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Table of Contents

Greetings from the Editor 6

Missionary Travels: Muddying the Waters of Victorian Stereotypes
by Mary Rosner 8

Whitewashing Blackface Minstrelsy in Nineteenth-Century England: Female Banjo Players in *Punch*
by Laura Vorachek 31

"If He caught me here, / O'erheard this speech": Audience, Performance, and Genre in Browning's "Caliban upon Setebos"
by Veronica Alfano 52

In "Persian garments": Orientalism and Hybridity in Robert Browning's Life and Works
by Gal Manor 66

Disease, Hospitality, and Forgiveness in Charlotte Yonge's *The Heir of Redclyffe*
by Lynn Shakinovsky 83

Navigating the Periodical Market: *Once a Week*, Poetry, and the Illustrated Literary Periodical
by Caley Ehnes 96

"False From Head to Foot": Social Performance and the Ideology of Recognition in *The Way We Live Now*
by Kevin Swafford 113

Book Review 125
Iain Ross, *Oscar Wilde and Ancient Greece*
by Nikolai Endres

Books Received 127

Contributor Notes 128

Cover Image: Livingstone in Africa

Greetings from the Editor

Victorians Journal of Culture and Literature #123, Spring 2013 marks a number of socio-literary milestones. First is the bicentenary of the birth of African explorer and missionary, David Livingstone. Mary Rosner investigates Dr. Livingstone's contributions to literary and cultural history by revisiting his 1857 *Missionary Travels*. By looking at the African explorer himself, at his interactions with African *others*, and at his confrontations with Africa's inscrutable geo-political landscape, Rosner proposes to "muddy the waters" of accepted Victorian stereotypes in order to provide fresh perspectives on this iconic representative of British imperialism.

Laura Vorachek's "Whitewashing Blackface Minstrelsy in Nineteenth-Century England: Female Banjo Players in *Punch*" offers a highly entertaining and distinctive perspective on the late nineteenth-century "banjo craze." This faddish American cultural import, while associated with southern slave-culture and street performers, was "all the rage" among British aristocrats, royals, and most scandalous of all, women. Vorachek's impressive research reveals a lesser-known aspect of women's transition from angel-in-the-house to New Women turning to black-face and banjos to signal their independence.

Our issue also marks the bicentenary of Robert Browning's birth, celebrated in 2012. Two insightful papers on Browning's poetry are here included: "'If He caught me here, / O'erheard this speech': Audience, Performance, and Genre in Browning's 'Caliban upon Setebos'" by Veronica Alfano studies the lyric underpinnings of dramatic monologues by aligning authorial and narrative voices with the traditions of poetic form. Our second Browning author, Gal Manor, analyzes the poet through the idea of "'Persian garments': Orientalism and Hybridity in Robert Browning's Life and Works." As Professor Manor's title implies, these themes are prominent in Browning's personal life as well as in his poetry; this fascinating study brings together a number of lesser-known poems investigating two topical scholarly interests: orientalism and hybridity.

Lynn Shakinovsky's "Disease, Hospitality, and Forgiveness in Charlotte Yonge's *The Heir of Redclyffe*" revisits this novel through the perspectives offered by Jacques Derrida, specifically those involving hospitality. This analysis considers the shifting roles of guest and host in the novel along with the themes of contamination and life-threatening disease, and the imperative requiring that both hospitality and forgiving the unforgivable must by definition be unconditional and unqualified.

Charles Dickens's bicentenary was also widely celebrated in 2012, and author Caley Ehnes provides new insight into "Navigating the Periodical Market: *Once a Week*, Poetry, and the Illustrated Literary Periodical." Taking as her case studies the definitively Dickensian H.K. Browne style of illustration and the Pre-Raphaelite style of Millais, Ehnes assesses the notorious split between Dickens and his publishers, Bradbury and Evans; Dickens's dissolution of *Household Words* and launch of *All the Year Round*; and the establishment of its competitor, *Once a Week*—influenced by Dickensian aesthetics but striving for distinction through quality illustrations by prestigious artists.

Our final offering is "'False From Head to Foot': Social Performance and the Ideology of Recognition in *The Way We Live Now*" by Kevin Swafford. This paper emphasizes Trollope's marked animosity towards the *nouveaux riches*, their shop-keeping mentality, and their industrial "taint." As Swafford establishes, figures like Augustus Melmotte are society's new "golden mean," while the inherent, innate superiority of the ancient landed-gentry is a fiction of the past that is unsupportable in the present.

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Missionary Travels: Muddying the Waters of Victorian Stereotypes

by Mary Rosner

> Travelers do not simply record what they see. They travel with a purpose. They journey with preconceptions. (Youngs 209)

> Alongside the written word, . . .visual representations played an important role in the construction of. . ."imaginative geographies." Explorers' tales were lavishly illustrated with images of fabulous creatures, awe-inspiring landscapes, and daring deeds. (Driver, "Geography's Empire" 32)

Victorian travel literature records the exploration and colonization of lands that promised raw materials and trade for industries, that demonstrated an absence of (and perceived need for) Christian ideals and practices, and that offered the prestige of imperial expansion. Parts of Africa were ripe for development and control, with various European countries claiming "empty spaces" to engage in their colonial projects. Joanne Van Eeden explains that such projects were influential in several ways: by invoking "the genres of exploration, discovery, and archaeology to validate the colonial enterprise"; by using "techniques such as naming and mapping to appropriate space and impose systems of surveillance"; and by rendering "the colonized land picturesque in accordance with Western aesthetic conventions" (23). By reporting on their projects, explorers and missionaries "*produced* 'the rest of the world' for European readerships" (Pratt 5). These productions—both verbal and visual—were not neutral but reflected the interests and values of European authors who "constructed an Africa suitable both to the needs of the nineteenth-century imperial interests and to a European readership longing for tales of exotic worlds being mastered by heroic European males" (Duncan 50). While Europeans typically represented themselves as models of order, reason, and civilization, Black Africans were viewed as "savage, primitive, childlike, apelike, lazy, exotic, sexually attractive or deviant" (Koivunen, *Visualizing* 3-4). Further, the African landscape was depicted from "the panoramic eye of the possessor. . . . Promontory descriptions and the monarch-of-all-I-survey syndrome were nineteenth-century gendered colonial tropes that signaled male power and presence" (Van Eeden 26). But my study of *Missionary Travels* explores an alternative perspective, in which commentary by explorer-missionary David Livingstone challenges, rather than upholds, accepted commonplaces about himself, Black Africans, and the African landscape.

For over thirty years, working first for the London Missionary Society, then for the British government, David Livingstone (1813-73) explored large areas of southern Africa that had been long considered desolate and dry wastelands. These explorations led him to discover Lake Ngami, Lake Nyassa, and Victoria Falls; to investigate the Zambesi River as a potential trade-route to interior Africa; and to conduct long, harrowing journeys within and across the continent. He died while searching for the source of the Nile, an event recorded with appropriate melodrama:

> the hero died upon his knees. . . he rose from his couch of mortal anguish, like the gallant and pious soldier of God that he was, to give up the ghost, praying to Heaven for Africa, for us, for himself. . . . The Caesar who proudly staggered from his bed, exclaiming that "an Emperor should die standing," is outdone in majesty and becomingness by the attitude of this grand Scotsman who passes away in the solitude of the African wild on his knees. . . . that impressive final scene [portrayed] . . . the perfect Explorer; dauntless, indomitable, sagacious, patient, gentle, intelligent, keen-eyed, full of confidence in his mission and himself. (*Life and Explorations* 588)

Livingstone's African companions preserved his body and carried it almost 1,500 miles to the coast, where it was transported to England and buried at Westminster Abbey. Subsequent memorials of "Livingstone, the missionary, Livingstone the geographer, Livingstone the imperial pioneer" established him as the "patron saint of African exploration" (Driver, *Geography* 89).

Yet that reputation had been developing over time. The Royal Geographical Society, presided over by Sir Roderick Murchison, enjoyed a symbiotic relationship with the explorer that brought public acclaim to both:

> Livingstone provided Murchison with a series of breath-taking discoveries that catapulted the RGS to a pinnacle of fame and influence, while the President transformed the obscure missionary into one of Victorian Britain's archetypal heroes . . . [resulting in] government aid, public subscriptions, and profits from book sales which freed him to prosecute further African explorations. (Stafford, *Scientist* 172)

Livingstone had also done considerable work on his own to establish his reputation. He was, as Roy Bridges notes, "a mill boy who 'made good' in the approved Samuel Smiles fashion" ("Discussion" 180). To publicize his discoveries, to popularize his theory of "commerce and Christianity" as a means to end the slave trade, and to gain the financial and government support needed for further work in Africa, he returned twice to England to give talks, publish reports, and prepare book manuscripts: first, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (1857), and later, with his brother Charles, *A Narrative of the Expedition to the Zambesi* (1865). *Missionary Travels* "quickly sold 70,000 copies at a time when anything over 10,000 was considered a best-seller" (Kubicek 256). The book seemed to offer "something for everyone":

> The Christian's faith in God is strengthened by the author's very survival of every imaginable danger. The missionary spirit is roused by descriptions of people awaiting the Word. The abolitionist is inspired by the prospect of stopping the slave trade. Medical men are intrigued by Livingstone's approach to disease and the value of his treatment for fever. Empire-builders, mill owners, and engineers are excited by the prospect of untilled lands, fertile soils, the need for railways. The geographer, the naturalist, the geologist are fascinated by Livingstone's meticulousness in bringing unknown territory, with its unknown formations, plants and animals into the realms of science. (Holmes 124)

Missionary Travels not only created exciting and interesting narratives: by complicating established commonplaces of nineteenth-century colonial projects, it also raised questions about those projects and challenged assumptions about the colonizers, the colonized, and the colonies.

I. Looking at the Explorer

> Livingstone: one of the greatest imperial heroes of the Victorian age, . . . a radiant white figure bathed in light amidst the dark and dangerous surroundings of tropical Africa. (Ryan 30)

Works by nineteenth-century Western travelers were largely emblems of cultural chauvinism; as Catherine Hall notes, their texts equated "whiteness . . . [with] order, civilization, Christianity, separate spheres and domesticity, rationality, modernity and industry" (212). Missionary-travelers evoked the same equation, promoting

> an almost universal belief that non-Western peoples were "heathens," lost in the degradation of sin and in need of salvation through the gospel of Christ; . . . a belief in the manifest superiority and liberating potential of Western "civilization," in both its intellectual and its technological aspects; an unshakable confidence in the regenerative capacity of rational knowledge. . . linked to Christian proclamation. (Stanley 8)

In the West, these missionary-travelers represented "moral titans facing dark forces which [could martyr] them in a Christ-like sacrifice" (MacKenzie, "Empire" 281); their journeys to "darkest Africa" epitomized the best test of European "physical and moral courage and strength and vigorous maturity" (Vance 8). As the subtitle of *Missionary Travels* indicates—"*during his sixteen years' residence in the interior of Africa; and . . . journey from the Cape of Good Hope to Loanda on the West Coast, thence across the continent, down the river Zambesi, and to the Eastern Ocean*"—Livingstone was repeatedly tested by hardships:

> he was in danger of perishing by hunger and thirst; . . . in peril by the hands of savages and the malice of the Boers; repeated attacks of fever. . . . exposure to drought and rain, to heat and cold, with innumerable inconveniences, show the greatness of the man who ignores the word "sacrifice," and thinks no endeavour too great to be made in the cause and for the honour of Him who laid down His life for the salvation of a guilty, ruined world. (G. Smith 18)

Reputedly, Livingstone triumphed over deserts, forests, rivers, and wildlife; demands for bribery by kings whose territory he wanted to cross; hostile natives and unreliable guides; hunger and diseases that rendered him helpless and giddy, unable to walk and incapable of directing porters or conducting prayer meetings. Through his heroic endurance, "manliness and empire confirmed one another, guaranteed one another, enhanced one another" (de Groot 56).

Yet, far from defining himself as strong, certain, and confident during recurring bouts of fever, Livingstone sometimes depicts himself as "weakly effeminate" (*Missionary* 226). But he reveals weaknesses at other times as well. Probably the best-known occasion of failed mastery in Livingstone's early career was his encounter with a lion at Mabotsa that nearly led to his death: "Nothing in all Livingstone's history took more hold of the popular imagination, or was more frequently inquired about when he came home. By a kind of miracle his life was saved, but the encounter left him forever lame of the arm which the lion crunched" (Blaikie 83-84). For Victorians, that encounter became "an emblem of his heroic response to African exigency" (Freedgood 138), but its presentation in *Missionary Travels* challenges both Blaikie's miraculous construction and Victorians' heroic version. The book more obviously shows that "the missionary has . . . lost control of his environment" (MacKenzie, "Iconography" 95), and that his survival depended on the Africans with him, not on any leadership or resolve or skill that he himself possessed. In a letter to Thomas Moffat, Livingstone confessed: "I very imprudently ventured across the valley. . . . This very nearly cost me my life. . . . It was . . . so contrary to my regular rules of acting I don't know what induced me to go" (Schapera, *Letters* 90-91).

According to his description of the episode, Livingstone attempted to "encourage" the "cowardly" Bakatla to destroy the lions attacking their cows: "It is well known that if one in a troop of lions is killed the others take the hint and leave that part of the country" (*Missionary* 10). Taking on a leadership role, he shoots at a lion but fails to kill it. While he is reloading, the lion attacks him:

> Growling horribly close to my ear, he shook me as a terrier dog does a rat. The shock produced a stupor similar

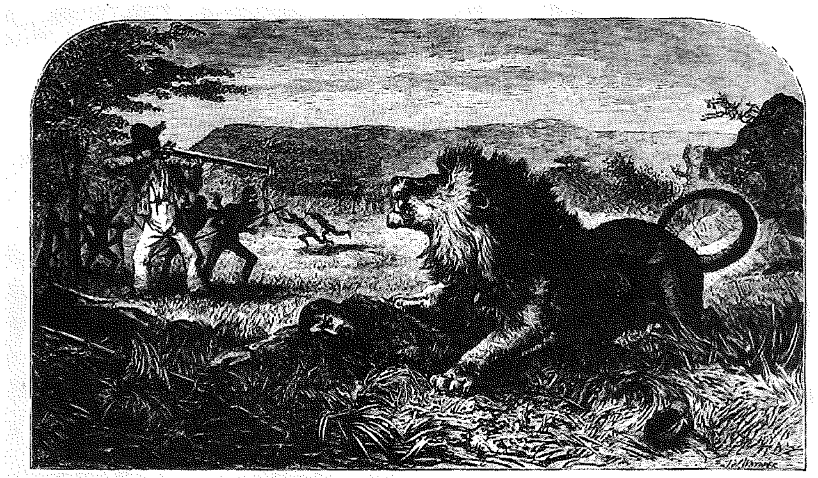
> to that which seems to be felt by a mouse after the first shake of the cat. It caused a sort of dreaminess, in which there was no sense of pain nor feeling of terror. . . . It was like what patients partially under the influence of chloroform describe, who see all the operation, but feel not the knife. . . . The shake annihilated fear, and allowed no sense of horror in looking round at the beast. (11)

His response "was not the result of any mental process" or choice, and certainly not a sign of bravery or cool-headedness such as he describes when an African is "caught by the thigh and taken below" the river by an alligator (222); the victim "retained, as nearly all of them in the most trying circumstances do, his full presence of mind, and having a small, square, ragged-edged javelin with him, when dragged to the bottom gave the alligator a stab behind the shoulder." Livingstone, in contrast, confesses to a lack of presence of mind, here attributed to "a merciful provision by our benevolent Creator for lessening the pain of death" (12). He is saved from death when Mebalwe, "a native schoolmaster" (10), shoots at the lion, drawing it away from Livingstone and toward himself. Another native who tries to spear the lion while it is biting Mebalwe is also attacked; finally, the lion drops dead from Livingstone's earlier bullet. Despite eleven tooth-wounds in his upper-arm and a splintered arm bone, Livingstone endured no "sloughing and discharge" or "peculiar pain" (11) from infection, as did the two natives.

The image accompanying Livingstone's description of this episode emphasizes his helplessness. Leila Koivenen notes that illustrations used in works like Livingstone's "were neither exact documents of what travelers had witnessed nor of what they had recorded by visual means. . . . [but] the result of a long construction process" that drew on "many concrete choices, coincidences and cooperation between different people" (*Visualizing* 206-07). Of the image entitled "The Missionary's Escape from the Lion" (Fig. 1), Livingstone complained to his publisher about the lion's depiction: "it's like a dray horse over me. It really must hurt the book to make a lion look larger than a hippopotamus" ("Letter," 22 May [1857]). Other complaints could have been made, were he interested in portraying himself as a superior European "in charge of the situation" (Bridges, "Nineteenth-century" 189). As it is, the image evokes alternative imaginary titles that undercut European daring and bravery: "The Missionary Saved from the Lion" or "Bakatla Saves Missionary" or "Mebalwe Helps to Rescue Livingstone." The doctor is shown sprawled face down in tall grass, under the control of a huge and savage lion, separated from his gun to the left foreground and his hat to the far right foreground. Taking the shot is Mebalwe, a Christian convert whose Western clothes suggest he is not wholly "uncivilized"; to his right is the Bakatla wielding a spear and a native apparently too frightened to act, while two others run away. This is great drama but not heroic; the unflattering image undercuts the dramatic encounter between European hunter and wild beast as well as popular constructions of the beast itself.[1] Livingstone compares the "majestic" lion with a big dog, "an animal somewhat larger than the biggest dog [ever seen]. . . and partaking very strongly of the canine features" (*Missionary* 121); its roar sounds like an ostrich (124), contrasting with descriptions by other Victorian hunters:

> One of the most striking things connected with the lion is his voice, which is extremely grand and peculiarly striking. It consists at times of a low, deep moaning, repeated five or six times, ending in faintly audible sighs; at other times he startles the forest with loud, deep-toned solemn roars, repeated five or six times in quick succession, each increasing in loudness in the third or fourth, when his voice dies away in five or six low, muffled sounds, very much resembling distant thunder. (Cummings 196)

In his challenge to the lion's ferocity, Livingstone also contests the stature of European hunters, including his own inability to overcome this "dog-like" animal.



THE MISSIONARY'S ESCAPE FROM THE LION.

Fig. 1 Heroic?

Several other episodes depict Livingstone similarly wanting in virility and courage, in effect parodying European heroism. Hunting, for instance, represented

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[1] To his publisher, Livingstone complained that "'the lion encounter is absolutely abominable,'" asking that the plate be suppressed "since 'everyone who knows what a lion is will die laughing at it'" (Barringer 179). He seems more interested in visual accuracy than in drama or in self-deprecation—both of which the published narrative of his adventure provides.

"the most perfect expression of global dominance" and demonstrated "the most virile attributes of the imperial male" (MacKenzie, "Imperial" 178); but Livingstone was an ineffective hunter—in part because of the injury from the lion that affected his shooting: "I wanted steadiness of aim, and it generally happened that the more hungry the party became, the more frequently I missed the animals" (*Missionary* 225). As a result, instead of demonstrating his ability to master the world around him and provide for his fellow travelers, his own account shows Livingstone dependent on the liberal support of "the people of every village," who supplied abundant "oxen, butter, milk, and meal" (214). Even his riding ox, Sinbad, had its own agenda, one that did not include him:

> If you jerk this [harness] back, it makes him run faster on; if you pull it to one side, he allows the nose and head to go, but keeps the opposite eye directed to the forbidden spot, and goes in spite of you. . . . When Sinbad ran in below a climber stretched over the path, so low that I could not stoop under it, I was dragged off, and came down on the crown of my head; and he never allowed an opportunity of this kind to pass without trying to inflict a kick. . . . Sinbad went off at a plunging gallop, the bridle broke, and I came down backwards on the crown of my head. . . . in the indulgence of his propensity to strike out a new path for himself, [he] plunged overhead into a deep hole, and . . . soused me. . . . (298, 299, 302, 329)

In another instance, a herald was to dignify Livingstone's entrance to a village by announcing, "Here comes the lord; the great lion"; but his pronunciation rendered "the great lion" into something "so like 'the great sow,' that [Livingstone] could not receive the honour with becoming gravity" (192-93). Even Oswell and Murray, experienced hunters and occasional traveling companions, made "frequent mistakes" (51) by allowing their expectations to shape what they think they hear. Livingstone demonstrates how they replace the "real answers" of their Bakalahari guide with their own "supposed answers":

> [Oswell and Murray]: "Where are the wagons?"
> *Real Answer*: "I don't know. I have wandered. I never wandered before. I am quite lost."
> *Supposed Answer*: "I don't know. I want water. I am glad, I am quite pleased. I am thankful to you."
> [O / M]: "Take us to the wagons, and you will get plenty of water."
> *Real Answer*: (looking vacantly around) "How did I wander? Perhaps the well is there, perhaps not. I don't know. I have wandered."
> *Supposed Answer*: "Something about thanks; he says he is pleased, and mentions water again." The guide's vacant stare, while trying to remember, is thought to indicate mental imbecility, and the repeated thanks were supposed to indicate a wish to deprecate their wrath.
> [O / M]: "Well, Livingstone *has* played us a pretty trick, giving us in charge of an idiot. Catch us trusting him again. What can this fellow mean by his thanks and talk about water? O, you born fool! Take us to the wagons and you will get both meat and water. Wouldn't a thrashing bring him to his senses again?" (50-51)

Later, the Englishmen "enjoyed a hearty laugh on the explanation of their midnight colloquies" (51); the Bakalahari guide's response to these "colloquies" is not included. On another occasion, Livingstone condemned an old Bushman who boasted of killing several other Bushmen and expected God's praise as a consequence:

> This man now appeared to me as without any conscience, and, of course, responsibility; but, on trying to enlighten him by further conversation, I discovered that though he was employing the word which is used among the Bakwains when speaking of the Deity, he had only the idea of a chief, and was all the while referring to Sekomi, while his victims were a party of rebel Bushmen against whom he had been sent. If I had only known the name of God in the Bushman tongue the mistake could scarcely have occurred. (139)

Conversely, had he been more cautious in his original assessment of the old Bushman, Livingstone might have remembered the subtleties with which languages separate peoples the world over.

II. Looking at Others

> For Livingstone, as for other missionaries and abolitionists, the African was a creature to be pitied, to be saved from slavery, and also to be saved from his own "darkness," his "savagery." (Brantlinger 178)
>
> Africans quite simply were denied recognition by the very people who, at great expense, often at the cost of their lives, ventured into Africa in order to study, among other things, its people. (Fabian 54)

Victorian scientific and popular culture reinforced many hierarchies, especially racial, with the African "assigned a particularly base position: he marked the point at which humanity gave way to animality. . . . the very embodiment of savagery, . . . [of] deviance from a racially-defined ideal" (Comaroff and Comaroff 99). According to George Stocking, Victorians identified "savages" as typically "dark-skinned and small of stature, unattractive, unclothed and unclean, promiscuous and brutal with their women"; they worshipped "spirits animating animals or even sticks and stones—their smaller brains enclosing and enclosed within the mental world" of the primitive (234-35). Such characterizations justified European intervention, and missionaries were not immune to their influence; from an assumed racial and cultural superiority, they perceived Africans as "misguided but malleable" (Coombes 177), and "demanded that Africans be taught to read and reason, to become self-reflective and self-disciplined," according to European standards, so they might progress (Comaroff, "Images" 674).

The title *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* implies a study of peoples objectified by cultural prejudices; accordingly, it promotes the idea of African inferiority, particularly at the level of appearances. Livingstone criticizes the Batoka who knocked out their upper teeth (456) and the women who inserted shell piercings in their upper lips to create "a most ungainly aspect" (494). Skin tone equates with tribal value: the Batoka are "generally very dark in color and very degraded and negro-like in appearance" (457), while the Basonga have "dark colour, thick lips, heads elongated" (327); the Bashinje "possess more of the low negro character and physiognomy. . . their color is generally dirty black, foreheads low and compressed, noses flat and much expanded laterally. . . . Their teeth are deformed by being filed to points; their lips are large" (379). Livingstone's approval of Africans' physical qualities is rare, occurring when African and European tastes apparently coincide; the Banyai, for instance, are "of a light coffee-and-milk colour . . . considered handsome throughout the whole country—a fair complexion being as much a test of beauty with them as with us" (535).

Livingstone also criticizes character: the Bakalahari suffer from the "degradation to which their minds have been sunk by centuries of barbarism and hard struggling for the necessaries of life" (137); and the Bechuanas are mentally "stagnant . . . in reference to the physical operations of the universe" (109). He connects chaotic and disturbing activities to the Makololos' "dancing, roaring, and singing, the jesting anecdotes, grumbling, quarrelling, and murdering" (197). Such qualities are not only questionable in themselves: they also create problems for Westerners wishing to interact with these tribes. The Bakalahari, for instance, are difficult to "improve" because they are not sufficiently developed to appreciate what the missionaries have to offer: "they listen with respect and attention, but, when we kneel down and address an unseen Being, the position and the act often appear to be so ridiculous that they cannot refrain from bursting into uncontrollable laughter" (137).

Inevitably, of course, Livingstone views Africa through European eyes, just as African tribes view him from their culture-specific perspectives. Yet he also rejects the idea of "our ideal negro, as seen in tobacconists' shops" (69), his "researches" enabling him to create more complex versions of Africans than Victorian stereotypes allow. Thus, even when he criticizes tribes according to European standards, he warns against condemning all members for their looks: the Balonda "have heads somewhat elongated backward and upward, thick lips, flat noses, elongated ossa calces, etc., etc.; *but* there are also many good-looking, well-shaped heads and persons among them" (253; emphasis added). He rejects the easy attribution of "dishonorable behavior" to the savagery of another tribe, explaining that it results not from nature but from their living "adjacent to the more civilized settlements" (288) from which they learn bad habits. Of the Bushman hired to lead them to water, Livingstone initially suggests that the guide is utterly worthless:

> Our guide Shobo wandered on the second day. . . . to all the points of the compass on the trails of elephants which had been here in the rainy season, and then he would sit down in the path, and in his broken Sichuana say, "no water, all country only; Shobo sleeps; he breaks down; country only," and then coolly curl himself up and go to sleep. . . . On the morning of the fourth day, Shobo, after professing ignorance of everything, vanished altogether. (68)

Later revising his opinion, Livingstone undercuts Shobo as a pathetic figure. When the company finally arrives at the river, they find Shobo surrounded by a group of Africans, who invite Livingstone to stop and have a smoke: "It was such an inimitably natural way of showing off that we all stopped to admire the acting" (69).

Other comments by Livingstone further resist popular stereotypes about African savages, as when he indicates that two Balonda, Mozinkwa and his wife, offered "frank friendship and liberality" (272) to him and his group, or when he claims that the Makolo tribe were "a strange mixture of good and evil as men everywhere else" (436). This mixture makes them similar to, not less than, Europeans: they "do not attempt to hide the evil, as men often do, from their spiritual instructors. . . . They sometimes perform actions remarkably good, and sometimes as strangely the opposite. . . . There are frequently instances of genuine kindness and liberality, as well as actions of an opposite character." At other times, Livingstone compares tribes and individual Africans to figures from Western history to suggest something extraordinary about the inhabitants of the "darkest" continent. For instance, he evokes an ancient myth to support the judgments several Makololo made about themselves: "The Argonauts were nothing to them; and they remarked very impressively to [Livingstone], 'It was well [he] came with the Makololo, for no tribe could have done what we have accomplished in coming to the white man's country: we are the true ancients who can tell wonderful things'" (352). He also declares Sebituane, head of the Makololo, to be "the best specimen of a native chief" (78), whose "narrative resembled closely the 'Commentaries of Caesar,' and the history of the British in India" (74).

Missionary Travels challenges other popular representations of Africans as well. In spite of European assumptions that Africans are unable to think clearly, Livingstone reveals the logical capabilities of Africans he knows, particularly when their own welfare is at stake:

> In general they were slow, like all the African people hereafter to be described, in coming to a decision on religious subjects; but in questions affecting their worldly affairs they were keenly alive to their own interests. They might be called stupid in matters which had not come within the sphere of their observation, but in other things they showed more intelligence than is to be met with in our own uneducated peasantry. (17)

After being attacked by the Boers, the king of the Bakuena, Sechele, reasonably intended to bring his complaints to Queen Victoria with whom he had a treaty: "being strongly imbued with the then very prevalent notion of England's justice and generosity, he thought that in consequence of the violated treaty he had a fair case to lay before Her Majesty" (106). In other words, even if he did not understand the difficulties and distances involved in transferring his message to the Queen or in her acting as he desired, Sechele understood whose duty it was to redress this wrong. Livingstone compliments another "intelligent chief" for the advice he gives about the sincerity of a group of converted Bakwains:

> You white men have no idea of how wicked we are; we know each other better than you: some feign to ingratiate themselves with the missionaries; some profess Christianity because they like the new system, which gives so much more importance to the poor, and desire that the old system may pass away; and the rest—a pretty large number—profess because they are really true believers. (95)

Further, Livingstone indicates that what might seem to the "uninitiated" to be "sophistry" is "a rational question" to the central African Bashinje (313). He even challenges conventional Victorian interpretations of the rain doctor, arguing the belief is reasonable, being based on an "obvious inference": "the rain-doctor selects a particular bulbous root, pounds it, and administers a cold infusion to a sheep, which in five minutes afterwards expires in convulsions. Part of the same bulb is converted into smoke, and ascends towards the sky; rain follows in a day or two. . . . Were we as much harassed by droughts, the logic would be irresistible in England in 1857" (19).

Finally, while many authors of nineteenth-century travel works "silenced" native populations, assuming that their words were "meaningless noise" (Nichols 1), Livingstone occasionally translates and quotes individual Africans, sometimes at length, often in positive contexts. Consider, for instance, the "nearly literally translated" letter to Livingstone by Sechele—Livingstone's sole (and only temporary) convert to Christianity—after his people had been attacked by the Boers:

> Friend of my heart's love, and of all the confidence of my heart, I am Sechele; I am undone by the Boers, who attacked me, though I had no guilt with them. They demanded that I should be in their kingdom, and I refused; they demanded that I should prevent the English and Griquas from passing (north). I replied, These are my friends, and I can prevent no one (of them). They came on Saturday, and I besought them not to fight on Sunday, and they assented. They began on Monday . . . and fired with all their might, and burned the town with fire, and scattered us. They killed sixty of my people, and captured women, and children, and men . . . .They took all the cattle and . . .goods of the Bakwains; and the house of Livingstone they plundered, taking away all his goods. (104-05)

The letter shows Sechele's ability to present information clearly and logically while it suggests his loyalty to the English, his suffering, and his "Christian" respect for the holiness of Sunday. Livingstone's translation presents this Bakwain leader as a man who can articulate his losses and his ethics; insofar as Victorians consider ethics to be one of the last evolved traits, Sechele is far from primitive.

Other translations mark particular Africans as intellectually equal to Europeans. As Ashton Nichols notes, "as soon as Africans are allowed to be heard . . . , silencing gives way to a complex interplay between African and Western discourse. . . . Africans emerge as verbally intelligent and complex, easily able to express viewpoints diametrically opposed to the dominant Western outlook" (10). In an exchange with a rain doctor, Livingstone refuses to define this African as simply a superstitious enemy, though many missionaries might have done so (Cannizzo 156). Instead, he asserts that rainmakers "carried the sympathies of the people along with them, and not without reason" (*Missionary* 20). The excerpt below shows part of the debate between an M. D. (Medical Doctor, Livingstone) and an unnamed R. D. (Rain Doctor) among the Bakwain people during a succession of droughts.[2]

> M. D. So you really believe that you can command the clouds? I think that can be done by God alone.

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[2] Schapera notes, "still another version is found on pp. 78-81 in the Livingstone Memorial, Blantyre" (*Journals* 239).

> R. D. We both believe the very same thing. It is God that makes the rain, but I pray to him by means of these medicines, and, the rain coming, of course it is then mine. It was I who made it for the Bakwains for many years, when they were at Shokuane; through my wisdom, too, their women became fat and shining. Ask them; they will tell you the same as I do.
> M. D. But we are distinctly told in the parting words of our Savior that we can pray to God acceptably in his name alone, and not by means of medicines.
> R. D. Truly! But God told *us* differently. He made black men first, and did not love us, as He did the white men. . . . God has given us one little thing, which you know nothing of. He has given us the knowledge of certain medicines by which we can make rain. *We* do not despise those things which you possess, though we are ignorant of them. We don't understand your book, yet we don't despise it. *You* ought not to despise our little knowledge, though you are ignorant of it.
> M. D. I don't despise what I am ignorant of; I only think you are mistaken in saying that you have medicines which can influence the rain at all.
> R. D. That's just the way people speak when they talk on a subject of which they have no knowledge. . . . I use my medicines, and you employ yours; we are both doctors, and doctors are not deceivers. You give a patient medicine. Sometimes God is pleased to heal him by means of your medicine: sometimes not—he dies. When he is cured, you take the credit of what God does. I do the same. (20-21)

Earlier missionaries like Livingstone's father-in-law Robert Moffat equated rainmakers with "the essence of savage unreason . . . . our inveterate enemies . . .[who] uniformly oppose the introduction of Christianity amongst their countryman to the utmost of their power" (Comaroff and Comaroff 208). In a striking contrast, Livingstone's dialogue shows respect for the Rain Doctor. The M. D. may not be persuaded by his arguments, but this "savage" has an answer for every claim that the rational, civilized, Christian Westerner makes. Livingstone's description suggests "there was little to choose between their positions" (210); alternatively, the R. D. puts the M. D. on the defensive through the quality of his argument. Moreover, when he says "we don't understand. . . yet we don't despise," he reveals a generosity of spirit that contrasts with the narrow-mindedness of Euro-Christian ideology.

III. Looking at the Land

> The visual encoding of nineteenth-century Western hegemonic masculinist constructions of femininity, sexuality, nature and property are at their most overtly intertwined in the landscapes. . . . (Rose 94)

> Landscape images represent certain framings of the world. (Ryan 73)

Recent research on Victorian exploration and travel writing examines how it functions rhetorically, sometimes "taking hostages in the form of data used to inform decisions about territories made without the knowledge or consent of their inhabitants," sometimes using a romanticized "British yardstick of scenery" to "facilitate European domination," sometimes evoking "a value system based on European concepts of size, regularity, and control" (Stafford, "Scientific" 302, 312). Selected words and images became "implicated in the logic and vision of European expansionism" (Delmont and Dubrow 11). To connect the explorer with claims to ownership over the land he traveled, nineteenth-century travel writing used a technique identified by Mary Louise Pratt as "a gesture of converting local knowledges (discourses) into European national and continental knowledge associated with European forms and relations of power" (202). This technique often exemplified the "monarch-of-all-I-survey" dynamic with "promontory descriptions," in order to claim the discovery, to convey the appeal of the discovery (albeit one long-known by the locals), and to "suggest a need for social and material intervention by the home culture" (205).[3]

For example, the illustration of Lake Ngami from *Missionary Travels*[4]—whose "exact position . . . had, for half a century at least, been correctly pointed out by the natives" (39-40)—epitomizes the monarch-of-all-I-survey *visual* rhetoric identified by Pratt (Fig. 2). Based on an unfinished landscape by Alfred Rider, who visited the lake before Livingstone, the illustration is largely fictional: "the artist employed by [the publisher] was asked to add a family group into the picture to make it more suitable for Livingstone's purposes" (Koivunen, "Visualizing" 5). Those purposes

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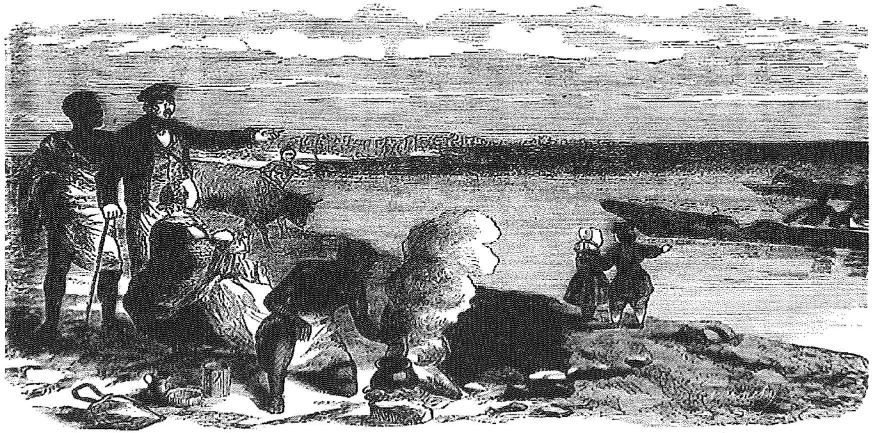
[3] Pratt includes an illustration of Victoria Falls from the frontispiece of Livingstone's *Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambesi* to exemplify a named and claimed promontory. While Pratt's framework examines texts published in 1860 and later, it also applies to Livingston's 1857 book.

[4] Apparently Livingstone brought almost no visuals from Africa for use in his first book: "The final form of the illustrations was reached by Livingstone commenting on and amending [an artist's] entirely imaginary drawings" (Barringer 181)—a collaboration that at least one of those artists found unsatisfying: "'I used to go to see Livingstone at Sloane Street and he would propose subjects; but there was no *handle* to what he said. He had a thing in his mind that couldn't be illustrated'" (Palmer 124).



Discovery of Lake Ngami by Livingstone, Oswell and Murray.

Fig. 2: Livingstone, His Family, and Unidentified Others at Lake Ngami

have to do with possession and power. Inserted close to the claim presented in *Missionary Travels* that "on the 1st of August, 1849, we went down together to the broad part [of the Lake], and, for the first time, this fine-looking sheet of water was beheld by Europeans" (*Missionary* 57), the visual shows Livingstone physically expressing ownership over the water, those who travel on it, and those who sit before it. Distinguished by his stance, his Western clothes, and his pointing hand, Livingstone is indeed the "monarch of all he surveys"; yet he is the only European male depicted, despite the caption asserting that he shares the discovery with Oswell and Murray—indeed it was Oswell, who "undertook to defray the entire expenses of the guides" (40) and made the expedition possible.[5] But while its "discovery" resulted in an award from the Royal Geographical Society, Lake Ngami was too shallow for the trade Livingstone envisioned: "it can never. . . be of much value as a commercial highway" (57). Also misleading is the depiction of Livingstone as a thriving patriarch having tea with his wife and children on the shore (Koivunen, *Visualizing* 202). In fact, Mary Livingstone and the children did not visit Lake Ngami until 1850 (*Livingstone's Missionary Correspondence* 156), the year following its "discovery" by the three European males, prompting Tim Barringer's comment that the plate is more about culture than geography: "the archetypal roles of the Victorian middle-class household are enacted: Livingstone, the paterfamilias, is at the top of a pyramid comprising his wife, children, servants and possessions" (180).

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[5] This illustration is the one most widely used. Among the variants is a "chromolith in four colours by West in which the Doctor's figure is unaccountably omitted" (Ransford 56n), suggesting an alternative version of Livingstone's explorations.

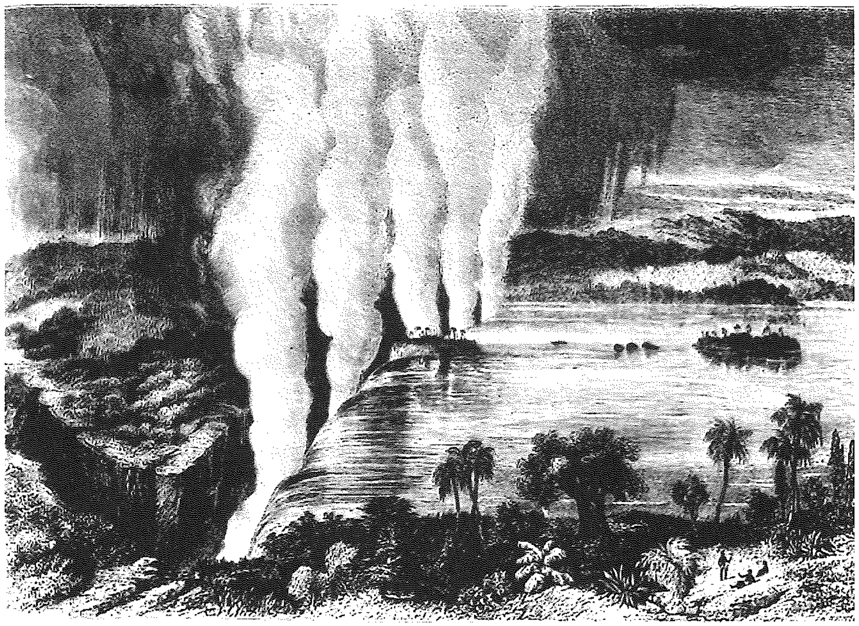

Fig. 3: Victoria Falls, *Missionary Travels*

Alternatively, the Victoria Falls frontispiece in *Missionary Travels* (fig. 3) offers a landscape that "presents itself as a spectacle" (Smith, J. 78-79). Distinct from the broad expanse of calm Lake Ngami that can be seen, "known," and claimed, here the river ends abruptly in a crevasse, while huge clouds of mist indicate the agitation and noise of the river as it hits the unseen bottom. An island appears to be in danger of disappearing over the river's edge, and tiny anonymous African figures in the right foreground are dwarfed by the river, the clouds, the falls, the vegetation; no man is monarch here, where nature dominates. This illustration, the only one in the book based on an actual sketch made by Livingstone (Koivunen, "Visualizing" 3), asserts the natural landscape's resistance to naming or claiming by explorers, Euro-Christian or other.

In addition to the visuals used to define and claim discoveries, Pratt identifies the verbal descriptions, which are characterized in three ways: the landscape is depicted with adjectives that not only define its beauty but connect it to the explorer's home culture; the choices made by the explorer-writer show some mastery over the landscape—he "has the power if not to possess, at least to evaluate [the] scene" (Pratt 205); and the landscape is "estheticized" in a way that emphasizes "pleasures of the sight" as in a painting (204). Picturesque elements could enable the explorer to make the space "familiar and manageable, since it domesticated and presented nature according to a Western scheme of representation" (Van Eeden 27). Livingstone describes the scenic beauty of Victoria Falls:

> Five columns now arose, and bending in the direction of the wind, they seemed placed against a low ridge covered with trees; the tops of the columns at this distance appeared to mingle with the clouds. They were white below, and higher up became dark, so as to simulate smoke very closely. The whole scene was extremely beautiful. The banks and islands dotted over the river are adorned with sylvan vegetation of great variety of color and form. At the period of our visit several trees were spangled over with blossoms. (*Missionary* 444-45)

Some elements of Nature at this site he judges to be superior to any in England:

> the great burly baobab, each of whose enormous arms would form the trunk of a large tree, beside groups of graceful palms. . . . The silvery mohonono. . . stands in pleasing contrast with the dark colour of the motsouri. . . . Some trees resemble the great spreading oak, others assume the character of our own elms and chestnut, but no one can imagine the beauty of the view from anything witnessed in England. (445)

Victoria Falls surpasses even the most extraordinary waterways back home: at low water, the Zambesi River (which feeds into the Falls) seems "to exceed in size the falls of the Clyde at Sonebryes [Scotland] when the river is in flood" (447). When comparisons to Scotland's wild Nature fail to do justice to the Falls, Livingstone turns for comparisons to the manufacturing world of factories and technologies: one "great jet of vapor [looked] exactly like steam"; rushing water appeared "exactly like bits of steel, when burned in oxygen gas, [and] gave off rays of sparks" (446; 447). Ultimately, industrial rhetoric also fails to capture the Falls, and Livingstone is forced to evoke a wholly imagined and transformed Thames in order to have "some idea" of what he had witnessed—a mix of beauty and power in motion:

> If one imagines the Thames filled with low, tree-covered hills immediately beyond the tunnel, extending as far as Gravesend; the bed of black basaltic rock instead of London mud; and a fissure made therein from one end of the tunnel to the other down through the keystones of the arch, and prolonged from the left end of the tunnel through thirty miles of hills; the pathway being one hundred feet down from the bed of the river instead of what it is, with the lips of the fissure from 80 to 100 feet apart; then fancy the Thames leaping boldly into the gulf; and forced there to change its direction, and flow from the right to the left bank; and then rush boiling and roaring through the hills,—he may have some idea of what takes place. (446)

Clearly, Livingstone masters the Falls only in so far as he is able to present a verbal version of them. Ultimately, that version is threatening, with its disturbing invitation to think of chaotic, wild Africa as a larger and more animated version of home—and as home in some ways like Africa; as Marlow notes in *Heart of Darkness*, England was itself once "one of the dark places of the earth" (Conrad 9). Neither domesticated nor controlled, the Falls perpetually move and change. At best, Livingstone can imitate the picturesque and divide it into "background, middle-distance, and foreground to render [it] readable" (Van Eeden 28), presenting it first from a distance, then from an island much closer, then in parts or sections closer still, finally focusing on the vapors that ascend from the Falls:

> we came in sight, for the first time, of the columns of vapour . . .at a distance of five or six miles. . . . When about half a mile from the falls . . . men well acquainted with the rapids. . . brought me to an island situated in the middle of the river, and on the edge of the lip over which the river rolls. In coming higher, there was danger of being swept down by the streams which rushed along on each side of the island. . . . creeping with awe to the verge [of the island], I peered down into a large rent which had been made from bank to bank. . . and saw a stream of a thousand yards broad leaped down a hundred feet, and then become suddenly compressed in a space of fifteen or twenty yards. (*Missionary* 444-46)

The Falls transform steam into vapor; dark smoke into a shower of water; the river into a white rolling mass; a column of vapor into a thick unbroken fleece; the stream leaps and becomes "suddenly compressed." As such, they confound Livingstone's attempts at rhetorical colonization: "no one could perceive where the vast body of water went; it seemed to lose itself in the earth" (445).

Science is also defeated here, seen in Livingstone's attempts to give an objective description—"the falls are simply a crack made in a hard basaltic rock from the right to the left bank of the Zambesi and then prolonged from the left bank away through thirty or forty miles of hills" (*Missionary* 446). Clouds obstruct his intended lunar observations; even his attempt to measure the breadth of the Zambesi River is thwarted:

> I tried to measure the Leeambye [Zambesi] with a strong thread, the only line I had in my possession, but when the men had gone two or three hundred yards, they got into conversation and did not hear us shouting that the line had become tangled. By still going on they broke it, and being carried away down the stream, it was lost on a snag. In vain I tried to bring to my recollection the way I had been taught to measure a river, by taking an angle with the sextant. That I once knew it, and that it was easy, were all the lost ideas I could recall, and they only increased my vexation. (447)

Livingstone acknowledges that even his plan for a Victorian garden on an island overlooking the Falls might be unsuccessful; like the initials and date he carves into a tree there, the garden epitomizes Western man's compulsion to mark, control, and tame nature. While he expresses faith in the "progress" the garden signifies—"I have no doubt but this will be the parent of all the gardens which may yet be in this new country" (*Missionary* 450)—he also expects (rightly) that hippopotami will destroy the cultivation. Clearly, then, many of the features described by Livingstone undercut the notion that he is "monarch of all I survey"; he rejects the conventional claim to ownership found in some European travel texts. And Livingstone explicitly and self-consciously draws attention to the "pretense" of his discovering the Falls by identifying the names the local inhabitants had long given to them—"called by the natives Mosioatunya, or more anciently Shongwe" (444)—and by specifying that the sight is new only to Europeans.

IV. Reading Missionary Travels

The text is not closed but ajar. (Badley 217)

As Justin Livingstone argues, *Missionary Travels* "turns domestic assumptions back on themselves" (286). David Livingstone both promoted and contested Victorian stereotypes of explorers and their representations of Africa; interestingly, Victorian reviewers seemed not to notice inconsistencies or challenges to received ideas in his account. Perhaps they overlooked these complications because they read the book expecting and, therefore, finding the usual cultural values and the standard exciting tales of strange peoples and places characteristic of nineteenth-century travel literature. More puzzling is why Livingstone evoked these complexities at all. Do his implied challenges to some Victorian concepts in *Missionary Travels* come from Livingstone being a lower class Scot suspicious of the hierarchy represented by the European in Africa? Are there specific distinguishing features of the contexts he challenged? Was class not a factor and was he simply becoming critical of imperialistic stereotypes as he tested his experiences against his home-grown expectations? That is, was he more modern in his attitudes than the Victorians who read his book? The door is still open for interpretations of this complicated book. *Missionary Travels* may cater to "British imperial fantasies" (Wisnicki 10), but it does much more in the complex vision Livingstone presents. In engaging with the ways the British saw themselves and others, it raises questions and invites reflections about significant cultural attitudes and actions. Unfortunately, such question-raising did not seem to have any long-range effects on Livingstone himself; his second book, *Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambesi* co-authored with his brother, tells a more conventional, and far less interesting, story.[6]

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[6] Versions of parts of this essay were presented at the Travel, Missions, and Empire Conference (U of Aberdeen 2001); the Feminism[s] and Rhetoric[s] Conference (Houghton, MI, 2005); the International Conference for the Society of Science, Literature, and the Arts (Amsterdam 2006); and the Narrative Conference (Washington 2007).

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Whitewashing Blackface Minstrelsy in Nineteenth-Century England: Female Banjo Players in Punch

by Laura Vorachek

Blackface minstrelsy, popular in England since its introduction in 1836, reached its apogee in 1882 when the Prince of Wales took banjo lessons from James Bohee, an African-American performer. The result, according to musicologist Derek Scott, was a craze for the banjo among men of the middle-classes (*Singing* 92). However, a close look at the periodical press, and the highly influential *Punch* in particular, indicates that the fad extended to women as well.[1] While blackface minstrelsy was considered a wholesome entertainment in Victorian England,[2] *Punch*'s depiction of female banjo players highlights English unease with this practice in a way that male performance does not. Expanding our understanding of minstrel performance to include racial markers other than skin color—such as the banjo—provides a new avenue for considering the role gender plays in delineating both racial difference and English national identity in the nineteenth century. Critics have noted that contradictory cultural significations of class and nationality are bound up in the English performance of blackface minstrelsy, but their focus on male troupes neglects the way gender further complicates and unravels meaning.[3]

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[1] "By the end of the late 1850s *Punch* had long since become one of Britain's central cultural institutions," read by "peers, politicians, and common readers alike" (Leary 1). *Punch*'s humor was calculated to appeal broadly, and its images tended to be conservative. See Du Maurier (*Social* 81-82); see also Henry Miller, "John Leech and the Shaping of the Victorian Cartoon: The Context of Respectability" (*Victorian Periodicals Review* 42.3 [Fall 2009]: 267-91) on the respectability of *Punch*'s cartoons.

[2] See also J. S. Bratton, "English Ethiopians: British Audiences and Black-Face Acts, 1835-1865" (*Yearbook of English Studies* 11 [1981]: 127-42); George Rehin, "Blackface Street Minstrels in Victorian London" (*Journal of Popular Culture* 15.1 [1981]: 19-38); and Brody, who contends that "the entire practice of blackface minstrelsy as it was performed in England had everything to do with the construction of Englishness as white" (85). Pickering argues that "British minstrelsy lent ideological support on racial grounds to the whole project of Empire . . . [but] cannot be confined to any core, unitary meaning" (xii). See also Scott, "Blackface Minstrels, Black Minstrels, and their Reception in England" (*Europe, Empire and Spectacle in Nineteenth-Century British Music*. Eds. Rachel Cowgill and Julian Rushton. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006: 265-80); Simon Featherstone, "The Blackface Atlantic: Interpreting British Minstrelsy" (*Journal of Victorian Culture* 3.2 [1998]: 234-51); Robert Nowatzki, *Representing African-Americans in Transatlantic Abolitionism and Blackface Minstrelsy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 2010); Douglas Lorimer, *Class and the Victorians: English attitudes to the Negro in the mid-century* (Leicester: Leicester UP, 1978); and Vanessa Dickerson, *Dark Victorians* (Urbana and Chicago: U. Illinois P, 2008).

[3] See Rehin, Bratton, Scott (*Singing* 81-92 and "Blackface"), Featherstone, and Pickering. White American women impersonating enslaved black women—in blackface or via dialect and gesture—in the early twentieth century signified "an elite status based on specialized

However, rather than affirming the whiteness of English national identity, women's attraction to the banjo threatens it by communicating a desire for non-white cultures and bodies.

Late-nineteenth-century *Punch* cartoons of women playing the banjo evince multiple anxieties, indicating that these illustrations do more than mock elite women for taking up an instrument connected to a popular entertainment form. A banjo in the hands of an upper-class woman was both incongruous and provocative due to the instrument's racial and working-class affiliations; it was associated with African and African-American culture, blackface minstrelsy, and the working classes who performed this entertainment on city streets, seaside resorts, and music hall stages. Thus a number of these cartoons seem to associate women, and particularly the adventurous New Woman, with threatening cultural categories. Indeed, female banjo players raise concerns that are not on display in *Punch* cartoons featuring middle- and upper-class white men playing the instrument. Cartoons with male banjo players tend to focus on the banjo's infiltration of the upper classes, often via the *nouveaux riches* who use the instrument to ingratiate themselves with an aristocracy eager to participate in the latest musical vogue. Alternately, the instrument lends caché to the male player by indicating his familiarity with the music hall and the street.[4] This emphasis on class mobility, whether one is climbing or slumming, brings attention to the banjo's function within the British social hierarchy; its African-American and blackface roots are not central to the humor of the cartoon. On the other hand, in representations of female players, the instrument's cultural and racial associations are usually alluded to through the cartoon's title, caption, or illustration itself. These references serve to allay anxieties about the New Woman's sexual and economic independence by associating her with a popular entertainment fad. However, the connection between upper-class women and low-brow blackface minstrelsy reveals anxieties about cultural miscegenation, as well as the adulteration of English art forms. Therefore, *Punch* cartoonists attempt to defuse these connections by couching women's banjo playing in terms of classical traditions in education, art, and music. In other words, they in effect *whitewash* these performances in order to maintain class, racial, and national differences, an attempt to reassert English culture that was not fully persuasive. The adoption of the banjo by the New Woman in particular raises the specter of racial miscegenation, her sexual liberty and infatuation with an element of black culture presenting the possibility of racial as well as cultural interbreeding. Thus, women's affinity for the banjo undermined English racial purity and national identity as white.

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racial knowledge that could only come from connections to the slave-owning past," a motive that does not apply to British women's blackface performances (McElya 64).

[4] See Du Maurier's "At Her Old Tricks Again" *Punch* 91 (Aug. 7, 1886): 70; "Country-House Pets" *Punch* 101 (Sept. 5, 1891): 114; "A Distinction with a Difference" *Punch* 78 (July 3, 1880): 303; "Mistress and Pupil" *Punch* 85 (June 7, 1883): 6; "Studies in Repartee." *Punch* 98 (Jan. 11, 1890): 15. See also "Child Chappie's Pilgrimage." *Punch* 85 (Aug. 11, 1883): 72.

The Banjo Craze in England

While blackface minstrelsy enjoyed broad popularity and respectability from its debut, the minstrel's signature instrument had a longer road to propriety. Although blackface minstrel songs were a staple of middle-class home music-making, the banjo's association with this particular entertainment form kept it from being considered an appropriate drawing-room instrument for much of the nineteenth century.[5] It was not until the Prince of Wales took up the instrument in 1882 that the banjo's tenuous hold on respectability was solidified.[6] In the decades that followed, the periodical press reported that "The banjo is all the 'rage' in high society, and our aristocrats seem prepared for any amount of the bones and burnt cork business" (*Lute* 90). Moreover, "you cannot go to a musical afternoon in the West-end, without finding that the banjo is used" ("Exeter" 125).[7] *The Musical News* reported on one such event on July 24, 1891: "At a fashionable concert recently given by the Duchess of Newcastle, at her residence in Hill Street, Berkeley Square, the programme included performances on the banjo" ("Comments" 420).[8] In 1889, *Bow Bells* breathlessly reported that "Prince Albert Victor is learning the banjo!" ("Society" 87), indicating that both the heir to the throne and his eldest son were banjo aficionados. Not surprisingly, during the 1880s and 1890s, advertisements selling banjos, lessons, instruction manuals, and sheet music proliferated, and a number of journals sprang up to cater to the interest in the banjo and its sister instruments.[9]

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[5] The banjo and blackface minstrelsy were inextricably linked once Joel Sweeney brought the instrument to England as part of his act in 1843 (Pickering 12). Despite its associations with low-brow street culture, there was a drawing-room market for "wholesom[e]" minstrel songs (Scott, *Singing* 91). In 1871 *The Leisure Hour* noted that some minstrel songs can be heard in "the drawing-rooms of the rich as well as in the mean abodes of the very poor" ("Wandering" 600).

[6] By 1846, the *Theatrical Journal* noted the "the banjo is in the ascendant" ("To Correspondents" 96), and song books such as the *Banjo Songster, or Virginia and London Negro Melodist* were available for domestic use; by the 1860s, instruction manuals like *Christy Minstrels' Banjo Tutor* and *Chappell's Popular Banjo Tutor* were available, as were private lessons ("List of New Books." *Athenaeum* 1764 [1864]: 218). See also "Chappell's Cheap Works for Various Instruments" (Advertisement. *The Musical Times* [April 1, 1868]: 368). By 1873, the banjo was broaching upper social circles; *The Musical Standard* quoted "the celebrated English banjoist" R. Mason's claim that it "'is rapidly increasing in popularity, and is now introduced in the most refined circles, who no longer consider it an instrument dedicated to negro minstrelsy only'" ("Notes" [1873] 30). Yet two years later, *The Tonic Sol-Fa Reporter* contended that "the banjo [is] prohibited in polite society" ("Home Music" 177).

[7] See also "The Banjo" (1886); "Musical Exhibits at the Manchester Exhibition" (*Musical Opinion and Trade Review* 10.119 [Aug. 1887]: 515-56); and "The Banjo Craze" (*Musical Opinion and Trade Review* 12.133 [Oct. 1, 1888]: 26). *The Musical Times* refused to endorse the banjo—"that musical abortion" ("Coming" 599)—lumping it with such "eccentric instruments" as the Melocipede, a musical bicycle ("Songs" 20).

[8] *The Musical Standard* published a satiric piece about a piano recital hosted by the Duke of York, "to be enlivened by banjo solos by the Duchess of York"; the report was taken as fact and reprinted in English and foreign papers including *Bow Bells* and *Le Ménestrel* ("Crotchets" [1896] 40). See also *The Musical Standard* (Jan. 18, 1896).

While the fad for the banjo originated with men, it was not long before women took up the instrument as well.[10] On December 16, 1882, *The Saturday Review* noted:

> It is with some regret that we hear rumours of the banjo becoming a favorite musical instrument in society; and with a view to checking the aspirations of those young ladies who are desirous of learning this instrument we have a suggestion to make. Why not learn the 'mandoline'? . . . it has none of the disadvantages of ugliness and twanginess of the banjo. ("New" 802)

Apparently few heeded *The Saturday Review's* advice, for *Musical Opinion and Trade Review* noted two years later that the banjo "has become the most popular society instrument now in use. Everybody seems to be learning it, and especially the ladies" ("Banjo Craze" 563). Some upper-class women took their banjos beyond the drawing room. At an amateur concert for the patients of the Brompton Hospital for Consumption, "the banjo band [was] represented by the Countess Cowper, the Hon. Mrs. Dalrymple, Miss Mary Liddel, [and] the Hon. Lionel Byng" ("Our Omnibus-Box" [1884] 223).[11] A few instrument makers attempted to capitalize on the female market, offering "the new instrument for ladies, the Banjoline" or a "ladies' special model" of the banjo (Banjo and Guitar Studio 459; *Musical Opinion* 50). By the 1890s, women were proficient enough on the instrument to offer lessons to others. On Nov. 1, 1891, *The Musical Times* ran an advertisement offering guitar and banjo lessons by a Miss Stable, "either at her own or pupil's residences" (Guitar and Banjo 645).

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[9] *The Banjo World: A Journal Devoted to the Banjo, Mandoline, and Guitar* (Nov. 1893—Feb. 1917); *The Jo: A Chronicle of Banjo, Guitar, and Mandoline News* (from Feb. 1895), renamed *The Troubador* (June 1896—Dec. 1915); *and B.M.G. A Journal Devoted to Banjo, Mandoline and Guitar* (Oct. 1903—April 1976).

[10] Karen Linn attributes the banjo's popularity among American women in large part to "Lotta," or Carlotta Crabtree, a favorite performer on the New York stage in the 1860s-70s who performed in blackface (30).

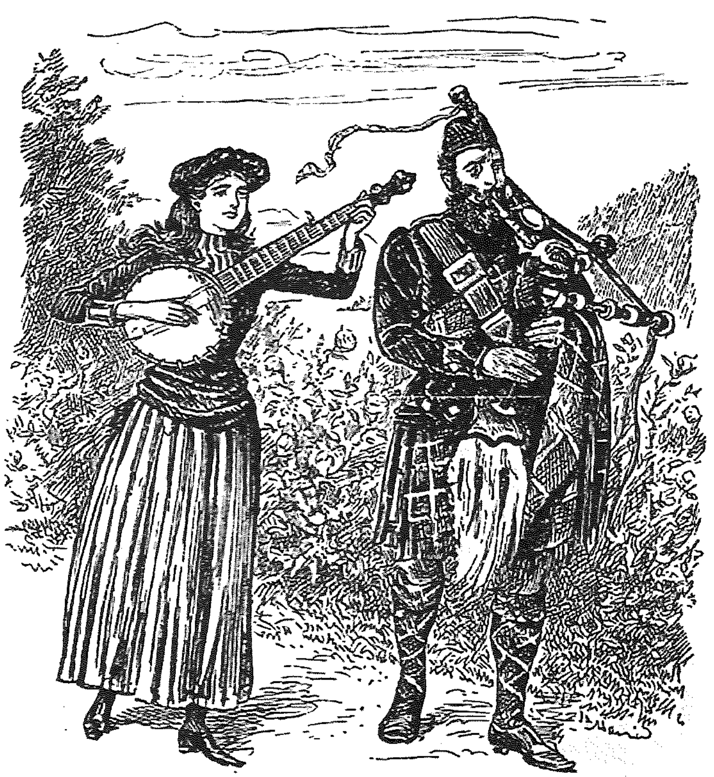
[11] Other examples of women playing the banjo in public include the all-female Continental Variety and Ballet Troupe (Advertisement. *Era Almanack* [Jan. 1887]: 114); London recitalist Kate Sampey ("Miss Kate Sampey" [*The Musical World* 69.43 (Nov. 16, 1889): 815]; and also "Concerts" (*The Musical World* 70.46 [Nov. 15, 1890]: 916-17); the Chester sisters at the Theatre Royal in Leeds ("Music in the Provinces." *The Musical Standard* 44.1487 [Jan. 28, 1893]: 73-74); and the Birmingham Amateur Banjo, Mandolin, and Guitar Orchestra which consisted of 80 "ladies and gentlemen" ("Facts" 238). Numerous plays, such as "Jack in the Box," "The Coming Clown," and "Bob" featured actresses with banjo solos; for reviews, see "The Week" (*The Athenaeum* 3094 [Feb. 12, 1887]: 233); "Our Omnibus-Box" (*The Theatre* 9 [March 1887] 167-77); "December" (*Dramatic Notes* 9 [Jan. 1888]: 178-90); and C. Howard, "Bob." Review (*Theatre* 13 [Feb. 1, 1889]: 99-100).

Judy: The London Serio-comic Journal neatly encapsulates the history of the banjo's rise to prominence in England in "Euterpe and the Banjo" (Sept. 19, 1888). The cartoon depicts Euterpe's enchantment with the instrument when she comes across an African-American player in Ohio. She offers her discovery to those in the "Land of Society," but when they refuse her "vulgar" gift, she gives the instrument to the "lower orders," who "black their faces and thump away on it" ("Euterpe" 144). One day a "royal prince of the land" sees her play the banjo and decides to try it. After it becomes known that the prince can play, society takes up the instrument as well; "often the goddess would spend the afternoon graciously instructing some great lady of the land in her boudoir." Once royally sanctioned and adopted by the female sex, "the banjo became the national instrument." As the cartoon suggests, women played a primary role in the acceptance and proliferation of the banjo in the upper reaches of society.

Despite fashionable society's adoption of the banjo in the 1880s and 1890s, it never lost its affiliation with blackface minstrelsy. The instrument was connected for British audiences almost exclusively with African and African-American music during the nineteenth century. The *Saturday Review* remarked in 1884 that the banjo was "characteristic of the negro race" ("Banjo and Bones" 740), and the instrument was referred to variously as "the nigger guitar," the "nigger instrument," "the humble instrument of the Ethiopian," and "the national instrument of America, (the black part of it at least)" ("Electric" 360; "Banjo" 525; "Thalberg" 503; "How" 298). This range of epithets evidences how English audiences collapsed blackface performers (also known as "nigger minstrels" or "Ethiopian serenaders") with actual people of African descent (Negroes and black Americans) in discussions of the instrument. Nevertheless, at the peak of the banjo's popularity, several other origins were claimed for the instrument, including Arabian, Egyptian, Moorish, Indian, Indonesian (the Dutch East Indian town of Banjoemas), and European (Strolling 372; Temlett 5; Crane 570; One 339; "Impromptus" 161). *The Musical Standard* was critical of this last claim, made by the *Daily Telegraph*, noting "The writer of the article is careful to state that the banjo is not of negro origin, but no musician supposed it was; though the author must have drawn largely on his imagination when he put it on record that the banjo is 'unmistakably of European origin'" ("Impromptus" 161). Interestingly, while rejecting Europe as the birthplace of the banjo, *The Musical Standard* affirms that its genesis is not African. Notwithstanding these attempts to whitewash the instrument's creation, its association with blackface minstrelsy and minstrelsy's adulterated depiction of African-American culture remained strong. As one commentator noted in 1897, "we have never ceased to associate the banjo with negro minstrelsy" (One 339). Indeed, a few years later, Egbert Roberts admonished quartet singers to "Leave the poor banjo alone, it only reminds you of slavery days" (340). Thus, the banjo was never completely divested of its African roots in the English imagination. Because of this, the banjo itself functioned as a marker of racial difference in much the same way as burnt cork. With this in mind, I turn to *Punch*'s cartoons featuring female banjo players.

The Banjo in Punch Cartoons

"North and South" (Fig. 1), by George Du Maurier, provides the earliest depiction of a woman playing a banjo in *Punch*, its appearance in 1885 coinciding with the instrument's rise to prominence among the upper classes and among women in particular. Thus, in Du Maurier's cartoon, Miss Brown "practices accompaniments" on an instrument currently very popular among fashionable society despite its "vulgar" associations with African-Americans and the "lower orders." In addition to reflecting the latest music fad, the cartoon also plays on the geographical and cultural distinctions between North and South in the United Kingdom and the United States. In the latter, these terms continued to signify slave-holding southern states and abolitionist northern states well after the Civil War. In Great Britain, the North connotes the manufacturing provinces of northern England or Scotland, represented here by a man in a plaid kilt playing bagpipes, whereas the South is associated with both the idyllic countryside (as in Elizabeth Gaskell's *North and South*) and the cosmopolitan metropolis of London, depicted in the young woman playing the instrument that was all the rage in English high society. However, Miss Brown's instrument also calls to mind the South of the United States, familiar to British audiences from the music and skits of blackface minstrels. Du Maurier seems to find it ironic that cultured and fashionable Londoners have taken up a musical craze with roots in the retrogressive American South. The woman of fashion is linked with African-American "otherness" not only through the banjo but also through her proximity to the bagpipe player. Although the two musicians are depicted in a rural setting, they would have more commonly appeared together on city thoroughfares, since both blackface minstrels and bagpipe players were a regular feature of urban street music. However, even though Du Maurier invokes blackface minstrelsy to critique urban sophistication, at the same time, by placing these musicians in a bucolic setting, he attempts to distance "the youngest Miss Brown" from the city street and from blackface minstrelsy, suggesting unease with the connection between this low-brow entertainment form and upper-class women.

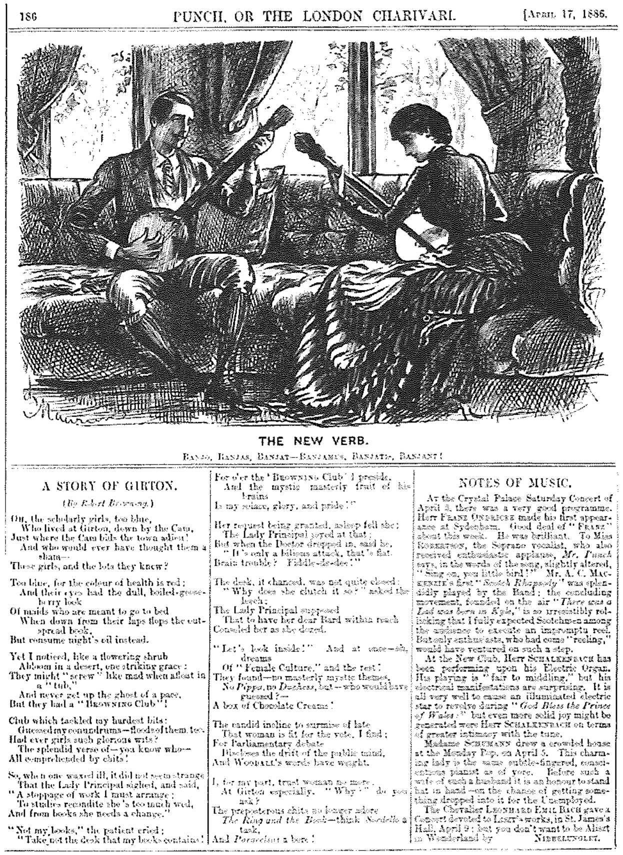


NORTH AND SOUTH.

THE YOUNGEST MISS BROWN PRACTISES ACCOMPANIMENTS.

Fig. 1 George Du Maurier, "North and South" *Punch* 89 (Sept. 12, 1885): 130.

In "The New Verb" (Fig. 2), published seven months later, the location has shifted indoors, and the female banjoist now plays with a male banjoist. The drawing-room setting lends a sense of propriety to the activity, as the musicians are no longer in the open air. The setting also evokes a scene of courtship, with the banjo replacing the drawing-room piano as the musical facilitator of this event. The romantic nature of this musical activity is also conveyed by the supposed "new verb" conjugated in the cartoon's caption, "banjo," which replaces the traditional Latin verb memorized by beginners: "amo" or "I love." The substitution implies that playing the banjo is akin to falling in love. The Latinate conjugation of "banjo" in the caption also links the banjo duet with a classical education since Latin was a standard part of the middle- and upper-class male's curriculum. This classical education was becoming available to women in the 1880s as well; the poem on the same page, "A Story of Girton," reminds us that women were starting to attend university at this time, a development often associated with the New Woman. Here, Du Maurier provides an early example of the link some made between the New Woman and the banjo. *The Musical Standard*, for example, noted that the harp has been rejected "by our modern 'wild-woman' in favour of the—banjo" ("Crotchets" [1892] 440). According to *The Church Musician*, "No one can have failed to remark on the growing number of ladies—old, middle-aged, and young—who perambulate the streets of London carrying violin cases or banjo boxes . . . . Some of these cases and boxes are of extraordinary form and more than usual size, but this only proved that no matter what shape a musical instrument might assume, the New Woman was prepared to tackle it" ("Notes" [1894] 182). Thus, some New Women demonstrated their autonomy by rejecting traditionally feminine instruments, instead taking up "masculine" and unwieldy ones like the banjo. As the banjo signaled non-English cultures and traditions, it was an apt symbol of the New Woman's rejection of her own society's values.[12] The irony of women communicating their independence with an instrument associated with a formerly enslaved people seems to have been overlooked.



186 PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI. [APRIL 17, 1886.

THE NEW VERB.

BANJO, BANJAS, BANJAT—BANJAMUS, BANJATIS, BANJANT!

A STORY OF GIRTON.

(*By Robert Browning.*)

Oh, the scholarly girls, too blue,
Who lived at Girton, down by the Cam,
Just where the Cam bids the town adieu!
And who would ever have thought them a sham—
Those girls, and the lots they knew?

Too blue, for the colour of health is red;
And their eyes had the dull, boiled-gooseberry look
Of maids who are meant to go to bed
When down from their laps flops the outspread book,
But consume night's oil instead.

Yet I noticed, like a flowering shrub
Abloom in a desert, one striking grace:
They might "screw" like mad when afloat in a "tub,"
And never get up the ghost of a pace,
But they had a "BROWNING Club"!

Club which tackled my hardest bits:
Guessed my conundrums—floods of them too.
Had ever girls such glorious wits?
The splendid verse of—you know who—
All comprehended by chits!

So, when one waxed ill, it did not seem strange
That the Lady Principal sighed, and said,
"A stoppage of work I must arrange;
To studies recondite she's too much wed,
And from books she needs a change."

"Not my books," the patient cried;
"Take not the desk that my books contains!
For o'er the 'BROWNING Club' I preside,
And the mystic masterly fruit of his brains
Is my solace, glory, and pride!"

Her request being granted, asleep fell she;
The Lady Principal joyed at that;
But when the Doctor dropped in, said he,
"It's only a bilious attack, that's flat.
Brain trouble? Fiddle-de-dee!"

The desk, it chanced, was not quite closed;
"Why does she clutch it so?" asked the leech;
The Lady Principal supposed
That to have her dear Bard within reach
Consoled her as she dozed.

"Let's look inside!" And at once—oh, dreams
Of "Female Culture," and the rest!
They found—no masterly mystic themes,
No *Pippa*, no *Duchess*, but—who would have guessed?—
A box of Chocolate Creams!

The candid incline to surmise of late
That woman is fit for the vote, I find;
For Parliamentary debate
Discloses the drift of the public mind,
And WOODALL'S words have weight.

I, for my part, trust woman no more,
At Girton especially. "Why?" do you ask?
The preposterous chits no longer adore
The Ring and the Book—think *Sordello* a task,
And *Paracelsus* a bore!

NOTES OF MUSIC.

AT the Crystal Palace Saturday Concert of April 3, there was a very good programme. Herr FRANZ ONDRICEK made his first appearance at Sydenham. Good deal of "FRANZ" about this week. He was brilliant. To Miss [illegible], the Soprano vocalist, who also received enthusiastic applause, *Mr. Punch* says, in the words of the song, slightly altered, "Sing on, you little bird!" Mr. A. C. MACKENZIE's first "*Scotch Rhapsody*" was splendidly played by the Band; the concluding movement, founded on the air "*There was a Lad was born in Kyle*," is so irresistibly rollicking that I fully expected Scotchmen among the audience to execute an impromptu reel. But only enthusiasts, who had come "reeling," would have ventured on such a step.

At the New Club, Herr SCHALKENBACH has been performing upon his Electric Organ. His playing is "fair to middling," but his electrical manifestations are surprising. It is all very well to cause an illuminated electric star to revolve during "*God Bless the Prince of Wales*;" but even more solid joy might be generated were Herr SCHALKENBACH on terms of greater intimacy with the tune.

Madame SCHUMANN drew a crowded house at the Monday Pop. on April 5. This charming lady is the same subtle-fingered, conscientious pianist as of yore. Before such a wife of such a husband it is an honour to stand hat in hand—on the chance of getting something dropped into it for the Unemployed.

The Chevalier LEONHARD EMIL BACH gave a Concert devoted to LISZT's works, in St. James's Hall, April 9; but you don't want to be Aliszt in Wonderland by NIBELUNGWOLF.

Fig. 2 George Du Maurier, "The New Verb." ***Punch*** **90 (April 17, 1886): 186.**

The cartoon's sexual undertones reinforce the idea that the female figure is a New Woman. Phallic banjo necks, angled toward each other, rise out of the laps of the two players, suggesting the man and woman are on the verge of a genital encounter. The woman appears to be not only familiar with Latin conjugations but also with greater sexual freedom than the traditional Victorian woman, in this case the liberty to be visibly, if symbolically, aroused by a banjo duet. That her arousal is represented by a phallus reflects contemporary depictions of the New Woman as masculinized.

Du Maurier's cartoon links the New Woman's educational advancements to women adopting prevailing musical fads, undermining the former by association with the latter. As a result, this scene of musical practice, performed on an instrument associated with blackface minstrelsy, is overlain with a patina of formal education and courtship conventions associated with the middle- and upper-classes. While Du Maurier skewers both social developments, perhaps implying that banjo playing is one consequence of educating women, I would argue that the allusion to higher education eases anxieties about the sight of a banjo in a drawing room, the middle- and upper-class associations of a classical education counterbalancing the working-class and racial connotations of the instrument.

While in Du Maurier's cartoon the banjo promotes courtship, Mary L. Pendered depicts the instrument as autoerotic and, consequently, a threat to marriage. In her cautionary tale, "A Baneful Banjo!," Pendered tells of receiving a banjo as a gift from her brother, recently returned from Africa. The banjo "cast[s] a spell over" her, making her increasingly dissatisfied and unhappy and spurring her to break off her engagement with her fiancé (278). Pendered's description of the banjo's influence echoes contemporary discourses on masturbation as a sordid and enervating practice. The instrument is described as "not too clean," and all songs played on it "lose their vitality" (277). Moreover, playing the banjo makes her lose "all interest in the ordinary affairs of life"; she becomes "hysterical," "melancholy," and fears she is going insane, reflecting the common belief that masturbation caused nervous disorders (278). Nevertheless, Pendered "was always longing to pull its strings" and "could not pass an hour without touching it," indicating the addictive appeal of the activity. She even feigns faintness at a ball in order to "get back to my own room, and—yes—the banjo!" This sexually obsessive behavior is triggered by her encounter with the "other," not only because the instrument that arouses these feelings comes from Africa, but also because this particular banjo drum was made from the skin of a "coffee-coloured" African chief (248). Pendered's uncontrolled desire to touch black skin raises the specter of Englishwomen seduced by, or under the spell of, African men. Therefore, the story stigmatizes women's sexual self-sufficiency through masturbation by connecting it with the threatening cultural category of blackness, while also hinting at miscegenation, metonymically represented by Pendered's attachment to the instrument. Clearly, English racial purity is threatened by women's fever for the banjo.

The New Woman's rejection of traditional English femininity via African and African-American culture is evident in Du Maurier's "What Shall We Do with Our

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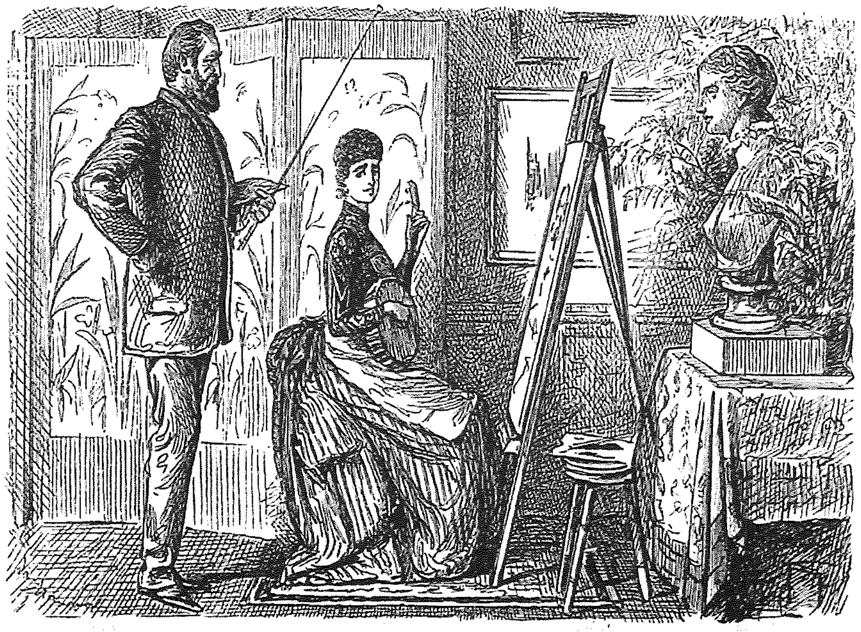
[12] Representations of women and the banjo in nineteenth-century American art reveals that "Euro-American women who took up the banjo proclaimed their modernity and independence" (Burns 90).

Girls? (Their Perverseness)" (Fig. 3), a cartoon that makes the connection between banjos and blackface even more explicit. Constance has spent so much time "strumming away" on the instrument that she has a reputation for performing as well as "a professional nigger"; indeed, she can be seen as a blackface minstrel without the burnt cork. However, as with previous cartoons, this female banjo player is distanced from street music. Not only is she depicted indoors, she is also associated with the established social order and the traditional education of middle- and upper-class girls. The letters after her father's name indicate he is a member of the Royal Academy and the Royal Watercolour Society, both exclusive organizations for artists. This member of the English art establishment is attempting to teach his daughter that staple component of a genteel woman's education—painting. In this cartoon, painting also has classical associations in that Constance is supposed to be copying the Romanesque bust on the table before her. The emphasis on her gentility indicates an attempt to mitigate the depiction of a female minstrel in a middle-class domestic setting. Nevertheless, tensions remain. Not only does Constance prefer to practice a form of entertainment with precarious social meaning rather than paint: she also chooses "that abominable instrument" over one more common to middle-class women, such as the piano. Instead, she includes the banjo in the general category of "music"—a term that, when applied to young ladies' accomplishments, generally denoted the piano or singing, thereby signaling the degeneration of middle-class music-making. Her rejection of patriarchal instruction in favor of an instrument associated with African-American culture and the British working classes both marks the New Woman's rebelliousness and undermines the class status usually connoted by female accomplishments.



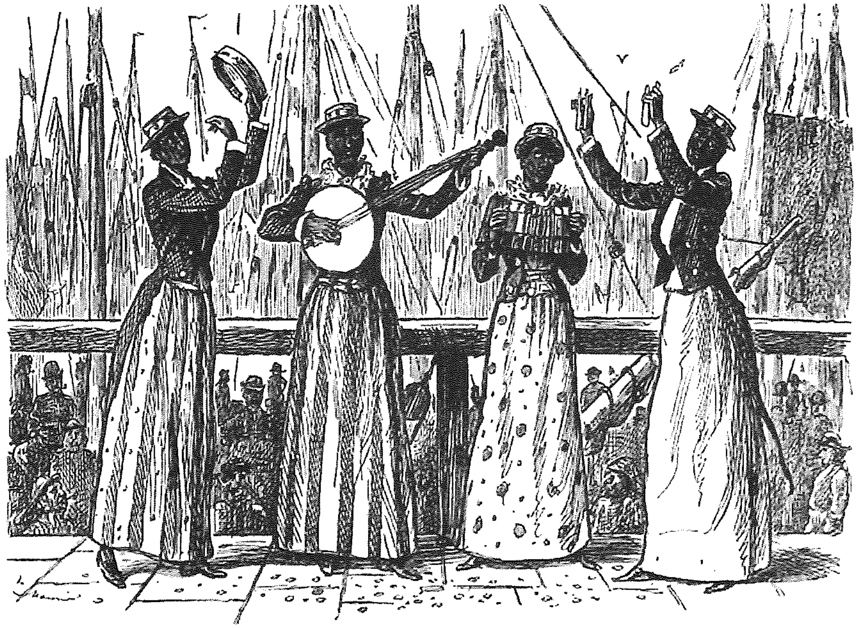
WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH OUR GIRLS?

(THEIR PERVERSENESS.)

Paterfamilias, R.A., R.W.S., &c., &c. "There you go, as usual, strumming away on that abominable Instrument instead of Painting! People tell me you can Play and Sing like a Professional Nigger; and yet, with all my care, you can't even make a decent copy of a Plaster Cast!"

Constance. "Ah! dear Papa, if you'd always discouraged my Painting as much as you've always discouraged my Music, by this time I should Paint almost as well as you do!"

Fig. 3. George Du Maurier, "What Shall We Do with Our Girls?" *Punch* 94 (June 9, 1888): 270.



BLACK SYRENS.

This is how the lovely and accomplished Miss B——ns (of —, Portland Place) managed to defray the expenses of their Sea-side Trip, this Autumn, without anybody being any the wiser!

"O-hi-o! O-hi-ho!
There never was a finer
Girl than Dinah,
Down by the Ohio!"

Fig. 4. George Du Maurier, "Black Syrens" *Punch* 99 (Sept. 27, 1890): 150.

The tensions and anxieties hinted at in the previous cartoons' depictions of culturally compromised elite women come to a head in Du Maurier's "Black Syrens" (Sept. 27, 1890) (Fig. 4), revealing the fluidity inherent in social constructions of female sexuality, class, race, and nationality. In this cartoon, four middle-class women are depicted in blackface, performing at a seaside resort. They are positioned in the standard minstrel configuration of performers in a single row with the tambourine and bones at the ends, while their swallowtail jackets and striped skirts replicate typical minstrel costumes. They are not drawn with the exaggerated features often used to depict Africans or African-Americans at this time, indicating that they are white women in blackface. This is also suggested by the visual pun on their last name, the "Miss B[row]ns," whose English name describes their supposed skin color. Their upper-middle-class status is evident in that common epithet for genteel women, "lovely and accomplished," and in their address in Portland Place. On Charles Booth's poverty maps for 1889-90, Portland Place is marked "upper middle and upper classes." That these well-off women are performing as working-class street musicians to "defray the expenses of their sea-side trip" is one indication of the irresolvable contradictory thinking underlying this cartoon, as their upscale address would seem to indicate that their motive is not financial. However, Portland Place also has a feminist pedigree as it terminates in Langham Place, the famous meeting place in the 1850s for activists Barbara Leigh Smith, Bessie Rayner Parks, and Anna James.[14] The cartoon's publication date and the Portland Place address implies they are simply middle-class New Women exercising their autonomy.

There were actual counterparts to Du Maurier's fictional Misses Brown in the nineteenth century. Although women sang minstrel songs in the home, several scholars contend that women "blacking up" and performing in public were rare.[15] While not as abundant as male performers, female blackface minstrels performed in a variety of venues during this period. Some were street musicians, as Arthur Munby notes (Hudson 158). More often, women performed in music halls and concert rooms. In 1847 the *Theatrical Journal*, bemoaning the fate of the English ballad singer in the face of competition from blackface minstrels, listed ten troupes currently performing in London. Of these, half included or consisted entirely of women: the Male and Female New York Ethiopian Serenaders, the Females Bayadere, the Buffalo Girls, the Male and Female Ethiopians, and the Female American Serenaders ("English" 162). The most successful of these troupes, The Female American Serenaders, could be seen at both Crockford's Saloon and St. James Assembly Rooms in 1847.[18] The same year, the Ethiopian Harmonists, "consisting of two ladies and four gentlemen," were engaged at White Conduit

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[14] Three years after the publication of "Black Syrens," George Gissing set Mary Barfoot and Rhoda Nunn's girls' clerical training school in the adjacent Great Portland Street in *The Odd Women* (1893).

[15] See Pickering (56n3) and Scott, *Singing* (89). Most scholarship on blackface minstrelsy in England does not address female practitioners.

[18] For reviews, see "The Female American Serenaders" (*Theatrical Journal* 8.387 [May 15, 1847]: 153-54) and "Female American Serenaders" (*The Musical World*)—the latter noting that "the entertainments differ but little from those given to the public at the St. James Theatre and elsewhere, but they are rendered infinitely more interesting by their being presented by members of the gentle sex" (267). The group was probably not American: although "thoroughly bronzed," they have "limbs of the stoutest English form and fabric" ("Varieties" 324), and they may have been from Manchester (Meer 149).

Gardens ("White" 237). Proving that blackface minstrelsy could be a family affair, a Mr. and Mrs. Dwight toured music halls in England and Ireland in the early 1850s; by 1855, their daughter Rosa had joined the act.[19] In 1870, an unnamed troupe of "female christies" sued the proprietor of the Wellington Music Hall and Circus in Cheltenham for terminating their engagement after a single performance instead of the agreed upon six-night run ("Female Christies" 358). They may have been one of the three troupes that Harry Reynolds, of Reynolds' Minstrels, describes in his memoir: an unnamed troupe managed by "Madame Christy," The Virginia Female Christys, and Andy Merrilee's Armour Clad Amazon Female Christys, fifteen young women who wore silver armor for their shows.[20] May Henderson's solo act was also very popular, according to Reynolds. And in the mid-1890s, the Columbians, "a clever quartet of lady vocalists who sing plantation songs, to the accompaniment of banjo and guitar, in a peculiarly fascinating manner," toured London, Bournemouth, Birmingham, Leeds, Newcastle and Liverpool (B., W. 325).[21] Blackface minstrelsy appealed to female performers as well as female audiences, and women in blackface could be seen on streets and stages throughout the nineteenth century. Among the middle and upper classes, however, Englishwomen donning burnt cork probably were not a widespread occurrence, which makes the "Black Syrens" a puzzling example.

While it would not have been unusual for the women of Portland Place to be familiar with minstrelsy—or even, as we have seen, to play the banjo—performing on a seaside pier is another story. According to Scott, the few female minstrel shows that did exist "would nowadays merit the description 'soft porn,'" suggesting that *respectable* troupes were all-male (*Singing* 89).[22] Certainly not all female troupes would have been considered risqué, but those who performed in the open air would have been more subject to speculation that they were prostitutes than those who performed in concert halls. For example, Arthur Munby records his "astonishment" at coming across the two female "Ethiopian Serenaders" in Scotland Yard, but they "were both very decent and modest in behavior; and were protected by their male companions, if they needed protection" (Hudson 157-58). The Misses Brown (Fig. 4), on the other hand, are unprotected as they sing and play out of doors, calling into question their respectability. They are also earning money via public display (they are the object of the gaze of the men on the wharf below), an activity suggestive of prostitution, thereby invoking working-class mores regarding female sexuality. In addition to class sexuality, the Misses Brown's impersonation evokes nineteenth-century constructions of black women as sexually licentious.[23] The supposed voracious sexual appetite of black women was both a marker of British superiority and a justification for British "civilizing" colonial projects. However, in this cartoon that quality is superimposed on its ideological opposite—sexually restrained, culturally refined, white, middle-class British women. The issue of sexuality is further complicated by the middle-class New Woman's association with free love. Thus, no clear categorization of these women on the basis of sexuality is possible, highlighting the shifting ideological grounds on which conceptions of female sexuality are built.

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[19] For reports of the Dwight family, see "Dublin" (*The Theatrical Journal* 12.600 [June 1851]: 193); "Our Little Chatter Box" (*Theatrical Journal* 14.695 [April 1853]: 111); "Metropolitan Theatres" (*Theatrical Journal* 14.969 [April 1853]: 114-16); and "Metropolitan Theatres" (*Theatrical Journal* 16.798 [March 1855]: 99-102).

[20] Despite the militaristic style of the Amazon Female Christys' costumes, they sang mostly sentimental songs, "rich in poetry and pathos, naturally taking their place in the hearts of all who hear them" ("Female Christy's" 120).

[21] See also "Other Concerts" (*Musical Standard* 4:103 [Dec. 21, 1895]: 405-06); "Madame Josephine Chatterton" (*Musical Times* 37:635 [Jan. 1, 1896]: 50); "Music in Birmingham" (*Musical Times* 37:639 [May 1, 1896]: 322-23); "Newcastle-on-Tyne" (*Musical Standard* 6:153 [Dec. 5, 1896]: 356); "Provincial" (*Musical News* 12:307 [Jan. 16, 1897]: 67); and "Notes on News" (*Musical Opinion and Music Trade Review* 20:234 [March 1897]: 373-75).

[22] Female characters in minstrel shows would most often be portrayed by male actors: "The practice of white men pretending to be black women on stage served complicated desires for misogyny, sexual freedom, and racist ridicule" (Brody 83). See also Annemarie Bean, "Transgressing the Gender Divide: The Female Impersonator in Nineteenth-Century Blackface Minstrelsy" (*Inside the Minstrel Mask: Readings in Nineteenth-Century Blackface Minstrelsy*. Eds. Annemarie Bean, et.al. Hanover, NH: UP of New England, 1996: 245-56) on the gender politics of American blackface minstrelsy.

Women in blackface destabilize Victorian constructions of class as well. The "Black Syrens" put their middle-class musical accomplishments to economic use, thereby undermining their rank since women of this class generally did not perform paid labor. The success of their endeavor is evidenced by the coins at their feet. Therefore, this cartoon confounds minstrelsy's typical portrayal of blacks as self-indulgent, lazy, and carefree. Michael Pickering argues that these stereotypes contrasted with and reinforced an English national identity based on middle-class values of industry, self-denial, integrity, and rationality, a thesis based on the performance of all-male troupes (113-14). Plausibly, blackface minstrelsy's inverted representation of middle-class English values is complicated when the audience is presented with women whose work replaces the leisure that marks their socio-economic status. Female labor while on holiday thwarts the contours of middle-class national identity by simultaneously summoning opposing class- and gender-based values: leisure and industriousness.

In addition to minstrelsy's depiction of African-Americans, given the cartoon's publication date of 1890, blackface is also a possible reference to Africa. England's imperial interests in South Africa in the 1880s and 1890s were threatened by other colonial powers and native Africans unhappy with colonial encroachment on their lands. Against the backdrop of British Empire and world politics, women in blackface assert the English national identity of their audience by placing before it the supposedly less civilized and more primitive non-European cultures of Africa and black Americans. Again, this performance is not totalizing since middle-class women's musical skills, honed in their leisure time, are a distinctive element of European culture. Moreover, the cartoon's title invokes classical mythology with its reference to "syrens." This allusion to beautiful female creatures making irresistible music at the water's edge is reflected in the physical position of the women in the cartoon and in the minstrel song they sing about a pretty girl "by the Ohio" River. Whereas in previous cartoons allusions to a classical education were employed to offset the banjo's racial associations, here the depiction of non-Western cultures invoked by blackface is inextricably intertwined with Western civilization. The degeneration in taste evidenced in previous cartoons by the upper classes' adoption of the banjo becomes full-scale cultural miscegenation. This depiction of white, upper-middle-class women's cross-racial performance resists stable meaning in regard to sexual, class, racial or national distinctions. The Misses Brown's attempt at "passing" does, however, concretize anxieties about the instability of categories on which Victorian middle-class difference depends.

Du Maurier's depiction of white women in blackface is not without precedent in the pages of *Punch*, though such illustrations occurred infrequently. Early examples portray female stage performers (who would not otherwise appear in burnt cork) as a means of critiquing contemporary entertainment fads or audiences. The author of "Ethiopian Fashions" (1846), for example, critiques "Ethiopian-mania" by stating that he expects this favorite entertainment to soon encroach on high art forms such as the ballet and the opera. The article is accompanied by an illustration of a ballet dancer in blackface, exaggerating the possible outcome of minstrelsy's popularity. "The Black Marseillaise" (Nov. 10, 1855) represents the famous French actress Mademoiselle Rachel in blackface next to an article about her New York performance of a version of the Marseillaise sung "in Negro dialect . . . . with her face and arms blacked" (186). The lyrics, included in the article, incite African-American slaves to rebellion against their oppressive owners. The article ends noting that "the House rose at Rachel before the end of the song," thereby critiquing both American theater audiences who had reacted violently to foreign actors in the past and Americans who were not prepared to extend the principles of liberty on which their country was founded to enslaved African-Americans.[24]

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[23] See also Yvette Abrahams, "Images of Sara Bartman: Sexuality, Race and Gender in Early Nineteenth-Century Britain" (*Nation, Empire, Colony: Historicizing Gender and Race*. Eds. Pierson and Chaudhuri. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1998. 220-36); Sander Gilman, "Black Bodies, White Bodies: Toward an Iconography of Female Sexuality in Late Nineteenth-Century Art, Medicine, and Literature" (*"Race," Writing, and Difference*. Ed. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. Chicago: U Chicago P, 1986: 223-61); and Phillipa Levine, "Sexuality and Empire" (*At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*. eds. Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006. 122-42).

[24] Brownstein does not mention this incident, indicating the event was a *Punch* fabrication. The French press did not expect Americans to appreciate Rachel ("the rabble could only admire her as a rabble-rouser" [204]). A precedent was the "bloody and destructive" Astor Place Riots of 1849, when "drunken patriotic supporters of Edwin Forrest had protested the visit of the English actor William Macready" (205).

Blackface minstrelsy was also occasionally linked with women's clothing trends in order to portray women as slaves to fashion.[25] For example, the author of "Ethiopian Fashions" expects "Ethiopian-mania" to extend "to the occupants of the boxes as well as the performers on stage" in the form of "Ethiopian headdresses and Ethiopian masks for the upper part of the face" (138). The article is accompanied by an illustration of a white woman in just such a costume. Whereas this is a speculative example of women's fashion, *Punch* mocks actual trends such as large bows and tiny hats by placing women beside blackface minstrels whose oversized or ill-fitting costumes resemble the women's clothing.[26] These women appear to have inadvertently adopted blackface costumes with their dress, suggesting they are blindly following fashion dictates, unaware of the ironic overlap between high fashion and the costumes of working-class minstrels, which were based on the supposed apparel of impoverished African-Americans.

In "Derby Costume a la Christy Minstrel" (June 3, 1876), however, a woman is depicted in an outfit that purposely replicates a blackface minstrel costume—including blackened hands and face. Claiming "a very slight addition to one of Mr. Worth's latest Parisian novelties," the cartoon presents the woman in a striped dress, a checked swallowtail jacket featuring exaggerated buttons, and an outsized collar (Sambourne 222). The blackface minstrel is superimposed on the fashionable upper-class woman in this image, collapsing the racial and class differences indicated by skin color and attire. Women and women's fashions are ridiculed as the female figure wears to the prestigious Epsom Derby an outfit that speaks of poverty, and the extent of blackface minstrelsy's popularity is again exaggerated.[27] Du Maurier takes this image a step further in "Black Syrens" by presenting women in blackface not for the sake of fashion but for the purpose of performance. As with his previous cartoons, Du Maurier critiques the New Woman by linking her greater mobility, economic liberty, and sexual expression with blackface minstrelsy. However, rather than reassure the viewer, "Black Syrens" places before it an image not only of English cultural degeneration but also racial miscegenation, featuring black women with English features. Underlying this attempt to discredit the New Woman is the fear that English women's infatuation with the banjo might lead to "blacking up" both culturally and biologically.

The final appearance in *Punch* of a woman playing the banjo is an untitled cartoon by Bernard Partridge, published the year of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, 1897 (Fig. 5). One of several cartoons *Punch* published contrasting the present year with the year of Victoria's ascension to the throne, this illustration attempts to provide an antidote to the anxieties and contradictions raised by "Black Syrens" by giving the instrument the imprimatur of middle-class respectability. By juxtaposing an illustration of a woman playing the harp with one of a woman playing the banjo, the cartoon indicates that the preference for one stringed instrument has simply been replaced by the preference for another as times and fashions have changed. The African and African-American cultural associations of the banjo are downplayed, since there are no allusions to blackface minstrelsy as seen in the other cartoons. In fact, there is almost no information—in the text or illustration—by which to contextualize the women and their instruments. Therefore our attention is drawn to the physical correspondences between the two women. Both are attired similarly, in evening dresses, and have almost identical hair styles. They are both sitting in demure attitudes, leaning over their instruments, and are intent on the music they are producing. Even the position of their hands as they play is similar. These likenesses imply that the only thing that has changed in sixty years is the instrument of choice; genteel young ladies still demonstrate their class status and respectability via music. Just as commentators tried to claim European origins for the banjo, this cartoon erases the instrument's racial and cultural associations by placing it in a genealogy of Western musical instruments suitable for middle-class women. Moreover, it links the banjo to a supposedly purer time in England, before the explosion in popularity of blackface minstrelsy in the 1840s or colonial expansion in Africa in the 1880s, thereby distancing the English from the banjo's threat of racial and cultural miscegenation.

Commentators began predicting the demise of the banjo as much as ten years before Partridge's cartoon. In 1887, for example, *Theatre* noted, "the banjo craze has of late subsided with astonishing completeness" (Clavichord 333). Others forecast which instrument would replace the banjo in the hearts of society women; the main candidates included the flute, the mandolin, and the bagpipe.[28] Nevertheless, in 1900, the *Musical Opinion and Trade Review* reported that "The banjo is said to be rising in the estimation of the public" ("Notes on News" 317); the *Musical Herald* continued to print banjo queries in its "Questions and Answers" section into the early years of the twentieth century.[29] Media interest in and public controversy over the instrument faded by the start of World War I, but examination of the banjo "craze" and its gendered representations reveals the instrument's enduring ties to blackface minstrelsy and African-American culture as well as the extent of blackface practice in the nineteenth century.

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[25] *Punch* reviled fashions that made women look as if they were black. "Shocking Result of Dark Veils" (Mar. 5, 1870) features a fashionably dressed woman whose black veil obscures her face. The caption reads "We humbly beg this young lady's pardon (who is *really* rather a pretty girl), but, being short-sighted, we positively took her for a lady of colour!" (94).

[26] See Sambourne's "My Health" (*Punch* 62 [Jan. 20, 1872]: 29) and "Social Science for Ladies" (*Punch* 60 [June 17, 1871]: 254).

[27] As Epsom Derby was held in early June, this is likely the event referred to in the June 3rd cartoon.

[28] See "Echoes of the Month" (*Musical Herald* 22 [Oct. 1, 1890]: 519-21; "Echoes of the Month" (*Musical Herald* 579 [Jun. 1, 1896]: 181); "Echoes of the Month" (*Musical Herald* 583 [Oct. 1, 1896]: 311. On Oct. 3, 1896, *Musical News* reported that "'the bagpipes are to be the fashionable society instrument this winter, and hundreds of men and maidens, who erstwhile swore allegiance to the banjo, will soon be ardent devotees of the bagpipes" (B., J.E. 284).

[29] Also in 1900, *Musical Opinion and Trade Review* reported that in Lancaster, "the fancy for the banjo is steadily growing" (Argus 56).

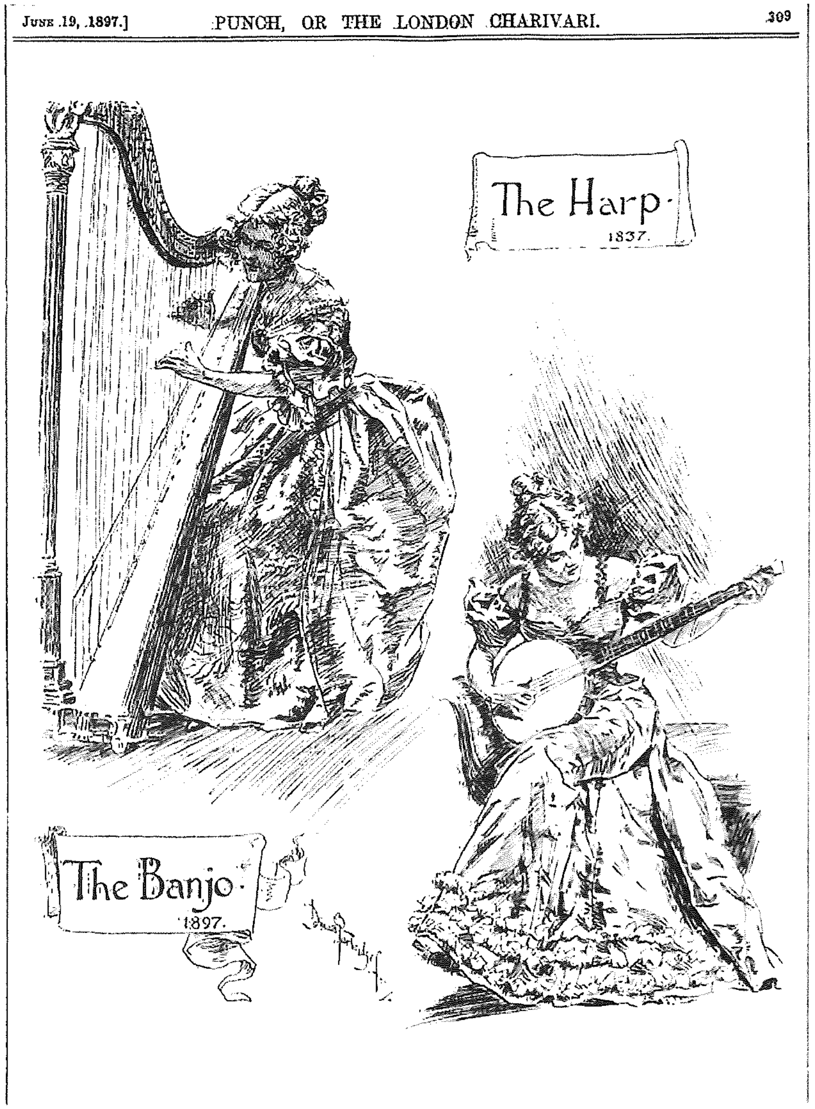
JUNE 19, 1897.] PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI. 309

Fig. 5 Bernard Partridge, Untitled cartoon. *Punch* 112 (June 19, 1897): 309.

While blackface minstrelsy is typically recognized by its hallmark of visages darkened with burnt cork, these late nineteenth-century depictions of women reveal that the banjo itself was another signifier of blackface performance. Broadening our understanding of blackface minstrelsy to include racial markers other than skin color allows us to recognize women's wider participation in this entertainment form. As these cartoons demonstrate, this participation complicates current understandings of blackface minstrelsy as a performance of racial and national difference because it indicates the potential for cultural and racial hybridity. Cartoonists affiliated the New Woman with the banjo and blackface minstrelsy to claim she was a sign of English cultural degeneracy. But their attempt to discredit the New Woman in this fashion reveals fears that her sexual agency and affinity for the banjo could lead to racial miscegenation, thereby undermining Englishness as white. Thus, women's cross-racial performances subvert the commonly understood function of minstrelsy—solidifying and reinforcing English national identity—instead exposing a desire for the "other."

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"If He caught me here, / O'erheard this speech": Audience, Performance, and Genre in Browning's "Caliban upon Setebos"

by Veronica Alfano

As he completes his murderous monologue, with a corpse's head leaning on his shoulder, Porphyria's lover exults, "And all night long we have not stirred, / And yet God has not said a word!" (ll. 59-60). This defensive yet triumphant justification for murder challenges the poet to re-establish his presence; it also attempts to escape the scrutiny of readers, who will rely on hints or instructions from the author as they evaluate his character's speech.

Robert Browning, who here refrains from directly undermining Porphyria's lover with authorial commentary or with the implied response of a censorious auditor, often struggles to establish a balance between his own voice—or, at least, a voice that openly describes personal experiences and emotions—and the carefully-distanced voices of dramatic monologists. He prefaces his 1842 *Dramatic Lyrics* with the declaration that they are "for the most part Lyric in expression, always Dramatic in principle, and so many utterances of so many imaginary persons, not mine" (i). In later life, he acknowledges the quasi-autobiographical *Pauline* as his work only with great reluctance, claiming that the poem had actually been an early attempt at dramatic verse. By 1876, he is testily refusing to open his heart "with a sonnet-key" ("House") and resists the notion that, in *The Ring and the Book*, "undramatic bits of myself . . . peep thro' the disguised people" (qtd. in Curle 162).

Yet Elizabeth Barrett urged him, in an 1846 letter, to write *in propria persona*: "speak yourself out of that personality which God made . . . in the directest & most impressive way, with the mask thrown off" (Kintner 2.180). In a letter to Barrett written the previous year, Browning contrasted her poetic earnestness with his ability merely to "make men & women speak—give you truth broken into prismatic hues, and fear the pure white light" (1.6). Such personas as Cleon and Andrea del Sarto stain the white radiance of genuine self-expression,[1] but Browning hopes someday to reveal that pure light with what he envisions as "R. B. a poem" (1.17).[2] *Paracelsus*, after all, declares that "God is the perfect poet, / Who in his person acts his own creations" (ll. 648-49). There is a note of wistful longing for direct communion with the beloved in "One Word More": "Let me speak this once in my true person" (l. 137). In 1855, Browning wrote to John Kenyon that "lyric is the oldest, most natural, most *poetical* of poetry . . . but I find in these latter days that one has a great deal to say, and try and get attended to, which is out of the lyric element and capability—and I am forced to take the nearest way to it" (qtd. in Cook xv). Indeed, Browning's 1851 *Essay on Shelley* reserves its highest flights of eloquence for the subjective writer, "whose study has always been himself, appealing through himself to the absolute Divine mind" (40).

These issues underscore a broader question: to whom is Victorian verse addressed? Should a poet write with others in mind, taking as her or his proper audience a public in need of education? Or is poetry instead a kind of private speech made public, ultimately addressed only to the self or to the heavens? Is the writer of verse an eloquent orator or an introspective songster—a Shelleyan "nightingale, who sits in darkness and sings to cheer its own solitude with sweet sounds," or one of the world's "unacknowledged legislators" ("Defense" 11; 46)?[3] Many critics have followed Robert Langbaum's lead in describing the dramatic monologue as Browning's means of navigating between the poles of instrumental rhetoric and intimate confession, between strategy and song. By ventriloquizing characters who tend to have intratextual hearers and ulterior motives, and by relying heavily on the reader's interpretive involvement, Browning challenges the notion—which John Stuart Mill articulates in his 1833 dictum that "eloquence is *heard*, poetry is *overheard*"—that the apparently isolated spontaneity frequently associated with the lyric is the supreme form of poetic expression (208). In "Deaf and Dumb," despite his former praise of the "pure white light," Browning muses that "Only the prism's obstruction shows aright / The secret of a sunbeam" (l. 1-2). His speakers, by dramatizing their virtues and shortcomings, reveal both moral messages and aspects of their creator's personality.[4] Their proclivity for unintentional self-revelation allows him both to enact and to ironize open-hearted lyricism. But the monologue can also be a mark of frustrated failure to find the perfect listener in God or the beloved; Browning called Elizabeth Barrett "my Audience" in letters, and famously wrote to John Ruskin that "[a] poet's affair is with God" (qtd. in Collingwood 1.234).[5]

Browning's ambivalence about the role of the personal in poetry fosters a new genre-centered reading of "Caliban upon Setebos; or, Natural Theology in the

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[1] See Shelley's *Adonais*: "Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass, / Stains the white radiance of eternity" (ll. 462-63). Browning refers to his characters as "prismatic hues," and to self-expression as "the pure white light."

[2] Browning was a "disappointed idealist . . . whose fear of betraying his own heart drove him to the perpetually unsatisfactory device of speaking obscurely through the mouths of others" (Altick 256); Constance Hassett asserts that that he replaced "the veiled autobiography" of his early works with "the individuality of others as his medium" (35). Britta Martens argues that the poet "continue[s] to be attracted to the subjective ideal" and to hybridize lyric and dramatic modes (1, 14-15, and *passim*). And Herbert Tucker confirms that a "yearning after the condition of lyric" haunts Browning's monologues (230). Interestingly, poems in which the poet's voice seems less mediated can threaten to become conventionally homiletic.

[3] See Dorothy Mermin, *The Audience in the Poem* (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1983).

[4] See J. Hillis Miller, *The Disappearance of God* (Urbana: U Illinois P, 1963).

[5] See also Erickson, who links Browning's creation of intratextual hearers to his complex relationship with the reading public.

Island," published in *Dramatis Personae*. This poem features a half-bestial creature that endeavors, by extrapolating from his own disposition and from the workings of nature, to construe the character of his god. Like Porphyria's lover, Caliban believes that this deity is not listening and will not reply. He addresses no one in particular; but once he imagines the cruelly capricious Setebos *can* hear his words, his speech becomes performative and self-disguising rather than candid and self-directed. The content of "Caliban upon Setebos" has prompted the vast majority of critics to focus their interpretations on natural theology, the higher criticism, Darwinism, the God of Calvinism, or more recently slavery and colonialism; scholarly controversies have centered on whether, to what extent, and for what reasons Browning satirizes his character's version of theology. But form is equally important, particularly in terms of how this poem functions as a testing ground for—and thus a nexus of anxieties about—the dramatic monologue itself.[6]

"Caliban" is premised on the strange contradiction that its speaker both wants to annoy Setebos—"to talk about Him, vexes . . . and time to vex is now" (ll. 17-18)—and not to be heard. Thus the figure of the real or imagined listener, and the attendant issue of self-concealment versus self-revelation, is emphasized from the start. Many *Dramatis Personae* poems have no intrapoetic auditor; but Setebos's sudden perceived entrance—and its drastic effect on Caliban—foregrounds questions of audience, performance, and genre. Reimagining Mill's fictive overhearing as actual eavesdropping that generates evasive rhetoric rather than heartfelt confession, "Caliban upon Setebos" stages its own troubled dependence on context and reception. As it vainly attempts to suppress its own dramatic situation and to prevent its speaker's solitary *cri de coeur* from becoming an object of scrutiny, this poem reveals Browning's lingering unease about his failure or refusal to inhabit a lyrical mode.[7] Implicitly critiquing both intimate spontaneity and the construction of a mask or persona, "Caliban" illustrates several conflicting models of aesthetic authority and reflects Browning's uncertainty about whether to renounce or pursue the lyrical fantasy of unmediated, private, artless speech. The double-consciousness of the poem's speaker, who begins as a lyricist and ends as a self-aware dramatic monologist, is worth exploring because it represents the dual impulses that continually motivate Browning himself.

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[6] See Martens; Donald S. Hair, *Browning's Experiments with Genre* (Toronto: U Toronto P, 1972); Hassett (96); Mermin (165n17). Distinct from other critics, I offer a sustained analysis from this point of view, re-reading the central events of the poem through the lens of genre and showing that it illuminates Browning's own aesthetic ambivalence.

[7] "Caliban upon Setebos" is not a prototypically Victorian "double poem"—that is, a poem in which a "*subject's* utterance" becomes "the *object* of analysis and critique" (Armstrong 12-13). Maynard notes that "the reader essentially overhears rather than hears a dramatic monologue" (106); and Loesberg connects this poem's "simultaneous expression and analysis" to the slave's double consciousness, concluding that it "is about enslavement because it is about Caliban's recognition of his own consciousness, both as mediated and as independent" (872, 886).

For the majority of his 295 lines, Caliban talks freely and unguardedly, "to his own self, howe'er he please" (l. 15). Often on the lookout for Setebos, he "never speaks his mind save housed as now" (l. 268)—holed up in a cave draped in foliage that he compares to an eyebrow, an imagistic simulacrum of Caliban's own mind.[8] Fittingly, he is locked inside his own perspective to the point of pathology, striving to read and order his surroundings in language that reflects a near-constant projection of his own intentions and desires. Positing a changeless universe—"all things will continue thus" (l. 241), he pursues a state of atemporal suspension with anaphoric strings of "Or" and "And," along with the repeated miniature refrain—"So He"—that structures the catalog of parallels he draws between himself and Setebos.[9] The relaxed rumination of loosely-connected sentences beginning "'Thinketh," "'Conceiveth," or "'Believeth" has a similar effect. Moreover, he derives pleasure from the non-purposive creation of microcosmic worlds inhabited by versions of himself. He imagines sculpting a bird, "my Caliban" (l. 77), out of clay, and he traps a sea-beast (also named Caliban) as part of an imaginative reenactment of his own life on the island; as he builds an elaborate structure of soil and wood, he explains that there is "no use at all i' the work" and that he does it "for work's sole sake" (l. 198). This episode, tellingly, sets off another time-suspending descriptive digression:

> 'Falls to make something: 'piled yon pile of turfs,
> And squared and stuck there squares of soft white chalk,
> And, with a fish-tooth, scratched a moon on each,
> And set up endwise certain spikes of tree,
> And crowned the whole with a sloth's skull a-top. (ll. 192-96)

Static and isolated, sincere and meditative, Caliban appears to take on the qualities of a lyric speaker. Even his drunken reverie—"I melt a gourd-fruit into mash . . . drink up all, / Quick, quick, till maggots scamper through my brain" (ll. 68; 71-72)—is a comically warped version of visionary ecstasy. In "Approaching the Lyric," Northrop Frye asserts: "The private poem often takes off from something that blocks normal activity, something a poet has to write poetry about instead of carrying on with ordinary experience. This block has traditionally been frustrated love" (32). Caliban imagines that one of his captive animals is "Miranda and my wife" (l. 160), thus linking himself to Frye's thwarted lyricist. W. David Shaw believes that an apostrophic impulse underlies the dramatic monologue's vocative mode. Behind the "seduction of a silent listener" lies the "subversive act of invoking"; by addressing an Other whose responses are excluded from the text, a monologue can balance social interaction and inward-looking isolation (68-69).

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[8] The early lines of the poem contain several striking depictions of enclosure: there is a bee shut up inside a flower, a "snaky sea which rounds and ends the same" (30), reflected sunbeams wrapping that sea in a glowing spider-web.

[9] Tebbetts comments on the static qualities of Caliban's speech, which he links to the character's sterile lack of intellectual growth and rejection of an afterlife; for Caliban, "there is no future, only repetitions of the present moment until death" (374).

Caliban, who is at first unaware that he is being heard at all, appears to suppress the auditor almost entirely.

Nonetheless, this speaker does not sustain the lyricist's first-person pronoun. Instead, he sometimes refers to himself in the third person or elides the relevant pronoun entirely, as in "'piled yon pile of turfs" (l. 192). This tic has attracted a great deal of attention, with critics usually attributing it to Caliban's stunted self-consciousness and inability to differentiate himself from Setebos.[10] However, it can also be read through the lens of genre. Alan Sinfield comments on "the device of the feint," the dramatic speaker's first-person singular that hesitates between replacing the poet's "I" of personal vision and shading into the third-person narrative mode (59). The lines "'Will sprawl, now that the heat of day is best, / Flat on his belly in the pit's much mire" (ll. 1-2) indicate the absence of an "I" and feints in the direction of detached plot-making, rendering these opening lines almost like stage directions.[11] Browning carefully dissociates himself from his monologists in *The Ring and the Book*, introducing characters by addressing readers directly—"Then comes the all but end, the ultimate / Judgment save yours" (*R&B* 1.1220-221)—before bowing himself offstage. But due to the title character's fluctuating syntax, such scene-setting is oddly unstable in "Caliban upon Setebos." What appears to be authorial distancing ends up obscuring the boundary between "I" and "he," dramatizing the dynamic of Sinfield's feint. When Caliban refers to himself in the third person, he unconsciously makes a laughably primitive attempt to dissociate himself from the irreverent content of his speech; when Browning creates a monologist, he takes up an impersonal or objective stance, stepping away from the content of his text.[12] Caliban hesitates between self-assertiveness and self-suppression, experimenting with lyrical confession within a dramatic frame. In so doing, he satirizes the way in which Browning partially absents himself from the material, avoids lyrical narcissism, and presents an alien subjectivity. The poet's chameleonic flexibility is rendered as paranoid naïveté.

Furthermore, the word "He" can also refer to Setebos. Without seeing the capitalization of Setebos's "He" or the apostrophe that marks the deletion of Caliban's self-referential pronoun, it would be extremely difficult to parse lines like "'Saith, He may like, perchance, what profits Him. / Ay, himself loves what does him good" (ll. 179-80). Such understated editorial intrusions allow the poet to hover in our peripheral vision. By reminding us that there is a controlling presence behind

the speaker, and by tacitly acknowledging the reader's presence, these narrative intrusions acknowledge that Caliban's speech is not perfectly private and introspective. And of course, Browning's structuring hand is also present in the flexible pentameter that underlies even Caliban's most spoken-sounding lines—"When . . . when . . . well, never try the same way twice!" (l. 222), or in Biblical allusions exposing the poem as a constructed text—"the fowls here, beast and creeping thing" (l. 45) recalls "to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth" (Gen 1:30). The author-god cannot fully remove himself from the scene, as Caliban will soon learn when he cowers at the return of Setebos.

At the end of his penultimate stanza, Caliban muses in a sleepily caesura-filled line that someday Setebos "Decrepit may doze, doze, as good as die" (l. 283). But his reverie is interrupted by the onset of a storm that cues a panicky series of exclamations: "A curtain o'er the world at once! . . . There scuds His raven that has told Him all!" (ll. 284; 286). A series of emphatically-stressed, jabbing deictics—"there, there, there, there, there, / His thunder follows!" (ll. 290-91)—reflects Caliban's terror, whereas earlier in the poem that same deictic—"there, see, he hath wings . . .There, and I will that he begin to live" (ll. 78; 81)—had accompanied Caliban's confident control over the clay bird that represented a newly-crafted version of selfhood. This shift in tone also signals a generic shift. Caliban now believes that he is being watched, and he replaces earnest meditation with an insincere imitation of adoring prayer. He is lying in more than once sense as he "'Lieth flat and loveth Setebos" (l. 292)—an ironic echo of his relaxed position "Flat on his belly" (l. 2) at the start of the poem.[13] Instead of speaking freely to himself, he relies on rhetorical strategy and show to manipulate a powerful listener. His private, autonomous speech becomes relational and situational. He is like the speaker of Tennyson's *Maud*, whose unhealthily self-reflexive utterances cannot be woven into the social realm of action.[14]

In other words, as he becomes hyper-aware of his situation and deliberately creates a misleading persona, he ceases to behave like a prototypical lyricist and begins to behave like a prototypical monologist. Caliban is abruptly trapped by genre, by context, and by the newfound consciousness of temporality that makes his present-tense verbs signal terrified urgency instead of reflective timelessness. Overtaken by what is arguably the poem's first real narrative event, by a plot that prompts him to do some plotting of his own—"will not eat this month / One little mess of whelks, so he may 'scape!" (ll. 294-95)—he cannot sustain lyric's magically suspended moment. The tempest that opens Shakespeare's play suddenly frames and reclaims his would-be introspective soliloquy. And that falling curtain of cloud signals the beginning, not the end, of Caliban's performance; he may refer to his former self-absorbed talk as "fool's *play*" (l. 287; emphasis added), but his current speech is far more theatrical and exaggerated as he pleads for mercy. This strangely compelling character may have fascinated us and even begun to win our sympathy with his vision of universal tyranny, but we are now called upon to judge him as his words crumble into hypocritical groveling. We overhear Caliban, and we are aligned with the hidden voyeuristic god to whom he prays. Just as Caliban's explication of Setebos's nature tends to shade into unwitting self-analysis, here he himself becomes the subject of disapproving scrutiny. Mill's overhearing is inverted as it is literalized; in this poem, overhearing produces not sublime lack of self-consciousness but deliberate self-masking.

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[10] See John Woolford, "Self-Consciousness and Self-Expression in Caliban and Browning." *Robert Browning in Contexts*. Ed. Woolford (Winfield: Wedgestone Press, 1998): 89-90.

[11] On stage directions, see Clyde de L. Ryals, *The Life of Robert Browning: A Critical Biography*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1993: 152.

[12] The use of third-person "enables Browning to adapt the subject of the soliloquy to the dramatic situation of the monologue . . . the speaker is able to be at once an observing ego and a participating ego" (Wolfe 9-10). Wolfe focuses mainly on the reader's experience and does not discuss either the eventual entrance of what Caliban sees as an actual auditor or Caliban's muted satire of Browning. See also Erickson (219).

[13] See also Stuart Peterfreund, "Robert Browning's Decoding of Natural Theology in 'Caliban upon Setebos'" (*Victorian Poetry* 43.3 [Fall 2005]: 328); and Tucker (*Browning's* 152-53).

[14] See Mermin 155 for a comparable perspective on *Maud.*

Ultimately, then, Caliban cannot avoid the surveillance of his god or of the reader. His solipsistic dream is destroyed. Having already satirized the monologist's feint, Caliban now joins Porphyria's lover ("God has not said a word!") in pathologizing the lyricist's egomaniacal delusion of self-addressing isolation. And as Browning uses the entrance of Setebos to emphasize his creature's bestial state, urging readers to seek another level of intellectual authority, he doubly underscores audience and reception. Robert Langbaum, who asserts that the lyrical element of dramatic monologues lies in their excessive self-revelation, believes that the "meaning" of "Caliban upon Setebos" is "Caliban's whole soul as it breaks through and exceeds the conditions of the poem . . . the Caliban who bursts upon us in the end as a revelation, with a new intensity and largeness that justify him as more himself than ever" (207-08). This character's striking self-expression, in other words, trumps our delayed judgment of his benighted state. However, rather than revelatory, Caliban attempts to stifle and resist precisely this sort of expression in the final stanza of the poem.

I do not mean to imply that all dramatic monologues lacking intrapoetic listeners should be reclassified as lyrics. But the fact that Caliban offers us two radically contrasting modes of self-presentation within the same poem does call attention to questions of genre. The silent God of "Porphyria's Lover," as embodied in Browning and his readers, *does* say a word as that poem ends, shattering its corrupt travesty of lyrical atemporality (the speaker murders his beloved in order to keep her "perfectly pure and good" [l. 37]). But in "Caliban upon Setebos," the condemnatory reception of confessional speech—the process whereby such speech turns outward and makes itself subject to interpretation—is explicitly dramatized in the text itself. A balance between self-concealment and self-display underlies nearly every Browning monologue, and this poem brings that balance to the surface, overtly thematizing it. As a result, it generates anxiously exaggerated versions of both lyric and dramatic speech.

Re-reading "Caliban upon Setebos" in light of its final stanza reveals that the shift into deceptive performance is foreshadowed at several points. Caliban wonders how to avoid Setebos's anger, concluding that the best way is "not to seem too happy" (l. 257). He anticipates his own future position by describing an urchin that "[c]urls up into a ball, pretending death" at his approach (l. 230); and he tends to interrupt his contemplations with worried queries about how to please his potential overhearer—"Aha, that is a question . . . Aha, if He would tell me how" (ll. 128; 217). He is concerned with the language of surveillance, describing how he will "catch" birds and a convenient fruit. And the tentative, labored syncopation of "Setebos, Setebos, and Setebos!" (l. 24), which appears in an unassuming stanza of two lines, implies a gradual crescendo in which Caliban calls out to be sure his god is not listening.[15]

Most notably, the penultimate stanza presciently describes how Caliban would put on false pretenses if Setebos discovered him:

> . . . 'would have Him misconceive, suppose
> This Caliban strives hard and ails no less,
> And always, above all else, envies Him;
> Wherefore he mainly dances on dark nights,
> Moans in the sun, gets under holes to laugh,
> And never speaks his mind save housed as now:
> Outside, 'groans, curses. If He caught me here,
> O'erheard this speech, and asked "What chucklest at?"
> 'Would, to appease Him, cut a finger off
> . . . .
> While myself lit a fire, and made a song
> And sung it, "*What I hate, be consecrate*
> *To celebrate Thee and Thy state, no mate*
> *For Thee; what see for envy in poor me?*" (ll. 263-71; 275-78)

Though Caliban intends to mollify Setebos with this song, it actually betrays his loathing of the deity. He promises to sacrifice only "[w]hat I hate," and cannot help adding the malicious aside "no mate / for Thee." Syntactically compressed and internally rhymed, this ditty is not far from Browning's "With spire and sad slate roof, aloof" ("Dîs Aliter Visum" l. 27) or "As I ride, as I ride, / When an inner voice has cried, / The sands slide, nor abide" ("Through the Metidja to Abd-El-Kadr" 3:1-4). The implied awareness of an auditor—"If He caught me here, / O'erheard this speech"—and its self-undermining subtext echo Browning's monologues more generally.

Caliban the narcissistic lyricist, again, can also satirize the dramatic mode; indeed, throughout the poem, he mirrors Browning's casuistic speakers with his repeated "Put case . . ." and "suppose . . . ." For E. Warwick Slinn, he amplifies the limitations and distortions in every perspective, and is thus "a grotesque parody of all monologists" (89). In particular, he represents a degraded version both of many monologists' relationship to their auditors and of Browning's relationship to his public. Caliban reveals the poet's fear that he cannot direct his speech to either of his perfect audiences. Neither this character nor his creator sustains lyrical earnestness; they must don masks and perform. If the dramatic monologue "presents a delicate antithesis between the speaking subject as isolated and that same subject as constituted only by language in the process of communication and exchange" (Martin 132), Browning betrays a worry that his own identity will remain either irreparably hermetic or fragile and contingent.[16] And if the poet is Caliban-esque, he cannot feign sublime unawareness of his hard-to-please, judgmental, Setebos-like readers, the "British Public, ye who love me not" (*R&B* 1.410). As Caliban's private world is assimilated into the storyline of *The Tempest* and to the fact of being viewed and assessed, so Browning submits his work to audiences who may lament its obscure or prosaic qualities.

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[15] I owe this observation to John Howard (255).

In fact, Caliban parodies not only Browning's monologists but also the poet's manipulation and control of his speakers. Although the egoistic aspect of the microcosmic worlds he creates seems to signal his status as a lyricist, his eventual destruction of these worlds complicates this reading, painting both Caliban and his god as demonic monologue-writers. Caliban imagines himself and Setebos crippling the things they build in order to confirm their superior authority; of his wooden structure, he explains that he shall "some day knock it down again" (l. 199), and equating authorship with torment, he "pens" his blinded beast "in a hole o' the rock and calls him Caliban" (l. 165-66). Browning, who also pens a purblind beast called Caliban, reveals his uneasiness about his signature form of poetic expression by reducing it to petty tinkering.[17] He seems to imply that monologues are mere meddling rearrangement. For instance, *The Ring and the Book* tellingly presents itself as a historically-mediated manipulation of raw material: "although nothing which had never life / Shall get life from him, be, not having been, / Yet, something dead may get to live again" (*R&B* 1.727-29).

This reading is particularly apropos given Caliban's eventual fate: he betrays his own weakness while literally wounding himself with a bite to the lip. In other words, Browning appears to dole out the same kind of punishment as Caliban and Setebos, although he does so not capriciously but in order to discredit his blasphemous speaker. And Caliban must be discredited not only because of his faulty theology—he constantly commits the logical fallacy of assuming his deity

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[16] Dramatic verse may "resolve the speaking self into its constituent influences"; conversely, "lyric isolation from context distempers character and robs it of contour," evacuating the poet's subjectivity (Tucker 230, 235).

[17] Caliban's narcissistic creations "might remind us of the true art of Browning himself, with its independent men and women, dramatic personae of many different interests and origins" (Tebbetts 380). Hassett agrees: "[a] subjective aesthetic leaves one ignorant, whereas true creation, because it requires the suspension of one's habitual identity, is a means of discovery. When the personality of the maker is allowed to dominate, then the created object . . . is only a deceitful alternative to reality" (97). Caliban's sea-beast grotesqueries highlight the fruitful mechanism of imaginative self-escape in the dramatic monologue.

must share his own psychology—but also because he twists and misuses linguistic skill. His detailed natural descriptions are undeniably delightful to read. The assonant phrase "round mouth" (l. 125), which playfully forces just such roundness on the mouth that pronounces it, and the deliciously onomatopoetic consonants of "catch and crunch" (l. 11), provide dangerous amounts of sonic pleasure for Caliban and Browning and readers alike. Parodying Biblical creation as he crafts God in his own image, Browning's swamp-dweller also parodies poetic creation. He even imitates Prospero, another incarnation of textual authority; after spying on the sorcerer, Caliban crafts "a book of broad leaves" that contains "prodigious words" (ll. 152-53).

But Browning undermines his character by showing the creature's imaginative limitations. Though Caliban may identify Prospero's "prodigious words," he does not know what those words signify, and he vaguely refers to his imitation sorcerer's wand by "a name" (l. 154). Arresting though the metaphor may be, he betrays his radically circumscribed frame of reference by calling an otter "lithe as a leech" (l. 46). His eye for natural imagery is sharp, but his abstract vocabulary tends to cluster around the simple and monosyllabic "good" or "worst" or "strong" or "best." Even his description of his own creations turns out to be tautological: he "'*piled* yon *pile* of turfs" and "*squared* . . . *squares* of soft white chalk" (ll. 192-93; emphasis added). In the Preface to *Paracelsus*, Browning affirms his dependence on "the intelligence and sympathy of the reader," who must "connect the scattered lights into one constellation" (xi); here, Browning and his audience join in condemning Caliban as the poet re-establishes his character's performative frame. From this perspective, he aligns himself with the assessing act of the reader rather than with the mumblings of the creature. Caliban, who in his role as mock-poet "'Taketh his mirth with *make*-believes" (l. 169) or "'Falls to *make* something" (l. 192), at last only "'*Maketh* his teeth meet through his upper lip" (l. 293; emphases added). He knows that his creator "hath a spite against me" (l. 202)—and it turns out he is not too far wrong. Ironically, the way Browning subdues his character closely resembles the very methods that Caliban parodies.

Given the uncomfortable parallels between Browning and Setebos, it is significant that Caliban outright accuses his deity of being an imperfect creator. As the dramatic monologue indicates a falling-off from subjective purity of self-expression, so Setebos must have fashioned the world "in spite" because "he could not, Himself, make a second self . . . as well have made Himself" (ll. 57-58). This contempt redounds on Caliban's other maker, echoing Browning's fear that he cannot figure himself in verse and must be content with displacements and disguises. Caliban says of Setebos, "He hath made things worthier than Himself"—things "Himself would fain, in a manner, be" (ll. 112; 62):

> 'Hath cut a pipe of pithless elder-joint
> That, blown through, gives exact the scream o' the jay
> . . . .

Put case such pipe could prattle and boast forsooth
"I catch the birds, I am the crafty thing,
I make the cry my maker cannot make
With his great round mouth; he must blow through mine!"
Would not I smash it with my foot? So He. (ll. 117-18; 122-26)

Thus Caliban evokes Browning's own potential loss of control over the charismatic dramatic characters that make the lyrical cries he cannot. Will his readers fail to separate these characters' opinions from the poet's opinions or misconstrue their messages entirely? Is his use of mouthpieces an inferior substitute for Shelleyan song, just as Caliban's babbling and cringing final performance ("there, there, there, there, there") pales in comparison to the richly textured self-exploration of the previous stanzas? If he does not speak as an inspired visionary, must he watch in envy as he realizes that his supposedly inferior "playthings" actually "do more / Than He who made them" (ll. 64; 113-14)? The handiworks of Setebos, like those of Browning, are "Things He admires and mocks" (l. 65); both Browning and Setebos can "exercise much craft, / By no means for the love of what is worked" (l. 187). "Mocks" and "craft" assume double meanings, linking creation to thwarted (and even vengeful) dissatisfaction. As Setebos eventually subdues Caliban, so Browning ironizes Caliban to underscore his own authority.

"Caliban upon Setebos," then, sets forth several models for the poet's role. He can remain partially withdrawn from his textual creation, ready to spring forth and assert his will. This Setebos-like writer is the anxious poet of the dramatic monologue. Like the "many-handed" deity, who loves to "Use all His hands" (ll. 142; 186), he has a variety of textual personae. And before he is reframed, Caliban's speech offers another poetic model, representing the temporary resurrection of an exaggeratedly solipsistic lyric. The circumscribed Caliban, wishing he were "born a bird" (l. 74), must make and mar a bird instead; his projection of Setebos continually "vex[es]" (l. 171) what he creates, crafting "a bauble-world to ape yon real" (l. 147) because he "cannot soar" (l. 144) to the level of what Caliban imagines as a higher god. Even so, Browning makes and mars an intimate self-disclosure, both invoking and rejecting lyricism, both positions producing grotesque poet-doubles. Browning-as-Setebos is an impotent voyeur rather than a wise puppet-master, and Browning-as-Caliban indulges in solipsism—writing a dark version of "R. B. a poem"—before becoming excessively aware of an audience he must address.

Near the beginning of the poem, Caliban spies

. . . . an icy fish
That longed to 'scape the rock-stream where she lived,
And thaw herself within the lukewarm brine
O' the lazy sea her stream thrusts far amid,
A crystal spike 'twixt two warm walls of wave;
Only, she ever sickened, found repulse
At the other kind of water, not her life,

(Green-dense and dim-delicious, bred o' the sun)
Flounced back from bliss she was not born to breathe,
And in her old bounds buried her despair,
Hating and loving warmth alike: so He. (ll. 33-43)

Setebos is not content in heaven or earth. The icy fish cannot easily move from solitary stream to teeming sea. Browning, too, cannot unite the "crystal spike" of white-light individual selfhood with the variegated, multitudinous, fecund world of the monologue, in which such alliterative compound words as "green-dense and dim-delicious" capture disparate and synaesthetic impressions. Appropriately enough, this passage is itself a descriptive interlude in a topical, quasi-didactic poem.[18] The sea, portrayed as both blissful and repulsive, reflects Browning's ambivalence; he is not at ease speaking either in his own person or through the mouths of various speakers.

In a sense, this distinction is overly simplistic, because every textual "I" is necessarily a mask or persona rather than a transparent window to the soul. If all poems show self-dramatization and not self *per se*, then perhaps all poems are dramatic monologues in essence, and the monologue form only literalizes the impossibility of speaking as oneself. My reading of "Caliban upon Setebos" confirms that confessional speech and performative or dramatic speech can coexist and intermingle within a single text. The liminal status of Caliban's soliloquy—is he actually talking to himself, or is he overheard?—also emphasizes the illusory autonomy of lyric, underscoring the fact that all published poetry is inevitably oriented toward an audience. A lyric addressed to a skylark and a dramatic monologue addressed to the Pope are both "heard" by the reader. Given the blurry demarcations between a poet and his characters, perhaps we ought to cease fixating on the shadowy figure of the "speaker" altogether. Yopie Prins argues compellingly that no poem is a transcript of speech: "Why must sound be attributed to a speaker in order to be understood as meaningful?" (47).

Admittedly, terming the dramatic monologue as *the* form that underlies all verse and dispensing with the idea of a poetic speaker are theoretically provocative tenets. But the prevalence of the dramatic monologue in Victorian poetics persuasively invites scholarly investigation of the motives, strategies, and critical receptions of poets who employ a vaguely personal "I" and of poets who self-consciously ventriloquize an entity or character outside themselves.[19] Moreover, imagining a speaker who addresses an identified or implied intratextual *listener* clarifies the reader's interpretive role, hinting at where our sympathies should lie;

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[18] Linda Hughes identifies this as one of Browning's "bursts of lyricism" (131).

[19] There are cases where this distinction is unclear, as implied by classifications such as "double poem" or "mask lyric" or "Greater Victorian Lyric." See Armstrong; Ralph Rader ("The Dramatic Monologue and Related Lyric Forms," *Critical Inquiry* 3.1 [Autumn 1976]), and George Bornstein (*Poetic Remaking: the Art of Browning, Yeats, and Pound* [University Park: Penn State UP, 1988]).

analyzing the dynamics of intrapoetic communication, and deciding to what extent we are meant to envision a highly individualized dramatic speaker, will help determine whether a character who addresses no one in particular is cuing us to merge our voice with hers/his or showing signs of mental instability. And in "Caliban upon Setebos," wherein the interaction of speaker and auditor exposes the unsustainable nature of lyric speech, isolated self-revelation gives way to persuasion and performance.

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In "Persian garments": Orientalism and Hybridity in Robert Browning's Life and Works

by Gal Manor

Robert Browning's fascination with Oriental images permeates his writing: Jewish, Arab, and Muslim characters abound in his poems and plays, constituting a life-long interest. But despite such abundance, Browning's Orientalism remains a much neglected field of study.[1] The poet's unusual middle-class education[2] likely influenced his interest in different points of view, including oriental ones; this is reflected in his shift away from a binary conception of East and West in his early works toward a more empathic representation of the East through the character, Ferishtah. In *Ferishtah's Fancies* (1884), Browning formulates a hybrid image of the poet disguised as a Muslim dervish who utters Hebrew phrases. This work, along with the second series of the *Dramatic Idyls* (1880) and *Jocoseria* (1883), reveals a preference for similarities over differences in comparisons of East and West. Further, Browning presents Judaism, Islam, and Christianity equitably and highlights the mutability and the constructed nature of race by creating hybrid images such as Ferishtah. Indeed, during his lifetime and following his death, Browning-the-man and Browning-the-poet comprise a suggestive and controversial trope for blurred racial and religious distinctions.

Browning's development with regard to Oriental themes spans three distinct periods: first, the early and middle period, is characterized by a binary conception of East and West, and by colonialist language. Subsequently, he shifts toward an unconventional conception of the East, evidenced by his use of hybrid images and poems highlighting fissures in the Victorian Manichean conception of East and West. Finally, critical responses to his later works are complicated by discussions of Browning's allegedly "mixed" race; the anxiety and fascination this issue provoked intensified after his death (1889), posing critics' reliance on contemporary theories about race against Browning's flirtation with images of hybridity in his personal life and his poetry.

"The savage heart": the Early and Middle Years

Browning's fondness for constructing Oriental characters is evident from his earliest works. Beyond Victorians' general obsession with the East and its inhabitants, Browning had access to the many Oriental and esoteric texts in his father's library, which consisted of approximately six thousand volumes (Berlin-Lieberman 9). According to Moncure Conway, the mind of Browning's father was "a storehouse of literary and philosophical antiquities. He seemed to have known Paracelsus, Faustus, and even Talmudic personages personally" (2.21). Another powerful influence was his father's disgust and horror at the slavery he witnessed in the West Indies[3] (Irvine and Honan 2). Politically, Browning was largely philo-semitic, liberal, or some would say radical (Woolford and Karlin 158); he was "tolerant in religious matters" (Conway 2.28) and abhorred oppression. Yet, some of his works from the early and middle period imply Orientals are developmentally backward, ruled by passion, and destined for conversion to Christianity, ideas corresponding with his belief in "progressive intelligence" (Woolford and Karlin 189). In an 1881 letter to Furnivall, Browning mistakenly equates his notion of eschatological progress planned by a "creative intelligence" with Darwin's idea of natural selection: "all that seems proved in Darwin's scheme was a conception familiar to me from the beginning," citing as proof part V of *Paracelsus* (qtd. Woolford et. al. 621). Dorothy Mermin argues that Browning's poems "presuppose the evolutionary view that . . . primitive peoples and barbaric myths represent early rather than degenerate stages in the cultural development of the human race" (211-12). This notion can be traced in the developmentally "backward" behavior and language used by oriental characters in *Bells and Pomegranates* (1841-46): "From the Metijda to Abd-el-Kadr," "Home-Thoughts, from Abroad," *The Return of the Druses*, "Waring," and *Luria*. Joseph Phelan explores the language of colonialism in some of these early works, attributing it to the influence of "The Colloquials," a group (to which Browning belonged) keenly interested in the growing empire, despite claims to mere "colonialism" and liberalism (81).[4]

But predating *Bells and Pomegranates*, *Pauline*, *Paracelsus*, and *Sordello* associate the words "Arab" and "East" with immoral power over others, "primitive" religion and black magic. In *Pauline*, the speaker's worst moment of "decay" (l. 462) and "vanity" (l. 493) is linked with the flight of "Arab birds": "...And I was borne away, / As Arab birds float sleeping in the wind, / O'er deserts, towers and forests, I being calm" (ll. 478-80). This destructive narcissistic fantasy is repeated in *Paracelsus* Book 1, again associated with the "East," a "swarthy race" and "desert tribes." Browning's bifurcated attitude towards the East begins with an idealized setting "where all Wisdom sprung":

> Think, think! the wide East, where all Wisdom sprung;
> The bright South, where she dwelt; the hopeful North,

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[1] See Joseph Phelan (104); Dorothy Mermin's "Browning and the Primitive"; and Rowena Fowler's "Browning's Jews."

[2] Browning's father owned a substantial, highly eclectic library; according to his sister, "Robert became very early familiar with subjects generally unknown to boys" (Orr 29; Hawlin 6n3).

[3] The family owned a plantation in the West Indies. In an Aug. 27, 1846 letter to Elizabeth Barrett, Browning describes his father's "loathing" towards his West Indies experience.

[4] Unlike imperialism, colonialism was perceived as non-oppressive by "The Colloquials," (Maynard 105); but some members of the group eventually held posts in the British Empire (Phelan 83).

All are passéd o'er—it lights on me!
Once the feat achieved,
I would withdraw from their officious praise,
Would gently put aside their profuse thanks. (ll. 474-79)

Yet such idealization swiftly turns into a narcissistic fantasy of power:

Like some knight traversing a wilderness,
Who, on his way, may chance to free a tribe
Of desert-people from their dragon-foe;
When all the swarthy race press round to kiss
His feet, and choose him for their king, and yield
Their poor tents, pitched among the sand-hills, for
His realm: and he points, smiling, to his scarf
Heavy with riveled gold, his burgonet
Gay set with twinkling stones—and to the East,
Where these must be displayed! (ll. 480-89)

In *Sordello*, Book I, the inmost chamber where Adelaide employs her black magic is situated at the end of "corridors contrived for sin" (l. 391), described as distinctly "Arab":

A maple-panelled room: that haze which seems
Floating about the panel, if there gleams
A sun-beam over it, will turn to gold
And in light-graven characters unfold
The Arab's wisdom everywhere; . . . (ll. 394-98)

In these lines the same ambivalence towards all things Arab appears, the association with wisdom being of an immoral nature. At the time, Arab culture evidenced "arrested development," characterized as primitive, imbued with occultism, and anchored in the past (Said 234). Thus, in these early works, Browning's Oriental images coincide with the idea of the primitive in Victorian culture—representing early developmental stages in human "progress" and characterized by primitive "magic" and superstition.[5]

Browning's interest in Oriental themes expands in *Dramatic Lyrics* (1842), with his first Arab and Jewish speakers emerging in "Through the Metidja to Abd-el-Kadr" and "Saul." The speaker of "From the Metijda" is a follower of the Algerian Qadir who is fighting the French troops. Joseph Phelan claims this poem employs "anticolonial discourse" but also foreshadows the speaker's failure in the struggle against France (100). The poem also continues Browning's association of Arab culture with "primitive" mysticism as he follows his "full heart" and "inner voice," and detects his leader in "ways untried," that is in mystical and exceptional ways:

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[5] The idea that magic is an early form of religion was sounded by many philosophers, such as Hegel (1832) in his "Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion." Consequently, magic became associated with savages who represented "the infancy of man." See Mermin's "Browning and the Primitive."

As I ride, as I ride,
With a full heart for my guide,
So its tide rocks my side,
As I ride, as I ride,
That, as I were double-eyed,
He, in whom our tribes confide,
Is descried, ways untried
As I ride, as I ride. (ll. 1-8)

The reliance on the "full heart" and the theme of Arab mysticism recurs in *The Return of the Druses*, published the following year in *Bells and Pomegranates IV*. This is a sceptical play which reduces the Arab mysticism of "From the Metijda to Abd-el-Kadr" to a mere instrument of power. Throughout the play, Browning criticizes both Druse and Christian cultures, and their claims to moral and religious supremacy. Nevertheless, the Druse religion is emptied of meaning and depicted as false and groundless, whereas Christianity is not similarly dissected. In *The Return of the Druses*, Browning's stand for the Druses' national rights appears side by side with the devaluation of the Druse religion and its portrayal as "childlike, vain and superstitious" (Phelan 90). The character Djabal promotes love over race:

Djabal: I with my Arab instinct, thwarted ever
By my Frank policy,—and with, in turn,
My Frank brain, thwarted by my Arab heart—
While these remained in equipoise, I lived
Nothing; had either been predominant,
As a Frank schemer or an Arab mystic,
I had been something; —now, each has destroyed
The other—and behold, from out their crash,
A third and better nature rises up—
My mere man's nature! And I yield to it:
I love thee, I who did not love before! (5.270-80)

Djabal, like Luria, the Moorish protagonist of *Bells and Pomegranates* VIII (1846), is torn between his Western rationality and his Eastern emotions. At this early stage in his career Browning seems to believe that this is a destructive division, and that East and West cannot reside in the same individual, for both Djabal and Luria are ultimately destroyed by this split. This belief is supported by such Victorian theories of race as the "decomposition thesis," which posits that miscegenation destines all concerned for extinction (Young 8).[6] The play attempts to dissipate Arab otherness and protest oppression, while simultaneously adhering to that Arab Otherness and to Victorian ideas of progress. For "instinct," "heart," and "mystic[ism]" are still in the domain of the Arab, while "policy," "brain," and "schem[ing]" belong to the European. However, Browning's ambivalence is apparent in the final message of human love beyond nationality and religion, probably inspired by Shelley's "Queen Mab" (1813), which anticipates *Ferishtah's Fancies* and also blurs racial and religious distinctions.

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[6] According to Young (8), Matthew Arnold is one follower of this theory of decomposition, introduced by W. F. Edwards in 1829: "dissimilar" human races can interbreed, but the mixed breeds die out quickly or revert to one of the original parental types.

Published four years after *The Return of the Druses* and "From the Mtijda," *Luria* continues the theme of inner and outer conflict between East and West. In the play, Luria the Moor is a mercenary in Florence, who kills himself after discovering a Florentine plot against him. In their correspondence, Elizabeth Barrett and Browning discuss their love of Luria's character, Barrett referring to Browning as "golden hearted Luria" (Kintner 471). A "noble savage," Luria's disillusionment corresponds with Browning's unravelling of his message about "the East." In Act I, Luria believes himself and his culture inferior to the Florentines'; when Domizia, with whom he is in love, suggests to the Florentine commander Braccio that he should have been one of them, Luria exclaims:

> Oh, no!
> Not one of you and so escape the thrill
> Of coming into you, and changing thus,—
> Feeling a soul grow on me that restricts
> The boundless unrest of the savage heart! (ll. 320-24)

Whether this statement is ironic or not, Browning understands the rhetoric of European racial prejudice toward Arabs. The Italian secretary perceives Luria as childish, while to Braccio he is "brute force" contrasted with Italy's pure "intellect." However, like Djabal in *The Return of the Druses*, Arab characters Luria and Hussain themselves use the same contrasting terms. In Act V, this split between reason and emotion is romanticized, foreshadowing Browning's later idealization of the Orient in *Ferishtah's Fancies*:

> Luria: My own East!
> How nearer God we were! He glows above
> With scarce an intervention, presses close
> And palpitatingly, His soul o'er ours!
> We feel him, nor by painful reason know. (ll. 225-29)

Browning's oppressors, in both *Luria* and *The Return of the Druses*, employ this dichotomy of heart and mind in order to mock those who are under their control and to legitimize their rule. However, Browning uses the same division in order to romanticize the East while placing it in the past as obsolete.[7]

Although Arab and Jew constitute two distinct sets of Oriental images in Browning's writing, some works from the early and middle period evidence a split between sympathy and cultural arrogance. Browning, who had excellent knowledge of Eastern cultures from his father's library, did not confuse the two, except for "One Word More," where he mistakes Arab Karshish for Jewish Karshook.[8] However, he sometimes consciously mixes Arab and Jewish themes and images. As Berlin-Lieberman shows, Djabal's story (*The Return of the Druses*) is based, among other sources, on the Jewish false messiah Shabtai Zvi, while Luria is the name of a Cabbalistic philosopher whose ideas appear in "Abt Vogler."[9]

Another theme shared by Browning's Jewish and Arab characters is Christian conversion, a theme Michael Ragussis places at the center of literary representations of the Jew in English Literature. The rhetoric of Jewish conversion originated with the early Church fathers, claims Ragussis, and it is the most important ideological setting for the representation of Jews in Protestant England in the nineteenth century. In "Holy-Cross Day," concerned with Jewish rather than Arab themes and characters, ambivalence towards the Oriental Other recurs, this time involving the issue of conversion. The poem is a criticism of coercion and support of the oppressed Jews on the one hand, and a construction of the Oriental other as ultimately inferior to true "Christians" on the other. In this poem, published in *Men and Women* in 1855, Browning criticizes decrees against the Jews by sixteenth-century Pope, Paul IV; not only were Jews forced to hear a Christian sermon in Rome, some were forced to convert to Christianity. The final stanzas combine "conversionism with Zionism" (Woolford and Karlin 587):

> We boast our proofs, that at least the Jew
> Would wrest Christ's name from the Devil's crew.
> Thy face took never so deep a shade
> But we fought them in it, God our aid!
> A trophy to bear, as we march, a band
> South, east, and on to the Pleasant Land! (ll. 115-20)

By predicting Jews' future embrace of Christ and independence in the "Pleasant Land" of Palestine, Browning performs the exact same coercion of which he accuses the sixteenth-century papacy. Woolford and Karlin note that Browning subsequently denied advocating this claim in a letter to Furnivall (587). Nevertheless, this same claim appears in another poem with a Jewish theme, "Saul" of 1855, in which the biblical David, trying to lift Saul's spirit, has a vision of Christ: "O Saul, it shall be / A Face like my face that receives thee: a Man like to me, / Thou shalt love and be loved by, for ever! A Hand like this hand / Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee! See the Christ stand!" (ll. 309-12).

The message of Christian revelation that places Oriental culture at an earlier stage of human development also appears at the end of "An Epistle Containing the Strange Medical Experience of Karshish, the Arab Physician" (1855). Here,

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[7] EBB uses the same dichotomy in her letter of Feb. 9th, 1846: "And how fine he is, your Luria, when he looks back to his East, through the half-pardon and half-disdain of Domizi" (Kintner 463).

[8] See Berlin-Lieberman (30).

[9] "On the earth the broken arcs; in the Heaven, a perfect round" (ll. 71-72).

Browning contrasts Karshish's "primitive" magic with Christianity; the line between them is threatened by Karshish's view of Jesus as a magician, yet Christian humility and love are ultimately reaffirmed:

> So, through the thunder comes a human voice
> Saying, "Oh heart I made, a heart beats here!
> Face, my hands fashioned, see it in myself!
> Thou hast no power nor may'st conceive of mine,
> But love I gave thee, with myself to love,
> And thou must love me who have died for thee!"
> The madman saith He said so: it is strange. (ll. 306-12)

Thus, at this stage of his career Browning imposes the rhetoric of conversion upon Arabs and Jews, a condescending attitude notably absent from his late collection dealing with Oriental themes and characters, *Ferishtah's Fancies*.

One Oriental image foreshadowing Ferishtah is that of an Eastern Jew in Browning's 1846 letter to Elizabeth Barrett. As Rowena Fowler notes, Browning compares the secret delight of courtship with an Eastern Jew's experience in London:

> [T]here's no denying the deep delight of playing the Eastern Jew's part here in London—they go about, you know by travel-books,[10] with the token of extreme destitution & misery, and steal by blind ways and by-paths to some blank dreary house, one obscure door in it—which being well shut behind them, they grope on thro' a dark corridor or so, and then, a blaze follows the lifting a curtain or the like, for they are in a palace-hall with fountains and lights, and marble and gold, of which the envious are never to dream! (245)

In Browning's fantasy, being Elizabeth Barrett's secret lover aligns with the experience of an Eastern Jew in London, who wears the simplest attire yet hides fabulous treasures behind secret doors. This image of the Jew, while somewhat anti-Semitic and indebted to Shylock and Fagin, appeals to Browning, and he plays the role of an Oriental again in 1884 by constructing the Persian persona of Ferishtah. However, in *Ferishtah's Fancies* of 1884, the Oriental hidden treasure which Browning seeks no longer stands for the Brownings' secret courtship but rather for religious and philosophical insights.

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[10] Rowena Fowler traces this travel book to J. S. Buckingham's *Travels among the Arab Tribes Inhabiting the Countries East of Syria and Palestine* (1825).

Orientalism and Hybridity in Browning's Late Works

In the works written between 1855 and 1880, Orientalism and "primitivism" are far from absent,[11] yet it is only in 1880 that the theme of East-and-West dominates an entire Browning collection: the second series of *Dramatic Idyls*. The collection consists of six poems, four of which clearly revolve around Oriental themes, while the remaining two evoke related images. *Idyls* reiterates Browning's preoccupation with oriental themes in *The Return of the Druses* and *Luria* in the 1840s—here, blurring the line between the two, with a cautious yet solid anti-imperialist stand. The first poem, "Echetlos," evokes the great battle of West against East, the Battle of Marathon. The second poem concerns the historical figure Lord Clive,[12] "who gave England India": "While the man Clive—he fought Plassey, spoiled the clever foreign game, / Conquered and annexed and Englished!" ("Clive" ll. 7-8). The great conqueror is humiliated and ruined, indicating his sense of failure. This is the dark side of colonialism: "Power is power, my boy, and still / Marks a man,—God's gift magnific, exercised for good or ill" (ll. 33-34).

Browning, whose work highlights both a criticism of power and a craving for it,[13] extends this theme in "Pietro of Abano," "Doctor," and "Pan and Luna." However, the poem which follows "Clive" is "Muleykeh," which tells about the self-destruction of a Bedouin, Hoseyn, who lets his beloved mare be taken from him because he does not want her to lose a race.[14] The two figures, Clive and Hoseyn, are juxtaposed as emblems of human frailty and failure, although the latter's message of love places him above the other characters and foreshadows the themes of *Ferishtah's Fancies*. Hoseyn's world is not split between heart and reason, as is the case with Luria and the Druses; neither is it met with Christian revelation, as with Karshish and Saul. Even though Hoseyn is placed within a conventional Oriental setting of desert environment, tent and tribe, he does not represent an undeveloped, primitive culture. Whereas most nineteenth century Europeans found it hard to perceive Arabs as "present beings" (Said 234), Hoseyn is characterized as a contemporary and is not associated with the evolutionary past, as are Browning's previous Arab characters.

"Pietro of Abano," Browning's beloved magician who dresses up as "Turk or Arab, Jew or Gypsy," is the subject of the next poem (l. 10).[15] Like the Pied Piper and Ferishtah, Pietro is a hybrid image; despite his occult knowledge, he is not mocked by Browning as are Karshish or Mr. Sludge. In "Pietro of Abano" the corruption of power over others is again explored, while Pietro, whose book contains "no potent spell like these to rule the masses" (l. 430) is admired by the speaker without a tinge of irony. The Greek who follows Pietro evokes images of the Mediterranean landscape reminiscent of Luria's vision of the East, yet his origin does not protect him from the destructive force of power.

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[11] For example, he constructs a Ferishtah-like sage in "Rabbi Ben Ezra" (1864), and examines the language of anti-Semitism in *The Ring and the Book* (1868-69).

[12] Based on John Malcolm's *Life of Robert, Lord Clive* (1836) and on Macaulay's review of that book (1840).

[13] See Gal Manor, *Browning Society Notes* 25 (1998).

[14] Based on R. Stringfield's *The Horse and his Rider: or Sketches and Anecdotes of the Noble Quadruped* (1847).

[15] See letter to Elizabeth Barrett (Feb. 8, 1846) in which he calls Pietro "[p]oor dear wonderful persecuted Pietro D'Abano" (Kelley et. al. 48).

The fourth poem, "Doctor—," features a tale based on the Talmud, the major post-biblical Jewish text written in the fifth and sixth centuries in Jerusalem and Babylon. Beginning with "A Rabbi told me," the poem reveals Browning's interest in Rabbinical texts; like "Jochanan Hakkadosh," the Talmudic story has universal symbolical significance despite its "absurd" plot (l. 256). "Doctor—" espouses the dialogical structure of the Talmud, allowing facts to be discussed alongside fables and encouraging a symbolical over a literal reading.[16] Beyond this respect for Talmudic lore, "Doctor" contains neither Christian condescension nor a reference to a future conversion of the Jews, as in "Holy Cross Day" and "Saul."

The final poem, "Pan and Luna," subtly evokes some of the oriental and colonialist themes of the previous poems: the abuse of power by the "red" Pan, "half-god half-brute," who captures the snowy whiteness of Luna as a mirror image of imperialism in a mythological setting (l. 66; 83). Pan's ill use of power, responsible for the first moon-eclipse, is presented as callous and vile: "So lay this Maid-Moon clasped around and caught / By rough red Pan… / Bruised to the breast of Pan, half-god half-brute" (ll. 65; 83). The final stanza quotes Virgil's claim that Luna followed Pan, despite his assault, "by no means spurning him" (l. 100), prompting Browning to posit "In her sleep surely?" (l. 99). The poem investigates the relationship between powerful and powerless, and points to the mutual attraction between the white Luna and the "primitive" Pan—a fitting ending to this anti-imperialist collection. The last two lines, however, recoil from the political into a purely aesthetic realm: "Thus much, one verse of five words, each a boon: / Arcadia, night, a cloud, Pan, and the moon" (ll. 104-05).

Therefore, the second series of the *Dramatic Idyls* explores the dynamics of power struggles, one of Browning's favorite themes, but with special emphasis on the dichotomy of East and West. The year 1880, when the collection was published, marks an intensification of interest in empire, colonial expansion, and militancy; also that year, Gladstone, who supported "the rights of the savage"[17] and whose politics Browning admired, succeeded imperialist Disraeli's six-year rule. Victorian writers who believed British colonial rule was a necessary and civilizing force include

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[16] For an analysis of Browning's references to the Talmud, see Gal Manor, "Supernatural Language in Robert Browning's Work" (Diss. U. London 2000: 168-89).

[17] "Remember the rights of the savage" from a speech delivered by Gladstone at the Foresters Hall in Dalkieth (Nov. 26, 1879). Under Gladstone's rule, however, the British empire expanded even more than it did during Disraeli's government (Bloy 2002). On Browning's admiration for Gladstone, see Hawlin (39).

Carlyle and Trollope, as well as Tennyson, who published pro-imperialist poems "The Revenge" (1878) and "The Defense of Lucknow" (1879) (Brantlinger 10). Against this backdrop, Browning's 1880 series is an unconventional and sympathetic construction of the Oriental and "primitive" Other—mingled with an investigation into the ugly side of power—constituting a cautious yet critical statement about British imperialism.

Following *Jocoseria* (1883) with its abundance of Jewish themes, Browning's engagement with Oriental themes culminates in *Ferishtah's Fancies* (1884). Ferishtah constitutes a new hybrid image of an Englishman, dressed up as a Muslim Dervish, and speaking Hebrew phrases—a subversive image undermining the conventional East-West dichotomy, one reminiscent of Richard Burton's pilgrimage to Mecca disguised as an Indian Muslim doctor. Whereas Burton represents "European ambition for rule over the Orient" (Said 196), Browning's hybrid persona questions that ambition.

Nineteenth-century discussions of hybridity revolved around the argument between monogenists, who claimed that different human ethnic groups form one species, and polygenists, who claimed that diverse peoples belong to different species and therefore cannot or should not propagate (Young 47). In the twentieth century, such thinkers as Mikhail Bakhtin and Homi K. Bhaba redefine hybridity beyond biological considerations, granting it wider significance. Linguistic hybridity constitutes

> [A] mixture of two social languages within the limits of a single utterance, an encounter, within the arena of an utterance, between two different linguistic consciousnesses, separated from one another by an epoch, by social differentiation, or by some other factor. (Bakhtin 429)

From a post-colonial point of view, Homi Bhaba (*The Location of Culture*) views hybridity as the blurring of the binary positions of colonizer and colonized, East and West. He describes interstitial space as occupying the fissures between cultural constructions, reflecting colonial anxiety and ambivalence towards colonial authority. In *Ferishtah's Fancies*, Browning conjures images of hybridity in both the linguistic and the racial spheres, and constructs these hybrid images as a continuation of his anti-imperialist stand in the second series of *Dramatic Idyls*. However, as I have shown, Browning's attraction to hybridity does not begin in 1884, as some of his previous works also contain hybrid images and forms. Djabal and Luria are both a mixture of East and West, as are Caliban and Pietro of Abano. Even "The Pied Piper of Hamelin" is an elusive hybrid character of undetermined race: "With sharp blue eyes, each like a pin, / And light loose hair, yet swarthy skin" (ll. 60-61).

Yet Browning does not confine himself to hybrid characters. "Jochanan Hakkadosh," for example, is a rare Victorian text of linguistic hybridity, incorporating both English and Hebrew within the poem, and showing that "of all non-Jewish Victorian writers Browning made the most honourable attempt to play the 'Jew's part'" (Fowler 245). In *Ferishtah's Fancies*, however, Browning goes a step further in his representation of the relationship between East and West. Unfortunately, in spite of its popularity at the time of publication, this innovation has been largely ignored by most critics, disliked by some for its didacticism and lack of irony.[18] This collection features the hybrid image of a Persian, Hebrew-speaking, Muslim Dervish, an alternative oriental philosopher and teacher, behind whom stands the poet Browning: "You, Sir, I entertain you for one of my Hundred; only, I do not like the fashion of your garments: you will say they are Persian: but let them be changed" (Shakespeare, *King Lear* 3.6.78-80).

Just as the high priest's garments signify his role as mediator between God and the Israelites (*Bells and Pomegranates*),[19] so also do Persian garments endow Browning with the power to answer theological questions in poetic form. However, his choice of "garments" is subversive: Browning is actually "going native," an image liable to arouse anxiety among Victorian readers and likely to suggest the "demise of civilization" (Ashcroft et.al. 106). Browning's choice of a "Dervish" as his mouthpiece gives the anti-imperialist collection an extra edge, for the Dervishes were considered dangerous enemies of the British Empire since the 1881 Mahdist revolt against the British and Egyptian rule in Sudan (Raugh 119).[20]

At this stage in his career, Browning has achieved the success and popularity he sought since 1833's "Pauline." No longer an "abstruse oddity," Browning is now considered a "Great Poet," a sage and a religious teacher receiving awards and honorary degrees (Woolford 69; Hawlin 37). The founding of the Browning Society in 1881 was the culmination of this process, with its founder Frederick Furnivall propounding the idea that Browning is not merely a poet but also a profound thinker (Hawlin 129). Irvine and Honan have suggested that in *Ferishtah's Fancies* Browning is giving his readers, especially the Browning Society, exactly what they want—the wise Victorian sage only barely disguised as a Persian one (507).

The Persian setting, already used in "Jochanan Hakkadosh," indicates Browning's fondness for Persian fables, more widely popular through *The Thousand*

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[18] For example, Hawlin (116) and Woolford (xvii).

[19] The phrase "bells and pomegranates" is found in Exodus 28: 34, and refers to the ornaments on the High Priest's garment. According to Rabbinical lore with which Browning was familiar, the pomegranates stand for sensuality, and the bells for sense, embodying the two characteristics Browning wished for his collection of *Bells and Pomegranates* published from 1841-46 (Berlin-Lieberman 23).

[20] Dervish: common name for followers of the Mahdi in the Sudan war, but they were also called "fuzzy-wuzzy" (Raugh 119). According to British popular opinion, they were religious fanatics who opposed foreign rule, and their representations in British culture in the 19th century were extremely negative. See Brian Street, *The Savage in Literature: Representations of 'Primitive' Society in English Fiction 1858-1920*. London & Boston: Routledge, 1975. 71-72.

and One Nights and *The Rubáiyáat of Omar Kahayyám*. In his recent introduction to the *Rubáiyát*, Daniel Karlin differentiates between the popular "Eastern Tale" with magic carpets and other fantasy elements, and FitzGerald's "respect for what is socially and culturally distinctive, as opposed to 'Oriental' in a more vague, generalized sense" (32). FitzGerald's "adoption of an Oriental mask" in order to reflect on his own culture does not undermine his respectful attitude towards cultural difference, which is evident in the *Rubáiyát* (33). Despite Browning's criticism of FitzGerald's religious skepticism in the *Rubáiyát*, his character Ferishtah exhibits the same respectful attitude towards Oriental culture, compromised by the fact that he (unlike Omar Khayyám) is not anchored in historical narrative (Introduction xxxii). Distinct from the *Rubáiyát's* hedonism and pessimism, Ferishtah is set in Nishapur,[21] Omar Khayyám's home city, in order to present the poem as a reply to the *Rubáiyát*, a continuation of his earlier retort through the persona of "Rabbi Ben Ezra" (1864).

Indeed, this Hebrew-speaking dervish contrasts with representations of Muslims and Jews in the early 1880s, including Disraeli, who died in 1881 and whose politics Browning detested;[22] the poverty-stricken East European Jews in London who fled the pogroms in Russia; and the resurgent Mahdists/Dervishes in Sudan, regarded as dangerous enemies of the empire. Thus, with the myth of Browning's Jewish origin lingering in the background (Berlin-Lieberman 7-8),[23] he boldly disguises himself as an exotic sage and teacher rather than an "inferior oriental," though one step removed: Ferishtah is placed in the past, and the Hebrew quotations, especially the one from the book of Job, associate him with Biblical times and distance him from contemporary Orientals.

The insertion of Hebrew words was not well received in *Jocoseria*'s "Jochanan Hakkadosh," a poem termed by one critic as "abstruse" and "uncouth" (Litzinger and Smalley 511), yet Browning reemploys it in *Ferishtah's Fancies*. The following lines from "The Melon-Seller" exhibit this hybrid linguistic mixture of Persian names, Hebrew letters and English translation:

> To school Ferishtah went;
> And, schooling ended, passed from Isaphan
> To Nishapur, that Elburz looks above
> Where they dig turquoise e: there kept school himself,
> The melon-seller's speech his stock in trade.
> Some say a certain Jew adduced the word
> Out of their book, it sounds so much the same,
> **ואת־הרע לא נקבל : את־הטוב נקבל מאת האלהים**

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[21] Nishapur featured a large Jewish community, which supports Browning's use of Hebrew in the collection.

[22] See Browning's poem on Disraeli in John Pettigrew, ed. *Robert Browning: the Poems*. 2 vols. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981 (958).

[23] Although rumors of Browning's Jewish blood were disproved by Furnivall (1890), they persisted nonetheless.

> In Persian phrase "shall we receive good at the hand of God
> And evil not receive?" But great wits jump. (ll. 33-42)

In *Ferishtah's Fancies*, Browning premises that Christianity, Islam, and Judaism share the same great theological questions and respond to similar human needs. There is no clash between Islam and Judaism as they are represented by Ferishtah, and the truisms of both appear in the collection in order to address some of the basic questions of Christian faith. Indeed, in this collection, Browning attempts to answer some of the most basic religious queries which had troubled him throughout his poetic career.[24] The questions are fundamental and direct, the answers are daring and argumentative. For example, "Shah Abbas" parallels the historical validity of Lord Ali, Mohammad's son-in-law, with New Testament accounts of the life of Jesus. Distinct from "A Death in the Desert," which addresses the problem of historical grounds for belief, "Shah Abbas" asserts that one does not need to believe in the historical existence of Jesus in order to believe in him and be a good Christian. Thus, this poem not only reveals Browning's agreement with Higher Critics' claims to Christianity's lack of historical evidence: it is also a claim for the universality of religion and its independence from external proof.[25]

Finally, the Oriental Other is no longer represented as "primitive" and "inferior" as in "An Epistle . . . of Karshish," *Luria*, and *The Return of the Druses*; nor is its language a "primitive" blend of magic spells and incantations, power relations, jealousy and vengeance. Here, Browning presents oriental language as sophisticated and allegorical, with frequent use of parable in the Persian style as it was known in nineteenth-century England;[26] the Other is not a foil to affirm Victorian superiority but an equal and a mentor, albeit one removed from contemporary Orientals. This change in the representation of the Other is partly a consequence of Browning's growing doubts about Christian dogma (Orr 353); earlier expressions of Christian superiority are nowhere to be found here—the emphasis is on similarity to the Other, not on difference. Considering evidence of cultural and racial arrogance produced by some of the leading intellectuals of the time, Browning in his late writing presents a subversive and hybrid construction of what forty years before he termed "our mere Man's nature" (*The Return of the Druses* 5.279).

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[24] Ryals's commentary on *Ferishtah's Fancies* explores "fundamental religious questions" (190-200).

[25] Browning disliked the claims of the higher critics, especially Renan's *Life of Jesus* which he had read in 1863 (DeVane 278). See also E. M. Shaffer's *"Kubla Khan" and the Fall of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1975: 207) and J. A. Dupras's "The Word's Dispersion: Two Letters and a Parchment in Browning's Poetry." *Browning Institute Studies* 18 (1990): 95-111.

[26] *The Fables of Pilpay* (1818) which he had as a child, and *The Epic of Kings* (1882), by his friend Helen Zimmern.

Browning's "Dark Blood"

Robert Browning the man is himself a trope for hybridity: although references to his "very dark" skin and "Jewish cast of countenance" appear as early as 1849 (Powell 85), his "mixed race" became a legitimate topic for discussion among literary critics and in the Browning Society only after his death in 1889. The reasons for these narratives are various; for instance, his consistent support of the Jews notably surpassed that of two other prominent philo-semite writers, George Eliot and Charles Dickens (Woolford and Karlin 157). Also, his numerous oriental personas and themes, and his knowledge and use of Hebrew language and of Jewish texts fueled the idea that Browning was not "purely" British. Moreover, the notion of hybridity suggested by his later works, especially *Ferishtah's Fancies*, became associated with his actual self, and continued to trigger animated discussion for decades. The suggestion of "mixed race" triggered both excitement and uneasiness among Browning critics, who were as drawn to this hybrid image as they were eager to refute its existence.

Some speculations about Browning's ancestry were fueled by his conscious playfulness with hybrid images and his reluctance to deny rumors about his "mixed" race. Such narratives expose Victorian anxieties about the capacity for racial "hybridity" to undermine and threaten English racial purity in the age of imperialism and colonialism—anxieties variously articulated by the monogenists and polygenists. Thomas Carlyle claims in his 1849 slavery tract that inter-marriage would lead to "wide-coiled monstrosities, such as the world has not seen hitherto!" (qtd. August 8); Charles Darwin argues that boundaries between species are fluid, and "there is no essential distinction between species and varieties" (qtd. Young 11). Despite its scientific authority, the latter view remained unpopular because it undermined the idea of European superiority.

Frederick Furnivall, founder of the Browning Society, went to great lengths to refute the claim of Browning's "Jewish blood," fearing it would damage the poet's popularity and undermine his presentation as a Christian (26). He explored six generations of Browning's pedigree, arguing that Mrs. Browning's maiden name, Wiedeman, "has been adopted by a few Jews in Hamburg, yet it is a regular good German name still," and that his uncle, who worked for Rothschilds' bank, was named Reuben out of Puritan rather than Jewish sentiments (33-34). According to Browning biographer, William Sharp:

> I can find nothing to substantiate the common assertion that . . . his people were Jews....[Indeed] the poet's great-grandfather gave one of his sons the baptismal name of Christian . . . . In appearance there was, perhaps, something of the Semite in Robert Browning . . . observable but slightly in the portraits of him . . . as a young man. It is most marked in the drawing by Rudolf

> Lehmann, representing Browning at the age of forty-seven, . . . as much distinctively Jewish as English. . . . These characteristics, again, are greatly modified in Mr. Lehmann's subsequent portrait in oils. (16-17)

This commentary reveals Sharp's aim to reaffirm the Victorian racial order of "us" and "them," only to find that this binary perception is blurred and what remains is confusion. Furnivall also suggests that Browning's paternal grandmother had Creole "dark blood" (6)—a claim likely triggered by his love of sensation and mystery, and one also addressed by Sharp. The term creole, which originally meant White Europeans raised in a tropical colony, could also imply some component of "black" blood through "miscegenation" (51). Sharp asserts that the "creole strain" was "distinctly noticeable" (20) in Browning, but leaves this term undefined, thus neither negating nor supporting Furnivall's claims to Browning's "dark blood."

Alternatively, Mrs. Sutherland Orr presents a more militant denial of Browning's mixed race, arguing that such claims

> received outward support from certain accidents of his life, from his known interest in the Hebrew language and literature, from his friendship for various members of the Jewish community in London. It might well have yielded to the fact of his never claiming the kinship . . . . The results of more recent and more systematic inquiry have shown the belief to be unfounded. (1-2)

Distinct from Sharp, Mrs. Orr rejects the suggestion of Jewishness without referring to Browning's physical features; and yet, to undermine Furnivall's claim of "negro blood," she appeals to the portrait of Browning's Creole grandmother:

> . . . the first Mrs. Browning, which gave so much umbrage to her husband's second wife, has hung for many years in her grandson's dining-room, and is well known to all his friends. It represents a stately woman with an unmistakably fair skin; and if the face or hair betrays any indication of possible dark blood, it is imperceptible to the general observer, and must be of too slight and fugitive a nature to enter into the discussion. (12)

As with Sharp, the binary opposition of "black" and "white" implodes as the boundaries between races become more and more blurred with Orr's insistence on minor and almost undistinguishable features. A different approach is presented by G. K. Chesterton's *Robert Browning*, which mentions three "incorrect theories" about his ancestry: that his family was "prominent in the feudal ages," that he had "a strain of the negro," and that he was "of Jewish blood": "There is nothing valid against any of these three theories, just as there is nothing valid in their favour; they may, any or all of them, be true, but they are still irrelevant" (4-5). Chesterton sees the absurdity—both of these theories and their repudiation; it is indeed ironic that the same Browning who revelled in the mixture of voices from different ethnic groups, and who in his later years constructed the hybrid anti-colonial character of Ferishtah, himself came under scrutiny, the topic of a racist investigation of "origin."

Finally, instead of contesting the rumors concerning his racial "origins," Browning repeatedly associates himself with Jewish and Muslim themes and personas, and he avoids a clear religious stance, preferring to focus on the universality and sameness of religion and race. Since Browning, apparently, never publicly denied the hypotheses concerning his ancestry, he deliberately toyed with these volatile political images of hybridity, in his personal life as well as in his works. With imperialism and racial and cultural arrogance hovering in the background, Browning continued to promote images of hybridity, risking his reputation in the process. His failure to deny the rumors about his "mixed" race aligns him with the Jews, the Arabs and the colonized, a position he defiantly celebrates.

Why was it, then, that Browning continued to conjure these Oriental and hybrid images while refusing to deny the rumours concerning his heritage? The answer seems to be twofold, encompassing both his stylistic preferences and his political inclinations. First, these choices reflect his insistence on the authorial gap between the dramatic voice and the poet "Browning," even in poems in which the speaker seems to be the poet himself, as Britta Martens has convincingly pointed out. This poetic principle, along with his liberal ideology and his life-long support of the powerless and the oppressed, must have led to his reticence about clarifying his ancestry, despite the risk to his popularity as a "Great English Poet" in the last two decades of his career.

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Disease, Hospitality, and Forgiveness in Charlotte Yonge's The Heir of Redclyffe

by Lynn Shakinovsky

> How can the unforgiveable be forgiven? But what else can be forgiven?—Jacques Derrida

Charlotte Yonge's *The Heir of Redclyffe* (1853) utilizes the intertwined motifs of disease, hospitality, estrangement, and forgiveness to investigate the infirmity that lies at the heart of both the English family and the expanding British Empire. Disease and infection in the novel represent domestic and national politics of mastery, at the heart of which is an unrelenting, phobic abjuration of the *other*. A domestic novel preoccupied with the complex interactions of the Victorian family in the context of High Church Christianity,[1] *The Heir of Redclyffe* investigates familial domesticity within the broader context of national and imperial culture. Yonge's novel replicates Britain's "nineteenth-century imperial unconscious" (Bewell xii), with its disavowal of the precarious nature of the imperial project and its pathological and blind insistence on similitude and replication. The domestic novel seemingly presupposes an inward-looking world, one essentially concerned with repetition and replication, one that rejects otherness, strangeness or foreignness. Yet *The Heir of Redclyffe* repeatedly stages encounters with the *other* that expose the ineluctable estrangement that lurks at the heart of the domestic realm and the hospitality it offers.

The stranger in Yonge's novel is Guy Morville, who leaves Redclyffe to reside at Hollywell, home of the Edmonstone family. Guy is one of the two titular characters visiting Hollywell, the other being his cousin Philip Morville, with whom he is perversely linked by an ancient family enmity. Guy's arrival at Hollywell's insular domestic world precipitates the plot; as the interruptions of these two guests shift the comfortable continuum of the Edmonstone family, the initial welcome gives way to demonstrations of mastery, power, ownership and, eventually, exile and destruction. But while the advent of the *other* might serve to expose the claustrophobia and xenophobia shaping the idea of home, it also offers the possibility of liberation, and of escape from the stultifying, constricted world of domestic stasis. The inherent paradox underpinning the arrival of the stranger and the hospitality he receives is figured in the motif of disease that runs through the narrative: on the one hand, disease, in its very potential for contagion, reflects how porous and violable are the structures that both protect and bind; on the other, its capacity to infect these boundaries figures the opportunity for liberation and for escape from enclosure and stultification. Thus, while the disease motif is a manifestation of the destructiveness, indeed deadliness, of the enclosed domestic world, it also figures that same world's abiding potential for transformation and redemption; in this redemptive capacity, the disease motif becomes profoundly entwined with the ideas of forgiveness, penitence, repentance, and salvation.

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[1] See Baker, Joseph. *The Novel and the Oxford Movement*. New York: Russell & Russell, 1965 (104-05); Brownell, David. "The Two Worlds of Charlotte Yonge." *The Worlds of Victorian Fiction*. Ed. Jerome H. Buckley. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1975 (168); Dennis, Barbara. *Charlotte Yonge (1823-1901) Novelist of the Oxford Movement*. Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 1992 (105); Schaffer, Talia. "The Mysterious Magnum Bonum: Fighting to Read Charlotte Yonge." *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 55.2 (Sept. 2000): 244-75; Sturrock, June. *"Heaven and Home": Charlotte M. Yonge's Domestic Fiction and the Victorian Debate over Women*. Victoria: U Victoria P, 1995; and Tillotson, Geoffrey, and Kathleen Tillotson. *Mid-Victorian Studies*. London: Athlone, 1965 (53).

Jacques Derrida's *Of Hospitality* traces the complex relation in Western culture between guest and host, between the stranger or migrant and the one who is already "at home" in family or nation, illuminating the contradiction and impossibilities that lie at the heart of hospitality. Fundamental to Derrida's concept of hospitality is the *aporia* that exists at the heart of hospitality, the gap between the practice of hospitality in any specific or particular form and the absolute law of *unconditional* hospitality, which is limitless, contingent upon nothing, and unqualified. The concrete manifestation of hospitality as performed under "the conditions, the norms, the rights, and the duties that are imposed on hosts and hostesses" (*OH* 77) exists in eternal and irresolvable tension with the absolute, totalizing ethic that constitutes unconditional hospitality (which is always inchoate and can never be practiced). Derrida's theories of hospitality clarify the ways *The Heir of Redclyffe* reaches beyond a limited Christian sphere of concern and a narrow, domestic world, to a concern with the ethics of national culture in mid-Victorian England. For Derrida, the idea of hospitality is entwined not only with ethics and morality but also politics; indeed, hospitality emerges as the place where ethics and politics meet. The transcendence of borders and the dissolving of boundaries may find their beginnings in "house, hearth, the family home," but such dynamics emerge as far more vital and critical at the cosmopolitan or universal level than at the domestic. At the end of *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, Derrida enunciates his "dream for thought," where "conditions" would never be "stipulated," a dream of universal global hospitality (60). This visionary ideology emerges as one of the central tenets of *The Heir of Redclyffe*, modeling a politics of hospitality and forgiveness extending beyond the boundaries and limitations of home and state.

The stranger's arrival in this novel precipitates the High Church Christianity shaping the ideological and ethical underpinnings of all Yonge's novels. Her life-long involvement with the teachings of the Oxford Movement dates from 1836 when, at age twelve, she began studying under Keble, whose influence was powerful: "[a]t fifteen, I became a catechumen of Mr. Keble's, and this I would call the great influence of my life did I not feel unworthy to do so; but of this I am sure, that no-one, save my own father, had as much to do with the whole cast of my mind" (*Musings* iii-iv). *The Heir of Redclyffe* is permeated with the Tractarian doctrines taught her by Keble;[3] its central characters consistently and self-consciously perform rigorous self-investigation in order to understand the "rule" of good Christian living (*Heir* 54). Yonge's commitment to Tractarianism has been a primary focus of critical responses to *The Heir of Redclyffe* from its publication to the present; critics link it with her didacticism, domestic realism, and aesthetic enterprise.[4] Most significant for the purposes of this paper is the critical view that Yonge's religious commitment accounts for her social and political limitations. For example, in his review of *The Heir of Redclyffe,* Charles Dickens states that this "Pusey novel" manifests the writer's "utter incapability of abstraction from one narrow circle of ideas" (624); Richard Hutton in *The National Review* states that "all the life on which she dealt with interest lay within the pale of her own communion" (217).[5] But while Yonge's concern with ethical Christian domesticity does function as a meta-text throughout the novel, it is paradoxically her intense focus on the spiritual, emotional, and moral world of the Christian Victorian family that allows for an investigation of an ethics of living that reaches beyond the circumscribed world of the familial sphere. Derrida's theories of hospitality and forgiveness link the diseased politics of English domesticity to the broader world, fostering the potential for a borderless hospitality and forgiveness.

The Domestic: Hospitality, Disease, and Mastery

In *The Heir of Redclyffe,* the complex relations between host and guest Derrida describes are enacted by four men: Philip and Guy, the two guests at Hollywell, and Mr. Edmonstone and his son Charles, the two masters of Hollywell. Progressively, these relationships transmogrify; the men switch places with one another, form, break, and recreate alliances, each held hostage to one another and substituting for one another. The very idea of such transformation or liberation is predicated upon the potentially protean capacities of both host and guest. Such pliability in the face of the other, however, is a source not only of an unrestricted welcome, but also of danger or contamination, as it threatens to breach domestic insularity; thus the very idea of a full welcome is inextricably bound to a rigid determination to protect boundaries and borders. The potential threat underpinning hospitality is exposed through the destructive behavior of Mr. Edmonstone and Charles. Mr. Edmonstone abuses his power as host by expelling first Guy and then Philip from Hollywell; but it is Charles who precipitates the series of events that lead to their expulsion. Eventually, the stranger does bring to the host the liberation and salvation of which Derrida wrote (*OH* 123), which the host hardly knows he desires; but the cost is high—for one, his very life.

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[3] The focus on the personal pursuit of holiness, church-going, church-building, and the sacraments (baptism, communion, confirmation) is all part of the Tractarian fabric of the novel.

[4] See also Budge, Gavin. "Realism and Typology in Charlotte M. Yonge's *The Heir of Redclyffe*." *Victorian Literature and Culture* 31.1 (2003): 193-223; Coleridge, Christabel. *Charlotte Mary Yonge: Her Life and Letters*. London: Macmillan, 1903; Hayter, Althea. *Charlotte Yonge*. Plymouth: Northcote House, 1996; and Jay, Elizabeth. "Charlotte Mary Yonge and Tractarian Aesthetics." *Victorian Poetry* 44.1 (Spring 2006): 43-59.

[5] See "Religious Novels." *North British Review* XXVI (Nov. 1856-Feb. 1857): 209-27; and Sandbach-Dahlström, Catherine. *Be Good Sweet Maid. Charlotte Yonge's Domestic Fiction: A Study in Dogmatic Purpose and Fictional Form*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1984.

The novel opens in the drawing room of Hollywell, one of those "favoured apartments, where a peculiar air of home seems to reside whether . . . in the middle of summer . . . or . . . [amidst] the fog and the leafless trees of November" (*Heir* 3). Hollywell is, as its name suggests, a place of grace, virtue and health; situated at the heart of the home, however, is the diseased, brilliant Charles Edmonstone. Disabled by a withered hip which prevents him from walking, Charles suffers agonizing, recurrent bouts of pain; his chronic illness compromises the ideas of inviolability and health with which Hollywell is associated by its very name.[6] Confined to Hollywell as he is, Charles is the consummate symbol of the complexities of domestic hospitality. As the host who is always—of necessity—at home, he embodies an utterly constricted, rigid version of hospitality. His desires frequently thwarted and frustrated, Charles and his disease "rule the family": an "object of constant anxiety," he is their "undisputed sovereign"; his mother "giv[es] up everything for his sake," his father attends to his "least caprice," and his sisters are his "slaves" (14). Charles' "idle, unoccupied life" (50) prompts him to seek ways not only to subjugate and master his family but also his guests. He treats all of them as sources of amusement, goading both Guy and Philip for his perverse, destructive pleasure and using his intelligence and percipience to play on the deepest weaknesses of each—Philip's jealousy and Guy's rage. Prepared "to do anything for the sake of opposition to Philip," Charles ponders, "What use shall I make" of Guy (23, 24). His treatment of the two guests exposes the potentially corrosive dynamics of power defining the relationship between host and guest, and the complexities inherent in any invitation to cross a threshold.

Charles' psychological manipulations are the catalyst of a tragic chain of events, making his disease both cause and symptom of the ensuing destruction.[7] His initial abuse of power as host highlights the ways he employs his exceptional intelligence and insight to goad Philip and provoke Guy. The most destructive example is stirring Philip's jealousy over Laura. Even before Guy arrives at Hollywell, Charles tells his sister Amy that he should "enjoy" seeing Laura, the beautiful oldest daughter of the family, fall in love with Guy and "Philip properly jealous" (*Heir* 14). Later referring to Guy's poetry, he calls Guy "a Petrarch" (104), leading Philip to believe that Guy is falling in love with Laura. Instead of rectifying matters when he realizes that he has inadvertently made Philip jealous, Charles "perceiv[es] with delight that he had perplexed and teased, . . . [and] rejoice[d] in keeping up the mystery." The dread that Charles fosters in Philip, that he will lose Laura to Guy (a fear that is entirely unfounded), drives Philip to an ill-considered and impulsive secret romantic understanding with Laura. His actions are therefore a direct consequence of Charles's unseen and unacknowledged destructive behavior. In this jest, Charles fuels not only Philip's jealousy concerning Laura, but also Philip's rivalry with and envy of Guy, emotions that are the precipitating factors in Philip's colluding with Mr. Edmonstone to drive Guy from the house. Having planted the seeds of this "disease," Charles is also the first to recognize it. While Philip deludes himself into believing that his own behavior is driven by righteous concern for the Edmonstones, Charles' insight into Philip's unconscious determination to destroy Guy translates as "malignity" (265). The word "malignant" is highly charged, its connotations exceeding those of "malevolent" in its relation to disease and contagion ("Malevolent," def. 3a). Philip's growing "malignity," however, has been unconsciously fuelled by the events at Hollywell; his profound sense of dispossession is aggravated by the painful contrast between himself and Guy, whom he views as fortune's favoured son. As a result of his impecuniousness, Philip may never gain the hand of Laura Edmonstone; in contrast, the wealthy Guy's betrothal to her sister Amy is, ultimately, welcomed by the family. Thus, Philip is infected by "malignant" envy and rage, aligning him with Charles, who triggered his disease in the first place.

Guy's banishment is the cause of Charles' first overt disagreement with his father. As the bond between Guy and Charles deepens, the latter's attitude towards himself, his home, and his guests begins to change, although for a time he remains tied to his father's ambivalent hospitality. The violence and irrationality with which Mr. Edmonstone wields his power as both host and father are demonstrated by his expulsion of first Guy and then Philip from Hollywell. Mr. Edmonstone sends Guy away, declaring that he "hate[s] his underhand ways" and that his actions are "monstrous" (*Heir* 206), and then equally unexpectedly reinstates him at Hollywell, calling him "the most generous fellow in the world" who has been "used abominably" (325). Guy's reinstatement coincides precisely with the disgrace of Philip, whom Mr. Edmonstone now views as a "meddlesome coxcomb" driven by "envy and ill-will" (347), who is himself now threatened with expulsion. The downfall of one is directly correlated with the success of the other; Guy himself comments that his return to the fold makes him feel as if he has "supplanted" Philip (353). The two young men clearly fulfill the same function in relation to the Edmonstone family; each in turn is regarded as contaminated, untouchable, and deadly as the other is made welcome in the family fold. Enraged with both his father and Philip at Guy's banishment, Charles defends Guy against his accusers, yet he appears to emulate Mr. Edmonstone in that his loyalty to Guy correlates with his

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[6] "Well" is associated with medicinal springs and a "holy well" is a well or spring reputed to possess miraculous healing properties, as being a channel of divine influence ("Well," def.1c 2b).

[7] The "tensions that simmer in the narrative . . . express themselves in Charles's illness" (Bourrier 124).

rage against Philip. The narrator notes that "the pleasure of galling his cousin" Philip not only prevents Charles from perceiving "the harm he [does] his friend's cause," but has the unintended effect of making his father "too angry to pay attention." Ultimately, his "advocacy" of Guy "only injure[s] his cause, . . . inflaming the minds of all parties" (238). That provoking Philip and insulting his father remains more important to Charles than gaining a successful outcome for Guy indicates his inability to give up his sovereign mastery as host. Unable to offer a full welcome to Guy without simultaneously using his power as host to torment Philip, he remains limited by the rigidities and confinements of Hollywell hospitality.

These complexities once again manifest themselves in disease. Charles, while being assisted upstairs by Philip after the argument, jerks away from him in rage, causing Philip to lose his grasp on him so that he falls (*Heir* 239). This ostensibly minor accident results in Charles becoming desperately ill, an illness sustained through most of Guy's exile. Charles's disease is a literal outcome and symptom of his own rage, but it also, paradoxically, becomes the vehicle for a new-found humility and patience, and for a relinquishing of his power. Mr. Ross, the minister of the parish and a close family friend of the Edmonstone family, points out that Charles's irritable and fretful behavior became "very different after he was laid up . . . I don't think I ever knew him suffer so much; but, at that same time, I never knew him behave so well, or show so much patience or consideration for other people" (314). By interpreting the shift in Charles' behavior as a consequence of his illness and suffering, Mr. Ross foregrounds the double role played by disease: while it confines and destroys, it can also transform and redeem. Charles's capacity for transformation continues to unfold; in his final farewell to Guy, he asserts he is a "new man" instead of the "wretched stick" he had been previously, and anticipates treating him as a "man and a brother" (376). The inert immobility of a "wretched stick" or a "helpless log" (91, 239) convey the physical infirmity by which Charles is "chained down" and "condemned" to his "sort of life" (92, 91). But the metaphor also suggests the lifelessness and implacability that governed his world before Guy's arrival, defining him as a host trapped in his home, sovereign and immutable. Guy does not return—indeed, he dies: this is his last private conversation with Charles, but the transformation he has wrought in Charles is permanent.

The seeds of Charles' metamorphosis into a "new man" with the capacity to relinquish his authority as host were planted early, when Guy takes him out of Hollywell for a day to watch a revue. This singular episode demonstrates the possibilities inchoate in the relationship between Charles and Guy, the possibilities of a mutual, transformative relationship. Because Charles' previous attempts to leave Hollywell were unsuccessful, it had not been thought "possible to attempt any amusement away from home" (*Heir* 123). However, now relying on Guy's hospitality rather than the reverse, Charles' day out is a success; Guy is the host, settling Charles into the carriage, driving him, taking care of him, and eventually carrying him upstairs and putting him to bed. The substitutions implicit in Guy's care-taking of Charles anticipate two subsequent, crucially-linked episodes: the first, when Guy dies nursing Philip back to health; and the second, when Charles leaves his home for a second time to nurse the relapsed Philip, thus again saving his life. These substitutions shift the nature and meaning of hospitality since they require the dissolution of the roles of both host and guest. Paula Keating points out the contradictions inherent in such shifts, stating that to "enact hospitality is self-destruction" (5). The fundamental paradox—that the destruction wrought by these substitutions also provides ground for new liberating possibilities of hospitality—is figured in the disease which, passing through Charles to the other major characters, both kills and redeems.

While Charles is absent from the narrative of Guy and Amy's European honeymoon, the disease associated with Hollywell and initially figured in his body re-emerges in Philip (whose disease has been partially caused by Charles), and reaches its denouement in the pivotal encounter between Philip and Guy that results in Guy's death. Mark Westmoreland states that "[t]he law of hospitality opens up the possibility for contamination in that it calls for no governing body such as a sovereign state or master of a home to establish laws and authority over another subject" (8); the *law* of hospitality is both creative and dangerous, it "opens" but simultaneously "contaminates." Charles' disease represents both possibilities. In opening himself and his home to a new set of precepts, he also opens up the fundamental aporia at the heart of hospitality, creating the space for the contradictions, the dissolutions, and the violence that such permeability allows. As boundaries become increasingly porous, the illness (with all its possibilities for contamination) bred domestically in the English home is carried abroad beyond the sovereign boundaries of England.

Abroad: Hospitality, and Forgiveness

The setting of Yonge's investigation of domestic confinement shifts to Italy. With the culmination of Philip's enmity towards Guy and Guy's ensuing death, questions of sovereignty, estrangement, hospitality, and forgiveness expand to the national level and beyond. The encounter with the *other* is now structured not only by the exclusions and norms of the familial domestic, but also by issues of culture, language, religion, and custom. The interactions between Guy and Philip are framed by the fact that they are both strangers in a strange land; the shift beyond England's borders precipitates a new fluidity and malleability in assigned roles and presumed norms, of precedence, of sovereignty, and of power.

Guy and Philip encounter each other abroad, first as Guy deliberately seeks him out while on his honeymoon, and again when he discovers that Philip is ill, making the fatal choice to nurse him. As a result, Guy dies, contracting the disease that Philip himself had contracted as a result of his own wilful, arrogant disregard for contagion. In dying for Philip, Guy makes place for him; indeed, he *gives* him his own place since, with Guy's death, Philip becomes the new heir of Redclyffe. Guy's sacrificing his life for Philip is the supreme act of hospitality, but it is also powerfully tied up with the idea of forgiveness. By fatally infecting Guy, Philip harms Guy, his wife Amy, and the rest of the Edmonstone family; here, the question of hospitality is intertwined with the ideas of harm, irreparability, and forgiveness. Indeed, for Derrida the notions of hospitality and forgiveness are inseparable: "[f]orgiveness granted to the other is the supreme gift and therefore hospitality par excellence"; the welcoming one must both forgive the other in order to welcome him, and also ask of him forgiveness, for "one is always failing, lacking hospitality . . . one never gives enough" ("Hostipitality" [sic] 380). Thus, just as true hospitality requires that the host demand nothing of the guest, not even his name, so forgiveness must be granted without requirements (of prior remorse, contrition, acknowledgement of guilt, or stated need for forgiveness on the part of the guilty). Forgiveness "which gives without return or else is nothing" (386) shares the same contradictory logic and condition of "impossibility" as Derrida's notion of hospitality. Just as true hospitality ultimately requires its own dissolution, so can true forgiveness only be applicable to the unforgiveable and the irreparable; forgiveness therefore can only forgive that which cannot be forgiven. Giovanna Borradori points out that "a true act of forgiveness, in this light, is an illogical proposition, because it can only apply to an instant of irreparable harm" (79). Derrida describes these two conditions of impossibility as being not only similar in structure but also as causally linked, stating that "the one affixes its condition of impossibility to the other" ("Hostipitality" 386).

Since true forgiveness cannot be conditional or contingent in any form, it cannot participate in what Derrida sees as an "*economic* transaction" which consists of the "*conditional* logic of the *exchange* . . . according to which forgiveness can only be considered *on the condition* that it be asked" (*C & F* 34). The ancient enmity of the Morville curse enacts the "economy of a circle" (*OH* 135), a cyclical cause and effect, revenge and counter-revenge, situated in and perpetuated by centuries of English history. Derrida's disapprobation of the essentially transactional nature of conditional forgiveness is predicated on its structural similarity to the economic logic of revenge; both are relationships of tabulation, of profit and loss. In contrast, when Guy dies for Philip, he acts unconditionally; he offers his life without reference to Philip's state of mind or being. Indeed, he does this at a time when Philip still cannot hide his "old dislike" or his "repugnance" for him (*Heir* 413, 414). That his forgiveness is clearly not in any way based on reciprocity or contingency (particularly upon the actions of the object of forgiveness) is made manifest by the fact that Guy forgives Philip in *advance* of the irreparable act he (Philip) has yet to commit; his forgiveness does not depend upon a prior request for it or upon a previous act of repentance. He forgives not only without Philip's asking for it, but also long before Philip even understands that he requires forgiveness. When in an agony of remorse, Philip asks Guy if he can ever forgive him, Guy answers: "'that was done a long time ago'" (463). Such forgiveness, without conditions or limits, in advance of the irreparable act interrupts the conventional movement of time, the chronological chain of cause and effect, action and reaction. Guy's forgiveness of Philip (prior to all acknowledgment or remorse) eschews the logic of chronology that underlies the rhythms, the give and take of asking and responding. In *anticipating* the playing out of the curse, Guy breaks the course of normal historical temporality and ends it.

This kind of forgiveness, which requires nothing to precipitate its enactment, exists both inside and outside of time and brings into being Derrida's fleeting moment where the absolute law of *unconditional* hospitality may come into play. The paradoxical contradiction when the laws of hospitality meet with *the* law of unconditional hospitality is a "duration without duration," possessing an "impossible chronology" (*OH* 127). That Guy forgives unconditionally and dies doing so reflects the "impossibility" of unconditional hospitality and forgiveness. But his death ultimately instantiates a new kind of forgiveness which is also a new form of hospitality. Guy's death *is* the aporia that such paradox instantiates; it is the fleeting interruption momentarily resolving the aporetic contradiction of the laws of both hospitality and forgiveness. His death is the unrequited act of utter generosity, the act of full substitution where he "*give*[s] *place*" to Philip, lets him "take place in the place [he] offer[s him]" (25), where he dies so that Philip may live.

Yonge links Guy's capacity for forgiveness to his Christian devoutness. His initial response to Philip's ill-founded accusations (resulting in estrangement from Amy and the Edmonstone family) is, "anything but this might be forgiven" (*Heir* 224). However, during the long internal struggle that ensues—his central psychic and spiritual turning point—he determines "to compel himself, ere he [leaves] the spot, to forgive his enemy—forgive him candidly—forgive him, so as never again to have to say, 'I forgive him!'." Guy's character is deeply and overtly Christian: the "good angel" that he recalls to himself, his sense of a "higher and holier power," his quotations from Ephesians and Matthew, particularly his invocation of the Lord's Prayer—"forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us"—underpin his determination to achieve unrequited and unrequested forgiveness (225-26). The link between Guy's capacity for forgiveness and Christianity is followed through even after his death: the baptism of his daughter, her sacramental release from sin, is said to "complete his [Guy's] work of pardon" (541).[8]

However, while Guy functions as a pattern hero, an ideal demonstration of English Tractarian Christianity, and while he clearly adheres to the teachings of the High English Church, his Christianity is one of the more important ways that Yonge moves *The Heir of Redclyffe* beyond the domestic world of England and its institutions. In its transcendence of historical temporality, specific historical institutions, and even history itself, Guy's death acquires a kind of universality that reverberates far beyond the precepts of the English Church.

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[8] On Guy as a Christ figure, see Budge 208; Colon 42 and Sandbach-Dahlström, cited by Budge.

The ideals of forgiveness, hospitality, and universality all converge in Guy's final resting place, symbolizing a new order of hospitality and forgiveness. The narrative initially emphasizes the foreignness and estranged nature of Guy's grave, situated in the "stranger's corner of the grave-yard . . . [a] distant grave, far from his home and kindred," where blessing is attained through the "precious English burial service" (*Heir* 475-76). Ultimately, however, these observations serve only to underscore the transcendence of such considerations. "I believe in the Communion of Saints" is inscribed on his tombstone, chosen by Amy for its inclusiveness, specifically stating that she wishes Italian Catholics to see that "this stranger has the same creed as themselves" (485-86). She also has the epitaph translated into a common language so that all can read it, explaining that "it should be in Latin, since it is in a foreign country" (485). Guy's hospitality and forgiveness must reach beyond the estrangements of language, culture, and even religion, speaking to new forms of welcome and extending beyond home and nation. Indeed, the inscription on Guy's tomb-stone is the very biblical phrase Derrida utilizes to invoke the concept of a hospitality without borders as he describes the cosmopolitanism (universal hospitality) of Pauline Christianity: "'And so therefore, you are no longer foreigners abroad . . . you are fellow-citizens of the Saints, you belong to the House of God'" [Eph. 2:19-20] (*C & F* 19-20).

Coda

Set in England, the long coda that follows Guy's death emphasizes the two English homes—Hollywell and Redclyffe—and Charles. This final section deals with the far-reaching consequences of the forgiveness enacted by Guy, and it does so through the prism of the unforgiveable. Borradori points out that "[i]f pure forgiveness has a chance to come into being, it is precisely by the encounter with the unforgiveable" (82). Her suggestive comment highlights not only the indissoluble association of the two concepts, but also the paradoxical and contradictory nature of the connection between them. The unforgiveable provides an *opportunity*—a "chance [for pure forgiveness] to come into being"; without the unforgiveable, it would be impossible to forgive. Thus, without Guy's death, Philip cannot repent; without Philip instigating his death, Guy cannot forgive him; the agonizing remorse and repentance of Philip exists because of the hospitality and forgiveness that Guy instantiates. The two heirs of Redclyffe are linked through the hospitality and forgiveness enacted between them. Thus, when Susan Colon claims that "[i]n the concluding section following Guy's death . . . Yonge reveals the secret she encoded in the title to the novel: that the central figure of the novel is not Guy but Philip" (41), she avoids the ineluctable relationship between the two men. Philip is there because of Guy's absence; this ongoing relationship with the other is precisely the inheritance that Guy's sacrifice and forgiveness facilitates. The paradoxical relationship with the other is once again expressed through the doubled trope of disease. The very capacity for contagion or infection carries not only the threat of destruction but also the creativity of connection: this redemptive quality of disease is now figured in the body of Charles, which had previously figured its possibilities for destruction.

Philip's return to Redclyffe might be regarded as the realization of all he has ever longed for. He becomes the new owner of Redclyffe with all the wealth and status that entails, marries Laura and distinguishes himself in parliament, and becomes, in Charles's words, "one of the first in this world" (*Heir* 586). But his achievements are marked by the insoluble relationship between the forgivable and the unforgiveable, and his life is one of bitter repentance. On the one hand, his very capacity for repentance is engendered by Guy's act of pure forgiveness; on the other, his profound sense that he has committed the unforgiveable is its very matter. Thus what brings him joy, torments him; his greatest achievements are merely "the strange fulfillment of his desires that had become punishments" (547). Maurice Blanchot points out that the act of forgiveness "re-affirms rather than erases guilt if you forgive the guilty as guilty" (qtd. in Guyer 1116); for Philip, the very memory of Guy's generosity is the "'acutest sting and yet the only balm,'" and he finds himself "forced to endure an inheritance that seems to have come like the prosperity of the wicked" (*Heir* 543, 544). Philip's unbearable remorse results in brain fever, an onslaught which again brings him to the brink of death, prompting Charles' second departure from Hollywell (this time, with Amy) in order to nurse him. This journey is rendered emotionally and spiritually possible by the earlier outing undertaken with Guy. As Charles was then able to "invert the economy of the threshold" (Keating 4) by giving up his sovereignty as host and allowing Guy to care for him, he now becomes host in Philip's home, functioning as care-taker and ultimately saving Philip's life. It is now Charles who is the stranger, a displacement of positions that ultimately allows him to forgive Philip. On his first night at Redclyffe, Charles contemplates that he "could have hated Philip" but for the "deep lines which, at seven-and-twenty, sorrow had traced on his brow" (*Heir* 566). The true recognition of the suffering of another is the beginning of forgiveness without conditions. Charles himself highlights the distinction between true forgiveness and forgiveness by ritual or rote, pointing out to his mother: "[y]ou did not see him at Redclyffe, or you would do more than simply forgiving him as a Christian'" (586). In leaving the confinements of Hollywell and substituting himself in Philip's own home as host and caretaker, Charles enacts the possibilities of liberation brought into the lives of the Hollywell family by the initial stranger, Guy. The disease instantiated at Hollywell leaves the sovereign borders of England, is redeemed by the death of Guy, and is returned to England with all its possibilities for transformation and redemption.

The paradox at the heart of forgiveness and possibility continues beyond the narrative's boundaries. That Philip will suffer all of his days is highlighted by the narrative. He tells Laura that she will marry a "saddened, remorseful man . . . his whole life embittered by that fatal remembrance" (*Heir* 544); together, they must "'look to enduring the consequences all [their] lives, and give each other what support [they] may'" (584). Nevertheless, the encounter with the other, the stranger, allows for the enactment of a new kind of hospitality. The two outsiders transform the two domestic spheres, Hollywell and Redclyffe, which ultimately function as an allegory for family, nation and empire, and opens the domestic world and its inhabitants to new possibilities and roles. This transformation is partially figured in the diseased, complex figure of Charles Edmonstone, whose illness demonstrates the structural fragility of hospitality, for home, family, and nation. Initially, Charles embodies the diseased politics of mastery, the sickness inherent in being only and always at home, of being only a host and never a guest, an allegory for imperial England itself. But the slow transformation of his relationship with his guests holds out promise for the host's liberation and for the liberation of England from the toils of the "imperial unconscious." Thus, while *The Heir of Redclyffe* demonstrates how easily threatened is the structure of home and how precarious is any invitation to cross a threshold, it also demonstrates, through the transformation of Charles Edmonstone, the creative possibilities offered by the figure of the migrant and the stranger.

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Navigating the Periodical Market: Once a Week, Poetry, and the Illustrated Literary Periodical

by Caley Ehnes

Publishers Bradbury and Evans launched their illustrated weekly, *Once a Week*, on 2 July 1859, effectually declaring the end of their fruitful collaboration with Charles Dickens. The event marks a crucial moment in the history of periodical publishing that shifted readers' encounter with popular poetry. Linda Hughes outlines the innovations inaugurated by *Once a Week*, noting that it was one of the first to pair "original poems *and* original woodcut engravings," thus creating a "double" novelty for its purchasers ("Inventing" 41). In this way, the periodical "seized the initiative in defining how original poems and illustrations might be conceptualized, presented, and read in relation to one another" (42). While several critics have discussed the relationship between text and image in *Once a Week*, there is little investigation of the creation of *Once a Week* in relation to Charles Dickens's *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*.[1] Dickens played an important, if implicit, role in the development of Bradbury and Evans' periodical; as this analysis of *Once a Week*'s illustrated poetry reveals, his influence was both practical and aesthetic. *Household Words* changed the cultural value of the weekly periodical, making it acceptable for middle-class consumption and opening the door for such publications as *Once a Week*, which both benefitted from and improved upon the Dickensian model.

The Origins of Once a Week

Dickens's quarrel with Bradbury and Evans constitutes an essential chapter in periodicals history. *Once a Week* was "born in controversy" (Savory 287), as biographers and literary historians note, beginning with Dickens's sensational separation from his wife Catherine.[2] In June 1858, he published a statement addressing his domestic difficulties in *Household Words*;[3] when he asked Bradbury and Evans to publish the statement in *Punch* (Buckler 924), they refused. Furious, Dickens moved to dissolve the partnership, but the publishers rejected his offer of £1,000 for their share of the copyright. The conflict over *Household Words* ended up in the Court of Chancery, which decreed that it be put up for auction; Dickens was the successful bidder. In the meantime, he commissioned a special advertisement (published March 1859) announcing the cessation of *Household Words* and promoting his forthcoming venture, *All the Year Round*, which began publication on 30 April 1859. Dickens had won the contest, and the transition from *Household Words* to *All the Year Round* was seamless, with the staff (excepting H.K. Browne) and contributors (some) of *Household Words* shifted to the new periodical.

Bradbury and Evans also issued a statement on 31 May 1859 indicating that Dickens never asked them to publish his personal announcement in *Punch*, nor did it "occur to [them] to exceed their legitimate functions as Proprietors and publishers, and to require the insertion of a statement on a domestic and painful subject in the inappropriate columns of a comic miscellany" ("Statement"). The statement casts Dickens as an unreasonable and selfish figure, who "injured a valuable property, in which others besides himself were interested." The public battle between Dickens and his former publisher shaped the content of *Once a Week* as popular authors chose sides, publishing either with Dickens or Bradbury and Evans. Viewing the publishers as victims, Harriet Martineau, Charles Knight, and Thomas Hughes gave their allegiance to Bradbury and Evans, as did George Meredith, who cautioned editor Samuel Lucas: "we must be careful not to seem to be copying the enemy" (1:65).

The birth of *Once a Week* in the context of Dickens's weekly publications indicates how influential they were in the development of the middle-class literary periodical. As Lorna Huett observes, *Household Words* rehabilitated periodical fiction by presenting readers with good-quality serialized fiction published "under the aegis of a celebrated novelist known in part for his depiction of idealised domesticity" (136). In effect, Dickens shaped *Household Words* to fill a void in the literary market; he catered to a new middle-class audience by publishing morally acceptable serial fiction (as opposed to the sensational stories published in the era's penny dreadfuls). From format to content, the periodical structure established by Dickens was undeniably influential; *Household Words* fostered a readership interested in purchasing literary periodicals and a market for that readership, prompting other publications to adopt this popular and profitable model. In many ways, *Household Words* became a literary standard, thus clarifying Meredith's anxiety about the potential stylistic similarities between *Once a Week* and *All the Year Round*. *Once a Week* could not afford to appear to be lacking in originality, which would render it an inferior product to *All the Year Round*.

Dickens was well aware of his dominant position in the era's literary market. In a letter dated two days before *Once a Week*'s inaugural issue, he comments: "What fools they are: As if a Mole couldn't see that their only chance was in a careful separation of themselves from the faintest approach or assimilation to All the

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[1] The foundational article on *Once a Week* remains William Buckler's 1952 essay "*Once a Week* under Samuel Lucas, 1859-65." See also Savory; and Elwell, Stephen. "Editors and Social Change: A Case Study of *Once a Week* (1859-80)." In *Innovators and Preachers: The Role of the Editor in Victorian England*. Ed. Joel H. Wiener. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985. 23-42. For recent work on illustrated fiction in *Once a Week*, see Cooke, Simon. "George Du Maurier's Illustrations for M.E.Braddon's serialization of *Eleanor's Victory* in *Once a Week*." *Victorian Periodicals Review* 35.1 (2002): 89-106. Also, Leighton, Mary Elizabeth and Lisa Surridge. "The Plot Thickens: Toward a Narratological Analysis of Illustrated Serial Fiction in the 1860s." *Victorian Studies* 51.1 (2008): 65-101.

[2] See Buckler; also Dixon, Diana. "Bradbury and Evans." *British Literary Publishing Houses, 1820-1880*. Ed. Patricia Anderson and Jonathan Rose. Detroit: Gale, 1991. 62-67.

[3] Dickens's signed statement (titled "Personal") opened the 12 June 1858 issue of *Household Words*.

Year Round!" (*Letters* 9:86). The anticipated failure of *Once a Week* is reflected in its circulation numbers: for the first six months (July 1859 to December 1859) total circulation was around 570,000 (or 22,000 copies per issue);[4] this decreased to 150,000 over the next six months and continued steadily declining by an average of 35,000 per year until the mid-1860s (Buckler 938-39).[5] As its circulation decreased, so too did the number of illustrations, erasing the very feature that made *Once a Week* stand apart from its most direct competitor, *All the Year Round*.[6] Dickens later expressed glee at the periodical's failure in the competitive periodical market of the 1860s; nevertheless, its black and white illustrations by some of the era's most prominent artists make it "the most remarkable illustrated magazine of the period for both the quality and variety of its illustrations" (Goldman 268).

By commissioning illustrations from some of the foremost artists in the field, Samuel Lucas (editor), along with Bradbury and Evans (publishers), distinguished *Once a Week* from the dominant Dickens influence. While *All the Year Round* "became an acceptable way for the middle classes to consume the products of the leading authors of the day" (Skilton) by publishing reputable fiction, *Once a Week* drew on the cultural reading practices associated with mid-century gift books, which celebrated both the poetic and the pictorial.[7] The significance of *Once a Week* in the history of illustrated literary periodicals thus lies in the *interpictorial network*[8] suggested by the illustrations it published, thus aligning it with the most important narrative and visual forms of the period. The impressive list of *Once a Week*'s illustrators include John Everett Millais, John Leech, Harold K. Browne ("Phiz"), John Tenniel, and George du Maurier. The movement of artists between periodicals and disciplines (painting and black-and-white illustration) allowed periodicals to use an artist's reputation and external associations to promote their publication. Millais and Browne provide valuable case studies for examining how illustration came to define *Once a Week*, with its links to the Pre-Raphaelite school of black and white illustration and the Dickensian aesthetic associated with H. K. Browne's green serial covers.

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[4] These numbers are small compared to the circulation numbers of Dickens's *All the Year Round*, which averaged 120,000 copies per issue from 1859 to 1860 and reached 300,000 copies per issue in 1869.

[5] Buckler offers several explanations for its decline, notably the lackluster success of its serials (Meredith's *Evan Harrington*, for instance). Since, by the 1860s, the serial was *the* main feature, "upon it depended the success or failure" of the journal (936).

[6] The decline in illustrations was due to both financial (expensive to commission and produce) and editorial (emphasis on fewer, higher-quality images) considerations.

[7] See Kooistra, *Poetry, Pictures, and Popular Publishing*.

[8] *Interpictorial network* refers to how an illustration published "within" *Once a Week* references images produced by the same artist "outside of" *Once a Week*.

Millais and the Interpictorial Networks of Once a Week

The Pre-Raphaelite school of black and white illustrations with which Millais was associated challenged the aesthetics of the 1850s and 1860s by presenting illustration as a legitimate art form comparable to painting. Their "high seriousness" and rigorous designs made illustrations equal to text (Goldman 1); in some cases, illustrations even superseded text as art objects in their own right, as confirmed by the 1864 publication of *The Cornhill Gallery*, a collection of that periodical's illustrations reprinted without the source text. The popularity and cultural status of black and white illustrations in the 1860s meant that publications like *Once a Week* provided readers with high-quality original images and texts; indeed, a Millais illustration was as much of a draw as a poem by the Poet Laureate, Tennyson. Between July 1859 and December 1862, Millais contributed at least thirty-four illustrations to the periodical;[9] the first poem he illustrated was Tom Taylor's "Magenta" (9 July 1859), which moves from the political interest of the battlefield to a scene of domestic loss. Linda Hughes identifies Taylor's poem as "intimately tied to the news cycle and Britain's international interests, insofar as it concerned Napoleon III and his alliance with the Piedmontese to resist Austrian rule in Italy" ("Inventing" 50). Millais's illustration repositions the politics of the poem into a domestic space (Fig. 1), emphasizing the domestic costs of war. The illustration cancels out the noise of "the illuminated streets [where] the triumphs go" (Taylor 1:10) by foregrounding a bereaved female whose prostrate figure and voluminous skirts occupy the majority of the frame (Hughes, "Inventing" 51). The victory and celebration are rendered secondary to this private grief. Both Linda Hughes and David Skilton point out that Millais's first contribution to *Once a Week* creates a significant interpictorial network between his work for the periodical press and his contributions to the expensive gift books of the 1850s. Skilton observes that the position of the female figure drawn to accompany Taylor's "Magenta" reworks Millais's earlier illustration for "Mariana" in the Moxon edition of Tennyson. For Hughes, the interpictorial network suggested by Millais's illustrations shows how the periodical "tacitly import[ed] the symbolic capital . . . of the more expensive books to the cheap luxury of the illustrated magazine" ("Inventing" 51). More importantly, the illustrations composed by Millais created an interpictorial network between *Once a Week*, his broader reputation as an artist, and the aesthetic associated with his Pre-Raphaelite contemporaries.

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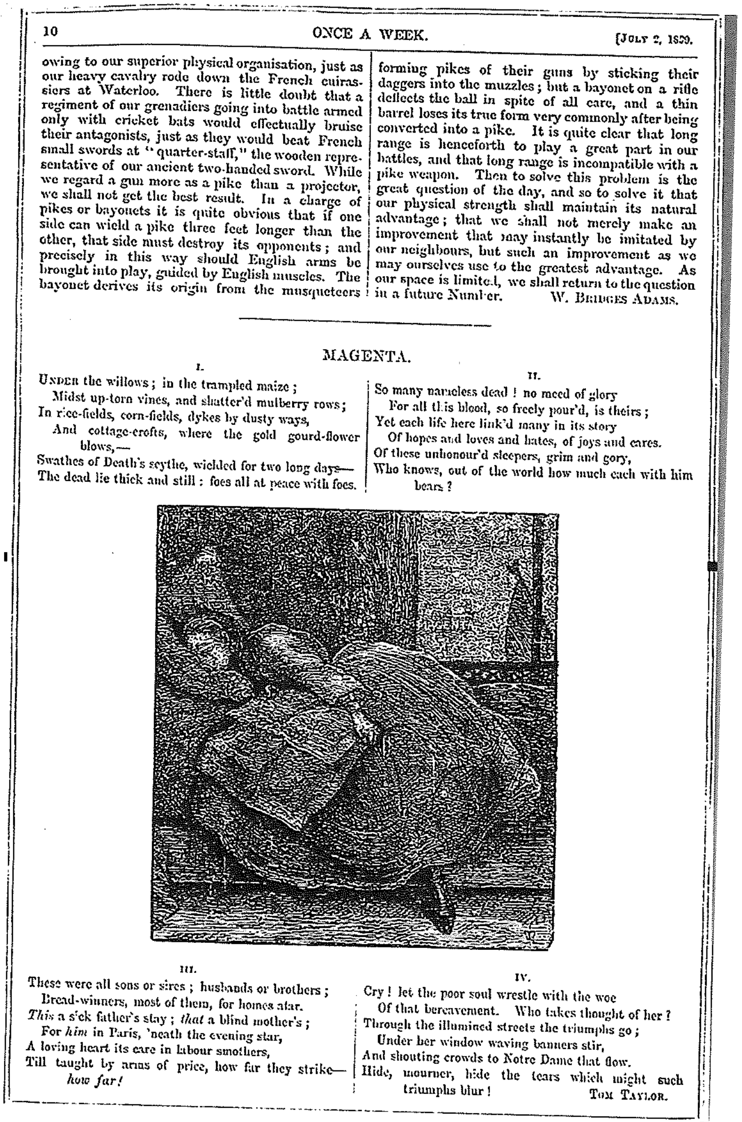
[9] This number reflects only Millais's illustrations for poems during this period. Millais's introduction of the Pre-Raphaelite style—black-and-white images—heavily influenced 1860s illustration aesthetics. See Layard, George Soames, "Millais and *Once a Week*." *Good Words* 34 (1893): 552-58; and Alan Life.



10 ONCE A WEEK. [July 2, 1859.

owing to our superior physical organisation, just as our heavy cavalry rode down the French cuirassiers at Waterloo. There is little doubt that a regiment of our grenadiers going into battle armed only with cricket bats would effectually bruise their antagonists, just as they would beat French small swords at "quarter-staff," the wooden representative of our ancient two-handed sword. While we regard a gun more as a pike than a projector, we shall not get the best result. In a charge of pikes or bayonets it is quite obvious that if one side can wield a pike three feet longer than the other, that side must destroy its opponents; and precisely in this way should English arms be brought into play, guided by English muscles. The bayonet derives its origin from the musqueteers forming pikes of their guns by sticking their daggers into the muzzles; but a bayonet on a rifle deflects the ball in spite of all care, and a thin barrel loses its true form very commonly after being converted into a pike. It is quite clear that long range is henceforth to play a great part in our battles, and that long range is incompatible with a pike weapon. Then to solve this problem is the great question of the day, and so to solve it that our physical strength shall maintain its natural advantage; that we shall not merely make an improvement that may instantly be imitated by our neighbours, but such an improvement as we may ourselves use to the greatest advantage. As our space is limited, we shall return to the question in a future Number. W. Bridges Adams.

MAGENTA.

I.

Under the willows; in the trampled maize;
Midst up-torn vines, and shatter'd mulberry rows;
In rice-fields, corn-fields, dykes by dusty ways,
And cottage-crofts, where the gold gourd-flower blows,—
Swathes of Death's scythe, wielded for two long days—
The dead lie thick and still: foes all at peace with foes.

II.

So many nameless dead! no meed of glory
For all this blood, so freely pour'd, is theirs;
Yet each life here link'd many in its story
Of hopes and loves and hates, of joys and cares.
Of these unhonour'd sleepers, grim and gory,
Who knows, out of the world how much each with him bears?

III.

These were all sons or sires; husbands or brothers;
Bread-winners, most of them, for homes afar.
This a sick father's stay; *that* a blind mother's;
For *him* in Paris, 'neath the evening star,
A loving heart its care in labour smothers,
Till taught by arms of price, how far they strike—*how far!*

IV.

Cry! let the poor soul wrestle with the woe
Of that bereavement. Who takes thought of her?
Through the illumined streets the triumphs go;
Under her window waving banners stir,
And shouting crowds to Notre Dame that flow.
Hide, mourner, hide the tears which might such triumphs blur!

Tom Taylor.

Fig. 1: Taylor, Tom. "Magenta," Illus. John Everett Millais, *Once a Week* (9 July 1859), U. Victoria

Starting with "Magenta" in the first issue and continuing over the next eighteen months, Millais contributed two sets of illustrations (totalling eight images, which accompany seven poems and one prose piece) that depict female characters dressed in voluminous skirts and seated in positions that often connote grief or despair.[10] For example, the composition of Millais's illustration for A. [William Allingham]'s "A Wife" (7 Jan. 1860; Fig. 2) echoes the bereaved woman depicted in "Magenta" (Fig. 1) through both its formal composition and its narrative effect. In terms of composition, Millais depicts each woman, head in hand, weeping over the dissolution of her dreams and relationships; thus does the distressed woman in voluminous skirts become one of the more iconographic images in *Once a Week*, reappearing several times over the course of the periodical's first three volumes. The formal echoes seen in these illustrations create an expectation about the poem's content that anticipates the letterpress narrative; such interest in visual narrative is a key feature of Pre-Raphaelite aesthetics. Paul Goldman describes how the Pre-Raphaelites "saw themselves essentially as literary artists . . . [turning] to illustration as a means of a narrative element which was so central a feature in their [painting]" (1). Paradoxically, the narrative captured by the illustrator exists both within and outside of the poem, in that the illustrations become archetypal images associated with broader themes as opposed to a speaker's particular situation. Such repetition creates an implicit link between the illustrations and the status of the artist rather than between the illustration and the poetic text."[11]

In her work on popular poetry and publishing, Lorraine Janzen Kooistra argues that Pre-Raphaelite illustrators realized "the difficulty of adequately illustrating the affective and subjective experience of lyric poetry," leading them to prefer narrative poetry; this provided "them greater scope . . . for allegorizing on the poetic subject without detriment to the poet's leading idea" (58) and also allowed for the representation of characters in dramatic situations. Millais's illustrations for "Magenta" and "A Wife" effectively capture the narrative moments of each poem; but, despite Millais' ability to capture these narrative moments, this interpictorial network simultaneously renders the illustrations acontextual, cast as iconographic representations of feminine despair and grief elsewhere replicated by Millais and those influenced by his style. A similar dynamic occurs with H. K. Browne, whose Dickensian aesthetic, and its eventual disappearance from the pages of *Once a Week*, reinforces both the importance of illustration to the brand of the periodical and *Once a Week*'s position on the cusp of a new era for illustration and popular poetry.

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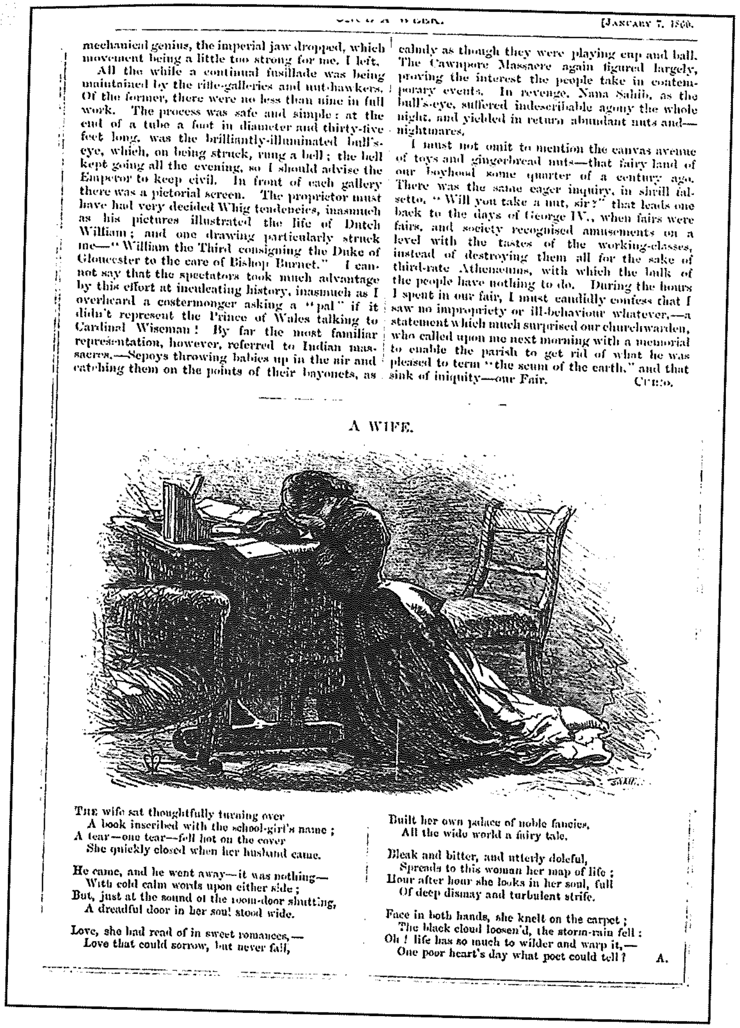
[10] Alan Life dismisses much of the verse illustrated by Millais, who "was willing by the early sixties to accept any profitable and easy commission, and much of the verse he illustrated at this time is conspicuously bad" (51).

[11] Linda Hughes ("Doubling") notes that the clustering of Millais' illustrations in volume one tacitly positioned the illustrator as a value-added feature. Further, Millais' illustration for "On the Water" (22 July 1859)—an insubstantial and anonymous poem— suggests that it exists only to support the illustration.



ONCE A WEEK. [JANUARY 7, 1860.

mechanical genius, the imperial jaw dropped, which movement being a little too strong for me. I left.

All the while a continual fusillade was being maintained by the rifle-galleries and nut-hawkers. Of the former, there were no less than nine in full work. The process was safe and simple: at the end of a tube a foot in diameter and thirty-five feet long, was the brilliantly-illuminated bull's-eye, which, on being struck, rung a bell; the bell kept going all the evening, so I should advise the Emperor to keep civil. In front of each gallery there was a pictorial screen. The proprietor must have had very decided Whig tendencies, inasmuch as his pictures illustrated the life of Dutch William; and one drawing particularly struck me—"William the Third consigning the Duke of Gloucester to the care of Bishop Burnet." I cannot say that the spectators took much advantage by this effort at inculcating history, inasmuch as I overheard a costermonger asking a "pal" if it didn't represent the Prince of Wales talking to Cardinal Wiseman! By far the most familiar representation, however, referred to Indian massacres,—Sepoys throwing babies up in the air and catching them on the points of their bayonets, as calmly as though they were playing cup and ball. The Cawnpore Massacre again figured largely, proving the interest the people take in contemporary events. In revenge, Nana Sahib, as the bull's-eye, suffered indescribable agony the whole night, and yielded in return abundant nuts and—nightmares.

I must not omit to mention the canvas avenue of toys and gingerbread nuts—that fairy land of our boyhood some quarter of a century ago. There was the same eager inquiry, in shrill falsetto, "Will you take a nut, sir?" that leads one back to the days of George IV., when fairs were fairs, and society recognised amusements on a level with the tastes of the working-classes, instead of destroying them all for the sake of third-rate Athenæums, with which the bulk of the people have nothing to do. During the hours I spent in our fair, I must candidly confess that I saw no impropriety or ill-behaviour whatever,—a statement which much surprised our churchwarden, who called upon me next morning with a memorial to enable the parish to get rid of what he was pleased to term "the scum of the earth," and that sink of iniquity—our Fair.

CUTHO.

A WIFE.

THE wife sat thoughtfully turning over
  A book inscribed with the school-girl's name;
A tear—one tear—fell hot on the cover
  She quickly closed when her husband came.

He came, and he went away—it was nothing—
  With cold calm words upon either side;
But, just at the sound of the room-door shutting,
  A dreadful door in her soul stood wide.

Love, she had read of in sweet romances,—
  Love that could sorrow, but never fail,
Built her own palace of noble fancies,
  All the wide world a fairy tale.

Bleak and bitter, and utterly doleful,
  Spreads to this woman her map of life;
Hour after hour she looks in her soul, full
  Of deep dismay and turbulent strife.

Face in both hands, she knelt on the carpet;
  The black cloud loosen'd, the storm-rain fell:
Oh! life has so much to wilder and warp it,—
  One poor heart's day what poet could tell?

A.

Fig. 2: A. [Allingham, William]. "A Wife," Illus. John Everett Millais, *Once a Week* (7 Jan. 1860), U. Victoria

Narrative Illustration and Poetry in Once a Week

The dominant layout adopted by Lucas in the first three volumes of *Once a Week* involved embedding a single, narrative illustration in the letterpress, a style replicated by such periodicals as *Good Words* in subsequent years. *Once a Week*'s layout also included Hablot K. Browne's ("Phiz") distinctive, and increasingly outmoded, style of allegorical and supplementary illustrations, reminiscent of his engravings for the wrappers of Dickens's serial novels. Browne's linear, narrative-focused illustrations (limited after volume one) evokes Dickens's style by commissioning illustrations from the artist most associated with him. The illustrations also speak to *Once a Week*'s status in the 1860s, when the black and white style of the Pre-Raphaelite illustrators dominated the literary market. The illustrations included in the first volume of *Once a Week* signal a shift in the purpose of literary illustrations, as visual aesthetics moved away from the style perfected by Phiz and Cruikshank. Skilton succinctly articulates this difference in Millais's repertoire of images, which "present single moments in an action [or narrative], rather than the more extended narrative often embodied by Cruikshank or 'Phiz' in their images for Dickens' novels." If, as Skilton argues, Millais's illustrations represent a shift towards illustration as a serious, narrative art akin to narrative painting, then Browne's illustrations speak to the less-sophisticated visual literacy of mid-Victorian readers. Indeed, one of the main ways Victorian readers engaged with narrative illustrations prior to the 1860s was through illustrated serial fiction, which was dominated by Dickens and his illustrators.

Browne's *Once a Week* illustrations, like his earlier work for Dickens, served both as advertisements and visual allegories that "perfectly anticipated the tone and targets of the narrative to come" (Cohen 107)—indeed, he often had to design the wrapper long before the novel in question was complete.[13] Browne's illustrations for several poems published in *Once a Week* function similarly, representing the narrative of the poem through allegorical designs that advertise the narrative movement of the letterpress. For instance, his illustrations for Benson's "Bought and Sold" (Figs. 3 & 4) run parallel to the text along the page's vertical margins, creating a graphic, linear, and proleptic narrative that replicates the poem through images. Although the visual text reiterates the verbal text, neither relies on the other for meaning; this vertical *band dessinée*[14] offers a visual narrative of the poem, both kinetic and progressive. Browne's narration begins in the first initial, which depicts a young man courting a girl seated on the curve of the 's'; that the 's' is linked to an axe-wielding figure on the far left suggests severed or thwarted love. The first block of illustration ends in a 't' shape, which divides two separate vignettes: a scene of women fawning over the privilege and wealth of Sir Vivian de Grey, and the ideal, pure love of Lesley and Phyllis. The second block of illustrations narrates the social events and pressures, including de Grey's bags of money, leading to Phyllis' marriage to Sir Vivian de Grey. The visual text of the illustration thus presents readers with a complete narrative that creates non-verbal meaning. Significantly, the visual signs of Browne's illustration compliment the ballad form of the poem; the vignettes feature cupid-like figures performing acts mirroring the illustration and the letterpress narratives. The images link the visual text to iconic representations of love, transforming the narrative into a legend about the machinations of love in society. Similarly, the poem's form reflects ballad conventions seen throughout the periodical, explicitly framing it as a contemporary legend in the last stanza. Image and text combine in this example to create meaning even as they represent two distinct narrative texts.

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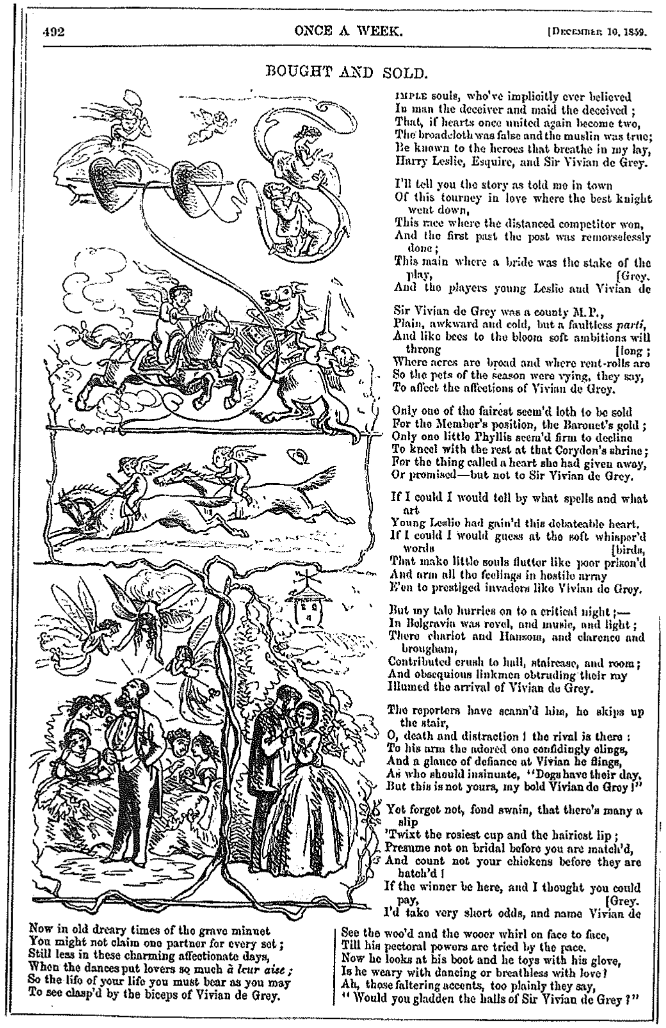
[13] On Browne's wrapper designs, see Patten, Robert. "Serial Illustration and Storytelling in *David Copperfield*." *The Victorian Illustrated Book*. Ed. Richard Maxwell. Charlottesville: UP Virginia, 2002 (93-99) and Cohen 100-18.

[14] That is, a vertical format as distinct from the horizontal format of a comic strip.



492 ONCE A WEEK. [December 10, 1859.

BOUGHT AND SOLD.

SIMPLE souls, who've implicitly ever believed
In man the deceiver and maid the deceived;
That, if hearts once united again become two,
The broadcloth was false and the muslin was true;
Be known to the heroes that breathe in my lay,
Harry Leslie, Esquire, and Sir Vivian de Grey.

I'll tell you the story as told me in town
Of this tourney in love where the best knight went down,
This race where the distanced competitor won,
And the first past the post was remorselessly done;
This main where a bride was the stake of the play,
And the players young Leslie and Vivian de Grey.

Sir Vivian de Grey was a county M.P.,
Plain, awkward and cold, but a faultless *parti*,
And like bees to the bloom soft ambitions will throng
Where acres are broad and where rent-rolls are long;
So the pets of the season were vying, they say,
To affect the affections of Vivian de Grey.

Only one of the fairest seem'd loth to be sold
For the Member's position, the Baronet's gold;
Only one little Phyllis seem'd firm to decline
To kneel with the rest at that Corydon's shrine;
For the thing called a heart she had given away,
Or promised—but not to Sir Vivian de Grey.

If I could I would tell by what spells and what art
Young Leslie had gain'd this debateable heart,
If I could I would guess at the soft whisper'd words
That make little souls flutter like poor prison'd birds,
And arm all the feelings in hostile array
E'en to prestiged invaders like Vivian de Grey.

But my tale hurries on to a critical night;—
In Belgravia was revel, and music, and light;
There chariot and Hansom, and clarence and brougham,
Contributed crush to hall, staircase, and room;
And obsequious linkmen obtruding their ray
Illumed the arrival of Vivian de Grey.

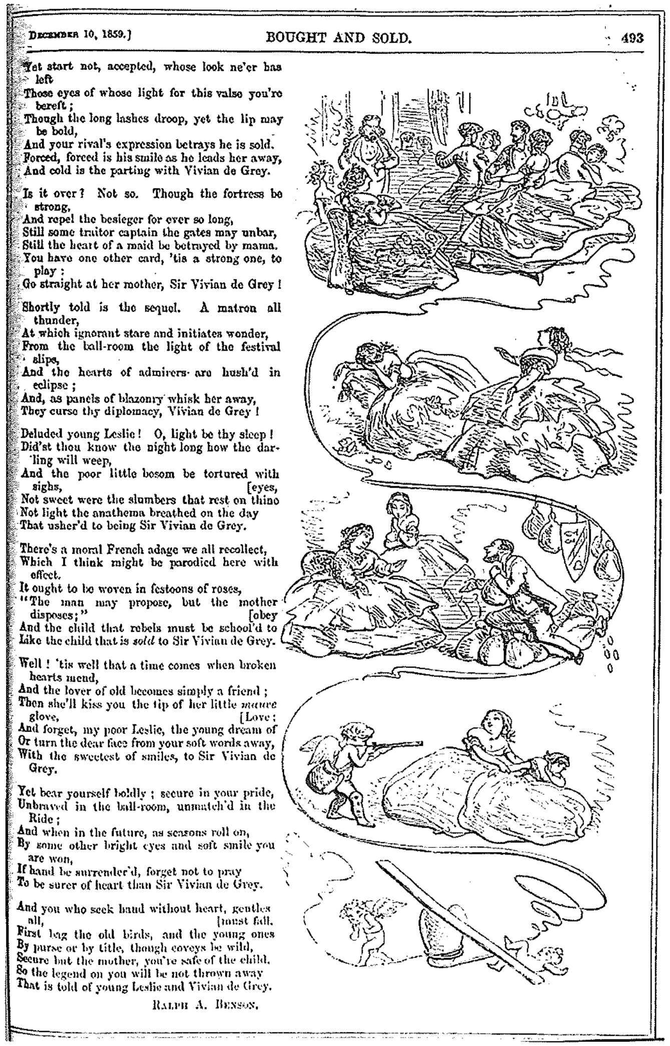
The reporters have scann'd him, he skips up the stair,
O, death and distraction! the rival is there:
To his arm the adored one confidingly clings,
And a glance of defiance at Vivian he flings,
As who should insinuate, "Dogs have their day,
But this is not yours, my bold Vivian de Grey!"

Yet forget not, fond swain, that there's many a slip
'Twixt the rosiest cup and the hairiest lip;
Presume not on bridal before you are match'd,
And count not your chickens before they are hatch'd!
If the winner be here, and I thought you could pay,
I'd take very short odds, and name Vivian de Grey.

Now in old dreary times of the grave minuet
You might not claim one partner for every set;
Still less in these charming affectionate days,
When the dances put lovers so much *à leur aise*;
So the life of your life you must bear as you may
To see clasp'd by the biceps of Vivian de Grey.

See the woo'd and the wooer whirl on face to face,
Till his pectoral powers are tried by the pace.
Now he looks at his boot and he toys with his glove,
Is he weary with dancing or breathless with love?
Ah, those faltering accents, too plainly they say,
"Would you gladden the halls of Sir Vivian de Grey?"

Fig. 3: Benson, Ralph A. "Bought and Sold," Illus. H.K. Browne, *Once a Week* (10 Dec. 1859) U Victoria



December 10, 1859.] BOUGHT AND SOLD. 493

Yet start not, accepted, whose look ne'er has left
Those eyes of whose light for this valse you're bereft;
Though the long lashes droop, yet the lip may be bold,
And your rival's expression betrays he is sold.
Forced, forced is his smile as he leads her away,
And cold is the parting with Vivian de Grey.

Is it over? Not so. Though the fortress be strong,
And repel the besieger for ever so long,
Still some traitor captain the gates may unbar,
Still the heart of a maid be betrayed by mama.
You have one other card, 'tis a strong one, to play:
Go straight at her mother, Sir Vivian de Grey!

Shortly told is the sequel. A matron all thunder,
At which ignorant stare and initiates wonder,
From the ball-room the light of the festival slips,
And the hearts of admirers are hush'd in eclipse;
And, as panels of blazonry whisk her away,
They curse thy diplomacy, Vivian de Grey!

Deluded young Leslie! O, light be thy sleep!
Did'st thou know the night long how the darling will weep,
And the poor little bosom be tortured with sighs,
Not sweet were the slumbers that rest on thine eyes,
Not light the anathema breathed on the day
That usher'd to being Sir Vivian de Grey.

There's a moral French adage we all recollect,
Which I think might be parodied here with effect.
It ought to be woven in festoons of roses,
"The man may propose, but the mother disposes;"
And the child that rebels must be school'd to obey
Like the child that is *sold* to Sir Vivian de Grey.

Well! 'tis well that a time comes when broken hearts mend,
And the lover of old becomes simply a friend;
Then she'll kiss you the tip of her little *mauve* glove,
And forget, my poor Leslie, the young dream of Love;
Or turn the dear face from your soft words away,
With the sweetest of smiles, to Sir Vivian de Grey.

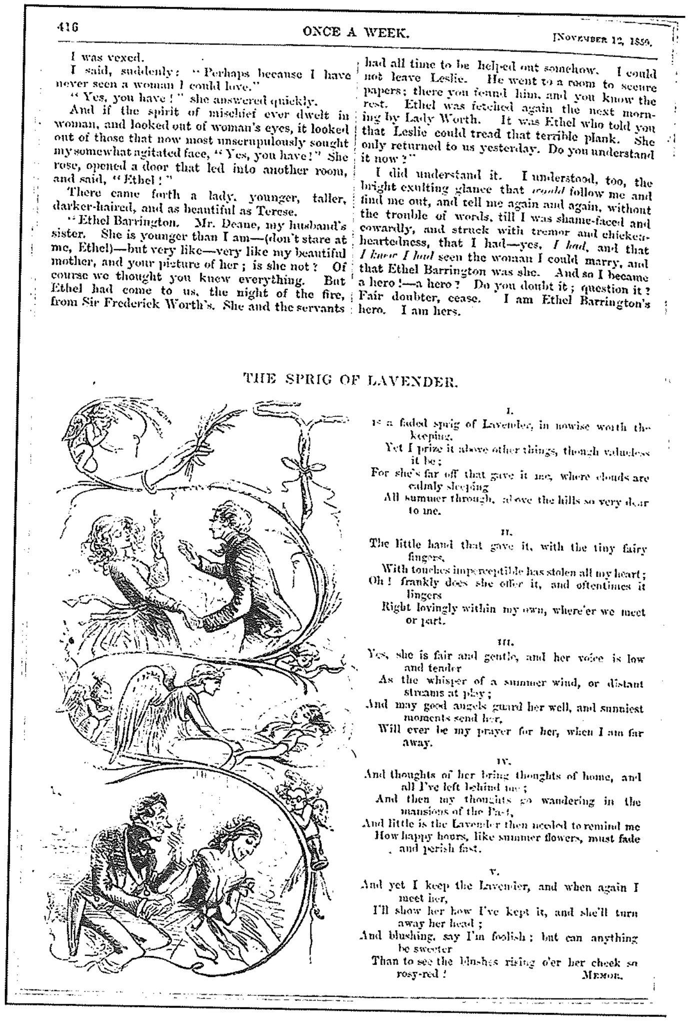
Yet bear yourself boldly; secure in your pride,
Unbraved in the ball-room, unmatch'd in the Ride;
And when in the future, as seasons roll on,
By some other bright eyes and soft smile you are won,
If hand be surrender'd, forget not to pray
To be surer of heart than Sir Vivian de Grey.

And you who seek hand without heart, gentles all,
First bag the old birds, and the young ones must fall.
By purse or by title, though coveys be wild,
Secure but the mother, you're safe of the child.
So the legend on you will be not thrown away
That is told of young Leslie and Vivian de Grey.

Ralph A. Benson.

Fig. 4: Benson, Ralph A. "Bought and Sold," Illus. H.K. Browne, *Once a Week* (10 Dec. 1859) U Victoria

This style is prominent in volume one, where six poems appear in multiple frames, pictorially illustrated by Browne. Published a month prior to "Bought and Sold," Browne's illustration for Memor's "The Sprig of Lavender" (12 Nov. 1859) anticipates the sinuous, linear narrative applied to Benson's poem, running parallel to the text along the vertical margin of the page (Fig. 5). This illustration differs from "Bought and Sold" in that the events of the poem align with the individual vignettes tucked into the serpentine frame of the illustration, creating an almost direct correlation between image and text. For example, the layout of the poem centers the second stanza with its associated vignette located in the second curve of the linear illustration, a pattern of alignment continued down the page. As in "Bought and Sold," the illustrated narrative supplements the letterpress, rendering visual the textual narrative.



416 ONCE A WEEK. [NOVEMBER 12, 1859.

I was vexed.

I said, suddenly: "Perhaps because I have never seen a woman I could love."

"Yes, you have!" she answered quickly.

And if the spirit of mischief ever dwelt in woman, and looked out of woman's eyes, it looked out of those that now most unscrupulously sought my somewhat agitated face, "Yes, you have!" She rose, opened a door that led into another room, and said, "Ethel!"

There came forth a lady, younger, taller, darker-haired, and as beautiful as Terese.

"Ethel Barrington. Mr. Deane, my husband's sister. She is younger than I am—(don't stare at me, Ethel)—but very like—very like my beautiful mother, and your picture of her; is she not? Of course we thought you knew everything. But Ethel had come to us, the night of the fire, from Sir Frederick Worth's. She and the servants had all time to be helped out somehow. I could not leave Leslie. He went to a room to secure papers; there you found him, and you know the rest. Ethel was fetched again the next morning by Lady Worth. It was Ethel who told you that Leslie could tread that terrible plank. She only returned to us yesterday. Do you understand it now?"

I did understand it. I understood, too, the bright exulting glance that *would* follow me and find me out, and tell me again and again, without the trouble of words, till I was shame-faced and cowardly, and struck with tremor and chicken-heartedness, that I had—yes, *I had*, and that *I knew I had* seen the woman I could marry, and that Ethel Barrington was she. And so I became a hero!—a hero? Do you doubt it; question it? Fair doubter, cease. I am Ethel Barrington's hero. I am hers.

THE SPRIG OF LAVENDER.

I.

'Tis a faded sprig of Lavender, in nowise worth the keeping,
Yet I prize it above other things, though valueless it be;
For she's far off that gave it me, where clouds are calmly sleeping
All summer through, above the hills so very dear to me.

II.

The little hand that gave it, with the tiny fairy fingers,
With touches imperceptible has stolen all my heart;
Oh! frankly does she offer it, and oftentimes it lingers
Right lovingly within my own, where'er we meet or part.

III.

Yes, she is fair and gentle, and her voice is low and tender
As the whisper of a summer wind, or distant streams at play;
And may good angels guard her well, and sunniest moments send her,
Will ever be my prayer for her, when I am far away.

IV.

And thoughts of her bring thoughts of home, and all I've left behind me;
And then my thoughts go wandering in the mansions of the Past,
And little is the Lavender then needed to remind me
How happy hours, like summer flowers, must fade and perish fast.

V.

And yet I keep the Lavender, and when again I meet her,
I'll show her how I've kept it, and she'll turn away her head;
And blushing, say I'm foolish; but can anything be sweeter
Than to see the blushes rising o'er her cheek so rosy-red!

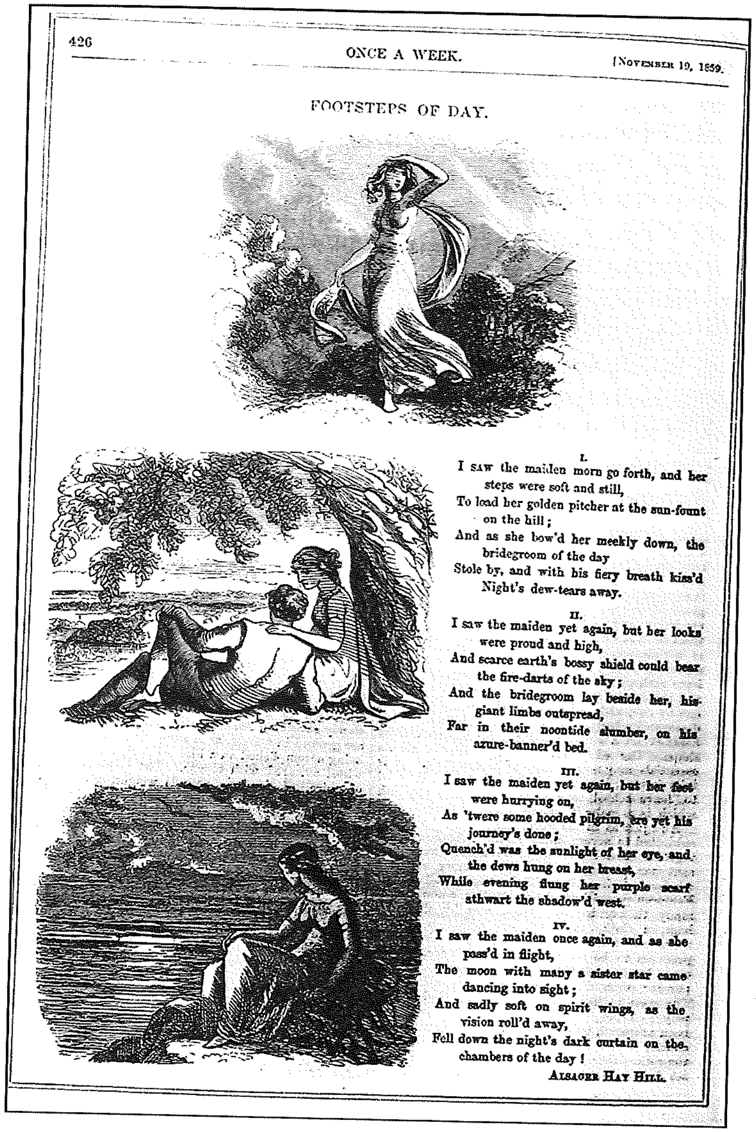
MEMOR.

Fig. 5: Memor. "Sprig of Lavender," Illus. H.K. Browne, *Once a Week* (12 Nov. 1859), U. Victoria

Linda Hughes notes that the "mutual embeddedness" of word and image in *Once a Week* "signals its classed status as an empathetically middle-class family magazine that takes reading, history, and art seriously" ("Inventing" 46). Browne's illustrations extend this idea of *embeddedness* by linking the two genres through mode of narrative. The visual aesthetic of Browne, so associated with Dickens, implicitly supports the periodical's profile as a middle-class family product; his illustrations import the cultural values associated with Dickens. Despite the urge to disassociate themselves from Dickens and the fallout over *Household Words*, Bradbury and Evans were nonetheless indebted to his reputation and his legitimization of the weekly periodical. *Once a Week* builds on the model offered by *Household Words*, publishing illustrations and using the cultural capital of its illustrators to entice readers to buy.

The final poem under consideration is Alasger Hay Hill's "Footsteps of the Day" (19 Nov. 1859; Fig. 6). One of the few descriptive lyrics published in the periodical, Hill's poem uses allegory—the progression of the day as a maiden—to describe the sun's natural cycle. Beginning with the narrator's observation, "the maiden morn go forth, and her steps were soft and still" (1:426), the poem traces the unfolding of day through a series of highly figurative vignettes that use the position of the young maiden to allegorize both specific times of day and the non-reversible sequence of human life. For instance, the second stanza captures the moment of noon and marriage by imaging the maiden and her bridegroom who lay "[f]ar in their noontide slumber, on his azure-banner'd bed." Similarly, the third stanza documents the coming dusk with language suggestive of an aging figure: "Quench'd was the sunlight in her eyes, and the dews hung on her breast." While the poem reshapes a rather commonplace narrative—the progression of a day and a life—through the speaker's lyrical reflections, it ends with a theatrical flourish blending the universal idea of a passing day with individual, domestic experience: "And sadly soft on spirit wings, as the vision roll'd away, / Fell down the night's dark curtain on the chambers of the day." The curtained chamber evokes the ideological centrality of the Victorian middle-class home, as described by Hughes and Lund in *The Victorian Serial*. Hill's poem employs strong visual images, each stanza beginning with the act of seeing ("I saw") that creates a refrain. The meter of the first line in the first three stanzas deviates from the iambic heptameter used throughout the poem to an anapaestic foot after the caesura, effectually isolating this moment of seeing in the very structure of the poem. The lines that follow each act of sight build on the initial vision until the image is complete. The language of the poem transcribes the implied visual into a textual image.

Yet, although the descriptive lyric does convey the visual through language, the fact remains that such lyrics were part of a culture increasingly mediated through visual images. The tension between descriptive lyric and illustration plays out in "Footsteps of the Day." While Browne's illustrations aim to transform the poem's figurative language into a series of concrete images, they instead offer a reductive reading that creates a *third* narrative (Fig. 6). His images focus on a maiden figure (who looks different in each vignette), ostensibly depicting moments from three of the four stanzas. But the images do not match the moments described by the speaker, and they lack the aesthetic power of Hill's textual images. In his 1833 essay "What is Poetry," John Stuart Mill defines the descriptive poem as one that "consists, no doubt, in description, but in description of things as they appear, not as they are; and it paints them not in their bare and natural lineaments, but arranged in the colours and seen through the medium of the imagination set in action by the [narrator's] feelings" (1215). This definition clarifies the dissonance between Browne's illustrations and the letterpress of Hill's poem. Browne's illustrations force a concrete narrative onto the poem by depicting things as they are (a literal version of the maiden) rather than how they appear figuratively (the allegorical progress of the maiden and of the day), thus flattening a large portion of the metaphoric content in the text. Browne's illustrations represent the figurative maiden (or day) as "real," stripping away the multiple meanings made possible by Hill's descriptive lyric. The sense of progression, of life, and of the day's changing vistas vanishes as Browne focuses on the (metaphorical) maiden seen by the narrator; each image dilutes the layers suggested by Hill's descriptive language. In the letterpress, the speaker's description of the young girl lying by her bridegroom has multiple meanings, referencing both the day's complicity with the sun at high noon and a young woman's marriage at the apex of her life. Browne's illustration negates these potential meanings, leaving the viewer/reader with the concrete image of a pair of lovers seated under a tree. Exemplifying a rare misstep in Lucas' pairing of image and text, Browne's illustrations for "Footsteps of the Day" nonetheless speak to the periodical's interest in supplying its readers with identifiable narrative content. Whereas Hill's poem features an identifiable narrative flow (the progressive narratives of day and life) suggested through the poem's figurative language, Browne's illustrations create a discrete narrative for the letterpress that compromises that flow.



426 ONCE A WEEK. [NOVEMBER 19, 1859.

FOOTSTEPS OF DAY.

I.

I SAW the maiden morn go forth, and her steps were soft and still,
To load her golden pitcher at the sun-fount on the hill;
And as she bow'd her meekly down, the bridegroom of the day
Stole by, and with his fiery breath kiss'd Night's dew-tears away.

II.

I saw the maiden yet again, but her looks were proud and high,
And scarce earth's bossy shield could bear the fire-darts of the sky;
And the bridegroom lay beside her, his giant limbs outspread,
Far in their noontide slumber, on his azure-banner'd bed.

III.

I saw the maiden yet again, but her feet were hurrying on,
As 'twere some hooded pilgrim, ere yet his journey's done;
Quench'd was the sunlight of her eye, and the dews hung on her breast,
While evening flung her purple scarf athwart the shadow'd west.

IV.

I saw the maiden once again, and as she pass'd in flight,
The moon with many a sister star came dancing into sight;
And sadly soft on spirit wings, as the vision roll'd away,
Fell down the night's dark curtain on the chambers of the day!

ALSAGER HAY HILL.

Fig. 6: Hill, Alasger. "Footsteps of the Day," Illus. H.K Browne, *Once a Week* (19 Nov. 1859), U. Victoria

The linear illustrations designed by Browne exaggerate the narrative function of illustration in *Once a Week* by supplementing the content of the poem and determining how the reader encounters and understands the poetic text. Whether the image was composed by Millais, Browne, or one of the many other illustrators associated with the periodical, the illustrations included in *Once a Week* are a fundamental part of reading the periodical, defining its literary identity against that of Dickens's *All the Year Round.* And yet, Bradbury and Evans could not escape the literary and visual associations established through years of collaboration with Dickens. *Once a Week* is a product of the Dickensian model, adapted and modified for what the publishers hoped would be a new kind of reader, one interested in purchasing original art and literature in a magazine format. However, unlike Dickens's *All the Year Round,* which built its success on the back of *Household Words* and the star power of Dickens's name, the publishers of *Once a Week* faced a transitioning market. The 1860s saw the publication of a glut of illustrated periodicals, prompting Elizabeth Barrett Browning's comment: "[t]here's a rage for new periodicals, . . . speculations crowd the market, overcrowd it: there will be failures presently" (453).

Equally important was a shift in the visual aesthetics of the era. After December 1859 the narrative style favored by Browne largely disappeared.[15] There are a number of plausible reasons for this shift, including the gradual relaxation of Lucas's "original insistence . . . that an artist *illustrate* the text of the author" (Buckler 933). Lucas's evolving sense of illustration moved the periodical away from illustrating "scientific and topographical pieces" requiring "the hand of the draftsman rather than the artist." In many ways, Browne's illustrations were those of a draftsman: they explicate the text, lacking the powerful character drawing associated with the popular black and white illustrations of the period. For Buckler, the artistic attraction of the magazine lay in the illustrative style of Millais, Du Maurier, and others working in the black and white traditions established by the Pre-Raphaelite school. Over time (and up to the 1866 launch of the periodical's new series following the departure of Samuel Lucas), "the purely illustrative began to disappear, and a greater emphasis was laid on fewer drawings of high quality and more extensive proportions" (Buckler 933-34). More importantly, by the 1860s, Browne "definitely belonged to an 'old school' of illustrators. Public tastes and artistic techniques had changed. Earlier preferences for the grotesque, the picturesque, and the emblematic had yielded to ones for academic realism and narrative sentimentality" (Cohen 121). A quantitative look at the poetry published in the first three volumes of the periodical tracks the changes occurring in illustration as a new decade began. Browne's contributions decreased steadily over the first eighteen months of the periodical from thirteen illustrations in the first volume to one illustration in volume three; this decline supports Cohen's description of his increasing alienation from the visual aesthetic of the 1860s (62). There was no longer a place for his illustrative style in the popular literary forms of the era; and, as *Once a Week* began to compete not only with Dickens's publications but with such illustrated periodicals as *Cornhill Magazine*, *Good Words*, and *The Argosy*, it had to match the visual standards of those publications, which were aligned with Pre-Raphaelite aesthetics.

The early years of *Once a Week* serve as a microcosm of the Victorian literary market, both participating in and reflecting the aesthetic changes that occur as the literary periodical of the 1860s came to define and shape the era's popular literature. Its origins in scandal highlight the interconnected nature of the periodical market and emphasize Dickens's key role in periodical culture. *Once a Week* both resisted and adapted the literary model popularized by *Household Words*, and its illustrated poetry provides an opportunity for examining how the periodical responded to the expectations of the literary market. As Linda Hughes notes, poetry is important to periodical studies "[f]or what it tells us about periodicals' cultural politics, editorial principles, authorship, formal dynamics, and visuality" ("What" 115). In the case of *Once a Week*, the composition of its illustrated poetry exemplifies the periodical's engagement with the contemporary periodical market—its unique contributions and its place in literary history.

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[15] The linear style associated with Browne (volume one) appears only twice in subsequent issues, disappearing after volume two.

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"False From Head to Foot": Social Performance and the Ideology of Recognition in The Way We Live Now

by Kevin Swafford

Anthony Trollope's *The Way We Live Now* (1875) aims to do what Charles Dickens famously suggested *all* realist novelists should do: namely, provide a "service to society" by calling forth a greater good from representations of the "vilest evil" (*Oliver Twist* liii). When *The Way We Live Now* first appeared, this aspect of its narrative was a source of consternation for some of Trollope's readers. Among his contemporaries, Trollope was valued as an astute observer of human character, who provided engaging narrative accounts of various aspects of everyday life among the English upper classes. The confluence of "truth" and "charm" in narrative portraiture was central to his allure as a writer. As one contemporary put it, "true sketches, true in form and truly felt" were the qualities of Trollope's writing most appreciated (qtd. in Smalley 298). When his fastidious observation and representation turned to the pervasive dishonesty and commercialism of the ruling classes in *The Way We Live Now*, the value of charm was decisively supplanted by the moral imperatives of novelistic truth telling and social critique, thus making it one of Trollope's "uncomfortable" novels. Trollope the satirist and social critic was not nearly as well received as Trollope the "chronicler" of Barsetshire—even though there is a consistent ethical sensibility that pervades most of his novels. As Jane Nardin notes in *Trollope and Victorian Moral Philosophy*, the problem of honesty in a changing world is one of the core concerns that runs through much of Anthony Trollope's writing—in *The Way We Live Now*, approached with a heightened urgency.[1] Concerning the ethical impetus for writing the novel, Trollope states:

> I was instigated by what I conceived to be the commercial profligacy of the age. Whether the world does or does not become more wicked as years go on, is a question which probably has disturbed the minds of thinkers since the world began to think. That men have become less cruel, less violent, less selfish, less brutal, there can be no doubt;—but have they become less honest? If so, can a world retrograding from day to day in honesty, be considered to be in a state of progress? (*Autobiography* 354)

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[1] Nardin does not discuss the Victorian concern with declining common morality and honesty in relation to *The Way We Live Now*, which provides Trollope's "fullest exposition of his moral and social values" (Tracy 158).

According to Trollope, *The Way We Live Now* is essentially about a "great speculator who robs everybody . . . the intrigues of girls who want to get married . . . the luxury of young men who prefer to remain single . . . and the puffing propensities of authors who desire to cheat the public into buying their volumes" (355). Overall, Trollope considered the novel a successful account and critique of the "commercial profligacy" at the heart of the new social and economic reality in England; and, as Christopher Herbert rightly claims, the critical tradition has largely followed Trollope's lead by reading "the world of the novel" as "primarily one of moral standards in collapse" (*Comic Pleasure* 175).[2]

However, the problem of dishonesty fueled by a corrupting materialism was not the only thing that troubled Trollope and spurred his writing. In fact, this central aspect of the novel is intimately bound to something that is even more fundamental to Trollope's overall narrative concern—namely, the articulation of the foundations of authentic social relations. Like many other contemporary writers (Thackeray, Dickens, Carlyle, and Ruskin, to name a few), Trollope was deeply concerned with questions of social legitimacy and the ethics and responsibilities of hierarchically structured social relations. *The Way We Live Now* returns to the problem of social performance—staging, role playing, and acting within the public sphere—and its impact on perceptions and the inter-subjective dynamics of authentic social distinctions.[3] According to Trollope, part of the "dishonesty" of the new forms and displays of wealth is that it allows people to appear and perform as something they are not:

> [A] certain class of dishonesty, dishonesty magnificent in its proportions, and climbing into high places, has become at the same time so rampant and so splendid that there seems to be reason for fearing that men and women will be taught to feel that dishonesty, if it can become splendid, will cease to be abominable. If dishonesty can live in a gorgeous palace with pictures on all its walls, and gems in all its cupboards, with marble and ivory in all its corners, and can give Apician dinners, and get into Parliament, and deal in millions, then dishonesty is not disgraceful, and the man dishonest after such a fashion is not a low scoundrel. (*Autobiography* 355)

The "certain class of dishonesty" that agitates Trollope has to do specifically with the upper echelons of culture and society. Trollope believed that people in positions of power and privilege had a fundamental duty to provide and maintain an ethical example for those beneath them in position and rank. For Trollope, pervasive materialism and moral collapse among England's upper classes are particularly problematic, undermining and threatening traditional ideas concerning legitimate social relations, hierarchy, and power. In a society governed predominantly by materialism, the opulence of wealth generated from commercial speculation, investment, and/or "swindling" blurs and displaces the boundaries of so-called "natural" social distinctions and sets up the possibility—perhaps inevitability—that economic villains like Augustus Melmotte (the novel's main scoundrel) can and will become the norm of social and political power. Trollope goes to great lengths to show how Melmotte is essentially a poseur who is able to influence and swindle others because "material profligacy" has transformed the foundational ethos of social relations. Moreover, he demonstrates some of the ways in which "appearance over essence" has become the common social reality that threatens to explode the possibility of marking and maintaining *authentic* social relations and distinctions.

But this begs the question: if social relations that are based upon the values of materialism and appearances are *inauthentic*, as Trollope suggests, then what are the foundations of *authentic*, traditional social relations and hierarchy? In various ways, most of Trollope's novels communicate the idea that the legitimate establishment and designations of class and gradation of rank are and ought to be established on innate distinctions: that is, on what is perceived as the natural and yet objectively verifiable social distinctions of individuals. Despite superficial fluctuations in some characters' personalities, Trollope believes that there are immutable attributes of character that define and differentiate people; and it is from this that authentic, hierarchical social relations are determined. According to Christopher Herbert, Trollope "often calls attention to the weird disjunctions in the acts and motives of his characters, but his point of departure is a presumption that personality is essentially monolithic at the core and possesses indeed almost the solidity, the distinctness of contour, of a material object" ("Fixity" 230). Moreover, in a series of reflections in Trollope's autobiography on the political and ideological differences between conservatives and liberals (he calls himself an "advanced conservative Liberal")[4], he concludes that authentic social distinctions are the "natural" results of innate qualities and differences; further, because they are also divinely established, it is useless to seek "proclaimed equality," even when motivated by a deep "consciousness of wrong" and unjust inequity (*Autobiography* 292). All efforts to change the fundamental structure of social relations have "shown how powerless they are in opposing the ordinances of the Creator." Indeed, for Trollope, inequity and social hierarchy are inevitable because they are rooted in nature and the will of the divine: "Make all men equal today, and God has so created them that they shall all be unequal tomorrow." However, the question remains: what are the defining characteristics of those that are considered naturally distinctive and socially authentic, beyond the possession of economic, social, and cultural capital?

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[2] Herbert rejects approaching the novel as a social/ethical indictment, a limited perspective that fails to account for the novel as "*entertaining*, unusually rich in humorous invention, especially in those areas supposed most to epitomize modern moral degeneracy" (175). Interestingly, Trollope and nearly all of his contemporaries also focused primarily on the novel's social/ethical criticism and not on its humorous or "entertaining" qualities.

[3] For more on the centrality of the problem of social performance in Trollope's narrative practice, see Swafford, Kevin. "Performance Anxiety or the Production of Class in Anthony Trollope's *The Claverings*." *Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association* 38.2 (Fall 2005): 45-58.

[4] See also Lynette Felber's "The Advanced Conservative Liberal: Victorian Liberalism and the Aesthetics of Anthony Trollope's Palliser Novels." *Modern Philology* 107.3 (2010): 421-46.

In attempting to answer this question, Trollope often finds himself in difficult circumstances. Throughout his novels, there are various (implicit and overt) representations of legitimized social hierarchies that Trollope considers "natural." The "best" at the top of the social hierarchy are deemed worthy of complete respect because they are essentially "natural" in their distinction and distinctiveness. Such characters are never false in matters of personal ethos and social position, duty and responsibility; they know and accept their social position entirely. Moreover, their essential tell-tale sign of distinction and authenticity is revealed by the fact that they do not pretend or seek to be anything other than what they truly are. As emblems of distinction, their existence is never a calculated act or performance dependent on the confirming gaze and admiration of others, but rather a *state of being* that perpetually signifies and communicates a transcendent and differential social essence. Among such characters, social actions and interactions are ends in themselves and not the means to other ends.

Many of Trollope's most sympathetic and engaging characters exemplify and reinforce these ideas in varying degrees, but the paradigmatic figure who embodies them most clearly is Plantagenet Palliser (ultimately, Duke of Omnium) of the Palliser novels, one of the primary characters to express and embody his most fervently held political and social convictions (*Autobiography* 180). In *Can You Forgive Her?* (1864), Palliser is described as "born in the purple, noble himself, and heir to the highest rank as well as one of the greatest fortunes in the country . . . and yet he devoted himself to work with the grinding energy of a young penniless barrister labouring for a penniless wife, and did so without any motive more selfish than that of being counted in the roll of the public servants of England" (246). As Trollope's exemplary "noble gentleman," Palliser "never thought of assisting his position in the world by his outward appearance" (222); since his "natural" qualities defy any type of calculated performance and self-interested public display, he "justifies to the nation the seeming anomaly of an hereditary peerage and of primogeniture" (*Autobiography* 181). Utterly free of affectation, Palliser is "naturally" suited to his social and economic position; he is essentially selfless and yet paternalistic, in need of simply the opportunities and means to serve his country and family. Quite literally, he represents Trollope's ideal embodying a host of traditional political and social beliefs concerning power, position, and class.

The Way We Live Now features Roger Carbury, Squire of Carbury Hall, as the representative of Trollope's social and political ideal. Like Plantagenet Palliser, Carbury's ethos is in part established in opposition to calculated social performances. Whereas crass materialists and snobs like Melmotte seek to *perform* (to be *recognized*) and act out the roles of social distinction and superiority from motives of self-interest, Carbury scorns spectacle and refuses to acknowledge anything outside of what he perceives as the natural social sphere and duties of a "gentleman." As a result, his social position is compromised to a certain degree among those who have generally abandoned traditional ideas of social distinction for the allure of wealth and display: "In the days of which we write the Squire of Carbury Hall had become a poor man simply through the wealth of others. His estate was supposed to bring him £2,000 a year. . . .he lived on his own land among his own people, as all the Carburys before him had done, and was poor because he was surrounded by rich neighbors" (48). As a traditionalist and a gentleman, Carbury cares next to nothing about the seeming diminution of his status among the new rich and the older families that flaunt wealth. Carbury's relative poverty is merely a false appearance; in truth, his "wealth" is more than material, reflected in his character, which, according to Trollope, marks him as an exemplary gentleman and an embodiment of social authenticity. Carbury is absolutely certain of his own social position and how it is different from those whose "standing" is established by wealth:

> It was his opinion—which he did not care to declare loudly, but which was fully understood to be his opinion by those with whom he lived intimately,—that a man's standing in the world should not depend at all upon his wealth. The Primeros were undoubtedly beneath him in the social scale, although the young Primeros had three horses apiece, and killed legions of pheasants annually at about 10*s*. a head. Hepworth of Eardly was a very good fellow, who gave himself no airs and understood his duties as a country gentleman; but he could not be more than on par with Carbury of Carbury, though he was supposed to enjoy £7000 a year. The Longestaffes were altogether oppressive. Their footman, even in the country, had powdered hair. They have a house in town,—the house of their own,—and lived altogether as magnates. (49)

As a bulwark of traditional, squirearchical values and beliefs, everything about Carbury is intended to signify a contrasting position to the facile materialism and corruptions of modern culture and society. His reserved pride in his social position, family home, and region are unwavering—but it is never objectified or manifested demonstratively:

> Taking it altogether, one would be inclined to say, that it [Carbury Hall] was picturesque rather than comfortable. Such as it was its owner was very proud of it—with a pride of which he never spoke to any one, which he

> endeavoured studiously to conceal, but which made itself known to all who knew him well. The houses of the gentry around him were superior to his in material comfort and general accommodation, but to none of them belonged that thoroughly established look of old country position that belonged to Carbury. Bundlesham, where the Primeros lived, was the finest house in that part of the county, but it looked as if it had been built within the last twenty years. It was surrounded by new shrubs and new lawns, by new walls and new outhouses, and it savoured of trade—so at least thought Roger Carbury, though he never said the words. (130)

For Carbury, overt and ostentatious displays of wealth, which often "savour of trade," indicate something worse than poor judgment and taste—they signify an underlying corruption of culture and a breakdown in the traditional social structure. His own county, Suffolk, is largely immune to the disheartening changes that are happening elsewhere: "I like Suffolk," he asserts. "The people are hearty, and radicalism is not quite so rampant as it is elsewhere. The poor people touch their hats, and the rich people think of the poor. There is something left among us of old English habits" (153). Yet Carbury feels an acute uneasiness in relation to his family and friends who seem willing to sacrifice traditional values and beliefs for purposes of self-promotion and gain. Lady Carbury, her son, Sir Felix Carbury, and Paul Montague (Carbury's friend, sometimes rival, and eventual heir) willfully seek to associate with the Melmottes (the paradigmatic emblems of debased society) in order to realize social and economic advantages, something that Roger Carbury would never do: "The old-fashioned idea that the touching of pitch will defile still prevailed with him. He was a gentleman—and would have felt himself disgraced to enter the house of such a one as Augustus Melmotte. Not all the duchesses in the peerage, or all money in the city, could alter his notions or induce him to modify his conduct" (69).

Ultimately, Trollope would have his readers believe that there is a "natural" quality to Carbury that distinguishes him from others and warrants his social position. Moreover, unlike the new rich and others seduced by materialism, the gaze of society is irrelevant to a gentleman like Roger Carbury—again, he apparently does not need confirmation to realize himself socially; and this too is a mark of his distinction. Conservative and thoroughly dependable in his staid adherence to traditional ideals, he presents a stark contrast to the pervasive ways of thinking and acting in the world of the novel. But the attempt to differentiate and offset Carbury from the corrupt tendencies of modernity is, in the last instance, a romantic appeal to a mythic past and social tradition. As the novel makes clear, the ethos and social logic that defines and justifies figures like Roger Carbury may be impossible to maintain in a world driven and determined by materialism. For Trollope, such a

world encourages even the best to be "false from head to foot," as Trollope writes of Lady Carbury (17), while undermining legitimate social hierarchy based upon something more socially organic and lofty than mere economics and performance. Indeed, displaced by an elusive, golden idol—that reflects and reinforces crass self-interest, greed, and sham—the very idea of legitimate social distinction, as Trollope perceives it, becomes something largely irrelevant in the new social reality, and it is this primary fact that motivates Trollope's scathing satire and critique.

Trollope develops his critique by showing how important social positions and relations are based upon a perpetual dialectic of recognition and performance that is fundamentally established by economic realities. Ultimately, Trollope denies the economic dimension as a legitimate foundation of social distinctions, for he sees it as the realm of the vulgar and the inauthentic. However, the degraded society represented in this novel features little behind contemporary social relations and distinctions *other* than economic interests. In a sordid age of materialism, traditional social codes and relations that are undermined by greed become the vestiges of a mythologized, "authentic" past that are in desperate need of recuperation—here, as elsewhere in Trollope's writing, the traditional values of a mythic past function as a standard measure of critiquing the present. To reject such values and traditions is to invite dire consequences, as Carlyle and others variously warned throughout the nineteenth century.

Augustus Melmotte is of course the character and symbolic figure in *The Way We Live Now* that embodies and clarifies the scope and dynamic of the problem. Melmotte represents how the binary tensions between truth and lies, nature and performance, essence and illusion structure and reveal the corrosive inter-personal and socio-economic dynamics at the center of novel. In terms of character, the true—such as Roger Carbury—are committed to traditional ideals of personal and social responsibility, rank and duty; whereas the false—Melmotte—engage in an ongoing performance of disguise and bluff, manipulation and dishonesty, to secure ever increasing amounts of money and power. Without money, Melmotte is nothing; but with it, or at least the rumor of it, he has enormous influence and power. The fact that money can buy prestige, command respect, and call into being elaborate displays of grandeur, changes how social relations and positions are understood and experienced. Part of the outrage Melmotte generates is that he demonstrates and reinforces the idea that the old ways of marking and maintaining distinctions are no longer absolutely applicable or relevant: wealth itself has become the actual measure of power and position, while social and cultural capital are mere façades that cover its ultimate truth. For Melmotte, capital is the source of social positioning; and yet, as the foundation of power, it must perform and be put on display, if it is to have any real social value.

In varying degrees, all of the primary characters in *The Way We Live Now* believe in, adhere to, and engage with calculated social performance and an ideology of display and recognition rooted in the logic of capital—the exception, again, being

Roger Carbury. Trollope illustrates how socially symbolic acts—objects, social alliances, gatherings, and events—are interpreted in different ways, relative to the social positions of the "actors" and "audience." The meaning of a social performance is, in part, determined by audience, although audience is also relatively determined in the symbolic exchanges of signification and reception. Among the aristocracy, Melmotte's elaborate display of material wealth, his calculated gestures, overtly performed self-interested acts, and intended expressions of social distinctiveness are undermined by "giving off" a message at odds with the usual codes of natural distinctiveness. Melmotte is thoroughly artificial and inauthentic; and it is understood that the act, the display—the objectification of desire for recognition—is his attempt to *purchase* prestige and not the excess or natural outflowing of an established social position and character. Melmotte's performance is a deception that is recognized and accepted as such. Repeatedly, Trollope asserts that Melmotte is known to be a swindler who bought his way into society; in Roger Carbury's terms—

> Men say openly that he is an adventurer and a swindler. No one pretends to think that he is a gentleman. There is a consciousness among all who speak of him that he amasses his money not by honest trade, but by unknown tricks—as does a card sharper. He is one whom we would not admit into our kitchens, much less to our tables, on the score of his own merits. But because he has learned the art of making money, we not only put up with him, but settle upon his carcass as so many birds of prey. (138)

More to the point, "Mr. Melmotte was admitted into society, because of some enormous power which was supposed to lie in his hands; but even by those who thus admitted him he was regarded as a thief and a scoundrel" (299).

In a sense, that everyone agrees Melmotte is a fraud indicates their belief, at least implicitly, in the idea of social authenticity and the ideal of the "natural"—the one who need not perform. The ethical dubiousness of his financial actions and the boorish tendencies of his social exchanges indicate that he is not a *gentleman*. But why is it, then, that so many are willing to accept and affirm Melmotte, if he is so clearly a poseur? As a constant reminder of the power and desirability of material wealth, Melmotte's socially symbolic acts limit the degree and forms of negative response.[5] To the extent that Melmotte is useful (materially and socially), he is indulged and appeased; that he has the requisite audience ensures his performance is accepted and allowed to continue.[6] To openly disavow or reject Melmotte is to lose

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[5] Trollope implies that "England is the one society vulnerable, stupid, and corrupt enough to admit Melmotte . . . . people never forget that Melmotte is a scoundrel; they just do not care much" (Kincaid 166).

[6] The intersubjective dynamics of social performance and recognition must be consistent in order to effectually influence social positioning. Once established, the performance must be

access to what appears to be easy profit. As long as Melmotte has access to capital and is able to put it on display and make it work, he is authorized to give his performance; but as soon as his resources and money are gone, he becomes a mere imposter, condemned and barred from the stage of social performance and power.[7] All of this illustrates Trollope's sense of the degraded and reprehensible "way we live now."

Still, Trollope seems less concerned with the hypocrisy of the social dynamic than with the meaning and effects of Melmotte's overall success. Repeatedly, the narrative illustrates that Melmotte's performance is not *gratis*, nor is he simply purchasing prestige—which, at times, inspires self-righteous indignation among certain members of the peerage, but more frequently reveals the overall social complicity with charlatanism; rather, as an emblematic type, he is also changing the rules of the social stage.[8] By reinforcing the idea that social distinctions, relations, and actions are interconnected performances determined by the accumulation, expenditure, and regeneration of capital, Melmotte's example explodes not only the ideology of "natural" social distinctions, which, again, Trollope perceives as a social essence that is fundamentally non-performative, but also the codes of conduct and values that are associated with it.

What matters to Melmotte is power; and, since the traditional means of achieving it socially have been largely supplanted by new economic forces and realities that he manipulates and uses to advantage, he feels no compunction in violating a host of norms associated with past hierarchical demarcations. The recognition of title, for example, is a form of meaningful symbolic capital commanding specific types of comportment, observation, and acknowledgement. Deference to title was once one of the essential rules of stratified social relations. Prior to the industrial revolution and the emergence of the cultural and political hegemony of the middle-class in the nineteenth century, a legitimately bestowed or inherited title of distinction, as a form of capital, was often valued more highly than economic capital, although the two often accompanied each other. The authority of titles signified by association the *ideal* of various qualities of personal character and achievement (as opposed to a mere ability to amass wealth and power); it also established immediate social boundaries and alliances that demanded respect. By not

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adhered to as a form within a specified and determined habitus or else fail. See Goffman (10-11).

[7] Goffman writes: "Sometimes when we ask whether a fostered impression is true or false we really mean to ask whether or not the performer is authorized to give the performance, and are not primarily concerned with the actual performance itself. When we discover that someone with whom we have dealings is an imposter and out-and-out fraud, we are discovering that he did not have the right to play the part he played, that he was not an accredited incumbent of the relevant status" (59).

[8] Melmotte is a type, fashioned after "several notorious nineteenth-century speculators: Henry Fauntleroy, John Sadleir, and especially George Hudson (1800-71), who was known as 'the Railway King,' 'the Railway Napoleon,' and 'the Yorkshire Balloon'" (Tracy 159).

simply deferring to title, Melmotte challenges a part of the foundational mythos of the social hierarchy. Ultimately, titles and social hierarchy signify very little to Melmotte, *if they are not supported by a substantial material or economic foundation.* Indeed, only when buttressed by economic capital does a title have value for Melmotte. The scandal and ignominy of this idea among the aristocracy is reflected in Sir Felix's incredulous response to Melmotte's inquiries into his "finances" and inheritance:

> The bloated swindler, the vile city ruffian, was certainly taking a most ungenerous advantage of the young aspirant for wealth. It was then that Sir Felix felt his own position. Was he not a baronet, and a gentleman, and a very handsome fellow, and a man of the world who had been in a crack regiment? If this surfeited sponge of speculation, this crammed commercial cormorant, wanted more than that for his daughter, why could he not say so without asking disgusting questions such as these—questions which it was quite impossible but a gentleman should answer? Was it not sufficiently plain that any gentleman proposing to marry the daughter of such a man as Melmotte, must do so under the stress of pecuniary embarrassment? Would it not be understood as a bargain that as he provided the rank and position, she would provide the money? (221-22)

As a baronet, Sir Felix believes that title is superior to wealth and that wealth should recognize the traditional privileges of rank. But this is precisely what Melmotte rejects.[9] By not recognizing Sir Felix, who lacks an adequate income, though he possesses a title and is the heir apparent to the Carbury estate, as a worthy suitor for his daughter, Melmotte illustrates the degree to which the ideology of social distinctions based upon anything other than wealth has been eroded. For Melmotte, the dialectic of recognition (that situates the inter-subjective meaning of social positions) is conditioned by the possession of economic resources and capital. Without these, one is not recognized as a leading actor on the stage of social performances. Indeed, Melmotte informs his daughter's would-be lovers that she "will have money; but money expects money," and that rank—though highly desirable—is not sufficient by itself to win his approval (222).

The conflict between Sir Felix and Melmotte is one of different prejudices—aristocratic snobbery versus *nouveau-riche*, adventure-capitalist snobbery—and it illustrates, in minutiae, one aspect of the defining, historical class struggle between the aristocracy and the emergent business/middle class. Both, in their prejudicial arguments, are abhorrent to Trollope, although he is slightly more sympathetic toward the perspectives and disposition of the aristocracy. Still, neither point of view accords with his sense of the natural order of social distinctions, as Roger Carbury clarifies:

> A title, according to Roger's doctrine on such subjects, could make no man a gentleman, but, if improperly worn, might degrade a man who would otherwise be a gentleman. He thought that a gentleman, born and bred, acknowledged as such without doubt, could not be made more than a gentleman by all the titles which the Queen could give. With these old-fashioned notions Roger hated the title which had fallen upon a branch of this family. He certainly would not leave his property to support the title which Sir Felix unfortunately possessed. But Sir Felix was the natural heir, and this man felt himself constrained, almost as by some divine law, to see that his land went by natural descent. . . . It was his duty to see that it went from Carbury to Carbury as long as there was a Carbury to hold it, and especially his duty to see that it should go from his hands, at his death, unimpaired in extent or value. (131-32)

From Carbury's perspective, Sir Felix is not worthy of a title—since he lacks the "born and bred" qualities of a gentleman. For both Trollope and Carbury, at the core of authentic social distinctions is a mythic code of respectability that is somehow inherent in the rightful heirs of power and prestige. A gentleman is one who has natural attributes that can be refined; and a title is meaningless and an error without the appropriate expression of these inherent characteristics and sensibilities. All of this, of course, cannot be maintained without recourse to a denial of historical reality. The idealism of "natural distinctions" is an ideological construct and a projected social-political fantasy that works to divert awareness and questions concerning the historical foundations of class differences and distinctions themselves. In terms of social structure and relations, the "natural" does not reflect Nature but rather historical contingencies; and Trollope's novel responds precisely to some of the effects of many of these contingencies as they were being negotiated and experienced in nineteenth-century England. What gives characters like Roger Carbury, Plantagenet Palliser, Phineas Finn, and Dr. Wortle (and many other Trollopian gentleman found in his later novels) their authority is in fact rooted in economic foundations and inequities that are screened by the performance of a "naturalized" social code—that is, a way of thinking, seeing, and acting that is no longer considered to be a product of history but rather eternal and natural within certain "types" of humans.

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[9] Some aristocrats were offended by Melmotte's lack of respect for rank and title. "'Damn that kind of nonsense . . . . Call people by their proper names'" (42).

Although Trollope insisted upon it, there is nothing "natural" about social positions: so why, then, does he insist? The class-question in Victorian society was deeply problematic, poised between the notion of a semi-divine determinism and the era's economic and historical realities. A novelist committed to exploring a variety of moral and ethical dilemmas, Trollope struggled with the class-question, his ideology of natural distinctions preventing him from developing his critique beyond the scope of ethics. His anger at the "commercial profligacy" of the period is, quite literally, a disavowal of association, whereby the values and ideals of the past, configured in the mythic image of the gentleman, are claimed to be radically different in their removal from the realm of economics. Ironically, in this perspective Trollope is either deluded or not entirely honest with himself and his readers. Modernism requires that social distinctions are largely premised on economic relations, and the concept of natural distinction aims to evade this fact.

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Book Review

Review of Iain Ross, *Oscar Wilde and Ancient Greece*
Cambridge Studies in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture
(Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2012), ISBN 978-1107020320, 293 pages, 4 b/w illus.

by Nikolai Endres

"To read Greek and speak French are two of the greatest pleasures in the cultivation of Life" – thus Oscar Wilde's gospel of aestheticism. While the French aspect has been researched fairly exhaustively, the Greek legacy has probably received less attention. Iain Ross sets out to remedy this lack in his book *Oscar Wilde and Ancient Greece*.

The Introduction turns to the three foundational texts for Wilde's Hellenism: Matthew Arnold's "Hellenism and Hebraism" in *Culture and Anarchy*, Walter Pater's "Winckelmann" in *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, and John Addington Symonds' *Studies of the Greek Poets*: "All three sought to preserve Greece as an imaginative resource and a model of right conduct amid the encroachments of industrialisation, utilitarianism and mass culture" (3). Ross establishes two complications that arose for Wilde in his pursuit of Hellenism: the need to make money and his (earlier in his career) embrace of the more sensationalist aspects of Greek antiquity, namely his promotion of popular archeology in his contributions to the *Pall Mall Gazette* and *Woman's World.*

Chapter 1, "Paideia," reviews Wilde's education and trip to Greece. It begins with Wilde's father, an avid traveler and amateur classicist who eagerly assimilated Homer to the Celtic bards of Ireland. At Portora, Wilde Junior was fortunate to receive learning that went beyond the grammar grind. At Trinity, Ross contends, Robert Yelverton Tyrrell, Professor of Latin, exercised equal influence over Wilde as the better known John Pentland Mahaffy, Professor of Ancient History. Combining rigorous scholarship with superb wit, Tyrell paved the way for the scholar dandies of Wilde's comedies and *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.

Chapter 2, "Poiêsis," considers Wilde's early writings and a dilemma Wilde faced: "The threat posed to the Greece of romantic imagination by the spade of scientific archeology can be seen as a subset of the broader assault of science upon faith that characterised the culture of the latter half of the nineteenth century" (54). Reading Keats, for example, Wilde rejects rational/scientific approaches to myth: "At the beginning of the century Keats's ode ("Grecian Urn") responded to the enthusiastic amateurism of archaeology's inception; by the end of the century the discipline had been professionalised and specialised, casting over the previously free realm of antiquity a net of chronological and topographical overdetermination" (80).

Chapter 3, "Archaiologia," explores Wilde's membership in The Society of the Promotion of Hellenic Studies (other notables include Symonds, Heinrich Schliemann, and Sir Charles Newton, Keeper of Greek and Roman Antiquities at the British Museum), which promoted archeology, published newly discovered inscriptions and monuments, and combined "scientific study with the preservation of a normative aestheticism" (102). Wilde was also involved in the staging of plays set in antiquity, where Wilde advocated strangeness of setting over historical accuracy. Ross then turns to Wilde's embattled relationship with Sir Lawrence Alma Tadema's famous paintings (whose *Sappho and Alcaeus* is reproduced on the book's cover): "Tadema's pictures serve up history as a collection of fetishised artefacts and costumes whose otherness is simultaneously overemphasised by wealth of detail, so that no one could mistake them for the quotidian material of lived experience, and neutralised by the contemporary faces and postures, so that no one could mistake the people in the paintings for the real inhabitants of the past" (110). Eventually, Wilde would lose interest in archeology because of its claim to historical truth.

Chapter 4, "Philologia," summarizes Wilde's mature writings, which reject the popularism and positivism associated with archeology. Wilde also broke with his former mentor Mahaffy, who privileged the three Ps of Hellenism: "Perikles, Pheidias, and the Parthenon" (128). What follows is an extensive discussion of Aristotle's influence, especially his idea of self-control: "For Wilde, the *Ethics* was a practical manual for fashioning one's self" (145). Ross also speculates about what might have happened had Wilde gained a fellowship at Magdalen that he applied for. Regarding Plato, Ross uncovers that in Wilde's edition of Benjamin Jowett's translation of the Socratic dialogues, the pages covering Plato's "technical, metaphysical dialogues," such as the *Parmenides*, *Theaetetus*, and *Statesman*, "are often uncut" (164). Ross ends with a section on "Hellenism Repudiated?" In *De Profundis*, Wilde seems to be turning to Christianity or at least to the more chthonic/irrational/Dionysian forces of suffering, while previously he had worshiped the sweetness and light of Olympian or Apollonian Hellenism.

The book concludes with appendices on Wilde's Trinity College Dublin syllabus, Oxford syllabus, Wilde's notes on his trip to Greece, Wilde's compositions of Greek tragic verse, his notes on Aristotle's *Ethics*, his notes on the Pre-Socratics and Plato, and his efforts at Greek comic verse composition. When looking at the syllabi, I noticed a conspicuous absence: Plato's *Symposium* does not seem to have been part of assigned reading at Trinity or Oxford (unlike the *Phaedo* or *Apology*). Considering the famous exchange in E. M. Forster's *Maurice* – undergraduate students translating Plato when the dean exhorts them: "Omit: a reference to the unspeakable vice of the Greeks" – when and where did Wilde first encounter this seminal text? In this context, Ross is also mistaken to term Dorian as the Platonic lover/*erastes* and Lord Henry the beloved/*eromenos*, which should be exactly the other way round. My final verdict is thus mixed. I guess I was hoping for more literary criticism, while Ross' emphasis falls on historical matter.

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Author Biographies

Veronica Alfano is an assistant professor of English at Borough of Manhattan Community College in the City University of New York. Her research interests include Victorian poetry, lyric theory, the history of prosody, and photography; her work has appeared or is forthcoming in publications such as *Feminist Studies in English Literature, Critical Matrix,* and the volume *Libidinal Lives: Economies of Desire in the Literature and Culture of the Fin de Siècle*. Currently, she is co-editing an essay collection titled *Virtual Victorians: Networks, Connections, Technologies* and working on a book project called *The Lyric in Victorian Memory*, which explores the links between mnemonic form and cultural nostalgia.

Caley Ehnes is a doctoral candidate at the University of Victoria. Her dissertation, "Writing with 'one hand for the booksellers': Victorian Poetry and the Illustrated Literary Periodical," argues that poetry is not only essential to our understanding of the periodical press, but also that the periodical is integral to understanding Victorian poetics. The archival research completed for this dissertation makes up part of the *Database of Victorian Periodical Poetry* (for which Ehnes is senior research assistant) on the *Victorian Poetry Network*. She has recently published on devotional poetry and the religious periodical *Good Words* in *Victorian Periodicals Review*, and is currently co-editing a forthcoming special issue of *Victorian Poetry* on periodical poetry.

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Mary Rosner, an Associate Professor of English at the University of Louisville, has a continuing interest in Victorian travel which, she hopes, will soon take her to Livingstone's second book. She has been lucky enough to follow her interest in Livingstone to the Alan Paton Archives in South Africa, where she studied drafts of Paton's two plays about Livingstone. For more information, see *English in Africa* (2011).

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