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Cover: On the centenary of his death, we reproduce "Robert Browning reading 'The Ring and the Book' at Naworth Castle September 19, 1869. From a *second* drawing by the Earl of Carlisle, in the possession of Marchesa Edith Peruzzi dè Medici."

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Ruskin's Pied Beauty and the Constitution of a "Homosexual" Code

Linda Dowling

In a recent essay dealing mainly with nineteenth-century anthropology and romanticism, Robert Crawford broaches a subject that has increasingly drawn the attention of students of late-Victorian culture: Victorian "homosexuality." Writing of Gerard Manley Hopkins, Crawford declares, "the great imaginative cluster at the heart of his work centers around the Greek term *poikilos*, which is used to refer to homosexual love in Plato's *Symposium* (a text familiar to undergraduates), and which has a range of meanings including 'pied,' 'dappled,' 'flashing,' 'intricate,' 'ambiguous.'" Crawford continues, "So the poet of 'Pied Beauty' is able to interweave Christian and homoerotic experience, just as his teacher, Pater, [in "The Bacchanals of Euripides"] . . . is drawn to the Euripidean detail of the god's 'white feet, somewhat womanly, and the fawn-skin, with its rich spots.'" Crawford concludes the passage by noting, "Here again the term used of the fawn-skin by Euripides is *poikilos*."¹

Certainly, many admirers of Hopkins will object that Crawford's verb "is able" projects upon Hopkins an intention to mix Christian and "homoerotic" experience that Hopkins by no means had, and indeed, would have vehemently rejected. Admirers of Pater may in turn protest at Crawford's imputation of a "homoerotic" motive to that writer. In short, given the fragmentary biographical materials we possess about both Hopkins and Pater, any assertion about the "homoerotic" nature of their experience or imagination may seem at best recklessly premature and at worst damnably presumptuous. Yet Robert Crawford seems to me to be interested in a larger issue than the merely biographical. For it is an arresting implication of his argument that the Greek term *poikilos*, like Greek studies generally at Oxford and Cambridge, belonged to a "homosexual" vocabulary or code that served to widen the terms of late-Victorian erotic and aesthetic expressiveness. And it is precisely this notion of a hidden language or code, belonging in part to a proscribed group and in part to the educational apparatus of a dominant group, that offers its power of explanation to scholars interested in the competing and coalescing discourses within the Victorian public and private spheres. In what follows I should like to sketch out some of the difficulties and implications involved in the idea of a Victorian "homosexual" code, particularly as such a code may be constituted by two words: "*poikilos*" and "Dorian."

To begin with, one obvious difficulty with the notion of a "homosexual" code is the danger of reductionism: ever since Lytton Strachey, Victorianists have tended to "solve the Victorian equation for sex" by reading surface episodes

of, say, religious controversy or social convention as evidence of a massive Victorian effort of repression designed to keep the real subject—sex—safely out of sight. Yet the very intensity of the twentieth-century preoccupation with sex ought to warn us that sex may not have been the fundamental concern of the Victorians. A second difficulty with the idea of a "homosexual" code is the danger of anachronism: it is all too easy to read nineteenth-century phenomena in terms of twentieth-century categories, construing Walt Whitman's "adhesiveness," for example, as our idea of "homosexuality." Yet, as David Halperin has recently reminded us, both the term and the concept of "homosexuality" are very new: the term dates from 1892, an awkward half-Latin, half-Greek neology introduced to translate an only slightly older German coinage, Krafft-Ebing's *Homosexualität*.

Moreover, the concept of "homosexuality," which only gradually replaced other earlier nineteenth-century notions of "sexual inversion" and "sexual deviance," represents a decisive narrowing of those earlier ideas because "homosexuality" constitutes what it represents entirely in terms of the choice of sexual object, that is, the propensity toward a person of one's same sex. Yet throughout the nineteenth century, as Halperin has said, "sexual preference for a person of one's own gender was not clearly distinguished from other sorts of non-conformity to one's culturally defined sex-role: deviant object choice was viewed as merely one of a number of pathological symptoms exhibited by those who reversed, or 'inverted,' their proper sex-roles by adopting a masculine or feminine style at variance with what was deemed natural and appropriate to their gender" (34).

To be sure, this twentieth-century narrowing of the focus to "homosexuality" (or, even narrower, to Anglo-American post-1967 "gayness," the moment in which, as Regenia Gagnier has said, sexual preference becomes an identity²) had its Victorian equivalent. For as Harald Patzer has argued, nineteenth-century students of ancient Greek culture may have entirely misunderstood the several varieties of Greek *paidēstia*, whose ritual character and public orientation verged on the unimaginable, that is, unimaginable given the reliable limits of the Victorian middle-class, Christian, Eurocentric imagination. Still, it seems clear that although we have long been accustomed to see in the late-nineteenth-century variety of such terms as "inversion," "Uranism," "pederasty," "New Chivalry" and so on the quaint but hopelessly unscientific Babel that precedes the establishment of a genuine scientific paradigm (in this case the paradigm of Freud), it might be truer to see in this hubbub of terms an expression of the range of sexual styli-

1. (854). Professor David Halperin informs me that in the context of Plato's *Symposium poikilos* refers not to *paidēstia per se* but to the "intricacy" of the law or social convention governing it. For the role of *poikilos* in expressing the archaic Greek's delight in texture and the play of light, see Fowler.

2. (140). "Gay" signifying "homosexual" derives, according to A *Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary* (1976), from "gay cat," U.S. slang for a young or inexperienced tramp, or a hobo who accepts occasional work. "Gay cat" in turn derives from U.S. slang "gay" meaning "impudent" or "insolently free."

zations as they were actually experienced in the later nineteenth century.

By the same token, it is clear that even this more various, if old-fashioned lexicon of terms was inadequate to describe all of late-Victorian experience. Nor was it merely sexual propagandists and reformers like John Addington Symonds who felt themselves at a loss for an answerable term. Consider the case of A. C. Swinburne: vexed and frightened in the months after his friend Simeon Solomon had been arrested and convicted for immoral behavior in a public urinal, Swinburne sought to explain and justify his decision to drop the unfortunate Solomon by declaring that "in such a case as this I do think a man is bound to consider the consequence to all his friends and to every one who cares for him in the world of allowing his name to be mixed up with that of a _____ let us say, a Platonist; the term is at once accurate as a definition and unobjectionable as a euphemism" (letter to Watts, 1 Dec 1873, *Letters* 2:261). Perhaps Swinburne, who was writing his respectable friend Theodore Watts, used "Platonist" because any balder term might have offended Watts. Or perhaps "Platonist"—rueful, ironic, trailing its tattered idealist clouds—came much nearer to the meaning Swinburne really meant.³

Given these difficulties, then, how may we recognize the genuine vocabulary and implications of a "homosexual" code? Let us begin with the relatively unproblematic case of the word "Dorian." Regenia Gagnier has suggested that the name of Oscar Wilde's eponymous hero in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890, 1891) "bore its significance for some as the classical term by which polemicists for the amendment of homosexual laws designated their noble ancestors in ancient Greece" (61), and she refers her readers to J. A. Symonds' invocation of "the early Dorians, those martial founders of the institution of Greek Love" in *A Problem in Modern Ethics* (privately printed, 1891). Gagnier's verb "designated" implies there was something arbitrary or idiosyncratic in Symonds' choice of the word "Dorian," but in fact there was not: Symonds took the word from the public sphere, specifically, from "Müller's *Dorians*," that is, K. O. Müller's *Die Dorier* (1824), translated into English by Henry Tufnell and George Cornwall Lewis as *The History and Antiquities of the Doric Race* (1830, 1839).

It was this well-known book, first encountered by Symonds while he was at Oxford, that became the canonical text upon which he would ground both his later polemics—"my theory about the Dorians," as he described his privately printed pamphlet *A Problem in Greek Ethics* (1883) to Sir Richard Burton (15 Aug 1890 in *Letters* 3:488)—as well as his earlier "manly love" poems. Enclosing one

such poem in a letter to a sympathetic friend, Symonds told him, "Should the subject [that is, "the Epitalamium of the Ravisher"] need explanation you will find it in Müller's *Dorians* Vol 2 p 300 et seq" (*Letters* 1:675). This section of Müller's book, though in part bowdlerized by the translators, treats with a degree of detail previously unknown the institution of *paiderastia* among the Dorians, and does so "without examining it in a moral point of view, which does not fall within the scope of this work" (Müller, *History* 2:300). Together with Plato's *Phaedrus*, a set text in the Honours School of *Literae Humaniores* at Oxford, Müller's *Dorians* supplied Symonds both with the principle of the Dorian/Ionian opposition in Greek culture as well as with the models for the two poems "meant to illustrate Greek *philia* [friendship] in Ionian and in Dorian states respectively"; both poems, as Symonds told Edmund Gosse, "are based upon texts to such an extent that I think I have authority for all the incidents & sentiments."⁴

Thus here in Symonds' word "Dorian" we have clear evidence of both a "homosexual" code and the role of Greek studies at Oxford—with its emphasis on "scholarship" and textual "authority"—in articulating and expanding that code. Symonds has, unmistakably, taken a word from the public world of scholarship and "culture" and given it a private, "homosexual" inflection. Yet in the same moment he does so, in 1865 when Symonds is composing the paired Dorian and Ionian poems he called "A Cretan Idyll" and "Eudiades," John Ruskin is urging the student soldiers of the Woolwich Military Academy to read "a book which probably most of you know well, and all ought to know—Müller's *Dorians*"—because in Müller's book the young men will meet the incomparable composure of the Spartans, "the greatest soldiers who prayed to heathen gods." Ruskin tells young men what Müller has told him, namely, that the Cretans, an early Dorian tribe, always sacrificed to the god of love before battle "as confirmer of mutual esteem and shame" ("War" in *The Crown of Wild Olive*, *Works* 18:472). But Ruskin manifests no awareness whatever that this same Cretan youth customarily "fought in battle next his lover," clothed in military garb his lover had given him at the end of their equally customary two-month sojourn in the mountains together (Müller 2:303). Is Ruskin nonetheless initiating the youth of Woolwich into the "institution of Greek Love"?

If we find it relatively easy to distinguish the private, "homosexual" valence of the word "Dorian" in Symonds' usage from the sanctioned, public meaning that Ruskin accords it, these demarcations begin to waver and blur when we come to Pater. What are we to make of Pater's Dorians?

3. Swinburne returned to the theme of Greek studies/Greek Love when he wrote Watts a month later: "[T]he Master of Balliol [i.e. Benjamin Jowett] will be at Torquay, where I am not sorry that I do not join him, as I have no wish, especially in his company, to encounter that of a Platonist of another sort [i.e. Solomon] then the translator of Plato [Jowett had translated both Plato's *Republic* and his *Dialogues* (1871)]—'translator he too' [i.e. Solomon] as Carlyle might say, of Platonic theory into Socratic practice" (*Letters* 2:264). Symonds tried to convince Jowett that "the study of Plato is

injurious to a certain number of predisposed young men" (see *Letters* 3:345-47).

4. (2:399). As Symonds knew, William Johnson (later known as William Cory after his dismissal from Eton in 1872) had given voice to the Ionian mode of Greek Love in a collection of poems entitled *Ionica* (1858). Pater owned this book, and as Brian Reade has pointed out (20), took the image of the Mona Lisa's "fallen day" from it.

Are they surrogate soldiers in the campaign against the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885, the law that was used to prosecute and imprison Oscar Wilde? Or are they merely otherwise unremarkable characters in the lectures of an Oxford don? Whatever we decide, it is clear that Müller's *Dorians* was a favorite book with Pater, for he invokes it both indirectly and by name in several of his later works, most notably in Chapter 8 ("Lacedaemon") of the lectures he gave to "some young students of philosophy" at Oxford and published in 1893 as *Plato and Platonism*.⁵ In this work, as with Ruskin's speech to the Woolwich Military Academy, an appeal is made to the Spartans, though now the Spartans are invoked not as the "greatest soldiers" but, repeatedly, as the "most beautiful of all people" (P&P 218, 222). It is Pater's characteristic fancy to explore "hollow Laconia," the mountain-bound central district of Sparta, through the eyes of an imaginary young visitor from Athens—"a pupil, say! in the Athenian Academy"—who wishes to see for himself the Dorian polity which his teacher Plato regards as something of a model, and which has "unmistakably lent many a detail to his ideal Republic, on paper, or in thought" (P&P 202).

This quasi-fictional device allows Pater to dramatize the occulted nature of Spartan life lived "there, in the hidden valley of the Eurotas" (P&P 212) at the border or on the threshold of Dorian experience, gracefully straining to catch a glimpse of this people who are so "suspicious of foreigners" even within their "jealously enforced seclusion" (P&P 202-203, 207). Pater's Platonic visitor thus dramatizes the surprising intervenience of public and private spheres in Sparta: he can observe some things but not others. He can see the ceremonial "ballet-dance" of the Spartan youths (P&P 225) but not their gymnastic exercises ("in the gymnasia of Lacedaemon no idle bystanders, no—well! Platonic loungers after truth or what not—were permitted" [P&P 220]). Should his readers resist this picture instead to have been brutal in their bravery or loutish in their reserve, Pater is ready with an authorizing quotation from K. O. Müller to attest to this "secluded, impenetrable, and secret character" of Spartan life (P&P 215).⁶

Indeed, Müller's "laborious, yet, in spite of its air of coldness, passably romantic work on *The Dorians*" (P&P 199-200) is, with Plato's *Republic*, the authorizing text for Pater's chapter on the Spartans. Müller's prose is quoted when he is not cited, and appropriated when he is not quoted. But to what extent does Müller provide Pater with a "homosexual" code? Is Pater's impermissible "Platonic lounge" at the gymnasium in fact coincident with the "middle-aged gentleman loitering wistfully at the edge of the playing fields" that Richard Jenkyns has seen in Pater's "Lacedaemon" and identified with the "literary voyeurism

practised by Symonds"?⁷ Like Symonds', Pater's account of Dorian *paiderastia* is taken over from "Müller's *Dorians* Vol 2 p 300 et seq.," and Pater's version sufficiently warms Müller's "coldness" to make more than passably romantic

the clean, youthful friendship, "passing even the love of woman," which, by system, and under the sanction of [Lycurgus'] name, elaborated into a kind of art, became an elementary part of education. A part of their duty and discipline, it was also their great solace and encouragement. The beloved and the lover, side by side through their long days of eager labour, and above all on the battlefield, became respectively, *aitas*, the hearer, and *eispnélas*, the inspirer; the elder inspiring the younger with his own strength and noble taste in things. (P&P 231-32)

Pater first spoke these words to audience of young hearers whose attendance at such lectures was part of their education, part of their "duty and discipline" at Oxford. Does Pater's version of Müller's *Dorians* serve these hearers as public and sanctioned exposition or "inspire" them as private and proscribed indoctrination?

Such questions are important, not because they may uncover an erotic propensity one way or the other in any given individual such as Pater, but because they can discover the larger, institutional biases within an educational foundation such as Oxford. It is clear, for example, that Pater himself believed that the institutions of Sparta bore directly upon those of Victorian England: the parallels he draws between the education of Spartan youth and the public schools and universities of England are too insistent for us to think otherwise. Yet even more than this, Pater presents Sparta as the essence of Greece ("the specially Hellenic element in Hellenism" [P&P 201]) which is itself the essence of all that England inherited from the past. In Pater's totalizing view, not just Plato's *Republic* but all Platonism "is a highly conscious reassertion of one of the two constituent elements in the Hellenic genius, of the spirit of the highlands namely in which the early Dorian forefathers of the Lacedaemonians had secreted their disposition, in contrast with the mobile, the marine and fluid temper of the littoral Ionian people" (P&P 200-201). The Athenian, Ionian Plato is in fact Dorian. And so is "Hellenism."

Thus within the Hellenic opposition of Dorian and Ionian Pater prefers and privileges the Dorian term. So, of course, did most Victorians, in part because, as Martin Bernal has argued in a provocative new book, northern Europeans like the Victorian British and the Germans associated the luxurious, sensuous Ionians with the "dirty," inferior, "Oriental" races while they identified the "racially pure and somehow northern" Dorians quite simply with themselves (294). By the same token, the Ionians seemed to the Victo-

5. (P&P vi). According to Germain d'Hangest, these lectures were given at Brasenose College in 1891-92. Portions of "Lacedaemon" were published in three separate periodicals in 1892 (2:323-24).

6. Pater attributes this phrase to Müller but as William Shuter has discovered, the phrase in fact comes from Ernst Curtius' *History of Greece*. If, as Christopher Ricks has argued, Pater's misquotations are always significant, this misattribution to Müller may reinforce

the "homosexual" subtext that Pater wishes at once to disguise and to disclose: "You couldn't really know it unless you were of it" (P&P 215).

7. (225). Jenkyns gives a scathing but witty account of Pater's misrepresentations of Sparta (222-26). Similarly disapproving are Peters and Rawson (362-63).

rians to represent all those irrational and demoralizing "effeminacies" of culture" (P&P 199) that had hitherto made them so thoroughly mistrust all "Hellenism." The titular deity of the Dorians, on the other hand, was the rational and eminently respectable Apollo: "the Lacedaemonians were the hereditary and privileged guardians, as also the peculiar people of Apollo . . . Apollo, sanest of the national gods, became also the tribal or home god of Lacedaemon" (P&P 226, 227). Pater shows the Dorian Apollo presiding over "a religion of sanity . . . harmony of functions . . . of health" (P&P 227), in short, a religion no Victorian need mistrust. But precisely here, in this moment of rational, sunlit reassurance, do we first catch the note of something alien and turbulent, the dissonant note "in which the early Dorian forefathers of the Lacedaemonians had secreted their peculiar disposition."

To understand this dissonant element is to see that it arises entirely *within* Pater's idea of the "Dorian." For Pater, as we have said, privileges the Dorian term over the Ionian. So much so, indeed, that he in effect drops the Ionian term altogether, and in doing so banishes the "effeminate" or feminine term in the opposition: "The beauty of these [Dorians] was a male beauty, far remote from feminine tenderness" (P&P 222). But Pater was too good an Hegelian to think that the Dorian could operate as a term by itself outside the dialectic. So instead he effects a sort of thematic mitosis within the Dorian term, a division in which the masculine Dorian element is poised in creative tension over against another, unnamed, but even more "virile" term: "Amateurs everywhere of the virile element in life, the Lacedaemonians" (P&P 228). In short, Pater establishes a Dorian/more Dorian opposition, and in doing so shifts the grounds of cultural debate, as Robert and Janice Keefe have recently noted, further to the politico-cultural *right* (see Keefes 111, 123, 129-32).

It is, quite obviously, difficult either to map or to denominate Pater's manoeuvre here, for it is taking place in an ideological space that is itself obscure. What is important to notice, however, is that at the point in "Lacedaemon" at which Pater most firmly banishes the feminine element by embracing the Dorian Apollo ("He remains youthful and unmarried" [P&P 228]), Pater once again turns to K. O. Müller. Müller provides the basis for subsequent sections in the chapter: on Hyacinthus and the Hyperborean Apollo (P&P 228-30), on the youthful demigods Castor and Polydeuces, cult figures in Sparta (P&P 230-31) and, as noted, on Dorian *paiderastia* (P&P 231-32; see Harrison). These borrowings from Müller comprise immensely significant themes to Pater: he was to fashion the Hyacinth/Apollo myth into his last imaginary portrait, "Apollo in Picardy"⁸ published in the same year as *Plato and Platonism*, while the myth of Castor and Polydeuces had already become, as Gerald Monsman has laboriously shown, one of the ruling thematic structures of all Pater's fictional work. The Dorian/Ionian antithesis, cognate with Nietzsche's

Apollonian/Dionysian opposition and determinant of so much of Pater's non-fictional writing, is, like the Nietzschean terms, taken over from Müller.⁹

Thus although Müller's Dorian/Ionian antithesis is reconstituted in Pater's "Lacedaemon" as a Dorian/more Dorian opposition, Müller still presides over the new set of terms. For the models he makes available to Pater—Hyacinthus/Apollo, Castor/Polydeuces, "hearer"/"inspirer"—supply the pattern for the male/more male opposition that Pater requires. This is, of course, a "peculiar" form of antithesis, for in each set the figures are more alike than different: Hyacinth is the son of Apollo, Castor is the brother of Polydeuces. The antithesis arises instead from the different *condition* of the two members, not from their different nature: it is the difference of younger and older, and more important to Pater, mortal and immortal, dead and living, unseen and seen. The near identity of the two members of the pair, however, means that Pater must rupture their apparent similitude into an antithetical difference. This he does by emphasizing the violence that changes similitude to difference: Castor falls in battle, Hyacinthus dies accidentally during a game of quoits with Apollo—the discus, in the unforgettable words of "Apollo in Picardy," sinking "edgewise, sawing through the boy's face, uplifted in the dark to trace it, crushing in the tender skull upon the brain" (MS 168). Violence, in the structural terms of Pater's antithesis at least, is the engendering sign of the "more male."

Even in its moment of differentiating violence, however, Pater's Dorian/more Dorian opposition is a figure of male comradeship. But, once again, is this figure of comradeship part of a "homosexual" code? It should be noted that K. O. Müller himself insists upon the noble, that is to say, non-genital nature of Dorian *paiderastia*. Müller argues that no relationship so public, so sanctioned by the state, so characterized by artlessness, innocence and unreservedness (*Arglosigkeit, Unschuld, Unbefangenheit*) could possibly involve any sinful or criminal connection: in short, no dark deed is ever done in the daylight. Though Müller's logic here is notably wobbly, his argument does point to the aspect of Dorian *paiderastia* that is crucial for Pater: its status as a sanctioned, systematic and public institution. Pater's dramatic premise in "Lacedaemon" has been, as we have seen, to insinuate his alien visitor from Athens into the center of the Spartan mystery where Spartans have "hidden their actual life with so much success" (P&P 234); the sequence of Pater's account makes it clear that Spartan *paiderastia*, though unnamed, is meant to be the final stop on the tour, the young Platonist's destination, if not his destiny. But the culminating mystery Pater wishes to reveal is precisely that there *is* no mystery about Spartan *paiderastia*: Spartan comradeship is the "open secret" lying at the heart of "hollow Laconia." Pater shows this comradeship to be the most characteristic institution of the most Greek, therefore most Western, therefore most English

8. For an analysis of "Apollo in Picardy" as representing the conflict between Hebraism and Hellenism, see Robert Keefe.

9. The founding account of the Apollonian/Dionysian antithesis in Pater's work is Lenaghan's.

people in the world: rational, moderate, reserved, disciplined, and wholly male.

If at the end of this journey to the "place in which friendship, comradeship . . . came to so much" (*P&P*: 231) we find it difficult to estimate the exact angle of "homosexual" inclination among Pater's Dorians, it is because Pater throughout his "Lacedaemon" posits what Eve Sedgwick has called "the potential unbrokenness of a continuum between homosocial and homosexual" desires (1). Among the ancient Greeks—exceptionally in Western culture—"the continuum between 'men loving men' and 'men promoting the interests of men' appears to have been quite seamless" (Sedgwick 4). In Pater's "Lacedaemon" homosocial and "homosexual" experience are made to appear, like the patron demigods Castor and Polydeuces themselves, differentiated but not essentially different: both are public and private, seen and unseen—or in the words of K. O. Müller, "on one side intimate and confidential, and on the other accepted and prominent in public life."¹⁰ This is why Sparta is at once the ideal Republic for Plato and for Swinburne's "Platonist." And this is also why, at the end of "Lacedaemon," Pater bids farewell to this visionary state as to "[a]nother day-dream" that is yet "a quite natural dream" (*P&P* 233, 234). For with a rhetorical sleight of hand that is as dazzling as it is virtually invisible, Pater has appropriated the language of cultural legitimization in such a way as to authenticate the claims of the proscribed: uplifted by the cultural hydraulics of classical scholarship and liberal education, the Dorians—the virile, sane, beautiful paederastic, all but English Dorians—have become in Pater's hands simultaneously the "quite natural" and the quite "peculiar people of Apollo."

Yet to say this about Pater's "inversion" of the discourse of Oxford Greek studies is probably to simplify the matter overmuch. For Pater's success in Chapter 8 of *Plato and Platonism* arrives more as a result of rhetorical mimicry than of polemical mastery: in his hands the "homosexual" code expands precisely as it disperses itself in the dominant discourse of scholarship and "culture." Where Wilde can maintain the "homosexual" valence of his character's name Dorian Gray because "Dorian" exerts an exotic friction against the monotonous grayness of his late-Victorian world (see Gordon), Pater's Dorians merge all but imperceptibly into K. O. Müller's Dorians rather than into J. A. Symonds'. In short, if what I have called the relatively unproblematic word "Dorian" has revealed some of the difficulties involved in ascertaining a Victorian "homosexual" code, how much more reliably may we determine the "homosexual" valence of the word with which we began—G. M. Hopkins'

poikilos?

The Greek word *poikilos* itself, of course, does not appear in any of Hopkins' poems. Instead we must imagine it as a sort of ghostly semantic field lying behind or beneath Hopkins' "dapple-dawn-drawn" falcon or his "Pied Beauty." But to what extent is this semantic field ionized by a "homeroetic" current? It is tempting at this point to look for a firmer ground of connection among Hopkins and *poikilos* and "homosexuality" in the materials of biography. We know, for instance, that Hopkins was acquainted with Swinburne's "Platonist," the painter Simeon Solomon, who was also—thanks to Swinburne's introduction—a "great friend" of Pater's (Swinburne, *Letters* 2:253). On 17 June 1868, after luncheon with Pater, Hopkins visited Solomon's studio and later the Royal Academy exhibition, presumably still in Pater's company.¹¹ It is possible that at Solomon's studio Hopkins saw Solomon's Academy painting of the preceding year, "Bacchus," which had so excited Pater's admiration. Solomon's picture, as Pater was to recall in "A Study of Dionysus" (1876), captured a "subtler, melancholy Dionysus," "the god of the bitterness of wine, 'of things too sweet'; the sea-water of the Lesbian grape become somewhat brackish in the cup" (*GS* 42).¹² And whether or not Solomon's painting recorded it, the *nebris* or fawn-skin "with its rich spots"—habitually described in Greek by the word *poikilos*—was, as Pater noted in "The Bacchanals of Euripides," part of the standard regalia of Bacchus or Dionysus.

Thus here we have a conjunction of texts—whatever verbal remarks Pater may have made of this occasion, and Solomon's paintings, which at this point in his career were notable for their hermaphroditic figures, their sexual "ambiguity"—that may have exerted a shaping force upon Hopkins' imagination in such a way as to influence such poems of 1877 as "Pied Beauty." And, at a somewhat greater remove, we have the word *poikilos* with all its various meanings as they are found in Plato's *Symposium* and in other works of "the most electrical literature of the world"—Greek literature—as J. A. Symonds said almost reproachfully to Benjamin Jowett, Master of Balliol and Regius Professor of Greek (*Letters* 3:347). Hopkins, like Symonds, was a pupil of Jowett's at Balliol, and, also like Symonds, Hopkins won a First in *Literae Humaniores*, the Oxford course of study devoted to the philosophical and historical thought of ancient Greece and Rome. Moreover, it is clear as well that Hopkins knew, or at the very least had heard of, Müller's *Dorians*, for in a diary entry made during his first autumn at Oxford (1863), Hopkins composed a mock-scholarly exegesis, "The Legend of the Rape

10. Müller, *Die Dorer* 291: "Der Nexus selbst was einerseits sehr innig und vertraut, und andererseits im öffentlichen Leben anerkannt und hervortretend." It should be noted that while Pater is working from the Tufnell/Lewis translation of Müller, his knowledge of German was more than adequate to allow him to read the unexpurgated German original.

11. (*Journals* 167). Hopkins had met Solomon three weeks before in Oxford, probably through Pater, who occasionally put Solomon up at Brasenose. It seems likely that after lunch together in London Pater would have guided Hopkins to Solomon's studio where

Hopkins had never been. See Levey (107).

12. This passage is unchanged from the version published in 1876 in the *Fortnightly Review*. Pater says that Solomon submitted "Bacchus" to the Royal Academy exhibition of 1868, but Sir Michael Levey has stated that the correct date is 1867 (215n). Pater's unmistakable reference to Solomon, a ruined man after his conviction in February 1873, was a courageous gesture in 1876, particularly in view of Pater's own difficulties after the publication of the "Conclusion" to *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873).

of the Scout," in which he refers to "Müddler's *Scotians*."¹³

Nonetheless *poikilos* does not yet appear to impinge with any unmistakable force upon Hopkins' imagination, much less implicate him in a "homosexual" code. It may be possible to draw Hopkins more obviously into the orbit of *poikilos* by recalling that *poikilia*, the noun form, was an important term to Pater. Pater used the word in several essays written in the later 1870s and collected in *Greek Studies* (1895) that deal with early Greek art. In one of them *poikilia* is specifically named and defined as "minute and curious loveliness" and "daintiness of execution"; and even when it is not named, *poikilia* clearly lies behind such phrases as "this various and exquisite world of design" and "variegation . . . what is cunning or 'myriad-minded'" and "that bewildered, dazzling world of minute and dainty handicraft."¹⁴ On these occasions Pater identifies "Asiatic *poikilia*" (*GS* 222) specifically with the Ionian strain in the Hellenic character, the element which, as we have seen, Pater also associates with the effeminate or feminine tendency.

Thus Pater's use of *poikilia* at the same time complicates rather than simply clarifies our sense of the "homosexual" valence of the word. If we equate the "effeminate" with the "homosexual," then *poikilia* will probably appear to belong to a "homosexual" code. But if we include ideas of the "manly" or the "more male" in our notion of "homosexuality," then *poikilia/poikilos* will seem less unmistakably part of that code. What Pater's use of *poikilia* does make unmistakable, however, is that his source for the word is Ruskin. For when in his two-part essay on the beginnings of Greek sculpture Pater talks about *poikilia* and "Daedal work" and the "various and exquisite art of Japan" (*GS* 222, 237-39, 222), it is clear that he is responding to Ruskin's Oxford lectures on Greek sculpture, *Aratra Pentelici* (delivered 1870, published 1872) where, in the sixth lecture of the series, we find precisely the same focus upon *poikilia*, upon "Daedal work" and upon the ingenious work of Japan (*Works* 20:352-53).

As the index of the Cook and Wedderburn edition of Ruskin's collected works will show, *poikilia* was a frequent and favorite term with Ruskin, especially in his later writings where the word was, as we might expect, powerfully charged with the darker themes of those later years, with the erosion of his religious faith, with the failure of love and of his work. Thus in the Oxford lectures of 1870 *poikilia* represents more than simple spottiness in art and nature; it becomes the dappling and dazzling of moral

ambiguity and danger, "the glittering and iridescent dominion of Daedalus" where brightness "has a lurid shadow": "The spot of the fawn, of the bird, and the moth, may be harmless. But Daedalus reigns no less over the spot of the leopard and snake" (*Works* 20:353). This is the moral realm imprinted with

the Greek conviction, that all nature, especially human nature, is not melodious nor luminous; but a barred and broken thing: that saints have their foibles, sinners their forces; that the most luminous virtue is often only a flash, and the blackest-looking fault is sometimes only a stain: and, without confusing in the least black and white, they can forgive, or even take delight in things that are like the *nebris*, dappled. (*Works* 20:171)

This sense of *poikilia*, it seems clear, might plausibly be extended to cover the mixed and ambiguous passions of "homosexual" experience. But is this what Hopkins means by pied beauty? Our answer to the question will depend in part on how we read Hopkins' poems, but we will probably agree that Hopkins' delight in dappled things is, at least in the earlier nature poems, not chequered with Ruskin's doubt (see Keefes 70, 160). Instead, the dapples and spots and intricacies of the natural world that Hopkins records in his journals and recreates in his poems are taken and presented as evidences of the quenchless plenitude of God. To say this, however, is simply to emphasize Hopkins' debt to the early Ruskin, the devoutly Evangelical Ruskin of *Modern Painters I*, rapt before the "ceaseless and incomparable decoration of nature":

The detail of a single weedy bank laughs the carving of ages to scorn. Every leaf and stalk has a design and tracery upon it; every knot of grass an intricacy of shade which the labour of years could never imitate, and which, if such labour could follow it out even to the last fibres of the leaflets, would yet be falsely represented, for, as in all other cases brought forward, it is not clearly seen, but confusedly and mysteriously . . . the greater part of those details are still a beautiful incomprehensibility.¹⁵

By now it will be clear that Greek *poikilos*, at least in the implicitly "homoerotic" significance that Robert Crawford has claimed for it, can only with some difficulty be made to apply to Hopkins' poetry. W. H. Gardner has called Hopkins' embrace of natural pieings, freaks of colors and perversities "Whitman-like," noting that "Hopkins liked the forms and activities of the material world to be as varied, curious, and irregular as the God of inexhaustible invention chose to make them." Significantly, however, Gardner points to the distinction Hopkins drew between perversities

13. (*Journals* 6). The joke here is elaborate: Hopkins is tracing a mocketymology of "scout" from "Scot." Balliol was noted for its large contingent of Scotsmen. Englishmen were accustomed to calling the Scottish dialect "Dorian" because it was to their ears rough and uncouth (see Jenkyns 167). Hopkins here tacitly acknowledges the "homosexual" aspect of Müller's *Dorians* because the "rape" or abduction of the scout or Oxford college servant is cognate with Müller's description of the abduction of the youth by his lover among the Cretans (cf. Symonds' "Epithalamium of the Ravisher" above).

14. ("The Beginnings of Greek Sculpture I: The Heroic Age of Greek Art," *GS* 222, 220); "The Marbles of Aegina," *GS* 253, 255). These

essays were derived from a series of lectures on Greek art and archaeology that Pater delivered at Oxford in 1878.

15. (*Works* 3:338). Ruskin in these early volumes is clearly working out his position on spottiness in art, declaring that a "patched garment of many colours is by no means so agreeable as one of a single and continuous hue" (*Works* 3:96) but also insisting that the moral notion of Spotlessness as evidencing perfection was merely metaphorical and thus without bearing on the material world of nature and art (*Works* 3:132-33). This essentially negative sanction of spottiness later became Ruskin's positive approval of *poikilia*. For Ruskin's "almost obsessive fascination" with spottiness and visual intricacy, see Rosenberg (68-69).

in nature and those in men: "men too, as artists, were bound to be original, spare, strange. But in the moral sphere, the 'counter' (like Swinburne) and the 'fickle' (like Carlyle)—and all those who had 'no principles' or who flourished anti-Christian banners—these were anathema" (2:250). Although by Hopkins' own admission Whitman himself ("a very great scoundrel") had a "mind more like my own than any other man living," it is yet difficult to trace in Hopkins' poetry the unconscious presence of any "homosexual" code that might join him to the poet of "Calamus" or to such declared disciples of Whitman as J. A. Symonds, much less to find any conscious permission in Hopkins' work that would allow us to try. Rather, Hopkins is, if anything, vigilantly on his guard *against* Whitman—certainly as a poet and perhaps as a man: "And this also makes me the more desirous to read him and the more determined that I will not" (letter to Bridges, 18 Oct 1882, *Letters* 1:155).

This is not at all to say that there is no such "homosexual" code in later Victorian writing. But it is to suggest that whatever that code consists in (and even its outlines are not yet clear to us), it does not operate as a simple inversion of the dominant discourse. Instead, as Ruskin's persistent presence as a source and influence will remind us, the late-Victorian "homosexual" code (or codes, for I have focussed here on merely one of them) assumes a discontinuous and constantly shifting relationship to the discourse of the dominant group. This is, of course, the point that Michel Foucault has made so insistently: "There is not, on the one side, a discourse of power, and opposite it, another discourse that runs counter to it. Discourses are tactical elements or blocks operating in the field of force relations" (101-102).

What future studies of Victorian sexuality must strive to do, then, is to plot the varying adhesions and resistances that punctuate the relation between "homosexual" and dominant discourses. Yet even to speak of "the dominant discourse" is a perilous oversimplification. For what may appear from a point of view at the margin to be the fluent speech of power may seem from a point near the center to be a subversive dialect of opposition. Hence, for example, the unstable institutional role of Greek studies at the ancient universities: J. A. Symonds found in Greek studies a haven, while opponents of "Germanism" and university reform saw in them a hell, and it is precisely the continuing implication of "homosexuality" in university politics that at times impels and at times impedes its emergence as a discourse.

If the discontinuousness and instability of these discursive elements suggest they will sooner obey Heisenberg's principle than Hegel's, the rewards of studying them seem nonetheless great. In particular the complex relations between sexual and aesthetic knowledge open for us a rich field of inquiry. Surely no one who has attended to the many aesthetic or Aestheticist scandals of the later Victorian period—the fury at Swinburne's *Poems and Ballads* (1866), the "Fleshly School" controversy (1871-72), Gilbert and Sullivan's satiric opera *Patience* (1881), the

debate over the "New Woman" novel (1885-95), the three trials of Oscar Wilde (1895)—has failed to notice the pervasive and habitual coincidence of sexual and aesthetic categories at such moments of cultural tension: "manly," "emasculated," "epicene," "effeminate," "Hellenico-sensuous." At times it is difficult to determine whether the problems of art are being discussed in the vocabulary of sexuality, or whether issues of sexuality are being vented in the vocabulary of art. Moreover, as we have seen in the case of "Dorian," such terms do not define a specific quality or issue so much as simply locate and expose a ganglion of psycho-sexual and psycho-cultural anxieties. Thus to the already considerable difficulties posed to analysis are added the blinding emotions arising from misogyny and homophobia—the Victorians' misogyny and homophobia as well as our own.

One final example will indicate the complexity of the analytical problem lying before us. In early 1875 Fitzjames Stephen wrote Oscar Browning, then a master at Eton, about Browning's conduct of his son's education. Stephen was concerned that Browning was encouraging his pupils to read such works as Gautier's *Mademoiselle de Maupin* and FitzGerald's *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*, sometimes lending the boys the very books. Here is the paraphrase of Stephen's letter given by Browning's nephew and biographer: "[Stephen] thinks that Oscar Browning should try to lead boys rather to grave and hard books than to poetry and criticism, and he is sorry that he should have lent *Omar Khayyám* to one of his pupils. It is a lady's book, and he has both lent and given it to ladies though he has been told 'the original is as bad as anything can be'" (Wortham 114). The pronoun referents here are a little confusing, but the really interesting part concerns the lady's book that is not to be given to boys much less to ladies. How can a lady's book be unsuitable for ladies? What are the "grave and hard books" that Stephen would prefer to these effeminate and emasculating lady's books? Plato's *Dialogues*? Or Müller's *Dorians*?

It may be the case (to adapt Walter Benjamin's famous dictum) that there is no document of Victorian Aestheticism which is not at the same time a document of Victorian sexuality. And it may equally be the case that there is no text appropriated to buttress ideology—as Greek texts were appropriated at Oxford and Cambridge—that does not in the end subvert that ideology. For as we have seen, the glamor of cultural and ideological legitimacy that it was within the power of Greek literature to bestow upon its Victorian "heirs" had its darker, dappled and ambiguous side, a side constantly repressed and yet as constantly resurgent. This is the "hollowness" that Pater exposed at the heart of even the Apollonian ideal; and it is the hypocrisy that Virginia Woolf was to perceive even in the common rooms of "high-minded" Cambridge.

Later in the same year that he received Fitzjames Stephen's reproofing letter, Oscar Browning was dismissed from Eton—for insubordination, according to the official explanation, for pederastic excess, according to the un-

official one. Browning was the friend of Pater and the patron of Simeon Solomon, whose painting "Bacchus" was inspired by the trip to Italy he took with Browning. Thanks to the influence of powerful friends, Browning was able to secure a new post at King's College, Cambridge. It was there in later years that he worked, in a rich mode of characteristic self-contradiction, to open the university to teacher-training while keeping it closed to women. For it was there (as Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* tells us) that Browning presented himself metaphorically as one of the Beadles blocking women's access to the lawns and libraries of the university, and literally as one of the Fellows sneering at the women students of Girton and Newnham ("the best woman was intellectually the inferior of the worst man").¹⁶ The "androgynous vision" that we today so prize in the works of Virginia Woolf arose in part out of her struggle with the "homosexual" Browning and with the misogynistic estimate of "ladies' books" set by her uncle Fitzjames Stephen. In its certainty, in its anxiety, and in its self-contradiction, Stephen's letter to Browning is a concretion of the intercurrent sexual and aesthetic discourses in the late Victorian period that we must still labor to understand.

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16. (Oscar Browning quoted in Woolf 93). Woolf had been reading Wortham's biography of Browning. See also Jane Marcus' review of Ian Anstruther's *Oscar Browning*.

Why the Ghost of Oscar Wilde Manifests in *Finnegans Wake*

Grace Eckley

While James Joyce announced that he wanted the dream, with its various levels of consciousness ranging to unconsciousness, to provide the structure for *Finnegans Wake*, he presented his public with a typically-Irish conundrum in that the only actual dream in the novel takes place in chapter 14, in the mind of the sleeping Shaun-Jaun, who "had tumbled slumbersomely on sleep at night duty" (429.22). At the opening of chapter 15, Shaun-Yawn lies "heartsoul dormant" (474.2) on a hillock, and his "dream monologue was over" (474.4). Subsequently, the Four Old Men, who stand for the nagging conscience of conservatism in the *Wake*, find him there, exhausted, and rouse him to a passive state of consciousness in which he acts as medium. With Shaun under control, the ghost of Earwicker speaks through Shaun; and only briefly (535.26-35) the ghostly voice of Oscar Wilde intrudes on that of Earwicker. With Earwicker's character throughout the *Wake* based on that of the London journalist William Thomas Stead (1849-1912), the mystery of Earwicker's relationship with Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) can be unravelled; Oscar Wilde's, and not Earwicker's, voice pronounces "Haveth Childers Everywhere," the title under which Joyce published the longer segment (532.6-554.10) in 1930, well in advance of the completed work (1939).

Stead gained international prominence in 1885, while editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, with an exposé of child vice and white slavery in London, reported in four newspaper articles called "The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon." A remorseful jury of Londoners perforce clapped him in jail, not for committing vice but for exposing it. To prove children were regularly being drafted into white slavery, he abducted Eliza Armstrong and reported her story as that of Lily, "A Child of Thirteen Bought for £5." The citizens cried that he was washing their dirty linen in public. The day after the last in his articles of "filth"—a euphemism for excrement—Stead published "Laundresses Past and Present" and provided for Joyce's washerwomen. Wilde, an occasional contributor to the *Pall Mall Gazette* during Stead's editorship (1880-1889), would have shared acquaintance with Stead, whose purpose in investigating London vice was passage of the Criminal Law Amendment bill, which became known as "Stead's Law"; Stead's concern was to raise the consent age of girls from thirteen to sixteen.

Considerable confusion exists regarding this Act and the numbers II and 11. "Sylvia Silence, the girl detective" announces that "fow this act [Earwicker] should pay the full penalty, pending puwsuance, as pew Subsec. 32, section 11, of the C.L.A. act 1885, anything in this act to the contwawy notwithstanding" (61.8-11). Joyce, who makes 1132 the date of Earwicker's "fall" throughout the *Wake*, used Halsbury's *Laws of England* (see Ellmann 638), in which Subsections 2 and 3 of Section 2, "Offences against Women and Girls" specify "Offences under the Criminal

Law Amendment Act, 1885" and "Incest." Sylvia Silence collapses sections 3 and 2 into the number 32. There is no applicable "Subsec. 32" and no "section 11" in Halsbury's Section 2; but in Section 1, concerned with "Acts Involving Bodily Injury," Sub-section 11 prohibits "Administering Drugs," which was, as Sylvia Silence maintains, a Stead-Earwicker crime in that the midwife who examined Eliza Armstrong sold Stead's agent a bottle of chloroform "to make the seduction easier," and in the brothel Rebecca Jarrett gave Eliza Armstrong a whiff of chloroform on a handkerchief.

The Public General Acts passed in the 48th and 49th Years of the Reign of Queen Victoria gives the text of the Criminal Law Amendment Act in which Section 11, governing "Outrages on decency," pertains to Oscar Wilde:

Any male person who, in public or private, commits, or is a party to the commission of, or procures or attempts to procure the commission by any male person of, any act of gross indecency with another male person, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and being convicted thereof shall be liable at the discretion of the court to be imprisoned for any term not exceeding two years, with or without hard labour.

This in spite of the fact that Stead had no desire to interfere with the "liberty of vice," but only with crimes against women and girls.

Having been arraigned at Bow Street and tried at the Old Bailey, as Wilde was, Stead served two months in jail for "abduction and indecent assault," mostly at Holloway, where Wilde was held while on trial. Upon leaving the *Pall Mall Gazette*, Stead started the international journal the *Review of Reviews* in 1890, became a spiritualist and a peace crusader, was nominated for the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1901, and died on the *Titanic*. At the beginning of "Haveth Childers Everywhere," the ghost of William Stead-Earwicker announces himself with humor: "Hep! Hello there, Bill of old Bailey!" (480.18). One of the Four greets him with "Hunkalus Childared Easterheld. It's his lost chance, Emania. Ware him well" (480.20-21) in parody of the refrain of "Titanic Blues" from Eugene Jolas's book *Le Negre qui chante*: "It's your last trip, Titanic, fare you well." Stead's "Agenbyte of inwit," the remorse of conscience that comes from the conflicting bonds of circumstance and conscience, all his life and beyond into his spirit communications after death, was the question that becomes Earwicker's "sin in the park"—the morality of the Maiden Tribute escapade. A public "fall" and incarceration for sexual crime unite Stead-Earwicker and Oscar Wilde. Also, Wilde, like Stead, communicated through mediums after his death, with his messages published by one of the mediums, Hester Travers Smith, in *Psychic Messages from Oscar Wilde*, a copy of which Joyce owned.

Just as the ghost of Earwicker stops speaking for a moment, one of the Four detects another presence and asks

"Is that yu, Whitehed?" (535.22). The voice of Wilde answers with "Old Whitehowth he is speaking again" (535.26) in parody of "Oscar is speaking again" at the Smith seances (535.26). Some spirit voices had difficulty making themselves heard, and Wilde implores his hearers "Ope Eustace tube!" (535.26) and complains of having been "deff as Adder" (535.31). Just before his death in 1900 Wilde sustained an operation on the eardrum perforated in prison, and Earwicker repeats, "he is not all hear" (536.1). The biblical verse, however, implies that Wilde has found a truth beyond earthly flattery: "like the deaf adder that stops its ear, so that it does not hear the voice of charmers or of the cunning enchanter" (Psalms 58:4). "Pity Oscar Wilde" (7) was his plea, addressed to the medium, "dear lady," and "Pity, please, lady, for poor O.W." (535.28-29) and "Pity poor whiteoath!" (535.27) he pleads now.

Wilde's "hairs hoar" (535.30) combines with Earwicker's "Take off that white hat" motif (see 322.1), based in part on Stead's wearing of a large white hat; also, "whiteoath" and "white Howth" for White Castle on Howth link with the *Wake's* giant sleeping on the landscape, his "humptyhillhead" at Howth and his "tumptytumtoes" in Phoenix Park (3.20-21). Howth Castle merges with Holloway Gaol that was commonly called "the castle" and that Stead christened his Happy Holloway. Stead's widely-publicized Christmas card shows the towers similar to the "three shuttoned castles" (22.34) on Dublin's coat of arms. For Stead Holloway was a peaceful retreat where, "as in an enchanted castle, jealously guarded by liveried retainers," he was kept secure. Similarly, Wilde talked of Reading Prison as "a sort of enchanted castle" (qtd. in Morley 141).

Joyce gave Harriet Shaw Weaver the impression that the dream was to be a "convenient device," allowing him "the freest scope to introduce any material he wished—and suited to a nightpiece" (see Ellmann 544 and Lidderdale 428). The giant on the landscape stands for the lasting impact of an historical figure such as Stead who fell (3.15) and whose spirit lives on. Referring to his character, Stead's biographer said "Stead was big."

Earwicker spoke of his "dirty-nine articles" (534.12) exposing London's "filth" and Wilde speaks of "Nine dirty years mine age" (535.29-30), his age when convicted. In Stead's "Book of the Dead," his *Letters from Julia*—communications with the departed Julia Ames, republished *After Death*—Julia conveyed information that she said would contradict that of the afterlife commonly taught by the churches; and either Stead or Wilde's spirit communications constitute their own subtle methods of rewriting the church's Thirty-nine Articles. The ghost of Wilde says, "I have lived true thousand hells" (535.28) in the tone of *De Profundis*, in which one sentence contains eight:

I have lain in prison for nearly two years. Out of my nature has come wild despair; and abandonment to grief that was piteous even to look at; terrible and impotent rage; bitterness and scorn; anguish that wept aloud; misery that could find no voice; sorrow that was dumb. I have passed through every possible mood of suffering. (81-82)

The ghost of Wilde reviews the life of Wilde, with "this profundust snobbing I have caught" referring to the study of snobbery for which he was famous, having caught it, according to Hesketh Pearson, from his professor John Pentland Mahaffy at Oxford, who also taught him "that superciliousness was a sign of good breeding" (qtd. in Morley 19). Time and again the metaphors in *Psychic Messages* repeat those of the prison experience. Wilde deplores the afterlife loss of the beauties of the earth and the "twilight" of a kind of "hell," as in "The Ballad of Reading Gaol":

With midnight always in one's heart,
And twilight in one's cell,
We turn the crank or tear the rope,
Each in his separate Hell.

In the *Wake* Wilde's loss of the garden of Earth—"I askt you, dear lady, to judge on my tree by our fruits. I gave you of the tree. I gave two smells, three eats" (535.31-32)—refers to the year 1895, which Sheridan Morely has titled "Two Triumphs. . . and Three Trials." At Oxford, Wilde "wanted to eat of the fruit of all the trees in the garden of the world" (*De Profundis* 97), and for a while could do so with the simultaneous successes of his two plays, *An Ideal Husband* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*. The two Trees in his life were, of course, the actor-managers Herbert Beerbohm Tree and Max Beerbohm Tree.

For his children, the plays, "my happy bossoms, my allfalling fruits of my boom" (535.33), Wilde applies the metaphor that Joyce used as title for a segment of the *Wake*: "Pity poor Haveth Childers Everywhere with Mudder!" (535.34-35). Fallen in the mud were these plays. In *Psychic Messages*, Wilde said "The very children of my imagination were thought unworthy to live, and a lady whom I had trusted and who in the days of my pride had often called me her friend, deliberately destroyed a manuscript of mine" (57). These are his "Dear gone mummeries" (535.27) that he now has difficulty remembering: "mummery failend" (535.30).

While "Childers" in "Haveth Childers Everywhere" means primarily the plural of "child," Hugh Culling Eardley Childers (1827-1896), a member of Gladstone's cabinet to whom Adaline Glasheen found "Here Comes Everybody" attached by Punch, was one of a cast of characters that Joyce adopted from the year of Stead's Maiden Tribute, 1885; others are the Norwegian Captain and the "ship's carpenter," plus caricatures of Stead himself and of Gladstone. In the larger sense "Haveth Childers Everywhere" means any of the efforts that live after us. Bearing the initials of the *Wake's* hero, it makes an umbrella for Earwicker's "childers"—his multitudinous efforts to improve the world—that led Joyce elsewhere to call him "fafafather of all schemes for to bother us" (45.13).

Brought into the mud also were Wilde's mother "Speranza" and the mother of Lord Douglas, and all stains occur in the context of Earwicker's sexual "sin" and the filth of the social milieu that comprise "The Muddest Thick That Was Ever Heard Dump," another early-published segment

of the *Wake* (1929).

Wilde stops speaking with this metaphor, and Earwicker comments "That was Communicator, a former colonel" (535.36). Hester Travers Smith explained carefully in "Introduction" that Wilde was the "communicator" to distinguish him from the "control" or spirit guide of the medium (1-2). Sheridan Morley observes that "by the end of 1881 there was little doubt in the public mind that Oscar Wilde was the man being satirized by *Punch*" in George du Maurier's drawings, and "When therefore in that same year the then editor of *Punch*, F. C. Burnand, wrote a play called *The Colonel*, in which there was a swindling, charlatan dandy called Lambert Streyke, there was again the feeling that this was intended as a parody of Wilde" (38-39). Earwicker continues, "A disincarnated spirit, called Sebastian, from the Riviera in Januero. . . may fernspeak shortly with messuages from my deadported" (535.36-536.3). Wilde stayed at Napoule on the Riviera in the winter of 1898, and in *Psychic Messages* he remembered a happy moment entertaining the schoolchildren at the little village near Berneval: "Of course I was Mr. Sebastian *Melnotte* in those days . . . *Melmoth* from some ancestor of mine. Sebastian in memory of the dreadful arrows" (66-67). The German *Fernsprecher* for telephone suggests Stead's advocacy of a "prayer telephone," a continued topic in his *Review*.

Because of Wilde's mournfulness and need for pity, Earwicker proposes, "Let us cheer him up a little and make an appunkment for a future date" (536.3-4) in keeping with the practice of holding seances at appointed times. Earwicker addresses Wilde, "Hello, Commudicate! How's the buttes?" (536.4) The chief "attributes" of Wilde became his "maxims" or "epigrams," of which he said in *De Profundis* "I summed up all systems in a phrase, and all existence in an epigram" (81).

Wilde fails to respond to Earwicker's call, and Earwicker interprets this, "Everscepstic!" (536.5). Stead in his review of *De Profundis* (*Review* 31 [1905], 314) accepted that Wilde admitted "Religion does not help me" (84); and Joyce expands this into specifics of unhelpful religions described by Mary Baker Eddy: "He does not believe in our psychous of the Real Absence, neither miracle wheat nor soulsurgery of P. P. Quemby" (536.5-6).

While Stead toured the States in 1907 on a peace mission, Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy was much in the news, and Stead made her the topic of a character sketch based in part on Mark Twain's *Christian Science*. Her mentor Dr. Quimby "on one occasion [sent] his astral body to visit her in her room," and she had powers to "discern in the human mind thoughts, motives, and purposes" (*Review* 35 [1907], 360-67). Yet Mrs. Eddy in *Science and Health* scorned the Real Presence of the Eucharist, for the Eucharist would be Absent where the only bread must be Truth (35). She announced that miracles "are impossible in Science" (83), denounced "the educated belief that Soul is in the body" (39), and cited Jesus' resurrection as "a method of surgery beyond material art" (44). Mark Twain provided a long list, "To mention only a few," of the people and systems of

philosophy she considered mad (41-42). Stead-Earwicker has no intention of refuting the "everscepstic" Wilde.

Earwicker sympathizes, "He has had some indiejestings, poor thing, for quite a little while, confused by his tonguer of baubble" (536.7-8). Referring to London society as a "huge heap of philistinism," Wilde said in *Psychic Messages*, "I felt like a goldfish who has choked from devouring too much bread. The meal did not nourish me, it merely distended my stomach" (34). Prejudices, privileges, and legal powers made Stead's "Modern Babylon" a Tower of Babel.

For all of this, Earwicker admits Wilde has "A way with him!" (536.8), and, imagining himself in Wilde's place, sympathizes "Poor Felix Culapert!" (536.9). Three times distinctly Stead publicly reiterated "felix culpa" for the one Maiden Tribute "fall." Six weeks after Stead published the story of Eliza Armstrong under the name "Lily" (6 July 1885 *PMG* p.6) and no one searching for her had inquired of him, Stead announced dramatically in St. James's Hall, "I, alone, standing before you now—I am solely responsible for taking Lizzie Armstrong away from her mother's house." Again, when at Grindelwald he learned that his agent Rebecca Jarrett had been arrested, he cabled for his newspaper "I alone am responsible" (3 Sept. 1885 *PMG*, p.1). A third time in court, and published in *The Armstrong Case*, he concluded his defense, "I beg of you to remember that mine was the guiding brain, and this the directing hand, which alone is responsible for what was done" (16). Wilde's "felix culpa" was his refusal to condemn others while defeated in his purpose to put Queensberry in prison, and Earwicker ends several exclamations of sympathy with "I deplore over him ruely" and "Mongrieff!" (536.12), which Franklin Walton found to be Algernon Moncrieff of *The Importance of Being Earnest* (311).

Wilde reviewed his previous condition in *Psychic Messages*: "I was a fallen god, a fallen king, and felt I had the dignity of royal blood within me" (51). Earwicker juxtaposes this with Wilde's lonely death: "Guestermed with the nobelities, to die bronxitic in achershous!" (536.12-13). Earwicker marks the fall from the former state of amusements and top hats and white lilies with "So enjoying of old thick whites, in haute white toff's hoyt of our formed reflections" and borrows a metaphor from the *Wake's* patriotic Buckley who shot the Russian General: "so buckely hosiered from the Royal Leg [an allusion to Wilde's knee breeches], and his puertos mugnum, he would puffout a dhymful bock" (536.13-16). *Puer* suggests George Bernard Shaw's admission that he had underestimated *The Importance of Being Earnest*, having "hazarded the unhappy guess" that it was "a young work written or projected long before" (qtd. in Morley 104). Stead pronounced Wilde's last "dhymful bock," the "true cry of the heart *de profundis*."

Wilde was not exclusively concerned with young boys: "And the how he would husband her that verikerfully, his cigare divane!" (536.17-18). Similarly, Earwicker just

moments before swore his innocence by his "verawife" (532.18), based on the "steadfast" devotion of Stead's wife through his trials and incarceration and Anna Livia's similar support of Earwicker. Wilde's wife Constance, too, came to visit him in prison, where they discussed Lord Douglas and the future of their children (*De Profundis* 141). Jacques Barzun, in the introduction to the complete version, judges, "no better test of his sincerity can be imagined than his references to his wife, and they are all admirable, as she herself was" (xi). Also, in the autumn of 1881 *Punch* announced "The production of Mr. Oscar Wilde's play *Vera* is deferred. . . . *Vera* is about Nihilism; this looks as if there were nothing in it" (see Morley 39). Again with the failure of *Vera* or *The Nihilists* on Broadway in September, 1883, *Punch*, "ever gleeful when reporting news of fresh Wildean disaster," according to Morley, "noted smugly that *Vera* must have been 'vera vera bad'" (53).

While "verawife" implies conventional morality, Earwicker has slipped into the language of controversial sex, both Wilde's by deed and his own by reputation and recorded in Wilde's art and Stead's Maiden Tribute. In the white slave trade, a "cigar" was a "parcel" or "colis" being transported for sale; and earlier Earwicker "was to just pluggy well suck that brown boyo, my son, and spend a whole half hour in Havana" (53.24-26). A "niece" was a child being abducted, and Earwicker just before Wilde's appearance has spoken of his own "anniece" and "nieceless to say" (532.24). Now its "With us his nephos and his neberls, mest incensed and befogged by him and his smoke thereof" (536.19-20). Wilde's "children" are being "clouded" and confused with his intense eroticism; and *mest* for Danish *most* and Dutch *dung* returns to the "filth" or the "mud" of "Mudder."

Earwicker's next remark promises a toast lifted in honor of Wilde, in keeping with the spirit in which, writing for the June 1 *Review*, Stead objected to Wilde's sentence, which he anticipated would be two years' hard labor: "The heinousness of the crime of Oscar Wilde and his associates does not lie, as is usually supposed, in its being unnatural. It would be unnatural for seventy-nine out of eighty persons. It is natural for the abnormal person who is in a minority of one." Yet the trial might pose a social regression; it would be a "fatal blunder" at this stage of progress if the "blighting shadow of wrong-doing" were permitted to form a "upas shade over the relations between man and man and man and woman."

Under heading of "The Sacro-Sanct Male" Stead deplored the uneven punishments for corruption of girls and boys in London's "tonguer of bauble":

If Oscar Wilde, instead of indulging in dirty tricks of indecent familiarity with boys and men, had ruined the lives of half a dozen innocent simpletons of girls, or had broken up the home of his friend by corrupting his friend's wife [an allusion to Parnell], no one could have laid a finger upon him. The male is sacro-sanct: the female is fair game. To have burdened society with a dozen bastards, to have destroyed a happy home by his lawless lust—of these things the criminal law takes no account. But let him act inde-

cently to a young rascal who is very well able to take care of himself [Lord Douglas], and who can by no possibility bring a child into the world as the result of his corruption, then judges can hardly contain themselves from indignation when inflicting the maximum sentence the law allows.

Stead knew the law, from having helped to write its final version, and knew the principals in Wilde's three trials. The redoubtable Charles Russell, Q. C., defended Rebecca Jarrett; and ten years later Russell selected Edward Carson for Queensberry's defense counsel, with devastating results for Wilde. Among prejudiced judges, Mr. Justice Lopes in passing sentence on Stead—though he knew that Stead's articles had no part in the charges of abduction and indecent assault—lectured him: "You deluged some months ago our streets and the whole country with an amount of filth which has, I fear, tainted the minds of the children that you were so anxious to protect, and which has been (and I do not hesitate to say ever will be) a disgrace to journalism" (11 November 1885 *PMG*, p. 11). The accuracy of Stead's prophecy regarding Wilde's sentence would be a foregone conclusion, though he also feared that Wilde would die in prison. With Wilde's crime judged "worse than murder," Mr. Justice Wills lectured him at sentencing: "you, Wilde, have been the centre of a circle of extensive corruption of the most hideous kind among young men. . . . I shall, under the circumstances, be expected to pass the severest sentence the law allows. In my judgement it is totally inadequate for such a case" (qtd. in Morley 128).

To protect the public, Stead had suppressed the worst of the crimes and vices he discovered in his Maiden Tribute investigation, and his next comment on Wilde's "crime" addresses another public fallacy and a suppressed issue:

Another contrast, almost as remarkable as that which sends Oscar Wilde to hard labour and places Sir Charles Dilke in the House of Commons, is that between the universal execration heaped upon Oscar Wilde and the tacit universal acquiescence of the very same public in the same kind of vice in our public schools. If all persons guilty of Oscar Wilde's offences were to be clapped into gaol, there would be a very surprising exodus from Eton and Harrow, Rugby and Winchester, to Pentonville and Holloway. . . . But meanwhile public school boys are allowed to indulge with impunity in practices which, when they leave school, would consign them to hard labour. (*Review* 11 [1895], 492-93)

Certainly Wilde deserves not only a toast but an Octoberfest: "But he shall have his glad stein of our zober beer-best in Oscarshal's winetavern" (536.20-21). Mrs. Bernard Beere, actress and producer, remained a friend from the beginning of Wilde's career in drama to the end of his life. In the year of *Ulysses* (1904) Stead opposed the Welsh Closing Acts because the pubs should not be closed on Sundays unless the churches were ready to assume their responsibility for the poor. His book *If Christ Came to Chicago* made clear his perception that "The saloon-keeper is practically the only man who supplies free warmth to the chilled and shivering wanderers on the street" (152). In "*Here Am I; Send Me!*" (republished *Which? Christ or Cain?*), he cast himself in the role of Paul the Publican, "a

man who serves the public. It is the modern equivalent of the *servus servorum* of the old Popes" (23). Making his pub the center of every type of social service required—food, shelter, entertainment, worship, education, even a newspaper and enlightened sex—so that it becomes a Public Home, Paul the Publican continues to dispense "distilled damnation," as a means of weaning his public to higher goals, to anyone "sober and able to pay" (18). This Pub and this Publican become the model for Earwicker in his various roles—tavern keeper, greengrocer, journalist who "fell from story to story" (374.36), and opponent of white slavery "voyaging after maidens" (323.6-7)—and makes sense of Earwicker's "zober beerbest" (536.21).

Where "glad stein" (536.20) suggests Gladstone, Stead had a long relationship with Gladstone from his early days as editor of the Darlington *Northern Echo*, when he joined Gladstone in opposing the Turks and the Bulgarian atrocities (1876), up until the death of the Grand Old Man; and Oscar Wilde sent his poems to Gladstone. Earwicker would wish Wilde a "glad stein," also, to overcome Wilde's resentment of the translation of his "beautiful prose into German. . . a very real form of murder. To have maimed my soul was terrible, but to have maimed the soul of my work was more terrible still" (*Psychic Messages* 57).

Earwicker continues, "The boyce voyce is still flautish and his mouth still wears that soldier's scarlet though the flaxafloyeds are peppered with salsedine" (536.21-24). Here is *Punch* again, triumphantly capitalizing on Wilde's fury at the Lord Chamberlain's cancellation of Sarah Bernhardt's production of his *Salomé* in rehearsal in 1892. Wilde declared he would give up his British citizenship and exile himself to France; and *Punch*, Morley records, "cartooned him in the uniform of a French soldier" (83). Although the thread may allude to Alfred Taylor, the blackmailer tried with Wilde, the scarlet thread was Wilde's metaphor in *De Profundis* for his passion for Lord Douglas, "through those two and a half years during which the Fates were weaving into one scarlet pattern the threads of our divided lives" (41).

With *sal* in "salsedine" meaning both "salt" and "dirty gray," Joyce returns to the passing of time evidenced in "hairs hoar" and Wilde's favorite comparison of himself, exiled in prison, to Dante and the eating of salt bread. Wilde in *De Profundis* quoted Goethe's lines "Who never ate his bread in sorrow,/. . . He knows you not, ye Heavenly Powers" (92) and added "Those who have the artistic temperament go into exile with Dante and learn how salt is the bread of others and how steep their stairs: they catch for a moment the serenity and calm of Goethe" (106). In *Psychic Messages* he repeated, "like Christ or Cain, I found how weary the way was—and, like Dante, how salt the bread when I found it" (56). Stead linked Christ and Cain because, like Wilde, "Most of us are piebald Cains, chequered Christs."

With those steep stairs in mind, Earwicker utters the phrase that most closely unites Wilde and Stead: "It is because of what he was ascend into his prisence on account

off. I whit it wel. Hence his deepraised words" (536.24-26). At its simplest level, the ascension is Wilde's statement about his imprisonment in *Psychic Messages*: "I who worshipped beauty, was robbed not only of the chance of beholding her face, but I was cast in on myself; and there, in that barrenness of soul, I languished until my spirit rose once more and cried aloud that this was its great opportunity" (50). Again, at its simplest level, Stead-Earwicker's statement marks his own prison-time ascension to his "Be a Christ" doctrine; it marks, also, the vast similarities between his prison experience and that of Wilde.

Stead long wanted to be a martyr to his ideals for social improvement, and, knowing that social upheaval generally provokes violence, in Holloway he fully expected to welcome at some future time a second imprisonment; therefore, he titled his account *My First Imprisonment*. Again Wilde, as a contributor to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, would have known of this work of Stead, and may have had it in mind while writing *De Profundis*, in which his study of the essential humanity of Christ would meet Stead's approval.

Both Stead and Wilde found the prison chaplains examples of "Religion does not help me." Morley recalls that Wilde's chaplain at Wandsworth demanded "Did you have morning prayers in your house?" When Wilde replied negatively, "'Then,' said the chaplain triumphantly, 'you see where you are now'" (131). Stead's chaplain at Coldbath-in-the-Fields was "the only creature. . . among all those to whose care, spiritual and temporal, I was entrusted who ever said an unkind word" (10-11). Stead's chaplain at Holloway announced on Christmas morning that "no one there could be touched by any appeal to their love for wife or children," on which Stead commented, "The good chaplain would be all the better if he were to read once in a way not merely the Gospel according to St. Matthew and St. Mark, but also the Gospel according to Victor Hugo, in 'Les Misérables' and 'L'Homme qui Rit'" (24-25). "Be a Christ" meant essentially "The man who acts as Christ would do under the same circumstances is the true believer, though all his dogmas be heretical and his mind is in a state of blank agnosticism" (*Pope* 16). Because Stead thoroughly understood Wilde's "Religion does not help me," he advocated his "secular" or "civic" church for social improvement; and Wilde in prison proposed "I would like to found an order for those who cannot believe" (84). Other similarities between Wilde and Stead are perfectly obvious.

Jacques Barzun notes that, after Wilde's sentence, Lord Douglas "wrote a long letter to W. T. Stead, editor of the *Review of Reviews*" (52). While in prison himself, Stead implored his followers to desist from petitioning the Queen for his release. Persons who opposed Maiden Tribute reforms feared blackmail should women be legally protected, and just before Wilde's appearance Earwicker protested "the pupup publication of libel" (534.17). Wilde said two blackmailers were "wonderful in their infamous war against life" (*De Profundis* 129).

As a result of their prison experiences, both Stead and Wilde advocated prison reform. After the experience itself,

however, and in spirit communications after his death, Stead continued to exalt the prison experience, so that all his public knew he had reached the second position Wilde desired to reach: "when I shall be able to say. . . that the two great turning-points of my life were when my father sent me to Oxford, and society sent me to prison" (*De Profundis* 85).

Stead maintained that "Salvation by sex is no doubt one of the channels of divine grace" (*Review* 12 [1895], 367-74), and Wilde understood that the Soul "can transform into noble moods of thought, and passions of high import, what in itself is base, cruel, and degrading" (87). Stead often emphasized, "The Magdalene is only second to the Madonna among the holy women who ministered to Him" and made "The Union of all who love in the service of all who suffer" his motto. Regarding Mary Magdalen's washing of Christ's feet, Wilde said "it is love, and the capacity for it, that distinguishes one human being from another" (117).

Stead closed his letter on his "Be a Christ" doctrine with the words "Nor is it from 'the Mountain of the Voice,' alone God speaks: His word is heard in the silence of the secret places of the heart" (*First Imprisonment* 32), and Wilde writes in *De Profundis* "Those. . . who are dumb under oppression and 'whose silence is heard only of God,' He chose as his brothers" (107). For children, Stead constructed an entire series of "Books for the Bairns," sponsored baby adoptions and country outings, helped Dr. Barnardo with his street arabs, made hundreds of private benevolences, established a children's page for his *Daily Paper*. Wilde observes that Christ "took children as the type of what people should try to become" (114). While Stead chose the Publican "as the most elementary form of social union," Wilde decides "The conversion of a Publican into a Pharisee would not have seemed to [Christ] a great achievement by any means" (118).

The two great Victorians Stead and Wilde were enmeshed in the social upheavals of their time before Joyce merged them in the pages of *Finnegans Wake*, where Earwicker understands thoroughly the position of Wilde because "of what he was ascend into his prisonce on account off" and his urgency to communicate these "depraized words" (536.24-25). Stead in prison began writing a complete history of the Eliza Armstrong case but yielded to advice that he should let the matter drop, and Earwicker entertains the same ambition for Wilde: "Some day I may tell of his second storey" (536.25-26). Most revealing, however, is Earwicker's "It looks like someone other bearing my burdens. I cannot let it. Kan'es nought" (536.26-27). Stead's own Congregationalist-minister father once asked him if he couldn't leave a little work for God.

While other similarities with Wilde are apparent in the *Wake*, this section in which Wilde appears as ghost is the richest, and most effectively brings forth the great unities that mark the construction of this amazing novel. Espe-

cially fruitful is the characterization of Earwicker that "He would . . . fire off, gheol ghiornal, foull subustioned mullmud, his farced epistol to the hibruws" (228.29-34). Stead maintained that the editor should lead his public out of Canaan to a new social order, and he continued editing the *Pall Mall Gazette* while he was in Holloway. He even wrote some of the articles attacking himself—as he did in other instances—because these kept the public alert and because he knew his own failings better than anyone else; he "subustioned mullmud" himself.

The ghost of Oscar Wilde manifests in part to develop the *Wake*'s resurrection theme, and Joyce was serious about his ghosts. Explaining why Harriet Shaw Weaver could not understand Patrick and Berkeley in the *Wake*, as recorded in *Dear Miss Weaver*, he suggested "The answer, I suppose is that given by Paddy Dignam's apparition: metempsychosis" (228). When he was disturbed by her failure to comprehend *Finnegans Wake*, Miss Weaver consoled him with her appreciation of the "beautifully expressed ghost-parts" (269). For James Stephens to "play ghost" (289) for the writing of the *Wake*, he need only be given the Stead key to comprehend the unities and the methods. Finally, there must be ghosts because an influence such as Stead must be almost invisible.

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Darwin's Comedy: The *Autobiography* as Comic Narrative

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In an essay on "The Darwinian Revolution and Literary Form," A. Dwight Culler brilliantly linked the historical impact of *On the Origin of Species* with traditional comic reversal:

Can we not say that the Darwinian reversal does in the realm of evolutionary thought precisely the same thing as is done in the realm of comedy by that reversal of situation which we call the *peripeteia*? Can we not say that the discovery by Darwin of the true explanation of adaptations in the natural world is analogous to what in comedy we also call a "discovery" (or recognition scene or *anagnorisis*), in which characters learn for the first time their true relation with each other and with their world? (237)

Culler argued that the established, orderly view of creation was turned topsy-turvy by Darwin's account of the origin of species. Instead of William Paley's uplifting vision of creatures purposefully adapted to their environment by a God of design, Darwin presented a picture of teeming animal life struggling to survive by means of adaptation, the whole unseemly process operating gradually, randomly, and impersonally. Compared with the older view of humanity as the crown of God's creation, this new Darwinian vision of the world was a comic comedown, a deflation of human pride, a farce. And in the world of ideas, the way in which religious creationism was displaced by Darwin's theory of natural selection represents a comic reversal of the first order (Culler 231).

Culler's argument was anticipated by the Victorians themselves. Right from the start, many of them had sensed there was something funny about the Darwinian revolution. Shortly after the publication of the *Origin* in 1859, they were delightedly retailing Darwinian stories, like the one about the Bishop of Worcester who had informed his wife that the horrid Professor Huxley believed humans to be descended from apes. "Descended from apes!" the lady is reported to have replied. "My dear, let us hope that it is not true, but if it is, let us pray that it will not become generally known" (Montague 3). Unfortunately for the bishop's wife, it was already generally known, and *Punch* cartoonists were soon having a field day with Darwinian themes. It was only a matter of time before Gilbert and Sullivan would get into the act with a song about an ape trying to win a lady by proclaiming himself "Darwinian man" (*Complete* 271-3).

But perhaps the clearest evidence of Victorian comic response to the Darwinian revolution lies in accounts of the famous Wilberforce-Huxley encounter at Oxford in June 1860. Exactly what Bishop Samuel Wilberforce and Thomas Henry Huxley said to each other on that memorable occasion is in doubt, but the question of verbal accuracy is almost beside the point; indeed, discovering the antagonists' actual words might spoil the fun. For the confrontation was immediately molded into a traditional comic *agon* or conflict-debate between a boastful *alazon* and a wily

eiron (Sypher 217-8, 228-31). To this day, whenever the tale is retold (and it often is), it is presented as delicious comedy. Wilberforce is cast as the quintessential *alazon*, pretending to know more than he did and behaving with typical arrogance when he asked Huxley whether he was descended from a monkey on his grandfather's or his grandmother's side of the family. Likewise, Huxley emerges as an exemplary *eiron*, a sly and witty gadfly who punctures the *alazon's* pretentiousness with his remark that he would prefer a monkey for an ancestor rather than a misinformed bishop. This retort provides the perfect comic reversal, making a monkey of the bishop and ending the episode—now as then—with "unextinguishable laughter among the people" (Clark 59).

When Culler sought the comic analogues of the Darwinian revolution, however, he looked to history and to the literature of the late Victorian period, for example, *Erewhon*, Lewis Carroll's *Alice* books, and *Man and Superman*. He did not turn to Darwin's own writings. As Culler saw it, the Darwinian revolution was the comic reversal of the century, and everyone except Darwin was in on the joke:

Only Darwin . . . seems to have had no appreciation of the emotional overtones of his theory. He was, indeed, so bland and colorless a person that a recent writer has made it a major enigma how so brilliant a theory could have emerged from so placid an intellect. . . . As a scientist he was the author of the greatest repartee in nature, but as a man he says that he was without wit and that he had a fatality for putting his statement initially in a wrong or awkward form. (232)

In the twenty years since Culler published his article, no one has challenged this view of Darwin and his work. Even the latest study of Darwinism and literary form—Gillian Beer's 1983 study, *Darwin's Plots*—never suggests that Darwin himself produced a comedy analogous to that which his theories precipitated in the history of ideas.

But Darwin seems to have had the last laugh after all. What literary critics of Darwinism have overlooked is that Darwin realized the comic potential of his theory when he wrote his *Autobiography*. In this literary reconstruction of his life, Darwin created a comic portrait of himself as an unpromising dimwit who evolves into an unlikely hero, a klutzy innocent who confounds the stolid wisdom of the ages. It is beyond the scope of this paper to question how accurately Darwin portrayed himself in the *Autobiography* or how deliberately he set out to write a comedy of evolution. For present purposes, it is sufficient to note that Darwin himself was the first to tell the funny story about the "bland and colorless" nerd who grew into "the author of the greatest repartee in nature."

To be sure, Darwin did much to disarm his readers. The very first paragraph of the *Autobiography* tells us: "I have taken no pains about my style of writing" (*Autobiography* 21). It seems that the narrator is rejecting design in writing

just as surely as Darwin had rejected design in creation. Moreover, the narrator insists that his aesthetic sensibilities had atrophied in his later years, that is, during the very time in which the *Autobiography* was written. But reader would do well to be wary of such professions of narrative ingenuousness. During the Victorian period, manipulative narrators professing simple honesty were all the rage—as any sensitive reader of Browning's dramatic monologues or Thackeray's *Barry Lyndon* knows. Even autobiographical accounts professing to tell "the truth" often made artistically sophisticated appeals to the reader, as *Sartor Resartus* and the *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* amply demonstrate. Only a careful reading of Darwin's *Autobiography* can reveal whether its deadpan prose is a technique used in the service of comedy.

To examine whether the *Autobiography* is a comic narrative, the reader should perhaps begin at the end. The final sentence reads: "With such moderate abilities as I possess, it is truly surprising that thus I should have influenced to a considerable extent the beliefs of scientific men on some important points" (145). A classic example of Darwinian understatement, the sentence crystallizes the *Autobiography's* over-all design, encapsulating the sly joke which the entire book has been telling, namely, the story of how an unpromising mediocrity stood conventional wisdom on its head. The sentence tells us that Culler need not have turned to his unnamed writer to puzzle over the enigma of how "so bland and colorless a person" as Darwin could have formulated "so brilliant a theory": the comic enigma is right there in Darwin's *Autobiography*, stated explicitly in the book's final sentence, hinting that Darwin was aware of the little joke he had played on the learned world.

In addition to beginning at the end, the reader needs to distinguish between the author, the narrator of the text, and its principal character. Those familiar with Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* will recall that critics make a similar distinction between Chaucer as the controlling artist of the work, the "voice" which narrates the text, and Geoffrey as a dim-witted version of the narrator within the story (Donaldson 2). While Chaucer the poet artfully employs a narrative voice which is subtle and perceptive, Geoffrey the pilgrim is often naively dense when it comes to comprehending the people and events around him. In Darwin's *Autobiography* a similar separation of author, narrator, and character must be made. In this article, "Darwin" will refer to the historical author of the text, the narrative persona will be designated as "the narrator," and the book's main character will be called "Charles."

In the early part of the *Autobiography* Charles resembles a familiar comic type—the well-meaning buffoon. This good-hearted numbskull is dim and fumbling, slightly ridiculous, rather fatuous, and faintly appealing in his simplicity. In Jewish humor, this kind of clown appears as the schlemiel (Wisse). As a character in the *Autobiography*, Charles is a similar comic figure. He bears more than a passing resemblance to Geoffrey the pilgrim in *The Canterbury Tales*, as well as a host of other comic fools like

Voltaire's *Candide*, Dickens's *Mr. Pickwick*, Charles Chaplin's *Little Tramp*, Al Capp's *Li'l Abner*, and that endearing dingbat, Edith Bunker. As a youth, Charles resembles another Charles—Charlie Brown, the perennial loser of the *Peanuts* comic strip. But when he matures, Charles develops into a genial absent-minded professor who knows more than he lets on. Pottering with his orchids and barnacles, repeatedly flattened by mysterious illnesses, Charles nevertheless fumbles his way to greatness, achieves it almost in spite of himself, and blinks with bemused delight at the firestorm of controversy which he has somehow managed to create. Surely, William Irvine was right on target when he called Charles's early life "a prosaic and comfortable variation on the folk tale of the unlikely prince" (44).

To create this image of the unpromising hero, the narrator recounts a series of anecdotes that deflate Charles as a character. Appearing most frequently in the early pages of the *Autobiography*, this technique of deflation illustrates how dense Charles can be:

I must have been a very simple little fellow when I first went to school. A boy of the name of Garnett took me into a cake-shop one day, and bought some cakes for which he did not pay, as the shopman trusted him. When he came out I asked him why he did not pay for them, and he instantly answered, "Why, do you not know that my uncle left a great sum of money to the Town on condition that every tradesman should give whatever was wanted without payment to anyone who wore his hat and moved it in a particular manner"; and then he showed me how it was moved. He then went into another shop where he was trusted and asked for some small article, moving his hat in the proper manner and of course obtained it without payment. When we came out he said, "Now if you like to go by yourself into that cake-shop (how well I remember its exact location), I will lend you my hat, and you can get whatever you like if you move the hat on your head properly." I gladly accepted the generous offer, and went in and asked for some cakes, moved the old hat, and was walking out of the shop, when the shopman made a rush at me, so I dropped the cakes and ran away for dear life, and was astonished by being greeted with shouts of laughter by my false friend Garnett. (26)

Stories of Charles's gullibility abound in the *Autobiography*. On another such occasion, young Charles steals some apples to give to some men and boys who live in a nearby cottage; but before parting with the apples, Charles insists that they watch how fast he can run:

... and it is wonderful that I did not perceive that the surprise and admiration which they expressed at my powers of running, was given for the sake of the apples. But I well remember that I was delighted at them declaring that they had never seen a boy run so fast! (24)

In other words, Charles is not too swift mentally. On still another occasion, while bird shooting, Charles is bilked of some of his game by friends who keep telling him that the bird he has just shot had actually been bagged by another

member of the party who fired at the same time. It is only when his friends let him in on the deception that Charles realizes how dense he has been (54). On this occasion, Charles could pass for Nathaniel Winkle, the dimwit sportsman of *Pickwick Papers*.

Confirmation of Charles's knuckle-headedness comes from others as well, especially from his formidable father. The testimony of Robert Darwin is all the more damaging, because the narrator stresses the father's extraordinary ability to assess people's characters intuitively (32-35), an ability which Charles lacks entirely. Thus, it is especially mortifying when Robert tells Charles: "You care for nothing but shooting, dogs, and rat-catching, and you will be a disgrace to yourself and all your family" (28). Part of the fun of the *Autobiography* is watching Charles both confound his father's prophecy and ironically confirm it by gaining notoriety through his scientific speculations.

The portrait of young Charles as inept *naif* is abetted by the narrator's repeatedly depicting him in what James Olney calls a state of "modest bewilderment" (184). Charles is forever "surprised" and "astonished," usually at the most obvious things. A characteristic illustration occurs during a field trip when Charles rushes to Professor Henslow to inform him of an amazing botanical discovery—only to have Henslow explain to him, ever so gently, that the phenomenon is well known to everybody in the least conversant with botany (66).

Sometimes the narrator resorts to downright slapstick to illustrate Charles's empty headedness:

I have heard my father and elder sisters say that I had, as a very young boy, a strong taste for solitary walks; but what I thought about I know not. I often became quite absorbed, and once, whilst returning to school on the summit of the old fortifications round Shrewsbury, which had been converted into a public foot-path with no parapet on one side, I walked off and fell to the ground, but the height was only seven or eight feet. (25)

At such moments, young Charles resembles a youthful Inspector Clouseau.

Charles begins his scientific career as a collector of beetles, and another comic episode depicts him like an eighteenth-century scientific virtuoso:

But no pursuit at Cambridge was followed with nearly so much eagerness or gave me so much pleasure as collecting beetles . . . I will give proof of my zeal: one day, on tearing off some old bark, I saw two rare beetles and seized one in each hand; then I saw a third and new kind, which I could not bear to lose, so that I popped the one which I held in my right hand into my mouth. Alas it ejected some intensely acrid fluid, which burnt my tongue so that I was forced to spit the beetle out, which was lost, as well as the third one. (62)

Resembling an escapee from Swift's flying island of Laputa, Charles hardly seems destined to transform the world of science with his theories.

Irvine's remark about the "unlikely prince" is a reminder of how closely Darwin's life account follows the traditional

pattern of comic action and how Charles as a character resembles the mythological and folk heroes described in Joseph Campbell's *Hero with a Thousand Faces*. Like a traditional comedy, the *Autobiography* opens in catastrophe and closes with triumph. The first paragraph indicates the imminent death of the hero ("I have attempted to write the following account of myself, as if I were a dead man in another world looking back at my life"), while the final paragraph emphasizes the hero's "success." Originally Charles is a troublesome bumbler who incurs his father's wrath. The Father (the word is often capitalized in the text) is godlike—huge in stature, a "Father-Confessor" (31), and astonishing in his intuitive wisdom. In a passage that reads like a parody of the Fall, Charles gathers "much valuable fruit from my Father's trees," hides "them in the shrubbery," and then compounds the theft with a lie (23). Charles begins to redeem himself, however, by undertaking a perilous journey-quest. During the voyage of the *Beagle*, he encounters a fantastic world of geological, botanical, and biological multitudinousness. "On first examining a new district nothing can appear more hopeless than the chaos of rocks," the narrator reports (77), the dangling modifier serving as a grammatical equivalent of Charles's mental bewilderment. Gradually, Charles—like many another hero—makes a discovery which is actually a self-discovery: "It then first dawned on me that I might perhaps write a book on the geology of the various countries visited, and this made me thrill with delight" (81). Like the traditional hero, Charles returns greatly changed by his quest, as indicated when his father exclaims, "Why, the shape of his head is quite altered" (79). After his father's death, Charles demonstrates that the son can rival the father's astonishing ability to draw inferences from seemingly unconnected facts. As Charles's publications appear, he begins to resemble a Promethean hero who has returned with saving knowledge for humanity. As in the ancient tales—like Plato's myth of the cave—a large part of the community rejects such knowledge and excoriates the truth-bearer: in many Victorian circles, the *Origin* and other works provoke outraged denunciations. But those who accept the hero's wisdom remain triumphant with him at the close of the narrative.

As Charles evolves from bumbler to hero, his character increasingly resembles that of the narrator. The role of the comic fool becomes a mask, and the narrative becomes more complex, subtle, and sly. To establish Charles's new status as hero, the narrator provides a series of character sketches of contemporaries, many of them etched with acid: "Buckle was a great talker, and I listened to him without saying hardly a word, nor indeed could I have done so, for he left no gaps" (110). In the climactic sketch of the series, Carlyle is neatly dispatched with a similar observation: "Carlyle, however, silenced every one by haranguing during the whole dinner on the advantages of silence" (113). In contrast to the earlier deflating anecdotes, these sketches undercut not Charles but those who reject or minimize his wisdom. They also demonstrate that the narrator, when he wants to, can write a sentence of deadly precision and grace.

Such demonstrations call into question the narrator's professions of verbal incompetence and even his more inept passages. In the early part of the *Autobiography* grammatical clumsiness reinforces Charles's fatuity, as in this example utilizing a dangling modifier:

Another of my occupations was collecting animals of all classes, briefly describing and roughly dissecting many of the marine ones; but from not being able to draw and from not having sufficient anatomical knowledge a great pile of MS. which I made during the voyage has proved almost useless. (77-8)

But as Charles the comic character merges into the character of the canny narrator, the narration becomes increasingly baffling: it is no longer clear who or what is being laughed at. For example, when the narrator tells us that he has always had difficulty expressing himself gracefully, he does so in a passage so magnificently muddled that we begin to wonder whether he is entertaining us with a parody of his own alleged bad writing:

There seems to be a sort of fatality in my mind leading me to put at first my statement and proposition in a wrong or awkward form. Formerly I used to think about my sentences before writing them down; but for several years I have found that it saves time to scribble in a vile hand whole pages as quickly as I possibly can, contracting half the words; and then correct deliberately. (137)

As the *Autobiography* proceeds, word-play creeps into the text, leaving the reader wondering how to take this poker-faced narrator. For example, after regaling the reader with the story of how Charles popped a beetle into his mouth, only to have the creature exude some foul-tasting fluid, the narrator caps the episode with a dreadful pun: "It seems therefore that a *taste* for collecting beetles is some indication of future success in life!" (63; italics mine). What is a reader to make of this, especially a reader who has hitherto not questioned the Darwinian deadpan? Or how is such a reader to respond to the narrator's punning rejection of the Christian condemnation of non-believers to eternal damnation as "a damnable doctrine" (87)? Are such puns unintentional, or are we being hoodwinked by an ironical narrator who has been playing dumb while laughing at us all the time?

The first paragraph of the *Autobiography* perhaps gives us a clue. The narrator explains why the *Autobiography* was written: ". . . I have thought that the attempt would amuse me, and might possibly interest my children or their children" (21). The narrator often seems to be amusing himself with puns and in-jokes, while simultaneously delighting a group of children, rather like Lewis Carroll with the Liddell sisters.

Especially in the latter sections of the *Autobiography*, the narrator seems to have a perpetual sly glint in his eye. Are we to take with a straight face his declaration that on a memorable day he happened "to read for amusement Malthus on *Population*" (120)? What kind of person reads Malthus on population for amusement? When the narrator

tells us that on the *Beagle* voyage Charles read *The Excursion* and *Paradise Lost* (85), is this a little joke hinting that Charles lost his belief in a Miltonic paradise because of his excursion on the *Beagle*? One's suspicions are strengthened when the two sentences containing this information lead immediately into the section marked "Religious Belief," which chronicles the decline of Charles's faith. Furthermore, the narrator of the *Autobiography* is almost always chortling when he alludes to religion: "I hope also to republish a revised edition of my book . . . My strength will then probably be exhausted, and I shall be ready to exclaim 'Nunc dimittis'" (133). Evidently, the narrator of the *Autobiography* is a trickster who bears careful watching.

Much of the *Autobiography's* humor, however, is less equivocal. Straight-forward anticlimax, for example, abounds in the narrative. On the very first page we read: "I have heard my Father say that he believed that persons with powerful minds generally had memories extending far back to a very early period of life" (21). Then comes the anticlimactic kicker: "This is not my case for my earliest recollection goes back only to when I was a few months over four years old . . ." The anticlimactic effect is reinforced as the sentence trails off into rambling inconsequentiality: ". . . when we went to near Abergele for sea-bathing, and I recollect some events and places there with some little distinctness" (21-22).

Repeatedly, the narrator begins passages in one gear and then shifts anticlimactically into another. When, for example, he tells how at Cambridge Charles thrilled to the music sung in King's College chapel, the narrator concludes:

. . . I used generally to go by myself to King's College, and I sometimes hired the chorister boys to sing in my rooms. Nevertheless I am so utterly destitute of an ear, that I cannot perceive a discord, or keep time and hum a tune correctly; and it is a mystery how I could possibly have derived pleasure from music. (61-2)

In the earlier half of the book, anticlimax usually undercuts Charles, but in the second half it is increasingly dishes his opponents: "This leads me to remark that I have almost always been treated honestly by reviewers, passing over those without scientific knowledge as not worthy of notice" (125). Such anticlimax is another variation on the principal comic reversal which informs the *Autobiography*, as it spins its tale of the credulous simpleton who confounded the scientific world.

In the *Autobiography*, then, Darwin as author operates as *ieron*, using the deadpan irony of his narrative to set up conventional wisdom for its comic downfall before the onslaught of a most unlikely giant-killer. This reading of the *Autobiography* suggests that Darwin is a more complex artist than he is usually credited with being. But it also raises the question of how this idea of Darwin as creative artist can be reconciled with the *Autobiography's* account of him as a man whose aesthetic sensibilities withered in later life (138-9).

The answer to this riddle probably lies in recognizing

that while Darwin's mind became immune to some forms of art, it did not reject all. While Darwin eschewed the sublime and the tragic, he never abandoned the comic. Donald Fleming's important essay on Darwin as "the anaesthetic man" argues that Darwin repressed his enjoyment of the sublime because it was too closely allied with religious belief and because in later life he could no longer tolerate belief in a deity who permitted suffering when He could have prevented it. Likewise, Darwin's intense sensitivity to pain forestalled his enjoyment of tragedy. Fleming, however, never explores Darwin's response to comedy, and the understated humor of the *Autobiography* shows that its author continued to enjoy it. Furthermore, Darwin's autobiographical narrator reports that novels "have been for years a wonderful relief and pleasure to me, and I often bless all novelists" (138). But not quite all novelists: novels which end unhappily, he says, should be banned by law. Clearly, Charles's favorite novels were sentimental comedies containing a pretty heroine and a happy ending.

Thus, for Darwin comedy was safe, as the sublime and the tragic were not. It may have been comic for Darwin to overturn the conventional view of creation, but he must have realized that the joke had terrible implications. Although in the *Autobiography* the narrator stresses his tentative belief that pleasure overbalances pain throughout earthly existence (88), he is clearly haunted by the universal suffering experienced by sentient beings: "That there is much suffering in the world no one disputes" (90). Later critics have been more direct about the tragic dimension of Darwinism in *On the Origin of Species*. Stanley Edgar Hyman in *The Tangled Bank*, for example, points out that the evolution of life-forms, like tragedy itself, inevitably involves the suffering and extinction of the unfortunate (27-31). Even Culler acknowledges that while the reversal of orthodox thinking is comic, the newly installed vision of the human condition may be tragic (231). Sensing the tragic implications of his theory, Darwin uncomfortably shied away from tragic art as too closely allied with evolutionary struggle and death. But comedy was "a wonderful relief" because, as Darwin saw it, comedy was both an evasion of tragic reality and a refuge from the pain of contemplating it.

It is unlikely that Darwin ever saw in comedy what some of its leading twentieth-century theorists—Francis Cornford, Susanne K. Langer, Northrop Frye—have found there: an art form deeply rooted in religious feeling and ritual, a habit of mind as ancient and fundamental as the change of seasons, a vision of life which transcends tragic realities to revel in song, dance, sex, and even the wild improbability of divine blessings. It is no mistake, modern critics remind us, that one of the world's greatest religious poems is called *La Commedia*. Such a paradox Darwin apparently never considered.

Nevertheless, in recoiling from the *Origin's* tragic vision

of life, Darwin intuitively may have sought repose, refreshment, and renewal in comedy. The *Origin's* vision may represent the workings of Darwin's ratiocinative mind describing a world in which life tragically feeds on death. But the *Autobiography's* comic vision may express another part of Darwin's self, something deeper and more joyful, which celebrated the life force within himself and the world at large. If so, the *Autobiography* may be Darwin's own comic rejoinder to the *Origin's* tragedy.

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A "Root Deeper Than All Change": The Daughter's Longing in the Victorian Novel

Suzy Clarkson Holstein

On the eve of the Hale family's departure to Milton in *North and South*, Margaret walks outside in her garden and hears a poacher. She remembers how she had sympathized with other unknown poachers earlier, and had had no fear of them.¹

But tonight she was afraid, she knew not why . . . Margaret ran, swift as Camilla, down to the window, and rapped at it with a hurried tremulousness that startled Charlotte within.

"Let me in! Let me in! It is only me, Charlotte!"

Her heart did not still its fluttering till she was safe in the drawing room with the windows fastened and bolted, and the familiar walls hemming her round and shutting her in. (60-61)

By contrast, on the threshold of her great adventure, Jane Eyre expresses a longing exactly opposite to Margaret's:

I went to my window, opened it, and looked out. . . . My eyes passed all other objects to rest on those most remote, the blue peaks: it was those I longed to surmount; all within their boundary of rock and heath seemed prison-ground, exile limits. I traced the white road winding round the base of one mountain and vanishing in a gorge between the two: how I longed to follow it further! . . . I desired liberty; for liberty I gasped; for liberty I uttered a prayer. (100-01)

Jane wants to shed the false security of Lowood and venture into the wider world. For Margaret Hale before her move to Milton, that wider world represents only terrors, and she yearns for the safe harbor Jane desires to flee.

It is difficult to imagine Maggie Tulliver, Dorothea Brooke, Gwendolyn Harleth or Hetty Sorel sharing Margaret Hale's desire for bolted windows and walls that hem one in. Or at least it is difficult to imagine such an impulse at an equivalent point in the heroine's development—early in the novel, as it occurs in *North and South*. Typically, Charlotte Brontë and George Eliot are contrasted as creators of romantic versus realistic heroines, respectively, but the young women in their novels perhaps share more similarities than we have formerly acknowledged. While it must be granted that there is a fundamental difference between the private and individual dramas of the psyche visible in *Jane Eyre*, *Shirley*, and *Villette* (Yeazell 136) and the exploration of the young woman's needs as they are woven into the larger social web that George Eliot presents in her works, both novelists are primarily concerned with women who are, initially, yearning to go beyond the prescribed boundaries. Elizabeth Gaskell is certainly closer to George Eliot in terms of her realism and her portrayal of the social web, but she stands apart from both the other novelists in her conception of the heroine's strivings.

Margaret Hale of *North and South* is no rebel. She val-

ues traditional, even chivalric ideals, and has decidedly aristocratic notions. She prefers the implications of the term "gentleman" to Thornton's "man" (194), and asserts that in spite of the menial work she does that she is a "born and bred lady" (87). Even after her father's resignation from the clergy, Margaret remains orthodox in her religion. Gaskell's fictional daughter acquiesces fully in her role within the patriarchy, and seeks no release from that role. Unlike George Eliot's Maggie Tulliver, she seems at first to promise little revelation to feminist critics, for she does not yearn to go beyond her allotted sphere, nor does she question authority and tradition. Yet Margaret Hale's conservatism fails to insulate her from the multiple and serious changes that vibrate through her life. Almost in spite of herself, she is thrust beyond the protected domestic hearth and becomes embroiled in debates about the nature of authority. Her very attempts to cling to stability underscore the inescapability of change. Margaret's experiences demonstrate that for Gaskell, one need not rebel to break the pattern of her life: the pattern will be broken whether one wishes it or not. Because both the large, connective web of human relations and the energy of the future claim Margaret, she responds actively to the losses and threats she faces.

Seen in this light, Margaret stands in sharp contrast to the heroines of Charlotte Brontë as well as to those of George Eliot. Shirley Keeldar, Caroline Helstone, Jane Eyre, Lucy Snowe, Maggie Tulliver, Dorothea Brooke, Romola Bardi, and Gwendolyn Harleth all at one point or another despise the restraints imposed upon them by their female status. Yet all learn, if not acceptance of their role as self-sacrificing wives, then resignation to and acceptance of their personal limitations as women. Brontë's heroines, especially, bewail the inequality of their position only to find later that they are happiest giving themselves completely to masterful men whom they fear as much as they love. In *Shirley*, Brontë movingly portrays the powerlessness of a disappointed female lover and contrasts it with the options available to a male: "A lover masculine so disappointed can speak and urge explanation; a lover feminine can say nothing: if she did the result would be shame and anguish, inward remorse for self-treachery. . . . Take the matter as you find it; ask no questions; utter no remonstrances. . . . You held out your hand for an egg, and fate put into it a scorpion" (117). Caroline Helstone wishes at times that she were a man (89), longs to have masculine occupations (257), and inveighs against the "useless, blank, pale, slow-trailing" life the patriarchal society allows women (441). But in the end, *Shirley*, the eponymous heroine, proclaims that she wants the man to be master, and that

1. Patricia Spacks, in her discussion of this point in *North and South*, asserts that Margaret identifies with the poacher and is flirting with

notions of independence (308). Such a reading overlooks the context of Margaret's feelings and ignores the passage that I quote here.

she cannot conceive of loving a man without fearing him (626, 609). Bold desires and aspirations are recast into traditional resolution that emphasizes the male's irresistible and welcome power.

Similarly, the women in much of George Eliot's fiction have grand and idealistic dreams of their missions in life, but they, too, must learn to shrink their ambitions and accept life's diminishment.² Margaret is on a different course from these heroines, for her lesson is one of broadening. She cherishes the restrictions and limitations of her role as the daughter of a rural cleric. Though she never relinquishes her reverence for the old ways, her experiences teach her to let go, gradually, of her narrowness and force her to expand her vision in order to meet her life's requirements. She is pulled centrifugally away from her original center, always continuing outward while trying to retain her traditional understanding of herself. As a moving body rotating around the centering gravity of the past while simultaneously being pulled outward by the demands of the future, Margaret treads a widening spiral. The heroines of George Eliot and Charlotte Brontë, by contrast, often travel a path that marks a shrinking perimeter.

It would be a mistake, however, to infer from this distinction between the novelists that Gaskell's fictions trace the liberation of the feminine spirit while Brontë's and George Eliot's recount the pattern of woman's inevitable oppression. The young women in all the works have hard truths to learn, and Gaskell's heroines do not feel themselves to be throwing off oppressive cultural manacles. Indeed, Margaret's broadening is as painful to her as Caroline's and Maggie's narrowing possibilities are to them.³ But instead of showing the stultifying imprisonment of the young girl within the stable, patriarchal home, Gaskell quickly removes Margaret from her comfortable environment—twice. Suddenly, the heroine must focus on managing without the traditional props. The hierarchical positioning of the stable community of Helstone is left behind, and with it the security such hierarchy offers. From Margaret's perspective, the move to Milton and the new, democratic possibilities it offers, the more mature role she is granted within the family, and the questioning of restrictive church dogma do not at first represent freedom, but anarchy.

What, then, leads Margaret to change her mind? Part of the answer lies, as I have suggested, in the linkage of Margaret's personal changes to larger social changes. *Shirley* provides an interesting contrast here because there are some superficial plot similarities between it and *North and South*.⁴ Both deal with labor unrest, and both portray a

young girl who marries a manufacturer. Further, each girl believes her lover lost to her, and strives to find fulfillment in service to others. But Caroline's love for Robert requires no serious re-evaluation of beliefs on her part. She is not forced into a new, strange environment, nor does she involve herself intellectually in the labor disputes. Further, much of Caroline's drama centers on her discovery of her biological origin. That is, her sense of self becomes sharply focused the moment she learns that Mrs. Pryor is her mother; indeed, the revelation literally saves her life. Her knowledge of her individual past, then, is enough to steady her for the future.

The quest for personal origins is entirely absent from Gaskell's novels. Margaret does not have to seek the stability of hereditary identity; she already knows it. But knowing her history cannot, by itself, sustain Margaret through all she must encounter. First, the assumed stability is shaken by her father's resignation from the Anglican clergy. Her history changes because her father is no longer what he was before; the recognizable point of origin, is, in some sense, blurred forever. In addition, the world outside the "bolted windows" has a great influence on Margaret's development. Milton and its people challenge many of Margaret's impressions and opinions. By listening to and participating in discussions of labor issues, by meeting and talking with the Higginses and Bouchers, by physically confronting the wrath of the strikers, by being forced to make decisions affecting the family's welfare in both trivial and grave matters, and by repeatedly comparing the three worlds she has been a part of (Edith's London, Helstone, and Milton), Margaret makes herself vulnerable to the claims of the larger social sphere. Unlike Caroline's development, Margaret's growth is bound up in industrial conflict. Her developing recognition of Milton's positive attributes serves as an index to her maturity, as her personal progress mirrors historical progress.

When the Hales first arrive in Milton, Margaret, like her mother, is homesick and depressed. "It needed the pretty light papering of the rooms to reconcile them to Milton. It needed more—more that could not be had" (74). But Margaret begins more carefully to observe the workings of her new home—at first critically, then with some respect. A major turning point in her development occurs at the Thorntons' dinner party, where Margaret listens eagerly to the industrialists' discussion:

She liked the exultation in the sense of power which these Milton men had. . . they seemed to defy old limits of possibility. . . . If in her cooler moments, she might not approve of

2. Coral Lansbury also discusses the relative feminism of George Eliot and Elizabeth Gaskell (107-113). Although Lansbury and I would both question the usual judgment about the degree of conventionality and unconventionality in the two authors, Lansbury's account relies more heavily on biographical information than mine and reaches some conclusions with which I cannot fully agree. For instance, she describes George Eliot's reservations about the absolute admirability of Florence Nightingale as a model for women but overlooks Gaskell's reservations about Nightingale. Further, Lansbury seems to suggest that George Eliot was unaware of Dorothea's ultimate limitations in

Middlemarch, while I would argue that the author knowingly presents the novel's conclusion in tones that are, at best, muted.

3. Caroline must learn to be content with a diminished life, though she is later granted a happy ending.

4. Several other critics, including Martin Dodsworth in his Introduction to *North and South* (13), comment on the connections between the two works, including the use of the same name for the Hale parsonage and Caroline's last name—Helstone. See also Bodenheimer 295 and Pikoulis 176.

their spirit in all things. still there was much to admire in their forgetfulness of themselves and the present, in their anticipated triumphs over all inanimate matter at some future time which none of them should live to see. (193-94)

Margaret is then keenly disappointed to be dragged off to join the ladies by Miss Thornton, who "is sure [Margaret] would be uncomfortable at being the only lady among so many gentleman," and Gaskell's heroine finds the feminine conversation, "oh, so dull!" (197-98).

The discussion and Margaret's reaction to it reveal several crucial elements of her character: first, she is attracted to power, and displays no sense of shame here at being more interested in typically masculine concerns than feminine ones. And despite her conservative leanings, part of the attraction of this power is that it defies "old limits" and promises new possibilities. Yet perhaps the most significant revelation about Margaret in this passage is that she recasts the men's spirit into a "forgetfulness" of self and a concern for the welfare of future generations, qualities typically ascribed to females. In effect, Margaret's focus on the discussion reformulates the patriarchal structure into a vision of connectedness, the vision she has formerly presented to Thornton (143).⁵ Finally, Margaret's response to the conversation has important implications for the novel's structure. Though several critics have argued that *North and South* tries to resolve large social issues through an entirely personal marriage,⁶ Margaret is here attracted to Milton men as a group while she is still only barely tolerant of Thornton. Her love for him, that is, does not provide the single or even the initial impetus for her acceptance of and regard for Milton.

The vitality of the urban manufacturers does not blind Margaret to the ugliness around her, nor does she relinquish her love for the rural South. But she does begin to see the promise in her new environment, and, simultaneously, she takes on more responsibility and becomes more engaged in events outside her domestic sphere. Even before her bittersweet visit to Helstone, Margaret acknowledges that both city and country have their temptations and trials (358), and, more strikingly, she vehemently dissuades Higgins from going south to find work (364). Because she had earlier praised her native place with such fervor, Margaret recognizes her responsibility to reassess Helstone more objectively as she has seen the conditions of the North more fully. The final sections of the novel highlight Margaret's awareness of Milton's strengths and undergird her self-reliance. Though like other Gaskell heroines she is faced with numerous events beyond her control, Margaret risks taking action. Ultimately, of course, she takes charge of her fortune, venturing it in a business investment she believes

in. Although she also acts because she is in love with Thornton, she hazards a great deal in her aggressive proposal, for she has no guarantee of Thornton's affection nor any certainty that he will not reject her for her boldness. In Margaret's imagination, then, the energy and vitality of Milton replace the beautifully sheltered, but ultimately limited and isolated Helstone, just as she herself moves from secure limitations to risk-taking power.

Shirley Keeldar develops very differently, and, like Caroline Helstone, her reaction to historical forces of change is tenuous. We first meet her confidently taking control of her inheritance, participating as fully as possible in the public sphere. "They gave me a man's name; I hold a man's position: it is enough to inspire me with a touch of manhood; and when I see such people as that stately Anglo-Belgian—that Gerard Moore before me, gravely talking to me of business, really I feel quite gentlemanlike" (224). Shirley is bold and assertive in her conversations and her business dealings, and jokingly refers to herself and is referred to by others in the masculine gender. Significantly, she also admits freely her admiration for Moore's mill, and pronounces, "I adore the counting house." When questioned further about the grimy particulars, "the greasy wool—the polluting dyeing-vats," she categorically replies "the trade is to be thoroughly respected" (226).

But Shirley's proto-feminism seems to vanish during the novel's riot scene. With Caroline, the novel's other heroine, Shirley watches the attack from afar and prevents her friend from rushing into the fray: "Miss Keeldar clasped her round the waist with both arms and held her back. 'Not one step shall you stir,' she went on authoritatively. 'At this moment, Moore would be both shocked and embarrassed, if he saw either you or me. Men never want women near them in time of real danger'" (384). Shirley's authority and power remain, but it has become the power of restraint, of enforced passivity, and of removal from danger. Caroline asks, bewilderedly, "Do you feel unmoved?" and Shirley replies, "Hardly that—but I am glad I came: we shall see what transpires with our own eyes: we are here on the spot, and none know it. Instead of amazing the curate, the clothier, and the corn-dealer with a romantic rush on the stage, we stand alone with the friendly night, its mute stars, and these whispering trees" (385). Her language emphasizes silence, remoteness, and concealment in the place of the bold presence she has represented until now. The young women continue secretly to observe the riot: "Caroline rose; Shirley put her arm round her: they stood together as still as the straight stems of two trees . . . Both the girls felt their faces glow and their pulses throb: both knew they would do no good by rushing down into the

proto-feminist assertions.

6. Dodsworth, for example, says, "The theme of industrial unrest, that is, is parallel and subordinate to the passionate unrest in the lovers' relationship" (18) and David makes a similar assessment (48). Bodenheimer cites several other critics who view the romantic plot as predominant, though Bodenheimer herself disagrees with this appraisal (282n5). To see Margaret's marriage as a personal solution ignores the organic connection between her development and historical change that I am suggesting.

5. Delamont and Duffin argue that women who deviated from the feminine ideal were seen as threatening, and that therefore "most successful feminist campaigners were those who managed to minimise hostile reactions by manipulating the classification system and not violating it" (16). While neither Gaskell nor Margaret could be mistaken for a feminist campaigner, it is worth noting that both the writer and her character follow the pattern of re-perceiving the patriarchal system rather than attacking it. Perhaps this also explains, partially, why Brontë's and George Eliot's characters are not "successful" in their

melee: they desired neither to deal nor to receive blows: but they could not have run away" (387-88).

Like rooted trees, the young women stand transfixed, choosing carefully their position which separates them from physical involvement. They do not turn away from the dramatic conflict, but they intentionally limit their role to that of spectators. As morning dawns, Shirley sees the devastation below, and cries, "This is what I wished to prevent." Caroline comforts her, saying, "you did your best; it was in vain" (389). The women are referring, of course, to earlier efforts, yet when Shirley was offered the opportunity to make her presence known at the actual battle, she determined that such was not an appropriate role for a woman. The power she has displayed at the beginning of the novel, her adaptation of non-typical feminine postures, seems to have evaporated on the night hillside.

By contrast, when Gaskell's conservative Margaret Hale is faced with a similar labor riot, she does not remain within the safe shelter for which she had earlier longed. Though Margaret's intervention in the Milton riot reads somewhat melodramatically and though her efforts to protect Thornton are grounded in her femininity and privileges she believes it to afford her, Gaskell's heroine does choose to thrust herself into the middle of the uproar, in a scene described with extremely physical and violent imagery:

Even while she looked, she saw lads in the background, stooping to take off their heavy wooden clogs—the readiest missile they could find; she saw it was the spark to the gunpowder, and, with a cry, which no one heard, she rushed out of the room, downstairs,—she had lifted the great iron bar of the door with an imperious force—had thrown the door open wide—and was there, in face of that angry sea of men, her eyes smiting them with flaming arrows of reproach. (211)

Again we see the opposing pattern of the two women's journey: while Shirley puts aside her adopted "masculinity" during the time of danger and becomes oddly passive, Margaret, almost in spite of herself, takes a dangerous and potentially unfeminine stance, becoming the protector instead of the protected. Instead of separating herself from conflict, Margaret decides to meet the manifest power of the strikers with a dramatic presence. As Shirley negates herself by her silence, Margaret constitutes herself by means of "an imperious force" and eyes like weapons.

Shirley's love for Louis Moore further obliterates her feminist rhetoric. When she agrees to marry Louis, she recognizes a great loss of freedom and influence for herself:

There she was at last, fettered to a fixed day: there she lay, conquered by love and bound with a vow.

Thus vanquished and restricted, she pined, like any other chained denizen of deserts. . . .

She furthered no preparations for her nuptials; Louis himself was obliged to direct all arrangements: he was virtually master of

Fieldhead, weeks before he became so nominally. . . . She abdicated without a word or a struggle. (729-30)

Brontë's diction, of course, emphasizes Shirley's captivity; the author reminds us not only that Shirley willingly chooses marriage but that she also consciously chooses to restrict and limit herself. "In all this, Miss Keeldar partly yielded to her disposition; but a remark she made a year afterwards proved that she partly acted on system. 'Louis,' she said, 'would never have learned to rule, if she had not ceased to govern: the incapacity of the sovereign had developed the powers of the premier'" (730). Shirley's motives and opportunities differ radically from Margaret Hale's, but Brontë's character nevertheless fashions for herself at the end of the novel the kind of confinement and "incapacity" that Margaret yearns for at the beginning of her novel.⁷ Finally, then, the movement of *Shirley* is oddly regressive. While the original thrust of Shirley's character is bold and forward-looking, and Robert prophesies the changes he and his brother will bring to Briarfield, the novel's conclusion refuses to endorse either harbinger of progress. Just as Shirley's romantic "gain" is conveyed with a sense of loss, so "The Winding-Up" concludes with the narrator's visit to the altered Hollow, and her housekeeper's nostalgic reminiscence of things forever gone. The narrator refuses absolutely to condemn the changes or absolutely to validate them, and playfully mocks the "judicious reader" who would "look for the moral" (740). "It would be an insult to his sagacity to offer direction. I only say, God speed him in the quest!" (740-41). Is the male-dominated progress ultimately harmful or beneficial? The ending casts a doubt over the industrial progress the novel has reflected and mourns, for the first time in the book, the loss of rural beauty. The work insists, ultimately, on leaving open the question of harm or benefit.

Brontë reserves till the end of her novel questions about progress and the past, and when they are raised, her main characters are no longer on stage. *North and South* deals with nostalgia for the past and uneasiness about change differently. Questions about the lost rural traditions and new methods of living dominate Margaret Hale's growth. Indeed, as Rosemarie Bodenheimer has argued, the novel is fundamentally about change and the responses and accommodations required by it (282). Gaskell focuses throughout on the process and the pain involved in such responses. Margaret's confrontations with her losses and her dawning recognition of the value of new ways shape her understanding of herself and her environment. The movement of the novel, then, is ultimately progressive. Yet the forward movement is always concerned with the present's relationship to the past, and Margaret's conservatism provides ballast for her journey into the future.

One source of that conservatism is Margaret's loving ties to her father, and her relationship to him therefore

conclusion" (132-33). While this reading allows us to make sense of the disjunctions in the text, I think it is at least equally plausible that Brontë herself felt deep ambivalence about the role of women.

7. Rabine suggests that Brontë, "faced with the larger power system into which an author sends her finished work, had to hide the feminist conclusion behind the patriarchal discourse and ideology of the overt

shapes her development. Indeed, Gaskell's portrait of the father-daughter relationship separates her works from those of other Victorian novelists, including George Eliot. For while Margaret Hale and Maggie Tulliver, for instance, share the recognition of the links between personal development and the demands of the larger social community, they understand their link to their fathers differently.

Both Margaret Hale and Maggie Tulliver have a warm, affectionate relationship with their fathers, and like many Victorian heroines, identify more fully with their male parent than with their mothers. A major crisis of each young woman's maturation centers on recognizing her separation from father and his ultimate limitations. The childhood ideal of a future secure from change, tied to the rural homeplace and protected by the father, is rudely shattered for both girls. Suddenly, they must confront fathers who are, in some sense, mentally and physically debilitated and burdened with the stigma of failure. But, as we have seen the girls' careers take divergent patterns. Not only does *The Mill on the Floss* end with the heroine's drowning while *North and South* concludes with a marriage proposal, but Margaret is also drawn inevitably away from her own past while Maggie returns to it dramatically.

Part of the difference in pattern can be traced to the difference in the relation of the girls' fathers to the power system. Maggie's father fails in a law dispute. He engages in legal battle and is bested by a stronger man. Maggie's brother Tom recognizes that power is the real issue in the struggle and resolutely vows to acquire more authority than his father ever had so that he may win all battles. Mr. Tulliver's fall gives way to Tom Tulliver's rise, and Maggie remains loyal to both representatives of masculine power. Her father's fall shakes Maggie's domestic stability, but the failure is a personal one. The existing patriarchal system continues with only a changing of the guard. Maggie does not face a breakdown of the patriarchy, but instead the breakdown of one patriarch.

From her early childhood, Maggie is aware of her place within the system: her brother makes certain of that. Not only does young Tom point out that "I always have half-sovereigns and sovereigns for my Christmas boxes, because I shall be a man, and you only have five-shilling pieces, because you're only a girl," but Maggie also quickly learns the difference in their attitudes toward forgiveness. She sobs, "I'd forgive you if *you* forgot anything—I wouldn't mind what you did—I'd forgive you and love you." Tom replies, "Yes, you're really a silly—but I never *do* forget things—I don't" (31). The male Tullivers' inability to forgive dominates the course of their lives, and Maggie's feminine "weakness" of loving forgiveness has no place in the patriarchy. As a young woman she protests against this cruelty and powerlessness, and her brother gives the inevitable answer of the dominating figure:

"If *you* were in fault ever—if you had done anything very wrong, I should be sorry for the pain it caused you. But you have always enjoyed punishing me—you have always been hard and cruel to me. . . . You have no pity: you have no sense of your own imper-

fection and your own sins. . . ."

"I have a different way of showing my affection [said Tom]."

"Because you are a man, Tom, and have power, and can do something in the world."

"Then *if you can do nothing, submit to those that can.*" (305, my emphasis in last sentence)

Maggie recognizes and rebels against Tom's injustice and her own lack of power, but for all her rebellion, she can finally find no alternative but the power of renunciation: she renounces her own desires several times and finally renounces her life.

Even Maggie's attempts to rebel are always half-hearted, for half of her cannot ever really let go of the world her father and brother represent. "Maggie always writhed under this judgment of Tom's: she *rebelled* and *was humiliated* in the same moment:" (345, my emphasis). Though she fights against Tom's judgment and hears the voice of her own, superior moral code, she is never able to break away from the old standard that he represents. Thus she returns from the gypsies, she gives Phillip up, and she turns away from Stephen's love at least twice. Even her plans to go out and support herself independently come to nothing, and her valiant efforts to educate herself can be seen, at least in part, as efforts to please her father and help her brother. She finally internalizes the old system of power because she has no alternative and because she depends on it for her identity. No real change can occur because no real challenge can be offered.

Margaret Hale does not need to threaten the existing system because her father does it for her. That is, in the eyes of the world, Mr. Hale's "failure" results from his resignation from the Anglican clergy. He can no longer accept the institutional dogma he is required to uphold, and his quiet action undermines the omnipotence of the old patriarchy for Margaret. Her father's decision raises two unhappy alternatives: either Mr. Hale or the Anglican church is in error. In either case, the seamless whole of patriarchal power has been rent, and Margaret will never be able to bind it together again. Her predicament becomes entirely different from Maggie's. George Eliot's heroine learns that her father's downfall is a personal tragedy, but that her brother can step into the father's role after a time. The changes Maggie fears become only temporary; the basic power relations do not finally shift. By contrast, the changes in Margaret Hale's world are not temporary, and power structures are forever altered. Mr. Hale's decision uproots Margaret physically and denies her a future that is continuous with the past. She learns that the role of Lady Bountiful is inappropriate in Milton and that the relationship between classes is not the same as in Helstone. Indeed, the Miltonian definition of classes and the relationship between them is new to Margaret, and she observes, "I never lived in a place where there were two sets of people always running each other down" (138). The old, rural patriarchal system based on feudalism is replaced by competitive industrialism.

The new system, is, of course, also a patriarchy, but

neither Margaret's father nor her brother can participate as figures of power. (Manufacturers like Thornton, indeed, modify the old image of the family as the model for power relations, for while Thornton may take care of the orphaned Boucher children, he rejects the adoption of a fatherly posture with his workers.) Mr. Hale, stunned by his wife's illness and his own momentous decision, can no longer direct the family. "My one great change has been made and my price of suffering paid. Here I will stay out my life; and here will I be buried, and *lost in the crowd*" (403, my emphasis). Further, Margaret's brother cannot step into the breach as Tom does.

Indeed, Gaskell's presentation of brothers and their relationship to the heroine also provides an instructive contrast to George Eliot's work. One of Gaskell's early novellas, "The Moorland Cottage," written nine years before *The Mill on the Floss*, depicts a brother-sister relationship with intriguing similarities to the one in George Eliot's novel, but it is the differences that stand out most prominently. Both heroines are named Maggie, both idealize their relationship with their fathers, and both have overbearing brothers who try to exploit their loving sisters for the young men's own purposes. Maggie Browne ("Moorland Cottage") even wishes that her position as a girl was not such a powerless one devoid of reward, though her longing is expressed much less vehemently than Maggie Tulliver's: "I wish I was not a woman. It must be a fine thing to be a man" (271). Like George Eliot's heroine, Maggie Browne is exhorted by her brother Edward, "Be obedient, I tell you. That is what a woman has to be" (298). But when Gaskell's Maggie is faced with the demand that she give up her fiancée to save her brother, she refuses, arguing she has no right to cause her lover such unexplained pain. Though she does offer to go with her brother to America and then return to her fiancée, still her assertion of needs beyond those of the male members of her family (though carefully phrased as her lover's needs and not her own) sets Maggie Browne apart from Maggie Tulliver. And while Edward Browne eventually drowns, like the Tullivers, Maggie Browne is saved for a happy ending. She joins a husband in life rather than a brother in death.

While Frederick Hale's situation has little in common with that of Edward Browne, one similarity does shine forth—he cannot be his sister's protector or companion. Further, Margaret Hale has even less capacity to aid her brother in his troubles than does Maggie Browne. Frederick has rebelled much more thoroughly than his father, and like many sons in Gaskell's works, has effectively turned his back on England, literally and figuratively.⁸ Some of these sons, like Edward Browne and Benjamin Huntroyd ("The Crooked Branch") are unsympathetic criminals, while others, like Frederick Hale, maintain a more honorable extra-legal stance. Still others, like Osborne Hamley (*Wives and Daughters*) and Peter Jenkyns (*Cranford*) break no laws, yet violate custom and so remain outside the pale of patri-

archal expectations. In each of these cases, the young men make themselves ineligible to carry on the father's line: the changes they represent separate them too dramatically from family history and tradition. The daughters, by contrast, embody more mediated change that strives to conserve remnants of that history and tradition yet is forced beyond it.

Margaret longs for the old, secure system more wholeheartedly than Maggie Tulliver, but she cannot return to it. Instead, she must learn a new relationship with her father, and, after a brief visit, must let go completely of her brother. Gaskell's heroine takes on the responsibilities of an adult and makes many family decisions, even as she also acts outside the family circle. From the moment Mr. Hale tells her of his decision to resign, Margaret recognizes that she has a new, somewhat unwelcome power. She feels it to be wrong that she knows of the decision before her mother and must break the news to her parent, but gradually comes to realize that if the family is to survive the shock, she must discover new abilities within herself. Ruefully, she recalls that "four months ago, all the decisions she needed to make were what dress she would wear for dinner and to help Edith draw out the lists of who should take down whom in the dinner parties at home. . . . Now, since that day when Mr. Lennox came, and startled her into a decision, every day brought some question, momentous to her, and to those whom she loved, to be settled" (56). It is more than mere coincidence that Margaret's new position begins on the day an outsider perceives her as a grown woman and ready for marriage. Adulthood has come. Slowly, as Margaret accepts her father's limitations as well as his strengths, she learns the possibilities of her own new role in Milton. Unlike Maggie, she discovers the power of action, not just of renunciation. This distinction points up a critical difference in Gaskell's and George Eliot's perception. For George Eliot, the personal ego represents the key to development and to one's environment: a character's personality is primarily shaped from the inside out, and the self projects itself onto the landscape (Levine 240). Consequently, in order to feel the needs and demands of others, one must learn to narrow one's own ego. The extreme position, then, is the renunciation of her needs that Maggie Tulliver practices. Given George Eliot's framework, such a stance requires ultimate strength, for it means giving up one's own needs and one's ability to control the environment. Gaskell sets up the problem differently. Characters in her works are affected and shaped by external events. Usually, the daughter has no choice but to give up her illusion of control over the events of her life. The only appropriate course is to participate in, rather than struggle to shape, her environment. The self, for Gaskell, is interactive and always in process, and the personal ego therefore has little chance to become overwhelming. Rather than gradually learning to narrow the ego, therefore, Margaret Hale and other Gaskell heroines broaden their awareness as they mature.

8. Frederick participates in a seemingly justifiable mutiny against a tyrannical captain. But his chances of clearing himself at an English

court martial are nonexistent. Further, he makes a new life for himself in Spain and becomes a Roman Catholic.

Margaret's task is to become more conscious of the needs and problems beyond her own domestic hearth. Unlike Maggie, who must learn to trim and ultimately relinquish her ambitions and desires, Margaret must learn to extend her boundaries. The challenge to the old, well-loved system of her childhood shatters Margaret's security, but it also opens a new world to her. It is a frightening place in some ways, but it is also a world in which Margaret can discover her "own genius for management" (68). It is a world Maggie Tulliver never sees.

Margaret's values also exert some power in her new environment. Gradually, though not single-handedly, she begins to influence Mr. Thornton's business policies. Victorian heroines often save the hero through their morally uplifting love, but it is less frequent that the heroine's *ideas* help change the hero's approach to the marketplace. Margaret and Mr. Thornton, however, debate the rights and responsibilities of masters and men, and each one's beliefs eventually modify the other's. Though Margaret learns Thornton's true worth and comes better to understand the worker's situation, her stirring speech to Thornton early in their acquaintance points toward the manufacturer's later recognition: "You are a man, dealing with a set of men over whom you have, whether you reject the use of it or not, immense power, just because your lives and your welfare are so constantly and intimately interwoven. God has made us so that we must be mutually dependent. We may ignore our own dependence, or refuse to acknowledge that others depend upon us in more respects than the payment of weekly wages; but the thing must be, nevertheless" (143). Near the end of the novel Thornton says, "My only wish is to have the opportunity of cultivating some intercourse with the hands beyond the mere 'cash nexus'. . . I have arrived at the conviction that no mere institutions. . . can attach class to class as they should be attached unless the working out of such institutions bring the individuals of the different classes into actual personal contact. Such intercourse is the very breath of life" (515). Unlike the powerful males in Maggie Tulliver's world, Thornton does not reject the feminine perspective; instead, he adopts it.

The contrast between the two young women is strikingly visible in their returns to the places of their childhood. Late in each novel, both women go back to their old homes—a recurrent motif in Gaskell's works. Maggie goes back for the last time in the middle of a flood to save her brother, but we have seen her make this trip home before: returning from the gypsies, bringing Tom home from school, and fleeing Stephen's love. Each time, Maggie turns to the world within the family circle, and turns away from the outside world. Marriage to Stephen would have thrust her beyond the familiar sphere: she says duty is being true to the past, and for her, the past means her childhood bonds. "I cannot marry you. . . it would rend me away from all that

my past life has made dear and holy to me. I can't set out on a fresh life and forget that. I must go back to it, and cling to it, else I shall feel there were nothing firm beneath my feet" (419-20).⁹ Her motion is finally centripetal, for she is always drawn back to the center, to Tom and to the mill. The past represents the only stability, and Maggie is willing to pay the awful price it exacts. Early on, she laments the overwhelming changes in her life, saying, "Everything is going away from us—the end of our lives will have nothing in it like the beginning" (209). But she is mistaken, for the end of her life is exactly like the beginning.¹⁰ She recognizes the flood as "that awful visitation of God which her father used to talk of. And with that thought there rushed in the vision of the old home—and Tom and her mother—they had all listened together. Oh, God, where am I? *Which is the way home?*" (455, my emphasis). She and Tom drown, clasped in each others' arms, "living through again in one supreme moment the days when they had clasped their little hands in love and roamed the daisied fields together" (459). Though one critic has argued that no such idyllic past existed (Jacobus 219), at the end of each of the novel's three volumes Tom and Maggie do weep and cling together.¹¹ In her final sacrifice, she is able to merge with her brother and regain her ideal childhood, in which a loving brother called her "Magsie" and her father asked tenderly, "What 'ud father do without his little wench?" (101).

The separation from Tom as well as from her father, the price of growing up, is cancelled in death. Earlier, the narrator tells us, "To have no cloud between herself and Tom was still a perpetual yearning in her, that had its root deeper than all change" (399). And Maggie's heroic attempt to save Tom finally overcomes the power of change, finally achieves the stability she longs for, not because the brother and sister die, but because Maggie is able to recreate permanently the unified world of her past. Tom and Maggie are clasped in an "embrace never to be parted" and their epitaph emphasizes their eternal union: "In their death they were not divided" (459, 460).

Margaret Hale's return to Helstone after her parents' deaths propels her in a direction diametrically opposed to Maggie's journey, for Margaret sees about her in Helstone the inevitability of change and the impossibility of regaining her lost childhood. She is forced outward, centrifugally, from her past, from her memories of life as a vicar's daughter. As the train approaches Helstone, Margaret looks out over the "golden stillness of the land" and thinks of "German Idyls." But "from this waking dream she was roused" (460), just as her trip will somewhat unpleasantly rouse her from the dream-like memories of her idyllic childhood. Everywhere she looks, there is change: in people, in the countryside, in the vicarage. Margaret at first grieves over each absent tree and cottage, "like old friends" (463). She

9. As Greenstein asserts, the lesson of both *The Mill on the Floss* and *Romola* is that "one must stay where one is rooted, go back to the unchosen and hence fully binding duties of context, of citizenship" (500).

10. Stewart demonstrates that the events and language of the book lead up to and predict Maggie's death (115).

11. The three volumes end with books 2, 5, and 7, respectively.

recognizes that such change is a mark of her own growing up, for she says sadly, "I did not think I had been so old," and Mr. Bell tries to comfort her by saying that she will get used to "the instability of all human things" (464).

But like Maggie, Margaret longs for the stable surroundings of her past, and her journey home to Helstone is a painful one. The tour of the "improved" vicarage demonstrates vividly to Margaret that home as she knew it has disappeared forever. She reflects that in Helstone, "there was change everywhere; slight yet pervading all" (471). And it is precisely because the changes are slight that Margaret is shaken, for they represent a normal growth process, "natural mutations brought by days and months and years" (471). "A sense of change, of individual nothingness, of perplexity and disappointment, overpowered Margaret. Nothing had been the same; and this slight, all-pervading instability had given her greater pain than if all had been too entirely changed for her to recognize it" (478). The alterations she sees in Helstone do not represent a unique event; Margaret realizes that nothing in her life is exempt from change. It is a hard lesson of growing up, and one that Maggie Tulliver is spared in death.¹² At first Margaret believes all is dizzy chaos, and is overcome by a kind of emotional vertigo. Finally, however, she is able to see that Helstone is still beautiful, but that she no longer belongs there. "A few days afterwards *she had found her level*. . . it would always be the prettiest spot in the world, but that it was so full of associations with former days. . . that if it were all to come over again, she should shrink back from such another visit" (480, my emphasis). Margaret succeeds in disenthraling herself from her past by regaining her balance. Her vertigo gone, she at last can move into the future. It is a painful success, but a requisite one. Not until she can recognize the changes outside herself can she admit to and nurture the changes within. It is not accidental, therefore, that it is on this visit to Helstone that she confides in Mr. Bell in hopes that he will be able to explain her lie to Thornton. Though she cannot yet admit her love for the manufacturer, her tormented confession makes plain that she has come to care deeply for Thornton, and that she yearns for his regard. Her trip has revealed that the daughter of the former vicar of Helstone has changed just as the village has. Margaret's path is out of the South of the past and into the North of the future, away from the memories of her dead, beloved father and toward the possibilities of Thornton. The young woman no longer yearns for the fastened windows and walls that hem her in—or rather, she accepts that such a yearning is unfulfillable. Instead, she strides toward the exogamous marriage that Maggie Tulliver flees. Not only does John Thornton represent a world

completely separate from the world of Margaret's childhood, but her choice of him as a husband will meet with disfavor from her relatives, as the final lines of the novel demonstrate. Margaret is willing to take the opportunity of the "fresh life" Maggie rejects, and Gaskell's heroine finally does not cling to the past in an effort to find firm ground beneath her feet.

Perhaps this difference in Margaret's attitude toward change from that of the heroines in Charlotte Brontë and George Eliot springs from a different perspective, ultimately, on the old system of power, the agrarian patriarchy. For the heroines of the other novelists, the old patriarchy is always an adversary. It may be a beloved adversary, but, nevertheless, the heroines are engaged in a struggle with an enemy. And the masculine power system is always victorious, though the fictional women do not always die like Maggie. Indeed, some find love and marry. But each one must learn that she does not have the resources or power to topple the patriarchy.

Gaskell views the problem from a different angle. In *North and South*, there is no all-powerful father nor even an omnipotent system of fathers. For Gaskell's young women, the old system is not an adversary, but neither is it victorious. Like all human institutions, it will undergo change, and new ways of responding to the world must develop. Margaret's marriage to Thornton does not represent so much a regression into feminine stability and the traditional closure of the wish-fulfilling ending as it does Margaret's active participation in a future that will bear little resemblance to her past. Uniting her fortune with Thornton allows her to step forward into history. Though marriage often removes the male hero from history and limits him to the domestic (Levine 17-18), for the female hero, marriage frequently offers the only way *into* history. Margaret Hale will assist Thornton, financially and intellectually, in his business endeavors, and her fate finally seems far less diminishing than most marriages in Brontë and George Eliot. She does not dwindle into a wife; her upheaval and her multiple struggles allow her to open into the possibilities that stretch before her as the helpmate of John Thornton.

In a letter written to Lady Kay-Shuttleworth, Gaskell expressed what may be the key to the dynamics of the Thornton marriage: "I suppose we all *do* strengthen each other by clashing together, and earnestly talking our own thoughts, and ideas. The very disturbance we thus are to each other rouses us up, and makes us more healthy" (*Letters* no. 72) This "confrontational psychology," as Bodenheimer refers to it, is the cornerstone of *North and South*, and it also underscores the openness to change which char-

ideology is also somewhat colored by the critic's assumption that Gaskell turned all her money over to her husband. This assumption is based on the story Gaskell tells of her husband pocketing a twenty-pound note she received for writing "Lizzie Leigh." Elizabeth Gaskell's later financially independent acts (including the purchase of a retirement home) indicate that William Gaskell did not dominate his wife economically and that the twenty-pound note incident did not epitomize their relationship. See Gaskell, *Letters* no. 70, and Newton 168, 162.

12. Newton, in a comparative discussion of Gaskell, Brontë, and George Eliot, indicates that Gaskell's solution to the complexity of "the ideology of woman's sphere" is too easy. She further asserts that the resolution of *North and South* lacks the ambivalence and tension found in the endings of *The Mill on the Floss* and *Villette*, and that the novel is therefore flat. While Gaskell does give her heroine a "happy ending," I would argue that Newton's reading of the novel overlooks the losses Margaret confronts and the tension inherent in her responses to those losses. Newton's vision of Gaskell's conservative

acterized Gaskell and her writing (293). Further, it perhaps provides the context for understanding a phrase that is repeated in several Gaskell works: "gentle violence."¹³ In one sense, the phrase suggests the sexuality that charges the relationship between Margaret and Thornton and that it is explicitly linked to overt violence in the mob scene. In addition, "gentle violence" may suggest a kind of blending of masculine and feminine attributes such as Margaret seems to envision in response to the manufacturer's talk of power. But the oxymoron also alludes to a heightened give-and-take, a struggle that is fierce without being angry. It is the daughter's struggle as she learns to navigate the terrors and hopes of the world that opens before her.

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The Literary Significance of Edmund Burke to Matthew Arnold

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"Burke greatly needs to be re-edited," wrote Matthew Arnold in the preface to his 1881 edition of Burke's Irish writings. "[I]ndeed, he has never yet been properly edited at all" (9:288). Arnold assembled Burke's letters, speeches, and tracts on Irish affairs partly because of the contemporary urgency of the Irish question. The "Burke" of Arnold, however, cannot be described simply as a political or historical writer. Nor does Arnold's lifelong reading of Burke show the sort of theoretical preoccupation that Hazlitt and Coleridge had with the quality of Burke's imagination. Yet Arnold sows scores of quotations, half-quotations, and impressions of Burke throughout his writings. What emerges from these seeds is a consistent, unified "Burke." Arnold applies his "Burke" to test for truth, durability, and trustworthiness in some of his deepest concerns: culture, perfection, religion, the character of the English, and the nature and function of the State. Arnold applies the sentences and phrases of Burke as "prose touchstones." By

focusing on Burke as a source of "touchstones," one can see Burke's literary significance to Arnold (in Arnold's sense of "literature") better than by focusing on Burke as an "influence" on him.¹

To illustrate the difficulty of tracing Burke's "influence" on Arnold one can pick many issues—the State, for instance—where one feels the presence of Burke. But the difficulty is that a host of other writers influenced Arnold as well: Hegel, Renan, de Tocqueville, Hooker, Montesquieu, and above all, Thomas Arnold and Coleridge (see Tobias 174-82). To add another layer of complication, Burke may first have influenced some writers (Lessing, Herder, and Humboldt on "culture," for instance) who then influenced Arnold.² A final complication arises from Arnold's explicit quotations of Burke. The "significance" he draws from Burke is sometimes entirely unrelated to Burke's "meaning." The most pivotal of all the touchstones Arnold takes from Burke is his alleged "return upon him-

13. See Dodsworth 15 for a discussion of the term in *North and South*. It also appears explicitly in *Ruth*.

1. There is, however, a very well-done Ph.D. dissertation on Burke's influence on Arnold (see Tobias). But I believe that my method of looking at Burke as a source of "touchstones" for Arnold is more fruitful.
2. See, for instance, Howard 608-32, and the eight books indexed under "Burke's Reputation and Influence in German" in Gandy and Stanlis 348.

self" at the end of *Thoughts on French Affairs*, in which Arnold conceives Burke as re-evaluating his opposition to the French Revolution. Arnold completely misses the meaning of Burke's text here. In this case, Burke's "influence" on Arnold has very little to do with his "meaning."

Textual meaning, to adopt the terminology of E. D. Hirsch, is the entire organization of relationships within a text. Meaning differs from significance (Hirsch "Introduction"). "Significance" is textual meaning in relation to minds and eras other than the author's own (Hirsch 2). Burke's enormous significance for Arnold is less in a direct transfer of beliefs from his text into Arnold's than in the extraordinarily fertile, if sometimes perverse, uses to which Arnold puts his quotations and impressions of Burke.

One is immediately struck by the frequency with which Arnold reiterates a small number of Burke's phrases and sentences. For all their many ramifications, these quotations seem to fall into three categories. First are two of Burke's phrases on the character of the English people and of Dissent. Arnold uses these phrases to indicate the possibilities for reform, especially in education and the Church. Second are four of Burke's statements about the State. Arnold applies these statements to judge English culture, the proper scope of State action, and (again) the Church. Third, and most important, is Burke's "return upon himself," really an impression of Burke which Arnold draws from many locations in his writings. The "return upon himself" becomes for Arnold the way to measure whether he and others are "living by ideas," spreading "culture," and obeying the *Zeit-Geist* of their "epoch."

Arnold's "Burke" is consistent from some of his earliest prose ("On the Modern Element in Literature," 1857) to some of his latest ("The Zenith of Conservatism," 1887). Burke continually radiates into the most characteristically Arnoldian themes, producing a fertile, if sometimes puzzling, sort of intertextuality. In so doing, the three categories of Burkean prose touchstones enable Arnold to make some of his most fundamental cultural judgments.

I

Arnold, Prose Touchstones, and Burke

The editors of Arnold's *Note-Books*, where some of Burke's phrases and sentences occur, say that a "thought jotted down again and again over the years had a way of flowering in his mind and of acquiring virtue with long use." Arnold had "the poet's power to build up the greatest thing from least suggestion" (Lowry et al. xii). Repetition in Arnold is never mere reiteration. His repetition of Burke illustrates the development, transformation, and deepening awareness of the significance which a line of prose can produce for him. Arnold's continued attention to one author, one literary work, or even one line was characteristic of him throughout his career.³

Arnold frequently uses the "touchstone" method of ex-

plaining his meaning rather than attempting rigorous, abstract definitions. As early as the 1853 *Preface to Poems*, for instance, Arnold recommends the study of "excellent models" (such as Shakespeare) for young writers who are confused about the aim of literature. Rather than define the aim of literature, he suggests that, with continual study of these "models," the aim will become clear. He similarly avoids of definition of the "grand style." In the lectures on Homer (1860-61) he complains that an "abstract" discussion of the grand style is useless (for its presence "can only be spiritually discerned"); instead, he resorts to something like touchstones—"eminent specimens" of the grand style from Homer, Vergil, Dante, and Milton to illustrate its nature (1:136-37). In *Literature and Dogma* (1873) he explicitly refuses to give a means of testing the spirits in religion. Instead, he gives "examples" of true religion—expressions of religious or moral sentiment that function as touchstones—and bids the reader use them as yardsticks for discerning true religion (6:176-78).

The "touchstone" method, then, describes Arnold's habit of mind in his private *Note-Books* and in his public writing from 1853 onward. When Arnold finally names the method in "The Study of Poetry" (1880), he is merely recognizing a long-standing practice:

Indeed there can be no more useful help for discovering what poetry belongs to the class of the truly excellent, and can therefore do us most good, than to have always in one's mind lines and expressions of the great masters, and to apply them as a touchstone to other poetry. . . .

[I]f we have any tact we shall find them, when we have lodged them well in our minds, an infallible touchstone for detecting the presence or absence of high poetic quality, and also the degree of this quality, in all other poetry which we may place beside them. (9:168)

Late in "The Study of Poetry" Arnold comes as close as he ever does to defining the qualities of a touchstone; the touchstone must possess "in an eminent degree, truth and seriousness" and "superiority of diction and style" (9:171). Yet Arnold's terms, especially "ideas," "culture," and "seriousness," often seem to invite one to an infinite regression: one undefined term leads to another. By seriousness (or "high seriousness") Arnold says he means that which "gives our spirits what they can rest upon" (9:177). What then gives "rest"? Arnold's contemporary essay on Wordsworth suggests that the only fit place for a mind to rest is upon the concern with how to live. The "seriousness" of a touchstone is a product of a writer's engagement with "moral ideas" (9:46).

Given this understanding of a touchstone, one can ask whether Arnold ever considered prose passages, such as those of Burke, the equals of his poetic touchstones. He did. A year before his death, when he was listing the literary passages which had moved him most, Arnold included Burke's tribute to the prison reformer John Howard along with an excerpt from *The Iliad* which he had earlier classed among the touchstones (Arnold 11:381; cf. 9:168 and Burke 2:142).

Burke is Arnold's model of a man who lived by ideas

3. The following discussion of Arnold's lifelong use of the touchstone is indebted to Eells.

(3:267-68). "Living by ideas," for Arnold, means continually entertaining the possibility that one's knowledge is insufficient, that more effort is required to see the object as it is, that more development of one's powers is needed. Arnold's discussion of living by ideas (in "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time") begins with Burke and leads into his discussion of "culture," "perfection," and "criticism" (3:268-71). If any writer's ideas possessed the seriousness which defined a touchstone for Arnold, Burke's did.

But perhaps the plainest indication that Burke's sentences and phrases are touchstones is that Arnold applies them as touchstones. Time and again he judges the value, especially the moral value, of ideas by comparing them to Burke's.⁴ Burke gives Arnold a description of the English people and of Dissent. He gives him a definition of the State. Above all, he provides Arnold with a model of "living by ideas."

II

The Character of the English, Dissent,
and the Possibilities
of Educational and Ecclesiastical Reform

"[T]he religion most prevalent in our northern colonies is a refinement on the principle of resistance; it is the dissidence of dissent, and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion."
(Burke 1:466)

"It was my endeavour . . . to preserve, while they can be preserved, pure and untainted, the ancient, inbred integrity, piety, good nature, and good humour of the people of England."
(Burke 5:133)

The first group of Burkean touchstones used by Arnold has to do with the English character and the possibility of developing authentic "culture." From his early political writing on "Democracy" (1861), Arnold searched for ways of analyzing the cultural shortcomings of the middle class and the aristocracy. In this early essay Arnold describes democracy's "readiness for new ideas" and contrasts it with the inaptitude of aristocracies and the English middle class for new ideas, high reason, and a fine culture (2:11, 23-24). The sense of "idea" in this essay includes an awareness that one's knowledge may be deficient. In particular, the knowledge possessed by the middle classes, argues Arnold, is deficient. The "new idea" they need to entertain is that of state-supported education. Comprehended within that "idea" is the aim of diffusing "culture" through public education. Why, asks Arnold, are middle-class Dissenters so hostile to state-supported education and the spread of culture?

In 1867, in the first of the essays later incorporated into

Culture and Anarchy, Arnold explores the causes of the Dissenters' hostility to culture. He fixes upon the motto of the newspaper *The Nonconformist*:

The motto, the standard, the profession of faith which this organ of theirs carries aloft, is: "The Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion." There is sweetness and light, and an ideal of complete harmonious human perfection! (5:101)

By adopting this quotation from Burke as their motto, argues Arnold, English Nonconformity condemns itself out of its own mouth. Such a religion offers nothing for the believer to "rest in" beyond complacency, nothing to satisfy and complete human nature (5:101-2, 130). It has nothing to do with the "harmonious expansion of all the powers . . . of human nature"—Arnold's definition of "culture" (5:94). Religion, as a part of "culture," is necessarily public, and therefore middle-class Dissent falls short of true religion by refusing to have anything to do with a public ideal (cf. 7:102-04).

In addition to his harsh judgments of middle-class Dissent, Arnold uses a Burkean touchstone to point out the possibilities in the English character that can lead to the wider diffusion of "culture." In the 1860s Arnold had said that the "energy" of the middle class and its insistence upon freedom were necessary if not sufficient conditions for an adequate culture (3:238). In 1871 he first quotes publicly Burke's "character" of the English. (It first appears in the *Note-Books* in 1869 [Lowry 105].) Arnold quotes it in the "Dedicatory Letter" to *Friendship's Garland*, where he imagines a response of Arminius von Thonder-ten-Tronckh to Frederic Harrison, Arnold's antagonist in the *Fortnightly Review*:

[T]he best character of the English people ever yet given, friendly as the character is, is still this of Burke's: 'The ancient and inbred integrity, piety, good nature, and good humour of the people of England.' Your nation is sound enough, if only it can be taught that being able to do what one likes, and say what one likes, is not sufficient for salvation. (5:353)

This "character" is important both for what it says and what it leaves unsaid. It says nothing about intelligence or an interest in reason, as the comment of Arminius seems to acknowledge. Why then does Arnold have any hope for a diffusion of culture among the English people if Burke's description is correct? I believe the integrity, piety, good nature, and good humor in Burke's description suggest the possibility of "harmony," which is essential to Arnold's "culture." Arnold defined cultural perfection as "a harmonious expansion" of the powers which "make the beauty and worth of human nature. . ." (5:94). When Arnold applies Burke's touchstone (approximately a dozen times in his public writings, nine times in the *Note-Books*), he usually attempts to show how some aspect of Dissent or the

4. Burke is by no means the only source of prose touchstones for Arnold. The Bible provides Arnold with a very large group of touchstones. He chooses "Estote ergo vos perfecti!" as the epigraph of *Culture and Anarchy*, for example, because he continually tests English culture in that book to see if it is moving towards or away from perfection. He applies Bishop Wilson's maxim, "to make rea-

son and the will of God prevail" to a similar end in *Culture and Anarchy*. And for a general touchstone to judge expressions of culture, Arnold (following Herder) asks if they contribute towards "the harmonious expansion of all the powers which make the beauty and worth of human nature" (apRoberts 94, 143; Arnold 5:94).

Church of England inhibits English culture from achieving harmony (cf. 7:96, 98, 122, 123).⁵

By his use of the "dissidence of dissent" and the "inbred integrity, piety, good nature, and good humour" of the English people, Arnold suggests the differences between an influence and a touchstone. A writer who influences another permeates his thought so that one can perceive some determinate meaning from the original writer to his follower. One follower may well find different "significance" from another in the same book—the meaning of the Bible influences both Arnold and George Herbert, for example, but they hardly find the same significance.

Burke provides Arnold with touchstones, but he does not permeate Arnold's thought. The intertextuality between Arnold and Burke is one of cross-fertilization rather than direct influence. A single line or phrase, applied in different contexts, can cross-fertilize a dozen hybrid thoughts—not always related to Burke's original meaning. For instance, Burke's meaning in the very short passage on the "dissidence of dissent" (in Burke's *Speech on Conciliation with America*) is to show the temperamental correspondence between American religion and American "liberty." It has nothing whatever to do with English Dissent, nothing to do with the nature of Dissent as such; it does not praise Protestantism, as *The Nonconformist* motto suggests; it does not condemn Protestantism, as Arnold suggests. It is a descriptive, not an evaluative, statement about America.

Similarly, when Arnold quotes Burke in "The Church of England," he is using Burkean touchstones to test ideas that are foreign to Burke's meaning. But the touchstones contain such a "profound application of ideas to life" for Arnold that he does, I believe, legitimately employ them in cultural judgments which Burke could never have foreseen. The "dissidence of dissent" and Burke's character of the English judge the self-satisfaction of the middle-class Dissent, the Dissenters's hostility to the kind of education necessary for culture, and the need for a different relationship between the Church and culture.

III

Burkean Touchstones for Judging the State

1. "[A] number of men in themselves have no collective capacity. The idea of a people is the idea of a corporation." (Burke 3:82)

2. "... [Englishmen think themselves bound . . . in their corporate character to perform their national homage to the institutor, and author, and protector of civil society. . . ." (Burke 2:369)

3. "[W]ithout . . . civil society man could not by any possibility arrive at the perfection of which his nature is capable, nor even make a remote and faint approach to it. They conceive that He who gave our nature to be perfected by our virtue, will also the necessary means of its perfection—He willed therefore the state—He willed its connexion with the source and original archetype of all perfection." (Burke 2:369-70)

4. "[L]aw itself is only beneficence acting by a rule." (Burke 2:331)

These four quotations provide Arnold with three touchstones for analyzing the nature and function of the State. Arnold combines the first two for his often repeated definition of the State—"the nation in its collective and corporate character"—which he says he takes from Burke (see Tobias 173n). He applies the third quotation to make cultural judgments that maintain the necessity of civil society for the perfection of man. The last quotation provides him with a means of judging whether contemporary Englishmen, especially Dissenters, have an adequate view of law, and hence of State action.

Once again Burke's influence on Arnold is very difficult to distinguish from that of other men, especially Thomas Arnold and Coleridge. When Arnold points to the State as the agency which alone can replace the aristocracy and priesthood, for example, and become culture's "center of light and authority," he reflects the influence of Lessing, Herder, and Humboldt far more than that of Burke (5:113; 2:312). Arnold nevertheless quotes Burke even in such contexts.

Arnold first quotes Burke on the nature and function of the state in the epigraph to *The Popular Education of France* (1861), a book that begins the outline of a great, national culture, which Arnold fully develops later in *A French Eton and Culture and Anarchy*. The greatness of a nation is determined by the number of individuals freely employed in the service of an ideal higher than that of the individual's self-interest; this "ideal commanding popular reverence" can no longer be supplied by the aristocracy and must now be supplied by the State; and the middle class must overcome its (historically justified) distrust of the State and accept the State's role in representing the best self of the nation (2: 18, 19, 28).⁶

Burke's touchstones have a role in validating Arnold's

says the church lacks, is essential to culture's aim of "perfection."

6. The epigraph reads:

I know that, since the Revolution, along with many dangerous, many useful powers of Government have been weakened. (Burke 1:349)

Even in the pages of *Popular Education of France* which seem unrelated to the epigraph of Burke (2:18, 19, 29), Burke is nevertheless available to Arnold. In the epigraph Burke merely implies that many useful powers of government need strengthening. But Arnold makes a slight addition to the essay on "Democracy" eighteen years later, when *Popular Education of France* was reprinted in 1879: he adds Burke's "definition of the state" as "the nation in its collective

5. In his essay on "Falkland" (1877), Arnold applies Burke's "character of the English" to judge the temper of pre-Restoration Puritanism (8:201). He applies it likewise in "The Church of England," where it indicates the shortcomings of Anglicanism. In the latter essay, Arnold quotes Burke's description, then discusses its first two elements, piety and integrity. He points out that the piety of the English people is the Church's natural ally against the "philosophical radicals and secularists" (8:78) The "integrity, as Burke calls it,—a native fund of downrightness, plain honesty"—will further prevent them from going over to "Romish superstitions." But above all, the integrity of the English people requires a Church dedicated to establishing God's kingdom on earth, which Arnold takes to be the end of the primitive gospel (8:77). This dedication, which Arnold

theory of education in *A French Eton* as well (cf. 2: 294). But that book is perhaps most notable for its early, lyrical description of "perfection" as the end of culture and the ideal of humanity. How significant are the touchstones of Burke for Arnold's description of "perfection"? The "unworn and successful [striver] after perfection" to whom Arnold refers here is not Burke but Wilhelm von Humboldt (2:312; apRoberts 93-99). The ideal of humanity which Arnold describes is identified by Ruth apRoberts as *Humanität*, derived from Humboldt and ultimately from Herder:

But it is in making endless additions to itself, in the endless expansion of its powers, in endless growth in wisdom and beauty, that the spirit of the human race finds its ideal, culture is an indispensable aid, and that is the true value of culture. (2:318)

Even in this passage, however, I believe that Burke's statement that the end of civil society is perfection is working along with Arnold's more obvious debts to Humboldt and Herder. In a later essay, "Equality" (1878), Arnold explicitly applies a phrase of Burke as a touchstone to judge whether those who oppose social equality are enabling men to achieve "civilisation," "the humanisation of man in society," and in short, the perfect ideal of *Humanität*:

[T]o be civilised is to make progress towards this [full humanity] in civil society; in that civil society "without which," says Burke, "man could not by any possibility arrive at the perfection of which his nature is capable, nor even make a remote and faint approach to it." (8:286)

As in the case of the later addition to "Democracy," I believe the touchstones of Burke are frequently present in Arnold's cultural judgments even when he does not specifically mention Burke. The Burkean touchstone undergoes a process of development and change as it contributes to the production of new ideas in Arnold's mind over time. Finally, when Arnold explicitly mentions Burke, one can see the final—or more accurately, a later—product. But since the explicit references to Burke come sometimes early and sometimes late in Arnold's career, a mere list of cross references is inadequate to gauge Burke's importance to him:

and corporate character" when he is attempting to overcome middle-class distrust of State action (2:26). This addition suggests that, even when Burke is not explicitly mentioned, his touchstones are available to Arnold in cultural judgments. Perhaps Arnold had Burke in mind as early as 1861, or perhaps some time after 1861 he saw that Burke's definition did more elegantly what he had tried to do in "Democracy." The addition also suggests that Arnold's "Burke" has consistent, developing significance for him. The intertextual relationship is living and vital, not mechanical. The later addition goes farther than the earlier epigraph.

7. Arnold turns to Burke's definition to weigh the typical Englishman's view of the State and find it wanting:

Just as the rest of us,—as the country squires in the aristocratic class, as the political dissenter in the middle class,—he has no idea of a *State*, of the nation in its collective and corporate character controlling, as government, the free swing of this or that one of its members in the name of the higher reason of all of them, his own as well as that of others. (5:122)

Burke's significance changes and deepens to Arnold over time. Burke's contribution to Arnold's notion of "perfection" is a case in point.

According to *A French Eton*, "perfection" is the end of culture and of public education. English support for public education, however, was small. Reliance on state-enforced, state-supported education, said some, would "make us 'a set of helpless imbeciles'" (2:310). Arnold countered this view of educational legislation by matching it against Burke's definition of law. Law, said Burke, is "beneficence acting by rule" (Burke 2:331; Arnold 2:310). Arnold applies this definition five times in *A French Eton* to argue that the casual, voluntary beneficence of private schools and "educational homes" is inferior to the beneficence that acts by rule.

After *A French Eton* Arnold's definition of culture depends more and more on Lessing, Herder, and Humboldt, the "great men of culture" and "beautiful souls" of *Culture and Anarchy* (1869; 5:113, 161). They are the clearest influences on Arnold's definition of culture as the "study of perfection" (apRoberts 138-43). But even in *Culture and Anarchy* Arnold refers to Burke's definition of the State several times, and may have Burke in mind when he declares that "without society there can be no human perfection" (5:223). Burke's definition of the State is most clearly available to Arnold in chapter two, "Doing as One Likes." In that chapter Arnold argues that the common English ideal, to do as one likes, leads to anarchy (5:119). Because that ideal spurns reason it lacks a principle of authority (5:123). Because it values individualism above all, it possesses nothing national or public, nothing to transcend the loyalties of class (5:134). "Doing as one likes" can only be the ideal of a self-satisfied class, because the ideal of culture—"the pursuit of light and perfection"—continually makes one develop new ideas and new powers (5:94, 130).⁷

Burke's definition of the State appears in later essays on religion to bolster the ideal of national culture. In *Literature and Dogma* (1873) Arnold argues that the Dissenters' wish to separate religion from the State would have the effect of separating religion from culture. No, says Arnold,

"The free swing" here refers to tensions between the three classes Arnold mentions. Without Burke's view of a national, collective, and corporate character, the three classes will continue to oppose each other with power swinging now to one class, now to another. The alternative, Burkean view of the state, says Arnold, is suggested by "culture." By "doing as they like," the English separate themselves from each other and develop an "everyday self" (5:134). By pursuing "culture, or the study of perfection," the English could develop their "best self." They would be united and harmonious because culture is by definition the harmonious development of all one's powers (5:134). The State as Burke described it is the outward and visible manifestation of the inward and spiritual "harmony" produced by "culture." "[C]ulture," writes Arnold, "suggests the idea of the State, . . . or organ of our collective best self, of our national right reason" (5:135-36). Arnold also applies Burke's definition of the State at 9:304, 306, 309, and 11:102 for the purposes I discuss here. He likewise applies the touchstone to test the adequacy of Spencer's social Darwinism as a political idea (10:207).

“the thing is, to recast religion” into morality touched with emotion (6:150, 176). “If this is done, the new religion will be the national one; if it is not done, the separating the nation, in its collective and corporate character, from religion, will not do it” (6:150-52). Burke’s touchstone again judges the inadequacy of the Dissenters’ insistence on pitting religion against culture. Such a view prevents them from fulfilling their duties to the nation.

Although his judgments often diverge from Burke’s, Arnold’s category of “culture” is closer to Burke’s own categories than those of many nineteenth-century interpreters of Burke. Many of them approached Burke as simply a politician or belletristic orator or theoretician or idol to be worshipped. Few of them captured the unity for which Burke strove among politics, literature, and religion. Coleridge found the unity in Burke’s “imagination.” Arnold found it in applying Burke to “culture.”

IV

Burke’s “Return upon Himself”: “Living by Ideas,” the *Zeit-geist*, Criticism, and Culture

So far is it from being really true of him that he “to party gave up what was meant for mankind,” that at the very end of his fierce struggle with the French Revolution, after all his invectives against its false pretensions, hollowness, and madness, he can close a memorandum of the best means of combating it, some of the last pages he ever wrote,—the *Thoughts on French Affairs*, in December 1791,—with these striking words:—

“The evil is stated, in my opinion, as it exists. The remedy must be where power, wisdom, and information, I hope, are more united with good intentions than they can be with me. I have done with this subject, I believe, for ever. It has given me many anxious moments for the last two years. *If a great change is to be made in human affairs, the minds of men will be fitted to it; the general opinions and feelings will draw that way. Every fear, every hope will forward it; and then they who persist in opposing this mighty current in human affairs, will appear rather to resist the decrees of Providence itself, than the mere designs of men. They will not be resolute and firm, but perverse and obstinate.*” [Arnold’s emphasis] That return of Burke upon himself has always seemed to me one of the finest things in English literature. That is what I call living by ideas: when one side of a question has long had your earnest support, when all your feelings are engaged, when you hear all round you no language but one, when your party talks this language like a steam-engine and can imagine no other,—still to be able to think, still to be irresistibly carried, if so it be, by the current of thought to the opposite side of the question, and like Balaam, to be unable to speak anything but what the Lord has put in your mouth. I know nothing more striking, and I must add that I know nothing more un-English.

(3:267-68, “The Function of Criticism at the Present Time”)

The last and most important touchstone, the “return upon oneself,” is not a quotation but an impression that Arnold drew from Burke. It is the most comprehensive of all the touchstones; it radiates into the greatest number of Arnold’s concerns: living by ideas, the *Zeit-Geist*, the notion of an “epoch,” criticism, and culture. Once again Arnold draws significance from Burke while missing his textual meaning. *Thoughts on French Affairs* was by no means “some of the

last pages” Burke wrote. The entire *Regicide Peace*, many speeches on Warren Hastings, and one-third of his extant *Correspondence* came afterward. What is more, Arnold misstates Burke’s relation to party. There was no “party talking Burke’s language” in December 1791. In November of that year, having already been repudiated by his party, Burke wrote his patron Fitzwilliam, a Whig leader, to decline any future financial assistance (*Corr.* 6:xix, 449-53). The Portland Whigs did not yet exist. Arnold also overlooks Burke’s active support of the very “party habits” he condemns (Mansfield 1-19).

Nevertheless the significance which Arnold draws from the “return upon himself” is not arbitrarily imposed on Burke. In this passage and in many others quoted by Arnold, Burke does question himself, his constituents, and his country. He does test his own ideas, attitudes, and policies. Arnold finds a number of passages in Burke which seem to ask the same questions: are these ideas profound and true? do they really apply to the actual conditions or objects of life? Arnold says that Burke’s return upon himself is what he calls “living by ideas” (3:267). In the following paragraphs (in “The Function of Criticism at the Present Time”) he chooses slightly different words to describe this sort of life—the disinterested free play of mind, criticism, and curiosity—all of which are ultimately related to the study of perfection and culture.

At the heart of the relations among these Arnoldian terms is the continual development of a man who lives by ideas. The passage on Burke’s return upon himself imagines a Burke who is aware of his own deficiencies. He needs to consider new “ideas” or possibilities, especially the possibility that Providence intends something other than what Burke desired. By questioning himself Burke entertains such new ideas. Conscious of his need to consider new possibilities, the man who lives by ideas, in Arnold’s discussion, develops “curiosity,” or “disinterested love of a free play of mind on all subjects . . .” (3:268). Curiosity, in turn, is the defining quality of criticism. “Criticism, real criticism,” he writes, “is essentially the exercise of this very quality. It obeys an instinct to try to know the best that is known and thought in the world” (3:268). And criticism, in its turn, is related to culture because its “best spiritual work,” says Arnold, “is to lead a man towards perfection” (3:271).

Criticism is virtually personified by the “antagonist” who appears in the epigraph to *Essays in Criticism*, where “The Function of Criticism at the Present Time” was printed. For the epigraph Arnold quotes a passage from Burke’s *Reflections*:

Our antagonist is our helper. This amicable conflict with difficulty obliges us to an intimate acquaintance with our object, and compels us to consider it in all its relations. It will not suffer us to be superficial. (Arnold 3:2; Burke 2:437)

Burke’s meaning here is almost certainly connected with his efforts to make English political parties respectable. But Burke’s significance, given the aims of *Essays in Criticism* and Arnold’s earlier writings, is quite different. The

antagonist who disallows superficiality, I believe, is Arnold's "critic," whose aim is "to see the object as in itself it really is" (3:258). The epigraph is also related in Arnold's mind (though not in Burke's) to the concluding sentences of *Thoughts on French Affairs*. Arnold hears both passages calling a man to make a return upon himself and test his own ideas against the authority of reason, critical intelligence, and correspondence with actuality. The return upon oneself is thus the most comprehensive of Arnold's Burkean touchstones. It is the defining quality of "living by ideas," and only the man who lives by ideas possesses within himself the principle of development necessary for making cultural judgments.

"Living by ideas" seems to be a reformulation of issues that Arnold discussed long before he wrote "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time." In his lectures "On Translating Homer" (1860-61) he had declared the "noble and profound application of ideas to life is the most essential part of poetic greatness." Homer is "never more nobly himself, than in applying profound ideas to his narrative" (1:211-12). Arnold characteristically finds it difficult to define the "nobility" which marks the "grand style" in Homer and other poets (1:139, 159, 188). The passage on Burke may provide the necessary gloss. Burke and such poets as Homer are grand or noble because they entertain the possibility that they continually require new ideas, more development, and the self-critical "return upon themselves" in their effort to know the best that is known and thought in the world.

Arnold associates "ideas" with three more notions that are later related to Burke: *Zeit-Geist*, "epoch," and "perfection." Arnold says the *Zeit-Geist* is the originator of current ideas. An "epoch" occurs when a reformer—at any rate a religious reformer—harmonizes (religious) life with the ideas of the *Zeit-Geist* (3:69, 77). "Perfection" is linked to "living by ideas" in *A French Eton*, which describes the striving for perfection, exemplified by Lacordaire and described by Humboldt, as the very best idea to live by (2:312, 318-24). Arnold's passage on Burke in "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" appears after Arnold has associated "ideas" with all three of these notions. Arnold's remarks about Burke's ability to live by ideas, therefore,

makes up only a part of a greater intertextual network, which Arnold built up throughout his life.

Arnold thought Burke was "the great voice of that epoch of concentration" created in opposition to the French Revolution (3:266).⁸ To go back to the terms Arnold had used elsewhere, I believe Arnold would say that Burke adequately spoke for his epoch because he harmonized the political life of the last years of an aristocracy with the ideas of the *Zeit-Geist*. Arnold believed the aristocracy properly ruled England until Waterloo. At the moment of the French Revolution Burke was "in some sort a providential person" (5:330; *Letters* 2:192). He provided the true voice of his epoch because his ideas were, on balance, what the nation needed at the time (3:266-67).⁹

In order to speak with the voice of his epoch Burke, like the writers described in Arnold's essay "On the Modern Element in Literature," had to represent his "world . . . in all its fulness, in all its significance" (1:34). Like Sophocles, he had to interpret human nature and political life with reference to his age (1:28). He had to harmonize politics with the ideas of the *Zeit-Geist*.

The connection of the *Zeit-Geist* to Burke's "return upon himself" at the end of *Thoughts on French Affairs* is suggested, however vaguely, in *Literature and Dogma* (1873). In that book the *Zeit-Geist* apparently means the power which causes the movement of ideas (Neiman). The sentences from *Thoughts on French Affairs* occupy an important place in the book—they serve as one of the epigraphs—but their very location takes them out of any particular context.

A year after the publication of *Essays in Criticism*, Arnold reports that he had to make a "serious return" upon himself for having called his countrymen Philistines (*Friendship's Garland* 5:4). Arnold is being ironic, of course, but perhaps he is also providing a model for the offended middle class, which "can never see two sides of a question" and therefore believes English society is perfect. If they could apply the most comprehensive of all touchstones, the return upon themselves, the middle class could see other possibilities than the ones they were currently pursuing. By viewing both sides of a question, they would begin to love ideas rather than clap-trap and begin the proc-

8. Arnold's view of the "epoch of concentration" is not consistent. He admires the aristocracy of the eighteenth-century for its dignity and lofty spirit, but says aristocracies are fit only for epochs of concentration. The opposite sort of epoch, the "epoch of expansion," is defined by "a movement of ideas." How then can Burke, whose defining quality is that he lived by ideas, consistently be the "voice of" an epoch of concentration? (See 5:124, 126, 330; 1:108; 2:11, 12, 14, 263). Arnold says, "it is an accident that Burke's ideas were at the service of an epoch of concentration not an expansion," but this "accident" really shows the inadequacy of his explanation of "concentration," "expansion," and aristocracy.

9. The quotation from "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" reads:

It is the fashion to treat Burke's writings on the French revolution as superannuated and conquered by the event; as the eloquent but unphilosophical tirades of bigotry and prejudice. I will not deny that they are often disfigured by

the violence and passion of the moment, and that in some directions Burke's view was bounded and his observation therefore at fault. But on the whole, and for those who can make the needful corrections, what distinguishes these writings is their profound, permanent, fruitful, philosophical truth. They contain the true philosophy of an epoch of concentration, dissipate the heavy atmosphere which its own nature is apt to engender round it, and make its resistance rational instead of mechanical.

But Burke is so great because, almost alone in England, he brings thought to bear upon politics, he saturates politics with thought. It is an accident that his ideas were at the service of an epoch of concentration, not of an epoch of expansion; it is his characteristic that he so lived by ideas, and had such a source of them welling up within him, that he could float even an epoch of concentration and English Tory politics with them. (3:266-7)

ess of development which defines true culture.

In the conclusion of *Culture and Anarchy* the return upon oneself becomes part of Arnold's cultural gospel, a part which must be preached by the "believer in culture." It is the business of the "believer in culture"

to get the present believers in action, and lovers of political talking and doing, to make a return upon their own minds, scrutinise their present talking and doing much less; in order that, by learning to think more clearly, they may come at last to act less confusedly. (5:226)

The "believer in culture" has the same function as the character Arnold had earlier described as an "alien." The alien is led "by a general humane spirit, by the love of human perfection" (5:146). And the aliens increase or decrease in number—that is, culture spreads or contracts—in proportion to the strength of their love of perfection and their reception by the outside world. Part of Arnold's evangelistic call to the "believer in culture" is to spread the "return upon oneself" to others.

A dozen years later, in "The Incompatibles," Arnold places the aliens among those who follow Burke's views on Ireland rather than the shortsighted policies of Gladstone (9:240-1). "[D]etached from classes and parties," these "lovers of the humane life and civilisation" wish to see Irish affairs "for what they really are." The aliens still have the office of spreading "light and the humane life"—in other words, of spreading culture.¹⁰ Their office explains Arnold's otherwise curious name for their (and Burke's) opponents. Arnold calls them "pedants."

Arnold's reading of Burke develops consistently, from his first public mention of Burke (when he celebrates Burke's "modernity" in "On the Modern Element in Literature") until the end of his life. The preface to Arnold's edition of Burke's Irish writings (1881) shows that he admires the same quality he had discerned in 1865, Burke's capacity for living by ideas. Burke is a "prose classic" for his contributions to "English life, thought, and language" (9:286).

Indeed, Burke's embodiment of the ideal of the thinking man *as such* seems to appeal most to Arnold. He closes the preface thus:

Burke writes to Mrs. Crewe that a work of his has, he is told, "put the people in a mood a little unusual to them—it has set them on thinking." . . . In general, our Governments, however well informed, feel bound, it would seem, to adapt their policy to our normal mental condition, which is, as Burke says, a non-thinking one. Burke's paramount and undying merit as a politician is, that instead of accepting as fatal and necessary this non-thinking condition of ours, he battles with it, mends and changes it; he will not rest until he has "put people in a mood a little unusual with them," until he has "set them on thinking." (9:289)

Arnold is not celebrating Burke merely for questioning government policy. Rather, Burke's mode of thinking and questioning provides Arnold with a touchstone to judge all of the nation's policies and all of one's own opinions. Ulti-

mately it judges whether one is contributing to a national movement towards culture and *Humanität*.

Arnold's essay "The Future of Liberalism" (1880) brings together all of the concerns for which he relied on Burkean touchstones. A passage which quotes Burke can help sum up his entire literary significance to Arnold:

[T]he end and aim of all dialectics is . . . to help us to an answer to the question, how to live; so beyond all doubt whatever, have politics too to deal with this same question and with the discovery of an answer to it. The true and noble science of politics is even the very chief of the sciences, because it deals with this question for the benefit of man not as an isolated creature, but in that state "without which," as Burke says, "man could not by any possibility arrive at the perfection of which his nature is capable,"—for the benefit of man in society. Now of man in society the capital need is, that the whole body of society should come to live with a life worthy to be called *human*, and corresponding to man's true aspirations and powers. This the humanisation of man in society, is civilisation. The aim for all of us is to promote it, and to promote it is above all the aim for the true politician. (9:141-2)

Man's true nature is fulfilled in the pursuit of perfection, during which he must continually apply the all-embracing touchstone of the return upon himself to test the truth of his ideas. That perfection cannot be reached in isolation; it is found in the culture of a State whose nature Burke described as the nation in its collective and corporate character. The rest of Arnold's essay finds the Dissenters wanting because of a temper so narrow that it takes pride in the "dissidence of dissent" as an ideal. But the essay also finds—within the significance of the Burkean touchstones—capacity for reform: the possibility of cultural development is comprehended in Burke's description of the "ancient and inbred integrity, piety, good nature, and good humour of the English people."

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10. The "aliens" thus seem to function as a "clerisy" for Arnold, as Richard Tobias has pointed out to me. See Knights.

Books Received

- Baswell, Christopher and William Sharpe, eds. *The Passing of Arthur: New Essays in Arthurian Tradition*. New York & London: Garland, 1988. Pp. xix + 316. \$37.00. Includes essays by John D. Rosenberg on "Tennyson and the Passing of Arthur" Jonathan Freedman on "Ideological Battleground: Tennyson, Morris, and the Pastness of the Past," Carole Silver on "Victorian Spellbinders: Arthurian Women and the Pre-Raphaelite Circle," and William E. Fredeman on "The Last Idyll: Dozing in Avalon," with an "Appendix: The Laureate and the King: An Iconographic Survey of Arthurian Subjects in Victorian Art."
- Boardman, Brigid M. *Between Heaven and Charing Cross: The Life of Francis Thompson*. New Haven & London: Yale UP, 1988. Pp. xvii + 410. \$37.50. "The . . . aim of the present reappraisal is to set aside the earlier views and by listening to Thompson's own voice speaking through his poetry and prose, whether published or unpublished, to recreate the real personality and the real poet. By doing so in relation to the people and events that shaped his life and his poetry, it will be evident that both the man and the poet have a fuller claim to our attention today than has so far been recognized" (xiv).
- Brady, Ann P. *Pompilia: A Feminist Reading of Robert Browning's "The Ring and the Book"*. Athens: Ohio UP, 1988. Pp. [150]. \$19.95. "The poet of *The Ring and the Book* is a feminist in ways strikingly at variance with some aspects of his puzzling life. If the pattern of his real life does not incarnate the subtlety, penetration, and consistency with which the poet of the Franscheschini murder trial probes the warp and woof of patriarchy and its deleterious effect on women, so be it. I can only answer for the poem, not the enigmatic man" (9).
- Drotner, Kirsten. *English Children and Their Magazines, 1751-1945*. New Haven & London: Yale UP, 1988. Pp. x + 272. \$27.50. "[T]his book is structured so that changes in the juvenile magazines are correlated with changes facing the young. . . . [T]he main argument . . . is that the development of modern childhood and youth rests on a structural paradox. This paradox creates contradictory experiences for the young into which the magazine intervenes as an aesthetic organiser" (10).
- Epperly, Elizabeth R. *Anthony Trollope's Notes on the Old Drama*. English Literary Studies 42. Victoria: U of Victoria English Department, 1988. Pp. 143. "It is impossible to say how many plays Anthony Trollope attended or how much drama criticism he actually read, but we do know that between 1866 and 1882 Trollope read more than [270] Elizabethan and Jacobean plays (including Shakespeare)—often more than once—and that he made extensive notes in his own copies" (13).
- Fielding, K. J., ed. *The Speeches of Charles Dickens: A Complete Edition*. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf; Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities P, 1988. Pp. xxxii + 456. \$90.00. "Dickens never wrote out his speeches before they were given, and only rarely did so afterwards" (xvi). "As far as possible all the better reports of any speech that could be found have been consulted, and an attempt has been made to combine them in a text which may take something from several different versions" (xvi). Includes 115 speeches 1837 to 1870.
- Loomis, Jeffrey B. *Dayspring in Darkness: Sacrament in Hopkins*. Lewisburg: Bucknell UP; London & Toronto: Associated UPs, 1988. Pp. 221. \$32.50. "Augustine's and Origen's 'husk-kernel' paradigms help explain a great deal we have never recognized, or at least have not fully understood, about Hopkins. These paradigms seem to explain: (1) why Hopkins the sacramental transubstantiationist coined, along with the famous term *inscape*, a term like *outscape* that has been hitherto unexplored; (2) why he emphasized the contrasting poetic textures of outer 'overthought' and inner 'underthought'; (3) why he set the external experiences of the 'affective will' against the internal choices of the 'elective will'; and (4) why he alternated exuberant externalist nature poetry with poetic monologues about the spiritually struggling internal soul" ([9]).
- Peters, Robert and Janine Dakyns eds. *Letters to a Tutor: The Tennyson Family Letters to Henry Graham Dakyns (1861-1911), with The Audrey Tennyson Death-Bed Diary*. Metuchen, NJ & London: Scarecrow P, 1988. Pp. xv + 288. \$29.50. "This collection presents over 200 hitherto unpublished letters written primarily by the immediate members of Alfred Tennyson's family. . ." (ix).
- Shaw, Marion. *Alfred Lord Tennyson*. Feminist Readings Series. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities P, 1988. Pp. xiv + 173. \$38.50 cloth, \$12.50 paper. "My feminist reading is . . . an attempt to understand maleness as a function of poetic expression; and perhaps also to see poetic expression, particularly love poetry of the tradition to which Tennyson belonged, as a function of maleness" (10).
- Timko, Michael. *Carlyle and Tennyson*. Iowa City: U of Iowa P, 1988. Pp. xvi + 284. \$22.50. "To see how and why the prophetic utterances of the one gave way to the idyllic vision of the other is to gain greater understanding and new insight into a period of time that did much to form our own" (xiii).
- Waddington, Patrick. *Tennyson and Russia*. Tennyson Society Monographs 11. Lincoln: Tennyson Research Center, 1987. Pp. 46. Tennyson Society dues £5.00
- Zaniello, Tom. *Hopkins in the Age of Darwin*. Iowa City: U of Iowa P, 1988. Pp. xix + 199. \$22.50. "Chapters 1 and 2 portray the situation in Oxford education and Victorian philosophy as atomist and Darwinist trends began to alter the received wisdom of the mid-Victorian periods. Chapters 3 and 4 bring Hopkins through the 1870s, as his interest in language and perception developed in the context of the major challenges to theology put forward by the supporters of Darwin. Chapter 5 discusses Hopkins' most significant achievements as an amateur scientist. The Conclusion then offers an overview of his career. . ." (xiv).

Victorian Group News

Announcements

The 21st Annual Meeting of the Research Society for Victorian Periodicals will be September 22, 23, 1989 at the Huntington Library, San Marino, CA. Theme is "RSVP Comes of Age." Papers should deal with some aspect of Victorian periodicals, or their use as sources for research; limit to 15-20 minutes; submit to Rosemary Van Arsdale, 4702 N. E. 39th St., Seattle, WA 98105, Program Chair. Write Prof. Barbara Penny Kanner, Conference Coord., 467 Comstock Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90024 for details.

The 7th Annual Newman Conference will be held August 11-13, 1989, at the Center for Development in Ministry, University of St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelen, IL. The theme of the conference is "Lead Thou Me on: Newman and Conversion. Papers limited to 35 minutes, with time for discussion afterwards. Send papers to Father Vincent J. Giese, Catholic Church Extension Society, 35 Wacker Drive, Chicago, IL 60601 by June 1, 1989. There will be no stipends, but all expenses at the Conference will be covered—excluding transportation.

A special issue of *Browning Institute Studies* on the theme *Victorian Learning* will appear in early spring 1989. Contact Robert Vicusi, Humanities Institute, Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, NY 11210.

For the Hopkins Centennial Conference on Sept. 29-30, 1989, at St. Joseph's University, Philadelphia, PA, 19131, papers (10-12 pages) on critical and rhetorical aspects of Hopkins poetry, on his biography, and on his Victorian background should be sent to Prof. Joseph J. Feeney, S. J., Dept. of English, St. Joseph's University and Prof. Jude V. Nixon, Humanities Dept., Philadelphia College of Bible, Langhorne, PA 19047, by March 15, 1989.

Victorian Periodicals Review plans a special issue on the *Athenaeum* for Winter 1989. Articles ranging from short notices to 20 double spaced pages should be received by June 30th. Send to Editor, *VPR*, English Department, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, Edwardsville, IL 62026-1436.

Fordham University will host a conference *A Voice from the World: A Hopkins Centenary* on April 10, 1989, at its Rose Hill Campus, Bronx, NY 10458-5158. The keynote speaker will be Norman White, University College, Dublin. For information contact Philip Sicker, Chair, Dept. of English, Fordham University at the above address.

The Victorians Institute 1989 will have its annual meeting on Oct. 20-21 at Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA. The major topic will be "Victorian Mixed Media," and the session on the 20th will commemorate the Browning Centennial. For information contact David Latané, English Dept., Virginia Commonwealth Univ., Box 2005, Richmond, VA 23284.

AUMLA, the Journal of the Australasian Universities Language and Literature Association, is planning a special edition to commemorate the centenary of the death of Robert Browning. Edited by Simon Petch and Warwick Slinn, the issue (no. 71) will be available in May 1989 at \$20.00 (inc. postage and handling), from Dr. R. White, Department of French, University of Sydney, N.S.W. 2006, Australia.

Notice

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