well-acquainted with the period's new medical / scientific writings about homosexuality. For instance, he interrupted his work on the *Memoirs* in 1891 to write his privately-distributed *A Problem of Modern Ethics* (1891), an early homosexual liberation document which addressed that material, among other matters, particularly the writings of Tardieu, Moreau, Tarnowsky, Lombroso, and Krafft-Ebing. Yet manuscript evidence indicates that Symonds did not become familiar with that literature until at least late 1890, after he seems to have completed the bulk of the *Memoirs*.[5] In the chapters of the *Memoirs* concerned most analytically with his sexual development and awareness, Symonds inserted statements in the manuscript indicating that he had not yet read that literature when he wrote them. For instance, in a marginal note to his discussion of his "emotional development" in Chapter Twelve he states, "December 1891: This was written by me at Venice in May 1889. I had not then studied the cases of sexual inversion recorded by Casper-Liman, Ulrichs and Krafft-Ebing" (182), and he adds a similar and longer disclaimer after describing his recurrent dream about Bristol sailors and his response to *Venus and Adonis* in Chapter Two (63-65).

Symonds's language for his subject in the *Memoirs* is a more subtle feature of the text that also indicates that the late nineteenth-century's "medicalization of homosexuality" played no significant role in his sense of homosexual distinctiveness. New-inventionism views the word "homosexuality" as the first specific, categorical language for the subject in world history and holds that the term subsequently had a defining power, helping crucially to "invent" a "homosexual identity" in relevant persons where none had "existed" before. Strikingly, however, the literal terminology of "homosexuality" is completely absent from Symonds's self-portrait in the *Memoirs*. At no point in the book where it might be

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[1]Symonds's "What Cannot Be" was written in 1861, but not published until 1879, in his privately-printed collection, *Crocuses and Soldanellas*; it is reprinted in Reade 70-71. "L'Amour de l'Impossible" appeared in Symonds's 1882 volume, *Animi Figura*. Douglas's phrase is from his poem "Two Loves," which first appeared in the Oxford undergraduate literary magazine *The Chameleon* in December 1894 and which achieved notoriety when Oscar Wilde quoted it in his defense in his first trial for "gross indecency between males" in 1895. "Two Loves" is reprinted in Coote 262-64.

[2]For more on "new-inventionism," including why I prefer that term to the more familiar "social constructionism," see Cady. A second branch of new-

inventionism locates "the invention of homosexuality" not in the late nineteenth century, but near the start of the eighteenth, with what it believes to be the emergence of the first male homosexual subcultures in major Western European cities at that time. But the overwhelming emphasis in new-inventionism remains on the late nineteenth century, as the studies I cite later indicate, and, because of limitations of space, I omit any consideration of the early eighteenth century view here. For more on both the late nineteenth century and early eighteenth century arguments about "the invention of homosexuality," see Cady.

[3]New-inventionism also emphasizes the emergence in the West at this time of laws directed for the first time specifically against homosexuality, instead of against a more broadly defined "sodomy." But since this legal shift occurred only in two countries (Germany and England), new-inventionism's argument must chiefly rest on the period's new medical / scientific developments. Foucault, for instance, stresses a shift in the nineteenth century from "sodomy" as "a category of forbidden acts . . . defined by the ancient civil or canonical codes" to "the psychological, psychiatric, medical category of homosexuality" (42-43). Similarly, Jeffrey Weeks holds that "From the mid-nineteenth century the medical profession began to break down the formally universally execrated forms of non-procreative sex into a number of 'perversions and deviations.' . . . In this process homosexuality gradually emerges as a separate category" (25). David F. Greenberg, one of the most recent spokespersons for this view, devotes an entire chapter to the "medicalization of homosexuality" that he believes was crucial to the "construction of homosexuality" in the nineteenth century (397-433). The new terms "homosexuality" and "heterosexuality" were actually not coined by late nineteenth-century medical scientists, but by a German-Hungarian writer and translator, Károly Mária Kertbeny (sometimes called Benkert), in 1868; however, the new psychiatric / medical literature was largely responsible for the later dissemination of the terms. For more on the origin of the terms, see Cady, n. 1

[4]For example, Halperin states that "Homosexuality and heterosexuality, as we currently understand them, are modern, Western, bourgeois productions . . . .

The formation of a sexual orientation independent of relative degrees of masculinity and femininity . . . takes place during the latter part of the nineteenth century and comes into its own only in the twentieth" (8-9). Since his syntax might at first obscure the point, it should be stressed that Halperin is not simply saying here that our "current understandings" of homosexuality and heterosexuality are "modern . . . productions." As written, Halperin's sentence says that the things we now understand by the terms "homosexuality" and "heterosexuality" are "modern" inventions, a position further supported by the materiality of his language (e. g., "productions," "formation," "takes place," "comes into its own"). For other new-inventionist commentary suggesting that the late nineteenth century witnessed the "invention" of the actual phenomena of homosexuality and heterosexuality and not just of our current conceptions of them, see Jonathan Ned Katz's remarks that "In the forty years between 1880 and 1920 . . . the idea of the 'homosexual' and 'heterosexual' was first constructed by doctors . . . . The doctors' homosexual / heterosexual hypothesis was a self-fulfilling prophecy which helped to create those very creatures, emotions, mental states, and behaviors which medical men had first defined" (137, 150).

[5]Phyllis Grosskurth says that Symonds worked "steadily and feverishly" for eighteen months after starting the *Memoirs* in May of 1889. Then (that is, late 1890 / early 1891) he broke off the manuscript for a time, adding a good deal of marginalia later. It was apparently at this time that he first read the new medical / psychiatric literature (Symonds, *Memoirs* 18).

accurately used to describe his same-sex feelings does Symonds use the new scientistic vocabulary, a fact that amounts to a private rejection of it, for, as we know, he did become familiar with that language while writing the *Memoirs* and could have revised the manuscript in its terms had it had the determining force new-inventionism implies it did for the period's homosexuals.[6] Instead, Symonds characteristically has two other ways of denoting what we would now call "a homosexual orientation." One is the older, affective, categorical language that, contrary to new-inventionism, did exist for the subject. His favorite term of this kind is "masculine love," which, as I have argued elsewhere, was a direct, frank, and prominent Renaissance language for male-male attraction and survived in fluctuating use until the early twentieth century (Cady). For example, elaborating on the effect his first reading of Plato had on him, Symonds says, "For the first time I saw the possibility of resolving in a practical harmony the discords of my instincts. I perceived that masculine love had its virtue as well as its vice, and stood in this respect upon the same ground as normal sexual appetite" (99). Symonds's other characteristic language for homosexuality in the *Memoirs* is simply plain descriptive terminology, as several of his comments I have already quoted indicate. Here he employs a variety of extended phrases that amount to direct de facto denotations of the subject, referring, for example, to his "natural inclination for the male sex" (166), to "the sexual relation between man and man" (227), to "passion between males" (100), and to "the love for man for man" (189).

Though the late nineteenth-century's "medicalization of homosexuality" may be significant in the history of sexuality in several other respects, Symonds *Memoirs* suggests that it had no essential relation to homosexuals's sense of their own difference in the period and to their language for their experience. Those can emerge, the *Memoirs* implies, simply from the texture of individual homosexual experience, especially under heterosexual cultural domination—that is, Symonds's self-portrait suggests that persons attracted to their own sex will automatically feel "different" in a culture whose only permissible and public model for sexuality is heterosexual, and Symonds's direct, de facto, denotation of homosexuality indicates that, when they wanted to or were free to, homosexuals could build a meaningful language for homosexuality out of their available everyday vocabulary alone, independent of their dominant culture's official language for it. Because of its inherent point about how homosexuality should ideally be studied, it is this general implication of the *Memoirs*, rather than any of its more specific items of content, that in my view ultimately makes the book an indispensable source for its subject. (For example, in recommending the *Memoirs* here, I do not necessarily mean to endorse Symonds's particular innateness conception of

homosexuality. To my mind, all considerations of homosexuality's origins ought to be retired, and one of new-inventionism's most troubling ironies is the way its preoccupation with homosexuality's "invention" has helped to revive an etiological question that traditionally has always been homophobic and that in the early days of gay liberation we thought had been put to rest.)

All formulations about homosexuality, Symonds's *Memoirs* implies, should ideally be based on concrete testimony from within homosexual experience. Another ironic coincidence between the official Victorian and new-inventionist mappings of homosexuality is their contrasting practice of approaching homosexuality abstractly, externalistically, and deductively—that is, both start from presumably "higher" and more authentic bases outside homosexuality, from which they work down to the subject to tell it "what it is" or what its possibilities are. Official Victorian culture's base is its complex of assumptions about nature, erotic relationships, and gender roles, among other factors. In new-inventionism this externalism is seen rather in the kinds of sources it typically relies on. For instance, commentators like Foucault and Jeffrey Weeks invoke law codes or medical texts, while others like Eve K. Sedgwick work from poststructuralist theory or, in her *Between Men*, chiefly from heterosexual rather than homosexual literature.[7] Richard Dellamora's recent *Masculine Desire: The Sexual Politics of Victorian Aestheticism* is trailblazing in actually focusing on materials from Victorian writers whom we would now call homosexual, though even here Symonds receives only minor attention. Of course, it is not clear from Symonds's *Memoirs* how we should study homosexuality in situations where there seems to be no available homosexual speech itself. However, as a private homosexual document from a period when homosexuality supposedly "did not exist," one that uses a differentiating language for homosexuality when there supposedly was none, the *Memoirs* does, at a minimum, caution us against presuming that there was no homosexual experience or consciousness in an era just because official mappings of the subject say so. Furthermore, only by attending to the kind of individual homosexual testimony the *Memoirs* gives us may we begin to identify those unnerving qualities in homosexuality that seem to provoke dominant cultures to try to erase it from their official experiential maps.

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The Ring and the Book and *Light in August*: Faulkner's Response to Browning

Martin Bidney

Ever since Cleanth Brooks drew up his remarkable tables of Faulkner's allusions to English poets (mostly nineteenth-century [Brooks 345-54]), critics have been aware of the novelist's deep indebtedness to poetic tradition. Recent scholarship, by showing the wide range of influences on Faulkner's own early books of verse, and by demonstrating, in turn, the lasting impression left by Faulkner's poetic apprenticeship on his novelistic art (Sensibar *passim*),[1] encourages us to explore Faulkner's appropriation of the poetic heritage more fully than has been done before. In his brilliant new biography of Faulkner, Frederick R. Karl suggests in passing that in *As I Lay Dying*, a novel written as a series of dramatic monologues, "The multiplicity of voices—and here the literary influence seems Browning, especially the techniques of *The Ring and the Book*—established Faulkner's sense of the world as relativistic, fluid, and lacking in center" (393). This sense of the elusive complexities of human motivation, I would suggest, becomes even stronger in *Light in August*, and it is there that we should look for a still more pervasive Faulknerian appropriation of what Robert Browning had to teach, both as literary artist and as moral thinker. In *Light in August* Faulkner uses a variety of specific images and image-clusters which may also be found in *The Ring and the Book*, and he uses them for the same ambitious purpose that animated Browning's masterwork. Like Browning, Faulkner seeks to show how the exercise of visionary

power makes possible a penetrating moral psychology of crime and punishment.

Light in August is Faulkner's most comprehensive attempt to reassess and refashion, in his own terms, the poetic legacy of the nineteenth century. Faulkner's rewritings of Keats in this novel have often been remarked (Pearson, Pascal). His reimaginings of lyrical moments from Blake, Wordsworth, Byron, and Shelley are equally impressive (Bidney, "Faulkner's Variations"); and his bold adaptations of Tennysonian visions, both lyric and epic, clarify our understanding of the novel's major characters (D'Avanzo; Bidney, "Victorian Vision"). Though the question of a Browning-Faulkner linkage in this novel has not yet been broached in the critical literature, we know that Faulkner's mother "greatly admired" Browning, that his friend Stephen Vincent Benét enthusiastically imitated Browning's art, and that in December 1969 during an illness Faulkner asked his friend Linton Massey for some Browning to read (Blotner, one-vol. ed. 16, 58; two-vol. ed. 1: 205; 2: 1808). Indeed, Faulkner's strong attachment to the Romantics and to Tennyson makes it likely that Browning, the most novelistic of nineteenth-century psychological explorers in verse, would have had special appeal for him. In particular *The Ring and the Book*, like *Light in August*, deals with the complexity of the motives for violence, the problematic nature of moral judgment, and the need for a compassionate attempt to probe

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[6]Interestingly, Symonds does use the new vocabulary of "homosexuality" in *A Problem in Modern Ethics* and *Sexual Inversion*, though mixed with a sprinkling of the earlier and more everyday language he uses in the *Memoirs*. But it is surely significant that he never used that terminology when writing most privately, as in the *Memoirs*. Perhaps the age's homosexual authors felt that the new medical language was a cultural concession they had to make when writing about homosexuality publicly.

[7]For Foucault and Weeks, see n. 3. In her more recent *Epistemology of the Closet*, Sedgwick does discuss a small and highly selective sample of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century male homosexual writers. But she precedes her discussion of them with a long introductory chapter called "Axiomatic" (it takes up one quarter of the book), apparently on the assumption that homosexuality can only be comprehended via a prior immersion in poststructuralist theory. Homosexual writing, Sedgwick seems to say, cannot substantially speak for itself, nor can it be understood largely through readers' own experiences, common sense, and historical knowledge of gay oppression.

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[1]In the context of the present essay the section on "Echoes of 'A Dead Dancer' in *Light in August*" (Sensibar 97-101) is of special interest.

accurately used to describe his same-sex feelings. Symonds use the new scientistic vocabulary, a f amounts to a private rejection of it, for, as we kn become familiar with that language while writin and could have revised the manuscript in it the determining force new-inventionism period's homosexuals.[6] Instead, Sy has two other ways of denoting v homosexual orientation." One i cal language that, contrary the subject. His favorite which, as I have ar prominent Renai survived in fl (Cady). Fr ing of P saw c

split-second "white" self-concepts within Joe's ... tions that have plagued his life and that accelerate as he nea his death—are depicted in words that pointedly recall Browning's metaphor of a galvanic sphere that shifts at a finger's touch from black to white and vice versa, an emblem of the mercurial elusiveness of human motives, the near impossibility of definitive moral judgments. Indeed, Browning's metaphoric use of "white" and "black" to symbolize respectively the known and the unknown shows a profound psychological understanding that Faulkner, in turn, elaborates and clarifies as he shows us how fear of what is unknown becomes tragically transformed into hate.

Faulkner takes motifs from the suffering of Browning's Guido and transfers them, still more movingly (for we feel for Joe more than we do for Guido), to Joe Christmas. Guido's surreal prison-vision of worms, tears, and sweat offers three grotesquely interrelated motifs that Faulkner (as we shall see) carries over to the scene of Joe's traumatic experience with the crazed dietitian in the orphanage. Guido's misogynistically loathing rejection of Pompilia's kindness, metaphorically expressed as a nauseating reaction to food and female scent, again offers imaginal material that compounds Joe's horror in the dietitian's closet. But Joe is not just a sufferer: as outraged condemner of his unjust fate, he is given the metaphoric lightning and weaponry that accompany the anger of Browning's outraged Pompilia. Moreover, Rev. Hightower, whose compassionate understanding shows genuine penetration of Joe's (and of his own) tragic complexity, sees a vision of ethereal, struggling forces that reminds us dramatically of a comparable vision of celestial conflict that appears to Browning's Pope. Indeed, the metaphoric "light" that Faulkner has to offer reappears constantly in visionary rings.

It is appropriate that Faulkner should borrow so many details from *The Ring and the Book*, for—as we shall see repeatedly in tracing the reworkings of Browning's motifs—he shares Browning's vision of our complex moral nature, and he shares Browning's willingness to employ grotesquely vivid metaphors to dramatize that complexity. Grotesque imagery, in Faulkner as in Browning, heightens the painfulness of moral dramas even while it clarifies them: this painful vividness allows us, even compels us, to suffer along with the accused. And a metaphorics of combined and conflicting opposites—as with Browning's enigmatic brilliant rocket soaring into the unknown, or his galvanic sphere with its dazzling, dazing alternations—is the most useful literary tool Faulkner could have chosen to convey his Browningesque intuitions of our mental wars within, both as victims and as would-be understanders of our own elusive, riddling nature.

The rocketlike death-moments of Browning's and Faulkner's executed offenders produce different impressions on the respective crowds of spectators: Guido's glare of defiant desperation, ghastly now in breathless silence, contrasts with Joe's look of strangely triumphant peace, experienced as if after a rush of released breath. Browning's rocket symbol relates to the limits of our moral and metaphysical understanding, though Browning's Guido—hardly a lifelong victim like Faulkner's Joe—is altogether of a lesser moral stature than Joe. After Guido concludes his second monologue with the despairing plea, "Pompilia, will you let them murder me?" (XI: 2427)[2] Browning begins his poem's final section, "The Book and the Ring," with the metaphor that apparently left such a strong imprint on Faulkner's imagination:

> Here were the end, had anything an end:
> Thus, lit and launched, up and up roared and soared
> A rocket, till the key o' the vault was reached
> And wide heaven held, a breathless minute-space,
> In brilliant usurpature: thus caught spark,
> Rushed to the height, and hung at full of fame
> Over men's upturned faces, ghastly thence,
> Our glaring Guido: now decline must be.
> In it explosion, you have seen his act,
> By my power—may-be, judged it by your own,—
> Or composite as good orbs prove, or crammed
> With worse ingredients than the Wormwood Star.
> (12: 1-12)

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Browning further sets the precedent for viewing the symbolic rocket scene in the context of the theme of blackness. For Browning, the theme has no evident reference to racial stereotypes such as Joe has been forced to internalize; instead, it refers primarily to our moral and metaphysical incertitude. Whatever mitigation of Guido's own personal doom may be promised by his last moments, the eventual destiny, like the ultimate inner nature, of his troubled spirit is so obscure that the final apparition threatens to disappear into darkness as soon as seen. The moment's meaning will become more difficult to discern, more "black," its implications receding ever further into the vast unknown with each new retelling or redepicting of the scene:

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> Follow the main streaks, meditate the mode
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As we watch the fading fall of a bright trail of sparks into increasing dimness and invisibility as it "hastes to blend with black," we see, too, that our knowledge of Guido's (or human?) nature quickly proves elusive if not illusory, hasting

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the causes of criminality.

Browning's Guido Franceschini and Faulkner's Joe Christmas affect the reader in quite different ways—Joe elicits far more sympathy than Guido—but their similarly unhappy fates do not rule out the possibility of some final sense of mysterious transcendence, which Faulkner and Browning surprisingly convey through the same symbolic vehicle: the deaths of the violent offenders are in both cases accompanied by the striking metaphoric emblem of an upward-rushing, spark-emitting rocket. In both cases the revelatory solemnity of this rocket epiphany is buttressed by Biblical allusion, with tragically ambivalent implications for both dying men. And the rhetoric accompanying the two death scenes shares the explicit theme of blackness, a theme Browning and Faulkner both use to symbolize the infinitely vast, unknown reaches of human nature. The Browning-Faulkner parallels are surprisingly detailed: even the horrifying, murderous castration of Faulkner's Joe Christmas is described with the same phraseology Browning applies (metaphorically) to Guido. Still more important for our grasp of the two books' moral themes: the split-second alternations of the conflicting "black" and "white" self-concepts within Joe's mind—bewildering alternations that have plagued his life and that accelerate as he nears his death—are depicted in words that pointedly recall Browning's metaphor of a galvanic sphere that shifts at a finger's touch from black to white and vice versa, an emblem of the mercurial elusiveness of human motives, the near impossibility of definitive moral judgments. Indeed, Browning's metaphoric use of "white" and "black" to symbolize respectively the known and the unknown shows a profound psychological understanding that Faulkner, in turn, elaborates and clarifies as he shows us how fear of what is unknown becomes tragically transformed into hate.

Faulkner takes motifs from the suffering of Browning's Guido and transfers them, still more movingly (for we feel for Joe more than we do for Guido), to Joe Christmas. Guido's surreal prison-vision of worms, tears, and sweat offers three grotesquely interrelated motifs that Faulkner (as we shall see) carries over to the scene of Joe's traumatic experience with the crazed dietitian in the orphanage. Guido's misogynistically loathing rejection of Pompilia's kindness, metaphorically expressed as a nauseating reaction to food and female scent, again offers imaginal material that compounds Joe's horror in the dietitian's closet. But Joe is not just a sufferer: as outraged condemner of his unjust fate, he is given the metaphoric lightning and weaponry that accompany the anger of Browning's outraged Pompilia. Moreover, Rev. Hightower, whose compassionate understanding shows genuine penetration of Joe's (and of his own) tragic complexity, sees a vision of ethereal, struggling forces that reminds us dramatically of a comparable vision of celestial conflict that appears to Browning's Pope. Indeed, the metaphoric "light" that Faulkner has to offer reappears constantly in visionary rings.

It is appropriate that Faulkner should borrow so many details from *The Ring and the Book*, for—as we shall see repeatedly in tracing the reworkings of Browning's motifs—he shares Browning's vision of our complex moral nature, and he shares Browning's willingness to employ grotesquely vivid metaphors to dramatize that complexity. Grotesque imagery, in Faulkner as in Browning, heightens the painfulness of moral dramas even while it clarifies them: this painful vividness allows us, even compels us, to suffer along with the accused. And a metaphorics of combined and conflicting opposites—as with Browning's enigmatic brilliant rocket soaring into the unknown, or his galvanic sphere with its dazzling, dazing alternations—is the most useful literary tool Faulkner could have chosen to convey his Browningesque intuitions of our mental wars within, both as victims and as would-be understanders of our own elusive, riddling nature.

The rocketlike death-moments of Browning's and Faulkner's executed offenders produce different impressions on the respective crowds of spectators: Guido's glare of defiant desperation, ghastly now in breathless silence, contrasts with Joe's look of strangely triumphant peace, experienced as if after a rush of released breath. Browning's rocket symbol relates to the limits of our moral and metaphysical understanding, though Browning's Guido—hardly a lifelong victim like Faulkner's Joe—is altogether of a lesser moral stature than Joe. After Guido concludes his second monologue with the despairing plea, "Pompilia, will you let them murder me?" (XI: 2427)[2] Browning begins his poem's final section, "The Book and the Ring," with the metaphor that apparently left such a strong imprint on Faulkner's imagination:

> Here were the end, had anything an end:
> Thus, lit and launched, up and up roared and soared
> A rocket, till the key o' the vault was reached
> And wide heaven held, a breathless minute-space,
> In brilliant usurpature: thus caught spark,
> Rushed to the height, and hung at full of fame
> Over men's upturned faces, ghastly thence,
> Our glaring Guido: now decline must be.
> In it explosion, you have seen his act,
> By my power—may-be, judged it by your own,—
> Or composite as good orbs prove, or crammed
> With worse ingredients than the Wormwood Star.
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to dissolve into the infinite of the unknown. Our insight is fleeting[5] and limited; we confront a mystery.

Though Faulkner of course was not crucially dependent on Browning to teach him about the symbolic implications of blackness, Browning's way of interweaving the blackness-theme with the metaphor of the rocket to epitomize the dying moments of an executed offender could not have escaped Faulkner's notice. In Faulkner's reworking, the blackness is the very energy that propels the rocket:

> Then his face, body, all, seemed to collapse, to fall in upon itself, and from out the slashed garments about his hips and loins the pent black blood seemed to rush like a released breath. It seemed to rush out of his pale body like the rush of sparks from a rising rocket; upon that black blast the man seemed to rise soaring into their memories forever and ever. (513)

Browning mentions how "What once was seen . . . melts . . . Across our memory" till it "dies and leaves all dark," for "brightness . . . hastes to blend with black." The memory of Joe emphatically will *not* die; in this it is implicitly contrasted with the memory of Guido. Instead, Joe's brightness hastes to blend with black in quite a different way: his outrushing black blood merges, in Faulkner's description, with the bright sparks whose release propels the dying man symbolically upward. Triumphant liberation and tragic death, sparks and blackness, are wholly intermingled, their meanings no longer separable. Thus for Faulkner, as for Browning, "brightness. . . hastes to blend with black."

Indeed, despite the transcendence intimated by Joe's gaze and by the rocket's triumphant ascent, the tragi-grotesque castration scene in Faulkner's novel remains one of the most horrifying moments in modern literature, and part of its impact may well result from Faulkner's relentless literalizing of an image that in Browning's poem is only a self-characterizing metaphor of Guido's. When Guido faces death, his unregenerately hedonistic impulse is first of all to indulge his "wolfishness" (11: 2057), to give his savage fantasies of vengeance free rein, so as perhaps to purge them from his being and leave room for soberer thoughts. Guido's vision of prospective execution as a purging fire combines the motifs of a surging flow and a metaphoric unmanning, images that Faulkner combines and literalizes in Joe's death scene as a castration, the visible release of a torrent of blood. Browning's precise wording bears study:

> The honest instinct, *pent and crossed* through life,
> Let *surge* by death into a *visible flow*
> Of rapture . . . . (11: 2064-66)
>
> *Unmanned*, remanned: I hold it probable—
> With something changeless at the heart of me
> To know me by, some *nucleus* that's myself:

> Accretions did it wrong? Away with them—
> You soon shall see the use of fire!
>
> (11:2393-97, emphasis added)

"Pent," "surge," "visible flow," "Unmanned"—it seems probable that this image complex was metamorphosed in Faulkner's mind, becoming more horrifying, more literal and real, as it was more vividly seen. Even Guido's metaphors of "nucleus" and "fire" take on more convincing and more tragic force as we see Joe folding or collapsing inward toward a mere nucleus of himself, when the "pent" blood (Browning's word—which Faulkner borrows) surges out in sparks: "Then his face, body, all, seemed to collapse, to fall in upon itself, and from out the slashed garments about his hips and loins the pent black blood seemed to rush . . . ." "Pent *and crossed*," says Browning—even the crucifixion theme, so apposite to the fate of Joe Christmas, may have grown and developed in Faulkner's mind as he read this Browning passage.

Very likely Faulkner's imaginative adaptation of Browning's rocket emblem and the blackness-motif accompanying it was enriched by another Browning image closely related to both blackness and rocket sparks: the galvanic glass ball (a miniature electricity generator) whose electrical current or "magic fire" moves startlingly at a finger-touch of the sphere, causing dazzling alternations of black and white within (*RB* 1: 1368). This symbol of our unpredictable human nature appears at the end of Book I, "The Ring and the Book," just as the rocket image appears at the beginning of Book XII, "The Book and the Ring," each image (rocket and electric sphere) thus placed at an equal distance from the outermost ends of the poem as a whole, as also from the poem's center. The symmetry could hardly be more precise: Browning is urging us to consider the two images together, and Faulkner, I suggest, probably did so. For the theme dramatized by Browning's galvanic or electrical sphere—the interconvertibility of "black" and "white"—is the key to the psychology of Faulkner's Joe Christmas.

For Browning, the symbolic electrical fire in the human galvanic sphere—that is to say, any motive or impulse within the human individual—is mercurial and changeable because it is human, and there is but a "hair's-breadth" of difference between "shine" and "shade," between what is "styled" white and what is "stigmatized" as black. The predominant color can change in an instant, a second, in the flicker of a spark. It is very important to stress that, for Browning, the qualities that are interconvertible within the human sphere or (psyche) are not described as having any inherent, essential goodness or badness. They may "styled" or described in neutral or positive terms, or alternatively they may be "stigmatized," pejoratively labeled. Browning's galvanic ball is the emblem of a protean human psychic energy that takes instantaneously interconvertible forms—alternating forms, alternative forms. These forms are not only difficult to judge, they are nearly impossible even to *see* correctly:

> . . . See it for yourselves,
> This man's act, changeable because alive!
> Action now shrouds, now shows the informing thought;
> Man, like a glass ball *with a spark a-top,*
> Out of the magic fire that lurks inside,
> Shows one tint at a time to take the eye:
> Which, let a finger touch the silent sleep,
> Shifted a hair's-breadth *shoots you dark for bright,*
> *Suffuses bright with dark, and baffles so*
> *Your sentence absolute for shine or shade.*
> Once set such orbs,—*white styled, black stigmatized,*—
> A-rolling, see them once on the other side
> Your good men and your bad men every one
> From Guido Franceschini to Guy Faux,
> Oft would you rub your eyes and change your names.
>
> (1: 1364-78, emphasis mine)

At a finger's touch of the "silent deep," of the human individual's unconscious mental regions, baffling changes occur. White turns black, and vice versa, so fast that you "rub your eyes" and repeatedly try to alter your labels or "change your names" for what you think you see happening—a frantic attempt that may well be futile. The dizzying changes are too rapid.

It is precisely such baffling, dramatic alterations that recur within the galvanic sphere of Joe Christmas's mind: Faulkner presents for our instruction a test case, a vivid illustration, of what Browning was talking about. In one of the profoundest passages of *Light in August*, Gavin Stevens's friend, called simply a "professor" (and he is indeed a penetrating analyst and expositor, a good teacher), hypothetically reconstructs Joe's volatile, unpredictably and suddenly alternating or shifting motives. In Joe's psyche, theorizes the professor, "white" and "black" (as Joe had been taught to conceptualize them) were felt as irresistible forces alternating with lightning swiftness:

> . . . all those successions of thirty years . . . which had put that stain either on his white blood or his black blood, whichever you will, and which killed him . . . . Because the black blood drove him first to the negro cabin. And then the white blood drove him out of there, as it was the black blood which snatched up the pistol and the white blood which would not let him fire it. And it was the white blood which sent him to the minister . . . . Then I believe that the white blood deserted him for the moment. *Just a second, a flicker*, allowing the black to rise in its final moment and make him turn upon that on which he had postulated his hope of salvation . . . . And then the black blood failed him again, as it must have in crises all his life. He did not kill the minister. He . . . let them shoot him to death, with that loaded and unfired pistol in his hand.
>
> (495-96, emphasis added)

"Just a second, a flicker," is all it takes for each of the fateful changes, for Joe's volatile psyche resembles that of every human according to Browning: it is a galvanic "glass ball with a spark a-top," a sphere that needs but a second, a mere finger-touch, to shoot from "dark" into "bright" or from what is "styled" white into what is "stigmatized" as black, thereby baffling any "sentence absolute for shine or shade." Joe feels himself to be both white and black (as indeed we all are, Browning might interject—we are dynamic, volatile syntheses of all sorts of unjudgeable contrasts), but Joe has been conditioned to regard the two socially defined identities as mutually antagonistic. Any friendly contact with a member of either group ("whites" or "blacks") triggers off the shock of the inner antagonism, which pushes him toward contact with a member of the other group, setting off once again the same inevitable shock effect. The fact that in Faulkner's book "black" and "white" also denote supposed racial identities simply adds an additional sociohistorical layer of meaning—tragic meaning—to those offered by Browning.

So although Browning presents the galvanic ball image as an emblem of "Man" in general while in Faulkner it emblematizes one specific person (Joe Christmas), this difference is less crucial by far than the essential, underlying similarity. Indeed, with a name recalling that of Jesus Christ, Joe Christmas, on the archetypic level, is as much a figure for universal humanity as is Browning's galvanic sphere. Our human psyche "Suffuses bright with dark" and vice versa: we are composite creatures, multiplicities. In addition, by making the psychological analysis of Joe Christmas so specific and dramatic, Faulkner not only brings out unsuspected implications (and applications) of the Browning image but also does justice to its vividness and force.

To understand still more deeply Faulkner's response to Browning, we must look for a moment at the ways Browning uses the terms "white" and "black," along with the related pairing, "shine" and "shade." In *The Ring and the Book* Browning shows a marked fondness for both pairs of terms, using them repeatedly, but he uses each pair in two quite different ways: to mean good versus bad, and (much more profoundly) to mean the known versus the unknown. Guido himself uses the words "black" and "white" simply to mean bad and good: the court, he says, may call him "black" or "Guilty," but he is really "One white integrity from head to heel" (5: 1894-95, 1897).[6] Yet a speaker in Book XII asks, "Do you continue in the old belief? / Where blackness bides unbroke, must devils brood?"—and the point of the speaker's anecdotal fable is that the black cave rumored to hold a terrifying, hated "idol-god" was really the abode of a holy man: "The abhorred one was a martyr all the time, / Heaven's saint whereof earth was not worthy" (12: 526-27, 504, 524-25). Here the blackness, rightly understood, indicated no evil at all but simply something unknown, and the unknown was feared. It is in this sense that, as we saw above, when sparks of the

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quickly flaring Guido-rocket fade and their traces "haste to blend with black," the motif of blackness leads us to the realm of the unknown or unseen. Certainly Joe Christmas, the "abhorred one," was made a "martyr all the time" because of incomprehension and unreasoned condemnation. Joe's blackness was an unknown, something not understood and therefore feared.

In a fashion similar to his twofold treatment of the words "black" and "white," Browning uses "shine" and "shade" to mean either good versus bad, or (again more profoundly, with an insight that evidently impressed Faulkner) the known versus the unknown. Here we see "shine" and "shade" meaning respectively bad and good:

> Well, the result was something of a shade
> On the parties thus accused,—how otherwise?
> Shade, but with shine as unmistakable.
> Each had a prompt defence . . . . (3: 1340-43)

But in the following passage, "shine" and "shade" mean known and unknown:

> So do the facts abound and superabound:
> And nothing hinders that we lift the case
> Out of the shade into the shine, allow
> Qualified persons to pronounce at last . . . . (4: 5-8)

Shine and shade, white and black, indicate differences, but not necessarily moral opposites. What appears good may be simply familiar. What seems bad may have been "stigmatized" by ignorance.

That is precisely the point that Faulkner (more clearly and consistently, I think, than Browning) makes throughout the novel: blackness, for most of the book's people, stands for the unknown; people fear what they do not know; and fear turns easily to hate in pre-emptive gestures of defense. Joe Christmas, internalizing the habits of his repressive and male-dominated society, uses blackness to refer to all those aspects of his being which are unknown to, have no place in, are forcibly suppressed by, his conscious mind: "the lightless hot wet primogenitive Female" element (126)—passion, intuition, sexuality, feeling itself. "The abhorred one was a martyr all the time," as Browning says; Joe punishes that part of himself which he cannot and will not allow himself to know. By associating the unknown quite explicitly, in Freudian fashion, with the unconscious in his symbolism of blackness and dark, Faulkner clarifies the psychological mechanisms whereby the hidden and the feared can become the repressed and the abhorred, so that the unknown becomes regarded as the simply bad. It seems highly likely that Faulkner's psychological deepening of the implications of "white" and "black" in the historical context of *Light in August* owes much to the stimulus afforded by Browning's explorations of these and related terms in *The Ring and the Book*—primarily in the rocket and galvanic sphere passages, but also quite significantly in the other Browning passages we have cited.

Psychological deepening and relentless literalizing (of the sort Faulkner practices when he takes Guido's fantasy of a "pent" "instinct" allowed to "surge" into a "visible flow" and literalizes the image into a visible surging flow of pent-up

blood when Joe is castrated)—these are two metamorphic processes that Faulkner likes to combine in rewriting Browning. A perfect example of the combination is Faulkner's intensifying treatment of an already grotesque, surreal description: the passage occurs in the preview of Book I of Browning's epic, where a nightmarishly transformed wall of Guido's vile prison cell hideously emblematizes or projects Guido's inner torment. We see a "close" and "fetid" cell

> Where the hot vapour of an agony,
> Struck into drops on the cold wall, runs down—
> Horrible worms made out of sweat and tears—
> (1: 287-88)

Faulkner expands and elaborates each of the components of this Daliesque inferno: the tears, the sweat, the worms. He does this to clarify both the portrayal and the diagnosis of Joe's guilt-inducing trauma, so the reader will empathetically understand the built-up pressures that later find an outlet in Joe's repeated acts of violence.

The tears of agony that run down the prison-cell walls of Browning's Guido reappear—this time running down the windows—in the orphanage where Faulkner's Joe Christmas spends the earliest years of his childhood. In this equally prisonlike enclosure, the "bleak windows where in rain soot from the nearly adjacenting [sic] chimneys streaked like black tears" (131) show us Joe's inward weeping externalized on the windows in metaphoric tears that are, appropriately, "black." Just a little later, in the dietitian's closet scene, Faulkner introduces the related Browning theme of intense, persistent "sweating" as Joe begins to feel both mentally and physically sick, guilty and nauseated, at having secretly eaten the forbidden, candylike toothpaste:

> By feel he could see the diminishing tube. He began to sweat. Then he found out that he had been sweating for some time, that for some time now he had been doing nothing else but sweating . . . . He seemed to turn in upon himself, watching himself sweating, watching himself smear another worm of paste into his mouth which his stomach did not want. (134)

The "sweat and tears" intermingled in the vision of Browning's Guido are just as intimately related for Faulkner's Joe, whose misery here overwhelms both body and mind (indeed, Faulkner echoes the Browning phrase "sweat and tears" elsewhere as well, in a description of Hightower's misery as he hears Byron Bunch's tale of woe: "Once before Byron saw him sit while sweat ran down his face like tears; now he sees the tears themselves run down the flabby cheeks like sweat" [402]). And as Joe smears "another worm of paste" into his mouth, he thereby completes Faulkner's Browningesque nightmare ("Horrible worms made out of sweat and tears"). It is a parallel Faulkner wants us to notice: repeatedly, throughout the toothpaste-trauma episode, he tells of the "pink worm," the "invisible worm" (132, 33). The swallowing of the sexual worm is Joe's symbolic, and tragically permanent, internalizing of guilt—guilt for theft, but compounded by the dietitian's puritan paranoia and Hines's racial bigotry into guilt for having supposedly spied on a sexual tryst and even

simply for being black. Faulkner has taken a powerfully grotesque Browning image of sweat, tears, and worms, and has made it central to our understanding of Joe's lifelong psychological martyrdom.

Joe's attitude toward women and female imagery also has its clear prototype in Guido's metaphoric language, which Faulkner again relentlessly literalizes in sounding Joe's mental depths. Faulkner takes the language of Guido's hatred of Pompilia and gives it literal meaning as arising from the facts of Joe's closet-trauma of guilt and sorrow, of toothpaste and sensuality and paranoia and female persecution. The motifs that Faulkner appropriates from the following speech by Guido form a cluster—secrecy, cloying sweetness turned to something repulsively inedible, repellent female fragrances, inability to accept food from women:

> Nor is it in me to unhate my hates,—
> I use up my last strength to strike once more
> Old Pietro in the wine-house-gossip-face,
> To trample underfoot the whine and *wile*
> Of beast Violante,—and I grow *one gorge*
> *To loathingly reject* Pompilia's pale
> *Poison my hasty hunger took for food.*
> A strong tree wants no wreaths about its trunk,
> No *cloying cups, no sickly sweet of scent*, ...
> (11: 2400-08, emphasis added)

Guido talks about growing "one gorge / To loathingly reject" metaphoric food; Faulkner literalizes the regurgitation in transferring the language to a depiction of Joe's vomiting up the toothpaste. Browning's rhetoric about "cloying" and about "sickly sweet of scent" becomes the image complex associated forever in Joe's mind with sticky-sweet toothpaste eaten in a woman's closet amid the perfumes of women's dresses: "something sweet and sticky to eat, and also pinkcolored and surreptitious," something that loathsomely recalls "rife, pinkwomansmelling obscurity" (132, 134). Accused of hiding to spy on a sexual affair, Joe comes to associate women with punishable secrecy (recalling the "wile" mentioned in Guido's quoted speech), with cloying sweetness, with both food and scents that, once attractive, have become permanently repellent. All his life Joe will reject nourishment from females—from his foster mother, from his paramour, even (by extension) from his fellow workers at the planing mill (170, 261, 37). Literalizing Guido's imagery, Faulkner deepens our understanding of Joe's character.[7]

Of course, Joe's story is not simply one of guilt, resentment, suffering; his rocket-like metaphoric resurrection-scene has, as we saw, its element of enigmatic triumph, with its implicit and memorable condemnation of his torturers.[8] This dual aspect of Joe's life-and death is clarified by the way Faulkner echoes Browning's presentation of Pompilia. For Joe resembles Pompilia in two contrasting ways. Like Pompilia, Joe was trapped by fate at an early age in a sexually unhealthy situation; like her, he is repeatedly humiliated and

degraded. But—also like Pompilia—Joe appears in Browningesque imagery as a figure of nemesis, of tragic but imaginatively transcendent and imposing indignation. Browning's Caponsacchi recalls the inspired wrath, as of a militant archangel, with which Pompilia rose to defend her baby. The metaphoric electric sword, the flashings, fulgurations, are tokens of a doomed heroism:

> That erect form, flashing brow, fulgurant eye,
> That voice immortal (oh, that voice of hers!)
> That vision in the blood-red day-break—that
> Leap to life of the pale electric sword
> Angels go armed with,—that was not the last
> O' the lady! (6: 1600-05)

Faulkner reworks the electrical eye-flashings and fulgurant or lightninglike looks of Pompilia into the lightning bolts, the "glare and glitter," of Joe's flashing manacles as he raises them in wrath—like a vengeful Jove or a righteous Jehovah, recalling the angel of judgment in the Browning passage. After he has struck Hightower, we see Joe

> running up the hall, his raised and armed and manacled hands full of glare and glitter like lightning bolts, so that he resembled a vengeful and furious god pronouncing a doom.
> . . . (511)

Pompilia will die; Joe's gesture of doom recoils on himself. The "flashing" and "fulgurant" and "electric" ire of Pompilia proves as fruitless as the "glare" and "glitter" and "lightning" of Joe's desperate wrath. Pompilia and Joe cannot be victorious on the world's terms, but they have been pushed to the limit, and they will not give in. Pompilia's decency cannot allow her baby to go undefended; Joe's desperation will not allow him to beg for help from a white man without rebelling inwardly at the fate that drove him to it, and striking out in rage. Faulkner reveals the force of this parallel by showing that the rebellious ire of Joe as victim has supernatural, lightninglike force, a power of indignant outrage like that of Browning's Pompilia.

If Joe Christmas combines some of the enigmatic, violent drivenness of Guido with much of the martyrlike, though desperate, dignity of Pompilia, the Reverend Gail Hightower appropriately borrows motifs from Browning's presentation of Pope Innocent XII: both men are inspired seers. Parallels between Hightower and the Pope must be drawn with some caution, for Faulkner takes a semi-parodic attitude toward the defrocked minister that is wholly absent in Browning's portrayal of the Pope. "Upon the book Hightower's hands are folded, peaceful, benignant, almost pontifical" (399-400)—Faulkner writes this with a smile. But I think it is a shrewd smile: the word "pontifical" was not idly chosen, and there may well be a subtle allusion to Browning's Supreme Pontiff which other, stronger parallels will bear out. True, Hightower's habit of seeking insight in the work of Tennyson,

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[7]Rosenzweig observes that the "connection between vomiting and castration is strongly reinforced when a male witness of Joe's castration vomits" (100).

[8]"Nobody has better portrayed the power of the victim's look at his torturers than Faulkner has done in the final pages of *Light in August*," says Sartre (496).

"like listening in a cathedral to a eunuch chanting in a language which he does not even need to not understand" (350) could be taken as a comic-grotesque parody of the Pope's opening remarks which describe the latter's search for inspiration and precedent in a quite different sort of book, whose Latin he understands very well indeed—the "History . . . Of all my predecessors, Popes of Rome" (10: 3, 6). But Hightower is no mere parody of the Pope. Throughout the novel, Hightower's vision deepens and matures until he becomes worthy of a revelation for which, I suggest, Browning's ecclesiastical seer and judge offers at least a partial precedent.

Browning's Pope, with his transcending imagination, is capable of re-envisioning the "holy" time and "shrine"-like place (10: 670, 667) where Pompilia and her would-be rescuer Caponsacchi were brought together, a setting and atmosphere charged with momentous tension between potentialities for good and evil. In this reconstruction of the scene the Pope sees an ethereal battle between spiritual powers, as if good and evil stars or celestial intelligences were locked in struggle:

> Power in the air for evil as for good,
> Promptings from heaven and hell, as if the stars
> Fought in their courses for a fate to be. (10: 662-64)

The stars in conflict within the Pope's vision reappear as the struggling celestial intelligences or conflicting bright, ethereal forms in Hightower's analogous experience as he sees, in amazement, the spirits of the murderer Percy Grimm and the martyr Joe Christmas ("Power in the air for evil as for good" in Browning's phrase) trying in vain to disengage themselves from each other. Within his vision of "apotheosis," within a bright, supernal "halo" of spiritual representations of humanity, Hightower discerns the conflict of "two faces which seem to strive . . . in turn to free themselves one from the other, then fade and blend away" (542-43), the faces of Christmas and Grimm, each resisting the recognition of his hardly separable potentialities for good and evil. In this vision, Christmas and Grimm are in the greatest possible mutual tension—the air is charged with it—yet the two figures are at the same time so mutually inextricable in their fight that Hightower's ethereal vision bodies forth what seems the permanent human dilemma of being torn between contrary moral motions, impulses, or powers. Faulkner also alludes to the Pope's vision of "Power in the air for evil as for good" in the passage where Mrs. Hines tells how her husband picked up Lena's new baby that Hightower had just delivered: "he picked it up and held it up, higher than the lamp, like he was waiting to see if the devil or the Lord would win" (418). The Pope's vision of "Power in the air for evil as for good" hovers over Faulkner's book in an uncanny way. It must also be noted that the halo of light where Christmas and Grimm engage in their ethereal strife is nothing less than the book's emblematic "lambent suspension of August" (542) or light in August. Like Browning's Pope, Faulkner's Hightower has become his author's supreme visionary spokesman.

A halo of light is a golden ring. And this brings us, finally, to the topic of rings of light, of rings and books. Hightower's epiphany, in which he sees a halo of transfigured faces in light, is a vision of the total community, of all the story's major characters and of the "townspeople" (542) Hightower has known and, in former years, preached to. Hightower's halo-vision or ring-vision is a comprehensive portrayal of society. Browning's entire book, *The Ring and the Book*, is also a ring of this sort: ringed or framed with the authorial disquisitions on rings in the opening and closing sections, the book as a whole constitutes a unified, rounded portrait of a morally many-faceted community or social circle. But the symbolic ring of Books I and XII in Browning's poem stands somewhat outside the main narrative. A symbol of the annealing fusion of reality and imagination, it is discussed by the poet's narrator-persona and emblematizes the activity of that persona as the poem's creator. The poet as Hephaestus stands back from the poem's action and invites us to view that action as a word-forged ring, a divine artifice wedding reality and imagining, fact and fiction, life and art.

By contrast, *Light in August* presents no emblematic ring outside of the book's action; rather, the novel *as a whole* is filled with symbolic rings, many of which are also rings of light, as Browning's metaphoric ring is golden. *Light in August* might equally well be titled *The Book of Rings*. As in Browning's poem, there is a surrounding frame: the chapters on Lena Grove which begin and end the novel embrace or surround the main action as do the ring-monologues of Browning's persona; and Lena's journey is ringlike, resembling a movement "across an urn" (*LA* 7). Rings also reappear throughout Faulkner's novel. When Joe gloomily realizes that, as he puts it, "I have never broken out of the ring of what I have already done and cannot ever undo" (373-74), the ring image is not presented as golden or as metaphorically illuminated. But more often and more typically, Faulkner does indeed offer us rings of light. At one point Joe pauses to observe how "the slow constellations wheeled" (116). On another occasion Joe sees a "garland of Augusttremulous lights" around the black pit of Freedman Town (126). Later, Joe observes his paramour embraced or surrounded by "peaceful firelight" as a "portrait in a frame" (295). Also, Rev. Hightower, tormented by his conscience and the day's heat, surprisingly sees the bright heat-waves rising as a halo or "nimbus" (341). In the course of their search for the hapless Joe, we see the sheriff's men "ringed about with quiet, interested faces in the early sunlight" (360). Joe's manacled hands full of glare and glitter like lightning bolts" (511) present still more rings of light. The glowing August "halo" filled with mutually mirroring "faces" (542) that constitutes Hightower's vision of the human community is of course the most important ring in the book, but it is assuredly not unique. Rather, Hightower's ring of light should be seen as the culminating emblematic ring in a book-length vision abundant in rings of light, as *Light in August* abounds in homages to *The Ring and the Book*.

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Waiting for *Thou*: Resurrecting Clough's "Seven Sonnets"

Robert Johnson

"To have lived is not enough for them," explains Vladimir as he and Estragon ponder the need of the deceased to "talk about their lives," in Samuel Beckett's celebrated evocation of modern angst. Waiting for Godot, a primary need, even of the dead, is to say something. "Say anything at all!" Vladimir urges (40-41).[1] According to *Godot*, talking, naming our experiences into meaningful patterns, supplies one of the basic strategies humans use to survive their endless, patient vigil. Meanwhile, they long for the arrival of divine, or logical, affirmation. The mind relentlessly at work, scheming linguistic structures in which to locate human significance becomes an image for life's central struggle.

Such diligence is, after all, a source of human dignity. "We have kept our appointment," Vladimir affirms, "and that's an end to that. We are not saints, but we have kept our appointment" (51). To wit, given the options of embracing a willful death or waiting and talking in hopes of receiving meaning from outside of ourselves, humans may choose to wait, and to talk, and to keep themselves busy. Estragon notes: "We always find something, eh Didi, to give us the impression we exist?"

"Yes, yes," Vladimir agrees, "we're magicians" (44).

Beckett's portrait of human perseverance at the crossroads of aspiration and material limitations was not a model easy for audiences to swallow. Early patrons walked out. They refused to accept Beckett's vision as *theater* or as a picture of their lives. Thus, the reputation of *Godot* for breaking intellectual ground in the arts. (For a good critical / historical overview, see Kenner and Graver.)

Yet, nearly a century before Beckett's work debuted, Arthur Hugh Clough labored over a series of poems collected as the "Seven Sonnets" of 1851, which directly anticipate in tone Beckett's modernist point of view.[2] In fact, while the poems were left in manuscript form, the group deserve careful attention from readers of Victorian verse. They offer solid documentation of Clough's insightful movement toward positions we now regard as norms for art of the generation to follow his own. Indeed, they document Clough's importance as a thinker.

What, ask the sonnets, is the basis for human understanding of existence, given the limitations of logic, imagination, spiritual insight? Moreover, the group question, as we are not—even as Beckett will demonstrate in *Godot*—caught squarely between "despair" and "hope"? Are we not driven to the deliberate, though absurd, ritual of questioning the very imponderables of our situation, simply as a means of living?

Even the tone of Clough's poems foreshadows *Godot*'s wordy attack on the ability of language to grapple with life's quandaries. The sonnets begin and end as formal disputation: a logical attempt to quantify the nature of human confusion. They replicate, one Clough scholar writes, the "resonant gravity" of the intellect at work upon life's essential questions as the mind "circles on its own sense of mystery" (Biswas 371). This is language *as* ritual, as an act of meaning-making. Even as do Estragon and Vladimir's exchanges under their scrawny tree, Clough's poems document the edgy, determined rhetorical behaviors humans embrace in the place of certainty.

Sonnet I opens upon the ultimate human fact: Everything passes away. Children die. Life cannot be trusted to respect "dawning" human beauty (l. 2). Nor, the poem asserts, does it seem unnatural that the efforts of the old should be replaced by those of the young (ll. 4-9). We simply grow accustomed to loss. "But," Clough points out, the fact that a person

> Whose perfectness did not at all consist
> In things towards forming which time could have
>   done
> Anything—whose sole office was to exist—
> Should suddenly dissolve and cease to be . . . .
>
> (ll. 10-13)

is a certainty that tries our deepest understandings. What crime can it be merely to exist, that it merits death? The question daunts human comprehension.

We can accept, at least intellectually, Sonnet II continues, that the universe, *Nature*, functions in manners beyond our ken. Nature's only "ordinance" being to continue its own grand movements without regard to individual, flickering human consciousness, we recognize—as theory.

Yet, the sonnet also acknowledges, we like to believe ourselves more than "flowers, beasts." And, if man is to conceive of himself as "a Person and a Soul"—in possession of some continuing or non-material element beyond that which decays—then accepting the limitations of uncertainty and sure loss is powerfully disturbing (ll. 9-14)! It is one thing to embrace Nature as a repository of divine or primary purpose; quite another to level ourselves with all the perishable matter in Nature's closet, to be the equal of an ant or leaf or tree.

Romantic pantheism, it would seem, does not soothe Clough's concerns. The returning smoke lines along Mr. Wordsworth's celebrated woody ridge, with its parade of anonymous loss and return, does not provide Clough assurances of a cosmic home.

Nor, Sonnet III continues, is there necessarily to be found relief in some Keatsian song of harvest and autumnal splendor. We may well indulge ourselves in the sensuous wonder of Nature's fullness at the cusp of season's change. Moreover, to "see the rich autumnal tints depart," to witness the glow of winter's sun retreat from fields of snow, may a "strange thankfulness impart" (ll. 1-3, 8). But only because it is easier to lose beauty totally than to watch it in the balance, to long for its continuance before our senses. The "assurance" of loss, the poem counsels, offers pleasure because it conquers "blank dismay" (ll. 11-12). Better to lose beauty, than to agonize over its inescapable potential to fade.

"But," Sonnet IV counters, if, as human wisdom and man's heart and narrative story would hold, there *is* some essential bit of identity or existence that is not lost through change, then we must believe, as well, that some *Thou* "still" exists who understands or watches over this process of birth and decay (l. 12). In addition, with the embracing of such belief, the "patient heart" is temporarily satisfied and does not push the issue: "The where and how [of *Thou*'s existence, that heart] doth not desire to hear" (l. 14).

How like the awkward patience of *Godot* is this satisfaction. If we are willing, Clough's sonnets argue, to accept as fact the projections of our own thinking, desires, and fictions, we can be lulled into a contentment out of which we rarely climb to seek ultimate answers.

Clearly, though, this patience is not an absolute confidence, not a faith to move mountains. Sonnet V asks of *Thou*: If it is that you are "casual" (ll. 1-2) in creating and removing the individual elements of your handiwork, how many infinite-seeming ages must pass before "hopes dead-slumbering" in human kind may "dare to reawake" (l. 7)? "What worse than dubious chances interpose" between humans and divine light to "recompose / The skiey picture [they] had gazed upon" (ll. 12-14)? The romanticized adjective *skiey* itself labels the lost confidence as belonging to flighty realms of trust no longer accessible by the narrative voice of the poems. What are the odds that a "casual" Maker will come to our collective aid, anyway?

"But," continues Sonnet VI, whether our edgy patience be a "self-willed arbitrary creed," a deliberate closed-mindedness in "service of untruth," or merely ignorance—embraced as does a dying man hold to important lies or a hunted bird turn away from an approaching enemy—"who about this shall tell us what to think" (ll. 3, 7-14)? Who can sort out what we are truly to believe?

Thou remains distanced; "skiey" beliefs lie scuttled over time. And humankind lacks the ability, the sonnets worry, ever fully to engage the ambiguities of our earthly predicament. Whom *would* we ask for answers?

Just so, Estragon pleads to discover, in all our human thrashing at unresolvables, "what truth will there be?" We will inevitably fall back into our endless speaking and forgetting: "We have time to grow old. The air is full of our cries . . . . But habit is a great deadener" (58). We *have* no one to speak with, ultimately, but ourselves. So, we keep doing it—that is our magic. The noisy self-questioning keeps us alive. Always changing our perspective upon our collective plight, but never reaching bottom in our disputations. We play through all our intellectual habits; then we wait, to ask more questions. The cycle buffers us against encountering the knowledge that our existence is difficult to attach to any surrounding, defining system of values.

Thus wonders Clough's final sonnet, as well: "Shall I decide it [what to believe] by a random shot?" (l. 1). Importantly, by asking such a question, we are not indulging in emotional theatrics. For, our hopes and fears are "not mere idle motions of the blood" (l. 3), but sincerely felt. Humans, at their best, *do* recognize the absurdity of their existences.

That is to say: On the one hand, we must suppose that there is a "seed" notion or impulse behind the universe in

which we live (ll. 5-8). Yet, in spite of this urge, we cannot escape asking: "What if despair and hope alike be true" (l. 9)? In that case,

> The heart, 'tis manifest, is free to do
> Whichever Nature and itself suggest . . . (ll. 10-11)

a choice in which we may initially feel some freedom. However, even this sense of freedom does not remove us from acknowledging our status:

> . . . always 'tis a fact that we are here;
> And with our being here, doth palsy-giving fear,
> Whoe'er can ask, or hope accord the best? (ll. 12-14)

With which conclusion to the sonnet cycle, readers will recall once more the concerns of *Godot*. There is freedom to be had in being cut free of predetermining identities and allegiances. But. once severed from cosmic moorings, who can say if fear or hope is the appropriate response to our situation? To be constantly questioning the nature of our being *is* a conscious choice. Yet, accompanying that interrogation comes the knowledge that such questioning can never end with a sense of resolution. Questioning becomes a manner of living mirrored in the sonnet series' structure, opening in *given*'s, closing with an interrogative. Arguments over whether Clough's series is complete, therefore, seem moot: The series clearly demonstrates that its logical process cannot be concluded.[3] It ends in a question, and that is where humans have to live—in question.

The only position that we can affirm in all of our knowledge is our still being "here." This status has not changed because of or during the rhetorical maneuvering. All we have to build upon is physical existence. Even a format as clever and demanding as the sonnet offers but counterpoint to the knowledge that such arrangements provide artful elaboration of irreducible complexities.

We *are*, then, magicians: enamored of, devoted to, asking enough trying questions to keep our consciousnesses engaged for a bit, but always circling back to our being "here"—under our tree, on a road to who can say. Waiting. Questioning. Knowing that our choice is binary: remove ourselves physically, or patiently abide. We cobble *Thou* together from our worries, hoping it will respond to queries.

As a result, whatever one labels Clough's sonnet sequence—"early modern" or "pre-existential" or simply "high-water Doubt"—the group should not be overlooked in studies of

essential Victorian verse. Arthur Hugh Clough, writing with admirable facility in a demanding poetic form born of Renaissance faith in intellect, has captured the spirit of art for a generation to come, a time when faith in intellect, ironically, will falter. He has peered deeply into concerns that will found twentieth-century Western philosophical discursion. Clough has realized that the modern world will sprout endless perspectives, but very few final explanations.

Additionally, Clough is disarmingly honest, his resolution to the series of poems being *not* to resolve the ambiguity uncovered in the course of their rhetorical progress. This willingness to identify the "here" of existence with an acceptance of the ineluctable nature of the questions he pursues would alone mark the sonnet sequence as sufficiently courageous to merit critical attention . . . and more frequent inclusion in standard anthologies.

Here, the expected mid-century philosophical solutions are never embraced—not romantic absorption into Nature, not leap (or return) to faith, not the continuity of sensuality, not even the hard resoluteness of agnosticism. As will Beckett in *Godot*, Clough leaves his art asking questions for the sake of asking, waiting for answers that the narrative voice apparently knows will not come. Whom *do* we ask? Juggling "hope" and "fear" as equals, we comprehend that all the conceivable ultimate solutions are quite probably projections of our own desires.

This is Arthur Hugh Clough's lonely, remarkable stance in his seven sonnets. They capture the thinking of an artist who has stepped into an intellectual arena that will attract, and stagger, minds from the age of Picasso on.

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Graver, Lawrence. *Samuel Beckett: Waiting for Godot*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989.
Kenner, Hugh. *Samuel Beckett: A Critical Study*. New York: Grove, 1961.

University of Colorado at Denver

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[3]Katherine Chorley notes of the sonnets: "the drafts in [Clough's] 1851 notebook, although very carefully worked over even as regards superficially insignificant words, do not always show whether he had made his final decision as to what words or phrase to choose of the various alternatives he is trying out. But it is hard to believe that he would have made any radical alterations, since they are already such accomplished work" (250).

Books Received

Alexander, Doris. *Creating Characters with Charles Dickens.* University Park: Pennsylvania State UP, 1991. Pp. x + 218. $25.00. "[T]his study began with a massive search through Victorian memoirs, recollections, diaries, autobiographies, and letter collections for clues among the vast number of people Dickens knew, from intimate friends to outsiders he was able to observe closely. . . . Whatever the clues to his identity, an original became eligible for this study only if all the materials on him revealed that his was the psychology, the personality—what was once called the 'soul'—of the character . . . . [T]hirty entirely fresh originals did emerge . . . . Nine known originals, mostly those Dickens confessed to, have also been examined for what they reveal of Dickens's method" (2).

Allen, M. D. *The Medievalism of Lawrence of Arabia.* University Park: Pennsylvania State UP, 1991. Pp. xi + 220. $28.50. "This book examines one thread that runs through Lawrence's life from his schooldays almost to the very end. It is a thread without which the fabric of Lawrence's life would lack a vivid and essential color, without which the pattern could scarcely be discerned. An examination of Lawrence's medievalism helps to explain how he could be seen (sometimes by himself) as a 'chivalrous knight of the desert'; it also illuminates the 'adventurer' with 'twisted personal needs.' A careful look at Lawrence's interest in the medieval world—its art, especially literature, and its beliefs and attitudes to life—throw light on both the writer and the man" (2).

Bicknell, Peter. *The Picturesque Scenery of the Lake District 1752-1855: A Bibliographical Study.* Winchester: St. Paul's Bibliographies; Detroit: Omnigraphics, 1990. Pp. x + 198. $84.00. "This bibliography is an annotated chronological list of books about the scenery of the English Lake District, first published not later than 1855. It is limited to works which are devoted to scenery and not to other subjects such as agriculture, archaeology, history, dialect, folklore, geology, local industries and sport. Novels set in the Lake District, like directories which include descriptions of scenery, unpublished manuscripts and articles published only in periodicals, are not included; nor are works of the Lake Poets, apart from a few items, such as Wordsworth's *Guide* and Southey's *Letters from England by Don Manuel Alvarez,* both of which describe scenery and can be regarded as topographical books" (ix). 12 illus.

Booth, Michael R. *Theatre in the Victorian Age.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991. Pp. [xx] + 218. $49.50 (cloth), $16.95 (paper). "The purpose of this book is to provide the interested reader with a survey of the English drama and theatre within, approximately, the dates of Queen Victoria's reign, 1837-1901" (xiii). Chapters: "Theatre and Society," "Management," "Playhouse and Production," "The Actor," and "Dramatists and the Drama."

Conway, Hazel. *People's Parks: The Design and Development of Victorian Parks in Britain.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991. Pp. xviii + 287. $79.50. "The large number of municipal parks that came into being during the course of the century made it quite unrealistic to attempt to analyze them all in any detail. In order to establish the pattern of park development as a whole during the century, it was important to record the chronology of the main parks developed and to identify the first municipal parks created by the major urban centers" (4). 110 illustrations and a bibliography.

Dabbs, Thomas. *Reforming Marlowe: The Nineteenth-Century Canonization of a Renaissance Dramatist.* Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell UP; London and Toronto: Associated UP, 1991. Pp. 170. $29.50. "[L]ittle was said or even known about Marlowe until the nineteenth century. Moreover, no literary historical figure rose to prominence more quickly or more forcefully than Marlowe during this period. This sudden appreciation afforded to Marlowe's life and works therefore reflects a distinctly nineteenth-century change in the way literary history was perceived by men of letters" (13).

Engen, Rodney. *Sir John Tenniel: Alice's White Knight.* Aldershot: Scolar P, 1991. Pp. ix + 232. This "first full-scale illustrated biography . . . contains a complete catalogue listing of all Tenniel illustrations for the serious collector, a list of all exhibited work and lists of cartoons and paintings hitherto ignored by students of Victorian art. The book is thoroughly illustrated with 150 black and white illustrations, many of which have never been published before, to give a complete picture of the supreme Victorian artist."

Federico, Annette. *Masculine Identity in Hardy and Gissing.* Rutherford, Madison, Teaneck: Fairleigh Dickinson UP; London and Toronto: Associated UP, 1991. Pp. 148. $29.50. ". . . I use four male roles, or stereotypes, to help me to identify those ideas in each of the eight novels I discuss . . . . I have chosen the two opposite roles of the virile man and the chaste man, or the seducer and the saint . . . . The third stereotype is the idealist, the romantic fantasizer who seeks the woman of his dreams. . . . Opposite the fantasizer is the fourth type, the realist, who recognizes the presence of the New Woman and must try to deal with her as practically as he can" (16).

Fenwick, Gillian. *The Contributors' Index to the "Dictionary of National Biography" 1885-1901.* Winchester: St. Paul's Bibliographies; Detroit: Omnigraphics, 1989. Pp. xli + 413. $100. Lists alphabetically the contributors—more than 600 of them—and identifies their subjects (almost 30,000) by name, dates, vol. no. and pg. There is an introduction which includes a list of contributors and the no. of articles contributed—from Thompson Cooper with 1423 to Evelyn Abbott with 1.

Glancy, Ruth. *"A Tale of Two Cities": Dickens's Revolutionary Novel.* Twayne's Masterwork Studies No. 89. Boston: Twayne, 1991. Pp. xii + 135. $20.95. The text is divided into two parts: "Literary and Historical Context" and "A Reading." In addition there is a chronology, an appendix—"How *A Tale of Two Cities* Was Serialized,"—a selected bibliography and an index.

Hair, Donald S. *Tennyson's Language.* Toronto, Buffalo, London: U of Toronto P, 1991. Pp. 198. $50.00. ". . . I attempt to define Tennyson's own views of language, and to set those views in the context of both the old [philology, based mainly upon Locke] and new [philology, with it historical and comparative studies of world languages] . . . . The late 1820s and early 1830s were a time of trasnition in philology in England, and Tennyson's thinking about language owed as much to the past as it did to the present" ([3]).

Jenkins, Anthony. *The Making of Victorian Drama.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991. Pp. xi + 301. $49.50. After an opening chapter setting the theater in its early Victorian context, Jenkins devotes chapters to the dramas of Edward Bulwer Lytton, Tom Robertson, William Schwenck Gilbert, Henry Arthur Jones, Arthur Wing Pinero, Oscar Wilde, and George Bernard Shaw.

Lovesey, Oliver. *The Clerical Character in George Eliot's Fiction.* English Literary Studies Monograph Series no. 53. Victoria: U of Victoria, 1991. Pp. 135. $8.50 paper. "The primary focus of this study is on the exploration of methods for delineating the character of the cleric (characterization), but a companion concern is the examination of the strictly clerical qualities of this fictional personage (character)" (7).

McCormack, Jerusha Hull. *John Gray: Poet, Dandy and Priest.* Brandeis UP; Hanover, NH: UP of New England, 1991. Pp. [xii] + 319. $35.00 ". . . [A]lthough by origin working-class, Gray [1866-1934] chose to remake himself initially as the aristocratic 'Dorian' Gray. Later, after the rupture with Oscar Wilde, he reinvented himself as a patrician priest . . . . It is as a person in question that Gray will always remain, never more fully available to us than he was to himself, and available to us only as he understood himself: as a case, as a matter of inquiry, as a psychological conundrum" (6).

Maynard, Katherine Kearney. *Thomas Hardy's Tragic Poetry: The Lyrics and the Dynasts.* Iowa City: U of Iowa P, 1991. Pp. xiii + 231. $29.95. "This study examines the question of tragic literature's vitality in a secular age and explores the philosophical underpinning's of Hardy's tragic vision in his lyric poems and in *The Dynasts.* It also examines his efforts within the context of nineteenth-century poetry" (xiii).

McCormick, Frank. *Sir John Vanburgh: The Playwright as Architect.* University Park: Pennsylvania State UP, 1991. Pp. [ix] + 196. $29.95. "This study attempts a synthesis of Vanburgh's [1664-1726] achievement as dramatist and architect" ([ix]).

McFeely, Mary Drake. *Lady Inspectors: The Campaign for a Better Workplace, 1893-1921.* Athens & London: U of Georgia P, 1991. Pp. [vii] + 200. $15.00 (paper). Traces the influence of women inspectors like the first two, May Abraham and Mary Muirhead Paterson, appointed by Home Secretary H. H. Asquith in 1893, on working conditions for women, particularly working hours and welfare.

Monsman, Gerald. *Olive Schreiner's Fiction: Landscape and Power.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1991. Pp. xv + 201. $45.00. ". . . I propose to chart the topography of Schreiner's imagery, within the half-dozen of her most significant *imaginative* works, with special emphasis upon the African landscape in relation to the socioeconomic transformation of imperialism. . . . I argue that the South African landscape provided a source of emotional and narrative strength in Schreiner's work and that it furnished her the freedom to break with tradiional notions of sex roles and sexual hierarchies and that the unusual narrative forms of her fiction were not awkward and limiting, but in fact attempts to improve upon conventional Eurocentric ways of telling stories" (xi-xii).

Moon, Marjorie. *Benjamin Tabart's Juvenile Library: A Bibliography of Books for Children Published, Written, Edited and Sold by Mr. Tabart, 1801-1820.* Winchester: St. Paul's Bibliographies; Detroit: Omnigraphics, 1990. Pp. xvii + 180. $90.00. Contents: "Alphabetical Bibliography of Books Published, Sold, Written and Edited by Benjamin Tabart," "Books Advertised by Benjamin Tabart," and appendices on "The Book Trades," "The Preface to William Godwin's *Bible Stories,*" "Tabart's Catalogue, 1801," and "Some Notes on the Illustrations for the 'Silver Penny' and the 'Little Man and Little Maid,'" plus a chronological index.

Myers, Robin. *The Stationers' Company Archive: An Account of the Records 1554-1984.* Winchester: St. Paul's Bibliographies; Detroit: Omnigraphics, 1990. Pp. xlviii + 376. $110.00. "The present work . . . consists of an historical introduction tracing the growth and progress of the archive, an annotated catalogue of the bound volumes of records, two registers of supplementary documents, with a computerised name index to both compiled by Professor Peter Isaac . . . . A *Glossary of Terms* is provided as an *aide mémoire* to the Company's organisation and membership; there is a list of secondary works for further reading . . . ; there are also appendixes which reproduce or reconstruct various lists, . . . and finally, an index to the whole" (xiii-xiv).

Pearce, Lynne. *Woman / Image / Text: Readings in Pre-Raphaelite Art and Literature.* Toronto & Buffalo: U of Toronto P, 1991. Pp. xiii + 161. $85.00 (cloth), $24.95 (paper). "This book . . . . is not simply a book *about* the representation of women in Victorian art and literature; it is also an attempt to address the problem of what the twentieth-century feminist is to do with such images. The 'women' of the book's title are thus both the women then, and the women now: women as subjects of discourses, and women as consumers" (1). Includes chapters on "Towards a Theory of Gendered Reading," "The Virgin," "Beatrice," "Mariana," "The Lady of Shalott," "Isabella," "Madeline," "Guenevere," "Venus," and "Gendered Reading in Practice."

Raby, Peter. *Samuel Butler: A Biography.* Iowa City: U of Iowa P, 1991. Pp. xi + 334. $32.95.

Shaberman, Raphael B. *George MacDonald: A Bibliographical Study*. Winchester: St. Paul's Bibliographies; Detroit: Omnigraphics, 1990. Edition limited to 500 signed copies. Pp. xvi + 176. $130.00. Contents: An introduction and chronology, "A Classified Handlist of First Editions," "Works by George MacDonald," "Translations of MacDonald's Works," "Selections from George MacDonald," "Dramatisations," "Writings about George MacDonald." Appendices include: "Gustav Holst's 'Phantastes' Suite," "George MacDonald and Lewis Carroll," "Two Letters . . . to Phoebe Powell," "Letters from Alexander Strahan . . . ," "Letter . . . to his cousin James MacDonald," "Centenary of Birth, 1924," "'An Invalid Winter in Algeria' (reprinted from *Good Words*)," and "'A Journey Rejourneyed' (reprinted from *The Argosy*)."

Shaw and Politics. Shaw: The Annual of Bernard Shaw Studies, vol. 11. Ed. T. F. Evans. University Park: Pennsylvania State UP, 1991. Pp. vi + 314. $35.00. Includes 16 essays plus six reviews and "A Continuing Checklist of Shaviana."

Spreading the Word: The Distribution Networks of Print 1550-1850. Eds. Robin Myers and Michael Harris. Winchester: St. Paul's Bibliographies; Detroit: Omnigraphics, 1990. Pp. [xiv] + 241. $70.00. Contents: Eiluned Rees, "Wales and the London Book Trade before 1820"; Warren McDougall, "Scottish Books for America in the Mid-18th Century"; Charles Benson, "Printers and Booksellers in Dublin 1800-1850"; Tessa Watt, "Publisher, Pedlar, Pot-Poet: The Changing Character of the Broadside Trade, 1550-1640"; Michael Harris, "A Few Shillings for Small Books: The Experiences of a Flying Stationer in the 18th Century"; Ian Maxted, "Single Sheets from a Country Town: The Example of Exeter"; C. Y. Ferdinand, "Local Distribution Networks in 18th-Century England"; Michael Perkin, "Egerton Smith and the Early 19th-Century Book Trade in Liverpool"; John Feather, "The Country Trade in Books"; Warren McDougall, "A Catalogue of Hamilton, Balfour and Neill Publications"; and an index.

Stern, Marvin. *Thorns and Briars: Bonding, Love, and Death 1764-1870*. New York: The Foundation of Thanatology, 1991. Pp. xviii + 228. $27.00 paper. This family history is divided into two parts: "1764-1805—Harriot Clinton and Her Daughter, Harriot" and "1764-1870—The Clinton and Holroyd Families." 32 illustrations.

The Collected Letters of George Gissing. Vol. 2, 1881-1885. Ed. Paul F. Matthiesen, Arthur C. Young, and Pierre Coustillas. Athens: Ohio UP, 1991. Pp. xxx + 393. $55.00. Includes more than 300 letters fully annotated, most of them to Gissing's brother Algernon, as well as a chronology, intro., two indexes: of persons, and of titles, places and miscellanea.

Thackeray, William Makepeace. *The History of Pendennis*. New York: Garland, 1991. Ed. Peter L. Shillingsburg. Pp. xxii + 499. $100.00. "The purpose of this new edition is, first, to present the text as much as possible as Thackeray produced it and second to show the composition and revision of the work. The text is based on a comparative study of all extant versions from the now fragmented manuscript to the last edition touched by the author. The present reading text is, basically, that of the first edition" ([vi]. Includes more than a hundred pages of illustrations, introductions, notes on textual apparatus, a record of text variation and related documents.

Trollope, Anthony. *The Belton Estate*. Intro. David Skilton. London: The Trollope Society, [1991]. Pp. xvii + 365. £18.95. "The present edition follows the text of the serial version in the *Fortnightly Review* [15 May 1865 to 1 January 1866] with some minor errors corrected" (xvii). To order the volumes in the projected complete set of Trollope's novels, individuals contact The Trollope Society, 9a North Street, London SW4 0HN, UK; libraries and institutions contact Pickering & Chatto, 17 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5NB, UK.

——————. *The Duke's Children*. Intro. Roy Jenkins. London: The Trollope Society, [1991]. Pp. xvii + 565. £23.95. "The present text follows the serial text from *All the Year Round* [4 October 1879 to 24 July 1880] with minor emendations" (xvii). See preceding entry for ordering information.

Walton, Priscilla L. *The Disruption of the Feminine in Henry James*. Toronto, Buffalo & London: U of Toronto P, 1992. Pp. viii + 179. $40.00. "The interconnection between femininity and absence is the focus of this study . . . ." (4) "I would suggest that the link between the two derives from the ways in which both femininity and absence work to subvert Realism's overt effort to depict 'life' referentially. Indeed, the 'presence' of femininity and absence foreground the absence of referential knowability and emphasize the inherenet instability of language" ([13]).

Welsh, Alexander. *Strong Representations: Narrative and Circumstantial Evidence in England*. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins UP, 1992. Pp. xi + 262. $29.95. "This book argues that strong representations which make the facts speak for themselves . . . , became the single most prominent form of narrative in the later eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In any era a narrative amounts to a way of thinking, a process of sorting things out temporally, for many purposes . . . . In this period, narrative consisting of carefully managed circumstantial evidence, highly conclusive in itself and often scornful of direct testimony, flourished nearly everywhere—not only in literature but in criminal jurisprudence, natural science, natural religion, and history writing itself" (ix).

Victorian Group News

Announcements

Richard Tobias has edited *Bibliographies of Studies in Victorian Literature for the Ten Years 1975-1984*. New York: AMS Press, 1991. 1130 pp. It is a compilation of the Victorian bibliographies appearing annually in *Victorian Studies* and supplements Ron Freeman's compilation for the years 1965-74. The editor and Barbara N. Tobias have provided an index.

"Homes and Homelessness: Charles Dickens and the Victorian Imagination" is the subject of a conference 8-11 June 1992 at Hebrew University, Mt. Scropus, Jerusalem. For a program write: Murray Baumgarten, The Dickens Project, 354 Kresge College, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA 95064 or H. M. Daleski, English Department, Hebrew University, Mt. Scropus, Jerusalem, Israel.

Victorians Institute Conference 2-3 October 1992, College of Charleston, has as its theme *Tennyson 2000: Rethinking and Reappraisal*. Ten-page papers on any aspect of Tennyson should be submitted by 1 July 1992 to Dennis Goldberry, English Department, College of Charleston, Charleston, SC 29424.

Conference Announcement: "Victorian Literature and Victorian Visual Imagination," 6-9 August 1992 at the University of California, Santa Cruz. For information write John O. Jordan, The Dickens Project, 354 Kresege College, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA 95064.

Victorian Studies invites submissions for a special issue entitled "Victorian Sexualities." Essays which emerge from interdisciplinary study are particularly encouraged. Submissions should be sent to Donald Gray, Editor, *Victorian Studies*, Ballantine Hall 338, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405. Deadline for submission is 1 June 1992.

RSVP Third Annual VanArsdel Prize will be awarded to the outstanding essay on British Victorian periodicals, written by a graduate student. The winner will receive $100 and publication in *VPR*. The paper may have been submitted for a graduate class, or as a chapter of a thesis or dissertation, and must be the product of the student's own original research with historical, critical, or bibliographical emphasis on the importance of periodicals to the history and culture of Victorian Britain, Ireland, and the Empire. The unpublished paper (10 to 20 pp. including notes) may be in the areas of art, music, history, literature, science, etc. RSVP reserves the right to withhold the award if no paper meets the criteria of quality writing, accuracy, and contribution to the field. Two copies of the paper are to be submitted by 1 June 1992 to William Scheuerle, 18412 Timberlan Dr., Lutz, FL 33549.

RSVP 1992 Conference will be held 10-12 July 1992 at Manchester Polytechnic. Papers will be presented on reading Victorian periodicals, research methodologies, and representations and localities. For information write Margaret Beetham or Alan Kidd, English and History Department, Manchester Polytechnic, Ormond Bldg., Lower Ormond Street, Manchester, M15 6BX, England.

Notice

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THE VICTORIAN NEWSLETTER

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Pater and His Younger Contemporaries

Gerald Monsman

WHEN WALTER PATER EXHORTED the young men of Oxford to burn, like the stars of the French Pléiade, with a "hard, gemlike flame," he was challenging them in the concluding paragraphs of *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* to devote their lives to a new ideal, to the search for beauty, and "the love of art for art's sake." Unfortunately, his description of the aesthetic life seems to have seduced many of his younger contemporaries into the pursuit of naked beauty up the stairs of the ivory tower. That was not the life Pater had meant to describe, but confusion persisted, and until recently his reputation suffered. T. S. Eliot's essay on Pater is representative of the disrepute in which his writings were held during the decades after World War I. Eliot found Pater's novel, *Marius the Epicurean,* a "hodge-podge" because his mind was "incapable of sustained reasoning"—which meant for Eliot and his readers that Pater was primarily neither a philosopher, a literary critic, a classicist, nor a master of any other systematic discipline. Further, because Pater's mind was "morbid" and because he had confused art and life in his studies in *The Renaissance,* Eliot charged him with the blame for a number of "untidy lives" among his self-proclaimed disciples in the nineties.[1] So, tarred with decadence and covered with the feathers of too many disciplines, the Paterian corpus was borne from academia in derision.

But despite Eliot's dismissals, the influence of Pater's aesthetic ideal on modern literature has been extensive, though not yet fully documented.[2] In particular, his ideal of the gem-like flame, the moment of aesthetic ecstasy isolated within the flux of sensations, seems to have had a pervasive influence on many who read him. In addition to Eliot—reestablishing the religious significance of the Paterian "moment"—poets as diverse as Hopkins,[3] Yeats, Dowson, Johnson, Symons, Wilde, Pound, Stevens, Auden, MacNeice and novelists such as James, Conrad, Woolf, Joyce, Lawrence, and Proust have exhibited Pater's influence. And among artists and aestheticians,

critics and historians of art, George Santayana's and Bernard Berenson's experience of being dazzled as undergraduates at Harvard by Pater's *Renaissance* seems not unusual. Although Pater missed the chance in 1888 to admit the future historian of Italian art to his lectures, in after years Berenson testified that Pater's mythic and imaginary portraits "revealed to me what from childhood I had been instinctively tending toward. . . . It is for that I have loved him since youth and shall be grateful to him even to the House of Hades where, in the words of Nausicaa to Odysseus, I shall hail him as god. It was he who encouraged me to extract from the chaotic succession of events in the common day what was wholesome and sweet, what fed and sustained the spirit."[4]

I

The principal route of Pater's influence on twentieth-century literature led from the decadents to Yeats. Richard Le Gallienne pays tribute to the centrality of Pater among the literati of the *fin de siècle:* "Among the men . . . who were rapidly putting on immortality under our very eyes, perhaps the most important of all, as in certain directions the most influential, was . . . Walter Pater. Mr. George Moore has put himself on record more than once to the effect that Pater's 'Marius the Epicurean' is the most beautiful book in the English tongue. This was the opinion also of many young men in the '90's." In his *Confessions of a Young Man,* Moore had praised Pater's novel as "the book to which I owe the last temple of my soul," declaring that he shared with the novel "the same incurable belief that the beauty of material things is sufficient for all the needs of life."[5] Whatever preconceptions these young men of the nineties may have brought to *Marius,* owing to the construction they put on the aestheticism of *The Renaissance,* the beauty of its style, if not its vision of ideal love, remained for them undiminished despite the changing taste of the times: "Three or four years ago I reread *Marius the Epicurean,*

1. "Arnold and Pater," *Selected Essays: New Edition* (New York, 1960), pp. 382-93. First published in 1930.
2. Studies of "Influence" are cited by Lawrence Evans in *Victorian Prose: A Guide to Research,* ed. David DeLaura (New York, 1973), pp. 355-56. One addition to Evans' list should be Harold Bloom, "Late Victorian Poetry and Pater," *Yeats* (New York, 1970); post-1973 studies of influence have not substantially altered Evans' survey of the field.
3. For a study of this relation as well as an outline of Pater's thought see my "Pater, Hopkins, and the Self," *VN* (Fall 1974), 1-5.
4. *Sketch for a Self-Portrait* (New York, 1949), p. 163. See also Berenson, *Sunset and Twilight: From the Diaries of 1947-1958* (New York, 1963), pp. 343, 526; *Letters of Walter Pater,* ed. Lawrence Evans (Oxford, 1970), p. 172; Sylvia Sprigge, *Berenson: A Biography* (Boston, 1960), p. 42 and *passim;* and *The Letters of George Santayana,* ed. Daniel Cory (New York, 1955), pp. 238-39.
5. *The Romantic '90s* (New York, 1925), p. 97; John Pick, "Divergent Disciples of Walter Pater," *Thought,* XXIII (March 1948), 123.

expecting to find I cared for it no longer," wrote Yeats in his *Autobiography* in 1922, "but it still seemed to me, as I think it seemed to us all, the only great prose in modern English, and yet I begin to wonder if it, or the attitude of mind of which it was the noblest expression, had not caused the disaster of my friends. It taught us to walk upon a rope, tightly stretched through serene air, and we were left to keep our feet upon a swaying rope in a storm."[6]

The "friends" to whom Yeats refers were members of the Rhymers' Club, fellow walkers on the tightrope of ecstasy, precariously alienated from their audience and isolated from each other. Obsessed with innocence and evil in a society that cared merely for respectability, they led lives which were at best "untidy," and, as one critic observed, most died as soon as their constitutions would decently permit. Among the Rhymers, Yeats, Johnson, Dowson, Symons, Herbert Horne, and Wilde (an occasional visitor when the Club met in private houses) could be numbered as disciples of Pater. Although as a group these young men barely articulated an aesthetic philosophy of their own, the "Conclusion" of Pater's *Renaissance* focused much of what they believed, and in its three or four years of existence the Club carried the banner of "art for art's sake" and celebrated Pater's writings as the ultimate expression of that slogan. In his "Introduction" to *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse,* Yeats wrote:

> The revolt against Victorianism meant to the young poet a revolt against irrelevant descriptions of nature, the scientific and moral discursiveness of *In Memoriam,*. . . the political eloquence of Swinburne, the psychological curiosity of Browning, and the poetical diction of everybody. . . . Poetry was a tradition like religion and liable to corruption, and it seemed that [poets] could best restore it by writing lyrics technically perfect, their emotion pitched high, and as Pater offered instead of moral earnestness life lived as "a pure gem-like flame"[15] all accepted him for master.[7]

Then, as an example of pure poetry detaching itself from the flux in a moment of ecstasy, Yeats began his anthology by printing in *vers libre* Pater's purple passage on the Mona Lisa.

In later years Yeats acknowledged that whereas Rossetti's work had held an emotional, subconscious attraction for him, the Paterian celebration of pure, intense experience provided him with his conscious aesthetic program. Stylistically the early Yeats out-Paters Pater. Particularly notable is Yeats' fantasy, "Rosa Alchemica"

(1896), modeled on Pater's prose rhythms and presenting a nineties-style Marius as its hero: "I gathered about me all gods because I believed in none, and experienced every pleasure because I gave myself to none, but held myself apart, individual, indissoluble, a mirror of polished steel."[8] As Yeats evolved toward a poetic style with a new, astringent beauty, he sloughed off the stock romantic pathos and derivative diction of the nineties. In "The Phases of the Moon" (1919), his puppet figure Robartes complains, "He wrote of me in that extravagant style / He had learnt from Pater." But as a *prosateur,* Yeats never repudiated Pater's polyphonic richness and subtle consonance. From such earlier visionary prose-poems as "The Moods" (1895) and "The Autumn of the Body" (1898) to later works such as *Per Amica Silentia Lunae* (1917), the *Autobiography* (1914, 1922), and "Dove or Swan" in *A Vision* (1925), Yeats displayed a diction and cadence worthy of the most ardent of Pater's stylistic disciples.

But more sinister than any stylistic indulgence was Yeats' pursuit of that intensity which Pater had suggested as the chief end of man. Art should convey the most intense moments of life, refining experience until, nearing the purity and elevation of religious ritual, passion yields up knowledge and vision. For the Rhymers this Paterian "ecstasy" connoted the perfect absence of ideology or value judgments. In a broadcast entitled "Modern Poetry," Yeats recalled that the Rhymers "wished to express life at its intense moments, those moments that are brief because of their intensity, and at those moments alone."[9] This poetry of ecstasy looked to the flux of immediate impressions for its nourishment, and Yeats notes that when he began to write he avowed for his models those poets of "the aesthetic school" who "intermixed into their poetry no elements from the general thought, but wrote out of the impression made by the world upon their delicate senses."[10] He is undoubtedly recalling here the antecedent Keatsean celebration of beauty mediated so impressively through Rossetti; however, it was Pater who explicitly proclaimed these subjective impressions of beauty as the only knowable reality. The first step of critic and artist alike is "to know one's own impression as it really is."[11] Pater used the word *impression* a half dozen times in the second paragraph alone of the "Preface" to *The Renaissance,* and in the "Conclusion" he exhorted the young men of Oxford "to be for ever curiously testing new opinions and courting new impressions."

Of the genuinely talented Rhymers, only Yeats lived long enough eventually to be troubled by the exclusion of so much from this poetry of intense moments, for it left him, as he says, "alone amid the obscure impressions of the senses."[12] In his *Autobiography,* he attempted to explain something of the tragedy in the lives of two of the most promising Rhymers, Ernest Dowson and Lionel Johnson, precisely in terms of this obsession with a "pure" beauty "separated from all the general purposes of life." They made in their writing, said Yeats, "what Arnold has called that 'morbid effort,' that search for 'perfection of thought and feeling, and to unite this to perfection of form,' sought this new, pure beauty, and suffered in their lives because of it."[13] Just as Pater's writings had extended the premises of Arnold's, Rossetti's, and Ruskin's views of art, so with the Rhymers there occurs a certain drawing out of attitudes that seem to pertain almost exclusively to the "Conclusion." Although the "Conclusion" was merely a prologue to Pater's broader concern with the cultural heritage, it more than any other document sums up his influence on his disciples. In his *Memoirs,* Yeats does cite the "Animula Vagula" chapter of *Marius* as an influence upon himself and the Rhymers. Unfortunately, though avidly read, the novel was viewed merely as giving an antique setting to the modern aesthetic doctrines of the "Conclusion." In the seventies, certainly, it was easy to misread Pater; and if he had failed to publish successive "correctives" in the eighties and nineties, one could justly accuse him of being culpably vague about aesthetic ideals.

But no mere "corrective" succeeded in altering Pater's image, and accordingly Yeats blamed the "attitude of mind" expressed in *Marius,* rather than in the "Conclusion," for putting the Rhymers on the "tightrope" of intensity. The Rhymers saw only the solitary figure of Marius, isolated from life as if on some high-wire, balancing between birth and death a whole dreamworld of ideally exquisite passions. They loved those choice moments of revelation or near revelation extracted from common events; their spirits soared at the suggestion of a vision lurking just behind the veil of gross reality. John Davidson might aestheticize telegraph wires and factory chimneys; Symons might find inspiration in the theatre, the dance hall, the cafe; and Le Gallienne might allude to the "iron lilies of the Strand" (the gaslights); but in general the Rhymers tended to avoid as far as possible any contamination by quotidian life. They learned from the writings of Pater the paradoxical lesson that beauty was both the supreme manifestation of culture and yet radically independent of that culture. They looked to an

inner vision, and drifted ever deeper into their private world of rarefied emotions.

Ernest Dowson, who sang of remote, ideal love and the vanity of life, produced in his "Non Sum Qualis Eram Bonae Sub Regno Cynarae" (1896) the definitive expression of alienation. The distance from the "Conclusion" to this expression of the brevity of life and its despair was shorter than Pater had realized. *Marius,* too, with its almost mystical love of religious ritual and its beatific vision of the saintly Cecilia and the Christian community was easily assimilated into Dowson's despairing Catholicism. There are specific echoes, even, such as the one in Dowson's "Extreme Unction" in which the phrase "all the passages of sense" is taken from Pater's description of the last sacrament.[14] Certainly Pater's fatal Lady Lisa shadowed not only Dowson's profane loves but also his sacred ideal, Cynara, who as Adelaide Foltinowicz was his twelve-year-old epitome of innocence. Failing to capture this beatific vision of purity, Dowson stumbled toward death with, in Symons' memorable phrase, the face of a "demoralized Keats." Or perhaps he was more like a Pater who had visited the France of Verlaine, Baudelaire, and Gautier and on whose return the sea change was apparent, the taint of mortality was upon him. And so Dowson cries: "Unto us they belong / Us the bitter and gay, / Wine and women and song." He was dead of tuberculosis and drink at thirty-two.

Lionel Johnson in his self-imposed isolation was another casualty. He rose at six in the evening, spent his waking hours in his library in the company of whisky, and went to bed at dawn. Like Pater's Sebastian van Storck, he hated his image, and after the age of twenty-one would not allow himself to be photographed or drawn. But Pater was worth the effort of a visit, and Johnson reported after one such excursion that the master had "talked theology and praised Anglicanism for its 'reverent doubt and sober mysticism.'"[15] Sharing religious mysticism and a tendency to distill the intellectual aspects of religion into gracious sentiment, the two also shared a style sensitive to the precise value of words, a style which often pressed words back into their Latinate meanings. Twice Johnson wrote of Pater in his poetry. "A Friend" (1894) begins: "His are the whitenesses of soul, / That Virgil had. . . ." And in the 1902 elegy Johnson praised Pater as the "Hierarch of the spirit" and "Scholarship's constant saint," extolling him at the conclusion as "that unforgettably most gracious friend." But the Paterian contrast between the ideal whiteness of soul and the life of the senses becomes in Johnson's religious poetry a tragic conflict exacerbated by the introspective

6. *The Autobiography of William Butler Yeats* (New York, 1953), p. 181.
7. *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse, 1892-1935* (Oxford, 1936), p. ix.
8. *The Secret Rose* (London, 1897), pp. 223-24.
9. *Essays and Introductions* (London, 1961), p. 494.
10. *Essays,* p. 347.
11. *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry* (London, 1910), p. viii. In effect, Pater is using Ruskin's critical impressionism to undercut Arnold's famous dictum that the "aim of criticism is to see the object as in itself it really is."
12. *Essays,* p. 349.
13. *Autobiography,* p. 188.
14. *Marius the Epicurean* (London, 1910), II, 224.
15. *Letters of Pater,* p. xxiv.

melancholia of his spiritual isolation. Although he understood Pater's humanism and his call for an aesthetics in harmony with cultural norms, Johnson almost despite himself felt the sinister undertow of a shadow self, the Dark Angel: "Through thee, the gracious Muses turn / To Furies, O mine Enemy! / And all thing things of beauty burn / With flames of evil ecstasy." Pater, too, had spoken of the "ecstasy" of burning, but his enthusiastic desire in the seventies to explore the possibilities of aesthetic life had, with the Rhymers, entered into a new and terrifying phase which, tragically, Johnson could not escape. He became "one of those who fall,"[16] morally and physically, until, trying to sit on one pub stool too many, he fell off, fractured his skull, and died. He was thirty-five.

Because of difference of opinion and the clash of personalities, the Rhymers gradually separated in 1894 or 1895. But Yeats never abandoned his belief in Paterian intensity; rather, as his contemplative passions became active he quit the ivory tower, descended into the market place, and discovered life anew. As a young man, Yeats had been inspired both in his portrayal of the Muse as Destroyer and in his submission to Maud Gonne by Pater's description of the sinister Mona Lisa. In *Marius*, the epiphany of this goddess, which only tentatively structured the loosely knit portraits of *The Renaissance*, became a dramatically conceived antithesis. Here Venus (and her varied manifestations as Faustina and assorted courtesans) is contrasted with Saint Cecilia (anticipated in Psyche and Wisdom). Harlot and saint, both suggest fertility or rebirth, but in the virginal yet maternal Cecilia the pagan rites of slaughter and the old pagan sense of the earth as a mother become personified in another sort of muse, a "new vision."[17] Yeats seemed eventually to have found in Cecilia that Unity-of-Being toward which he aspired and to have realized that Lady Lisa was less Pater's ideal than his timely warning.

In "A Prayer for my Daughter," Yeats sought the custom and ceremony of Cecilia's holy house for his daughter Anne, who, he prayed, might also be learned in "courtesy" and mistress of a house where innocence and beauty are born "in custom and ceremony." Anne's "radical innocence" of soul and her ritualistic bridegroom are a Yeatsean elaboration of the Psyche / Cecilia ideal as Pater had portrayed it. In this poem Yeats no longer found Pater's aesthetics an isolating tightrope in a storm; the gale may come howling in from the Atlantic, but

Anne quietly sleeps, guarded by what Pater would call her bond with "all worthy men, living and dead. . . . There, I say, is the principle of custom raised to the level of heroism."[18] Among those worthy dead lay Robert Gregory who had been eulogized by Yeats the preceding year in the same house with the same bitter wind shaking the shutter. Although Yeats had rejected the intensity of the femme fatale, he utilized the intensity / death equation in his elegy for Gregory, creating after the fashion of Pater a portrait of the artist dead in his prime. Gregory burned with the Paterian "intensity" of a true Renaissance hero: "Our Sidney and our perfect man." Like an aristocratic Irish version of Pater's Duke Carl, Gregory went out to meet life with courtesy, to conquer it with ceremony, and to die with his youth (though in fact he was nearly forty) still upon him.

II

It seems clear that for the major modernists, the significance of the nineties lay in the misrepresentation of the Paterian moment of "ecstasy" as a revolt against "rhetoric" (the climate of nineteenth-century philosophy and morals) and as a celebration of pure sensation and form, as a "de-idealizing" of a type of experience which went all the way back to Wordsworth's "spots of time." Just why they could so lightheartedly dismiss Pater's Goethe-and-Gautier Aestheticism, as it was called, may in part be explained by the fact that these younger writers no longer wished to admit their debt to *any* Victorian. To protect his image as a revolutionary modern, Yeats' close friend, Ezra Pound, covered up his embarrassment at Pater's early influence with the patronizing confession that he "is not dull in the least. He is adolescent reading, and very excellent bait."[19] Yet in three of his early essays, "Vortex," "Vorticism," and "Vortographs," Pound, who would have been the last of these thirty-one-year-old "adolescent" when he wrote the last of these essays, credits "the immediate ancestry" of his school to Pater's dictum that "All art constantly aspires towards the condition of music." (Pound quotes Whistler as ancestor also, but Pater's insight is accorded priority, doubtless owing to Pound's experimentation with the "rhythm-phrase.") Pater's assertion that "In its primary aspect, a great picture has no more definite message for us than an accidental play of . . . fallen light, caught as the colours are in an Eastern carpet,"[20] epitomizes Pound's argument in "Vorticism" that

patterns of form and color seen and felt directly are superior to symbols used merely "to back up some creed or some system of ethics or economics." Not only does Pound's phrasing here echo Pater's "Conclusion" in particular ("theory or idea or system"), but when Pound defines the poetic image as "a radiant node or cluster, . . . a VORTEX, from which, and through which, and into which, ideas are constantly rushing," he both adapts Pater's metaphor of the gem-like flame and reaffirms the Paterian perception of consciousness as a "whirlpool" (for this image Yeats also had uses). If the poets of the nineties, isolated amidst the flux, owed their despair to Pater, poets in the first decades of the following century who proclaimed the kinetic gospel of vital forces were also his heirs—the Paterian flame, "point" of "purest energy," became the Poundian vortex, "point of maximum energy."[21] Small wonder Yeats was led to inquire a shade apprehensively: "Did Pater foreshadow a poetry, a philosophy, where the individual is nothing, the flux of *The Cantos* of Ezra Pound?"[22]

Pound's fellow countryman Wallace Stevens was equally indebted to what, afterwards, he called the "dreadful goings-on of Walter Pater," adding that "it would be impossible nowadays, I suppose, to concede anything at all in that direction."[23] Certainly the Paterian sensibility informs Stevens' richly sensuous first volume, *Harmonium* (1923), especially "Tea at the Palaz of Hoon" which may be cited as echoing the aesthetic self-sufficiency of Pater's "supreme, artistic view of life." Pater is again present in "Two or Three Ideas" and in *The Necessary Angel's* "morality of the right sensation," as well as in "the impossible possible philosophers' man" of "Asides on the Oboe," and above all in "Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction" which tentatively sanctions Pound's "magic moments" and Pater's "ideal instants": "Perhaps there are times of inherent excellence /. . . . moments of awakening, / Extreme, fortuitous, personal, in which / We more than awaken." Pater's influence on Stevens may be traced at least in part to his Harvard mentor, Santayana, friend of Berenson and of Pater's ardent disciple, Lionel Johnson. A charming stylist and aesthete whose "sense of beauty" shaped itself in the intellectual milieu of Ruskin and Pater, Santayana began as a poet of fragile sonnets not unworthy of Edmund Gosse. During Stevens' Harvard years, Santayana's *Sense of Beauty* (1896) and *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion* (1900) unveiled a Pateresque "materialistic Platonism" which blended neo-pagan naturalism with the metaphysics of the flux and elevated poetry to the seat of religion—all of which

left a lasting impression on Stevens' aesthetics. In one of his best late poems, "To an Old Philosopher in Rome," Stevens pays tribute to Santayana and depicts the moods and sensations of death in terms similar to Pater's description of Marius' last illness. Such lines as "The threshold, Rome, and that more merciful Rome / Beyond, the two alike in the make of the mind" forcefully recall Pater's description of the earthly city and the Rome on high.

When Pound set out "to bring poetry up to the level of prose," he was, of course, thinking not only of the French prose masters but of Pater as well, and it may be that Pater's influence was greater on the novelists of the twentieth century than on its poets. Possibly Henry James best expressed the paradoxical response of the emerging twentieth-century novelist when in an 1894 letter to Gosse after Pater's death he parodied the image of the gem-like flame and yet concluded with a line of absolutely genuine praise: "Faint, pale, embarrassed, exquisite Pater! He reminds me, in the disturbed midnight of our actual literature, of one of those lucent matchboxes which you place, on going to bed, near the candle, to show you, in the darkness, where you can strike a light: he shines in the uneasy gloom—vaguely, and has a phosphorescence, not a flame. But I agree with you that he is not of the little day—but of the longer time."[24] Certainly one reason for Pater's durability lay in the distinguishing technical characteristic of his prose romances, their emphasis not on action, but on attitudes. He does not render immediate gesture and utterance, but their temperamental equivalents; that is, finely discriminated "sensations and ideas" (the subtitle of *Marius*). Although his "imaginary portraits" lie outside the generic categories of Victorian literature, in their diminished plot emphasis they may be considered forerunners of one of the major developments of twentieth-century literature, the "psychological novel" with its stress on the rendering of impressions, on character and point of view. Writers such as James, Conrad, Ford, and Woolf, translating into fictional technique the concepts of self and time explored by William James and Henri Bergson, were anticipated in Pater's preoccupations by nearly a quarter-century.

Soon after James first "took possession" of London, he met Pater and found him "far from being as beautiful as his own prose." In the eighties the two men often had the opportunity of conversing at "literary tea-drinkings" and dinner parties; at one such gathering for J. S. Sargent, Violet Paget observed "Pater limping with gout and Henry James wrinkling his forehead as usual for tight

16. "Mystic and Cavalier"; alluded to in Yeats' elegy for Robert Gregory and quoted in the *Autobiography* as emblematic of Johnson and his tragically "fallen" generation.
17. *Marius*, II, 108.
18. *Letters of Pater*, p. xxv.
19. *Guide to Kulchur* (New York, 1952), p. 160.
20. Thus all the arts become "a matter of pure perception," and "the sensuous material of each art brings with it a special phase

or quality of beauty, untranslatable into the forms of any other." *Renaissance*, pp. 130-38 and *passim*. This theoretical passage in "The School of Giorgione," together with the "Conclusion," doubtless explains Pound's inclusion of Pater among "the great critics" in his 1909 introductory lecture at the Regent Street Polytechnic. Charles Norman, *Ezra Pound* (London, 1969), p. 31.

21. *Renaissance*, p. 236; "Vortex," *Blast*, No. 1 (June 1914), 153.
22. *Modern Verse*, p. xxx.
23. *Letters*, ed. Holly Stevens (New York, 1966), p. 606.

24. *The Letters of Henry James*, ed. Percy Lubbock (New York, 1920), I, 222.

boots, and a lot of artists buzzing about."[25] As early as 1873 James had wanted to review Pater's *Renaissance*, but found "it treats of things I know nothing about."[26] Yet by 1879 he is citing Pater in his fiction ("A Bundle of Letters") as the exponent of the life-is-an-art doctrine; and by 1881 the Paterian exhortation for a "quickened sense of life" and a "quickened, multiplied consciousness" is echoing in his description of Isabel Archer's "quickened consciousness" and "multiplied life."[27] James, sharing with Pater a celibate dedication to art, was likewise an aesthetic observer, a spectator of life, recording in an "architectural" style rich in preciosity of phrase—albeit mixed with un-Paterian touches of the colloquial—the multiplicity and intensity of his impressions. A few years later Pater's influence becomes equally evident in Joseph Conrad's 1897 "Preface" to *The Nigger of the "Narcissus."* "A work that aspires, however humbly, to the condition of art should carry its justification in every line." With this brash conflation of dicta from the "Giorgione" and "Style" essays, Conrad introduces his famous symbolist manifesto saturated with verbal echoes from Pater's work. In its final paragraph (to leap to the end) Conrad assimilates two of Pater's most striking sentences describing Giorgione's "ideal instants." The verbs "arrest" and "pause" and the phrases "a sigh, a smile" and "all the truth of life" echo their Paterian original ("a look, a smile" and "all the fulness . . . of life"). As he was finishing *The Nigger,* Conrad slyly described to Edward Garnett in a letter (November 6, 1896) a Cambridge don who admired his work: "He—I fancy—is not made in the image of God like other men but is fashioned after the pattern of Walter Pater which, you cannot but admit, is a much greater distinction."

Virginia Woolf's absorption in the "moment of being" likewise betrays an indebtedness to Pater. In "Modern Fiction" she portrays the mind in true Paterian fashion as receiving "a myriad impressions—trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steel"—and in "The Moment: Summer Night" she describes "the terror, the exultation" as the walls of the moment open and the self is freed (at the close of *Mrs. Dalloway* Woolf substitutes the even more Paterian "ecstasy" for the second noun in this pair). Clarissa Dalloway herself might serve as an excellent fictional equivalent to Pater's awareness that "not to discriminate every moment some pas-

sionate attitude in those about us, and in the very brilliancy of their gifts some tragic dividing of forces on their ways, is, on this short day of frost and sun, to sleep before evening." Even more typical of Pater's metaphysics of multipersonal selfhood and its gem-like confluence is Woolf's delineation of a series of Clarissa-selves which attempt to consolidate, as she describes it in a Paterian passage, into "one centre, one diamond."[28] Elsewhere, as in *The Voyage Out* and *The Waves,* Woolf develops another aspect of the multiplicity of self, utilizing the theme of the mythic double much as Pater had done in *Marius.*

Woolf, who incidentally had been taught Greek by Pater's sister Clara, "very white and shrivelled" she described her,[29] explicitly acknowledged her debt to Pater in the "Preface" to *Orlando* in which she thanked the friends who had helped in the writing of the book, beginning with those dead "and so illustrious that I scarcely dare name them, yet no one can read or write without being perpetually in the[ir] debt." Pater's name rounds out her brief list; and for good reason, since *Orlando* not only displays a very Paterian interest in the relation of the present moment to the changing flux of time and experience, but the hero-heroine is a symbolic figure of multiple selfhood who, like Pater's Mona Lisa, spans the centuries and epitomizes history in a culminating vision of the present moment. In "The Modern Essay" Woolf praised Pater's "vision" of Leonardo da Vinci—"a vision, such as we get in a good novel where everything contributes to bring the writer's conception as a whole before us. Only here, in the essay, where the bounds are so strict and the facts have to be used in their nakedness, the true writer like Walter Pater makes these limitations yield their own quality." Though Woolf felt compelled to note that "nowadays"—Stevens used this identical adverbial disclaimer—"nobody would have the courage to embark on the once-famous description of Leonardo's lady," she cannot resist either quoting Pater's purple panel or berating Max Beerbohm for failing to write like Pater.[30] But Woolf admitted that polysyllables and purple were "nowadays" passé, and she confessed that "the only living Englishman who ever looks into these volumes is, of course, a gentleman of Polish extraction."

Sensing the uniqueness of individual experience as basic to fiction, Pater nevertheless failed to explore the

possibilities inherent in the first-person narrator. But for that, his imaginary portraits might have provided the "new form" which Conrad and others set out to find. Notwithstanding, on the Continent in the works of a gentleman of French lineage, also much admired by Woolf, this failed Paterian "spectator persona" was triumphantly translated into the first person and so redeemed. Some years before Proust began publishing on Ruskin, he met Oscar Wilde, then at the height of his vogue. Proust would have been intrigued by his contacts with Ruskin, but Wilde and his friend Montesquiou could hardly have failed to praise that rival Oxonian apostle of beauty, Pater. It cannot be determined when Proust first read Pater, but Pater's friend, Douglas Ainslie, who had originally been introduced to Pater by Wilde, wrote of his conversations with Proust in 1897; "We fairly often began discussions on the respective value of Ruskin and Walter Pater. . . . He did not want anyone glorying in Pater rather than Ruskin, and when I told him that Pater had said to me one day: 'I can't believe Ruskin has been able to discover in St. Mark's more things than I,' he shrugged his shoulders and said: 'As you wish, we shall never agree about English literature.' "[31] Probably Proust effectively discovered Pater only after he began, painfully but successfully, to read him in the original; on one occasion he exclaimed: "What an interesting collection one could make with the landscapes of France seen through English eyes: the French rivers of Turner, the Versailles of Bonnington; the Auxerre or Valenciennes, the Vezelay or Amiens of Walter Pater; the Fontainebleau of Stevenson, and many others!"[32]

On a profounder level, the impressionistic Ruskinian-Paterian tradition of perception—the insistence less upon the Arnoldian seeing of the *object* as it really is than upon knowing one's *impression*—sets the stage for Proust's exploration of interior, psychic reality. In particular, the opening chapters of *Swann's Way* evoke the veiled autobiography of Pater's "Child in the House" by their nostalgic recollection of childhood and mother love (evoking *Marius* here also) from the vantage of middle age, by their sequence of moods woven from sharply etched memories and conveyed through idealizing adjectives and intricately balanced syntax, and by the central vision of the pink hawthorn in the garden near Combray. Proust's vision contains nearly the same components as Pater's: a fenced and forbidden park; the perfume in the wind and the thickness of the blossoms on the aged stock; the boy's loitering along the pathway with the massed flowers at his feet; authorial comparisons to tapestry and painting;

the initial unexpectedness and subsequent mysterious longing; and the blossoms gathered for decoration, as seen earlier in the white hawthorns on the altar. Perhaps Proust even noticed those moments when Pater stumbled by technical error toward the twentieth century (by saying "the child of whom *I* am writing" instead of "the child of whom *Florian* was thinking") as his third-person mask slipped halfway into first-person narration.

III

Pater alone among the major Victorian prose-prophets seemed to reject the Victorian conception of art as quasi-ethics and to urge in its stead the morality of pure sight and sensation. Pater alone conceived of the revelation of personality (Marius' and Lisa's) in terms of mythic archetypes. But because these insights have become so widely assimilated and hidden within the modern sensibility, the literal minded might question the propriety or maybe the sobriety of claiming that this impotent Oxford don (pater of no little feat) fathered the future. Yet circumstances suggest that when Proust groped among his memories of Albertine and found the ego to be "composed of the superimposition of our successive states," each "fresh memory" bringing a "different Albertine,"[33] he was aware of how Mona Lisa had embodied the antinomies of the flux, perhaps aware too of how Marius had gathered successive visions of Cecilia and her equivalents or antitheses. Or again, as the ultimate source of Woolf's multipersonal self, of her sense of the divisibility of time in contrast to the "moment of being," of her emphasis upon the androgyne and upon the intensity / death equation (all but embodied in Clarissa Dalloway and exemplified in herself), and of her Ezra-Poundian interest in the primary significance of rhythm and syntax, Pater stands as the *Ur*-modern. But he is a modern whose greatest contributions often lie beyond the range or compass of sources either peripheral or direct; rather, he exists as a "praeter-source" in unacknowledged, subliminal associations which have combined with other influences and emphases not exclusively his own. Considered in this light, countless twentieth-century threads lead back to him, as for example D. H. Lawrence's "Poetry of the Present" which describes a supercharged Paterian intuition of "the immediate, instant self": "The quivering, nimble hour of the present, this is the quick of Time. This is the immanence. The quick of the universe is the pulsating, carnal self, mysterious and palpable." To imagine Pater murmuring this to a friend would be (one

25. Quoted in Leon Edel, *Henry James: The Conquest of London* (New York, 1962), p. 331, and *Henry James: The Middle Years* (New York, 1962), p. 116.
26. *The Air of Reality: New Essays on Henry James,* ed. John Goode (London, 1972), p. 167.
27. *The Portrait of a Lady,* Chapters VII and XLII. In *The Tragic Muse* (1892) the so-called "Montesquiou-Whistler-Wilde aestheticism" of Gabriel Nash (partially a persona for James himself) has its closest Victorian analogue in Pater's writings; and

in *The Wings of a Dove* (1902) Susan Stringham's imagination has been fed on Pater as well as Maeterlinck.
28. *Mrs. Dalloway* (London, 1942), pp. 42-43.
29. Quentin Bell, *Virginia Woolf: A Biography* (New York, 1972), I, 68.
30. *Collected Essays* (New York, 1967), II, 43, 46. Max, not surprisingly, had felt obliged to accuse Pater of writing English "as a dead language" (his parody of Pater's style is a classic). "Diminuendo," *The Works of Max Beerbohm* (London, 1922), p. 129.

31. "Hommage à Marcel Proust," *La Nouvelle Revue Française,* XX (1923), 258-59.
32. Quoted by E. de Clermont-Tonnerre in *Robert de Montesquiou*

et Marcel Proust (Paris, 1925), p. 97.
33. *Remembrance of Things Past,* trans. C. K. Scott Moncrieff (New York, 1934), II, 764.

hopes) more parody than truth; yet Pater did suggest something not unlike it.

James Joyce, entangled by the critics in Aquinas, Vico, and whatever, might also be described as the beneficiary, preeminently so, of Pater-as-praeter-source. Whereas Joyce's parody of Pater's style in the "Oxen of the Sun" episode in *Ulysses* is truly comic, the postcard Joyce sent his brother, a "photograph" of Pater he claimed, was more heartless, picturing as it did the distorted face and swollen brass nose of the Brasenose College gate knocker (in *Finnegans Wake* Pater's college is parodied as "Bruisanose" and "Brazenaze"). Yet Joyce's 1902 "portrait" of James Clarence Mangan is Pateresque both in its rhythms and in its lyric love of beauty; and not only does Joyce, in comparing Mangan's brooding lady to the Mona Lisa, utilize Pater's intuitions (a figure of "many lives"), words ("presence," "delicacy," "lust," "weariness"), and phrases (Joyce: "distant terrors and riotous dreams, and that strange stillness," Pater: "strange thoughts and fantastic reveries and exquisite passions"; Joyce: "embodiment of that idea," Pater: "embodiment of the . . . idea"), but he also explicitly describes the Irish poet himself as a questing Paterian hero: "he seems to seek in the world . . . 'what is there in no satisfying measure or not at all.' "[34] In the concluding paragraphs of this essay, Joyce borrows Pater's myth of the exiled pagan gods reborn in Pico della Mirandola (passionately alive though unreadable) to describe Mangan (unread yet imaginatively vital), verbally echoing the eloquent culminating affirmation of Pater's study. Joyce's unconscious caricature of the heroic Pico in the feeble-bodied Mangan with his confused learning, pitiful loves, baggy pants, and early death, may possibly anticipate such later parodies as Finnegan's comic death and rebirth, in which case the Paterian motif of the gods reborn takes its place along side theosophical schemes and Viconian cycles as an influence on this most experimental novel of the century.

Eliot was closer to the truth than he probably had a right to be when in a discussion of *Ulysses* with Virginia Woolf he called Joyce "a purely literary writer . . . founded upon Walter Pater with a dash of Newman."[35] Significant Paterian motifs in the Mangan essay migrate to *Stephen Hero* and afterwards are found in Joyce's Pateresquely entitled *Portrait* as well as in *Ulysses* and *Finnegan*—not only a sentence from "Pico" parodied in *Ulysses* or the lines on Mona Lisa burlesqued in *Ulysses* and *Finnegan*, significant as these may be, but the entire idea of the "epiphany" itself. That moment of revelation

which Joyce described in "Mangan" and the *Portrait* as "less than the pulsation of an artery, [but] equal in its period and value to six thousand years," derives from Blake's *Milton* via Pater's "pulses" / "pulsations" imagery in the "Conclusion." These epiphanies throughout Joyce's work are very much like the expanded interval of the gem-like flame or such other indelible Paterian moments as Florian's discovery of the hawthorn (in Joycean terms, Pater's "Child in the House" is a study in the epiphanies of an artist's childhood) or Marius' vision in the Sabine Hills or Giorgione's "ideal instants."[36] As illustrative of the manner in which Pater-as-praeter-source functions, it could be shown (though it has not yet been) how completely Joyce dramatizes Pater's "Conclusion" in Stephen Dedalus' climactic epiphany on the beach at the end of the fourth chapter of the *Portrait*. The spirit liberated or reborn through its passion for art is the subject of both passages, and the general Paterian celebration of new impressions as well as the basic vocabulary of "ecstasy" and "flame" is everywhere applied to Stephen.

In scenic terms, Pater's initial image of summer bathing, which modulates into "movements of the shore-side, where the water flows down" at ebb tide, anticipates Stephen's seashore encounters, as does Pater's presentation of the perpetual flux in the "drift" of the tide, which finds its fictional realization in Stephen's wading among the "endless drift of seaweed." Equally pertinent to Joyce's description of Stephen's epiphany is Pater's definition of aesthetic passion as the only escape from the prison of one's experience of time and history; the mind, isolated like "a solitary prisoner," is seemingly "ringed round for each one of us by that thick wall of personality through which no real voice has ever pierced on its way to us, or from us to that which we can only conjecture to be without." For Stephen, this "incertitude that had ringed him round" tinged with unreality the calls of his bathing friends until the mythic overtones in their banter struck him like a "voice from beyond the world," a note "piercing" his isolation, and he conceived an aching "desire to cry aloud, the cry of a hawk or eagle on high, to cry piercingly of his deliverance." As is frequently noted, the bird imagery in this passage defines Joyce's central Daedalus / Icarus archetype of the artist, and this, on the praeter-source hypothesis, now appears to hark back to Pater's prison image and his stress on the power of art to "set the spirit free." Additional support for the Paterian origin can be found in Joyce's use of confinement,

flame, and cry for freedom to describe Mangan's earlier failure to escape: "History encloses him so straitly that even his fiery moments do not set him free from it. He, too, cries out, in his life and in his mournful verses. . . ." What the Joyce of the *Portrait* brought to the Pater / Mangan *donné* is the dramatization of these themes in myth, although the epigraph to *The Renaissance*—"Yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove" (Ps. 68: 13)—suggests elements of this legend, as does the Cupid / Psyche story in *Marius* which patterns the quest of its hero in the same archetypal fashion.

In the final paragraph of the "Conclusion" Pater elaborates his image of the prisoner, describing man as "under sentence of death" and citing Rousseau, to whom "an undefinable taint of death had clung always," as one who discovered the desired liberation in aesthetic passion. Joyce could hardly have missed Pater's description of this as "the awakening in him of the literary sense." And not only is Stephen's apprenticeship as an artist initiated by his sense of "cerements shaken from the body of death," but it also coincides with a repudiation of the priesthood in harmony with Pater's assertion that any facile orthodoxy "which requires of us the sacrifice of any part of [aesthetic] experience, in consideration of some interest into which we cannot enter, . . . has no real claim upon us." Finally, Stephen's culminating vision of the bird-girl, though only faintly anticipated in the "Conclusion" by several references to the perfected or friendly "face," is nonetheless yet another Paterian import from the Mangan essay—Leonardo's ambiguous Mona Lisa. The epiphany of the profane goddess, the "presence that rose thus so strangely beside the water," may well have

served as the prototype for Stephen's avowedly sensual "angel of mortal youth and beauty" (the ending of this chapter, after all, is designed as an explicit parallel to the "swoon of sin" which concludes the second chapter). As we see him later, writing a villanelle to his "temptress," Stephen is little more than a budding Dowson. He was lucky to have escaped.

Unlike Joyce and the other major modernists, Pater is not now and probably never will again become popular with any number of readers outside the walls of academia. But Eliot himself has given the lie to his own assertion that Pater failed to influence any first-rate mind: "No! Shakespeare's kings are not, nor are meant to be, great men" writes Pater;[37] "No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be" comes the Prufrockian echo of the young Eliot. And on the more elusive level of unacknowledged associations, the mature Eliot in the second of his moving "Four Quartets" proves he has not forgotten Pater's "Conclusion" or the pilgrimage of Marius:

Home is where one starts from. As we grow older
The world becomes stranger, the pattern more complicated
Of dead and living. Not the intense moment
Isolated, with no before and after,
But a lifetime burning in every moment
And not the lifetime of one man only
But of old stones that cannot be deciphered.

If one looks, one can find in Pater's ideal of the gem-like flame many such fugitive threads out of which our present literature is woven.

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The "Central Fiery Heart": Ruskin's Remaking of Dante

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JOHN RUSKIN'S LIFELONG INTEREST in the *Divine Comedy* is an established fact.[1] But it has yet to be shown how Ruskin takes images from, or relating to, Dante and merges these with his own vision *of* Dante as poet of the

"central fiery heart." Again: Ruskin's chief contributions to aesthetic thought during the decade 1846-1856— his concepts of the "penetrative imagination," the "Gothic," the "grotesque," and the poetic-psychological "bal-

34. From Pater's "A Prince of Court Painters," *Imaginary Portraits* (London, 1910), p. 44. Joyce's opening discussion of classic and romantic as constant states of mind may possibly derive from Pater's "Postscript" to *Appreciations*.

35. Quoted in Woolf, *A Writer's Diary*, ed. Leonard Woolf (Lon-

don, 1959), p. 50.

36. In *Stephen Hero* Joyce defined the epiphany as "a sudden spiritual manifestation, whether in the vulgarity of speech or of gesture or in a memorable phase of the mind itself, . . . the most delicate and evanescent of moments."

37. *Appreciations* (London, 1910), p. 199.

1. See Charles Eliot Norton, "Introduction," *Comments of John Ruskin on The Divina Commedia*, comp. by George P. Huntington (Boston, 1908), p. ix; E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedder-

burn, eds., *The Complete Works of John Ruskin* (London, 1903-1912), XVII, xxxviii (all Ruskin citations below refer to this edition). Beatrice Corrigan, in "Introduction," *Italian Poets and English Critics, 1755-1859* (Chicago, 1969), notes the numerological significance of 1300 for Ruskin.

ance" by which the "pathetic fallacy" is overcome—have received attention.[2] But the imagery of fire and center in which Ruskin embodies these ideas as he incorporates them into an emerging myth of Dante has not been traced or interpreted. What must be demonstrated is that as Ruskin's aesthetic thinking develops, his own poetic art develops concurrently with it and inseparably from it. This means that his poetic images are by no means confined to the function of illustrative similes but take on a life of their own. Specifically, through his use of the related images of 'fire' and 'center' (the latter suggesting also the idea of 'heart') as these recur and are amplified during the decade just mentioned, Ruskin constructs a vision of Dante as expression of the Ruskinian ideal of intense and organized consciousness—a poetic myth that stands as a major Romantic achievement (comparable, for example, to Blake's[3]) in its combination of aesthetic, moral, and psychological values. And an adequate analysis of this Dante-vision as it unfolds must above all show how at each stage imagery adds a new level of meaning to theory.

The four stages of this unfolding may be briefly summarized. First, in *Modern Painters* (Vol. II, 1846) Ruskin uses the image of a human shadow on a wall of fire from Dante's *Purgatorio* to symbolize Dante's own "penetrative imagination" as it pierces through to the "central fiery heart" of reality—and of the human spirit. Combining the image of the fiery human figure with that of the poet who provided it, i.e., as poet of imaginative intensity combined with moral compassion. Next, in *The Stones of Venice* (Vol. II, 1853), Ruskin makes Dante the iconic 'center' or incarnation of the Gothic spirit, which itself is presented as reaching its point of maximal energy in the "central" year 1300, the year of Dante's vision. The third stage of this development of Ruskin's Dante vision occurs in the third and final volume of *The Stones of Venice* (1853), where Dante is seen as overcoming the emotional dangers arising in the mental states associated with "apathetic" and "satirical" grotesque art, to attain the state of consciousness responsible for the highest pos-

sible artistic achievement—that of the "symbolical grotesque." Dante not only provides the images to illustrate all forms of the grotesque, but he also becomes the "central" symbol of its highest intensity of awareness. Finally, returning to *Modern Painters* (Vol. III, 1856), Ruskin recombines the "center" idea with his original Dantean image of the human figure outlined in fire, associating this image now with a newly expanded vision of Dante as exemplifying that ideal "balance" of faculties which corrects the "pathetic fallacy."

Throughout this development Ruskin's "center" imagery adds an ontological dimension to his aesthetic thinking: as Mircea Eliade observes, "Attaining the center is equivalent to a consecration, an initiation; yesterday's profane and illusory existence gives place to a new, to a life that is real, enduring, and effective."[4] And an investigation of the fire imagery represents in addition the kind of phenomenological inquiry for which Gaston Bachelard has set the example, a study "which could be undertaken to show the fundamental influence on the life of the mind of certain meditations aroused by objects"—especially of images of the elements.[5] Each of the four stages in Ruskin's Dantean vision will therefore be examined in some detail, and parallels from both the Romantic and religious traditions will be drawn to provide a context for interpretation.

I

In *Modern Painters* II Ruskin defines imagination as a "penetrating possession-taking faculty" (IV, 251). Though in another passage he describes the "penetrative imagination" as only "one of the forms, the highest, of imagination" (IV, 228), this difference in phrasing is not important, since Ruskin's chief aim is to sharpen the Coleridgian contrast between imagination (which penetrates to the "heart and inner nature" of things) and fancy (which only "sees the outside"—IV, 253). The example Ruskin chooses to illustrate the activity of this power is taken from *Purgatorio* xxvi. 4-8, a passage wherein the poet, Dante-as-narrator, recalls how his own shadow, when cast upon the wall of flame in which the

spirits of the penitent Lustful were refined in Purgatory, seemed to increase the redness of the red fire within the shadow's outlines:

> Feriami 'l Sole in su l'omero destro
> Che già raggiando tutto l'Occidente
> *Mutava in bianco aspetto di cilestro.*
> Ed io facea *con l'ombra più rovente*
> *Parer la fiamma.* (IV, 250; underscorings are Ruskin's)

Cary, whose translation of the *Divina Commedia* Ruskin evidently esteemed more highly than Milton's *Paradise Lost*,[6] offers this rendering:

> The sun
> Now all the western clime irradiate changed
> From azure tinct to white; and, as I passed,
> My passing shadow made the umber'd flame
> Burn ruddier.[7]

Dante's vision reveals the "intense essence of flame," which is "lambent annihilation" (IV, 250); he has conveyed in the plainest words a vivid sense of the true 'fieriness' of fire. And the image does show remarkably precise observation of the coloring of a shadow cast upon a mass of flame.

But at the same time there is something not easily forgotten, something uncanny or suggestive of the supernatural in the outlined image of a human figure suddenly superimposed upon a wall of fire. Similar vivid, refulgent forms come to mind from the Bible and from the visionary writings of Blake. One may think, for example, of the mysterious fourth figure who appears (like a "son of God") together with the three mortals cast into Nebuchadnezzar's "burning fiery furnace," and who is compared by Blake to Los the fourth Zoa, the Zoa of imagination.[8] (Eliade has studied comparable "luminous theophanies" from a great variety of traditions.[9]) Ruskin, impressed with the potentialities of this striking image, removes it from its context in the *Purgatorio* narrative to enrich and deepen its meaning:

> Such is always the mode in which the highest imaginative faculty seizes its materials. It never stops at crusts or ashes, or outward images of any kind; it ploughs them all aside, and plunges into the very central fiery heart; nothing else will content its spirituality.... (IV, 250)

Here the imagination itself "seizes" its materials, "ploughs" aside encumbrances, and "plunges" toward its goal: these vigorous, active verbs prepare us for Rusk-

in's next suggestion, namely, that the human imagination is identical in nature with the "central fiery heart" of reality to which it penetrates. The imagination not only *sees* fire truly, it seems to *be* a kind of fire. For no matter what the imagination encounters in its searches—"no matter what be the subject submitted to it, substance or spirit, all is alike divided asunder, joint and marrow, whatever utmost truth, life, principle it has, laid bare, and that which has no truth, life, principle, dissipated into its original smoke at a touch" (IV, 251). The fiery imagination pierces through vain shows in its search for the central fire of reality; indeed, "nothing else will content its spirituality"—a phrase that recalls the Fire-Logos that the Stoics adapted from Heraclitus.

One may also see in Ruskin's depiction of imaginative fire as a force that "plunges" to the center or "heart" of reality a very useful parallel with Novalis' Romantic fire imagery as Bachelard summarizes it: "The same heat animates both the rock and the miner's heart. 'One would say that the miner has in his veins the inner fire of the earth which excites him to explore its depths.'"[10] In similar fashion, the image of the "heart" is fully as basic to Ruskin's symbolism as that of fire, and inextricable from it. Imagination's

> nature and dignity depend on its holding things by the heart. Take its hand from off the beating of that, and it will prophesy no longer; it looks not in the eyes, it judges not by the voice, it describes not by outward features; all that it affirms, judges, or describes, it affirms from within. (IV, 251)

In Ruskin's concern for the prophetic inwardness of imagination he may have overstated his case: the imagination must to *some* extent describe by "outward features" as well as "from within"—though of course, as he has shown, it must select precisely those outward features that express what is truly within. But Ruskin has in any case clearly established the "central fiery heart" as a focus for his meditations on imagination's nature and goal. A deep-rooted force of firelike penetration, the imagination pierces with unswerving directness to the equally deep-lying inner core of reality. The metaphorical fieriness shared by imagination and by its deep-lying goal indicates that the values this penetrative faculty reveals at reality's center are akin to its own inwardness or "heart." One next discovers that this same fire symbol is also at the center of Ruskin's thinking about Dante him-

2. George P. Landow, *The Aesthetic and Critical Theories of John Ruskin* (Princeton, 1971) is good on the symbolical grotesque and on the balance that overcomes the pathetic fallacy; his references to Dante in connection particularly with this balance are useful (pp. 32, 140, 388). He does not, however, mention the apathetic and satirical grotesques, which I characterize below as the first two stages in Dante's Ruskinian *commedia* or journey toward the highest, or symbolical, stage of grotesque-sublime awareness. For imagination and Gothic, see John D. Rosenberg, *The Darkening Glass: A Portrait of Ruskin's Genius* (New York, 1961), pp. 13-18, 47-63. Harold Bloom, "Introduction," *The Literary Criticism of John Ruskin* (Doubleday, 1965), p. xxiii, also comments briefly on Ruskinian "imagination."

3. Bloom compares Ruskin to Blake (pp. xxi, xxv), but almost solely in the context of Ruskin's later work, *The Queen of the*

Air. In that work, Bloom comments, "Ruskin does not seem to invent 'Giant Forms' or titanic personages, as Blake does, but he invents and explores states-of-being in a manner very similar to Blake's...." Yet, as I suggest below, the Dante of "penetrative imagination" does indeed look very much like the "Giant Form" of Los-Urthona, while the Dante of the "symbolical grotesque" resembles the "Giant Form" of Albion. These appearances of Dante are genuinely Blakean "Visionary forms."

4. Mircea Eliade, *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York, 1959), p. 18. Pierre Fontaney, in "Ruskin and Paradise Regained," *Victorian Studies*, XII (1969), 347-58, has done a Bodkin-Eliade reading of a "cosmic mountain" passage from *Praeterita*.

5. Gaston Bachelard, *The Psychoanalysis of Fire*, trans. Alan C. M. Ross, Preface by Northrop Frye (Boston, 1964), pp. 102, 89.

6. In *The Stones of Venice* (Vol. II, 1853) Ruskin says, "if I could only read English, and had to choose, for a library narrowed by poverty, between Cary's Dante and our own original Milton, I should choose Cary without an instant's pause" (X, 307).

7. Henry Francis Cary, trans., *The Vision; or Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise, of Dante Alighieri* (London: H. G. Bonn, 1844), p. 313.

8. *The Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, ed. David V. Erdman, comm. Harold Bloom (New York, 1968), pp. 297, 865. See specifically *The Four Zoas* 3:9 and Daniel 3:25.

9. Mircea Eliade, *The Two and the One*, trans. J. M. Cohen (New York, 1965), pp. 19-77.

10. Bachelard, p. 41.