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***Pentangle's* History**

Pentangle, a journal of student writing, debuted in 1992 at Northern Kentucky University and is sponsored by the Pi Omega chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the International English Honor Society. Pi Omega is committed to the principles of Sigma Tau Delta, as stated in the international pledge: "To advance the study of chief literary masterpieces, to encourage worthwhile reading, to promote the mastery of written expression, and to foster a spirit of fellowship among those who specialize in the study of the English language and of literature."

The name of the journal, *Pentangle*, alludes to the famous image of the pentangle in the Middle English poem, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, where it is a symbol of truth and of the perfection to which Sir Gawain aspires. This association is consistent with the editorial staff's goal of honoring writing of merit in *Pentangle*. The Pentangle title also echoes the title of Sigma Tau Delta's official journal of student writing, *The Rectangle*.



Submission Guidelines

Pentangle solicits submissions of research papers, critical essays, and book reviews pertaining to all areas of literary studies in upper division and graduate courses. Book reviews should be for books written in the last two years. All submissions must be in MLA format (Gibaldi, et al., 7th ed.) and typed using Microsoft Word. Please email all submissions to pentangle@nku.edu. When submitting manuscripts, please include a bioline and contact information.

Editorial Policy

The editors reserve the right to edit submissions for grammar and punctuation. Editing may also include revisions to thesis statements and transitional sentences as well as other changes that clarify the work. The editors will work diligently to ensure that the integrity and intent of the author's work is maintained.

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Counting the Costs of Colonialism: The Unintended Legacies of British Imperialism in Collins's *The Moonstone*, Hardy's *Tess* and Dickens's *Bleak House*

Tom Clark

Consult the dictionary and the definitions of *foreign* and *domestic* could not be more plainly separated. *Foreign*, according to *Webster's*, is “born in, belonging to or characteristic of some place or country other than the one under consideration,” a definition amplified in the additional phrase “alien in character” (483). Conversely, *domestic* is defined as “of, relating to, or carried on within a country and especially one's own country” and, of particular concern for these purposes, “of or relating to the household or the family” (374). The definitions make clear that the boundary between affairs foreign and affairs domestic is the boundary between that which is labeled “home” and that which is labeled “not home.” For Victorian Great Britain, home ended at the water's edge. That left a great deal of “not home”; even the island just on the other side of the Irish Sea was considered a matter of “foreign” policy.

These seemingly straightforward definitions were complicated in Victorian Great Britain by the fact that so much of the world which lay beyond the water's edge was, in fact, the responsibility of the British monarch. With the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, the vast enterprise known as the British Empire found itself in an “extraordinary powerful position,” dominating the world in terms of “commercial, financial and naval power” (Cody). Assembled colony by colony in the previous centuries to serve the mother country as sources of raw materials and as markets for manufactured goods, the collected Empire in the 19th Century “existed not for the benefit — economic or strategic or otherwise — of Britain itself, but in order that primitive peoples, incapable of self-government, could, with British guidance, eventually become civilized” (Cody). Such intertwining

of economic, strategic and humanitarian goals (however egocentric and/or condescending the logic of each may have been) renders the boundary between foreign and domestic beyond the scope of dictionary definitions. India and South Africa were definitely not domestic, but neither were they totally foreign. Likewise, when the waters of the rest of the world lap up onto the beaches of Fortress England, matters domestic may not be so completely domestic after all. The actions and policies carried on someplace “alien in character” may find their way home. Melissa Free has gone so far as to charge the terms foreign and domestic to be “false binaries,” underscoring the “utterly false logic of imperialism: we are doing them a service” (340).

On their faces, the novels *The Moonstone*, by Wilkie Collins; *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, by Thomas Hardy; and *Bleak House*, by Charles Dickens, are domestic novels: the novels' plots unfold over restricted geographic terrains within England; the major characters of each never stray beyond the borders of England; the consequences of the characters' rises and falls barely ripple beyond the immediate families of the action. Read through a domestic lens, *The Moonstone*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, and *Bleak House* can be studied as parochial stories of morality. But a more expansive inquiry into each book reveals individual stories that can be read as metaphors that dive into foreign waters—cautionary tales that reveal the intrusion of the foreign into the domestic. Actions “carried on abroad,” suggest Wilkie, Hardy, and Dickens, may not be quite so apart from their own country, and the unacknowledged costs of British imperialism within the homes and people of Mother England may be even more dear than the millions of pounds debated annually

in the halls of Parliament.

In each of these novels, specific characters metaphorically embody legacies of British colonialism, legacies that haunt, complicate and even destroy their lives just as those legacies have complicated the affairs of the British state even into modern times. Written at the height of the British Empire's powers, these novels collectively presaged the decline of the Empire and the national anguish and soul-searching that were to accompany the Empire's decline in the aftermath of the world wars that were undreamed of horrors in the years when Wilkie, Hardy and Dickens published their tales of home and Empire.

When you looked down into the stone, you looked into a yellow deep that drew your eyes into it so that they saw nothing else.

—Wilkie Collins, *The Moonstone* (67)

Melissa Free has written persuasively that “the foreign shapes the domestic”; an idea that fostered and influenced this paper (340). Free's study of *The Moonstone* sees Collins's novel as an allegory of the British Empire, an allegory that “documents not innocence but *collusion* with the imperial project” (340). This allegory is, of course, lost on the characters of the novel, who see themselves only as actors in the remembered story of a lost family heirloom. The characters are recounting the search for “The Moonstone,” a diamond that has been bequeathed and then lost and assumed stolen. From the beginning of the novel, the reader is informed that the gem is “cursed”: stolen from its ancient home in India, ill fortune has followed its movements. Looted from India by a British army officer, John Herncastle, the stone is eventually bequeathed to his niece, Rachel Verinder.

That this stone has a troubled history escapes no one, but Rachel accepts the gift gladly and refuses all attempts to lock up the stone on the night she receives it. In the morning, the stone is reported missing, stolen from Rachel's room. The search calls into question the behaviors and motivations of everyone in the household, particularly Rachel, as her erratic behaviors complicate and even obstruct the investigation.

The metaphoric associations to British imperialism inherent in the Moonstone gem and its curse pile up rather easily in anything more than a superficial reading of Collins's text. The wondrous stone is Indian in origin; India was the gem of the British Empire. The possession of the stone is contested by Hindus and Muslims, as was (and is) the Indian Subcontinent—a religious conflict which the British occupiers of India understood little, as do the possessors of the stone. The Moonstone is from its first appearance in Collins's book a source of seduction, plunder, murder, family discord and regret, which

are all motivated by greed—a story that parallels the history of Britain in India.

British greed for Indian riches is exhibited in the greed for Collins's mystical gem that infects and transforms four characters of *The Moonstone*, beginning with John Herncastle. A soldier in Britain's army, Herncastle learns of the legend of the Moonstone in camp before the storming of Seringapatam. His “love of the marvelous induce[s] him to believe” the legend and, thus seduced, Herncastle abandons his orders to “prevent the plunder and confusion” following the battle to seek out the treasure (Collins 5-6). An unnamed cousin's account of the day leads readers to believe that Herncastle murders three Indians guarding the Moonstone. “The dying Indian sank to his knees, pointed to the dagger in Herncastle's hand, and said, in his native language: ‘The Moonstone will have its vengeance yet on you and yours!’ He spoke these words, and fell dead on the floor” (6-7). When next they meet, Herncastle will deny to his cousin any understanding of the guard's curse or any knowledge of the stone's fate. The cousin literally turns his back on his relation and writes prophetically that Herncastle “will live to regret [the theft], if he keeps the Diamond; and that others will live to regret taking it from him, if he gives the Diamond away” (8).

Whether Herncastle fulfilled his share of the prophecy is a matter of speculation, although Collins records Herncastle's subsequent estrangement from a portion of the family. But others do “live to regret taking it from him”; it is this regret which makes up the remainder of *The Moonstone's* plot. The gem comes into the temporary possession of Herncastle's niece, Miss Rachel, who receives the Moonstone as a birthday present, in accordance with Herncastle's will. The propriety of the bequest is much debated by Blake Franklin, the estate's executor: is he the messenger for an act of repentance or the deliverance of a curse? On its presentation, Miss Rachel is “fascinated” by the gem, as are her other guests (with one notable exception) (67). Miss Rachel wears the stone that night, wired into “the bosom of her white dress”—the prize possession nestled in the heart of the mother country—where “[e]verybody wondered at the prodigious size and beauty of the Diamond” (70). In hindsight, the servant Betteredge wonders if the “cursed Diamond...cast a blight on the whole company,” as the birthday dinner is marked by misunderstandings and social faux pas (71). The party is finally disrupted by the appearance on an Indian juggling troupe, who Franklin and others recognize to be in search of the Moonstone and chased away. As night falls, Miss Rachel ignores commonsense—Betteredge compares her to a headstrong child with a new doll—and tucks the Indian stone away in her Indian cabinet—“for the purpose of permitting two beautiful native productions to admire

each other" (81-82) This failure of prudence motivated by greed will have predictably disastrous results, as British efforts in India so often did.

With the morning comes the discovery of the diamond's disappearance, plunging the household into disorder and its inhabitants into suspicion. Mystery piles upon mystery, none more vexing to Sergeant Cuff, the newly arrived master of the investigation, than Miss Rachel's strange and frustrating behaviors. As the investigation unfolds, Rachel abandons the house entirely, even in the face of Cuff's specific warning that doing so "puts an obstacle in the way of my recovering your Diamond" (157). What Cuff and the other occupants cannot know is that Miss Rachel believes she knows the identity of the thief, having witnessed the removal of her jewel, and now finds herself in the discomfiting position of justifying behaviors that should normally be considered reprehensible while shielding the offending parties from more public condemnation. Such are the costs when conflicting greeds collide, as they did on the mysterious night of Miss Rachel's birthday.

As the narrative of *The Moonstone* unfolds through the pens of its multiple narrators, the underlying metaphor of greed must be unmasked before the crime's solution can be revealed. As in any good novel of detection, things are not always as they seem. *The Moonstone's* solution hinges on clearing away fabricated images to see the evil inside. On his introduction, Godfrey Abelwhite is described as "a barrister by profession; a ladies' man by temperament; and a good Samaritan by choice" (59). Abelwhite is the knight in shining armor to myriad women's charitable societies, "leading the dear creatures along the thorny ways of business," just as long-suffering generations of Britons toiled selflessly to lead the benighted multitudes of Indians toward civilization and respectability (60). Underlying Abelwhite's missionary zeal, of course, is the same avarice and gluttony underlying the devoted colonizing Briton's.

On first glance, Abelwhite appeared to be the least affected by the mesmerizing diamond. Betteredge reports that Abelwhite was "the only one of us who kept his senses...looking compassionately backwards and forwards between the Diamond and me, said, 'Carbon, Betteredge! Mere carbon, my good friend, after all!'" (67). That Abelwhite wraps his arms around each of his sisters' waists on his first viewing of the stone ends up appearing less like disinterest and more like a physical restraint of an impulsive urge to pluck the gem. In time Abelwhite will be revealed to be, in the words of John Reed, "the true heir of John Herncastle" (qtd. in Free, 361). This truer nature leaks out within the hour when Abelwhite proposes marriage to the newly endowed Miss Rachel, only to be rebuffed. Fortune smiles on Abelwhite later that night, and in what can be assumed to be

opportunistic glee, it is he who spirits the diamond away to London and the safekeeping of a bank safe, where it is held as collateral on a loan to finance the opulent lifestyle of this duplicitous friend of benevolent societies.

Ultimately, Abelwhite's greed costs him both the Moonstone and his life. As he attempts to flee England with his fortune, Abelwhite is followed by the stone's Brahman guards. They murder him in a dockside public-house and reclaim the stone for which Herncastle murdered the guards' predecessors. Ironically, when Sergeant Cuff finds Abelwhite's body, it is disguised with a wig, false beard and swarthy make-up. Godfrey Abelwhite is attempting to spirit away the stolen stone of India in the disguise of an Indian sailor.

In contrast to Abelwhite's naked avarice, the claim of the Moonstone on Blake Franklin is subconscious and can even be read as altruistic. Under the influence of a dose of opium surreptitiously administered by a local doctor to counteract a bout of sleeplessness, Franklin sleep-walks to Miss Rachel's room, where he removes the diamond from the India cabinet—the act witnessed and subsequently covered up by Miss Rachel. Still in his narcotic stupor, Franklin encounters in the hallway Abelwhite, who has also witnessed the "theft." Franklin hands over the diamond, instructing Abelwhite to return it to his father's bank. "It's safe there—it's not safe here" (466). Such are the costs of the "white man's burden" that good men ultimately can be corrupted by the narcotic lure of colonial riches, and driven to subvert their personal virtues to achieve ends that they remain convinced are in the best interests of those too ignorant to help themselves. That Franklin's act does not enrich himself may mitigate his culpability—Franklin is no Abelwhite, certainly—but his actions launch a string of events that will ruin the lives of some and the domestic tranquility of many (including himself).

That Franklin performs his treachery under the influence of the drug opium only serves to heighten this narrative of discovering the unconscious parallels between the imperialistic nature of Great Britain and this story of domestic conflict. Grown in India and processed in China, opium became the flashpoint of two 19th Century wars, conflicts in which the British Empire exercised its prodigious strength to control the trade and use of the drug and to suppress China. But addictions—whether to powder or power—come with risks, conscious and unconscious, with consequences intended and unintended. Franklin stands as a metaphor for all of these: the unwitting patient to a sympathetic doctor, the naïve user against a powerful opiate, the ill-prepared guardian protective of his love's security. What is done for reasons regarded as good turns, in the final accounting, horribly, horribly wrong.

"I am only a peasant by position, not by nature!"
 —Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (182)

The tragedy of Tess Durbeyfield begins on a parson's whim: "Good-night, Sir John" (1). That this "Sir John" has already been revealed as a shabbily dressed old man carrying an empty egg basket as he stumbles along a country byway is of consequence to Parson Tringham only in its illustration of how times change, of " 'how the mighty are fallen' " (3). Challenged by John Durbeyfield to explain the extension of nobility to such an unfortunate as himself, the parson responds:

"Don't you really know, Durbeyfield, that you are the lineal representative of the ancient and knightly family of the d'Urbervilles, who derive their descent from Sir Pagan d'Urberville, that renowned knight who came from Normandy with William the Conqueror, as appears by the Battle Abbey Roll? . . . There have been generations of Sir Johns among you, and if knighthood were hereditary like a baronetcy—as it practically was in old times, when men were knighted from father to son—you would be Sir John now." (1-2)

In that encounter, the fortune of John's daughter Tess is sealed. The parson has bestowed on "Sir John" a legacy, the legacy of a family name, a legacy that will encumber John and his daughter for the remainder of their days. "Involving no money, land, or power, the d'Urberville name is useless. But its mystique gives the dissipated Jack a reason to celebrate ostentatiously and sets Fortune's wheel in motion" (Rogers 303). This legacy imposed by Parson Tringham is of the same character as the nationalistic self-image that has burdened the British people throughout the centuries of Empire. It is a psychology of cultural elitism defined throughout British literature, including this passage from William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. Having discovered the stranded schoolboys amidst an island on fire, a British naval officer passes judgment: "I should have thought that a pack of British boys . . . would have been able to put up a better show than that" (Golding 202). British civility, it was supposed, prepared Britons for every contingency.

The debilitating effects of this elitism are visible in the newly knighted Sir John while he is still on the road. Overcome with his new station in lineage, if not in circumstances, he identifies himself to a passing friend as "one of a noble race" and orders up a horse and carriage "to carry me hhome [sic]. . . . And when you've done that goo [sic] on to my house with the basket, and tell my wife to put away that washing, because she needn't finish it. . ." (3-4).

Durbeyfield will live out his life in the vain hope that

his new found nobility will pay off, even proposing to solicit funds from the "old antiqueerians": "They spend lots of money in keeping up old ruins, and finding the bones o' things, and such like; and living remains must be more interesting to 'em still, if they only knowed of me" (273). Old Durbeyfield was correct in at least part of his egocentric supposition; the British of the 19th Century (as in the 21st) spent vast sums to maintain the elaborate remnants of a royal system that had already been long overshadowed and diminished in the face of representative government.

It is of no consequence that Durbeyfield plays the fool to his death bed, but consequence falls hard on his family and harder still on his eldest daughter, who is left to play the tragic heroine. Tess must suffer the slings and arrows of a legacy unearned by the genuine efforts of any generations of Durbeyfields or d'Urbervilles since Sir Pagan. Robert Schweik argues the novel reveals "a complex moral reality" and quotes Thomas Hardy's biographer Evelyn Hardy in diagnosing Tess as "a subtly-drawn character with contradictory traits. Her simplicity and purity are adulterated with a strain likely to bring about her downfall" (18). That "strain," which the biographer labels Tess's "tendency towards martyrdom and self-sacrifice," can additionally be read as Tess's efforts to live up to the unearned legacy of the d'Urbervilles (18). Such a reading echoes Rogers's characterization of Tess as a symbol of "the clash between modernity and medievalism and the tragedy that clash produces in the lives of individuals" (303). It is when Tess tries to don the mantle of those long-past generations—when the modern Britain must continue to play the role of Empire builder—that the foundations on which the Durbeyfields' world teeters begin to crumble.

The downward spiral for Tess begins almost as soon as her father carries home his regal announcement. With "Sir John" too drunk to complete his nightly delivery, Tess undertakes the task herself. She falls asleep, contributing to an accident that leaves the family horse dead. Blaming herself for the loss of the family's livelihood, Tess acquiesces to her mother's "projick" to "send Tess to claim kin"—that is, to ingratiate herself upon a wealthy line of d'Urbervilles in a nearby county (Hardy, 17). Mrs. Durbeyfield is unaware that the distant relations "were no more d'Urbervilles of the true tree than [Parson Tringham] was himself" (27). Hardy sharpens the commentary on the transitory nature of names and familial legacies by adding: "Yet it must be admitted that this family formed a very good stock whereon to regraft a name which sadly wanted such renovation" (27) Tess is quickly set upon by her unscrupulous "cousin" Alec. On their first meeting Alec disabuses Tess to any claim on the family name he has appropriated: "But, Tess, no nonsense about 'd'Urberville': 'Durbeyfield only, you

know—quite another name” (30). Alec simultaneously reveals a further, ulterior interest, one that will be consummated in his rape of Tess, an assault that seals the fates of both putative d'Urbervilles.

Tess's actions in the balance of the novel will be, collectively, an attempt to escape the stain of Alec's rape and provide for her family, who consider her naïve and foolish to desert the comforts offered by Alec d'Urberville. Hardy's domestic tale becomes both a search for redemption and a treatise on common morality, with Tess as the pawn in the shifting tides of love and fortune. Tess's efforts to assume the family legacy never lead her to question whether the legacy is of any real value; the riches looted from her by the fake d'Urberville are of more worth than any prize which could be gained under the family crest the Durbeyfields would claim as theirs. Ironically, the only character to recognize this truth is Alec. Confronting Tess in the only lodgings the Durbeyfield family can lay claim to—the d'Urberville crypt at Kingsbere—Alec propositions Tess yet again. “The little finger of the sham d'Urberville can do more for you than the whole dynasty of the real underneath” (287).

Compounding the tragedy of Tess is Angel Clare, the gentleman farmer in training who courts and wins the reluctant girl, only to reject her when he learns on their wedding night of her shame. Clare is a mass of contradictions: he is the rebellious son of a minister who rejects his father's religion but is ensnared by its ancient proscriptions of morality; he is the free thinker who judges without examination; he is the lover of simple women who privileges the superiority of cultivated manners. (“Angel . . . is unable to assimilate an actual modern situation into his philosophically imagined modern principles,” snipes Rogers [302].) Deserting his new wife with instructions to leave him in solitude to ponder their marital fate, he escapes to Brazil. In his harsh new environment, Clare softens and comes to accept a particularly un-imperialistic truth: “The beauty or ugliness of a character lay not only in its achievements, but in its aims and impulses; its true history lay not among things done, but among things willed” (267). Clare's new softness toward his wife is confirmed by a passing stranger who “thought that what Tess had been was of no importance beside what she could be” (268). Schweik argues that Clare's enlarging understandings throughout these passages “function as devices of perspective” and that “each new viewpoint reveals a world of different dimensions and different moral implications” (15). Among these implications must be the recognition that legacies of family and nationalism are less meaningful than Hardy's contemporaries recognized. A “pure” woman need not be virginal, perhaps; a worthy citizen of the world need not be a British subject.

Clare's epiphany arrives too late, of course; the die was cast in the d'Urberville sepulcher, beneath the “dark stone” on which was inscribed in Latin “Door of the tomb of the ancient family of d'Urberville” (287). When Clare finally reaches his wife, he finds that that she has sacrificed herself to the sham in trade for her mother's and siblings' security. Tess responds by murdering Alec, a moral lapse society cannot overlook (but which Clare, ironically, can), and Tess pays the ultimate penalty. Janet Freeman notes that no one witnesses Tess's execution, not even Hardy:

They are collectively reduced to watching a personified black flag move slowly up the staff and extend itself in the breeze—surely an image not of Tess's guilt, but of their own. Thus Hardy . . . joins the others, his power to see indistinguishable from theirs. If that power is the image of good in the world of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, it is of a good that fails. (323)

Freeman adds that within the novel, Hardy has made Tess “the sign of his own sensitivity and merit” (323). The author has “implicated [himself] in the very immorality he has watched and deplored” and “the grief that overwhelms the end” of the novel “is the expression of this guilt, futility, and loss” (323). Freeman is not addressing legacies of honor or nationalism, but the guilt, futility, and loss are no less discernible in these arenas that otherwise might seem foreign within a domestic novel. Tess's tragedy is a futile attempt to claim an inheritance that was neither hers to claim nor worthy of her sacrifice.

In truth it might be better for the national glory even that the sun should sometimes set upon the British dominions, than that it should ever rise upon so vile a wonder as Tom.

—Charles Dickens, *Bleak House* (553)

The sprawling narrative that comprises *Bleak House* begins in the fog. “Fog everywhere,” writes Charles Dickens (5). Up river and down, in the marshes and in the heights, “hovering in the rigging of great ships,” among pensioners and apprenticed boys, among the dim-lighted shops, fog blankets (5). Fog obscures. Fog provides the cover for that which is not to be known. At the “the very heart of the fog” is the High Court of the Chancery (6). Chancery is the vortex around which Dickens's indictment of British society spins. *Bleak House* “is a cry of despair and hopelessness,” writes Dusseau. “It paints to awesome effect fine-phrased hypocrisy, vicious indifference, and cold-blooded opportunism; the pitiless greed of the rich and the venality of the powerful are displayed on every page” (592). Whereas Tess suffered from the

expectation of unearned nationalistic privilege, and the various characters of *The Moonstone* contended against imperialistic greed, there is not just a single polluting agent at work in *Bleak House*. Yet the source of those agents is perhaps more clearly delineated in *Bleak House* than in either *Tess* or *The Moonstone*. “Physical pollution is linked to an anxiety about cultural degeneration,” writes Plotkin, “one born from contact that comes from colonial expansion and empire” (21).

Bleak House opens in the halls of Chancery, the uniquely British civil court system, where Dickens invents the great suit of Jarndyce and Jarndyce as the leading witness for his prosecution of Chancery (and, by extension, the whole of British domestic bureaucracy that cares more about Empire than people). Jarndyce and Jarndyce has ground along for years in the back story of *Bleak House*, proceeding so far from its beginning that the particulars of the question under adjudication are lost in the fog of motions and filings. The case “is a cause that could not exist out of this free and great country,” says the lawyer Kenge, without irony, proudly measuring the grandeur of the case in its “aggregate of costs” (22). Swept into the maelstrom of the lawsuit is Richard Carstone, a ward of the suit and has been taken into the household of John Jarndyce, a fellow litigant. Coming of age, Carstone shows no inclination for a profession, trying on medicine, the bar, and the military as if they were suits of clothes. He is constant only in his devotion to Ada Clare, a fellow ward of the suit who has also been embraced within the hospitality of John Jarndyce. While apprenticed to the lawyer Kenge, Carstone devotes himself to studying the intricacies of the infamous suit that has always swirled about him. Disastrously, and despite John Jarndyce’s warnings, Richard loses himself in “the very heart of the fog” and anchors his hopes and dreams upon the riches that he believes are destined to come his way.

In Dickens’s plot, Jarndyce and Jarndyce becomes a powerful metaphor. Thoms reads the metaphor as “the burden of the past and its potentially debilitating influence” (150), and Linehan suggests the question “raised by much of the action addresses the extent to which human beings can develop freely or preserve a measure of autonomy without crippling constraints” (146). These are compelling and helpful readings, but both can be expanded to include the destructive implications of imperial expansion that Plotkin suggests are prevalent in *Bleak House*. In this wider, imperial reading, Jarndyce and Jarndyce is not merely the past, but also the present: Carstone presents himself as a metaphor for the British generations raised in the “crippling constraints” posed by the promise of the Empire’s easy riches. “I was born into this unfinished contention with all its chances and changes,” Carstone confesses to his confidant Esther,

“and it began to unsettle me before I quite knew the difference between a suit at law and a suit of clothes; and it has gone on unsettling me every since” (288). Thoms fleshes out the metaphor when he writes, “Jarndyce and Jarndyce is an inescapable consequence of birth, an ‘unfinished contention,’ an inherited story that entraps and unsettles, challenging Richard’s ability to chart his life freely and thus express a distinct, individual identity” (150). From this perspective, Richard’s inability to settle down in a profession may be recognized as a symptom of the era’s rampant nationalism that evangelized for Empire through promissory parables of imperial wealth that would flow back to the mother country (perhaps in those fog-shrouded great ships) and wash over all deserving Britons. What impressionable young gentleman dare contemplate the law, or the clergy or the military with such riches in the offing? (Interestingly, Richard Carstone is but one of a roster of drifting young gentlemen in 19th Century fiction. The symptoms present themselves in varying degrees in the characterizations of *Tess*’s Angel Clare, *Middlemarch*’s Fred Vincy, *Mansfield Park*’s Edmund Bertram and “Daisy Miller’s” Winterbourne.) John Jarndyce confirms to Esther that Richard’s “indecision of character” is at least partly the responsibility of Chancery:

It has engendered or confirmed in him a habit of putting off—and trusting to this, that, and the other chance, without knowing what chance—and dismissing everything as unsettled, uncertain and confused. The character of much older and steadier people may be even changed by the circumstances surrounding them. It would be too much to expect that a boy’s, in its formation, should be the subject of such influences and escape them. (151)

Jarndyce’s observations are confirmed by Dickens’s inclusion among *Bleak House*’s characters of the suicidal Gridley, who is finally unhinged by his involvement in Chancery. Esther, too, laments that Richard’s education was all about adapting him to the desires of the public school (or to the established order, in this larger point of view). “But I never heard that it had been anybody’s business to find out what his natural bent was, or where his failings lay, or to adapt any kind of knowledge to *him*” (151). As children of the Empire, Britons were influenced and molded nearly from birth by the discipleship of colonialism. “The skewed sense of entitlement undergirding Richard’s attempts to interpret Jarndyce and Jarndyce . . . mirrors the logic driving Whig-Liberal rhetoric about England’s natural inheritance, which sees prosperity as natural, organic—simply the way things are” (Heady 323). Prosperity has a price, and many

young men died in the numerous wars fought in the name of imperial conquest and defense.

Such is Richard's fate, of course: He turns his back on his benefactor as his consuming passion in Jarndyce and Jarndyce raises paranoid delusion. He bankrupts both himself and Ada, whom he marries, chasing after the fortune he is sure will come their way when the great judgment is finally awarded. But fortune—even judgment—eludes Carstone. The case ends not in a verdict, but in bankruptcy; the costs of the Chancery case consume the estate under contention, leaving nothing to conquer. Perhaps this is Dickens's suggestion of how the British Empire will end, not in the granting of the final island independence, but consumed from the inside, leaving no one to govern the remnants of colonies? Long before the collapse of the case, Miss Flite, a spinster who also awaits great riches from Jarndyce, pronounced Richard's verdict: "I was a ward myself. . . . I had youth and hope. I believe, beauty. It matters very little now. Neither of the three served, or saved me" (34). Carstone dies in his meager apartment, his wife and child with only an empty promise as his legacy, forever trapped in a gilded cage of expectations like one of Miss Flite's birds.

Expectations and inheritance are at the heart of a second major plotline within *Bleak House*: the story of Lady Dedlock, who, in contrast to Tess Durbeyfield, seeks not to restore her family name but rather to protect her husband's name in the face of those who would discredit her. "One of the crucial issues that Dickens grapples with in the novel is moving on from an outdated, aristocratic society . . . to a modern bourgeois society" (Plotkin 22). The Dedlocks become symbols of that passing society, grasping to retain the relevancy and importance it enjoyed in the heady days of Empire. But Lady Dedlock has a secret; in her past, before there was a Lord Dedlock, there was a lover and a child. In the service of propriety, the child disappeared, assumed dead, along with Lady Dedlock's sister. No questions were asked, so the subterfuge of hiding answers was unnecessary to protect Lady Dedlock's reputation. But secrets are susceptible to the smallest chink in the armor. Noble houses and empires can collapse on the undisciplined start of recognition upon seeing a long-forgotten handwriting. With "purposeless malignance," Lord Dedlock's solicitor, Mr. Tulkinghorn, ferrets out Lady Dedlock's past and holds her hostage to it (Dusseau 593). The metaphor completes itself when the symbol of the dying society commits suicide in an act of preservation.

Ironically—and these domestic novels are replete with irony when read through a lens of foreign intrigues in otherwise domestic affairs—the stain of illegitimacy so feared by Lady Dedlock and treasured by the blackmailing Tulkinghorn are of no consequence in the advent of

the modern society. Esther Summerson, the naïve and unaristocratic narrator of half the book, turns out to be the illegitimate child of the martyred Lady Dedlock—a discovery that couldn't be of any less consequence to Esther or the new family who have gathered around her by the novel's conclusion. "For most of the novel's characters, families are not inherited, but made" (Plotkin 23), and at novel's end Esther is surrounded in a remade "Bleak House" by the remnants of multiple families. Among the scattered tribes are members of the Jellyby clan, who represent not only the last of the unintended legacies to be found in *Bleak House* but also Dickens's most scathing indictment of imperialistic Britain.

Within the narrative of *Bleak House*, "Dickens explicitly blames imperial expansion abroad for the confusion and degradation he finds at home"; "[b]ecause the English 'wander elsewhere,' away from their responsibilities for maintaining a nation, English streets are filled with ignorant, heathen children" (Plotkin 22, 19). The metaphors for this indictment are, in turn, specific and general; the former playing out as sarcastic parody, and the latter thundering forth in caustic denunciations. The parody is Mrs. Jellyby, "a lady of very remarkable strength of character, who devotes herself entirely to the public," in the estimation of Mr. Kenge (35). The irony (there's that word, again!) of Kenge's observation is revealed when Esther and her party arrive at the Jellyby home and find the mistress of the "house" fully engaged in Empire-building—specifically, a ridiculous project to resettle 150 to 200 "healthy families" among the natives of Borrioboola-Gha to cultivate coffee and educate the natives (38). What has not gained any of Mrs. Jellyby's attention is her ragamuffin children or her disheveled home, which even sweet Esther "must say" is "not only very untidy, but very dirty" (37). Mrs. Jellyby's oldest daughter, Caddy, summarizes the condition simply: "It's disgraceful. . . . You know it is. The whole house is disgraceful" (44). "Dickens seems to speak through her about the state of England" (Plotkin 24).

Inspired by the example of Esther, Caddy deserts her post as Mrs. Jellyby's secretary in favor of caring for her siblings and locating a share of domestic tranquility. In time she becomes engaged to Prince Turveydrop, a dancing teacher who himself endures an eccentric father more enamored of Deportment than of such unfashionable endeavors as profession or industry. Late in the novel, upon visiting the now-married Caddy, Esther learns that Mrs. Jellyby rarely visits, believing the absurdity of her daughter's marrying a dancing-master might rub off on her. Dickens, this time speaking about the state of England through Esther, notes "that if Mrs. Jellyby had discharged her own natural duties and obligations before she swept the horizon with a telescope in search of others, she would have taken the best precau-

tions against becoming absurd” (473).

Dickens repeats the assertion in the broader, angrier metaphor of Tom-all-alone’s. “It is a black, dilapidated street, avoided by all decent people,” writes Dickens, and home to Jo, the most pathetic and most pitiable character in this mini-series of a novel (197). That Dickens connects this most foul part of town to his primary villain—the establishment as represented by Chancery—is not surprising: this “desirable property” is “in Chancery”—the contested object of a lawsuit—and therefore immune to development, rehabilitation, or “the pale of hope” (198). The state of affairs within Tom-all-alone’s is much debated in and out of Parliament, admits Dickens, including what forces will be brought to bear on such ignoble blight: will salvation come “by constable, or by beadles, or by bellringing, or by force of figures, or by correct principles of taste, or by high church, or by low church, or by no church” (551)? The only known fact, says the narrator, is “that Tom only may and can, or shall and will, be reclaimed according to somebody’s theory but nobody’s practice.”

It is a devastating pronouncement of disinterest by institutions that invest millions of pounds in wealth and equipment and time in lands that lie far, far ashore. Surely, this must be the most unintended consequence of all. If the consequence of Tom-all-alone’s, of Jo, is not unintended, than it can only be intentional that Jo shuffles off each day to sweep the crosswalk near Chancery,

[t]o be hustled, and jostled, and moved on; and really to feel that it would appear to be perfectly true that I have no business, here, or there, or anywhere, and yet to be perplexed by the consideration that I *am* here somehow, too, and everybody overlooked me until I became the creature that I am! (198)

Disinterest comes at a price, of course. The ignoring of domestic needs in favor of the wants and desires of colonial merchants and governors does occur in a vacuum. Jo lives. Jo dies. In his short lifespan, he plays a part in the tragic undoing of Mrs. Deadlock, just as Tom-all-alone’s plays its part in the tragic undoing of another noble house:

There is not a drop of Tom’s corrupted blood but propagates infection and contagion somewhere. It shall pollute, this very night, the choice stream . . . of a Norman house, and his Grace shall not be able to say Nay to the infamous alliance. There is not an atom of Tom’s slime, not a cubic inch of any pestilential gas in which he lives, not one obscenity or degradation about him, not an ignorance, not a wickedness,

not a brutality of his committing, but shall work its retribution, through every order of society, up to the proudest of the proud, and to the highest of the high. Verily, what with tainting, plundering, and spoiling, Tom has his revenge.” (553)

Duties and obligations begin at home—whether “home” be Mrs. Jellyby’s domicile or Tom-all-alone’s dark avenue or the English homeland. In the circle of colonialism, when the domestic is exported to the colonies, the foreign comes back in the same ships. Where the dictionary sees clear distinction, social practice does not. “Here,” bemoans the faithful Betteredge, “was our quiet English house suddenly invaded by a devilishly Indian Diamond” (38).

“To ‘be’ English in the nineteenth century,” writes Free, “was to be of, and hence constituted by, the British empire, to claim the summary position not only of Britishness but of empire itself” (340). The imperialist experiment enriched Britain in ways exceeding estimation. The 19th Century must be forever considered the British Century, a position of power that the Empire rode into the First World War. But the costs of imperialism were being tallied well before a generation was lost in the trenches of France or the next was threatened by bombers and rockets over London. Legacies of greed, entitlement, unfulfilled promises, illegitimacy and misplaced priorities; legacies born in India, the Middle East, Africa, China, Australia and beneath Union Jacks hoisted wherever the sun rose; legacies promising much and demanding more must be counted against the profits of Empire.

Dickens’s John Jarndyce understood this end game, and if he could not solace the passions of his ward Richard Carstone, perhaps his words can fall on more fertile ground in modern times: “And thus, through years and years, and lives and lives, everything goes on, constantly beginning all over again, and nothing ever ends. And we can’t get out of the suit on any terms, for we are made parties to it, and *must be* parties to it, like it or not” (88-89). To characterize Collins, Hardy and Dickens as the accountants of the British Imperial experiment is to overstate the lessons of *The Moonstone*, *Tess of the d’Urbervilles* and *Bleak House*. But the turmoils that unfold in those pages demand to be recognized as both foreign and domestic.

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Death's Voice for Women in Early Modern England

Tracy O'Hara

In early modern England, gender norms required that reputable women should be modest, quiet and submissive to their male counterparts. Consequently, vocal women received a bad reputation for their verbal skills. In spite of (or maybe because of) the lack of freedom of speech in normal society, women were able to talk freely amongst themselves in their "female world" and use speech as a positive tool. Part of this feminine sphere included various phases of death, where women played an important role. Whether through mourning, deathbed scenes, or execution speeches, death was a means for women to break free from societal constraints against them and their words.

In her book *Women, Death, And Literature in Post Reformation England*, Patricia Phillippy defines female lamentation as "a group activity in which a community of women (united by shared sorrow and often by bonds of kinship) joins together to mourn. It is a unique forum for woman to woman address, a discursive community whose characteristic forms of speech are specific to the sex of its members and to their task" (15). Due to the fact that mourning was considered "women's work," women were able to use it as an opportunity to openly express their feelings, and women writers found in female lamentation a license to write and publish. However, like everything else involving women during this time, grief was a subject that fell under great scrutiny and regulation. In society's view, there was an expectation for a certain level of grief, and yet a fine line was drawn as to what was an acceptable show for mourning a loss. There were rules governing what women could wear and how they should behave during the period of mourning, as well as the appropriate length of time

that grieving should be allowed before it was deemed excessive. In the case of a widow, her public display of grief was essential to preserve her reputation as a chaste and loving wife. Despite the rules set forth in an attempt to govern female lamentation, women still mourned publicly and with great emotion; however, those who were regarded as grieving unnecessarily were harshly criticized.

Another way in which death served as an outlet for women to lend a voice to their own identity was in deathbed scenes. During early modern England, both women and men of all social classes strived to die a good death. In an attempt to overcome the fear of death, as well as ensure religious observance and social compliance, numerous sermons, pious conduct books, religious tracts, poetry, chapbooks, and street ballads dealt with the subject of death and were to be used as models for behavior (Becker 11). A main idea of *artes moriendi* (treatises on the art of dying well) focused on death as being a reflection of how one lived his or her life. Lucinda Becker, author of *Death and the Early Modern Englishwoman*, described this connection by saying, "The ability to accept death as part of the wider tapestry of life could not be acquired simply by studying a selection of poems and pious volumes; it required continual work in life as each individual moved inexorably towards death" (Becker 7). It is this premise of dying well that prompted women to use their deathbeds as a way to leave their marks on the world that they were departing.

Because death was a somewhat public occasion, women who were on their deathbeds used it as an opportunity to speak their minds to their family, friends, and neighbors. This may have come in the way of giving

blessings, expressing last wishes, or bestowing personal possessions. Even on the brink of death, women continued to be thoughtful to those they held dear to them by using words and personal effects to strengthen those bonds. They sought to use their final moments to make a lasting impact on those they were leaving behind.

In his play *Othello*, William Shakespeare provides two examples of what some might deem as ideal female deathbed scenes, despite the tragic circumstances in which they occur. In what may be considered a crucial moment for agency, the character of Emilia used the minutes prior to her death to defend the reputation of her friend Desdemona and to right the wrongs that had been committed by her husband Iago and which she unknowingly had been a party to. She confesses, "O thou dull Moor! That handkerchief thou speak'st of/ I found by fortune and did give my husband/ For often, with a solemn earnestness/ More than indeed belonged to such a trifle/ He begged of me to steal 't" (Shakespeare 5.2.231-235). Emilia felt that telling the truth was the right thing to do no matter the consequences. She says, "I will speak as liberal as the north/ Let heaven and men and devils, let them all/ All, all, cry shame against me, yet I'll speak" (Shakespeare 5.2.227-229). In the end, Emilia asks to be laid beside Desdemona, which not only showed her final desires but also the bond which she had created with her deceased friend. Speaking out may have cost Emilia her life, yet it was a price she was willing to pay to have the final say against her husband.

Similarly, Desdemona's last words in the play ensured that she also died "a good death," in accordance with society's standards. When given the opportunity to confess her sins, Desdemona said, "they are loves I bear to you" (Shakespeare 5.2.40). If anything, her only sin may have been in loving Othello too much. She does not fear the accusations against her because she is confident in her own innocence. She does, however, fear Othello and his overreactions to what he believed had occurred between Desdemona and Cassio. When Othello presented his evidence of the handkerchief, Desdemona still refused to confess. The more that she denied everything, the angrier that Othello became at Desdemona's refusal to sacrifice herself so that he could clear his own conscience of being a murderer and instead be seen as a seeker of justice. Desdemona's pleas for banishment or the postponing of her fate go unheard and Othello kills Desdemona. However, Desdemona still had some life left in her, enough to claim her innocence one last time and try to protect her husband. When Emilia finds her on her deathbed, Desdemona said, "O, falsely, falsely murder'd" and later, "A guiltless death I die" (Shakespeare 5.2.117/5.2.122). When asked who had done this to her, Desdemona replied, "Nobody; I myself. Farewell/ Commend me to my kind lord: O, farewell" (Shake-

speare 5.2.125). While this refusal to name her husband as her assailant may be viewed as a victim's attempt to take the blame, it can also be interpreted as a way to align oneself with the elements of dying a good death. Desdemona showed her unending love for Othello by safeguarding him against the crime he committed. She exacted forgiveness to those who wronged her, namely Othello, by branding herself as the cause of what happened instead of pointing the finger at others. And finally, she accepted death by acknowledging that she would be going to heaven to meet God. Although she was killed due to false pretenses, Desdemona used her final moments in the most positive way that she could—to restore her good name and prove that she was a virtuous woman in spite of all that happened.

For women, the art of dying well attracted attention for them and finally brought to light the achievements they attained in life but had never received recognition for previously. Women gained heroic status at their time of death by demonstrating fortitude, patience, and wisdom beyond their sex (Phillippy 95). Poems and ballads memorialized noteworthy women in forms that appealed to audiences at all social levels. Oftentimes, men praised deceased women for their successful fulfillment of domestic, spiritual, and marital duties. However, these memorials undeniably served as self-testimonials to men, as well, who established their abilities to fulfill their duty to control their wives. Thus, their wives' success in achieving her gender obligations was another means to show success for the men. Because memoirs were readily available and appealed to the masses, men found that they could use their works as a way to influence the behavior of other women. Yet, for women, the deathbed symbolized more than this. Deathbeds served as an avenue for women's speech to have meaning and gave women a way to gain individuality through self-expression by having their actions and words memorialized in print and in the minds of those present at death.

Because the seventeenth century was a time when women's silence or lack thereof was associated with their level of chastity, women were forced to choose the appropriate times to make their speech truly count for something. Unfortunately, for some women, this time came at the moment right before their executions. During this time period, executions were all too common, and they were seen as a public show. It was for these reasons that condemned women used their executions to gain agency. According to Frances Dolan in *Gentlemen, I have one thing more to say: Women on Scaffolds in England, 1563-1680*, "The scaffold becomes not only a locus of domination and oppression, but also an arena of boundary crossing, negotiation, and possibilities for agency" (157).

In choosing the method and venue of execution

for offenders, the sovereign took into account gender, social status, and possible ramifications of the execution. While it may be assumed that privatizing executions for the aristocracy was meant solely to show respect for the status of the offender, in reality there was much more behind it. In her essay, Dolan contends that "Restricting access to such executions prevented the further disruption which might ensue either from allowing the condemned to rally supporters or from the dangerous precedent for assaults on the aristocratic or royal body. A relatively private execution protected the aristocratic privilege represented by the condemned, as well as the political status quo that he or she threatened" (Dolan 160).

Instead of approaching death pessimistically, convicted women tried to make the best out of a bad situation by facing their sentences with a strong resolve. Dolan states, "For the female offender addressing a large audience—perhaps for the first and only time— from the scaffold, any speech, even one that affirmed the status quo and condemned herself, offered an opportunity to speak publicly that challenged powerful constraints on female self-assertion and volubility. Some condemned women are represented as going beyond this, seizing 'symbolic initiative' to challenge the institutions and individuals who accused and condemned them (169).

A perfect example of this is the case of Margaret Clark, who was executed in 1679 for setting fire to her master's house. She was a Protestant serving woman who was misled and betrayed by a Catholic guardsman named John Satterthwait. Clark attracted attention and support because of the class and religious controversies associated with her case. This controversy was fueled by society's notion of fire being linked with Catholics and Jesuits, lending many to doubt her guilt in committing the crime (Dolan 171/172). Because the only evidence against Satterthwait was Clark's testimony, which was disallowed since she was arraigned for the same crime, he was acquitted and she was found guilty. Before her execution, Clark (who was illiterate) dictated her side of the story to a clergyman who wrote the account down and had Clark sign it. On the scaffold, Clark interrupted the attempts to cover her face prior to being hanged so that she could speak her peace. According to Dolan's research, "Clark was reported as saying 'My horrible sin hath made me a publick spectacle to the world.' This visibility and her willing submission to death work together to focus attention on her as a popular heroine of Protestant conviction and fortitude, and as an author in her own right" (Dolan 177).

Although some women used their words at the scaffold to claim their innocence, others chose to use silence as an instrument to vindicate themselves. In these circumstances, silence could speak volumes, as

was the case of Mariam in Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam*. Dolan describes Mariam's execution by saying, "Mariam, whose speech has declared and complicated her virtue throughout the play, subsides into reticence as she approaches death" (Dolan 163). Although Mariam is being executed for outspokenness, the only thing that she says is "Tell thou my lord thou saw'st me loose my breath" (Cary 5.1.73). According to Dolan, Mariam has done this for two reasons— "...to insure both that Herod will know the irreversible consequences of his unjust sentence and that her death will gain the significance of being narrated, especially for the benefit of the man who ordered it" (164). While these are valid points, it can also be argued that Mariam reacts the way she does in keeping with the principles of dying a good death. Despite the fact that Mariam's mother tells her that "death was too too good/ And that already she had lived too long/ and she shamed to have a part in blood of her that did the princely Herod wrong," Mariam refuses to speak (Cary 5.1.41-44). Instead, she smiled and continued her walk to the scaffold. Upon arriving at her final destination, Mariam said a silent prayer and faced her fate. Her piety and strength in her final moments encompassed everything that one wishing to die well could hope to achieve.

Although condemned women were seen as criminals, oftentimes many were actually innocent of the crimes they were accused of. It is ironic that in the eyes of society these "criminals" had more of a voice than women who were considered to be honorable. Guilty or not, condemned women became pioneers in public speech, and they moved beyond fear in their final moments to give their words a life which would last long after they themselves were dead. Yet, it is a shame that women had to go to such lengths to gain agency. As Dolan noted in her essay, "Women who found voice on scaffolds paid a high price for the privilege of being heard" (177).

In a period where women found themselves beholden to the constraints of their assigned gender roles throughout most of their lives, death was a time when they were finally able to assert themselves. According to Becker, "The imminent extinction of a woman allowed her to behave in a way that would have been deemed unacceptable in life" (205). Likewise, Phillippy says, "Licensed by death, these women engage in final acts that rewrite gender in the household and in the larger culture beyond it as intimate with their approaches to death" (107). For those that knew that death was coming and had the opportunity to prepare for it, death may have been the beginning of a freedom that they were not able to experience in life. While it is disheartening that women seemed to be esteemed during those final moments before death but taken for granted for a good part of their lives, some women were able to leave

behind a legacy of sorts with their words.

Becker argues, "It is easy, and far too tempting, to romanticize this opportunity for women, to suggest that the majority of Early Modern female deathbeds were peopled by women eager to seize the chance to speak out" (204). However, she also admits that "death could liberate women...and that the occasion of dying can be shown to have provided a means of expression for some Early Modern women, and a moment of triumph for many others" (Becker 7). While we do not want to romanticize these deaths, it is important to recognize those women who did indeed realize that this was the occasion when they would choose to seek agency. Their willingness to finally break away from gender expectations are a cause for celebration, especially in a period when very few were able to do so. By selecting the time of death as the venue for their liberation, women seized an opportunity where their voices could be heard by the masses and thereby make a lasting impact on those still left to face their own demise.

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The Medical Renaissance and Arguing for Gender Equality in *Othello* and *The Flower of Friendship*

Brittney Blystone

The Medical Renaissance understood a woman by her body. This was more than sexualizing or objectifying a woman, but constructing the female body to justify gender roles and to limit her sense of self. As Michel Foucault explains, “the hystarization of women’s bodies” was a process of scientifically examining every body part of the female body as being “thoroughly saturated with sexuality” (Foucault 104). Medical texts perceive every part of a woman—from her bodily liquids to her temperature—as feminine. A woman’s body was a metonymy that represented all: her body engulfed her sense of self and enforced her gender role. In response to the medical construction of the female body, Emilia from *Othello* and Lady Isabella from *The Flower of Friendship* address their bodies to argue for gender equality.

Lady Isabella: “I know not, quoth the Lady Isabella, what we are bound to do, but as meet it is, that there be no superiority between them [men and women], as the ancient philosophers have defended. For women have souls as well as men, they have wits as men, and more apt for procreation then men. What reason is it then, that they be bound, whom nature hath made free?” (Tilney 282).

Emilia: “Let husbands know
Their wives have sense like them. They see, and smell,
And have their palates both for sweet and sour,
As husbands have” (Shakespeare 5.1.92-95)

Emilia and Lady Isabella are indignant women arguing for gender equality in marriage; by both mentioning the female body. Shifting the subject from equality in marriage to palates and the ancient philosophers may seem arbitrary; however, closer inspection of the texts reveals that the gender inequality is partly rooted in the medical construction of the female body. Medical beliefs frame each text; therefore, Emilia from *Othello* and Lady Isabella from *The Flower of Friendship* reconstruct the female body to support gender equality in marriage.

Emilia and Lady Isabella purposely address their bodies because the medical construction of the female body engulfed early modern England and thus penetrated the fictional world of *Othello* and *The Flower of Friendship*. Medical scholars sought the social hierarchy in the body, and in turn, their publications continued it. Thomas Laqueur proves that the medical construction of the female body infiltrated all aspects of society, “not only in the anatomy theatre but at the Globe Theater” (Laqueur 113). Likewise, Eve Keller explains that during the Renaissance there was a greater circulation of English texts and vernacular texts—medical texts included (Keller 48). Medical texts became so popular that by 1545, Thomas Raynalde thought “every boy and knave” would read *Byrth of Mankinde* (his medical self-help book for women) like the tales of Robin Hood (Keller 82). Raynalde derived his analysis of the female body from the ancient philosopher, Galen. *Byrth of Mankinde* was repeatedly reprinted until 1676 (85). For at least 131 years, Raynalde’s book perpetuated ancient assumptions about gender with new authority and popularity. Emilia and Lady Isabella must talk about their bodies

because medical texts further defended and circulated the ancient belief that men and women were naturally unequal.

By talking about the female body, Lady Isabella does not describe observations or empirical evidence, but references classical philosophy. Medicine used the ancient philosophers to add authority; therefore, Lady Isabella must address philosophy to argue for gender equality. Lady Isabella states that there is “no superiority between them, as the ancient philosophers have defended.” She targets the ancient philosophers’ beliefs of gender inequality because it is the foundation of medical texts. The Medical Renaissance was less about new discoveries and more about rediscovering ancient texts.

Within the Medical Renaissance’s standard of authority, Lady Isabella must support her argument. New medical texts contained century old information, thus traditional beliefs became truth. The Medical Renaissance distilled theology, classical philosophy, and personal experience, which were already tainted with gender stereotypes. Early modern medical scholars used the ancient philosophers; more so, they understood them through medieval scholars. For the medical scholars, medicine progressed only because “the ancients had been at last rediscovered” (Keller 47). Thus for them, progress was regression to a canonized, ancient philosophy. Ian Maclean explains that the new science “emerged not so much from observation as from the conceptual framework inherited from the ancients.” Medicine copied the author-based frame work. In turn, the medical texts were philosophical and derivative. Founded on ancient philosophers, medical texts relied on subjective worldviews rather than empiricism, objectivity, and new evidence. The Medical Renaissance was not about discovery but rediscovery. The Medical Renaissance rediscovered the ancients; it did not shift the science paradigm or the worldview. Lady Isabella had to address the opinions of ancient philosophers, because these opinions became medical facts during the Medical Renaissance.

The ancient philosophers are Lady Isabella’s opponents because the Medical Renaissance used them to support the gender hierarchy. The Medical Renaissance of the 16th century was the Galenic revival, which involved almost six hundred new translations of Galen’s work (Keller 47). Galen’s one-sex model crowned the male body as the standard, and female body as simply a deviation from this norm. Therefore, Galen continued the belief that “woman is less fully developed than man” (31). Maclean describes Galenism as “feminist” because women became “in her own sex, ...as perfect as man” (Maclean 31). Yet, his one-sex model only segregates the sexes: women are perfect but only “in her own sex.” Similarly, Laqueur argued that the one-sex model constructed women as only lesser men, not giving women

an independent existence from the male. Galenism seemed to counteract Aristotle’s misogyny, only by creating a greater and subtler divide by seeing the female body as the male body. Medicine analyzed the female body according to the standard of the male body. With the female body subordinate to the male, these medical beliefs embodied the social hierarchy. This ancient philosophy surfaces in Lady Isabella’s speech because medical texts further circulated those beliefs, making gender inequality into an unquestionable fact of nature.

Lady Isabella uses the same rhetorical move as medical scholars to undermine the argument that the female body is lesser: she uses her body as physical evidence of women’s abilities. She argues that the female body was not less, but more “apt in procreation.” Lady Isabella’s assertion of the female strength is a direct response to the common, traditional and thus unspoken belief in the lesser nature of the female body. Medical progress was simply a greater support of the gender hierarchy. Medical scholars expected to see gender roles in the body, because they believed that the body was the microcosm of the universe. As seen through the images like the Zodiac Man, the body was a “microcosmic screen for a macrocosmic, hierarchic order and as the more or less stable sign for an intensely gendered social order” (Laqueur 115). For medical scholars, the human body manifested the universe’s great chain of being, thus the “lesser” female body was Nature expressing the gender hierarchy. To contest the gender hierarchy, Lady Isabella and Emilia must contest the medical construction of their bodies.

The body is especially relevant because Emilia and Lady Isabella are arguing for equality for wives, and medicine intertwined women’s roles with the female body. Metaphors and literary descriptions of the female body parts became the character of the entire woman. For example, medicine constructed the role of a wife through the body’s role in procreation. As Mary Fissell explains, medical texts and midwife texts drew from ancient and biblical texts to construct the metaphor of grain and fertility as conception (Fissell 436). These metaphors often created women’s bodies like landscapes, as passive fertile ground for the active male seed (437). These medical analogies transferred the gender hierarchy. The understanding of procreation supported the gender hierarchy not only in marriage but also in society. While roles of creator and crop keeper stayed masculine, “commodity” became the slang for female genitalia (438), which further objectified the woman into property. Following metaphors in medical texts, men remained active workers, while women were only the objects they sought. Similarly, medical texts named the womb after the gender role of “the mother,” endowed with stereotypically female traits and behaviors

such as being “defenseless, ...yet industrious if properly controlled” (Keller 68). This created an “easy slippage between part and person” (67). The female body collapsed into the female role, specifically her role in marriage and procreation. Procreation was the main topic in understanding the female body, and both procreation and the female body were the main topics of marriage. “The Sermon of the State of Matrimony” which was mandatory for every church in England, stated the purpose of marriage as biological—“to bring forth fruit” (“Sermon” 273). The purpose of having a wife was biological; the purpose was her role in procreation. Thus the role of wife and the fertile female body was synonymous. Every part of Emilia and Lady Isabella’s bodies are feminine; they talk about their bodies because their roles as wives manifests in their bodies.

In *Othello* and *The Flower of Friendship*, the most significant marital issue is the control of the female body, because the role of a wife is the female body; the issue of controlling one’s wife is the issue of controlling her body. In *The Flower of Friendship*, Lady Julia’s argument of women’s nature precedes Lady Isabella’s speech. Lady Julia believes women’s natural virtue is her ability to control herself, “...where springeth the branch of shamefastness, which is the only defense that nature hath given women to keep their reputation, to preserve their chastity, to maintain their honor, and advance their praise” (Tilney 281). According to Lady Julia, Nature gave women only two virtues to maintain marriage: one, “shamefastness,” to curb one’s self, be shy, to defend one’s chastity, and two “another maintainer...is that of the goodly grace of obedience.” Lady Julia believes that natural virtues maintain marriage, and that is why “we obey our husbands” (252). Lady Julia believes Nature gives women the ability to be chaste and obedient wives. Following the same beliefs as medical texts, Lady Julia claims that the role of the chaste wife is located in female nature.

Lady Isabella’s speech is a direct response to Lady Julia’s claim that Nature and God create women to obey their husbands (Tilney 282). Rather than see women as naturally bridled, Lady Isabella’s speech questions why women “be bound, whom Nature hath made free” (282). Contrary to Lady Julia, Lady Isabella sees women as naturally free. Lady Isabella’s speech is an indignant response to Lady Julia’s argument of a natural female role as a chaste and obedient wife.

While Lady Julia sees women as naturally obedient, in *Othello* the female body is constructed as naturally inconsistent and lustful. In *Othello* and *The Flower of Friendship*, the marital issue is obedience and the female body. Like in *The Flower of Friendship*, the characters in *Othello* interpret a woman’s role and behavior according to the medical construction of the female body. Othello’s obsession

rests on seeing Desdemona as her body and her body as naturally inconsistent and lustful. Even the handkerchief alludes to Desdemona’s body. Will Fisher claims that the troublesome handkerchief in *Othello* is a “prosthesis” for the female hand. More so, the handkerchief is from mummies, “remnants of the human body into its web” (Fisher 54). A prosthetic created from corpses; the handkerchief closely connects with the body. Even its purpose is to bridle bodily humors. It cleanses Desdemona’s wet, hot, and thus lustful female body. While the hot male body has “courage, liberty, moral strength, and honesty,” the ideal female body was colder and thus lacking these qualities (Maclean 32). Medical beliefs made women’s humors and temperatures into “a rudimentary psychological framework, which had ethical and political problems” (38). A woman’s bodily fluids and temperature could signal her corrupt character. The missing handkerchief leads Othello to see his wife’s hand as “hot,” her body as “moist,” thus she is a “sweating devil,” inconsistent and lustful (Shakespeare 3.4. 36-39). The handkerchief controls the female humors, “women’s watery nature” (Fisher 52). Loss of the handkerchief is the loss of the bridle, making Desdemona’s body “leaky” thus her behavior to be inconsistent. Desdemona’s hand collapses into Othello’s obsession and the play’s central symbol. Desdemona is her body, thus, as Othello must control his wife, he must control her body. This construction of the female body surrounds Emilia’s speech to Desdemona.

Like Lady Isabella, Emilia also does not easily believe in natural gender roles. As Fisher notes, Emilia does not register the symbolic weight of the handkerchief. In fact, she calls Desdemona’s prosthetic hand and proof of chastity—a “trifle” (Fisher 54). She does not connect one’s role as wife with a female body in need of a handkerchief. She innocently picks up the handkerchief, because she does not predict that Desdemona’s moist body could propel accusations of adultery. For Emilia, restrictions on the female body are socially constructed. Adultery is only “but a wrong i’ the world” (Shakespeare 4.3.79). Trespassing monogamy is only one wrong, and is wrong only in society. Adultery is not something naturally wrong. Emilia’s speech is a response to Desdemona’s strict control of her body and inflexible obedience to her husband. Desdemona will not have sex outside of marriage, even for “all the world” or for the sake of her husband (Shakespeare 4.3.60-65). Desdemona explains her strict control of her body as a wife’s obedience to her husband rather than as a choice. Like Desdemona, moralists used the medical construction of the female body “as an argument against the enjoyment of coitus by women” (Maclean 35). The female genitals were considered lesser than males’ thus they were “residual and not functional” (32). Since women lacked the func-

tion of male sexual organs, woman's desires were sinful lusts and not like men's natural desires and trespasses. Contrastingly, Emilia separates marriage and faithfulness from what she does with her body. She would commit adultery for the sake of her husband, to make "him a monarch" (4.3.75). She explains that sex outside of marriage is adultery only when the spouse is "changed for others" (4.3.96): it is only adultery if the partner changes his personality for another. It is not the sex but the emotions and character of the person that matters. For Emilia, faithfulness and a successful marriage extends beyond the body.

In *Othello* and *The Flower of Friendship*, the marital issue is a wife's obedience and control of her body because medical texts assumed women lacked the will for self-control; however, Emilia and Lady Isabella argue that women have agency and thus have the ability to control their bodies. Since medicine located the role of wife within the female body, a husband must control his wife's body to control her. As shown in *Othello*'s suspicions of Desdemona, the men deduced psychological traits from the female body: the female body meant women were "inferior to him [men] for psychological reasons [too]" (Maclean 35). The wife's goodness, or lack of, manifested in her body. As Lady Julia states, Nature gives women "only one defense...to preserve their chastity, to maintain their honor, and to advance their praise," but defense against what? Her body. Medicine constructed the female body as unruly thus in need of bridling. A woman must be distanced from her body through shame or controlled by forces outside of the body, like her husband. As Lady Julia argues, successful, faithful marriages needs obedience, thus unbridled women cause unfaithful marriages. According to Lady Julia and *Othello*, without shamefastness and obedience to one's husband, a woman is defenseless to immoral, shameful lusts. Medical texts defined female inferiority as a biological trait in the female body. Lady Julia insists men are created to rule women, because men have the "capacity to comprehend, wisdom to understand, strength to execute..." (283). Men possess the "capacity" or agency, and with that agency, he must control the wayward, inferior female body. If a husband did not control his wife, her unruly female body would control her and possibly lead her astray. Seeing himself as superior, *Othello* believes he must save Desdemona from herself, or specifically, her bodily lust.

Desdemona and Lady Julia do not possess their bodies; rather, their unruly bodies have agency—not the women. Galenic text personified the female body; more so, the new anatomy rewrote Galen to "support a subjectivity more aligned with masculinist and humanistic ideals" (Keller 48). In such texts, the body became the acting subject. Summarizing the evolving beliefs of

the 17th century, Helkiah Cooke still presents the woman as passive to her unbridled, female body. While, Cooke is progressive in giving agency to the man rather than his body, women remain passive to their parts. Crooke describes how men taste, eat, or digest. It is not the stomach that desires food but the man (Keller 62). Yet, the womb, not the woman, is "unruly" (66). The womb is "Nurse" and lusts, not the woman (98). A woman's womb is restless rather than the woman being restless; a woman's stomach hungers rather than the woman being hungry. Keller extends Laqueur's one-sex model, the universal male body, into the universal male self (48). Medicine connected the self to the body, and then restricted the self to the universal male body. A sense of self was strictly male, because only men had the natural "capacity" or agency while unruly female bodies controlled women. Women lacked a "disembodied agency" (76), she "is not one who *posses* of a womb but rather one who *is* a womb" (74). Women lacked a self, a will separate from bodily functions and reflexes. These texts give the female body the women's role and her agency. These beliefs surround Emilia and Lady Isabella, thus their speeches do not simply refute male control but also argue that a woman possesses and controls her body.

Unlike Cooke's work, Lady Isabella and Emilia describe women as owners of their own bodies. In their speeches, women are the acting subjects, not their body parts. *Othello* suspects that Desdemona fell to unruly female appetites, and Lady Julia states women are "bound" by nature. Yet, in Lady Isabella's and Emilia's speeches, the women's wills surpass nature. Emilia's and Lady Isabella's repetition of "have" gives women ownership over their bodies; therefore women are neither just bodies nor controlled by their bodies. "They see, and smell": Emilia describes women who can taste and smell like the Cooke's male body. Unlike Cooke's description of the womb, the women—not their personified organs—desire. Emilia argues that women have "sense like them [their husbands]." Thus, their bodies do not control them. Rather, women own their bodies. According to Emilia, women "have senses" and this ownership is "as their husbands have" (Shakespeare 5.1.92-95). Likewise, Lady Isabella also creates a repetition of "have": "women have souls...have wits" (Tilney 282). Almost every time they describe the body, the women repeat "have," reinforcing possession. For Emilia and Isabella, women own and control these bodies, thus they are neither synonymous with their bodies nor controlled by their bodies.

Not only do women own their bodies but also they control them with great skill. According to Lady Isabella, women are "more apt" in procreation. Lady Isabella's use of "apt" gives women skillful control over their bod-

ies. Lady Isabella does not mean “apt” as simply preparation for the fetus: “in reproduction, as in the household, woman are responsible for...providing hospitality” (Fissell 349). Assuming the body was the microcosm of the universe, medical texts used procreation to prove the gender hierarchy was the established law of nature. The female body’s passive role in procreation meant women’s natural role as passive receptor in all parts of life. Yet, Lady Isabella’s use of “more” refutes women’s passive role. Women are “more apt” in procreation than men. Although not completely supporting gender equality in procreation, Lady Isabella gives women the key role in procreation, the act that established the gender hierarchy in marriage and even society. Now center and active, the woman acts not merely as passive receptors in procreation or marriage. As in Emilia’s speech, Lady Isabella argues that women respond to their senses and bodily desires; therefore their bodies or another’s body does not control Emilia or Lady Isabella.

In control of their bodies, Lady Isabella and Emilia also show that women have a spectrum of the abilities and senses that go beyond procreation and the role of wife. Although Emilia and Lady Isabella compare the female body to the male body, they make the comparison for true equality. Although they compare the sexes, the male body is not the universal standard as in the Galen’s one-sex model. As Emilia argues, women have bodies “as husbands have,” no less. By noting the different senses, they describe the female body beyond the sexual or gender specific parts. While medicine tended to “localize...agency in a single organ,” the womb (Keller 70), Emilia provides a spectrum of senses from various body parts. Medicine sexualized every part of a woman, but particularly concentrated on certain parts. These parts then symbolized the women’s psychology, including her sense of self and agency: “the physical characteristics of woman exclusive to their sex...have psychological implications” (Maclean 41). Medicine deduced psychological traits from female parts, then extended these traits to the whole woman. Emilia and Isabella extend women beyond organs for procreation. Emilia and Isabella go beyond the sexual parts to sight, smell, taste, and even wit. Arguing for gender equality, Emilia and Lady Isabella make these nonsexual parts truly gender neutral. They describe a woman’s wit and senses with the purpose of describing a self that goes beyond gender construction. Rather than a body as “thoroughly saturated with sexuality” (Foucault 104), Emilia and Lady Isabella describe a female body that is does not restrict women into gender roles.

Describing their bodies, Emilia and Lady Isabella dismiss the medical construction of the female body. They argue that women have agency—a woman operates her body and thinks beyond it. For Lady Isabella, women have enough of a bodiless self to have “wits” and even to be “free.” For Emilia, women have enough of a bodiless self to make moral decisions—to decide to have sex outside wedlock or not. Emilia and Lady Isabella reconstruct the female body contrary to the medical construction: “What reason is it then, that they be bound, whom nature hath made free?” (Tilney 282). Lady Julia and the medical texts describe nature as bridling women, but Lady Isabella argues women are, by nature, free. In Emilia’s and Lady Isabella’s speeches, the female body is reconstructed to represent a woman beyond her body, and thus with the agency and a sense of self equal to a man.

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Li Po's "Drinking Alone Beneath the Moon"

trans. by David Hinton

I

Among the blossoms, a single jar of wine.
No one else here, I ladle it out myself.

Raising my cup, I toast the bright moon,
and facing my shadow makes friends three,
though moon has never understood wine,
and shadow only trails along behind me.

Kindred a moment with moon and shadow,
I've found a joy that must infuse spring:

I sing, and moon rocks back and forth;
I dance, and shadow tumbles into pieces.

Sober, we're together and happy. Drunk,
we scatter away into our own directions:

intimates forever, we'll wander carefree
and meet again in Star River distances.

II

Surely, if heaven didn't love wine,
there would be no Wine Star in heaven,

and if earth didn't love wine, surely
there would be no Wine Spring on earth.

Heaven and earth have always loved wine,
so how could loving wine shame heaven?

I hear clear wine called enlightenment,
and they say murky wine is like wisdom:

once you drink enlightenment and wisdom,
why go searching for gods and immortals?

Three cups and I've plumbed the great Way,
a jarful and I've merged with occurrence

appearing of itself. Wine's view is lived:
you can't preach doctrine to the sober.

III

It's April in Chang'an, these thousand
blossoms making a brocade of daylight.

Who can bear spring's lonely sorrows, who
face it without wine? It's the only way.

Success or failure, life long or short:
our fate's given by Changemaker at birth.

A single cup evens out life and death,
our ten thousand concerns unfathomed,

and once I'm drunk, all heaven and earth
vanish, leaving me suddenly alone in bed,

forgetting that person I am even exists.
Of all our joys, this must be the deepest.

Explicating the Muse: The Poetry of Li Po

Joseph Brennan

In “Drinking Alone Beneath the Moon” (“Yue xia du zhuo” 月下独酌) by Li Po 李白 (perhaps more commonly known as Li Bai), the reader enters into a drunken affair with the redolent spring blossoms of Ch’ang-an, the fair moon, and the shadow of the self. Li Po writes four poems into one series with one title (though the first of the poems is by far the most well-known), and the poems, respectively, resemble the human experience, understanding, and expression of the natural Way; herein I am concerned with three of the four poems of the series, as translated by David Hinton (the fourth is extremely hard to find in English). The Taoist poet also uses classical Chinese and Taoist symbolism, imagery, and metaphor to describe what cannot be put into words: the eternal, wondrous, mysterious Tao, which cannot be named. As the poem develops through its three parts, so does his mystical experience and his voice as the speaker. But, in order to fully appreciate the poem, we must understand its speaker and the nature of Chinese language, thought, and poetry.

The Chinese language is akin to its philosophy of the yin-yang. Sentences’ subject-object, verbal, and prepositional relationships can often be interpreted in a number of different ways as rules of inflection are absent from the language (Hinton xxi). Yet, while relationship is vague, the communicated ideas are lucidly sewn together in a visual scene before the reader, as the written language is composed of characters, or ideograms. In a sense, an ideographic text also paints a scene before the reader. However lucid or intuitive this scene may be, the language still remains open to various possible interpretations, as its ideograms have a wide range of denotative and connotative meanings. Ameri-

can poet, translator, and scholar of Chinese literature David Hinton describes it thusly, “These two defining characteristics—empty grammar and graphic form—are reflected in the Taoist cosmology that became the conceptual framework shared by all poets in the mature written tradition” (xxi). This “mature written tradition” belonged to the stately, scholarly, and spiritual *wenren* 文人, or literati, of China.

The literati class ultimately developed as a result of the “rigid and inflexible” nature of the Chinese language which indelibly impacted its people (Carus, “Chinese Philosophy”, 188). This literati class had the privilege of possessing a written language which “remained relatively unchanged across millennia” (Hinton xx), allowing them to easily access and preserve the best works which their civilization had ever conceived. It is no surprise, then, that China has the longest and most extensive literary and poetic tradition in the world, beginning before 1500 BCE and continuing without interruption to the present (ixx). The Chinese language developed from antiquity and, being ideographic, assumed a symbolic character that was replete with the naturalist wisdom of those ancient “sages” who devised the language and passed on their yin-yang wisdom traditions in such ancient, enduring works as the *I-Ching*. Therefore, the simple, natural, profound, and—to the Taoist—prelapsarian worldview of the ancients was forever recorded in the language and minds of the Chinese people. The Chinese civilization, having the highest regard for ancient wisdom, has been exceptionally orderly and reverent of tradition and the established order as well as nature and the Cosmic Order (Carus, “Chinese Philosophy”, 189). One of the most essential features

of classical Chinese language and thought is the idea of yin and yang—the two complementary, operative forces of the universe; any discussion of Chinese literature, especially poetry, is incomplete without taking them into consideration.

Before discussing Chinese poetry, it is important to first understand yin and yang. The Chinese, had a monistic, pantheistic, and naturist view of the universe, believing that all is eternal and all is one notwithstanding its individuated forms. Nature, with all its changes, its life and death, is the perpetual embodiment of the eternal principle of being, Tao. The “generative” and “pregnant emptiness,” called *wu* 無, was the source of all things (lit., *wan wu* 萬物, the “ten thousand [or myriad] things”). Manifested being was called *tzu-jan* 自然, meaning perpetual suchness, “self-so,” “the of-itself,” or “occurrence appearing of itself” (Hinton xxii), the last of which is Hinton’s translation of the word in Li Po’s “Drinking Alone Beneath the Moon.” Therefore, yin is the receptive, feminine force which is embodied in all things, especially the earth and the moon, and it is also seen as being dark and yielding; yang is the creative, masculine force which engenders all things, and it is seen as heaven, the sun, light, brightness, and assertiveness. Both are cyclical forces of the eternal Tao and are hence embodied in nature and all things. All actuality, including the human being, takes part in the process of conformity and creation, returning and going forth. This ontological postulation of yin and yang has teleological—and thus historical—ramifications.

The Chinese telos is one of conformity to the Tao, nature, the eternal principle of life, the Cosmic Order, heaven or *tian* 天; it entails an essentialist ethos of harmony, accord, peace, balance, honesty, virtue, integrity, and responsibility that paradoxically begets an active quietism, or *wu-wei* 無爲, action through non-action, effortless accomplishment. Through *wu-wei*, the Taoist’s consciousness becomes so integral with universal infinity (*tzu-jan*) that he is not aware of himself as separate and distinct; his approach to life becomes a mystic intuitionism. For this reason, the Chinese saw all human action and expression in accord with the Tao as being of *tzu-jan*, and Confucianists saw organic, human, social structure as being of *tzu-jan* as well. Indeed, the great history of Chinese thought and culture is marked by the divergent (but not strictly incompatible) expressions between the intuitionism, primitivism, naturism, anarchism, and spontaneity of Taoism and the rigid essentialism, institutionalism, moralism, social hierarchy, and piety of Confucianism. (Confucianism has been traditionally the dominant cultural mode for millennia, though all of Chinese philosophy, culture, and psychology is above all integrally minded and holistic.) Both the Taoist and the Confucianist believed that if one would

let go of selfish will and mental conceptions (illusions), one would discover the transcendent truth necessarily inherent in being, and all of one’s words and actions would reflect this perfectly simple yet profound truth; such is the intuitionist life and poetry of the Taoist. According to Taoist ontology, then, life and language—in particular, the Chinese ideographic language with its images and empty spaces—possess an ineffable spiritual and mystical quality. And what reflects language and life more than poetry?

In Chinese, the word for poetry, *shih* 詩, is made up of two elements: one meaning “spoken word” and the other meaning “temple.” The idea is clear, but David Hinton and American translator, textual interpreter, journalist, and scholar Bill Porter (pseudonym, Red Pine) articulate it in different words, both of which accord with Taoist ontology and appeal to the ethereal beauty of poetry. Hinton mystically pieces the elements of poetry together to mean “words spoken at the earth altar” (xxiii), while Red Pine maintains that ancient literary tradition originally translates the second element not as the shorthand *shih* (寺) but as *chih* (志), meaning heart—“language of the heart” (3-4). Therefore, Chinese poetry usually didn’t feature a fictional speaker and world—though Li Po was known to write fictional speakers as in “The River Merchant’s Wife: A Letter” (Young 8). Usually, though, the speaker of the poem was the author expressing their existential awareness of the Tao, or Way of nature and thereby all things. Indeed, author, scholar, and translator of Chinese works Charles Egan verifies that “at the root of the poetic impulse is said to be *shi yan zhi* [詩言志] (poetry expresses intent), which would suggest that poems are always spontaneous, true reflections of the writer’s inner being” (Zong-qi et al. 211). Poetry is arguably China’s most treasured art. A poet was not only recognized by his literary success but also his “moral and spiritual cultivation” (Liscomb 354). Li Po was preeminently important, being one of the two best poets of the High Tang period (712-755 CE), the golden age of Chinese poetry. He is, therefore, among the best poets to have ever lived.

He may not be well-known by a Western audience, but Li Po is a literary giant; he is legendary among the Chinese. Indeed, so many legends surround his life that little historical fact is known about him. What is universally known about him beyond his style of poetry is that he was a spontaneous, wandering, irreverent drunkard who held decorum in contempt; a profoundly contemplative poet; and an unappreciated genius; the Chinese called him the “banished immortal” and say that his way was like “winds of the immortals, bones of the Tao” (Hinton 172). He is recognized as one of the greatest, rawest, and most enchanting Chinese poets. During his life, he served as a poet at the emperor’s court

in Ch'ang-an for two years until he was aggressively expelled from the palace, presumably for his drunkenness during formal proceedings despite his auspicious eloquence (Liscomb 355). For the remaining 18 years of his life thereafter, he went back to being a wayward soul, finding shelter in nature and seeking the hospitality of those who appreciated his poetry—and, of course, drinking wine and writing poetry.

Before we can start explicating Li Po's "Drinking Alone Beneath the Moon," it is finally necessary to determine the style and structure of his poetry. During the High Tang period, poetic structure began to become highly formalized and regulated; this kind of poetry became known as *jinti shi* 近體詩, or "recent-style poetry," and consisted of two main styles: *lüshi* 律詩, or "regulated verse," and *jueju* 絕句, or regulated "quatrains" (Zong-qi et al. 161). The majority of the *wenren* literati conformed to the strict, new changes, but many did not and rather adhered to the traditional, freer style of the past which became generalized as *guti* 古詩, meaning "ancient style" (161). Still, many others dabbled with both types and their subtypes. Li Po was a distinguished poet in almost every form, including "recent-style poetry," but his predominantly favorite form was "ancient style" poetry, which included the subtype *yüeh-fu* 樂府, or "folk-poetry," among other subtypes; the ancient style poetry, especially the folk poetry, was the quintessentially Taoist and traditional style (176). Indeed, eminent scholar, professor, and author Zong-qi Cai confirms, "The highly restrictive *lüshi* form seems to have been ill suited to Li Bai's [Po's] unbridled temperament and poetic style" (176). And, poet, translator, and author Tony Barnstone informs, "A number of his poems are in the Han dynasty *yuefu* form, which allowed him to indulge in radically irregular lines that gave his imagination free play. He was an influential figure in the Chinese [neo-Taoist] cult of spontaneity..." (Barnstone and Chou 177).

Interestingly, Li Po's "Drinking Alone Beneath the Moon" seems to be a synthesis between the *lüshi*, *guti*, and *yüeh-fu* styles. Like the *lüshi* form, the poem uses five characters per line and even uses alliteration, assonance, consonance, and mellifluous rhythm, but unlike this form, it is not constricted to one stanza of eight lines—rather, it has been collected into three parts throughout Li Po's life, with the first two parts having fourteen lines and the third part having twelve lines. Just consider the first line, "Among the blossoms, a single jar of wine", which in the original written Chinese is, "Huā jiàn yī hú jiǔ" 花間一壺酒; that's five ideograms, five images. Like the *guti* form, Li Po draws upon the Taoist theme of antiquity, uses ideograms which have traditional and connotative significance in the Taoist tradition, and as speaker of the poem, relates his mystical experience—

nay, total integration—with nature. Li Po also spontaneously introduces lines of imaginative, sometimes abrupt and unexpected ideographic characters for poetic effect, pace, stressing sentiments and themes, magnifying the lyrical experience, inspiring sensation and reaction in the reader, and challenging the reader to engage and explicate the text. Author, translator, and scholar David Young explains how, "movements from image to image seem like slightly larger leaps, and each image or sensation... is charged with delight and magic" (47). Additionally, Li Po's poem has the casual, colloquial diction and length of a *yüeh-fu* poem, though the poem is collected, or extended, into multiple parts as per the *guti* style. The poem's Taoist themes are furthered by the type of poem it is, one of "friendship and leavetaking", a type which was standard in its day but a type of which Li Po possessed exceptional mastery, craft, and élan due to the way he turbulently—and often eudemmonistically—lived as a naturalist, intuitionist, Taoist, drunkard, poet, and vagrant. Young informs that "Moments of separation fascinate [Li Po] because of the challenge they present to this pursuit of elation, and his solutions or resolutions, are poignant and various... the distinctiveness and authenticity of [the] handling [of this traditional type of poetry] are among the hallmarks of Li Po's work" (49) and he concludes that

"To a highly tradition-bound poetry, Li Po brought a sense of freedom and adventure. He showed an extraordinary ability to exploit the openness of the Chinese language, its gaps and implications, so that, reading his direct and simple poems, we find ourselves supplying their richness and exploring their implications" (51).

Above all, the poetry of Li Po, particularly "Drinking Alone Beneath the Moon," is among the finest of the classical Chinese and Taoist tradition, and it is brilliant in the way its pictographs relate to each other and paint a picture before the reader. With this knowledge—and a knowledge of classical Chinese symbolism and philosophy—, genuine explication, critique, and analysis of the poem become possible.

The complicated structure of the series of poems plays a meaningful role in the poem's development. The poems relate to each other in theme and meaning while adding their own meaning and expression to each other, ultimately lending the series a unique meaning unto itself. These three poems of the series have fourteen lines, except for the third poem which has twelve lines. This enhances the meaning of the poem, because in Taoism, emptiness is enlightenment, perfect and uninhibited being. By omitting the last couplet, Li Po assigns emptiness a very real part in the structure of his series of

poems (apart from inflectional, ideographic interpretation). It is enlightening to note that this emptiness can only be observed in the context of the series as a whole. In Taoist cosmology, a generative emptiness, *wu*, operates by perpetually complimentary forces, yin and yang, which produce the universe as a whole and thereby all manifested forms, *wan wu*. Therefore, these three poems of the series—either individually or when taken as a whole—link: (1) the generated fullness of heaven and earth with their empty source, (2) life with death as the nature of being and actuality, (3) the speaker's intuition and expression with reality, (4) and the three friends—shadow, human self (Li Po as speaker), and moon—with each other and with nature itself. The emptiness inherent in the third part's omission of the usual seventh couplet is juxtaposed with the final line's conclusion, "... of all our joys, this must be the deepest," suggesting that there is something more to be achieved after reflection, a letting go that is complementary to wisdom, a realization and actualization of human nature as a holistic and not atomistic expression of being, of nature and self.

Indeed, this complementarity of enlightenment and wisdom is so central to understanding the poem that the central lines of the second, central poem describe it, saying:

Heaven and earth have always loved wine,
so how could loving wine shame heaven?
I hear clear wine called enlightenment,
and they say murky wine is like wisdom... (5-8)

Wine is given as a poetic metaphor for the Tao, as drinking of it results in the loss of inhibition and self-conscious thought, a way to "wander carefree" (poem I, l. 13). In Chinese poetry, Hinton tells us, "the practice of wine involves drinking just enough so the ego fades and perception is clarified," a state recognized as *wu-wei*, or passive action by stillness and non-interference. Hinton specifies how Li Po "usually ended up thoroughly drunk, a state in which he was released fully into his most authentic and enlightened self: *wu-wei* as spontaneity" (173), and David Young quite cogently comments:

Life at its best, as Li Po envisions it, is a kind of intoxication, an elevation; good poetry, like good wine, should help us get perspective on ourselves and put the cares of the world aside. Even nature, as Li Po likes to present it, has an intoxicating quality, especially in spring. The poet's presentation of himself as drunkenly enjoying some natural setting is thus a cleverly unpretentious way of presenting transcendent states of mind and being. This idea isn't exclusive to Li Po, but he handles the metaphor

of the bibulous poet in a tipsy world as well as anyone before or since. (46)

This is precisely the goal of the Chinese poet, to communicate the "language of the heart," which is ultimately seated in the heart of all things—the principle of Tao behind source (*wu*) and effortless, natural manifestation, creation, nurturance (*tzu-jan*). The Tao was classically understood as the *t'ai chi*, or "ultimate reality" behind dualistic being, and was depicted in the yin-yang. Tao was understood as nature, the way everything is and that to which everything is ultimately oriented and should act accordingly. Though Tao underlies all things (*wan wu*; literally, "the ten thousand things"), the ancient Chinese sages determined three Taos: the Tao of Heaven which, is light and darkness; the Tao of Earth which is firm and yielding; and the Tao of Man which is love and rectitude (Wilhelm 264). Therefore, these four aforementioned central lines (poem II, ll. 5-8) let the reader know that wine is of the Tao of Man, because "heaven and earth have always loved wine." Li Po asks how, then, loving wine could shame heaven, which is the (ontologically and phenomenologically) creative principle of Tao. This is clearly a rhetorical question, a feature of the folk-poetry style (*yüeh-fu*); he is implying that an unrestricted way of life is not sinful, because it constitutes a true, natural freedom to pursue the good, to walk in the Tao without interruption or interference. Finally, Li Po indirectly expresses the Tao of Man as wine when he says, "I hear clear wine called enlightenment, / and they say murky wine is like wisdom..." (7-8). The importance of this line can begin to be apprehended when one considers the first two lines of the seminal Taoist text, the *Tao Te Ching*: "The tao that can be described is not the eternal Tao. The name that can be spoken is not the eternal Name" (McDonald 13). Therefore, in stressing his certain, confident, mystic understanding of being, Li Po is nevertheless careful to indicate that he himself has not assigned the name of "enlightenment" to "clear wine" and "wisdom" to "murky wine." But, he does mention this curiosity to prove a point: that enlightenment and wisdom are complementary. Enlightenment, like love, denotes a way of selfless being while wisdom, like rectitude, denotes a measure of natural, conscious circumspection, "murky" though it is with all of its limited thoughts and judgments. Li Po means to illustrate that the ultimate perception is none other than the natural perception, an insight which gives birth to the wisdom of *tzu-jan*, which can be said to be a monistic synthesis between ontology and teleology—a Truth that is given yet must be realized, a Truth that is lived yet must be learned. Indeed, Li Po stresses this idea twice in the second poem: with lines 10-11, "...once you drink enlightenment and wisdom, / why go searching for gods

and immortals?” and with the last sentence (13b-14), “Wine’s view is lived: / you can’t preach doctrine to the sober.”

The mode of enlightened, spontaneous, intuitive being that Li Po describes is immediately seen in the beginning of the first poem. Here, he is primarily in nature “among the blossoms,” swaying with the bright, heavenly moon above and tumbling with his dark, earthly shadow below, drunk together in an existential bond of friendship. He has become so profoundly one with nature that they can, “scatter away into [their] own directions... and meet again in Star River distances” (12, 14); in his Taoism, he always has comfort, company, goodness, and joy wherever he goes, and can oxymoronicly be alone together with nature and himself. The symbolism of moon and shadow, as shall be discussed later, also magnifies this theme, and their light-and-dark imagery is paralleled with the “Star River” and alludes to the Tao of Heaven. “Star River” refers to the stars above, the Milky Way; Li Po is talking about assuming an eternal omnipresence with all of nature in this last line. Comparatively, the wise way of being resembled by the “murky wine” is seen in the third part of the poem. In it, Li Po talks about the goodness of wine instead of getting or being drunk on it. The whole structure of the poem can be understood as wine having a connection between sobriety and drunkenness. The enlightenment-wisdom dichotomy is central to the poetic series and occupies the middle lines while the drunkenness of the first part connects to the sobriety of the third part as observed in both the first poem (11-12), “Sober, we’re together and happy. Drunk, / we scatter away into our own directions...” and the third part’s conscious acknowledgment that forgetting the Tao in heaven, earth, and self is really the ultimate realization of it, the deepest joy. Li Po stresses in each poem of the series that this is the nature of getting drunk.

The way in which the poetic series’ action develops and the parallelism in the structure, i.e., between the poems, is truly intoxicating. The series starts in the first poem with Li Po quite naturally pouring himself some wine and getting drunk with nature. The second poem has him discuss the Tao of Man as wine, talking about how he has “plumbed the great Way (lit., “Tao”)... and... merged with occurrence appearing of itself (lit., “*tzu-jan*”)” (11-13a). This second poem is more of a spontaneous soliloquy to the universe, with Li Po confidently uttering the nature of drunkenness in the fashion of a drunk man. The third poem has a mixture of the spontaneous, nature-focused experience of the first part and the axiomatic wisdom of the second part. It provides more detail about the setting, which is appropriate because this poem takes place during the day, but it also suggests that he is taking in the intoxicating landscape

more fully in his sobriety. The text of the third poem seems to suggest that it takes place the morning following his drunken night under the moon; this is evident by the tense and reflective tone of lines 3-4 and 7-12 and is also evident in the first two lines, “It’s April in Ch’angan, these thousand / blossoms making a brocade of *daylight*” (my emphasis). The third part also offers a justification of drinking wine, saying:

Who can bear spring’s lonely sorrows, who
face it without wine? It’s the only way...
and once I’m drunk, all heaven and earth
vanish, leaving me suddenly alone in bed,
forgetting that person I am even exists.
Of all our joys, this must be the deepest. (3-4,
9-12)

This third part seems to read like the sober reflection of one who got drunk the night before, offering more details to the newly lit setting, recalling the previous night’s joy, and summarizing the fulfillment of the experience to a lesser extent than was done in the previous poem, the climax of the drunken realization. Thus, in the first part of the series, Li Po lives the process and experience of getting drunk in this idyllic setting and becomes one with nature; in the second part, he, in a mystic drunkenness, indirectly professes the Taoist understanding as relating to wine and “merges with occurrence appearing of itself” (*tzu-jan*); and in the third part, he personally reflects about the truth and joy he experiences in drinking wine. In each part, the speaker has assumed a different perspective and aspect of being—he is a person utterly changed and adapted to the infinity of every moment in all its paradoxical constancy and perpetual change. The speaker relates his experience of each part in different ways according to his perspective; he mimetically conveys his process of enjoying and adapting to the environment as he relates it to his Taoist worldview, his universe. The series is like a tango between microcosm and macrocosm, between self and all, between perceiving and being, between drunkenness and sobriety, between wine and word, between all transcendental qualities of being.

Beyond the structure of the poem, imagery also adds to the poem’s meaning in light of its symbolic significance in the Taoist and ancient Chinese traditions. As mentioned, the Tao of heaven and earth are portrayed in the poem. The Tao of heaven is seen in the light of the moon and the dark of the shadow and the night. Both the firmness and yielding of the earth are seen in the spontaneous resolve of the drunken man. The receptiveness of the drunk, mystic consciousness is mirrored through the poem’s classical yin symbols: the dark shadow, the watery moon, the thousand blossoms, the

season of spring, and the forgetfulness of self. With the title, “Drinking Alone Beneath the Moon,” the moon is obviously the poem’s central image to which the speaker/author, Li Po, feels a special attraction. Understood in the context of the setting, the moon reflects Li Po’s emotional state.

The ancient Chinese determined that the moon was a symbol of the receptive yin. They postulated that it was a watery, crystalline world filled with fantastic creatures and transcendent spirits (Wang 42). In beholding Li Po’s wine-drunken, solitary, pastoral affair among the moon and his utterance of the aphorism of enlightenment and wisdom in wine, the Western reader is reminded of the Latin aphorism, “*In vino veritas et in aqua santias*,” i.e., “In wine there is truth, and in water there is health.” To Li Po, the moon was a mirror, reflecting his emotional state and his yin-filled setting, and, as the mind of the enlightened Taoist sage is described in the classical Taoist work *Hua Hu Ching*, he is like a mirror reflecting mirrors—this Taoist beneath the moon. Indeed, it is through the setting that his emotional state can be ascertained. The setting is Ch’ang-an, the city in which Li Po once briefly held his only distinguished occupation as poet and diplomat in the imperial court. At this time the poem takes place, however, he has since lost that station and has returned to being a solitary wanderer, searching for an audience and a unity with nature. To Li Po, Ch’ang-an is a poignant reminder of his lonely obscurity: As “moon has never understood wine” (poem I, l. 5), so have none of his time ever understood his deep honesty which had no regard for decorum. Geographically, Ch’ang-an is nestled between the Chun-nan mountains and the Yellow River. It is important to note that Ch’ang-an is a place where mountains and water meet, because to the Chinese, mountains traditionally represented compassion, transcendence, and immutability while water represented wisdom, joy, life, and impermanence (Pine 16-17). The river was symbolically similar to the moon in one respect: it represented the permanence of change, always moving and changing states. However, the moon symbolized the fleetingness of life (Carus, “A Chinese Poet’s”, 128). The last symbolic dimension of the moon to recognize is its aptitude to remind its beholder of his or her family and friends, who may also be looking at it (Pine 64). That sense of unity and home are especially evident in the full moon (Zong-qi et al. 210), and, indeed, we see a “bright moon” in this poem. It is also interesting that the moon is bright in the poem, because the moon was a symbol of yin, which is a dark element; the moon’s brightness indicates that a climatic change in the yin-yang cycle was at hand, that *t’ai chi* 太極—ultimate unity—was apparent, and that the speaker (and the reader) could behold the life-creating forces of heaven fully evident in

the moon’s quiet reception; the moon, like water or a healthy plant, reflected Taoist ontology and teleology in that it abounded with life because of its receptive, yielding nature—because *wu-wei* (strife-less accomplishment) is the gate to *tzu-jan* (spontaneous being). Piecing all of this together, we see a lonely Li Po in a beautiful, natural landscape strewn with Taoist symbols of wisdom and realizing the liberating love of universal being by toasting the bright moon in the springtime, when the hardships of winter have passed. This kind of universal being is the only true awareness of being, or, in other words, the sincere discernment, through reason and emotion, of ontology and teleology gives our life sense and purpose; that is why Li Po guides us in his consolatory rationalization, asking, “Who can bear spring’s lonely sorrows, / who face it without wine? It’s the *only way*” (poem III, ll. 3-4; my emphasis). For the mystic, being now—receiving (yin) what is (*wan wu, tzu-jan*)—is the only way to be. That is the Taoist’s story of transcendence.

In conclusion, Li Po’s “Drinking Alone Beneath the Moon” contains a wealth of meaning—of Taoist ontological and teleological wisdom—in its ideographic language and nuances, classical Taoist philosophy and spirituality, poetic form and tradition, style, structure, setting, symbolism, and action. Li Po, using the ideographic Chinese language, paints a scene with his poetry, filling it with all the symbiotic imagery of life. He develops that scene in the poem’s style, structure, setting, symbols, and action to ultimately reflect the Taoist ontology—his mystic heart—and he gives life to the scene with his voice, dispositions, sentiments, ruminations, convivial actions, the intoxicating imagery and setting, and his vivid and imaginative word choice. For Li Po, vision is reality; he is the Taoist mystic, mirroring reality and acting and speaking in a spontaneous, uninhibited, wholly natural, wise, self-realized, happy way with unaffected authenticity, a literate yet natural mind, and a sense of adventure, written in the most ancient and traditional of Chinese forms and styles yet with a provocative panache that unsettled the *wenren* literati whom he distanced himself from as certainly as they did from him. The perpetual cycle of nature is reflected throughout the course of his poem, his “language of the heart.” When one’s perspective is true, good, and natural, life is a euphoric wonder, a mystic celebration, a drunken reunion of ancient, immortal friends—heaven, earth, and mankind dancing among moon-shadows and blossom-brocades of daylight.

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“Fair is foul, and foul is fair”: Supernatural Representations In a Patriarchal Culture

Rebecca Cook

There has been a great deal of contrasting scholarship in determining the nature of Prospero’s “so potent art” (5.1.59) in *The Tempest*. A traditional interpretation, like that of Francis Barker and Peter Hulme, suggests, “Prospero can be seen as a playwright... because of the control over the other characters given him by his magic” (Nymphs and Reapers 303). A different theory, proposed by Barbara Mowat, suggests Prospero as a wizard.¹ Peggy Simonds offers two classifications of Prospero’s art; she defines him as an alchemist² and as, “...a magician in control of Nature and the poetic civilizer of barbaric peoples...” (Sweet Power of Music 538). While these scholars succeed in attributing showy titles to the supernatural power of Prospero, missed is the gendered ideology behind the “art” of Prospero and what it implies about his character, and more importantly, to understand supernatural representations in Shakespeare’s plays as a whole.

By examining Shakespeare’s treatment of the supernatural of Prospero in *The Tempest* and the Weird Sisters in *Macbeth*, it becomes apparent that male magic is used as an active method of controlling women and supporting the patriarchal structure, whereas witchcraft, a passive, female-based power, conversely challenges the patriarchy and births destruction. Additionally, much of Prospero’s “rough magic” seems to fall under early-modern definitions of witchcraft; the only characteristic that separates Shakespeare’s alchemist (Prospero) from his witches (The Weird Sisters), is the patriarchal culture behind Shakespeare’s plays. The distinction between “internal playwright,” magician, witch, wizard and alchemist comes not from a classification of supernatural, but is rooted in gendered ideology, which supports the

patriarchal social structure.

In understanding the character of Prospero as more than the allegory of the magician, it is necessary to compare and contrast the extraordinary power of Prospero to that of the Weird Sisters in *Macbeth*. There are many similarities in the types of “charms” that Prospero and the Weird Sisters are described as using. Both plays begin with a supernaturally induced tempest. In *Macbeth*, the witches plot revenge on a sailor’s wife through harming her husband: “Though his bark cannot be lost, / Yet it shall be tempest-tossed” (1.3.24-25). The witches’ proposed vengeance on the sailor’s wife is managed through a magically induced storm, “I’ll give thee a wind” (1.3.12) as one of the sisters offers. Although their witchcraft tosses the ship in the storm, it ultimately does not lose, or destroy the vessel.

The storm that the Weird Sisters produce is quite identical to what Prospero creates in the beginning of *The Tempest*, in order to seek revenge on those that stole his dukedom from him. Prospero, in telling Miranda of the tempest he created says,

I have with such provision in mine art
So safely ordered that there is no soul—
No, not so much perdition as an hair,
Betid to any creature in the vessel
Which thou... saw’st sink. (1.2.35-39)

Prospero, similarly to the witches, through his “art,” generates a storm that tosses the vessel, without intention of destroying the ship. Despite Prospero being understood as a “white magician,” the storm he conjures is portrayed as demonic. As Ariel is recounting what

he did to the ship, he mentions that one of its occupants cries “Hell is empty, / And all the devils are here” (1.2.52-53). Even though Shakespeare insinuates darkness over Prospero’s magic, since Prospero is ultimately creating the tempest to foster reconciliation, he retains the title of magician.

Despite the similarities between the two storms that are described in *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*, Prospero is considered practicing white magic as opposed to the black magic of the Weird Sisters. In addition to the resemblance of the scenes, an accusation of witchcraft from the early modern period was that “...witches were suspected of interfering with the weather...” (Thomas 437). Despite the fact that Prospero is depicted as engaging in the same type of act that is an allegation of witchcraft, he is still portrayed as the magus and wronged duke of Milan, whereas the Weird Sisters are conversely “instruments of darkness” (1.3.136).

The Weird Sisters’ summons of the three apparitions bears another resemblance to *The Tempest*. In *Macbeth*, the “black and midnight hags” (4.1.48) conjure three apparitions that vaguely tell the “black Macbeth” (4.3.63) how to keep his kinship secure, but they ultimately show him a line of kings that all resemble Banquo to “...grieve his heart” (4.1.125). Similarly, in *The Tempest*, Prospero sends “strange shapes” (3.3.23) to the “three men of sin” (3.3.70) and commands Ariel to perform in the figure of a Harpy who frightens the men with “...perdition, worse than any death” (3.3.95).

There are many parallels between these two supernatural scenes. The Weird Sisters and Prospero are both presenting their apparitions or spirits for men who have sinned, with an ultimate goal to act like, as Ariel says, “...ministers of Fate” (3.3.79). At the end of the apparition, the Weird Sisters refer to the outcome of their performance as “Our duties did his welcome pay” (4.1.48), suggesting that by showing Macbeth the line of kings in the image of Banquo, Macbeth is getting what he deserves. In fact, the “Weird” of the Weird Sisters can be understood as fateful, or fate-determining. The magic of Prospero and the Weird Sisters are depicted as instruments of fate and are both performed demonically.

The supernatural visions also end the same way, as the stage directions indicate; the apparitions and harpy disappear and leave the sinful men with music and dance. In *Macbeth*, the illusion ends with the stage directions of “*Music. The Witches dance and vanish*” (4.1.48.1); likewise, in *The Tempest* the stage directions conclude the scene with “*He vanishes in thunder. Then, to soft music... and dance*” (3.3.101.1). While these connections may seem of little consequence in understanding the character of Prospero better, they indicate how similar the magic that Prospero uses as means of restoration is to the magic of destruction in *Macbeth*.

Possibly more significant than the similarities of these characters in regards to the gendered supernatural, however, is their differences. The most telling of the distinctions between the good Prospero and the evil Weird Sisters, is how they acquired their magic. Prospero’s supernatural abilities are learned from books, as Caliban orders Stephano and Trinculo, “Remember first to possess his books, for without them / He’s but a sot, as I am, nor hath not / One spirit to command” (3.2.101-103). Caliban suggests that without Prospero’s prized books, the magician is as powerless as he is; it is because of this structure that it is possible for Prospero to later “abjure ... this rough magic” (5.1.59).

Conversely, the Weird Sisters procure their power in a much more passive way; they are simply demonized, or possessed. As Joanna Levin points out “...the witch was little more than the servant of Satan and did not have independent control over the supernatural” (Lady Macbeth 26). In considering the active versus passive nature of Prospero and the Weird Sisters’ power (or lack of power), the gendered ideology of Shakespeare’s magic is clear. It is because Prospero is capable of knowledge that he is able to become the magus, and ultimately given the opportunity of choice, to abjure his magic. Whereas the Weird Sisters are simply evil, their magic is no more than a passive practice, which they are unable to escape; they will always be nothing more than “filthy hags” (4.1.130).

Referring back to the example of the apparitions, conjured by the Weird Sisters, and the Harpy, commanded by Prospero, the active versus passive binary is prevalent in that scene as well. After Ariel’s performance, Prospero tells his sprite how well he did, “Of my instruction hast though nothing bated / In what thou hadst to say” (3.3.104-105). These lines imply that Prospero was completely in control, and commanding the act that Ariel performs. Prospero continues by saying, “My high charms work, / And these mine enemies are all knit up / In their distractions. They now are in my power...” (3.3.107-110). In addition to being in command of the performance, now that it is over, because of his high charms, Prospero still has power or control over his enemies.

For as effective as Prospero is in his art, the Weird Sisters are equally as ineffective in their own witchcraft. In the apparition scene, it is actually Macbeth who goes to the Weird Sisters, “I conjure you by that which you profess / (Howe’er you come to know it), answer me” (4.1.52-53). In contrast to Prospero’s act, which Prospero brings upon his enemies, in the case of *Macbeth*, it is Macbeth who “conjures” the Weird Sisters and demands that they answer him. The Weird Sisters reply to Macbeth by saying, “Speak. / Demand. / We’ll answer” (4.1.64-66), the witches are clearly passive creatures in this scene who are being told what to do, rather than

being in control.

To add to the witches' lack of power in this crucial scene in *Macbeth*, it is not even the Weird Sisters who give Macbeth the advice, it is "...from our masters" (4.1.69). Ultimately it is the apparitions, who the witches claim are their masters, who instruct Macbeth in how to keep his kinship secure. As Stephen Greenblatt states about the Weird Sisters, "The witches in *Macbeth*... account for nothing... it is in fact extremely difficult to specify what, if anything they do or even what, if anything, they are" (Shakespeare Bewitched 31). The witches lack the command that Prospero has that earns him the title of magus, alchemist or internal playwright; contrastingly, the Weird Sisters gendered, passive practice leaves them completely powerless over the play.

To further the suggestion of the Weird Sisters inability to command the play through their paranormal intervention, the question of what they actually do in *Macbeth* must be examined. It could reasonably be argued that the witches' power does little more than "Show / Show / Show" (4.1.121-124), as the Weird Sisters chant, the future; they are able to discuss what will happen, but are ultimately unable to affect the outcome. It is suggested in the text that the same events might have happened had the witches not done anything, "If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me / Without my stir" (1.4.158-159). Here Macbeth notices that what the witches foretell happens without him having to take action on their words. This is crucial in understanding the supernatural in Shakespeare's plays as representing a gendered ideology. Despite the fact that the Weird Sisters are completely unable to shape the events in *Macbeth*, they are still deemed as responsible for the demise of Macbeth, contributing to the destruction of the patriarchy through regicide.

While the Weird Sisters are unable to do more than foretell the future, Prospero's art brings about the entire play. It is through Prospero's "...sorcery he got this isle" (3.2.59), by his magic that he creates the masque, banquet, harpies and even the tempest for which the play is named. Prospero orchestrates the play that can be seen as a metaphor for life, he fabricates "... such stuff / As dreams are made on..." (4.1.173-174). The major difference between the two types of magic presented, is that Prospero's power creates a "...brave new world" (5.1.217). Prospero, though he admits his magic is rough, and needs to be abjured, the retired magus succeeded in restoring the social order; thus, Prospero is understood as the magician.

As Barbara Mowat concludes in "Prospero, Agrippa, and Hocus Pocus,"

In Prospero's role we can read the story of a man's personal growth from vengeance to mer-

cy, and from rough magic to deep spirituality; or we can simply enjoy the magician's struggles to bring about the play's remarkable happy ending" (187).

Instead, this paper suggests Prospero's character be read in terms of the gendered ideology that makes his magic possible. Prospero's art grants him the ability to be active in the play, and more importantly controls the restoration necessary for the comedy. This is why Prospero's magic has been seen as a "...poetic metaphor for wit, love, death, religious conversion and salvation, and political reform" (Simonds 538), instead of understanding his magic in terms of gender.

While the Weird Sisters of *Macbeth* also reinforce gendered supernatural representations in Shakespeare's plays, they do so at the opposite spectrum. The witches are incapable of accomplishing or controlling anything, as Macbeth says about their prophesy, "This supernatural soliciting / Cannot be ill, cannot be good" (1.3.143-144). The Weird sisters and everything that they do is entirely idle; what they suggest in their foretelling is devalued to being unable to produce neither harm nor good. However, simultaneously, "...the witches appear as a part of the 'demonic opposition to godly rule'" (Levin 45). The female power of witchcraft, while portrayed as passive, is inherently evil and destroys the patriarchal social structure.

By comparing the magic of Prospero, to the witchcraft of the Weird Sisters, the gendered nature of Shakespearean magic is obvious. By the end of *The Tempest*, Prospero has had his dukedom restored and has no more "Spirits to enforce, / Art to enchant..." (epilogue 14); the aura of the ending is magical and beautiful. For the Weird Sisters, on the other hand, they do not even make an appearance in the final act of *Macbeth*. As quickly as the witches vanish from their scenes, "As breath into the wind" (1.3.85), the Weird Sisters disappear entirely, they embody Macbeth's metaphor for life as,

...but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing. (5.5.27-31)

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(Endnotes)

1 "I would suggest that Prospero...is the tradition of the wizard—the pagan enchanter brought into the Christian world, the magician with the magus's pride in his secret knowledge, the enchanter's power over the elements, the sorcerer's control over the spirits, and finally, the Christian's concern over the fate of his soul" "Prospero, Agrippa, and Hocus Pocus" 175.

2 "I will argue here that Prospero is an alchemist as well as a magician, that his goal in *The Tempest* is to restore the Golden Age or, in terms of the future, to create a 'brave new world' by perfecting the people, including himself who will live in it, and that the art or science of alchemy thus provides a major shaping pattern for the tragicomedy as a whole" "My Charms Crack Not" 542.

Meanings Can Change the Meaning

Sarah Webster

The uses of *thou* and *you* can be hard to understand in Shakespeare's plays. According to J.M. Pressley, the uses of *thou* and *you* are not only "confusing" but also "one of the more interesting points of Shakespeare's language." Shakespeare was able to use these words to express emotion between characters and show how these characters related to one another. The differences in these words can help readers have a better understanding of Shakespeare's writing. In *Hamlet*, the uses of *thou* and *you* have many different meanings. Raychel Haugrud Reiff states, "*thou* and *you* could not be used interchangeably by the English noble men and women..." (69). Even though *thou* and *you* are hard to understand at times, Shakespeare used them craftily.

The history of *thou* and *you* can show how they transformed into what they are today. In Old English, *thou* and *you* had very different meanings. *Thou* was used primarily when referencing one person, or a singular pronoun. If a person stated, "thou come here," they meant for one person to come, not two. In Middle English, *thou* changed a little. It still kept its singular form, but also conveyed a polite tone. Seamus Cooney states that this change was "probably influenced by [the] French *vous* vs *tu*," which also held a polite tone depending on which word was used. The word *thou* would change again in Early Modern English, during the time of Shakespeare. During this time, *thou* was used by "people of higher rank to those beneath them" (Cooney). *Thou* lost its politeness and was used by the lower class when speaking to each other. *Thou* was also used when talking with supernatural beings, such as God, witches, and ghosts, which is how readers know the word today (Cooney). Husbands would also use *thou* when speaking to their

wives, but would expect their wives to respond with *you*. In Shakespeare's time, women were of a lower status than men, and would be expected to use the correct forms of *thou* and *you*.

Thou came with "an extra emotional element" (Cooney). On one hand, when trying to express closeness or affection *thou* was the proper word to use, no matter whom the conversation was with. It would show a "close intimacy or social distancing" (Reiff 69). On the other hand, when a person of the lower class spoke to a person of the upper class, using *thou* would carry the meaning of anger or scorn. Likewise, when an upper class person was using *thou* to another upper class person, the connotation was to be insulting, rather than showing reverence or respect (Cooney). According to Raychel Haugrud Reiff, using *thee*, another form of *thou*, in front of a host would be taken disgracefully: "the host would be offended, thinking either that the guest was mocking him or that the visitor had no manners" (69). However, if an adult guest used *thou* to a younger host, the host would be appreciative and understand that the adult guest enjoyed himself or herself (Cooney 69). The uses of *thou* were extremely important to understand what a person was saying.

The word *you* was also very important to use correctly. In the era of Old English, it was used primarily as a plural pronoun. When asking for more than one person, someone would say, "You come here." Today, a person implies *you* by saying, "Come here." Cooney notes that *you*, and *ye*, were used for "more than one." In Middle English, *you* was used more formally. According to Pressley, "*thou* and *you* at some point in Middle English operated the same way," but both were used politely or

to show respect. The meaning of *you* changed again in Early Modern English. Reiff explains that the word *you* was primarily used when speaking to a single person, or to show a polite tone but distant relationship between members of the upper class (69). The word *you* was also used by people of the lower status to speak to the upper class, such as a commoner speaking to a noble, or a child speaking to a parent (Pressley). Pressley states other instances where *you* would be used, such as “servants [speaking] to masters, and nobles [speaking] to the monarch.” Another standard use of *you* was between upper class when talking with each other. By using *you*, the upper class would show “honor and respect” toward each other (Reiff 70). When a male spoke to his female lover, he would also use *you*; he would address her with “the courteous but distant *you*.” By doing so, he would show her that he honored her and would always speak decently of her (Reiff 75).

The only time that *you* would not be used would be when the noble was asking for something, such as forgiveness: “Plaintiffs use[d] *thou* pronouns to try to establish an intimate relationship so the one petitioned will grant their request” (Reiff 71). *Thou* would be used when petitioning to the noble and *you* would be used to honor him. One could also show contempt or disrespect by using *you* instead of *thou*. Reiff states that *you* can show an “icy distance” (72). If a guest at a party was speaking to a younger host and said *you* instead of *thou*, the child would be hurt and wonder why the elder was acting so cold to them (Reiff 69).

In *Hamlet*, there are many instances where the proper use of *thou* and *you* play a significant role in the passage, and show how the characters interact with each other. In Act III, Scene IV, Hamlet enters the room to speak with his mother about his father. Upon entering, Queen Gertrude uses *thou* to speak to her son, to show intimacy and love for him. He responds immediately with *you* to show distance from his mother. Judith A. Johnson states that Gertrude was Hamlet’s mother, “thus he might be expected to use the intimate pronouns, but his intent is to rebuke her” (152). Gertrude instantly realizes how cold Hamlet is towards her and responds with, “...you answer with an idle tongue” (3.4.14). Not only does Gertrude respond with *you* to show resentment of his comment but also she states that she does not like the way he is speaking to her. Hamlet fights back by saying her tongue is “wicked” and again uses the distant *you* (3.4.15). Hamlet and Gertrude banter back and forth with the distant *you* for a few lines. Gertrude at one point worries about her own her life, and switches to *thou* to ask what he is going to do to her: “What wilt thou do? Thou wilt not murder me?” (3.4.26). She uses *thou* to ask for a request, for her life.

Later on in the same scene after Hamlet kills Polo-

nius on accident, he speaks directly to the dead body of Polonius but uses *thou* instead of *you*. “Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell! / I took thee for thy better. Take thy fortune; / Thou find’st to be too busy is some danger” (3.4.38-40). In this instance, he is speaking with Polonius, who is a noble of exact rank, and insulting him. By looking at the words around *thou*, such as “wretched” and “fool,” one can see how offensive Hamlet was being. Right after giving this speech to Polonius, he turns to his mother and uses *you* to show again how distant he wants to be from his mother. Gertrude replies to her son by stating, “What have I done, that thou dar’st wag thy tongue / In noise so rude against me?” (3.4.58-59). One could take this use of *thou* in one of two ways: Gertrude could be showing closeness to her son and asking him for forgiveness, or she could be insulting her son. From the context in the rest of the sentence, one could agree that Gertrude is being sympathetic to her son. She is asking him why he dares to be so rude to her, because she does not realize why Hamlet is so upset with her. Later in the act, Hamlet explains why he is so detached from his mother, by calling her a “murderer” and “villain” (3.4.110). Immediately after this, Gertrude responds to his accusations with *you* (3.4.133-141). By using *you*, she tries to show respect for Hamlet as her equal, hoping that he will come out of his “madness” and turn into her “gentle son” and show “patience” toward her. According to Johnson, “Hamlet’s behavior alarms the queen; his actions are those of a stranger, not of her child, so she shifts from ‘thou’ to ‘you’” (153). In this act, the uses of *thou* and *you* show the relationships between the characters and how they communicate with each other.

Another scene that has many mixed uses of *thou* and *you* is Act V, Scene I. In this scene, Laertes and Hamlet shift “pronouns, but for different reasons” (Johnson 153). Both of them have been good friends throughout most of the play, but things change at Ophelia’s funeral. Laertes exclaims to Hamlet, “the devil take thy soul” (5.1.272). Laertes is furious with Hamlet; he believes Ophelia’s death is Hamlet’s fault and is upset that Hamlet was present at the funeral. By using *thy*, another form of *thou*, Laertes is insulting Hamlet. Laertes is hoping the devil takes Hamlet’s soul. Hamlet also replies to Laertes using *thou*. Johnson explains Hamlet’s reply as being “simply [a] response to the tone set by Laertes... [or to] be a put-down” (154). Hamlet is either simply responding to Laertes with the same tone, or he is trying to disrespect Laertes. Later in the play, in Act V, Scene II, Hamlet shows a “respect for his former friend” by using *you* (Johnson 154). Hamlet is asking Laertes for forgiveness. Hamlet explains that he has done wrong to Laertes, and accepts his demands to a sword fight. During the sword fight they both use the distant *you* to each

other until their impending deaths. Laertes starts the shift by stating, “Mine and my father’s death come not upon thee, / Nor thine on me!” (5.2.362-363). Not only was Laertes expressing a closeness or friendship to Hamlet but also he was asking Hamlet to forgive him and not blame himself for Laertes’ or his father’s death. Hamlet replies by using *thou* to accept Laertes’ friendship and also implying that he will follow Laertes into death. By craftily using *thou*, Shakespeare summarized the relationships between Hamlet and Laertes throughout the whole play for his audience.

Since Shakespeare’s time, *thee* and *thou* have changed even more. Today, *thou* is rarely used; The Bible is where readers today most commonly find it. When *thou* is used it “is ... viewed as the language of solemn ceremony and formality” (Pressley). Pressley also states that *thou* started to fade away in Standard English around the 1700s. He further explains that *thou* was used in its original form by William Tyndale as a singular pronoun in the Bible, while *ye* or *you* are used in their plural usages. William Tyndale was one of the men who helped translate the Bible into English; his translation “became the translation for the King James version of the Bible” (Pressley). No matter how *thou* or *you* were used throughout the centuries, Shakespeare did a marvelous job showing how these words can work to better understand the hidden meanings in texts.

Throughout *Hamlet*, Shakespeare tactfully used *thou* and *you* to show relationships between the characters. Whether the characters were being respectful to each other or showing disdain, the uses of *thou* and *you* help readers better understand the plays that Shakespeare composed. Johnson states that although Shakespeare’s

uses of *thou* and *you* are inconstant, when it is important to show the “relationship between two characters, he makes that careful choice” (156). Shakespeare is credited for many new words, and for his skillful use of words. Pressley sums it up nicely: “Although the distinction may be lost today, there was once a logical basis for differentiating between *thou* and *you*.”

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The Birth of Tragedy: A Transcendental Poetics

C. J. Hedges

The two main requirements for philosophizing are: firstly, to have the courage not to keep any question back; and secondly, to attain a clear consciousness of anything that *goes without saying* so as to comprehend it as a problem. Finally, the mind must, if it is really to philosophize, also be truly disengaged: it must prosecute no particular goal or aim, and thus be free from the enticement of will, but devote itself undividedly to the instruction which the perceptible world and its own consciousness impart to it.

-Arthur Schopenhauer (*Essays and Aphorisms* 117).

I

Friedrich Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music* is in the words of Walter Kaufmann, "one of the most suggestive and influential studies in tragedy ever written" (Kaufmann 3). However, discussions concerning tragedy invariably play host to *Poetics*. "For centuries, theorists and critics of tragedy have routinely grounded their arguments in Aristotle's formulations and terminology," writes Sheila Murnaghan (755). I suspect the relative unimportance assigned to Nietzsche's work from the academic community is the result of his confounded prose. Nietzsche later wrote in "An Attempt at Self Criticism" that *The Birth* is a "strange and almost inaccessible book...badly written, ponderous, embarrassing, image-mad and image-confused..." (Nietzsche 19). Since *The Birth* is a bold and insightful study of tragedy, a crystalline exposition becomes imperative. And yet Dennis Sweet writes in *The Birth of the Birth of Tragedy* that, "few of Nietzsche's advocates have gone on to show clearly *how* or *in what sense* [Nietzsche's thesis is] innovative

and insightful" (346). Making *The Birth* intelligible and clear is therefore the first priority of this paper. I will consider what Nietzsche called the first "decisive innovation" of his book; namely, the "Dionysian phenomenon of the Greeks..." (Nietzsche 727). I will not consider Wagnerism and Socratic decadence. The second priority is to retire the *Poetics* and erect a new monument in its place. Even better, I will contemplate the "struggle of spring" (Sweet 354) or the "Dionysian phenomenon of the Greeks" in psychological rather than literary terms. Additionally, I would like to demonstrate the yielding potential of Nietzsche's innovation by offering a novel interpretation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*. To you wretched Aristotelian "sectaries," I say *adieu* (Eliot 55).

II

For Nietzsche, tragedy is produced by the "perpetual strife and [periodic] reconciliation" of two great forces; the "plastic" Apollonian and the "chaotic" Dionysian (Nietzsche 33). But what precisely do these terms mean? Nietzsche does not speak on this matter directly, opting rather for a poetic invocation of "drunkenness and dreams" (Magnus 22). Nevertheless, their characterization is indicative. Illustrating the nature of this opposition, Nietzsche quotes Schopenhauer:

Just as in a stormy sea that, unbounded in all directions, raises and drops mountainous waves, howling, a sailor sits in a boat and trusts in his frail bark: so in the midst of a world of torments the individual human being sits quietly... (Nietzsche 35).

Nietzsche casts the Apollonian as a vessel which affords an unusual degree of order and tranquility within an environment marked by a chaotic frenzy, unyielding and hostile. What is the Apollonian then? In Kantian terms it is simply the cognitive “soothsaying” apparatus from which the protagonist derives order and meaning from the chaotic substance that is his or her experience (Kant 35). I interpret Nietzsche to be arguing that the tragic drama unfolds from a unique augmentation of Kant’s transcendental philosophy in which sources of empirical knowledge are set to converge and contradict with certain transcendental elements of “pure cognition of the understanding,” and by extension certain sources of pure knowledge *a priori* (Kant 27). Human behavior is more often than not governed by this delicate tissue of transactions.

III

It is slightly ironic that Kant is now in the place he was most uncomfortable, that is, in the realm of fiction. *Hamlet* is no *Emile*, but it is no doubt a treasure (“the ‘Mona Lisa’ of literature” according to T.S. Eliot) and so I think Kant will be happy to stay (Eliot 47).

IV

What is significant about Nietzsche’s strange innovation? Nietzsche is the first philosopher/psychologist to construct a nearly complete model of human cognition simply by setting the transcendental ideality of the mind in motion or in opposition to sources of empirical knowledge. Kant tells us we have *a priori* knowledge, but he fails to tell us how the *a priori* knowledge affects our behavior in relation to our *sensibility* and ultimately *a posteriori* knowledge. We must therefore understand that Nietzsche is standing on the shoulders of Kant, contrary to the view put forth by many commentators that Nietzsche is an adolescent hermetically sealed thinker.

V

Cognitive dissolution usually leads to reconciliation or further despair. Unique to tragedy, however, dissolution drives a narrative to a singular point where reconciliation is manually forged by a monumental act of human will. Nietzsche calls this an act of self-illusion. The act of self-illusion is fundamental to the formation of tragedy. I will now explain this formation in further detail.

All dramatic works are driven by conflict. Conflict may be defined as a temporary restructuring of the elements of understanding, a metaphysical crisis, or in Nietzsche’s words an “overwhelming bursting forth of

the struggle of spring, a storm and rage of mixed feelings...” which again develops as a result of the contradiction that exists between a protagonist’s intuition and empirical representations (Sweet 354). How a dramatic work is further classified depends on the type of resolution that follows from the conflict. I have constructed three categories of resolution which I shall call (I) a consensual resolution, (II) a non-consensual resolution, and (III) a tragic resolution. A consensual resolution occurs when the protagonist’s phenomenal reality appears to re-harmonize with his or her intuition, producing psychologically a sense of comfort, certainty, and complete satisfaction, in short, a soft mania. *Beowulf*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *How Right You Are*, *Jeeves*, and *Sherlock Holmes* are a few examples which belong in the first category. This class is by far the largest. A non-consensual resolution occurs when the protagonist’s phenomenal reality does not re-harmonize with his or her intuition, producing a sense of nausea, disorder, and melancholy, in short, a depression. *Pale Fire*, *Frankenstein*, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, and *Voyage in the Dark* are examples the second category. A tragic resolution occurs when a sense belonging to the first category follows from a convergence belonging to the second. How does this happen? According to Nietzsche, a pseudo-re-harmonization is forged by a “metaphysical miracle of the Hellenic ‘will,’” that is to say, by self-illusion (Nietzsche 33). *Hamlet* is an instance of the last class.

VI

On a separate but related matter, Nietzsche discusses *Hamlet* explicitly in essay seven of *The Birth of Tragedy*. He refers to Hamlet as the perfect “Dionysian man” (60). It was clear to Nietzsche that Hamlet’s sentiment was shaded by a peculiar form of pessimism which Nietzsche termed “Dionysian pessimism” (Dienstag 86), a symptom of the cognitive dissolution which develops from the discordance in Nietzsche’s duality. For this reason, illustrating Nietzsche’s thesis using *Hamlet* is helpful in understanding the mechanics of tragedy.

VII

We arrive in the Danish court where a conflict immediately manifests itself: Hamlet’s father is killed. His uncle usurps and marries Gertrude with little reflection. What’s more, the alleged ghost of Hamlet’s dead father appears in a wooden lot and orders Hamlet to commit murder and thus treason on his vaporous and shadowy behalf. It is here the cries of Spring tumble in. We have an obvious disruption in Nietzsche’s duality. The substance of Hamlet’s experience does not agree with certain elements that compose his cognition. To

be precise, Hamlet's experience sits in opposition to all four conceptions of the understanding: quality, quantity, relation, and modality. First, Hamlet's conception of *plurality* is disturbed, because he lost his father. Second, his suspicious murder challenges Hamlet's conception of *causality* and *dependence*. Lastly, Hamlet's interaction with the ghost upsets his conception of both *possibility* and *existence*. The rest of the play is driven by Hamlet's attempt to will an agreement or false-harmonization between his understanding and his experience. In other words, Hamlet settles on revenge.

VIII

Along with the impending discord, Hamlet captures a glimpse into the Dionysian Universe, a "being," as Nietzsche contends in *Beyond Good and Evil*, "wasteful beyond measure, indifferent beyond measure, without purposes and consideration, without mercy and justice, fertile and desolate and uncertain at the same time" (Nietzsche 205). When Hamlet exclaims in a fit of grief that the "uses of the world" seem "weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable," (Shakespeare 2.2.114-163) or when he calls the air a "foul and pestilent congregation of vapors," he is experiencing a special kind of pessimism that comes with this collapse (2.2.287-338). According to *Hamlet and Counter-Humanism* by Ronald Knowles, Hamlet's "pessimism [is] influenced by the philosophical skepticism of what Hiram Haydn called the sixteenth-century 'counter-Renaissance,' which severely challenged the optimism of Renaissance humanism" (Knowles 1048). Contextually, this explanation is plausible, but it fails to capture with sufficient intensity the true essence of Hamlet's despair. Hamlet's melancholy is what Nietzsche calls "Dionysian pessimism" (Dienstag 84). For Nietzsche, "pessimism is the consequence of knowledge of the absolute illogic of the world-order," but a "Dionysian pessimism" is that "courageous pessimism that is...the way to 'myself,' to my task" (Dienstag 86). What Nietzsche means by this is the struggle to overcome, or in a sense, mask that knowledge of the Dionysian through illusion. In Hamlet's case, revenge is the act of self-illusion which results in a false-reconciliation between the Apollonian and the Dionysian.

IX

We find in Hamlet a curious immobility or hesitancy to act. But critics do not agree on the reason. Goethe attributes the inaction to a "weakness" of character, while Dr. Earnest Jones the Oedipus complex (Reed 171). Others ironically attribute Hamlet's "failure in the particular motive of revenge to psychotic shortcoming" (171). By reading Hamlet's inability to act according

to Nietzsche, however, it becomes clear that Hamlet is constricted by the knowledge that comes with a collapse of the Apollonian. As William Brashear writes in *Nietzsche and Spengler on Hamlet: An Elaboration and Synthesis*, the "understanding that Nietzsche finds at the core of Hamlet is not like Coleridge's reflection or Bradley's speculation a faculty to be balanced with the other but rather a level of thought, the Dionysiac level, at which the mind apprehends the meaninglessness and terror of existence" (Brashear). Hamlet says in the first scene of the third act that:

Conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sickled over with the pale cast of thought;
And enterprises of great pitch and moment,
With this regard, their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action (Shakespeare
3.1.68-116).

In this soliloquy, Hamlet indicates that he has "looked truly into the essence of things." He has gained knowledge of the Dionysian, and with that the "nausea [that] inhibits action" (Nietzsche 60). For Nietzsche, the "horrible truth outweighs any motive for action," because any action would ultimately exercise no influence over reality (60). In *Nietzsche, Virtue, and the Horror of Existence*, Philip Kain writes that such knowledge "kills action. Action requires distance and illusion. The horror and meaninglessness of existence must be veiled if we are to live and act" (Kain 155). In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche writes that:

It might be a basic characteristic of existence that those who would know it completely would perish, in which case the strength of the spirit should be measured according to how much of the 'truth' one could still barely endure-or to put it more clearly, to what degree one would require it to be thinned down, shrouded, sweetened, blunted, falsified (Nietzsche 293).

Hamlet's inaction is the symptom of a glimpse into the Dionysian. By a "metaphysical miracle," he must will an agreement between the Apollonian and the Dionysian. It is here that we find a tragic resolution.

X

Hamlet stabs his uncle. Shortly thereafter he falls to the ground dying in slow agony. This "potent poison quite o'er-crowds my spirit," he says (Shakespeare 5.2.345-389). He tells Horatio to "report [him] and [his] cause aright" (5.2.302-344). From this we can infer

Hamlet's sense of justice and satisfaction. If Hamlet did not feel this was a righteous conclusion he would have told Horatio to hide or distort his action to what extent is possible. Hamlet succeeded in forging with his "Hellenic will," (Nietzsche 33) a false-harmonization between his intuition and the substance of his experience. Justice, satisfaction, and triumph resonate. Hamlet refashioned his understanding despite his own death and that of Gertrude, Claudius, Polonius, Laertes, and Ophelia.

As I have shown, Hamlet's understanding is torn to pieces by the outward chaos of his experience and subsequently reassembled by self-illusion.

Searching for insight with an Aristotelian spectacle is like taking a survey of the ocean floor using a pair of goggles: fruitless and tiresome. I wish to overturn this model by grounding the problems of tragedy in human cognition rather than action and plot development.

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The Price of Magic in *Jonathan Strange and Mr. Norrell*

Amber Burton

British pop-culture seems to have taken hold of America once again. No, 60s rock and roll is not making another appearance. This time books are—fantasy novels to be more precise. Ever since 1997 when J.K. Rowling's immensely popular *Harry Potter* series was released, a new sort of literary British invasion has taken over America by storm. British authors such as Neil Gaiman, David Mitchell, Ian Rankin, Ian McEwan, and even the author of the controversial *Fifty Shades of Grey*, E.L. James, have all had bestsellers on the NY Times Bestseller's List.

In the midst of all this popularity it would be extraordinarily easy to brush aside another fantasy fiction novel from the U.K., and that is exactly what happened to Susanna Clarke's debut novel *Jonathan Strange and Mr. Norrell*. Coming in at 846 pages (87 pages longer than the final *Harry Potter* novel), *Jonathan Strange and Mr. Norrell* might have caught on just as quickly as any other novel from Britain if it were, perhaps, a little more relatable to its target audience. Amongst the tide of children and young adult novels such as *Harry Potter*, *Lord of the Rings*/*The Hobbit*, and *The Chronicles of Narnia*, that follow Joseph Campbell's Hero archetype to a tee, *Strange and Norrell's* deviation from that path may be why it never entirely made it across the pond to American readers.

The fact that *Strange and Norrell* never garnered international fame, and perhaps its daunting length, does the novel a disservice in that there are almost no academic articles on the novel. This in itself is not the disservice; the disservice is that since there are no scholarly sources on the novel. It is unlikely to be discussed amongst literary scholars and those in academia. These are the very people who have the power to make this novel more than just an obscure recommendation from a friend.

The intention of this essay is to fill this gap and open a door for scholarly discourse on *Jonathan Strange and Mr. Norrell*.

If scholars and critics were to read a work like Clarke's it would open up a gateway of new novels that could be added to the literary canon. It would then be possible for academics to take one book and teach literary devices such as magical realism, hamartia, fantasy, as well as the genre of historical fiction without reading the same books (e.g., *Lord of the Rings*, *Chronicles of Narnia*, and *The Hobbit*) semester after semester. The enthusiasm of this new material, which academics will no doubt pour over and teach, will be infectious to the students as well and bring a new enthusiasm for literature to old courses.

In the strictest sense, *Jonathan Strange and Mr. Norrell* is a novel about two magicians who want to return magic to England but go about it in two different and ultimately disastrous ways. Of course, a book 50 pages shy of 900 pages has a bit more going for it than this; in fact, the novel is so thorough in its purpose that almost, if not every, page of the novel has extensive footnotes that make up a legendarium of an alternate-universe England—an England where magic is just as commonplace as a cell phone. This is not, however, the magic of *Harry Potter* or *Lord of the Rings*. In Clarke's novel she takes great care to ensure that her readers understand one thing: all magic comes with a price. This is essential to the reading of Clarke's novel, and the literary device of magical realism in general, in order to understand that even fictional characters are not free of consequences and that we all must pay a price for our actions.

Strange and Norrell is unlike the current popular sto-

ries involving magic in which if there are any ill effects of magic it is because the user either made a mistake or because the user made a serious error in judgement. For example, in *The Deathly Hallows* Harry Potter speaks Lord Voldemort's name in a show of defiance despite the fact that he knew that the Ministry would be alerted anytime someone said Voldemort's name. This, in turn, leads to their capture and Hermione's horrific torture by the hands of Bellatrix Lestrange. In *Strange and Norrell*, however, there are consequences of every spell cast throughout the novel, although these consequences are not always immediately evident to the user. This is almost never apparent to the two titular characters until the very final moments of the novel, when the consequences have become far too steep to reverse.

The price of magic can be seen as early as the third chapter. In order to prove this point more clearly it is necessary to engage in a brief plot summary. Mr. Gilbert Norrell, the only known practical magician in England, has decided he has had enough with the Learned Society of York Magicians. The Society is simply a group of men who has theoretical knowledge of magic but no practical knowledge. These men—a relatively harmless group of people—would gather occasionally and discuss the history of magic as they understood it. Upon hearing of Mr. Norrell's boast to John Segundus that he is a practical, and not theoretical, magician, The Society sends Norrell a letter asking him to prove his claim. Offended by their audacity to make him prove his own claims, Norrell sends them a solicitor with a letter detailing that he will perform some token of magic upon The Society's next meeting and if he "failed to do the magic then he would publicly withdraw his claims to be a practical magician...and he would give his oath never to make any such claims again" (Clarke 23). In addition, he states that he intends to "exact the same promise from each and every magician of the York society as he made himself" (24) and that they would have to disband the society altogether. And exactly as he said he would, Norrell does prove his claim of being a practical magician upon The Society's next meeting by bringing the statues of the cathedral of York alive. The Society is thus forced to disband, Norrell becomes somewhat of a celebrity, and the consequences of this one act are not shown until the very end of the novel. Just like the riddle from the *Deathly Hallows* states "I open at the close" (Rowling 698), the same sort of literary device known as Chekov's gun is true in Susanna Clarke's novel when Norrell's dismissive disbanding of The Society comes back to haunt him.

Clarke is clever in her punishment of both Strange and Norrell's "sins" and makes them pay a heavy price. Norrell's forceful disbanding of the Learned Society, which leaves him and later Jonathan Strange as the only

magician(s) in all of England, backfires immensely. After the Gentleman with the Thistle-down Hair is defeated by Stephen Black and all the curses broken, the reader discovers that Strange, and now Norrell, are bound together by the Eternal Darkness. Not only are the magicians unable to move away from one another but they are cursed with the Pillar of Eternal Darkness that follows them wherever they go. The pillar casts a shadow of darkness upon the land. In a turn of delicious irony it is only their forced isolation from society that allows for their ultimate dream, the return of magic to England, to be realised.

What is interesting to note is that Norrell does not at first recognize his cursed attachment to Strange as a punishment or a curse—he merely sees it as an annoyance:

The spell will not allow us to move too far from one another. It has gripped me too. I dare say there was some regrettable impreciseness in the fairy's magic. He has been careless...If nothing else, Mr. Strange... this is an excellent illustration of the need for great preciseness about names in spells! (Clarke 811)

In fact more than just an annoyance he sees it as a mistake on the fairy's part, insinuating that *he* would or could never make such a careless mistake when it comes to magic. The same happens when Strange first discovers he has been cursed with Eternal Darkness:

DR. GREYSTEEL: Then at least free the parish from this Unnatural Night. Do that at least for me? For Flora's sake?

STRANGE: What are you talking about? What Unnatural Night? What is unnatural about it?

DR. GREYSTEEL: For God sakes, Strange! It is almost noon!

STRANGE: ...I had not the least idea (Clarke 689).

Strange's surprise and dismissal of the Eternal Night (he simply tells Dr. Greysteel that he is not sure if he can fix it and then goes back to his work) is equally as troublesome as Norrell's irritation. Their lack of concern over their eternal curse shows their lack of repentance for their "sins," as the members of society call their actions, thus Clarke leaves them to their fate. As little as Strange and Norrell care about their fate, and though they may be self-absorbed and occasionally single-minded in their goal to bring magic back to England, they are not overtly bad people, perhaps just morally ambiguous. The Gentleman with the Thistle-down hair, however, is not so morally ambiguous and his fate is much worse.

The Gentleman with the Thistle-down Hair is the

Loki of Jonathan Strange and Mr. Norrell. He is clever, witty, intelligent, greedy, and absolutely without conscience. From the first moment that he sets his eyes upon Stephen Black he gets the notion in his head that the man is royalty. Everything goes downhill for Stephen after this encounter. When The Gentleman first meets Stephen his flattery is seductive enough to make anyone perk up: "A man as talented and handsome as yourself ought not be a servant...He ought to be a ruler of a vast estate" (Clarke 160). And perk up Stephen does indeed. For the remainder of the novel The Gentleman's behaviour, while occasionally funny and amusing, can be described as the epitome of evil. The Gentleman's schadenfreude over the pain and suffering of others, particularly Stephen Black, Lady Pole, Arabella, (and later Jonathan Strange) and his deliberate obtuseness towards the formers' feelings shows him for what he really is. It is poignant to note that Clarke allows The Gentleman to do whatever he pleases throughout the novel and writes him like an evil sort of trickster character, again like Loki, as opposed to inherently evil. Despite this portrayal the signs of evil are all around.

In the "real" world The Gentleman is all cheer (albeit a bit of a manic sort) and happiness and the champion of Stephen Black. In the "real" world it is difficult to quantify or even notice his evil nature if it were not for Stephen Black and Lady Pole's resigned acceptance of their fates—and even then this is muted by The Gentleman's spell of silence over them. It is not until the reader is introduced to Lost Hope, the faerie realm, where his true nature is revealed. In the faerie-realm, the fantasy world, the veil is lifted. Clarke gives a perfect account of what the reader sees in Lost Hope:

Suddenly in his fancy he saw a dark place – a terrible place – a place full of horror – a hot, rank, closed-in place. There were shadows in the darkness and the slither and clank of heavy iron chains. (Clarke 220)

This place is a representation of The Gentleman's evil. While at first Stephen only sees an elaborate ballroom filled with people dressed in "the very height of fashion" (Clarke 162), he eventually comes to realise that these people are dancing to "melancholy music" (162) and that some are even dressed as monsters such as the woman with the gown the colour of "storms, shadows, and rain" (163). In order for Stephen to see any of this though he has to be transported to the faerie realm—he does not recognize The Gentleman's intention until he is in Lost Hope. Stephen is not the only one who falls victim to this veil.

The Gentleman curses Jonathan Strange with the Pillar of Eternal Darkness but before that, during the

many times that Strange had tried to scry into his bowl of water in hope of seeing Arabella once more, he had only succeeded in summoning The Gentleman who remains invisible to him simply out of annoyance. Until Strange eventually finds his way to Lost Hope he is unaware of The Gentleman's evil deeds as well. Strange is able to recognize that there is an invisible force several times throughout the novel that irritated him, but he is unaware of the true malevolent nature of The Gentleman until he is able to enter Lost Hope. Unlike Stephen, Strange is able to witness the sad state that his wife, Arabella, is in the moment he arrives but this is not until the veil from the "real" world has been lifted and he is ironically able to see things as they are in the faerie world rather than how he perceives things to be.

R. Jackson's book on subversion puts this more succinctly:

An emphasis upon invisibility points to one of the central thematic concerns of the fantastic: problems of visions. In a culture which equates the "real" with the "visible." The un-real is that which is invisible (Jackson 45).

Jackson may have been talking about fantasy novels in general but he hits the nail right on the head here if we relate this quote to what I have just said about both Stephen and Strange's experiences in Lost Hope as opposed to the "real" world. Having gone to such lengths in explaining just how evil and malevolent The Gentleman really is, I would be remiss if I did not mention how his sins are finally punished by Clarke.

Clarke saves The Gentleman's fate for last and it is one befitting him. Clarke has Stephen Black kill The Gentleman. Stephen realises, along with the readers, that if The Gentleman were allowed to live then his reign of terror would continue. The Gentleman thought nothing of hanging Vinculus or cursing Strange, and by extension Norrell, to a one hundred year fate of darkness. If The Gentleman were to live, what would stop him from taking the entirety of England as his own? The Gentleman's own evil has corrupted him beyond the point of salvation or even humanity and Clarke shows this in her description of his death:

His face was a terrible sight. In his fury and hatred he began to lose his resemblance to humankind: his eyes grew further apart, there was fur upon his face and his lips rolled back from his teeth in a snarl. (Clarke 827)

Perhaps this was The Gentleman's real face. The reader is never given a complete explanation of how

faeries work but it seems to me that it is more than coincidental that as all of The Gentleman's sins lie bare before his fate he becomes twisted and ugly and decidedly unhuman-like. The Gentleman's sins were steep and for those sins Clarke wrought an equally steep punishment upon him: death.

Clarke's is not simply writing a fantasy story, she is writing the story of humanity. Even in a novel with magic and fairies Clarke takes care to remind her reader that nobody is above punishment. Perhaps *Time Magazine* book reviewer Lev Grossman says it best when he talks about Clarke's portrayal of evil:

Clarke has another rare faculty: she can depict evil. Much of Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell takes place in the shadow of a powerful and fascinatingly cruel fairy who makes Voldemort look like a Muppet. This is not kid friendly, although precocious kids may go for it. Clarke reaches down into fantasy's deep, dark, twisted roots, down into medieval history and the scary, Freudian fairy-tale stuff. Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell reminds us that there's a reason fantasy endures: it's the language of our dreams. And our nightmares. (Grossman)

To Grossman, Clarke's portrayal of evil is superb because it's real. All of the sins portrayed in this novel, whether done by magic users or humans, is something that the reader can see clearly because they might have done the same in that character's shoes. It is this reality though that makes the reader realize that no sin goes unpunished and what goes up must inevitably come down.

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The Role of Poet: Toil or Be Toiled Upon?

Dana Clark

In one of the last poems Sylvia Plath wrote before she died, "Words," she focuses on words reaching the public and their meaning getting away from the author. She displays a sense of lament over the lack of a creator's control when releasing work with a line in her last stanza, "Words dry and riderless." (270). When reading Ted Hughes' collection, *Birthday Letters*, one sees a connection between Hughes' poem "The Hands," and Plath's late poem, "Words." While Hughes also focuses on the words that help to create poetry, he doesn't see words as "riderless" because he believes their design is to become that very sense of what "riderless" means. His poem portrays poetry as a collective rather than a personal process, which reinforces Hughes' belief that poetry is a vast, powerful force which will always escape its author, a belief informed by his shamanism, love of animal folklore, and extreme interest in astrology. In these poems by Plath and Hughes, both authors talk about the literary process of how poems are formed. Plath revisits her former work, and Hughes revisits the work of Plath after her death. Hughes emphasizes the writer as a device for poetry while Plath discusses the concept of revisiting work/contemplating the writing process. Viewing their processes in these poems side by side allows us to see the differing views that they have about the same concept.

The hands in Hughes' poem seem fed by some unearthly Ted Hughes-ian folklore whereby poetry possesses these hands, which in turn makes them larger than life. It appears that these hands ARE the possessing, all-consuming power of poetry, and that the gloves represent the writer who is powerless and moved to do only what poetry wants: "Sometimes I think/ Finally you yourself were two gloves/ Worn by those two hands."

(184). To Hughes, the writer is just the instrument to poetry's will. As readers, we have been shown the command of Hughes' White Goddess: that the writer will be carried around by the will of this poetry. In other words, whatever needs to happen for the poetry to survive will happen. Hughes' view of poetry's role supports the thesis of *Birthday Letters*, namely that all of the things in Plath's life needed to happen in order for her poetry to come into existence, which, according to Ted Hughes, is for the greater good.

The hands in Hughes' poem refer to Plath's hands that have "dandled" her childhood, "fed...the pills" for a suicide attempt, which subsequently have left their fingerprints in her poems. He writes, "Sometimes I even think that I too/ Was picked up, a numbness of gloves/ Worn by those same hands." He then goes on to say the hands were "Doing what they needed done," suggesting that every aspect of Plath's life was enacted the way it was in order to serve the higher call of poetry. Such a theory makes it necessary for him to include even himself because he was a source for a good deal of Plath's poetic ideas and unhappiness, therefore his actions count as part of Plath's motivation to write in the "Ariel voice." Hughes suggests that Plath became an instrument moved by poetry. Is Hughes comparing Plath to a chess piece that is moved by some outside force or is he trying to acknowledge her important role in having such amazing poetry flow through her? Perhaps it does not matter, since the poem is more interested in describing the role of this "mechanism" in her poetry rather than praising or depreciating her as a poet. While Hughes' tone seems condescending at times, such as when he writes "You got help to recognize/ The fingerprints inside what you had

done,” the sheer enormity of the “hands” device that he claims shaped her poetry seems to be a praise of all the beautiful work that poetry has taken her through.

The last stanza of “The Hands” holds the line: “The fingerprints/ Inside empty gloves, these, here,/ From which the hands have vanished.” In describing her poetry as “fingerprints/gloves” that then no longer exist he suggests that the death of her hands equates with her actual death, since in death the hands of poetry can no longer work through her anymore. In a way, the “fingerprints/gloves” are her works that survived, which Hughes’ views as a tool that she can no longer fill in her state of death.

Plath’s poem “Words” has concepts that are a lot less measured than Ted Hughes’. In spite of this, she puts in a very controlled image in the last two lines: “From the bottom of the pool, fixed stars/ Govern a life.” The fixed stars present an image that holds a theme of predetermination, much like the motif in “Hands.” Even more intriguing is what Middlebrook, the biographer of *Her Husband*, has to say about the matter. She points out, “In the call-and-response manner of their productive collusion, they had established this core vocabulary... In poems written after their separation, Plath returned obsessively to two of Hughes’ images in ‘Full Moon’—the mirror-pool and the star trembling on the water’s surface. These mutate in Plath’s poems to convey profound, aching abandonment” (191). Middlebrook goes on to list the last two lines from “Words” as an example of her borrowing of Hughes’ images. The use of the star image alone points to the intensity of their creative relationship, and Ted Hughes has kept this going by responding to her poems, even after her death. Plath uses Hughes image about stars in her poem shortly before her death. Hughes responds (even if unintentionally) in “The Hands,” after her death. This poem gives us an angle to look at their views on writing. Their poetry is woven together so tightly that it’s easy to get lost in the act of searching through all of their links.

The images leading up to Hughes’ “star” are filled with a very intense, very different kind of energy that, while desolate and sad, is a driving force. She compares the stroke of axes to running horses and describes an overflow of sap with the phrase, “Wells like tears.” Her second to last image is one of the most powerful of these “fast” images: “Words dry and riderless/ The indefatigable hoof-taps.” These lines invoke the sense of the poem really galloping, which is a feat accomplished gracefully by the well-executed techniques of line break, pace, and tone. Perhaps the push is not towards something pleasant, since we end the gallop in an abrupt halt and the last image is again very controlled and Ted Hughesian. Combine this halt and the desperate tone of the poem and we have quite a different point of view than

in “Hands,” though Plath isn’t able to escape Hughes’ influence. However, she doesn’t seem to share quite as much of the astrologically foretold view of poetry as Hughes. Plath’s poems are much more personal, and in the “Ariel voice” poems, much more intense. They read more like sprinting forward, than the carefully calculated style of Ted Hughes. Plath doesn’t seem to like that her words are getting away from her, or at least has misgivings about her lack of control. All of the examples listed above share not only an intense energy, but also a sort of desperation about seeing these words tumbling away out of control in the public’s mouth. The ringing of the axes is traveling like horses, the sap is pouring over the edges, the words are galloping away like horses... The element that all of these images have in common is that they cannot be contained. The ring of an axe cannot be taken back, sap cannot be shoved back in, and runaway words cannot be recaptured. The desperation in tone and fast pace connotes an anxiety that you don’t see in Hughes’ “Hands,” and demonstrates a lack of faith in his sort of higher power. Hughes, by contrast, believes in the good of situations like those described in Plath’s poem because he believes in the power of divine poetic devices at work.

Plath differs from Hughes in that she has less faith in the power of divine poetic devices at work and is much more haunted and dissatisfied. Lines like “A white skull,/ Eaten by weedy greens” could be read as the public chewing up poetry by critiquing over the years, and quite likely read as the same self-ridicule she inflicts upon herself. With the lines, “Years later I/ Encounter them on the road—,” Plath seems a little uncomfortable with seeing her words later down the road or not totally satisfied with her audience’s reading of her work. When she states, “Water striving/ To re-establish its mirror/ Over the rock,” she is trying to come to terms with the way her words are processed (though later meetings with them herself, the public picking them apart, etc.). Ultimately, Plath is trying to regain control, but can’t, as the metaphors of racing pace continue.

Plath worked upon poetry, while Hughes saw poetry as something that worked upon himself. Instances of daily life that Middlebrook describes show their attitudes toward the way “work” should be viewed in general. Plath doesn’t seem to relax in this regard. According to Middlebrook, “When advanced pregnancy made her uncomfortable about going out, she stayed in and translated for her own entertainment a play by Sartre, *Le Diable et le Bon Dieu*.” (134). Whether for entertainment or not, she undertakes a hefty job even during the discomfort of pregnancy. This tireless work ethic appears to extend to the kitchen as well, as Middlebrook recounts: “But Plath also viewed cooking as a practice that advanced her aim of developing a writing style grounded in womanly expe-

rience. After the honeymoon, when Plath and Hughes had resettled in Cambridge...she spent several hours one day...studying *The Joy of Cooking*, 'reading it like a rare novel.'" (90). Hughes doesn't seem to share the same interest when he says, "She cooks for relaxation while I eat only by necessity." (91). In fact, Hughes seems much more relaxed than Plath in many respects.

Their respective writing styles bear out this idea that one is more relaxed than the other. It seems that Plath is either working, racing forward, or both while Ted Hughes is much more content to let poetry ebb around him and push him in the direction it wants him to go. I believe this has something to do with his belief in the higher powers of poetry, astrology, animal folklore, and the White Goddess. He seems much more at ease that life and poetry will take him where he is supposed to be. My conjecture is based on Middlebrook's comment, "It was Plath who proposed. Some inquisitive person once asked Hughes point-blank, why did you do it? And got an answer: 'Because she asked me.' Why not?" (49). What a simple answer. He married Plath because she asked him. He certainly doesn't seem to have been at all uneasy about his future. Hughes: easy going, straight forward, comfortable in the fateful hands of poetry. Plath: Strict work ethic, high energy, seems to take more of a personal role in the production of poetry.

This look at the daily lives and attitudes of Plath and Hughes through Middlebrook's *Her Husband*, gives us

a good sense of how those attitudes translate into their poetry. It gives a clearer picture of why Ted Hughes would use hands as a metaphor for the symbolic spiritual work of poetry: he lets himself be worked upon in this way in his daily life. As for Plath, why did she write so desperately about her "Words" getting away from her, about the impossibility of bringing them back to herself? Perhaps because she was so focused on a work ethic and so intense that it was frustrating for her to lose that bit of control? We can't know for sure, but the insight into their daily lives is certainly a helpful tool in exploring the writing styles of Plath and Hughes. Perhaps I borrow a little of Hughes' theory when I say that life shapes the poet. Looking at the lives of these poets give us an idea of how attitudes about poetry might have been formed and informs our reading of their respective legacies, especially when looking at poems as intense as "Words" and "The Hands."

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The More Things Change, The More They Stay The Same

Robert Durborow

The Indian poet, Amaru, wrote the *Amarusataka* which is his anthology of love poems in the seventh century (W. W. Norton & Company). John M. Gottman, Ph.D. is touted on the cover of his 1999 best-selling book, *The Seven Principles for Making a Marriage Work*, as the country's (U.S.) foremost relationship expert (Three Rivers Press). One would not expect an author from the twentieth century to have much in common with his counterpart in the seventh century; however these two exhibit some striking similarities. Both wrote about relationships between men and women and, though centuries apart, they agree on a surprising number of details. Amaru wrote poems predominantly about physical love, while Gottman explored the science of relationship. The correlations that can be drawn between these two disparate writer's observations are more than a little illuminating. The writings of these two men, centuries and continents removed from each other, show that the way men and women act in a relationship has not changed in a very long time, nor have the effective means of solving conflict.

In section twenty-three of the *Amarusataka*, Amaru describes a fairly recognizable conflict between two unknown lovers:

Lying on the same bed,
backs to each other,
without any answers,
holding their breaths,

even though making up
each to the other
was in their hearts,
each guarded their pride. (Peterson 1339)

Amaru creates an extremely vivid visual in these verses. The lovers are having a quarrel of some kind and have physically and mentally turned away from each other. Though the subject of that quarrel centuries past may be different from the one John and Betty Public had the other night, the reaction is strikingly familiar.

Dr. Gottman calls such physical turning away "Stonewalling," one of what he refers to as the "Four Horsemen" of his second sign that a marriage is in trouble. Gottman says that at least one partner, secure in his or her own opinion, tunes out the other (Gottman 33). In this stanza of Amaru's work, it is apparent that both lovers have done exactly that. The last four verses spell out each party's mental state precisely. Though the arguments are separated by well over one thousand years, the unknown lovers and the Publics act the same.

An additional comparison can easily be made in the physical actions described in the first four verses. The unknown lovers have turned their backs to each other, using body language to signal their displeasure with one another. Dr. Gottman lists this as the fourth sign that a marriage needs help: body language. The doctor relates that couples in disagreement often become tense and that tenseness becomes visible in each person's physical actions. These verses from *Amarusataka* certainly indicate some tension between the lovers; however, the next few verses offer a solution with which Dr. Gottman agrees:

but slowly,
each looked sideways,
glances mingled
and the quarrel

exploded in laughter;
in enfolding embraces. (1340)

The lovers have turned toward each other, physically and emotionally. A few meaningful glances remind the couple that they care deeply for each other. The argument dissolves into laughter.

Dr. Gottman thoroughly approves of this most effective technique. He devotes the entire fifth chapter of his book to turning toward each other instead of turning away. Gottman describes the concept as recalling good times in a relationship and remembering the reasons each person is attracted to the other (79). Such remembrances could easily have been occurring in the minds of the lovers in these ancient poetic verses. The final verse in this selection refers to the ever popular “kiss and make up” method of ending a disagreement in a mutually satisfying manner. Again we see similar reactions in different centuries.

Amaru and Gottman appear to agree on more than one point. Another example is evident in Dr. Gottman’s regular references to his “Four Horsemen” that can accurately predict failure in any relationship. The first horseman is criticism. Gottman contends that many arguments begin with this very beast. One party berates the other, causing understandable feelings of resentment. Those resentful feelings can quickly lead to contempt, the second horseman. Contempt can be manifest as sarcasm or cynicism (27). Amaru supports Gottman once again in these verses from sections thirty-eight and fifty-seven:

You grovel at my feet
and I berate you
and can’t let my anger go. (57)

My girl.
Yes Lord?
Get rid of your anger, proud one.
What have I done out of anger?
This is tiresome to me.
You haven’t offended me.
All offenses are mine.
So why are you crying yourself hoarse?
In front of whom am I crying?
In front of me.
No, I’m not.
That is why I’m crying. (1340)

The first and second horsemen gallop through these verses with churning hooves. One lover grovels at the other’s feet in supplication, but the partner continues

to criticize in his fiercely righteous anger. Cynicism abounds in the subsequent discussion of the nature of their arguments.

The last six lines of verse illustrate that the woman perceives that her Lord no longer sees her for who she is, nor does he live up to her expectations. The last two lines state plainly that, while her Lord feels unchanged, his lover sees him as a completely different person. It would appear that the four horsemen have been riding through relationships for a very long time.

Turning toward each other is the key, according to Dr. Gottman. When each person in a relationship focuses on the other, that person becomes more important than self. Meeting the needs of the another person liberates couples from major strife and allows each partner to be a friend as well as a lover. When this plateau is reached, each partner becomes more desirable to the other. Neither romance nor friendship is enough to hold couples together. There must exist a little of both (79). Amaru agrees yet again in these excerpts taken from sections 101 and 102:

Friend,
that’s as much as I know now.

When he touched my body,
I couldn’t at all remember
who he was,
who I was,
or how it was. (102)

She’s in the house.
She’s at turn after turn.
She’s behind me.
She’s in front of me.
She’s in my bed.
She’s on path after path,
and I’m weak from want of her.

O heart,
there is no reality for me
other than she she
she she she she
in the whole of the reeling world. (1341)

The beginning seven verses of these sections speak of friendship and love, as well as a joining that results in the two becoming one. Amaru depicts the woman as no longer able to recognize herself or her lover as separate entities. They are one.

The final verses show that her lover has turned so far toward her that she is all that he sees. She is everywhere and everything — his whole life. Amaru’s repetitive use of the word “she” gives the final stanza an almost sacred

feel, similar to a religious chant. When all is said and done, the lovers have resolved their differences and salvaged their relationship, just as Dr. Gottman knew they would.

In the final analysis, the conflicts that arise between men and women have not changed a great deal over the last sixteen hundred years, nor have the effective methods of dealing with them. Though separated by years, continents, cultures, and disciplines, these two authors seem to agree; the more things change, the more they stay the same.

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Medieval Masculinity in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*

Ronnie L. Gladden

Gender is a complex subject because the construct doubly functions within psychological and physical entities. In this way, both the intangible (psychological) and the tangible (physical) function in a binary that is dependent upon one another. By many accounts, the physiological structures of one's sex often have profound implications for one's psychological development and functionality within a social ecosystem. However, from time to time (and perhaps occurring more frequently than is realized) some individuals' construct of their very own gender—meaning their gender identity and expression—is incongruous with the mores of the times in which they are posited. When this happens, the disruption of heteronormative patterns occurs. The disruptive occurrence upsets the binary that encourages a strict compliance with regard to notions of classic masculine and feminine gender roles as set forth during the timeframe one inhabits. This paper will focus on aspects of the gender contract for medieval masculinity in *Sir Gawain and The Green Knight*. The poem challenges the expectations of medieval masculine protocols.

In "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," Laura Mulvey incorporates psychoanalytical theory as a political "weapon" in the effort to depict the patriarchal hegemony that shapes the structured form on film via cultural aesthetics. Mulvey's arguments are, in many ways, universal and can provide insight into much older texts, such as *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. While *Sir Gawain and The Green Knight* is a literary text—and in turn inanimate—the motif of patriarchy controlling the idealized aesthetics of people and places intersects with the psychoanalytic construct that is a part of Mulvey's

thesis. Furthermore C.J. Pascoe's *Dude You're A Fag* and Mahler's "Adolescent Masculinity, Violence and Homophobia" will add additional insights with regard to contextualizing notions of masculinity via a contemporary lens.

In *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, the primacy of the text is concentrated within notions of masculinity and hyper-masculinity. Early in the work, The Green Knight is contrasted with that of other males, including Sir Gawain:

one the greatest on ground in growth of his
frame: From broad neck to buttocks so bulky
and thick, And his loins and his legs so long and
so great (4).

The striking figure that the giant embodies establishes and suggests a type of patriarchal significance that reinforces the supremacy of men during the medieval era. The supremacy is established via the size of the male – as the features connote strength and a facility for conquest and acquisition. Moreover, The Green Knight functions as the center of the poem's thesis in which his valor, figure and deeds serve ultimately as transformative occurrences that affect those living within the court. The sheer size and hue of the giant re-order protocols and places the poem's focus on the excesses of masculinity.

Mulvey asserts that "recent writing in *Screen* about psychoanalysis and the cinema has not sufficiently brought out the importance of the representation of the female form in a symbolic order in which the last resort it speaks castration and nothing else" (833). Perhaps one of the reasons for the lack of the female archetype in

the symbolic order of film (and in text) is because of the emphasized “greatness” and virility of the male. Indeed, women in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* are de-emphasized in contrast to the virility of Arthur’s court, the Green Knight, and Bertilak’s courtly behavior. However, both Guinevere and Bertilak’s nameless wife are key to the narrative: Guinevere will prove to be the reason why the Green Knight challenged the knights of Camelot in the first place and Bertilak’s wife will be the one to catch Gawain literally with the green girdle. Nevertheless, they are overshadowed by the larger-than-life figures of the Green Knight and Gawain.

The Green Knight’s exaggerated stature and form is metaphorical and symbolic of the differences of power between the masculine and the feminine. The symbolic is one of heightened greatness and relevance within a culture. The Green Knight’s legs and loins that are “so long” and “great” work to assert a phallogocentric prevalence in which the length of key appendages take on additional significance and the significance serves as a currency and cache that can order the social customs and additional accoutrements that follow. In addition, he helps to establish the standards of masculinity with both his appearance and adherence to the chivalric code, a medieval conduct protocol that Arthur and his knights claim to follow but, in fact, fail to uphold.

Arthur is described as having a “lordly heart” that was “light” amidst a backdrop of “boyish bravado.” This description positions Arthur in a sort of a masculine liminal space. Arthur is a man—young nevertheless—but still full grown in form—yet not necessarily in consciousness and behavior. The “boyish” part of Arthur’s being—a being that arguably intersects with elements of femininity because it must show deference to fully attained masculine growth and it does not possess the type of strength needed to subdue and/or to compete with masculinity—is continually emphasized. Moreover, the “light” heart is a trope that functions as a means to underscore the boyishness of Arthur – which works in contrast to fully developed manhood—and womanhood for that matter.

Nevertheless, Arthur is indeed described as “lordly,” which does suggest a level of maturation has been attained. However, the continual emphasis on Arthur’s “lightness” and intimated gendered liminality challenge the mores of medieval male expectations. This is all the more striking when juxtaposed with The Green Knight or even Sir Gawain. Arthur’s liminality reflected a hybrid masculine-feminine intersection that obscured gendered lines and the resulting aesthetic affected the symbolic and supremacy of patriarchy. This indictment comports into an alternative aesthetic that challenges the models of established mores of masculine and feminine interactions:

The alternative cinema provides a space for a cinema to be born which is radical in both a political and aesthetic sense and challenges the basic assumptions of the mainstream film ...yet this kind of “avant-garde cinema” can only continue to function as a “counterpoint” to the mainstream cinema. (Mulvey, 834)

The interlocking of the literary and the cinematic genres share many commonalities. Among those is the conjoined rhetorical space and lens in which to frame myriad socio-cultural contexts—especially those of the gendered order. Arthur’s description and mannerisms operate within a peripheral space of masculine and gendered norms of his time. He is marginalized in that he is feminine and engages in behavior inconsistent of the male order in his demure and “dainty” mannerisms. This behavior challenges the heteronormativity of the symbolic in which the male functions in the phallic space—even though the actions of the masculine are inverted. This inversion and reordering of masculine norms obstructs the traditional status quo of the gender binary in which the female form is fetishized. In fact, it is the hyper-masculine form of the Green Knight that is fetishized but the entire court.

In *Dude You’re a Fag* Pascoe describes what occurs with the expressions of effeminate and or gay males in the spaces of America’s high schools. Often their behaviors are marginalized and are problematic—in spite of the era of “It Gets Better” campaigns which are designed to quell the strains of bullying of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) youth. Even within the best of circumstances, effeminate and/or gay males function within a complex liminality – for they hover between traditional masculine norms and traditional feminine norms. Their actions rarely fully align with either side and in turn operate within a subordinated entity – known as Subordinated Masculinity. Subordinated Masculinity pertains to men “who are oppressed by definitions of hegemonic masculinity, primarily gay men” (Pascoe, 7). This subordination occurs because the behaviors and actions of these gay or effeminate men are not sanctioned within heteronormative spaces, so therefore they are not accorded the rights and privileges that would normally be available. Perhaps Arthur functions within this type of space for his “boyishness” or not yet fully developed interior self serves as a qualifier that may align with that of young males who are in another type of liminality – straddling the lines between adolescence and adulthood. This stage in life usually can be comported into the spaces of high school and traditional undergraduate college entities, where heightened acts of machismo are expected. For those males in the liminal spaces, it is rather difficult to assert themselves

in a valiant way. Perhaps as a means to compensate for perceived inadequacies, acts of violence serve as a misguided cathartic vehicle often culminating into school shootings. In “Adolescent Masculinity, Homophobia and Violence,” Kimmel and Maher:

...argue that in addition to taking gender seriously, a reasoned approach to understanding school shootings must focus not on the form of the shootings—not on questions of family history, psychological pathologies, or broad based cultural explanations—but on the content of the shootings—the stories and narratives that accompany the violence, the relationships, and interactions among students, and local school and gender cultures. (Kimmel and Mahler, 115)

The aforesaid may help to provide insight into the triangulation of male archetypes that exist within *Sir Gawain and The Green Knight*. Belying the different male templates of The King, The Green Knight and Arthur is a lyric that provides a contextualization of insight with regard to the approach to themes of violence and more importantly to issues that would trigger violence and other forms of aggressive behaviors during the medieval times. What are the deeper stories that align with the King, The Green Knight and Arthur? How would these stories establish a type of content that would help to illuminate the combative actions of the King and The Green Knight and the more conciliatory behavior of Arthur? What conditions have conspired to create the templates that each of the men embody? And why have each of the male figures worked to reflect such a design? The King and The Knight are certainly the more aggressive and said aggression functions as a type of male currency that can be used to frame and create a culture and climate that upholds the agenda of said creators. In this way, the notion of gender can be viewed as a serious entity—an entity that is a part of a psychological matrix which belies the motivations and behavior of individuals—those of the three male templates—as well as the broader collective. Arthur’s more temperate demeanor offsets the aggression and establishes another type of “male currency” to use within social circumstances.

Arthur’s non-valiant and non-war weary reality is a departure for what would be expected for a man – especially one that lived during the medieval times. But Arthur is actually able to broker a peace with regard to the masculine and feminine heteronormative contract of the medieval era because he occupies a position of authority; Arthur is a top one of the highest rungs within the social register of his time. Unlike those who may be positioned “powerfully in terms of gender but not in terms of class or race” (Pascoe 7) and are therefore

operating within a type of “marginalized masculinity” as Pascoe asserts, Arthur instead transcends the limitations of race and class and therefore to some extent transcends the strongholds of heteronormativity in the vein that it was structured in the past. What he may lack in valor he compensates in the form of potential veto authority via his high-ranking social status. Arthur’s subordinated masculinity seems to be prevalent when categorized with more virulent men.

Moreover, Arthur’s departure from the gendered contract encourages questions about gender such as: just how much does anatomy truly influence gender constructs? What happens when someone transcends or works to transcend the gendered status quo? And what happens when a person of means and influence transcends these heteronormative orderings? In addition, Arthur’s contrary but subtle behavioral differences offer a sort of continuum of male expression which works to offer other sorts of archetypal and stereotypical configurations (and options). Although Pascoe’s description of Parsonian theories on masculinity occurs within a contemporary lens, the gradations of the various types of masculinities can be comported within the character arcs of *Sir Gawain and The Green Knight*. The King, Arthur and The Knight each represent different kinds of archetypal “energies” that ultimately work to complement each other.

Arthur’s lightness and genteel behaviors while disparate from medieval masculine mores help to illustrate a construct and context for youth. There is a frivolity that often accompanies a gaiety or a light at heart persona. In fact, this kind of frivolity can be amplified by thinking of the possibilities of the future. However, there is a chance that the young heir will harden into perhaps a more dogmatic ruling entity and in so doing that will ultimately uphold traditional structures of gendered fare. But nevertheless, the youth of Arthur is important for vision casting and for making contacts which can ultimately be leveraged for a later time in ones masculine development.

The King signifies the middle of the male development – or perhaps a middle-aged male figure within the time of the Middle Ages. Some of the residual softness of youth may be more applied to and/or is manifested in the form of gentle reasoning and in the way of diplomacy and deliberating. Nevertheless, the effects of responsibilities and challenges that occurred within the vein of more traditional male mores in the form of rabble rousing and conquest set in and in this way the expression of the weight of masculine machismo is apparent and operates as a form of currency in which to control and usurp lesser people.

The Green Knight is an archetype of hypermasculin-

ity. While some of the temperings of charm and reason are embodied within The Knight as suggested in the text – and in this way, the Knight shares some connection with the Arthurian and the Kingly archetypes – still yet – an emblem of excess is apparent here and this ultimately works to control the heteronormative boarders. A female corollary is not apparent in this way. While there have certainly been examples of triumphant female medieval archetypes such as Margery Kemp and Joan of Arc, they are not positioned to compete with the force of excessive masculine archetypes such as what The Green Knight occupies.

The Green Knight had already attained full mass and was thus depicted as a full grown, towering and imposing entity – albeit a benign entity. The Green Knight’s chivalry and refinement, which is apparent from initial interactions, sharply offsets the description of his “bulky,” “thick” and “great” stature. Furthermore, this strangely hued green character while appropriate in attire because of the high times and the mirth associated with the new year, also reflects its excesses of over optimism and an over-reach of presentation while elaborately adorned and “embellished all with ermine...” featuring “furs cut and fitted” with “noble fabric.” There is a vulgarity that manifests in the ferocity of his frame and the fastidiousness of his finery of clothes: again double-bodied excesses. Nevertheless, the decadence of The Green Knight is ironically palatable within the context of the poem. The currents of excessive masculinity are tempered by some of the subtle female graces.

Mulvey mentions another point from Freud with regard to Scopophilia. In the viewership component, “The pleasure of the look is transferred to others by analogy” (Mulvey, 835). This transference is reflective of a gendered shift that includes the masculine within the scopophilic framework. The Green Knight is reflective of a type of voyeurism due to his striking form. The Green Knight’s massive size removes him from the confines of traditional medieval masculinity and makes him a spectacle. In this way, he becomes objectified in the way that would normally be the case for women. However, The Green Knight is not limited to being a “bearer of the look” as Mulvey describes. In fact, The Green Knight does the bearing – and perhaps more so than most men. Yet his objectified status only reinforces his male supremacy. Arthur too occupies the objectified space because of his non-traditional leanings and descriptions held in a kind of captivity because of his allure and youth. However, Arthur straddles the spaces of liminality and transcendence because he is both subordinated but yet ironically empowered because of his social status.

Gender is indeed a complicated subject because the construct jointly functions within psychological and physical entities. In this way, both the intangible (psy-

chological) and the tangible (physical) function in a binary that is intrinsically and extrinsically dependent upon one another. By many accounts, “anatomy is destiny” and therefore the physiological structures of one’s sex suggest profound implications of one’s psychological development and how their personage will function in a given societal context. Nevertheless, some challenge the status quo and, in so doing, can create a new type of “destiny” in spite of their assigned anatomical structures. When this happens, it is often the case that the construct of one’s very own gender—meaning their gender identity and expression—is incongruous with the mores of the times in which they are posited.

When this occurs, the disruption of heteronormative patterns occurs. The disruptive occurrence upsets the binary that encourages a strict compliance with regard to notions of classic masculine and feminine gender roles as set forth during the timeframe one inhabits. Additionally, Mulvey’s featured “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” article blends the psychoanalytic approach as a kind of political “weaponry” with the aim to depict the underpinnings of the patriarchal hegemony that forms cultural aesthetics on film.

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How Pop Culture Can Make the Unfamiliar Familiar: Using *Parks and Recreation* as a Tool to Examine Local Government and Rhetorical Concepts

Caitlin Neely

My Netflix binge-watching of the NBC comedy *Parks and Recreation* coincided with the Cincinnati city council's ongoing heated debate about the Cincinnati streetcar project, and, as I watched *Parks and Rec*, I began to connect this fictional account of local government with events and debates happening in real time. While we all have a familiarity with popular culture, it seems this familiarity, when applied to a rhetorical situation like the streetcar project, can help make unfamiliar rhetorical concepts easier to understand, process, and apply to the academic environment and to past, present, and future rhetorical situations. In this essay, I will use *Parks and Rec* to show how television helped me critically analyze local government projects like the Cincinnati streetcar project.

Parks and Recreation first premiered in 2009. It follows the story of Leslie Knope, a public official who works for the Parks Department in Pawnee, Indiana, and her cast of co-workers and friends. Several well-known actors and actresses play characters on the show including: Amy Poehler, Rashida Jones, Rob Lowe, and Megan Mullally ("Parks and Recreation"). In this essay, I will examine two episodes from the fifth season of *Parks and Rec*. One important plot point for the reader to note: going into the fifth season, Leslie had been voted onto the Pawnee city council, and a majority of the plot in season five revolves around this. "Soda Tax" is the second episode in the fifth season of *Parks and Rec*. It focuses on Leslie's attempts to pass a soda tax law that she believes will help lower diabetes in Pawnee. Leslie meets with Kathryn Pinewood, a member of the Pawnee Restaurant Association, and immediately butts heads with her. Kathryn threatens Leslie and tells her the restaurants will be

forced to lay people off if the tax bill passes (Hiscock, Daniels, and Schur 2012). Leslie decides to hold a public forum so she can better garner how Pawnee's citizens feel about the bill. The second episode I will examine is "How a Bill Becomes a Law." In this episode, Leslie is trying to pass a bill to keep the public pool open longer during the summer so a local swim team can have more time to practice. During the episode, Leslie faces numerous problems. She goes on a local talk show hosted by Joan Callamezzo called "Pawnee Today" to talk about the bill and the current state of the Pawnee city council. From the start, Joan is clearly not on Leslie's side and makes remarks about the blundering city council. Jamm, a councilman who works with Leslie, poses another problem when he first agrees to vote for the bill and then tells her he will only vote for it if she gives him her office. Leslie refuses to give in to his demands until right before the bill is set to be voted on. She agrees to give Jamm her office and her parking space in exchange for his vote (2012).

During the early 1900s, citizens and officials in Cincinnati began drawing up plans for a new transit system. Unfortunately, after only a few tunnels were built underneath the city, construction stopped in 1925 and, despite several attempts to continue, it was never finished (Mecklenborg). The abandoned subway system is now considered a cautionary tale for Cincinnati and big rail in general. The Cincinnati streetcar project is now following in the same fashion and the Cincinnati city council is essentially "repeating the past." Shortly after being sworn in and taking office, the Cincinnati city council was presented with 11 ordinances regarding the streetcar project. Most of them outlined temporar-

ily suspending contracts with construction companies, stopping the spending of money on the streetcar construction, and effectively “pausing” it (*Cincinnati City Council (Vote for Streetcar Pause) 2013*). Several of the council members cited the need to reassess the cost of continuing the street car versus the cost of stopping construction (Andrews 2013). Soon after, the federal government released a statement saying they were giving the city until December 19th to resume construction, or the 44.9 million dollars in grants they had given to the city would be pulled (“Cincinnati Streetcar Supporters Announce Ballot Initiative to Continue Project” 2013). Many have charged Cincinnati with being “slow moving,” “stifling” when change is involved, and “parochial.” The city council and their decision has the potential to either lift the city to a new level and image, or to solidify the city as one that is “stuck in the past.”

Public forums were used in both the episode “Soda Tax” and in the Cincinnati city council meetings regarding the streetcar project and illustrate the overlap and similarities between fictional accounts of local government and real accounts of local government. In *Parks and Rec*, citizens from both sides of the soda tax debate share their concerns with Leslie, and some answers are more bizarre and false than others. One man says, “I think we should tax all bad things, like racism or women’s genitals” (2012). It sounds crazy from a distance but is also a fairly accurate description of how some citizens think, feel, and assess situations. For some, little is based in reason, only in opinion and personal feelings. This causes difficulty with Leslie’s plan and can also cause difficulty in real local governments. If a citizen chooses to side with their beliefs and opinions, it can be hard to sway them with facts. Facts are often not enough to engage an audience member (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 17). As I viewed the streetcar meetings both in person and online, I noticed the same patterns. Numerous speakers from both sides approached the issue from a grossly emotional stance, much like the citizens in *Parks and Rec*. We can begin to see how *Parks and Rec* and pop culture in general can accurately reflect real political issues and situations, often in a more “real” way despite their fictional content.

Another potential overlap between these two sites is the recognition of opinion as “fact.” During “How a Bill Becomes a Law” Joan Callamezzo points out the Pawnee city council’s dismal 3% approval rating, and refers to her negative opinion of the council as “fact” (Goor, Daniels, and Schur 2012). Much like Pawnee talk show host Joan Callamezzo, politicians in Cincinnati also regard some facts as opinion. When John Deatruck, Streetcar Project executive, answered questions during the meetings, officials including John Cranley believed certain numbers he presented and questioned others.

They were quick to believe Deatruck when he told them the streetcar was costing the city around 100,000 dollars a day, but questioned him when he said “it will cost between 34.6 million and 51.6 million to stop the project and between 52 million and 74 million to complete it” (Osborne 2013a). Cranley later asserted how he thought it would cost much less to stop construction, and that he believed Deatruck’s numbers were not accurate (Osborne 2013b). Why would a city official pick and choose certain facts and numbers from the same study? One explanation could be because they are ignoring facts that oppose their reality and confirming facts that coincide with it. In this way, facts can be seen as opinion, at least according to politicians like Cranley or talk show hosts like Callamezzo. Even facts we would consider “hard” and uncontested can be contested in the political arena. If facts can be pushed aside and misconstrued by political officials and the media, how, then, do we define what they are? “For argumentation to exist, an effective community of minds must be realized at a given moment” (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 14). The values of a fact are determined by this “community of minds.” A talk show host like Callamezzo or a politician like Cranley can present their facts or their “opinions” in the best manner to persuade the audience, but the citizens of Pawnee and Cincinnati always have the last say.

Parks and Rec’s intended audience is the group of people any TV executive covets, the 18-49 year old age range. Its real audience, according to television rating data, is similar to the intended. About 2 million audience members fell into the 18-49 range for the “Soda Tax” episode (Kondoloy 2012). Other audience members include those who fall out of this 18-49 range, those who enjoy NBC’s comedies, and those who are fans of the actors and actresses on the show. The exigence for *Parks and Rec* includes the current state of politics in America. Our current political system gives writers from shows like *Parks and Rec* prime material to gather inspiration from and imitate; the writers are tuned into the political happenings in both local governments around the country and the federal government. The central claim of the show, especially in the two episodes I reference, is that government is messy. It is often determined and shaped by factors most people would not consider “ideal” or “moral” like “buying votes,” ethics violations, and the use of emotional appeals to prevent a bill’s passage.

The three streetcar meetings where discussions and voting of the ordinances took place were broadcasted live on numerous Cincinnati news sites. The audience of these meetings potentially represents a wide variety of people. Everyone who attended the meetings (including the council members and John Cranley) were audience members. Other audience members also included those who were watching the live feeds, and people who were

following along on Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, and message boards. The debate also invited audiences from different ideologies such as liberals and conservatives to take an active part. According to Lloyd Bitzer, “exigence specifies the audience to be addressed and the change to be effected” (7). Unlike *Parks and Rec*, there does not seem to be one set exigence in the case of the streetcar. The reason for the streetcar meeting, the “problem” that is influencing the exigence is dependent on how one views the situation. Yes, on the surface the exigence is simply the streetcar construction, but the exigence is also more complex than that when examining individual council members and audience members. For council members like Christopher Smitherman who are against the streetcar and unlikely to change their opinion, the exigence and problem is the streetcar itself, that is, the fact that it is still being constructed and built. However, for a pro-streetcar council member like Yvette Simpson, the problem of the streetcar is not the streetcar itself but the people who are opposed to its construction. These two views make it easier for the council members to keep audience members who agree with them on their side, but it also makes it harder for them to persuade others to reconsider their stance.

Two particular characters from *Parks and Rec* can help us examine how politicians are viewed by the average American. Councilman Jamm represents one view people in America have of politicians. As demonstrated in the “How a Bill Becomes a Law” episode, he is self-involved and only concerned with voting in a way that will give him what he wants. He has little regard for public opinion and has no problem changing sides. He represents the politician that has no moral or ethical compass. A fair portion of Americans hold this view about politicians. They see them as opportunists; elected officials who are not concerned with the voters who voted them into office, but who are concerned with their own interests and goals regardless of how their constituents think and feel. On the other hand, Leslie Knope represents a romanticized view of what a government can do for its citizens. She actively tries to pass bills that help and enhance the daily lives of her constituents (including those who are unable to vote for her, like the swim team). She is also fervently pro-government and pro-council, even when she is steam rolled and manipulated by council members like Jamm. Knope shows us a much less revered and noticed political archetype, but one that is important none the less.

During the final meeting, Cranley attempted to establish his ethos and character by reminding everyone numerous times how a “public forum” of this magnitude would not have been allowed at a council meeting when former mayor Mark Mallory presided. This character appeal Cranley attempted to make was not incredibly

effective. He seemed to be saying the people speaking should be grateful for his kindness and generosity. But Cranley came off as anything but kind when he refused to let certain council members speak. Councilman Smitherman also did a poor job of establishing his ethos. Throughout the meetings he lounged back in his chair, rolled his eyes and appeared bored and uninterested in what citizens had to say (*Cincinnati City Council (Vote for Streetcar Pause) 2013*). “The great orator, the one with a hold on his listeners, seems animated by the very mind of the audience. This is not the case for the ardent enthusiast whose sole concern is what he himself considers important” (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 24). Clearly, Cranley and Smitherman were not concerned with their audience based on their behavior during the meetings. They were only concerned with the facts and opinions which confirmed the reality they had previously established - cancelling the streetcar. This, as Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca imply, does not inspire confidence in the audience members who do not conform to their realities.

Pop culture is a useful tool for rhetorical analysis and should be used more frequently in the academy. It is something that encompasses daily life not just for myself but for many of my peers, and it is something that many in my age group inherently understand. It is how we interact with the world and learn more about ourselves and those around us. Moreover, pop culture can be helpful in teaching students about rhetorical theory. Rhetorical theory is a discipline that many consider complicated, difficult to enter into, and hard to understand and comprehend. A student might be able to counteract the unfamiliarity and difficulty of rhetorical theory by examining it through something that is familiar to them—like pop culture. In picking out examples of rhetorical ideas like exigence, audience, and pathos from pop culture they can begin to understand why these concepts matter and how they can be applied to real rhetorical situations.

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