A CRITICAL DICTIONARY OF

HERMAN MELVILLE'S POLYNESIAN TERMS

A Dissertation

by

CONSTANTINE CHRISTODOULOU

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

December 2006

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Approved by:

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ABSTRACT

A Critical Dictionary

of Herman Melville's Polynesian Terms. (December 2006)

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The dissertation is divided into five chapters and focuses primarily on Melville's *Typee*, *Omoo*, *Mardi*, and *Moby Dick*.

Chapter I introduces the idea that Melville understood Polynesian better than what critics have demonstrated, and that he used the Polynesian language to develop his own multicultural aesthetic.

Chapter II discusses how Melville attempts to resolve his aesthetic preoccupations by opening his narratives to the literary potential of the Polynesian language. The chapter examines representative examples of the orthographic idiosyncrasies of Melville's Polynesian adoptions and adaptations which describe his new literary aesthetic. The chapter also investigates how Melville's Polynesian aesthetic affects the construction of meaning in his texts. The chapter finally discusses examples of past editorial choices which have sidestepped Melville's Polynesian aesthetic and, thus, provided readers with a limited understanding of the Polynesian language's role in Melville's texts.

Chapter III analyzes samples of Melville's Polynesian adoptions and adaptations from the above narratives to emphasize the role of the Polynesian language in his Pacific experience. This chapter's intention is to underline the interaction between Melville's Polynesian language and culture and his texts, which engendered a complex multicultural aesthetic that permeated his first three works, continued to influence his later writings, and contributed significantly to his cosmopolitan vision of American cultural identity.

Chapter IV contains the dictionary, which incorporates approximately two hundred entries. Each entry is divided into four sections. The first is a series of quotes from Melville's texts that illustrate the various meanings that Melville has given to the term being examined. The second is a list of definitions from various dialects, intended to underline the various Polynesian linguistic elements that Melville adopted or adapted to construct each particular term. The third is an interpretative paragraph that explains how each term is divided into its constituent parts based on Melville's aesthetic. The fourth section contains specific quotes from other sources of the particular term that underline the significance of that source to Melville's knowledge of the particular term.

Chapter V concludes with the idea that this dissertation is meant as a starting guide to reexamining Melville's Polynesian aesthetic.

To my parents

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Herman Melville's literary relation with the language and culture of the islands
of Polynesia throughout his literary career was the result of personal experience with the
Pacific in the early years of his life. According to Jay Leyda's *Log* (1: 102), Melville
traveled the Pacific as a sailor of various ships from 1841 until 1843. In the fall and
winter of 1841, "the *Acushnet* cruises through the Galapagos Islands" (1: 102), and
Melville who was a sailor aboard that ship would later record his first Pacific experience
in short narrative, *The Encantadas, or Enchanted Isles*. In June of 1842, the Acushnet
reached the Marquesas cluster where Melville and his companion, Toby Greene, shortly
after the whaler's arrival, deserted the ship. Hershel Parker in Melville's biography (1:
218), and Charles R. Anderson in *Melville in the South Seas* (190, 192) agree that
Melville spent three weeks among a tribe of Polynesian "savages," the Typees. This
experience Melville used as primary material for his first literary endeavor, *Typee*. In
August of the same year, Melville shipped on the Australian whaler, Lucy Ann, which a
month later he deserted and along with the ship's doctor, John Troy, they roamed the
island of Eimeo, which became the locus for Melville's second novel, *Omoo*. As he
jumped from job to job, and from island to island, Melville managed to visit Lahaina and
Honolulu in Hawaii in April and May of 1843, as well as Tahiti in the fall of the same

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This dissertation follows the style of *The MLA Handbook*.

year which became his last in the Pacific. In the fall of 1844 he returned to the United

States where he began recording his Pacific adventures.

The impression this period of his life had on his writing is obvious in *Typee*,

Omoo, and later *Mardi*, in all of which the use of Polynesian culture and language would

portray Melville as an authority on Pacific matters. Although literary criticism has

appreciated and praised Melville's understanding of Polynesian culture, it has viewed

with certain skepticism and disbelief Melville's knowledge of Polynesian language, the

dominant linguistic system in the South Pacific that is made up of several related

dialects, such as Tahitian, Hawaiian, Marquesan, and Tongan, among others.

Unfortunately, such incredulity has been for the most part unsubstantiated and critics

like Andrew Delbanco and Harrison Hayford consider Melville's knowledge of the

various dialects of Polynesia to be either limited, contrived, or simply wrong without,

however, providing enough evidence toward that point. The purpose of this dictionary is

to show that Melville had more than an elementary or limited knowledge of the

language. In fact, Melville used or had access to several dictionaries of various

Polynesian dialects, such as the Tahitian and the Hawaiian, which had been published in

Europe, the United States, or Polynesia at least a decade before the writing of his first

work, *Typee*. This is corroborated by his alleged reading of William Ellis's *Polynesian

Researchers* (*Omoo* xiv), a missionary and explorer who recorded many of the cultural

and linguistic idiosyncrasies of the Polynesians. Ellis also knew and worked with several

of the missionaries who were involved in the compilation of proto-dictionaries of local

dialects, such as the reverend John Davis, author of the early Tahitian dictionary and

grammar of 1826, as part of the effort to proselytize the natives. In his first three works, then, Melville employs the Polynesian language in a romantic sense, to develop his own literary aesthetic as the reflection of the creative processes of his mind. Further than that, he uses or manipulates the Polynesian language to emphasize the potential of language to allow for new interpretations of social or historical reality and to challenge conventional (classical) perceptions of literary creation. Ultimately, Melville, by using the Polynesian language so extensively and with such creative force in his first three works, intended to develop a new, multicultural aesthetic for American writers, especially one that reflected the multicultural history and structure of American national identity and espoused its adoption as one of the unique characteristics of American literature. It is to that purpose that Polynesian terms like "Annatoo," "Fayaway," "Ji-ji," "Oh-oh" and many others acquire significance as carefully constructed linguistic and semantic inventions or adoptions.

One of the identifying characteristics that marks Herman Melville's first three Polynesian works, *Typee*, *Omoo*, *Mardi*, and, later on, several shorter Polynesian references, is the patchwork of sources he used to construct or enrich them. Hershel Parker uses Harrison Hayford's critical remarks on *Omoo* to identify Melville's habitual "plagiarisms" from other sources as part of Melville's effort to create a literary reality: "Now, in these months after the engagement, Melville used, misused, and downright abused his sources as he worked his 'expository borrowings into the manuscript.'" After a series of relevant examples, based on Harrison Hayford's remarks, Parker concludes that these borrowings highlight to a certain degree Melville's instinctual manner of

writing at the outset of his literary career: "Hayford's detailed account of Melville's depredations on his sources conveys something of the reckless fun Melville must have had during the commission of the purloinings and adaptings. He even had fun with the clichés he had used uncritically in *Typee*" (Parker 1: 456-457). Of course, beneath Melville's apparent "reckless fun" lies an unprecedented, for a novice author, measure of conscious control over the material and its purpose in Melville's text. Such control is apparent in the manner in which Melville incorporated material from other sources into his works, as well as the nature of this material and its function in relation to the intrinsic purpose of each of his Polynesian narratives. The first American edition of *Typee*, for example, contains several expurgated passages that the editor John Wiley excluded because they contained political, cultural, ethical, and religious remarks targeted against the missionaries and which would have damaged Melville's literary career and Wiley & Putnam's reputation. Parker quotes one of Melville's relatives on Melville's reaction to such invasive tactics: "Melville 'was very cut up that in all later editions — all mention of the Missionary's [*sic*] was omitted. He saw how much evil they were doing and thought it should be known'" (1: 440). Parker builds on Hayford's view that Melville's incorporation of source material may not have been as arbitrary or "reckless" as initially believed, and behind these compositions was an implicit aesthetic purpose. Parker explains how Melville first wrote "based on his recollections and invention," and then used extra sources "to pad out the chapters he had already written and to supply the stuff of new chapters that he inserted at various points in the manuscript" (Parker 1: 455). The historical, geographical, and cultural errors this technique produces in Melville's text (as

critics like Harrison Hayford and Charles R. Anderson have pointed out) are not so much indicative of Melville's literary immaturity as they are of an effort to produce a semi-fictional account of Polynesian adventure "and with a meaning too" (*Correspondence* 106).

Melville's choice to enrich his narratives with historical, anthropological, religious, and cultural information from several Polynesian sources illuminates his aesthetic orientation toward a multicultural approach to literary composition. Melville does not choose to write a travel narrative from an outsider's (missionary, sailor, or explorer's) perspective, with pre-conceived notions of what distinguishes western moral and cultural superiority from Polynesian "savagery." Instead, he writes from a multi-faceted, "insider's" perspective that identifies his works not only as rhetoric against western notions of "civilization," "human nature," "society," "religion," "faith," and others, but also as a uniquely American, cosmopolitan literature that reflects its worldly influence. For Melville, then, the term "American literature" means "cosmopolitan literature" and not just in its manifestation of cultural influences from the various ethnic groups that make up its national identity, but also and especially from peoples who exist outside its national borders, including the inhabitants of the recently discovered islands of the South Pacific.

Melville's Polynesian "wad of old patches" (*White-Jacket* 4) incorporates not only cultural elements from various Polynesian groups, such as the Marquesans, the Tahitians, the Hawaiians, and the Tonga and Maori, several of which critics like Charles R. Anderson have identified. It also includes numerous linguistic characteristics from the

same cultural groups, such as the numerous Polynesian morphemes used to invent hybrid Polynesian or Polynesian-English words, the incorporation of various semantic qualities of Polynesian words from different dialects into his texts, and the manipulation of the various phonetic idiosyncrasies of Polynesian dialects in order to create a text with no clear-cut semantic distinctions and thus challenge readers' preconceived notions of meaning construction. Most of these characteristics have not been identified in their meaning and function in relation to Melville's text or Melville's multi-cultural aesthetic. The purpose of the dictionary and the accompanying chapters is to define and identify Melville's Polynesian linguistic insertions, alterations, and hybrid constructions and to show how the linguistic aspect of his Pacific experience contributed to his development into an American writer with a cosmopolitan aesthetic awareness and with a vision for a global role and definition of American literature. I will discuss here the structural idiosyncrasies of the dictionary and to a lesser extent the subject of the two associated chapters.

The most important dilemma of this project has been how to write a dictionary on Melville's abstract, literary Polynesian adoptions and adaptations. In other words, how to create an entry for a Polynesian hybrid word that may not exist in any Polynesian dialect, especially when Melville uses it in a metaphorical sense and in an English-language context. In order to answer such questions, I examine in this introduction the various elements that make up each dictionary entry, as these are outlined in Sidney I. Landau's "Dictionaries: The Art and Craft of Lexicography." The structure of the dictionary's entries reflects the critical nature of the dictionary's literary dilemma, one

that views Melville's Polynesian words (whether adopted or adapted) as part of his effort to create fiction and manipulate fact in his stories.

One significant characteristic that distinguishes this dictionary from other Melville dictionaries is its bilingual nature. Melville's use in his books of other dialects besides the Marquesan, including the Tonga, Maori, Tahitian, and Hawaiian, affects both the format and the content of the dictionary's entries, and suggests that the interpretative "fluidity" of Melville's texts is linguistic as much as it is editorial or literary. Sindey I. Landau (76-77) suggests that all bilingual dictionaries should adopt the language of its target audience as the standard language of the dictionary. However, the lack of a standard linguistic medium of communication among the Polynesians in conjunction with Melville's frequent use of various dialects (rather than just the Marquesan) in his stories, make it almost impossible and impractical. The various dictionaries printed during Melville's time as part of the missionary effort to indoctrinate the natives to Christianity are the only written sources that Melville could have used in conjunction with his experiences of the Polynesian language. Because these dictionaries vary in orthography, Melville's spelling becomes *the* standard language for this dictionary, along with the English language of course. One such example is the term "Babbalanja" whose orthography is very similar to its Tonga equivalent, "Babalagi," and so can point readers to the other Polynesian equivalents from the various dialects while remaining literary enough to function in Melville's metaphorical context.

First, each dictionary entry includes the source word as it appears in Melville's text. All other odd constructs, such as phrases that combine different parts of speech or

words from both English and Polynesian, appear as in Melville's context. It is important to note here that Melville is not constrained by adherence to grammatical rules when incorporating Polynesian terms in his text or when constructing new ones. In fact, he changes the grammatical type of many words to suit his literary needs, a choice that becomes a significant interpretative challenge as readers are called on to examine every grammatical possibility that may arise from all possible morphemic combinations. An example is the word "keekee" that Melville uses as a Polynesian alternative for the American Zeke, an orthodox Calvinist with a capitalist view of Polynesia. The Polynesian term is an adjective that means "crooked, twisted, incorrect, contrary to the rule of right, twisted, out of shape, cross, petulant" (Andrews 1st ed. 67), whereas Melville uses it as a proper noun: "Upon being informed of our acquaintance with Zeke, they were delighted; and one of them recognized the boots worn by the doctor. 'Keekee (Zeke) maitai,' they cried, 'nuee nuee hanna hanna portarto'—(makes plenty of potatoes)" (*Omoo* 256). By ignoring the grammatical traits of the Polynesian word "keekee," Melville uses the Polynesian language to furnish his scathing criticism on the Calvinist doctrine of salvation through individual toil and on the imperialist attitude toward the colonization of Polynesia. For Melville, then, the proper noun Zeke reflects the metaphorical qualities of the Polynesian adjective "keekee."

According to Landau's work, a bilingual dictionary should include grammatical information on each word to help readers understand each term's place and role in the foreign language. However, I have excluded the incorporation of a standard section on grammar, such as part-of-speech indications, or particular phonetic or phonemic

representations of words, in order to avoid confusing readers with information that could lead them away from the primary focus of the dictionary: Melville's literature. Grammatical information has been incorporated in the interpretation of each word only if it is needed in deciphering Melville's peculiar literary usage. Although not strictly an etymological dictionary, my work includes etymologies to the extent that it tries to discover the roots of Melville's literary adoptions and adaptations. The fact, however, remains that etymology is a second consideration, as this is not a diachronic dictionary; in other words, it does not trace the development of a word's meaning through time. Instead, it is a synchronic dictionary, although its synchronicity is anchored to the historical moment of Melville's time in the South Seas.

The sections that follow the source word are all critical in nature with the exception of the definitions. First, the inserted quotation from Melville's text provides an instance where Melville's Polynesian insertion acquires significant meaning. For example, Melville provides a significant hint for the meaning of the word "Babbalanja" when he says on page 197 of *Mardi*, "The second was Babbalanja, a man of a mystical aspect, habited in a voluminous robe. He was learned in Mardian lore; much given to quotations from ancient and obsolete authorities: the Ponderings of Old Bardianna: the Pandects of Alla-Mallola." Of course, the significance of the character is not exhausted in only the textual references quoted by the dictionary; on the contrary, these are but "instances" of meaning, and "Babbalanja" means many things. But since this dictionary is more concerned with questions like, how did Melville come up with the word "Babbalanja," and why did he choose this Polynesian word to name his character, the

textual references are but guideposts for the critical information in the following two sections: the definitions and the explanatory notes.

The definitions provided in my dictionary are from various historical dictionaries which focus on different dialects of the region. However, Melville did not use only the Marquesan dialect in his works, and a close investigation of his Polynesian borrowings reveals that he also used words from less well-known regions. My focus has been on the two most prominent and familiar dialects of the time, the Tahitian and the Hawaiian, elements of which the Marquesan dialect borrows to construct its own vocabulary and grammar. These are also the prevalent languages in the locales where Melville spent most of his time in the Pacific, Tahiti and Hawaii. Other dialects, such as the Tonga, Maori, Rarotonga, Fiji, are present but less frequently used in Melville's text and consequently in my dictionary, since they were less frequently heard, visited, or known during Melville's time. Of course, not all definitions of a word are incorporated in my dictionary, and so even this section is critical as the interpretation of Melville's Polynesian word is crucial to determining which definitions of that word to be included in the dictionary (and vice versa). The definitions are not enough to explain Melville's multicultural aesthetic, however, nor do they relate the meaning of the Polynesian term to its use in Melville's text. That is done by the explanatory notes which follow the definitions and which provide my insight regarding the composition and use of each particular term. The name "Babbalanja," for example, is indeed a Polynesian word, as the definition section shows, but it is the explanatory notes (in conjunction with the definitions of course) that relate the definitions to Melville's in-text use of the name.

Each entry is, finally, rounded up with references from other sources, such as William Ellis' *Polynesian Researches*, which (references) contain either the whole the term or elements of it. The purpose of these references is to highlight the semantic properties of Melville's term by observing its use in a context other than Melville's. Of course, this is not always possible, as many of his neologisms are Melville's invention with no apparent source for their existence, other than Melville's text and imagination.

Finally, the dictionary is preceded by two long critical chapters that discuss Melville's multicultural aesthetic on the morphemic level and show how the study of that aesthetic enhances our understanding of the effect that his Pacific experience had on his writing and his vision for an American cosmopolitan cultural identity. More specifically, chapter one analyzes Melville's methodology for incorporating original or invented Polynesian terms in his Pacific novels and how he uses that methodology to develop and apply his cosmopolitan aesthetic in his literary compositions. The second chapter studies Melville's Pacific narratives through the prism of his cosmopolitan aesthetic in an effort to establish a new reading for Melville's role in the development of an American multicultural identity.

CHAPTER II

"BUT ALGEBRAIC SIGNS": ASSOCIATING POLYNESIAN LINGUISTICS

WITH MELVILLE'S AESTHETICS

Before proceeding with my discussion in this chapter, I must clarify the work's title, and, more specifically, how I use the terms "linguistics" and "aesthetics," as well as the chapter's organization. My references to the word "linguistic" are made in a more limited and focused light than the full meaning of the term suggests. I use the term to refer only to the morphological, semantic, and phonetic aspects of linguistics. I have used *An Introduction to Language* as a theoretical basis for my approach, a book that contains an extensive bibliography on linguistic methodology. On the other hand, I use the term "aesthetic" (for lack of a better term) to refer to the poetic ability of language (and not only poetry), to the art (not the science) of language and words, which the Greek language identifies (and distinguishes from linguistics) with the term *logo*, "word," and *technē*, "art." The end result of *logo-technē*, of the "artful manipulation of words" may have an aesthetic value, and my concern is as much with the poetic process as with the aesthetic result. I use the word "aesthetic" to refer to both.

As far as the organization of the chapter is concerned, this begins with a short introductory background on Melville's aesthetic dilemma as he indirectly confesses in one of his letters while writing *Mardi*. In the section "'A *real* romance of mine': Challenges for Aesthetic Originality," I explain what exactly Melville's aesthetic preoccupations are and how he tries to resolve them by using the Polynesian language on

a linguistic level. The orthographic element of the linguistic analysis of Melville's Polynesian insertions appears in the section "A Study of Melville's Polynesian Orthographic Interjections." I follow this with the section "The Construction of Meaning in Melville's Aesthetic" which deals with the semantic implications of Melville's aesthetic. The chapter closes with "Implications for Editorial Policy," a discussion on the practical application of my approach on editorial alterations in order to emphasize the need to reevaluate this particular aspect of Melville's art.

In his March 25, 1848 letter to John Murray Melville made a bold claim about *Mardi*, not only that it would diverge from *Typee* or *Omoo*, but that it would answer, in an equally bold voice, the harsh criticism made by some of his contemporaries that he was but "a romancer in disguise" (*Correspondence* 106). However, this "change in [my] determinations" was a significant risk that had to be calculated and thus carried out within the familiar context of his Polynesian adventures. The challenge to write "a *real* romance" was a crucial factor in his decision as he confesses in that same letter, but that was not the sole one: "I have long thought that Polynisia [sic] furnished a great deal of rich poetical material that has never been employed hitherto in works of fancy; and which to bring out suitably, required only that play of freedom & invention accorded to the Romancer & poet" (106). Melville's revolutionary statement is not only a literary one, that is, he is not departing only thematically from his past works; he is not going to write a "narrative of *facts*" for which he had developed "an invisible distaste" but "a story wild enough … & with a meaning too." He hadn't abandoned Polynesia but instead his treatment of it was not going to be the context for yet another travel narrative on a

world that had been, by that time, exhaustively explored, conquered, and corrupted. *Mardi* was to be a narrative of fiction, and his revolutionary statement in the Murray letter implied a deeper change in Melville's writing style. It was a literary revolution not only in context but also in language, and Polynesia would not merely provide the cultural, historical and physical background as it had in *Typee* and *Omoo*. When Melville confessed that Polynesia "furnished a great deal of rich potential" he referred to a dynamic culture that affected those who had visited (conquered) it as much as that culture was affected by its visitors (conquerors). Such dynamism manifested itself both through cultural artifacts and through language and Melville realized the creative potential of other languages interacting with his own. The new book would be a much more dramatic interaction between elements of the two cultures; it would be a literary work where language played a pivotal role in narrative conception and development; it would be "such a romance that it shall afford the strongest presumptive evidence of the truth of Typee & Omoo by the sheer force of contrast" (*Correspondence* 106-107). *Mardi* was the first work where Melville broke the bonds of convention and unfolded his creative potential as a unique craftsman of words and themes. Of course, this was partly a calculated risk since he had chosen a familiar context and medium, both to him and his audience, to create his story. At the same time, the danger of this new and unexpected change turned out to be much greater than Melville's original calculations, and his audience failed to recognize his literary abilities which he chose to manifest in such an unorthodox manner. The language and culture of Polynesia became the central aesthetic

medium of a romance that took on everyone and everything, an experiment in talking about familiar things through the visions and words of an alien civilization.

Melville's audience (or any other author's who would have dared such an eccentric work as *Mardi*) was not ready for the challenge of a Pacific language and culture playing a central aesthetic role in the process of developing an American cultural (and political) self-awareness. Unlike the Americas, the Pacific islands could not be absorbed so easily into Melville's world and, as such, the American psyche could not embrace Melville's reality of the extravagant and the extreme of Polynesia according to its (the American psyche's) perception of American identity as a multicultural one. Only by perceiving Polynesia as an external reality, as a world that had nothing to do with American growth, as a place to visit but not live in, could Melville's audience accept it (and his vision of it). Any work that attempted to challenge this norm was harshly criticized and ostracized as too alien, too threatening, as something indigestible. *Typee* and *Omoo* were successful because they were Melville's "peeps" at Polynesian life through the eyes of a foreign observer, who could not and did not yet fully understand Polynesian reality as the young and immature writer that he was. Those were presumed fireplace adventures, devoid of any literary quality other than the cultural (and political) observations that lay on the surface. As a result, any other Polynesian novel that veered off the streamlined approach of *Typee* and *Omoo*, that was not a "peep" but a whole-hearted "dive" into Polynesia as Melville envisioned it in *Mardi*, would be an almost guaranteed failure. Melville's aesthetic (and thematic) rebellion, *Mardi*, and with it his vision of the artistic role of Polynesia in American history, were buried "in chill and

dismal fogs" (*Mardi* 6) of obscurity just like the actual world they had sustained; and so was Melville's first effort to write "what I feel most moved to" (*Correspondence* 191).

"A *real* romance of mine": Challenges for Aesthetic Originality

The failure of *Mardi* to sustain its author's reputation among the current travel narrative canon was primarily the result of a change in Melville's language which until then had carried him to literary fame on account of its unique style and tone according to his critics: "the picture 'of Polynesian life and scenery is incomparably the most vivid and forcible that has ever been laid before the public' … 'Yet 'Omoo' is lively, sparkling, humorous, conversational, diversified with little episodes of ocean life and vivid descriptions of southern scenery'" (qtd. in Parker 400, 503). However, *Mardi* failed because, unlike *Typee* and *Omoo*, it was "judged only as a work meant to entertain" (*Correspondence* 131). With *Mardi* Melville presented a hybrid Polynesian-American (or Polynesian-Universal) reality and used the much more alien Polynesian language to furnish his discussion of Yankee politics and metaphysics (*Correspondence* 131). Unfortunately, his audience was not ready for such a cultural amalgam, or for the kind of linguistic contrivances and deviations from the norm that were abundant in that work. Within the space of these three works his audience had been exposed to two completely different, almost opposing, treatises on Melville's Polynesia, the "factual fiction" and the "fictional fiction" —I realize the redundancy of the terms and I use them here with every precaution and only to differentiate between the two approaches to Melville's use of the Polynesian language. And within this space, the only constant

parameter that has led critics to group these works together is the Polynesian background (linguistic and cultural), which was also the means for his literary revolution, his linguistic maturation and eventually his public downfall. Until his estrangement from the public (and some might say until the very end of his literary career), nothing affected his creative imagination as a logographer as much as Polynesia; and *Mardi* was the culmination of what Melville described as "certain something unmanageable" (*Correspondence* 132) in him that had to manifest itself through linguistic play and apparent inconsistencies. After the failure of *Mardi*, Melville's Polynesia, as an aesthetic and cultural medium capable of effecting the maturation of a uniquely American cultural identity, seeped into his later creations only in tiny drips and only as pure fiction or as dry fact.

Despite the early downfall, Melville's vision of Polynesia through its plastic language and polysemous images informed his writing work as a whole and did not remain within the confines of its origin, *Typee, Omoo,* and *Mardi*. Melville's characters, places, and events, those that are not part of the Polynesian canon, share the aesthetic affinity of Polynesian language. His non-Polynesian linguistic inventions are polysemous symbols and images with the hidden potential to have more than one meaning attached, and especially such (meanings) that can take readers beyond conventional associations. Melville's inclination as a writer went past conventional encyclopedism or lexicography or rhetoric and into aesthetics, into the development of a fresh, American language that can carry with equal force a new American ideology. His use of history or literature or any other cultural landmark was not solely to persuade or

to promote any particular agenda of his; it was meant to create a new aesthetic that would allow him to solidify his cosmopolitan ethos: "Words are but algebraic signs, conveying no meaning except what you please" (*Mardi* 269). The dynamic presence of the Polynesian language in Melville's works, from the very first word he ever published ("Typee") suggests that Melville, early on, became interested in experimenting with language as a means of challenging convention and of developing aesthetic and cultural originality. The Polynesian word "Typee," which became the author's popular nickname (whether he liked it or not), and its controversial meaning embody Melville's interest in developing an original, dynamic aesthetic through linguistic and semantic manipulation both of familiar and unfamiliar languages.

Several critics have attempted to catalogue and provide an adequate interpretation for most of Melville's conventional literary allusions, in an effort to point out the polysemy of his words, the interpretational plasticity of his text, and the new aesthetic he was struggling to create. Jill B. Gidmark, in *Melville's Sea Vocabulary: A Commentary and a Glossed Concordance*, recognizes Melville's compounding "knack" as a metaphor for the linguistic realities of life on land: "In compounding the words (one of his favorite grammatical tactics) and in the ways in which he shifts the functions of the words from one class to another using affixes, Melville reveals to us one of the greatest truths behind sea literature —that life on the sea is a microcosm for the larger reality of life on the land" (abstract xi). Equally forcefully, Gail H. Coffler's *Melville's Classical Allusions* underscores the influence of classical civilization on Melville's artistic and philosophical development: "by metaphorical application, these multivalent

allusions reveal much about Melville's own political thought, about his philosophical and artistic theories, and, most importantly, about underlying meanings in the works themselves" (preface ix). In the preface to her dictionary, Coffler recognizes the importance of language as poetics for Melville's literary growth; that is, she implicitly illuminates the connotational dynamics of Melville's classical adoptions and the inventiveness with which he seemed to infuse his words. Finally, Kathleen E. Kier, in the preface to her *Melville Encyclopedia*, makes a statement parallel in meaning to Melville's own confession in *Moby-Dick*: "Yet, although my emphasis has been on the literal, there is little in Melville's works that should be taken merely literally" (preface ix). Kier's work naturally emphasizes Melville's ability, to put it bluntly, to say one thing and mean another. Although the encyclopedia does not follow up very strongly on this particular premise of her work, that premise is indeed a sound observation of Melville's aesthetic tactics. In other words, Kier's statement is an indirect claim that Melville's allusions, just like his language, carry multiple meanings; they have potential referents that still remain undisclosed, while she is able to reveal only the most familiar one. Kier underlines this possibility herself: "he was aware of the seeming dichotomy between 'realism' and 'metaphysics' and must have enjoyed undercutting scientific taxonomies while simultaneously milking them for symbolic content" (preface ix). Kier clearly implies that Melville was never satisfied with convention and that the most crucial part of his poetic development was the ability to manipulate or subvert language in order to manipulate or subvert culture. In this sense, his unbridled linguistic inventiveness in works like *Mardi* is a clear example of his gradual poetic maturation.

Kier uses another statement to illustrate his poetic growth: "much of *White-Jacket's* nautical language was double-entendre for sailors, enabling Melville to be quite naughty without fear of censorship" (preface xiii). The emphasis on the relation between language and culture that all three critics (and many others) discuss, suggests that Melville had infused his language with the whole of his knowledge from experience and his readings; and he did this in order to underscore the interconnectedness of the two, and especially the power of language to destroy and recreate meaning in a poetic environment with the prospect of defining the characteristics of a new, American culture.

There are several critics who have argued in favor of or against Melville's political agenda, as part of a national effort at that time, to establish a uniquely American cultural presence in the eyes of Western Europe. Melville, however, effected the interplay of language and cultural context —by the term "cultural" I mean all the political, philosophical, and social achievements of a people— not solely within a western environment; his texts are infused with references from both the East and the West, the South and the North. Polynesia played a crucial role in shaping and expanding his literary context, especially in the early developmental years of his career. The Polynesian language and culture shaped the narrative of the first two narratives primarily on a factual basis —as opposed to the highly symbolic context of *Mardi*— and allowed Melville to present "the picture 'of Polynesian life and scenery … [as] incomparably the most vivid and forcible that has ever been laid before the public'" (qtd. in Parker 400). Besides their often explicit political agendas, both *Typee* and *Omoo* are highly evocative

travel narratives that use the Polynesian linguistic idiom to emphasize the conflicts and relations that affected, dynamically or subconsciously, both civilizations. Although critics like T. Walter Herbert, Samuel Otter, and Charles R. Anderson have conducted extensive research on the factual and politically suggestive nature of (at least) these two books, there has been no organized effort to record and critique the impact of Melville's Polynesian linguistics insertions in his text within an aesthetic context. This is also the problem with Gidmark's, Kier's, and Coffler's lexicographic efforts as they only catalogue words that are recognizable in the English language, that is, they are monolingual efforts. In other words, there is no bilingual critical work that attempts to provide a systematic interpretation of the multiple meanings that Melville embedded inside all those foreign words that flood his stories and upon which Melville based to a significant degree his first attempts "to plume my pinions for a flight" (*Correspondence* 106). Kier's encyclopedic effort presents several instances of Melville's use of Polynesian, such as the references to the folk song "A Hare ta fow" and "aorai" (Kier 1: 18, 44), but does not explain the actual Polynesian meaning of each entry as the nature of her work is not linguistic. The same can be said for several Polynesian terms that seem to have found their meaning in western world sources, like the term "Media" (Kier 2: 656), without reference to the possibility of a Polynesian root. If Ahab and Ishmael are figures that carry a multitude of meanings —Kier, although partial toward a particular definition, has done an excellent job in identifying at least two possible sources for Ahab— then it is not improbable that such linguistically alienating personas as King Media, Taji and Babbalanja, among others, are equally suggestive of the

existence of at least one more hidden meaning beneath the apparent incomprehensibility of their Polynesian or semi-Polynesian appellations.

From the first pages of "Etymology," *Moby-Dick* introduces readers to the world of aesthetic dynamics they are about to enter, a world where Ishmael claims "all this is not without meaning" (5). Based on Melville's confession about the nature of the new book which imitates the kind of poetic inventiveness that manifests itself through language, I decided to examine Melville's first linguistic steps through a systematic analysis of the Polynesian language as that was intended, among others, to manipulate fact and to create fiction. The emphasis on the poetic quality of language in *Moby-Dick* is rooted in Melville's particular experience with the Polynesian language in his previous works. The necessity of this project is guided by the need to identify and define Melville's aesthetic methodology, especially with something as alien and alienating as another linguistic medium. My concern is also with how he used these terms to bring into conflict and criticize established rhetorical, philosophical, and sociopolitical ideas and through that conflict expose his beliefs and counterweigh them to convention —with the term "conflict" I refer to the semantic interplay both between linguistic terms and between languages that allows Melville to question and redefine past conventional conceptions and ideas. One of the functions of my Polynesian dictionary is to expose the linguistic conflict both between English and Polynesian and among Polynesian dialects which Melville exploits in the process of creating a new context for new ideological conflicts.

Otter, Anderson, and Herbert have provided useful critical insights toward a more spherical understanding of the Polynesian culture and the juxtaposed conflict with western culture that appear in Melville. However, none of them (and no other scholar according to my research) has explored the semantic possibilities of Melville's hybrid linguistic constructions because the focus has been on cultural polarization between the South Seas and western civilization almost as an extra-linguistic phenomenon. This is not to imply any extravagant schism that has been artificially implanted by critical theory between language and culture; on the contrary, this study is meant to reinforce the interconnectedness between the two and enhance the field of literary interpretation. In this case, however, the study of the Polynesian language as it appears in Melville's text is imposed in order to cover a significant gap in the examination of Melvillean poetics. Is it possible, for example, that Melville knew of queen Aimata's (*Omoo* 303) licentiousness not solely through some rumor or research at random (it hasn't been proven how he knew of her character and her behavior), but because he knew the implicit meaning of her name, a fact common among Polynesians. My research has revealed three possible meanings for the Polynesian queen's name. First, the compound "Ai-mata" means "to begin to copulate" which implies that her name was indicative of her licentious character. At the same time, "Ai-mata" means "the face of disapprobation" which again suggests her terrible behavior toward her husband or anyone who displeased her. Finally, her name also means "eye-eater" a possible pun on her cannibalistic tendencies. Melville used this semantic multiplicity in *Omoo* to develop a dynamic discourse between language and culture. Later on, with *Mardi*, Melville would amplify

this discourse to an unparalleled extreme, in order to underline the culturally subversive potential of aesthetic originality. On a similar basis, although contemporary criticism has provided researchers with crucial insight regarding the mystery of words like Babbalanja, Fayaway, Oh-Oh, and Wee-Wee, it has failed to investigate the possibility of a Polynesian origin for these names and their implications on the characters' roles in *Mardi*.

Richard H. Brodhead claims about *Mardi* that Melville "comes to see that its true action is not his characters' adventures but his own creative process: that the real object of its quest is nothing his characters seek but the mental world he himself discloses through the act of creating his book" (Brodhead, *Creative* 39). Brodhead's observation is true but only if *Mardi* is perceived as aesthetic creation and the "creative process" be founded on language because language rather than fact is "the creative" just as Brodhead implies. The true action of *Mardi* is not the baggy narrative, neither is it the projections of the abstract "mental world" of Brodhead, but the concrete, practical, real problem of the aesthetic —the term is perceived here as the combination of the mimetic and intuitive aspects of literary creation— potential of language. The anonymous narrator describes *Mardi* as a tangible place where language is the sole means of its manifest reality and the sole means of grasping it: "But this new world here sought, is stranger far than this, who stretched his vans from Palos. It is the world of mind; wherein the wanderer may gaze round, with more of wonder than Balboa's band roving through the golden Aztec glades" (*Mardi* 557). In this sense however, names, expositions, events, and all his metaphysical preoccupations find articulation through his peculiar linguistic

inventiveness. Brodhead's thesis is such, although he never directly admits it until perhaps his later discussion of the effects of *Mardi* on Melville's subsequent work: "what makes his later versions of *Mardi*'s philosophical insights original and profound is not an increase in their content as intellectual propositions but the dazzling metaphorical formulation Melville gives them, his expression of them through the very images we see him creating here" (Brodhead, *Creative* 46-47).

Take for example the name of King Uhia in *Mardi*. Brodhead identifies it as a prefiguration of Ahab, a restricted image that has "not undergone such a genuinely metaphorical development" (Brodhead, *Creative* 45). However, it is not enough to accept the character and the concept of King Uhia without tracing the possibility of the name's origin, just as we cannot accept the choice of Ahab as the captain of the Pequod without examining Ahab's name's origin. King Uhia's name's origin, "to cover, to conquer" but also "to be covered, conquered," is linguistic as much as it is literary, since the "metaphorical development" of the linguistic into the literary presupposes a profound understanding of the linguistic and semantic qualities of both the name and the context within which it is intended to function. The explanation of the metaphor of King Uhia demands the explanation of the name's linguistic nature, in order to understand not only its function in the metaphor, but Melville's reasons for its initial choice/invention and, later, its role in that metaphor. We can extrapolate Ahab's role in the metaphor of *Moby-Dick* and we can estimate the reasons for Melville's choice to use the Biblical name for his captain because we know what "Ahab" means. In the same sense, we can say that "Uhia" is either an invention or Melville was establishing his apparent neologism in a

factual truth of Polynesian origin. In either case, the reasons for "Uhia's" existence and function in the text of *Mardi* cannot be found only within the bounds of its metaphorical use, just like with the meaning of "Ahab." The name "Uhia" must be defined as a linguistic unit and as a concept within the framework of its original language and then be correlated with its Melvillean context; this step will allow readers to understand the aesthetic rationale behind Melville's process of incorporating the term in his text. The function of my dictionary is to cycle the research process back to the linguistic analysis of a word's multiple meanings, which (process) will allow readers to examine each one of Melville's terms first as external (outside of Melville's text) entities and then as fully incorporated, meaningful forces inside Melville's text. Richard H. Brodhead concludes that Melville's plasticity of language was an amalgam of the contrived fictional and the "mangled" factual: "he creates shapely and self-enclosed forms, and then makes room within them for the ragged edges of mangled realities" (Brodhead, *Creative* 132). My dictionary separates such "shapely and self-enclosed forms" from the "ragged edges of mangled realities" and examines them within their original (Polynesian) linguistic environment before placing them back into Melville's synthetic (Polynesian–English) context. This way, it attempts to provide readers with pertinent insight into Melville's motives for his aesthetic choices —that is, how he blended fact with fiction in his language to "create[d] the creative" (*Mardi* 595), to develop a new, polysemous language that could convey his subversive, unique thought.

In his *Myths and Legends of the Polynesians*, Johannes C. Andersen explains the plastic quality of the Polynesian language in multiple dialects with the example of family names:

> Now the name of the father of Rata was Wahie-roa, and the name of his mother was Matoka-rau-tawhiri; the name of the mother of Nganaoa, Vaia-roa, is evidently the same as Wahie-roa; and the other names, mother in one and father in the other version, have much in common. Omitting the 'Ma' of the Maori name, 'toka-rau' is near 'tokerau' of the Aitutaki name; and the final part of the Maori name, 'tawhiri,' becomes the first part, 'Ta'iri,' of the Aitutaki name, since the region about this island, having a repugnance to the aspirate, drops it and the *w* with which it is combined in the sound *wh*. This is a striking metamorphosis, and shows that a name is of as much or even more importance than a story. (186)

Andersen uses the above explanation to clarify the name of the protagonist in a particular Maori story, but what this also shows is the morphemic shifts among Polynesian cultures, dialects, and regions. By "region" I refer to a particular island cluster that used more or less the same linguistic idiom to communicate, such as the Society or Sandwich Islands— based on their cultural particularities, as well as the foundational similarities of many words among dialects. Andersen's final contention underscores the specific attribute of Polynesian names to carry within their meaning certain elements of their mythology, thus becoming not merely symbols of their creation myths but parts of that myth. Furthermore, Andersen emphasizes indirectly the phonetic quality of Polynesian words and how that quality was translated into English in a manner that would maintain the regional phonetic differences between words with a similar (or the same) meaning. Lastly, the above example shows the phonetic and semantic interconnectedness of Polynesian words, that is, how the meaning of a word changes or,

in this case, remains the same, based on the manner of its pronunciation, a characteristic common with Indo-European languages as well. My dictionary is compiled with respect to the above fundamental characteristics, among others, which Melville was probably aware of when he decided to incorporate the perplexities of the Polynesian language into his own. His interest in the aesthetic potential of language is transplanted into the interaction between Polynesian and English and this interest remains alive until the end of his career, despite his gradual withdrawal from the Polynesian context that furnished his literary growth.

The manner in which Melville embodies this interaction between word and meaning is at the center of the hermeneutical effort of the dictionary. More importantly, he applies the following methodology when using a Polynesian word in his text: he names something or someone according to their physical characteristics or character or behavior, which he then embeds inside their name. The dictionary's interpretational agenda is based on the observation that Melville uses the ability of the Polynesian language to provide a name for someone or something based on a random incident of their life or on one of their particular physical or psychological traits, whose origin could have been either factual or fictional. In this sense, "Aimata," which means "to begin to copulate" or "to eat the eye" or "the face of disapprobation," is not just a name for the Tahitian queen; it could also be a name for a woman who indulged quite often in sexual acts, or who was severely critical of others, or who may have had cannibal tendencies, regardless of her Christian baptismal oaths or her social position. Additionally, "Media" is a lot more than Taji's host and his name reflects his role in the narrative. "Media" or

"Mea-tia," that is, is "an advocate, an intercessor" and "Mea-tiai" is "a keeper," just as "Metia" is "a parent," all of which are characteristic traits of Taji's host that surface throughout the narrative; "Media" interjects, like a parent, every time there is an argument among his guests, and acts as a chaperone and guardian throughout the trip. Melville used this particular methodology for most of his characters and it is almost standard of his narrative approach every time he introduces a new character to spend some time providing a basic and fundamental description that, as far as the Polynesian language is concerned, is based on the meaning of the particular character's name.

At the same time, however, Melville transcends the semantic limitations of the Polynesian language and very often in his text uses or creates a word that anchors several multilingual references to itself. This linguistic breakthrough allows Melville to create a character that transcends the limits of one culture and one history, and voices that very same American (multicultural) identity that Melville had been trying to establish since *Typee*. The case of "Media" is such an example: Melville uses the definition of the Polynesian name, "Metia" (and of the other alternatives), to develop a character that acts as intercessor, parent, and guardian. Further than that, Melville, by slightly altering "Metia" to "Media," is able to transcend the cultural barriers of Polynesia and ascribe multicultural (American) significance to his language and to the identity of his character. The slightly changed "Media" now also alludes to the European, Latin-based masculine word "Medius," which means "mediator," and thus allows its author to create a character who not only acts out in the narrative the meaning of his name, but also functions as a linguistic bridge and mediator that covers the

historical, geographical, and cultural gap of the two hemispheres. With this name,

Melville is able to create an aesthetic that combines the cultural and linguistic

backgrounds both of Polynesia and Western Europe. This narrative technique has also

been incorporated inside the dictionary in order to point the reader to those extra-

Polynesian references that illuminate Melville's cosmopolitan aesthetic.

A Study of Melville's Polynesian Orthographic Interjections

Before proceeding with my discussion on orthography, for reference purposes, it

is imperative to single out the alphabetic discrepancies between the English and

Polynesian languages. Readers should know that the Tahitian language is primarily a

vowel language, containing all the vowels as the English language except *y*. It uses only

the consonants *f*, *h*, *m*, *n*, *p*, *r* (or *l* in Hawaiian), *t* (or *k* in Hawaiian), and *v* (or *w* in

Hawaiian). The remaining consonants *b* (which is used in the Tonga dialect and

pronounced as *p*), *d*, *g*, *k* or *t*, *s*, *z* (all of which are pronounced as *t* or *k*), *l* (pronounced

as *r*), or *r* (pronounced as *l*) and *w* or *v* (pronounced as *ua*) are foreign.

One of the most significant challenges in creating a lexical account of Melville's

Polynesian vocabulary is dealing with the matter of orthography: developing, that is, an

interpretative approach for Melville's unorthodox spelling, pronunciation, syllabication,

and compounding of both his Polynesian and his hybrid constructs. Melville, however,

places great value on the morphemic nature of words, where the orthographic

manipulation of morphemes —the smallest meaningful combinations of letters—

produces a word that can carry his intended meaning. One such example is the repeated

morphemes "ji-ji" and "oh-oh" in *Mardi* (386, 378), whose equivalents "ii-ii" and "ohi-ohi" in the Polynesian language mean "to collect." Melville uses these (orthographically manipulated) morphemes as names for two minor characters who antagonize each other in their love of antiques and rare items. With this example, Melville emphasizes the value of morphemes in the Polynesian language, as well as the value of their orthographic manipulation in his texts. In his works the meaning of a word often changes with the addition or subtraction of a morpheme, whose orthography Melville has altered. Melville uses the polysemy engendered by the orthographic manipulation of morphemes, that is, by creating hybrid Polynesian or English-Polynesian morphemes, or by using the metaphorical implications of newly compounded morphemes, to develop semantic multiplicity in his novels. For example, each one of the original morphemes from the orthographically altered compound "Typee," "Ta-ai-piaa," "of eating flesh," carries a separate, literal meaning, which cannot exist by itself in Melville's text, just as "ji-ji," and "oh-oh." The compounded result "Typee" embodies Melville's understanding of the value of both the literal meaning of each morpheme and the metaphorical meaning it acquires in Melville's text after it has been orthographically distorted in accordance with Melville's developing aesthetic. With "Typee," Melville takes the meaning of the original "Ta-ai-piaa," "of eating flesh," and does what he pleases with it; he turns it into the dreaded and controversial meaning of "cannibalism." How and why Melville slightly modified "Typee" can now be interpreted, since we know the meaning of the original word, based on those orthographic rules of the Polynesian language it apparently violates. With such an observation, Melville was illustrating the significance of both the

literal and metaphorical effects of orthography, where the literal meaning of a morpheme could be manipulated, like an "algebraic sign[s]," to affect the meaning of a whole book. However, neither the literal nor the metaphorical significance of his language can be observed without a cross-cultural linguistic analysis and understanding of which Polynesian orthographic rules Melville observes, breaks, ignores, or changes for his purposes.

Essentially, Melville's Polynesian words carry (at least) two meanings that are implicitly interrelated: a metaphorical one that arises out of their contextual use, that is, their relation to other words in Melville's sentences, and a literal one that can be revealed by restoring the word's altered orthography back to its original. The example of "Typee" above illustrates the role of the morpheme as one orthographic element in deciphering first the literal and then the metaphorical meaning of this controversial term. Further, this example validates the aesthetic value of orthography, in other words, the significance of those morphemes Melville had transcribed, compounded, altered, or invented for the purposes of his text. What makes the issue of orthography a problem for any linguistic analysis of Melville's Polynesian, then, is how to rediscover and justify fixed words with (multiple) literal meanings from an orthographically unstable text, that is, how to go back and discern and justify the original Polynesian root-word from its altered derivative, without creating a collision with Melville's metaphorical context. The study of the metaphorical meaning of Melville's Polynesian functions as a guide to restoring the orthography and meaning of the original word, and provides the necessary theoretical background for explaining Melville's actions. The example of "Typee" shows

how Melville needed a Polynesian word that would mystify his readers but would not be altogether contrived. The definition that he came up with for "Typee" is not very far from that of the original "Ta-ai-piaa," and one need only look at the meaning of the original Polynesian morphemes to realize that Melville changed the orthography of the original to develop his metaphor and enhance the romantic appeal of his work.

The realization of the semantic potential of orthographic modifications came slowly in *Typee* and *Omoo*, but even these works made him aware of the aesthetic weight of the Polynesian language and provided him with the opportunity to employ his poetic license with a great deal of restraint and develop his skill at inventing, modifying, and compounding Polynesian words whose orthography was changed just enough to allow them to carry their meaning in Melville's own literary way. Melville did not fully develop this literary method until *Mardi*, and the first two travel narratives contain very few extravagant orthographic modifications. The Polynesian adoptions of *Typee* and *Omoo* are more conventional than those of *Mardi* or *Moby-Dick* not just because of Melville's possible aesthetic immaturity, but also due to the realistic nature of the narratives. Melville may have intended for the first two narratives to be fictionalized accounts based on a true story, but a close examination of his orthographic Polynesian interventions in *Typee* and *Omoo* reveals a conscious effort to be faithful to their original spelling and meaning and avoid significant experimentation with them. Despite the fact that Melville wrote Polynesian as a foreigner, that his orthography was primarily a phonetic one, there are still several similarities between his orthography of Polynesian words and those orthographic rules established by missionaries or explorers at that time.

By juxtaposing Melville's Polynesian orthography to that of several dictionaries which were published almost concurrently, I intend to show that, despite popular misconception, he hadn't "much grasp of the Polynesian languages—even of the sound of words he had heard and tried to pronounce" (Delbanco 76), Melville's phonetic perception of orthography has a lexicological basis; that rarely does it become a victim of his linguistic ignorance or the product of an entirely experimental effort, even at the apex of his aesthetic maturation with this language, *Mardi*.

Melville observes the rules of Polynesian orthography on a circumstantial basis, whether he is simply copying a term from memory, from another source, or whether he is altering it from its original. He also hints at his understanding of those rules when he is inventing a term either because he does not remember its equivalent or because he needs a term in the (quasi-Polynesian) form he gives it but without having to consult a Polynesian dictionary. In all these cases, I have used several dictionaries to extrapolate the original orthography by substituting those non-Polynesian letters that Melville replaced with their Polynesian counterparts. Another orthographical rule that Melville knew and very often violated was that vowels played a significant role in the Polynesian language: a vowel must always be the last letter of a word, and no word can have two adjacent consonants but such combinations must be divided up with the interjection of a vowel —these are the missionary John Davies' (3) observations that seem to apply to the Tahitian, Hawaiian, and the majority of the other Polynesian dialects. Melville's Polynesian words seem to constantly deviate from these two rules. He breaks the rules of Polynesian orthography both with vowel endings and with several consonant

conjunctions, as in the words "ardair," "mardi," and "marbonna," for example, thus

necessitating, in the process of discovering the word's Polynesian counterpart either the

interjection of a vowel, or the replacement of one consonant by a vowel, or the omission

of one of the two consonants —again, in most double-consonant cases, one of the two

consonants that seems to break Polynesian orthography is the letter *r*. As he confesses in

the preface to *Typee*, Melville wrote phonetically and his words reflect a conscious effort

to imitate the sound rather than the spelling of a word: "in several works descriptive of

the islands in the Pacific, many of the most beautiful combinations of vocal sounds have

been altogether lost to the ear of the reader by an over-attention to the ordinary rules of

spelling" (*Typee* xiv). In this sense, Melville applies a unique lexicographical method

that was also employed by those missionaries who were preparing more formalized

versions of Polynesian orthography.

The Polynesian language was at Melville's time the main medium for cultural

exchange, and its phonetic quality was significant for determining its intricacies and

dialectal differences. Melville (and other lexicographers) uses the same vowels that were

adopted by the missionaries to catalogue in a uniform manner the sounds of the

Polynesian language: "In late 1821, influenced by the decisions already made in Tahiti,

the missionaries decided to write the vowels in the so-called foreign or continental (e.g.,

Italian), not the English, way. The result was a perfect match between the sounds and the

letters —at least for the short vowels" (Andrews, *Dictionary* xi-xii). For longer vowels,

Melville employs double vowels, as in the words "omoo," "heeva," "keekee" to imitate

their equivalent sounds, but for the most part, and as Davies explains in the introduction

to his Tahitian dictionary, "each vowel has its own distinct sound" (3). Therefore, words like "faawai" and "kamapiikai," which do not try to imitate a longer sounding vowel, retain the distinct pronunciation of the two adjacent vowels. There are, of course, problematic cases where Melville does not follow any established spelling rules but instead creates his own. The lack of a manuscript template or a close study of an existing manuscript to identify editorial changes does not exclude the possibility that the adoption of the letter *y*, for example, to represent either the diphthong *ai* in "Typee" or in "Yoomy," was an editorial and not an authorial decision —John Bryant in the new *Herman Melville's "Typee": A Fluid Text Edition* is in the process of restoring such editorial ambiguities. Further, Melville seems to adopt missionary policy in using consonants that do not exist in the Polynesian alphabet and thus cannot be pronounced, to imitate foreign sounds, as in "ji-ji," "yillah," or "mow-mow," which in turn could only be uttered by the natives by some vowel or vowel combination —"ji-ji" is pronounced "ii-ii" or "i-i," "mow-mow" becomes "muoo-muoo" or "mau-mau," and "Yillah" has several possible spellings, such as "ira, ai-ra(a)," or "ui-ra(a)," or "ila(a)."

The orthography of the consonants, then, and especially the letter *r*, creates a wider field for experimentation and imbues Melville's Polynesian with a greater degree of interpretative ambiguity. In one of these cases, Melville uses two different consonant combinations which can be replaced by a vowel-consonant combination, or by nothing, as in the words "adondo," "midni," "minda," and "moldona" among others. It is possible that Melville was still working on a phonetic basis in the above examples because the letters *n* and *l* in the Tahitian dialect can often be replaced by the letter *r* (Davies 2)

which of course is so prevalent in Melville's Polynesian vocabulary. As explained later, the presence of the letter *n* or *l* next to another consonant could denote the possibility that it is replaceable by *r*, which (*r*) in turn can also be replaced by a vowel or by nothing in order to recover its Polynesian counterpart —in those cases where its presence results in the prohibited combination of two consonants. Another peculiarity that is easier to explain is where some consonants appear in dual form, as in the examples "ananna," "tommo," and "fanna," which most probably suggests either a spelling error on Melville's part, or possibly on the editor's, or an intentional modification of the original to serve Melville's purposes.

Another one of Melville's orthographical idiosyncrasies worth discussing is the use of the letter *h*, which for an uninformed reader could create orthographical ambiguity depending on whether the *h* were a voiceless or a voiced one. If it were a silent *h* then there would be no apparent problem with words like "karhownoo" or "arheetoo" because there would be no pronounced grammatical discrepancy with the two adjacent consonants. Davies's explanation that seems to be prevalent in almost all dialects, clarifies the case of the *h* by establishing its pronounced nature: "the *h* is invariably pronounced with the aspirate, though frequently so softly, as not to be perceived by foreigners, unless peculiar attention be paid to it" (Davies 2). In this sense, all *h*-consonant combinations are resolved on a similar basis as all other consonant combinations and the *h* acquires a separate existence in the word that must be observed, especially in two consonant combinations, because it is another consonant.

But an even more perplexing and complicated problem is the interjection of foreign consonants in Polynesian words. It is my understanding that with words that contain the consonants *g*, *j*, *q*, *v*, *s*, *w* (in some cases), *x*, and *z* —the rest of the English consonants have a more precise Polynesian equivalent— Melville is being inventive by using a Polynesian basis and then substituting one or more consonants with a foreign one, as in the words "ji-ji," "queequeg," and "xiki." For that matter, I was initially uncertain how to find their Polynesian equivalents, especially for those words that seem to only partially imitate some orthographical aspect of the Polynesian language. Some dictionaries, like Davies', include an alphabetical guide to replacing English consonants with Polynesian ones, but only those that can have some sort of phonetic equivalent in Polynesian; in several cases, however, that process does not produce a term that brought me any closer to understanding Melville's word. I have tried to discover an explanation either by basing my choices on a phonetic representation of the word or by looking for a lexical term that bears a similar meaning to Melville's word and then trying to find orthographical similarities between the two. This process is in turn dependent upon my general theory that Melville creates characters for his stories from the definitions of words, and I try to establish this with all dictionary entries. A significant hindrance to this process is that Melville uses the orthography of the whole of the Polynesian language, and not only one particular dialect, which makes the process of identifying and explaining words that belong to different dialects a challenge by itself. Melville does not use only Marquesan, and words with English consonants, like "xiki," "yillah," and

"babbalanja," point to the significance of examining other Polynesian dialects and their unique orthography to draw much more precise parallels for Melville's words.

A significant element of Melville's orthography is his interjection of the consonant *r* either at the end of a word or in-between consonants and vowels. The presence of the letter complicates the process of identifying the Polynesian orthography and meaning of a word. Some critics who have done some preliminary work on Melville's Polynesian (Fletcher 135-138) identify the *r* as a by-product of Melville's limited knowledge or familiarity with the Marquesan dialect of Nukuheva (Delbanco 76n). Others believe that Melville did not know Polynesian very well and that he was inventing based on phonetic approximations, which, in turn, where often misspelled, as happens with the interjected *r*: "Whether one attends to Melville's garbling of Polynesian words or to his eyewitness accounts of tribal practices, no one is likely to mistake his early books for the work of a scrupulous field anthropologist" (Delbanco 76). Of course, the presence of the *r* seems to delimit geographically the nature of Melville's Polynesian and its applicable substitutes to the Tahitian dialect and to its various spawnings within the same geographic region. At the same time, however, the manner of use of this consonant leaves open the possibility for more discrepancies between the Tahitian dialect and its own spawnings. In the case of Melville's *r* it is worth noting David Darling's *Remarks about the Marquesas*, where it is pointed out that this particular consonant is more pervasive among the Tahitians than the Marquesans:

> The Language at the Marquesas differs very much from the Tahitian although it is a dialect of the same language; there are many words nearly the same; they discard some letters such as the *r* which the Tahitians use very frequently and

adopt others which is not at all used by the Tahitians … The Marquesan dialect is not so soft a Language [*sic*] as the Tahitian, there being a much more frequent use of consonants, especially of the letter *k* which is not in the Tahitian. It has the same peculiarity as the Tahitian in never allowing two consonants to come together, nor a syllable to end without a vowel. (qtd. in Lamb 241)

Darling's observation regarding the two consonants establishes initially some ambiguity as to whether Melville depends on one dialect or multiple dialects, and, if the latter, which: the letter *r* points to the direction of the Tahitian, whereas the letter *k* indicates that Melville employed the Marquesan dialect (along with its Hawaiian influences) with equal frequency. Essentially, this orthographical dilemma in Melville's text reflects the instability of the Polynesian language as a whole, which seemed not to bother the natives at all —since any oral communication required extra-linguistic elements to function, such as gestures and facial expressions— nor Melville, who adopted its fluid nature as part of his literary creativity.

Melville used many Polynesian words and not just Tahitian ones and tried to imitate all sounds irrespective of geographical origin. Therefore, the problem of the interjected *r* is a contrived one, and it plagued mostly the missionaries who attempted to provide an exact lexicological representation of the oral idiosyncrasies of an unstable language. But it did not bother Melville who wrote fiction and not fact, who wrote more phonetically and less grammatically nor has it bothered Melville's critics who have not accounted for its presence yet. The peculiar case of the *r*, then, imposes the need for extrapolation not only in cases where Melville is writing phonetically, but also in cases where he is inventing and compounding terms. Furthermore, the use of the consonant *r* in a large majority of Melville's Polynesian is quite problematic because Melville uses it

to substitute sometimes vowels, sometimes other consonants, and sometimes nothing, thus making it difficult to establish some kind of constancy or pattern in the substitution process. The issue of the redundancy of the *r* depends on the meaning of Melville's particular Polynesian word, on the juxtaposition of its metaphorical meaning with several original Polynesian terms whose literal meaning may indicate Melville's use. The orthographical examination is a primary tool in this process. In the case of "farnoopoo" for example, which comes from the Tahitian "fanau-po" and which means "night-born," Melville has interjected the *r* without using it as a substitute for another letter. On the other hand, the *r* of "arheetoo" is more problematic because it is uncertain whether Melville wanted to refer to "aritu," which means "a person who seizes his prey in time of war" and which drops the *h*, or "ahitu," which means "a company of idolatrous priests, a sort of Nazarites, residing in a sacred house in a "marae," and observing peculiar customs, such as not shaving, not cutting the hair" (Davies 11). Both choices indicate that Melville is most probably using the word in a metaphorical sense, thus necessitating a more detailed analysis and inclusion in the dictionary of all possible orthographic alternatives. By "possible" I mean that each Polynesian original could have inspired Melville in adopting or transforming its orthography, without excluding its literal meaning but using it, through the altered spelling, in a metaphorical sense. Equally, the omission of one of the two consonants in the *r-h* combination validates Melville's aesthetic choice to disregard Polynesian grammar possibly because his creation allows him to use two alternative terms that could both have been in his mind when he tried to imitate their sound on paper. At the same time, and just like such cases

as "rartoo," "karky" and "ardair," the recurrent *r*, in conjunction with some other

consonant, validates the presence of the other consonant, or the use of a vowel in its

stead and indirectly points to the grammatical necessity to separate consonants with

vowels in restoring the original word. The literal meaning of the compound "ardair," for

example, "a place of shadow" or "a place used as bait," may have inspired Melville

while he was conjuring the golden prison of Yillah. He exaggerated the meaning of the

original Polynesian to create the metaphor of a precious secret lying hidden deep inside a

place of shadow. This example also illustrates the necessity to separate, replace, or

remove the *r* in words that end with this consonant and to replace it with a vowel or omit

it altogether. In all these cases and many more, the interjection of the *r*, justifies the need

for its critical examination as it forms an integral part of Melville's cosmopolitan

aesthetic.

The Construction of Meaning in Melville's Aesthetic

Melville constructs his cosmopolitan aesthetic by manipulating the Polynesian

language's orthographic and semantic traits. The concept of semantic construction is

perceived here in both its philosophical and linguistic dimension which any good

dictionary would define as "whatever it is that makes what would otherwise be mere

sounds and inscriptions into instruments of communication and understanding" (*ODP*).

According to this definition, Melville's use of the Polynesian language to construct

meaning is both a semantic matter as it relates the sign to the object it refers to, and a

holistic matter since "the meaning of an individual word can only be understood in terms

of its relations to an infinitely larger body of language" (*ODP*). Additionally, the

construction of meaning through manipulation of the Polynesian language is a multi-

cultural issue because Melville compounds or invents hybrid words out of basic

Polynesian morphemes. Finally, it is a translation issue because Melville transposes the

meanings of words from one language to another as part of developing his cosmopolitan

aesthetic. This multi-faceted nature of the semantic problem identifies Melville's

aesthetic as an interpretation issue, because, as Richard H. Brodhead comments on

Mardi, "Melville as a novelist wants to be both poet and historian. He constructs his

engagingly unstable novels by making use of both these modes of vision, presenting his

work to us not as a consistent imitation of any reality but as a consistent exploration of

ways of imaging a reality that must finally remain unknown" (Brodhead, *Creative* 132).

Unlike Brodhead's inconclusive take on Melville's sense of reality, my study shows that

Melville was guided by his desire to externalize "those occasional flashings-forth of the

intuitive Truth in him" (*Piazza Tales* 244), and the semantic nature of his aesthetic

reflects that poetic inclination to vocalize his internalized sense of reality. Melville's

"great Art of Telling the Truth —even though it be covertly, and by snatches" (*Piazza*

Tales 244), is a both logocentric and a semantically multilateral exercise. My

examination of the semantic, the holistic, the compound-based, and the translation-based

methods of constructing meaning out of the Polynesian language (and its various

combinations) underlines the significance of meaning as the derivative of a conscious

aesthetic process of literary interpretation down to the letter of every word.

First of all, I will study meaning through semantics, that is, through examining the relation of the sign to its referent, which Melville tries to establish more consciously in his first two novels, where the process of projecting a sense of Polynesian reality is a prominent feature of his early literary effort. The literary challenge that Melville faced at that time was centered more on establishing authority over the verity of his novels through a seemingly conscious (though often imprecise) effort to be semantically accurate with his Polynesian lexical references —current criticism has focused on the issue of verity through a study of Melville's textual borrowings. Words like "aeorai," "artua," "ati," "cokoo" and more, underline Melville's alleged effort to achieve semantic coherence through phonetic imitation, to match the word to its proper referent by copying it into his text based solely on phonetic parroting: as he wrote in the preface to *Omoo*, "in the use of the native words, therefore, he has been mostly governed by the bare recollection of sounds" (*Omoo* xiv). My research has shown that despite the flawed orthography, Melville was assuming authority over the meaning of his Polynesian, at least with those words that had an easily discernible Polynesian root. On the other hand, the meaning of terms such as "Keekee," "Aimata," "Karky," "Mow-mow," and several others, suggests the use of a literary rather than a linguistic approach to create the semantic parallelism, which (parallelism) no reader without prior knowledge of the Polynesian methodology of onomatology could have known. William Ellis in *Polynesian Researches* provides a good example on the accidental way in which King Pomare acquired his name:

> Its [the name's] assumption by his father was, as many names are among the
> Tahitians, perfectly accidental. He was traveling, with a number of his followers,
> in a mountainous part of Tahiti, where it was necessary to spend the nights in a
> temporary encampment. The chief's tent was pitched in an exposed situation; a
> heavy dew fell among the mountains; he took cold, and the next morning was
> affected with a cough; this led some of his companions to designate the
> preceding night by the appellation of *po-mare*, night of cough, from *po*, night,
> and *mare*, cough. (vol. 2, 70)

Although Melville was still imitating the phonetic representation of each of these words,

he probably knew the intrinsic meaning beneath them, because in his stories these

characters interact and function according to their semantic referents. In this sense,

Melville assumes authority over the suggested meaning of Polynesian terms that are

deceptively devoid of one. To create the necessary (for narrative, philosophical, and

other purposes) semantic correspondence of his characters, Melville uses all parts of

speech, even if there is no logical, grammatical precedent for these constructs. For

example, the name of king "Borabora" in *Mardi* is a place name in true geographical

terms. It is impossible to devise a plausible explanation for Melville's choice without

knowing that the Tahitian "Borabora" (also written and pronounced "Bolabola") has

another alternative in the Hawaiian dialect, "Polapola," which means "a sense of fullness

in the stomach," or "poapoapola," which is defined as "to eat greedily." Melville uses

the literal meaning of both Hawaiian alternatives to describe a person who in some way

or another is overweight because he eats a lot. Melville's changed name allows him to

create a character who is "portly" and "round all over" (*Mardi* 285, 286), but also whose

imperialist greed has made him notorious throughout the area. He (Melville) changes

slightly the orthography of his word in order to juxtapose the literal vastness of the

island "Borabora" with the metaphorical vastness of this king's greed. In this particular case then, Melville applies the place name onto a character for a reason that is not discernible without knowing the word's semantic qualities.

The semantic potential of Melville's Polynesian also depends on the relation of the word to its context, on the holistic qualities of the relation between the sign and its referent. The challenge Melville faces here as an author is obvious: how to match the meaning of a Polynesian word to the meaning of an English sentence, and how to provide an English context with sufficient information for readers to understand the Polynesian term. The fact that Melville thought in English but wrote in Polynesian is not sufficient (or accurate) to provide a plausible explanation for the use of a particular Polynesian word. Melville thought bilingually (or, better, multilingually) and wrote as such, both with the Polynesian and with other languages. In the case of the Polynesian, he made a conscious effort to blend the semantic qualities of the language with those of the English —for a more thorough discussion see the section below on meaning as translation. One such example is the name "Ohiro-Moldona-Fivona" (*Mardi* 405) where each part of the name obviously depends on the other to provide a fuller understanding of its semantic referent (and Melville's translation). A study of each term individually is not enough to establish any semantic relevance between the name and its context, or between the sign and its referent, thus suggesting the necessity for a holistic examination of the name, that is, not only of the name as a whole but of the name and its context as a whole. Melville's translation makes the process of identifying the name's semantic properties even more challenging, and underscores the metaphorical qualities of his

language. In this sense, Melville points out the holistic examination of his Polynesian not only in terms of "paradigmatic" relations, that is, how a word is related to other words in the semantic category it belongs to —as, for example, the word 'thief' in relation to the words 'burglar,' 'robber,' 'highwayman,' and so on. He emphasizes the holistic study in terms of "syntagmatic" relations, that is, how this particular Polynesian name invokes images of scandal and ancient secrets, its translated alternative, and an effort to cover up its implied meaning. The challenge of decoding the meaning of this particular name is similar to the one Melville must have had when he invented it: how to find the original words whose literal meaning Melville adopted and used in a highly metaphorical, non-Polynesian environment. Based on the theory that Melville created several of his characters out of the semantic properties of their respective names, it is safe to deduce how the process of analyzing the name reveals the characteristic elements of the secret scandal. Root-words like "hiro," which means both "to exaggerate in speech, to lie" and, liberally translated, "to steal," "motoi-na," which means "to bribe quietly," or "motoro-na," "to entice quietly for base purposes," and "hio-na," "to spy quietly," or "hiu-ona," "to be constantly glutted" (Davies 87-167) are all elements of a story that involves a woman who creates scandals, who is secretive and yet reveals the secrets of others, and who is essentially corrupt. By tracing such words back to their original orthography, we can deduce the relation of the words' literal meaning with that of Melville's own text, with the meaning of his altered words, and draw parallels of communication between the two.

The multi-cultural side of Melville's meaning creation is through the process of compounding, that is, the combination of words or morphemes from many languages and dialects to produce a new word. Melville understood the intrinsic quality of the Polynesian language to compound existing words in order to create a new term that describes something new. The example of the Tahitian king's name, "Pomare," suggests this Tahitian convention. Melville's text is filled with Polynesian compounds that he either invented or borrowed directly from their respective dialect, but which in either case are somewhat changed from their original. This involves a slight change of a vowel to a consonant as happens so often with the consonant *r*, or the interjection of one or more consonants that may or may not break Polynesian orthographical rules. However, compounding does not always entail that the meaning of a compound is the sum of the literal meaning of its parts (as with "Pomare"), and there are Polynesian compounds that are deceptive in this sense. For example, the word "Yillah" is a compound whose meaning is imperative that it be investigated in a metaphorical context because the meaning of its parts is so diverse as to furnish the complexity of the character. Melville constructed the name and the meaning of his character out of liberal adaptations of original Polynesian compounds like "ui-ra," "a virgin from the sun," "ila" or "ira," "a dark stain or mole on the skin," and "ii-laa," "the sacred captive." By taking such multilingual liberties, Melville underscores the fact that "Yillah" cannot have only one meaning, nor are its various meanings the result of the simple combination of their respective lexical parts. The same applies for slightly changed words like "farnoo," which according to Melville means "froth-of-the-sea," but whose meaning is clearly the

result of the extrapolated application of its compounded parts, "faa-nou," "to puff or blow as the wind." The incompatibility between the literal meaning of the word and Melville's definition is a clear example of the lack of coherence between an invented word and its suggested referent, and consequently of the imposed need for reaching Melville's meaning through examining the metaphorical implications of the literal definition. "Queequeg" is another such example but with the significant difference that Melville introduces into the word two non-Polynesian consonants, the first one (*q*) probably in imitation of the Polynesian *k* (or *t*) and the second one, the *g*, without any meaningful replacement. This way, Melville establishes with the reader his sense of the cosmopolitan side of the Polynesian language that reflects the universal spirit that pervades language as a common invention. For Melville, all languages have borrowed something from each other, all languages allow for invention and compounding (poetic license of course), all languages point to the relation of sign to its referent, and all languages suggest that the meaning of a word is also the result of its relation to a larger lexical whole (*Redburn* 169). On the same par with "Queequeg," Melville creates "hybrid compounds," that is, bilingual combinations of words like "donjalolo" or "azzageddi" or "babbalanja" that contain the potential for an equally bilingual interpretation and whose Polynesian root word is buried underneath a series of linguistic modifications and alterations —for example, neither the letter *z* nor *j* exist in the Polynesian language and there is no standard, agreed-upon letter to replace them. These particular creations are all the more challenging since their highly altered form necessitates the provision of an equally high number of possible alternatives for each

part in order to allow the reader to produce meaning pertinent to Melville's context.

With such unstable linguistic constructs, Melville emphasizes what Jacques Derrida

much later would theorize on: that such variants are significant in that they can subvert

the main ideas of a text. Unlike Derrida, of course, Melville was a proponent of a fixed

meaning for his work that could be discovered but only by paying attention to detail: "I

love all men who *dive*. Any fish can swim near the surface, but it takes a great whale to

go down stairs five miles or more; & if he don't attain the bottom, why, all the lead in

Galena can't fashion the plummet that will" (*Correspondence* 121).

As already noted above, Melville made a conscious effort to blend the semantic

qualities of the Polynesian language with those of the English, and another method of

achieving this was through translation. However, he did not depend on the silent

translation of every Polynesian word in order to incorporate it in his text; he did make an

effort to establish semantic harmony between English and Polynesian, and the most

difficult challenge he faced is the same one that any of his readers would when trying to

decipher some of his more complex Polynesian constructs or adoptions. This is what he

confesses in *Typee*:

> The Typee language is one very difficult to be acquired; it bears a close
> resemblance to other Polynesian dialects, all of which show a common origin.
> The duplication of words, as 'lumee lumee,' 'poee poee,' 'muee muee,' is one of
> their peculiar features. But another, and a more annoying one, is the different
> senses in which one and the same word is employed; its various meanings all
> have a certain connection, which only makes the matter more puzzling. So one
> brisk, lively word is obliged, like a servant in a poor family, to perform all sorts
> of duties; for instance, one particular combination of syllables expresses the ideas
> of sleep, rest, reclining, sitting, leaning, and all other things anywise analogous
> thereto, the particular meaning being shown chiefly by a variety of gestures and
> the eloquent expression of the countenance. (224-225)

How, then, do you translate the language of a culture that is primarily oral in nature and expression and creates the various shades of meaning through extra-linguistic means? Melville was fortunate enough to have a good memory and the experience of living, even for a short period, among the Polynesians and could combine both elements in his mind before putting the words on paper. For an audience that doesn't have this experience however, the attempt to understand Melville's Polynesian (either by itself or in relation to its context) is more than challenging. In *Typee* and *Omoo*, Melville makes a conscious, albeit inconsistent, effort to provide translations for some Polynesian words or phrases because it enhances the romantic character of his narrative. From *Mardi* and on, he abandons conscious (in-text) translations, and only rarely do we see some rough translations of words or phrases, which (translations) make such words even more cryptic for anyone who tries to decipher them. This change occurs after the first two novels because it is with *Mardi* that Melville decides to write "a *real* romance" (*Correspondence* 106) where language reflects less of reality and more of "a consistent exploration of ways of imaging a reality" (Brodhead, *Creative* 132), that is, where the Polynesian language is perceived more as metaphor and less as a reflection of real life. After *Omoo*, Melville does not translate but interprets —in fact he abandons translation in favor of interpretation— and to a great degree ceases to follow semantic rules in exploring the relation of the sign to its referent. In this sense, phrases like "ohiro-moldona-fivona" and "flozella-a-nina," or words like "farnoo" and "marjora" (all appear in *Mardi*) create significant dissonance between the two languages and are responsible for my characterization of his explications as "creative translation."

Melville validates "creative translation" —the process of transferring metaphorical meaning and not only literal meaning across cultures— because he understands the semantic role of each foreign word in its own cultural context. Melville's writing style is highly adaptive and dynamically transformational, blending the literal and metaphorical meanings of Polynesian words in English language contexts and thus allowing to surface a cross-cultural aesthetic that challenges readers' linguistic and cultural preconceptions. The text of *Mardi* is full of linguistic contrivances and adoptions with cross-cultural semantic references, a phenomenon that explains Melville's intention to challenge linguistic (and through linguistic, cultural) conventional notions and develop an aesthetic that encompasses such disparaging multivalence.

John Bryant explains that translation must necessarily be a transformative rather than transcriptive process if the translator wants to construct a meaningful reproduction of the original: "Can one ever render one language into another literally, submitting one word as a precise equivalent of its foreign counterpart? Must not *translation* necessarily involve a careful *transformation* of words that can only approach but never fully achieve literal equivalency? … translation can only be a transformative not transcriptive act, a fictive process, a liberation, and hence something that must be done 'liberally'" (qtd. in Bryant, *Dawn* 305). *Mardi* does exactly that. The idea of translation goes beyond the process of attempting to establish linguistic equivalence and adopts interpretation as its fundamental means of perceiving and transmitting meaning. As such, Melville's "Mardian" Polynesian is less of a conscious, recorded translation (if at all) and more of an explication or literary construct intended to mystify with its apparent complexity.

However, by placing emphasis on "careful *transformation*" *Mardi* reveals its function as a logocentric novel, that is, it emphasizes the significance of language as a carrier of meaning and not solely of the images this language invokes.

The problem of translation as extrapolation, then, is both a semantic and a linguistic one due to Melville's tendency to invent or compound his own Polynesian words out of original root words. One of Melville's invention methods involves the creation of a new term out of borrowed Polynesian morphemes with the addition of English (and more rarely non-English) morphemes. The resulting word is a bilingual combination that bears characteristic elements from both the original and Melville's language. *Mardi* is filled with such inventions, and words like "Foni," "Gaddi" and "Hello," for example, appear and sound more English than Polynesian. On the other hand, words like "Hooloomooloo," "ji-ji," or even "Yillah" and "Taji" sound a lot more non-sensical to the untrained, English-speaking ear than invented words out of a combination of Polynesian and English morphemes. But even with his invented terms, Melville seems to follow a phonetic pattern so as to allow the reader to perceive his effort to "sound Polynesian" though he is making up his words and though his words look more English than Polynesian.

With *Mardi*, and I believe with *Moby-Dick* as well, Melville made a book out of the multiple meanings of his Polynesian or English original or hybrid words. The object of the quest in *Mardi* ("Yillah") or the hunt in *Moby-Dick* ("the whale") is not only a cultural problem, but also a linguistic one, and any answer to the mysteries of these two books lies in a study of both language and culture. Of course, the narrative itself remains

the source of meaning for reaching each book's mysteries, and the narrator spends entire chapters in an effort to explore what the meaning is, both of the hunter ("Taji" or "Ahab") and of the prey ("Yillah" or "Moby Dick"). In this sense, Melville emphasizes both the significance of the linguistic voyage —one must read through whole chapters of words that have no pertinence to the narrative— and the cross-cultural voyage, which these disconnected from the narrative chapters embody. Melville illuminates the forcefulness of cross-cultural transcription ("*transformative*" translation) with the use of foreign words that carry the narration at crucial points in his books. The story of *Mardi*, for example, is about a country with the puzzling Polynesian name "Mardi" —is the name Polynesian, English, a hybrid, what?— just as his first two books use titles with two semantically ambiguous Polynesian words, *Typee* and *Omoo*.

The phrase "creative translation" that I mentioned above, suggests the transposition of a word's metaphorical use in the English text; that is, if a word which Melville uses acquires its particular meaning in its appropriated state in Melville's text, then Melville's text is the framework within which it should be studied. In this sense, "Yillah," which does not exist as a separate Polynesian word, is a compound of Polynesian terms whose lexical, dictionary meaning as separate entities has no relevance to Melville's term, but whose compounded meaning has complete relevance to their usage as compounds in Melville's text, depending on the particular context of their use each time. Of course, in a metaphorical (English) context that alters their literal meaning to serve the purposes of the new (metaphorical) context the degree of their literal relevance drops. The dictionary, however, does not dismiss the literal meaning of a word

nor its compound parts because the reader must resort to some measure of linguistic objectivity in order to be able to anchor the words' metaphorical use to a credible source, in order, that is, to have a stable basis for extrapolation. I use the term "objectivity" to refer simply to the literal meaning of a word in its language of origin; I do not want to use the term "truth" because that is not the function of a definition here. This was Melville's set opinion which he expressed succinctly in *The Confidence-Man*: "While to all fiction is allowed some play of invention, yet, fiction based on fact should never be contradictory to it" (*Confidence-Man* 69). Melville's first two travel narratives contain Polynesian terms which are for the most part used in a literal sense, despite the fact that there is still no set opinion among critics about the definition of the word "Typee" and its relation to the alleged cannibalistic rituals the people who bore that name regularly practiced. Even the term "Omoo" has been accepted as having a valid meaning based on its author's definition, despite that fact that Melville is notorious for his spelling mistakes, his misappropriations, his exaggerations, and for his emerging tendency in *Omoo* to invent either terms he couldn't remember or terms he needed. One of the most peculiar cases where Melville is intruding creatively into the meaning of the Polynesian language is the visit to "Partoowye" and the meeting with the girl "Loo": "They called her Loo: a name rather pretty and genteel, and therefore, quite appropriate; for a more genteel and lady-like little damsel there was not in all Imeeo. She was a cold and haughty young beauty though, this same little Loo, and never deigned to notice us; further than now and then to let her eyes float over our persons, with an expression of indolent indifference" (*Omoo* 278). The name "olu," which in Hawaiian means "benign,

pleasant to the sight, contended" (Andrews 1st ed. 26), suggests someone who is above all placid and benign. However, Melville places certain emphasis on her apparent haughtiness toward him and Long Ghost, an observation that is instigated mostly by comparison to his previous experience with the "Loohooloo" girls. "Loo" is a girl that acts very "un-Polynesian-like" compared to the others obviously for reasons of narrative expediency and despite the benign nature of her character that her name conveys. Melville inadvertently creates a second definition for her name possibly because the implicit duality of her character was necessary background for the humorous event with Doctor Long Ghost and her in *Omoo*, chapter 77.

However, if Melville was all about invented words with no particular allusion to any language (he would be writing high fantasy then), it would be impossible to provide a lexicographical account of a book like *Mardi*, at least on a surface examination of his invented Polynesian. Since the text of *Mardi* is highly suggestive and metaphorical, any critical, interpretative lexicographical effort should start from the literal use of the terms in the original language before extrapolating their meaning in Melville's highly adaptive context. Otherwise, the meaning of "Yillah" and any critical effort toward interpretation would be undermined by Melville's own creativity and our neglect of one of the most fundamental aspects of his aesthetic, his cosmopolitanism. Melville lived in the islands of the Pacific, he understood the culture and probably spoke the language of the Polynesians, and he used this background as a major source to furnish his works with the language he needed. The function of my dictionary is not to interpret everything for the reader. It is to show the reader a method of interpretation where language, and especially

the Polynesian language, is the primary focus because it forms an intrinsic part of

Melville's growing aesthetic, one that involves the reinvention of language through the

interplay of meanings and words from different languages and cultures.

Implications for Editorial Policy

The lack of a manuscript for most of Melville's works complicates the problem

of meaning as critics can only estimate the amount of editorial intervention, especially

with such unfamiliar insertions as Polynesian words and phrases. The end result is of

course as unfulfilling as it is unavoidable and the editors of the Northwestern Newberry

(N-N) edition of *Omoo* confess:

> Polynesian words in the copy-text are in general not corrected, or made
> consistent, even when they differ from conventional Western spellings. In his
> preface to *Typee*, Melville stated that he was trying to reproduce the sounds of
> the words (many of which he had heard himself), and their transcription differed
> with varying situations. To regularize these words would be to lose part of the
> authentic flavor and sense of immediacy which the book conveys. Some variant
> copy-text forms, however, may scarcely be recognizable as intended for the same
> Polynesian word. A number of these are probably errors made by compositors
> and not noticed by proofreaders, since the words were unfamiliar. Such forms are
> altered, so that readers will not think a distinction of meaning is involved in the
> two spellings. The treatment of Polynesian spellings may therefore be
> summarized by saying that variants are allowed to stand if they are clearly
> attempts at phonetic transcriptions of the same word; but when a compositorial
> misreading creates what appears to be a different word from the one intended (as
> determined by the context), the spelling is emended to agree with the commonest
> spelling used by Melville for the intended word. (*Omoo* 359)

The problem is not only with the N-N editors' effort to imitate the phonetic qualities of

Melville's Polynesian but also with their attempt to transfer authorial intent into the

adopted variants. Such an effort does not promote editorial objectivity because editors adopt one version over all others without providing supporting justification for their choices. Fortunately, there are not many Polynesian variants between the English and American editions of Melville's works, but those that exist are as significant as the commentary that accompanies them in the N-N edition. In all works the variants are centered on various names, whereas more complex linguistic combinations, such as phrases and sentences, are left intact, without any emendations either because Melville provides an accompanying translation or because editors have no means of verifying the orthography and the meaning of more complex Polynesian constructs. A closer look at each of these changes in each work has revealed some interesting editorial decisions that do not comply with Melville's aesthetics.

In *Typee*, the name of Melville's female companion, Fayaway, is a point of contention and its adoption by the N-N editors over the more Polynesian "Faawai" is done without substantial explanation. The genetic transcription of the manuscript in the N-N edition is inconclusive as to which of the two versions of the name Melville wanted: "spelling of this name is conjectural; it was altered to *Fayaway*" (*Typee* 369). Besides the change in the meaning of the word that the different spelling imposes — Melville understood how more plastic the Polynesian linguistic idiom was— the lack of more manuscript references as to which version Melville wanted and which version was finally adopted, remains a matter of conjecture, possibly until the publication of John Bryant's new *Herman Melville's "Typee": A Fluid Text Edition*. The fact is that the adoption of one variant over the other delimits the construction of a more meaningful

image for the character, and suggests the possibility that such a decision was not necessarily the author's, but it came from either his editorial or familial environment. Charles R. Anderson's study considers Melville's political agenda as the reason for the expurgations: "For, in spite of the immediate and widespread popularity of *Typee*, Melville's publishers felt it necessary to issue a revised edition before the summer of 1846 had passed, purged of all offensive matter: its mockery of the missionaries' efforts to Christianize Marquesans, its satire of the French attempts to civilize them, and its eulogies of the Polynesian way of life as superior to that of Europe" (237-238). Anderson's approach is valid from a western perspective but the study of the pertinent correspondence between Melville and his literary and editorial circle does not provide any clue as to how significant a role Melville's language, and particularly the Polynesian, played (in conjunction with his cultural references) in estranging his editors from his text.

The lack of an explanation in the N-N edition accompanies other changes in names, like the adoption of the *y* over the *i* in "Kori-Kori." Such a change may or may not be significant and that depends on how the letter *y* is pronounced; if its phonetic representative in English is *i* as in "sit," then all is well. But if the *y* is pronounced *ai* as in "my," then the meaning of the name may change and the possibility for a compound word increases along with its syllables. The worst is that we do not know who or why changed the spelling of the name to a *y*, and the adoption of the *y* is an unjustified complication. My research of the name provides an explanation for the manuscript orthography, and shows why Melville probably intended the phonetic representation of

the word to be as in the first case (with an *i* as in "meet"). My ultimate goal with this example is to underline the necessity either of restoring the name to its original orthography or of providing an explanation for its orthographic alteration.

A similar problem exists with the name "Marheyo" which in the extant manuscript is spelled without the pervasive *r*, and the resulting "Maheyo" is a much more orthographically appropriate Polynesian name than its adopted counterpart. However, again there is no apparent explication in the N-N edition as to the reasons for inserting the *r* and my research has shown that its presence is entirely redundant and carried out most probably for reasons of phonetic coherence with the majority of the names that contain this *r*. But even in phonetic terms, the name "Marheyo" breaks the rules of both Polynesian phonetics and orthography (as explained in the section on orthography), and increases the chances that the end word was the result of editorial intervention —the manuscript spelling, "Maheyo," attests to Melville's knowledge of Polynesian grammar. In either case, the presence of the *r* is representational, that is, it is there as an indication for the extended pronunciation of the vowel *a* that comes before it and can be removed without any change in the proposed (in my dictionary) meaning of the word.

In the case of *Omoo*, where there is not even a fragment of a manuscript as there is with *Typee*, the N-N adopts the English spelling for the word "harree" (*Omoo* 242) which in the American is spelled as "hanree." The semantic problem here is further complicated by the N-N editors' comment on the superiority of the American edition over the English in revealing the author's intention:

> If so, other substantive differences between the American and English editions, where one reading is not so obviously superior and the plates do not furnish a clue to revision, may have come about in the same way, with the result that the American readings in these cases would be later than the English and would represent Melville's final intention. Faced with these considerations, an editor has a double reason for following the American text except in extraordinary circumstances. (*Omoo* 355)

Based on this contention one would expect to see the American edition's spelling for the word and not vice versa. The N-N editors explain what they mean with "extraordinary circumstances": "when it is obviously corrupt; and when a convincing argument can be made that the English variant is Melville's own revision" (*Omoo* 355). Unfortunately, neither of the two reasons is used to explain the change from "harree" to "hanree," thus suggesting the possibility that the N-N editors chose to follow a spelling that did not agree with the American impression, and therefore did not consider authorial intent. In fact, as my dictionary shows, the term is probably a misspelling for the Polynesian "Haere" which means "to go or come" (Davies 96). In this case, I agree with John Bryant's theory of the "fluid text," which supports an edition that accepts both spellings of the word and explains the editorial implications (and possibly the semantic ones as well) of choosing one or the other.

The experimental character of *Mardi* makes even more challenging the process of identifying editorial emendations (current to Melville's time or later), and Melville's third novel contains one such problematic case —the list of emendations in the N-N edition contains only one case and with the lack of a manuscript it is impossible to identify any more. This is the case of the character "Hanto" whose name is changed to

"Hauto" by the N-N editors (contrary to evidence from both editions) based on an

interpretative suggestion:

> The A and E reading "Hanto" is emended by NN, following the suggestion of
> Nathalia Wright that since the names of the other three critics are thinly
> concealed versions of salient qualities displayed in their criticisms
> (Zenzori/Censor; Lucree/Lucre; Roddi/Rod) so probably is that of this fourth
> critic. "Hanto", however, suggests no such quality, while "Hauto" suggests the
> "haughty" advice he gives. The emendation assumes that "Hanto"is a copyist's
> or compositor's misreading of Melville's "u" as "n." (*Mardi* 701)

The editors' emendation and Wright's suggestion would be correct if "Hauto" had an

English term as its root word. On the other hand, if "Hanto" has a Polynesian term as its

root word, then the editorial change is prone to critical re-evaluation. The text of *Mardi*

contains little but sufficient information to help the reader construct an idea of that

particular critic's idiosyncrasy: "to Hauto [Hanto], who bade him not be cast down"

(*Mardi* 598). The Tahitian dialect identifies the word "hana" as "sad, sorrowful" (Davies

97) and the compounded "to" as "of, belonging to" (Davies 275). The meaning of the

Hawaiian alternative *haano*, which means "to boast, exalt, to extol" (Andrews 1st ed.

33), has significant relevance to Melville's context and does verify Wright's reading

without having to explore the possibility of editorial change. The possibility of a

Polynesian alternative does not imply the necessary existence of an editorial emendation

or mistake, in fact it suggests that "Hanto" is correct, and this name needs to be read as

an invented word that has a Polynesian morphemic foundation, "ha" or "haa." We

should not forget that Melville's confessed turn away from convention is as much

linguistic as it is thematic, and "Hanto" is one such manifestation of Melville's intention

to write what he wants without having to face the kind of editorial censorship that plagued his earlier works, and especially *Typee*.

John Bryant in his recent essay "Editing a Fluid Text" explains that "the issue, again, is not whether editors have the right to edit, but what sort of changes they may make, for what reasons, and with what signals to the reader … the editor must be prepared to guide readers through the reasoning behind each editorial judgment" (qtd. in *Herman Melville's "Typee"* 4, 5). With the lack of a manuscript for most works, editorial emendations are unavoidable and, in Melville's case, desirable so long as every variant between the first edition and later ones is accounted for and explained in each particular edition. Bryant's theory supports the critical nature of editing but with the prerequisite that all interpretative steps and editorial alterations are justified: "editors seeking to make invisible texts of revision visible must understand the dynamics of revision, which can be known only as critical constructions of past textual events. Fluid-text editing (more than many forms of textual editing) cannot happen without critical analysis and interpretation" (5). The problem with bilingual interpretation, as is the case with Melville's Polynesian, is that any change must take into account the linguistic and semantic idiosyncrasies of that language, as well as its literary relation to the relevant text. Melville, especially from *Mardi* and onwards, began writing unconventionally and his Polynesian additions reflect not only the change from the literal world of *Typee* and *Omoo* to the metaphorical world of *Mardi*, *Moby-Dick* and beyond; they also reflect his unique understanding that romance and fiction involves the subversion of language as a conventional carrier of meaning and not only the subversion of the meaning it carries.

Any editorial emendations in the text of such a controversial writer as Melville, must consider Melville's peculiar language where meaning does not exist within the boundaries of contemporary thought or writing style because Melville did not think or write in a familiar manner —this is one of the indications of Melville's troublesome relation with his editors. My effort to catalogue and investigate the possible meanings of his Polynesian is not intended to strip his works of their literary forcefulness or to theorize on the unaccounted omissions or alterations of the N-N editors. It is intended to reflect upon the intricate workings of a mind that created complex linguistic constructs because it refused to follow the rules of the time for literary composition. The Polynesian words are a significant segment of the linguistic phenomenon in Melville's works that, like the cetological chapters of *Moby-Dick*, begs for the kind of detailed analysis that can enhance our understanding (and pleasure) of his desire to write the truth "covertly, and by snatches." For example, the editorial problem is a more complicated one for those Polynesian words that do not seem to imitate any particular Polynesian equivalent and yet retain some Polynesian morphemes in their structure. Consequently, the N-N editors' policy to follow the rules of phonetics in emending Melville's Polynesian words is correct only for those words that can easily be recognized for what they are and do not need further explanation. On the other hand, there are words that are difficult to emend based on their phonetic characteristics because they have no clear phonetic equivalent. These words can be recognized in phonetic terms but only if they undergo some orthographic changes first —some, suggest the N-N editors, go beyond the scope of their editorial intentions and become part of the wider critical problem.

Unavoidably then, authorial intent and editorial intent (once more) collide because, as

John Bryant claims, the editors do not implement in their work the fact that any

emendations of such peculiar linguistic constructs as "Faawai," "Hanto," and "hanree"

(and who knows how many more) is an integral part of the editorial process of

understanding and transferring authorial intent through interpretation —these are typical

instances where invisible changes must be accounted for. In Melville's case, the editorial

problem of reconciling authorial intent is a semantic and linguistic one as the Polynesian

dilemma indicates; here language and meaning should be investigated both individually

and in conjunction with each other in order to guarantee that any editorial changes do not

bring editorial and authorial intent into inescapable dead-ends.

CHAPTER III

NEGOTIATING THE PACIFIC INTO MELVILLE'S AESTHETIC

Melville's identification as a diachronic and cosmopolitan writer has been the result of close critical examination of his aesthetic of language and culture. In Wai Chee Dimock's words, each one of Melville's texts should be examined as a diachronic creation, "as an evolving cluster of resonances, its semantic universe unfolding in time rather than in space, unfolding in response to the new perceptual horizons that we continue to bring to bear upon it and that never cease to extend to it new possibilities of meaning" (Dimock, *Incomplete* 101). The critical emphasis on the diachronic ability of Melville's language to engender new meanings according to the historical conditions of a particular period is not new. Neither is the examination of Melville as a writer of cultures, one who has used his language to embrace the idiosyncrasies of different and disparaging traditions and has in this way asserted the multicultural nature of the American psyche and aesthetic. Historical studies, such as Charles R. Anderson's *Melville in the South Seas*, examine the implicit dialectic that develops between historical and cultural appropriations in Melville's texts, and indirectly develop a critical framework for studying Melville not only as a diachronic writer but also as a cosmopolitan one. The critical process of identifying Melville as a writer with a cosmopolitan, a multicultural sensitivity and ethos, recognizes the need for a close examination of how he embedded in his works his vision and perception of Pacific culture. However, Pacific studies of Melville's texts have not endeavored to go beyond

investigating the problematics of Melville's Pacific cultural appropriations. Although, that is, there is a significant amount of work on Melville's immersion in Polynesian culture and how that is reflected in his texts, there is only scarce and fragmentary critical evidence on the role the Polynesian language had in dubbing Melville as a Pacific writer. Melville's first three works are, in his words, "narratives of my adventures in the Pacific" (*Correspondence* 105) (whether factual or fictional), thus suggesting that they are works with both a linguistic and a contextual aesthetic centered on Polynesia. My intention is to underline the interrelation between Melville's vision of Polynesian language and culture, and to show that Melville, by negotiating both, created a complex multilingual and multicultural aesthetic that permeated his first three works, continued to influence his later writing, and contributed significantly to our understanding of his diachronic and cosmopolitan vision of American cultural identity.

Melville's aesthetic involves the process of enmeshing both Polynesian language and culture in a dynamic context where he employs the engendered meaning of this multilingual and multicultural interaction to bring into conflict and challenge preconceived ideas of American aesthetic identity. This is the essence of Melville's distinctiveness as "Pacific writer," and consequently of his unique aesthetic. Neither of which, however, can be examined without first looking at representative examples of how critical studies has approached the cultural segment of Melville's Pacific sensitivity (and, if at all, the linguistic as well), and the questions and dilemmas it has left unanswered or created due to its limited scope of investigation. Within this critical context, my work will then attempt, by reinterpreting various examples from Melville's

texts, to integrate the linguistic with the cultural and develop a more complete image for Melville's aesthetic.

In light of the effort to investigate and possibly open new avenues of meaning for elements of Melville's art that seem to have been critically exhausted by previous research, cultural and historical research has re-examined the meaning of words like *Typee* and *Omoo*, for example, in order to investigate the veracity of Melville's claims regarding the cannibalistic savagery of his primitive hosts. Charles R. Anderson's historical survey of Melville's sources presents readers with a relatively accurate juxtaposition of historical accounts with Melville's textual claims that corroborate or challenge our image of Melville as a reliable source on Polynesia. Neil Rennie's theory of cultural relativity suggests that those historical and scientific accounts that Anderson mentions in his book are subject to their own historical and cultural prejudices and are therefore unreliable as sources of an objective image of Polynesia and therefore as consistent means of evaluating Melville's assumed claims of cultural and literary authority on the matter. Both Anderson and Rennie, in the effort to draw parallel lines (or discredit the existing ones) between the cultural and historical data and its lexical representation in Melville's text, inadvertently draw attention to the lexical nature of Melville's work despite the lack of a closer lexicological inspection. Whether the truth of Melville's account of Polynesian cannibalistic rituals is finally verified by Anderson's and Rennie's works or not, the question remains: What did the word "Typee" mean for the natives and what did it mean for the whites? Did the meaning of *Omoo* carry the

same weight for the natives as it did for the beachcombers? And what interpretation of their true meaning is Melville actually presenting to his readers?

Similar semantic investigations have also been conducted with Melville's increasingly diverse lexical constructs that appear in *Mardi* or *Moby-Dick*. The title of his third novel has been investigated by critics such as Nathalia Wright and Merrell R. Davis, whose concerted effort is aimed at suggesting a possible hermeneutical framework for interpreting Melville's polysemous, unorthodox romanticisms in that work. Nathalia Wright in the explanatory notes of her edition of *Mardi* identifies the meaning of the name with the geographic location of historical Media: "Possibly the name of Mardi was suggested by that of the Mardi or Mardians, an ancient people living on the northern borders of Media or in the area of present Transcaucasia" (Wright, *Mardi* n. pag.). Merrell R. Davis provides a similar explanation to Wright's but his approach is more lexical: "Anthon gives: 'MARDI, 1. a people of Asia, near the northern frontiers of Media, or rather Matiene, which formed part of Media' and 'MEDIA, a country of Upper Asia, the boundaries of which are difficult to determine, as they differed at various times'" (Davis 77n). Both of the above critical interpretations provide a basis for examining the interrelation between a term and its allusive potential, that is, between Melville's words and their intended meaning.

As a footnote to Davis and Wright's lexical observations, Ben Rogers's short article attempts to verify the geographic location of the archipelago of Mardi through a brief but insightful lexical study of its name: "It is likely that Melville referred to an actual map as he wrote and used his dictionaries to help him appropriate or craft names

that would bring to his text a semantic intensity it would not otherwise have" (Rogers, *Name* 23). Rogers contends that Melville borrowed the name for his third novel from the technical term "Mar Di India" which was "located adjacent to the islands Taji tours in search of Yillah" (Rogers, *Name* 23). Wright's, Davis', and Rogers' short but insightful bits of information about the possible meaning of the book's title point out indirectly to the inherent semantic qualities of Melville's words and to their lexical significance as morphemic constructs which were created (compounded, adopted, or adapted) with a specific meaning in mind. In the manner of relating a word's structure to its meaning, Wright's and Davis' entry notes are no different than Anderson's or Rennie's investigations of the Polynesian terms used to entitle Melville's first two works. Both represent specific moments of critical interpretation of one particular semantic hue of a diachronic and multicultural linguistic construct.

Such work has also been carried out with *Moby-Dick*'s Queequeg, whose diluted personality contains elements allusive to both European and Polynesian cultural history. In his short article, David Jaffe draws a connection between Melville's character and "a friendly native New Zealand chief named somewhat suggestively Ko-towatowa" (Jaffe 264). Jaffe discusses in parallel form several excerpts from Melville's text that feature Queequeg and several from Wilkes's *Narrative* where the New Zealand chief is prominent. Through close examination of key phrases and words, Jaffe shows "the extent to which Melville was indebted to Wilkes for Queequeg's adventures, beliefs, and background" (Jaffe 266). Jaffe's work concludes that during the writing of *Moby-Dick*, Melville was still drawing from Polynesian sources for inspiration and factual

information: "It is most intriguing that many of the seemingly whimsical, highly fanciful incidents in *Moby-Dick*, thus actually have a basis in fact" (Jaffe 277). Jaffe uses Willard Thorp's view on Melville to conclude his argument: "Finally, Melville here as elsewhere demonstrates anew his ability to 'transform an inert fact pillaged from a source book into humor or poetry by the turning of a metaphor'" (Jaffe 277). This way he hints at Melville's aesthetic ability to tap into unlikely, unconventional sources, such as those that refer to the Polynesian (or New Zealand in the case of Queequeg) culture, and convert them into the unique constructs that characterize his art.

Part of the effort to interpret the multiple facets of Queequeg's character is also Louis Leiter's brief essay on the significance of Queequeg's tattooed coffin as a symbol of salvation for both himself and Ishmael, "the double aspect of one character" as Leiter calls both protagonists. Due to his bonded fate, Queequeg manages to save Ishmael because he "points the way to sanity," right before the mad chase is about to begin, "not through corrosive philosophical questioning, nor through acceptance of religious dogma, but by what he is." In his critical investigation of Queequeg's role, Leiter is validating the dilution of European and Polynesian civilization in Queequeg, both of which, Leiter implies, find union in the symbolism of the coffin, even if one is sacrificed to save the other: "Queequeg, dead, lives on in the form of the coffin, once more saving Ishmael from the wolfishness of sharks and self" (Leiter 253). With Queequeg's metaphorical transubstantiation, Leiter's work indirectly validates the significance of the written word, the etched carvings on the coffin, as a denotational mechanism. In other words, any

effort to decipher the language of the coffin is akin to a lexical effort to catalogue the various meanings of his name.

In the context of analyzing Queequeg's coffin, JoAnne Yates interprets the simile that Ishmael creates between Queequeg's and a Newfoundland dog's heroic instinct to save those who are in distress. "The role of life-saver," Yates contends, "could have also been an early hint on Ishmael's (and Melville's) part as to the future life-saving role to be played by Queequeg in *Moby-Dick*" (Yates 9). Yates' brief comment, although not related to Queequeg's Polynesian background, does illustrate a side of his that is mostly related to the Christian spirit of self-sacrifice. In this sense, Yates recognizes Queequeg's split Euro-Polynesian personality and her study places emphasis on the significance of examining the non-Polynesian semantic hues of Queequeg's name.

Although these hermeneutical efforts illuminate the significance of lexical investigation, they do not make any claims to a larger critical interpretation of a persistent quality in Melville's writing. Davis' and Wright's definition of "Mardi" remains silent in the footnote area, a mere distraction that creates more questions than those it answers. Davis attaches the footnote information on "Mardi" when he comments on Melville's method of extracting information from various sources: "apparently […] [Melville] already transferred from a classical dictionary the names Mardi and Media to designate the islands of a fictitious archipelago and their ruler" (Davis, *Mardi* 77). Then, Davis concludes his remark by claiming how Melville extended the search for Yillah, in order to extend his discussion of the various subjects in the book, but without any other hint at the role of such etymological information on the quest or on Melville's

characters. At another point in his book, Davis describes King Media as a "congenial host and titular head of the company" (162), as a man who "consistently speaks down to his companions" (163), thus exhibiting a character that "stands for authority" (164) but who occasionally "looks down with sympathy upon the religious aberrations of these mortals" (165). Although all these are significant observations about the nature of the character, their relation to the meaning of Media's name remains, as Davis himself admits, shrouded in mystery: "No proof exists of Melville's choice of these names, but the combination is striking, even if he changed 'Media' to designate a king rather than a country and applied 'Mardi' to an unknown island archipelago rather than a Asiatic people" (77n). Even Rogers' more focused explication for *Mardi*'s geographic location leaves the question of the meaning of the archipelago's name unanswered. The same can be said for the rest of the critical work on Melville's later books; Queequeg is all that his critics claim to be, but the question remains: what does "Queequeg" mean? And why did Melville choose or invent such a name? All critical work (as far as I can tell) has revealed a specific trend to identify Melville's Polynesian characters through their existence in the narrative, that is, through studying their contextual identities. It is consequent then, that Melville's relation with his Pacific experience would be examined in light of ethnological, anthropological, or cultural influence, but not linguistic. Everything that has to do with the Polynesian language and how Melville incorporated it in his text has been left out of that trend or has not been approached either because the field of critical studies has deemed it of minor import to the discourse on Melville's art or because it is too great a challenge to tackle with very little guaranteed success.

The specific linguistic relation between Melville and the Pacific is divided into the problem of his orthographic faithfulness and of how he tackles the semantic clash between the Polynesian and English languages. Melville understands that the Pacific is as much its language as its culture, and interprets his Pacific experience by manipulating both on an orthographic and a semantic level. However, with the exception of minor works such as the above and Richard M. Fletcher's linguistically-focused article, *Melville's Use of Marquesan* (135-138), which argues against "his [Melville's] fluency with the Marquesan language *per se*" and rejects the use of the language for any purpose other than as a means of relieving literary tension, critical emphasis has been placed mostly on the conflict between Melville's Pacific themes, characters, and underlying ideas with his own American sensibilities.

Richard Hardack identifies Melville's Pacific anthropologism in the projection of the transcendental, American ego onto its understanding of the cosmopolitan identity of the Pacific self: "As an anthropological novelist, Melville is a profoundly Pacific writer, who not only incorporates beliefs from Pacific cultures but is among the few writers who consciously apprehends the way American society structures itself around its representation of the Pacific" (54). According to Hardack, then, Melville's language reflects the transcendental desire to discover the meaning of the American identity by writing about the relation of the (American) self to its cosmopolitan experience: "For the American transcendentalist, all languages and all human cultures are translated facets of One thing, and the geography Melville inhabits reflects the reification of Emerson's laws" (65). In this sense, Hardack identifies in Melville's language a tool that can unify

the diverse cultures that make up the American social landscape under the transcendental

principle of Oneness that Emerson introduced. As part of that language, and this is a

point that Hardack does not develop, Melville's Polynesian words illustrate their

relevant culture and topography, topics that were outside the American social framework

and that the American self desired to adopt as essential parts of the American psyche.

Melville's Polynesian words could allow the American reader to paint in his mind

familiar pictures of the Emersonian unifying spirit of nature with the metaphorical hues

of unfamiliar words. My research supplements Hardack's argument by claiming that the

incorporation of original Polynesian words in Melville's works, as well as of those that

were compounded or invented by the author, allows the reader to perceive the

transcendental essence of Melville's thought both through a linguistic and through a

contextual prism. Hardack's theory underlines the role of metaphorical language in the

process of perceiving the transcendental elements of American cultural assimilation: "It

is the imputed familiarity of the world that allows America to colonize it, first by

metaphor, by reconfiguring the entire Pacific as an extension of itself" (68). Melville is

transcendental in the sense that language is a culturally varied medium of expressing

universal thought —Hardack's notion of "imputed familiarity"— that is, how

Emersonian Oneness seeps into Melville's Polynesian originals and hybrids. Melvillean

aesthetic theory allows for transcendental thought to be processed through a different,

unfamiliar —culturally and linguistically— filter, that of Polynesia.

On the other hand, in the introduction of *Exploration and Exchange* the editors

claim that Emersonian transcendentalism does not inspire the process of discovering

Polynesia. The writings included in the book are used as examples to show how the

Polynesian experience became a means of emphasizing cultural diversity and difference

and of widening the gap in American self-awareness rather than closing it:

> If anything it [entry into the Pacific] magnified the contradictions at the heart of
> civil society; and instead of providing a convenient point of otherness from
> which to celebrate the consistency of national identity, it held up a distorting
> mirror to the certainties of the hearth. This is particularly evident in the nervous
> egoism of the accounts of voyages, as if the very category of selfhood is under
> threat—an unease that may be responsible for the many supplementary selves, in
> the form of compilers, editors, and ghostwriters, who were needed as conduits
> between the South Seas and the home audience. (Lamb 3)

Melville's works have been examined as moments of discontinuity and self-alienation as

part of wider literary studies but not as part of a discourse on the language of the Pacific,

and *Exploration and Exchange* does not include in its literary section any samples of his

works. Melville's unease with transcendental belief is evident in his distrust of language

as an accurate, a truthful means of portraying reality in an objective manner. This debate

is as old as Charles Feidelson's formalist argument, in *Symbolism and American*

Literature, in favor of Melville's rejection of the Emersonian spirit as a futile notion and

of the attempt to grasp it as equally futile. Later on, critics like Joyce S. Adler in "The

Imagination and Melville's Endless Probe for Relation," Edgar Dryden in *Melville's*

Thematics of Form, William Shurr in *The Mystery of Iniquity*, and Ferdinand Schunck

(in collaboration with Merton M. Sealts) in *Das Lyrische Werk Herman Melvilles* show

how Melville's aesthetic effort was focused on "fusing opposites," on "finding relation"

between reality and illusion rather than attempting to provide an accurate portrayal of

that (ungraspable) reality. Melville's realization of linguistic limitation becomes stronger

from *Mardi* on, where his effort to combine the semantic (and allusive) qualities of words from different languages reveals a more conscious desire to "fuse opposites." This desire to amalgamate, to create his own new language, is an indication of his literary maturation which at this point of his life creates the necessity to "wrestle with the angel—Art" (Cohen, *Poems* 144), that is, to develop an aesthetic principle that will allow his Truth to be revealed "by cunning glimpses … covertly, and by snatches" (*Piazza Tales* 244). Nina Baym's comment in "Melville's Quarrel with Fiction" solidifies the opinion that views Melville's gradual lack of faith in language as truth: "given Melville's Emerson-derived notion of language as proceeding from a divine Author or Namer, the loss of belief in an Absolute entailed not only the loss of truth in the universe but also of coherence and meaning in language" (910). To this conclusion also comes J. Kerry Grant's article "The Failure of Language in Melville's 'Typee'" where he argues specifically the point in relation to Tommo's narrative back-trackings:

> Despite his efforts to assume the role of what one critic has called "the detached traveloguer and amateur anthropologist," Tommo is obliged again and again to employ a narrative voice which undermines his detachment and permits a note of strain to creep into his observations of primitive customs. Melville exploits the interaction between the two postures adopted by Tommo to generate an ironic picture of the failure of language to accommodate the darker side of human experience. Tommo proves to be too bound up in the languages of his culture to achieve a clear perspective on the experiences he has undergone. (62)

Grant's article is one of the few that identify the failure of transcendentalism in Melville's Pacific works as a linguistic problem, despite the fact that he does not relate that failure to the problematics of Melville's Polynesian insertions. My work tries to bridge that gap with specific yet familiar reconsiderations of Polynesian words, which

illustrate that Melville's transcendental dilemma was not simply linguistic but, most importantly, multilingual. Such an examination will allow current criticism to incorporate the multi-layered conflict between Melville's English and Polynesian languages into the discourse on the problematics of Melville's language.

My intention is to show that Melville's relation to the Pacific is both linguistic and bilingual —or multilingual in that he employs not only the Marquesan dialect, but also the Tahitian, Hawaiian, Maori, Fiji, and Samoan— in other words centered around the interaction of two (at least) languages and the world they paint. What matters for Melville is not only the story being told or its meaning, but also how it is being told, and Melville, in *Hawthorne and His Mosses*, was adamant about his faith in developing a uniquely American aesthetic principle: "Let us boldly contemn all imitation, though it comes to us graceful and fragrant as the morning; and foster all originality, though, at first, it be crabbed and ugly as our own pine knots" (*Piazza Tales* 248). Melville's understanding of the aesthetic quality of language developed gradually in his career, but many critics agree that the process started early, in *Mardi*, and even *Typee* and *Omoo*. I believe that the bilingual semantic products that come out of this Euro-Polynesian dialectic in his early works, in other words the images, full of multi-cultural colors, that are conjured in the mind of the reader upon reading Melville's words, embody the process of Melville's aesthetic maturation. In the discussion that follows, I will engage in a reading of familiar terms from *Typee*, *Omoo*, *Mardi*, and *Moby-Dick*, in order to show how a linguistic and, more specifically, multilingual investigation of Melville's Polynesian originals, compounds, and constructs can enrich our understanding of his

Pacific experience, and to the maturation of his American (non-transcendental) aesthetic

principles. The guiding principle for choosing these two groups of works, *Typee* and

Omoo, and *Mardi* and *Moby-Dick*, is that they embody two significant stages in

Melville's aesthetic maturation through the gradual process of manipulating language,

and specifically the Polynesian language (in conjunction with the English language), to

manipulate culture.

Of "Noble Savages": *Typee* as New Aesthetic

In an early part of his review of Melville's rhetorical capabilities throughout his

literary career, Bryan C. Short reaches the following conclusion regarding the

emancipating nature of Melville's first narrative: "*Typee* expresses both ironic

fragmentation —the impossible, mute past of the sailor— and dialectical achievement —

the miracle of a found voice" (Short 29). The inherent duality of *Typee* is not, as many

critics have pointed out, just one thing; *Typee* is not only a travel narrative, or an attack

on western imperialism; it is also a multifaceted-challenge that Melville placed on

himself as an author who is attempting to form a genuine voice away from the traditional

prejudices that characterized similar travel narratives: the tumult of voicelessness or

parrot-like repetition of minor works narrated by illiterate sailors, written by anonymous

copyists for mass consumption and lost in an ocean of similar texts: "The stories of

disreputable narrators such as beachcombers, whose journeys into degeneracy disturbed

convention and who lacked access to the world of publication or indeed basic literacy

skills, were frequently assembled or ventriloquized by more socially acceptable

compositors—for instance, William Mariner's Dr. John Martin or George Vason's

clergymen Solomon Pigott and James Orange" (Smith xxi). In this limited sense,

Melville can be put in the same category as Transcendentalists like Thoreau and

Whitman who vied for literary authenticity as part of the effort to construct a national

literary identity, an aspiration that Melville himself confessed in *Hawthorne and His*

Mosses: "But it is better to fail in originality, than to succeed in imitation" (*Piazza Tales*

247). Melville's case is unique because the language he uses to voice his authorial

rebellion is not solely English but a unique combination of Polynesian and English that

is beyond the conventional Pidgin English of other minor works. The idea of an aesthetic

reinvention for Melville is a linguistic issue as well as a cultural one. Melville's Pacific

experience opens his creative mind to aesthetic possibilities that transcend the narrow

borders of the European (and presumably most dominant) heritage of American culture.

The practicality of establishing a voice through the then popular travel narrative was

present in Melville's mind because, first of all, he wanted to be heard. Bryan C. Short's

earlier opinion is significant because it makes an important distinction between the

conventional and the rebellious in Melville's authorial maturation at the age of twenty-

five; with *Typee* Melville indeed achieved the "miracle of a found voice" because he did

not adopt the already established voice of a "mute" sailor, but formed a voice that spoke

both English and Polynesian, not as isolated instances in a divisive context, but, as Short

says, in "dialectical" opposition, in a dynamic environment of cultural and linguistic

interchange. Melville belonged to a group of authors who, as the editors of *Exploration*

and Exchange claim, was not afraid to take chances to create something unconventional even at the cost of his credibility as Pacific author:

> Even though these interactions were typically misunderstood; even though the accounts of them incorporate, to varying degrees, concocted incidents and overt or covert fictions, they were shaped by situations of cross-cultural conflict and exchange. They are therefore unlike the whole array of metropolitan texts that lacked any basis in an author's experience—utopias, anthropological syntheses, juvenile adventure stories—in which projections of European knowledge and fantasy survived armchair voyagings relatively intact. (xvii)

It is also my belief that Melville at the time of writing *Typee* had both an elementary academic knowledge and a rough understanding of the spoken Polynesian language. He does not steer far from the literal meaning of his Polynesian insertions, and even when he is possibly compounding or even punning on certain hybrid words, he still tries to imitate spoken Polynesian, as in "Keekee," "twisted, contrary to the rule of right" (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 67) or "Typee." In either case, *Typee* is an effort to incorporate the originality and freshness of the Polynesian language into his text, not only because Melville wanted to imbue his first work with a sense of veracity (or the illusion of one) or with a sense of humor, but also because the inclusion of the Polynesian language would allow him to experiment with the concept of linguistic meaning at an aesthetic and literary level. The world of *Typee* is new and original for its author (and not so much for his audience) because of this self-imposed challenge to create linguistic originality through bilingual (or multilingual) amalgamation, an originality that will act as the founding work for the later linguistic and philosophical perplexities of *Mardi* and *Moby-Dick*. A detailed discussion of the poetic conjunction of English and Polynesian in some

of *Typee*'s words will show that Melville's knowledge of the Polynesian language does not lie with his Pidgin English or with what critics have been able to identify through Porter, Ellis, Langsdorff, and other ethnographers; it lies with those terms and words that are still full of ambivalence or that haven't been scrutinized because of their amalgamated nature. Such words can be examined closely with the assistance of a few dedicated "proto-dictionaries" by missionaries like Rev. John Davies —the first version of the dictionary was published in 1839 by Rev. David Darling (Davies vi)—, Lorrin Andrews (1836), and Rev. S. Rabone (1845), all of whom managed to catalogue a significant amount of Polynesian root words during Melville's time. My research has shown that the accuracy with which certain morphemes have been compounded in Melville's text, as in the term "Typee" or "ta-ai-pi(aa)," has shown that if ever Melville consulted any books on the Polynesian language it must have been some version of these. Most current critical effort has focused on the problem of Melville's veracity and use of specific sources to describing Polynesia and consequently on the ethnological and political claims of *Typee* as an objective account of Polynesian life. Such critical dedication has shifted attention away from Melville's use of the Polynesian language and its potential contribution to Melville's aesthetic agenda in *Typee*. I would like to discuss some of the critical work that has dealt with Melville and Polynesia, in relation to *Typee* of course, in order to underline the significance of Melville's use of the Polynesian language as fiction and not as fact.

The distinction between fact and fiction especially in Melville's earlier works is a critical challenge that has not even today been fully resolved. Charles R. Anderson in

Melville in the South Seas draws several clear lines between the fact-fiction dichotomy, but also several obscure ones that are more prone to critical re-evaluation. Anderson confesses in his discussion on *Typee* that he finds no satisfactory rationale behind Melville's extraordinary tapping into other sources for literary material: "Just why he followed his sources so closely, even in phraseology it is hard to say. Perhaps, in *Typee* especially, he was conscious of his own inexperience as a writer; perhaps, also, his personal acquaintance with Marquesan life was not so full or so accurate as a 'four months' residence' would have made possible" (126). Authorial insecurity may have been a reason for Melville's alleged heavy dependence on other sources, but as Bryan C. Short claims, Melville did not write a conventional book, another "mute" travel narrative, but something unconventional —the aesthetic qualities of the book required a higher level of authorial maturity and independence with the manipulation of both cultural and linguistic fact — and therefore something that cannot be so easily categorized. Anderson claims that his research "will serve as a check upon his [Melville's] ethnological accuracy, and even upon the faithfulness of his 'autobiographical' narrative" (117), and to a certain extent Anderson's work proves useful as a method of separating fact from fiction. However, Anderson does not fully explain how Melville used his personal experiences in the South Seas: "What effect this relatively slight contact with primitive life may have had upon the spiritual biography of a sensitive young man is largely a matter of conjecture" (192). Nor can Anderson explain how much control Melville had over his sources and the process of intermingling between the factual and the fictional; in other words, although Anderson finds traces of

authorial intent beneath such blatant extraction of material, he does not explore the

possibility that Melville was intentionally manipulating fact to create fiction because his

main purpose was to write a Romance, as he defined more clearly in his letter to Murray

later on when he was writing *Mardi*, and not a travel narrative. Anderson's recognition

of Melville's authority over several unique instances of Polynesian life suggests that

Melville had not relinquished control to his sources. One such instance is the discussion

on the "Feast of the Calabashes": "None of the earlier visitors furnishes an account of a

Marquesan festival that alone could have supplied Melville with the multitudinous

details that embellish his description of the Feast of the Calabashes" (Anderson 164).

Anderson juxtaposes several sources to cover the possibility of a compounded

composition in relation to "The Feast of the Calabashes" but then concludes: "From such

accounts Melville could have compounded at least the nucleus of his Feast of the

Calabashes, though the unprecedented fullness of his description of this festival is one of

the best pieces of evidence available to prove that he actually resided in the Marquesas

Islands and sometimes wrote almost exclusively from his own observations" (165-166).

Writing *Typee* was not some haphazard process or as Anderson claims, "almost all of his

recorded experiences there were lived vicariously in the travel literature which he

consulted upon his return" (192). His writing was a conscious compositional route with a

particular aesthetic and political agenda. Anderson recognizes the fact that since

Melville borrowed from unreliable sources (the only ones available), he is not solely

responsible for his inaccuracies or his lack of credibility. But if the possibility lingers

that *Typee* is primarily a fictionalized account of life in the Marquesas Islands, then the

issue of Melville's adherence to factual truth is not as important, and what becomes important is the purpose for which he used his sources.

On the subject of the scientific objectivity and impartiality of Melville's sources, Neil Rennie accurately uses the example of records on Polynesian savagery and cannibalism, about which Anderson remains inconclusive, to show that what matters is not whether such a threat existed as a fact but that it existed at least as a fiction in its writer's mind. Rennie quotes Walter Arens on the circumstantialities of historical evidence regarding cannibalism in order to underline the relativity of interpretative effort:

> He [Walter Arens] found no account by a modern anthropologist who had actually been an eyewitness of the practice [of cannibalism], and the rare accounts he found by travelers of former times almost always occurred in contexts where the account served to justify some civilized practice with regard to the 'cannibals', such as conversion to Christianity, enslavement, or colonial conquest. Arens's work pays too little attention to the Pacific evidence, and the opinion of the specialist ethnohistorians is that the Marquesans probably were cannibals, but there is nevertheless much truth in Arens's conclusion that 'cannibalism' was a civilized myth, having little relation to reality but great significance for those who believed in it, for whom it defined the savagery of others. (194)

Cannibalism for Melville was, as Rennie observes, "the product of a civilized observer's 'frame of mind'" (195), that is, nothing more than a manipulated fact, an interpretation, a fiction. Tommo's discovery of the human remains in the oblong vessel is an example of that fiction which is the driving force of the narrative of *Typee*. Rennie explains: "Civilization has its 'cannibal' horrors, in the form of Captain Vangs, or Fangs, just as savagery has, in the form of chief Mow-Mow, or Mouth-Mouth, and the result is

ambivalence and alternating 'frames of mind' in which the savage state appears, by

contrast with civilization, now as a refuge, now as a prison. The savage state is thus

presented as a subjective state of mind, its objective reality incomprehensible" (196-

197). In this sense, what matters for Melville is not the scientific veracity of a book

about life in the Marquesas but the westerner's uncertain perception of Polynesian

culture, which makes a language of ambivalence, like the Polynesian, especially

appropriate as a medium for literary creation. By placing such emphasis on manipulated

fact, Melville intends to draw attention to the method of manipulation and not the fact,

because what matters in the long run is not how the facts corroborate his fictions, but

what his fictions have to say about the facts and how they are said. In *Typee* Melville

does not refrain from confessing that his original intent was centered on the problems of

the fiction and not of the fact:

> Now, when the scientific voyager arrives at home with his collection of wonders,
> he attempts, perhaps, to give a description of some of the strange people he has
> been visiting. Instead of representing them as a community of lusty savages, who
> are leading a merry, idle, innocent life, he enters into a very circumstantial and
> learned narrative of certain unaccountable superstitions and practices, about
> which he knows as little as the islanders do themselves. Having had little time,
> and scarcely any opportunity to become acquainted with the customs he pretends
> to describe, he writes them down one after another in an off-hand, haphazard
> style; and were the book thus produced to be translated into the tongue of the
> people of whom it purports to give the history, it would appear quite as
> wonderful to them as it does to the American public, and much more improbable.
> (171)

Based on the earlier assumption that Melville's narrative is constructed also with the

help of his Polynesian terms and more specifically their meaning, I will examine the

relation between the lexical nature of three characteristic and controversial terms,

"Typee," "Fayaway," and "Tommo" that appear in the dictionary and their role in the narrative and in carrying out Melville's political, philosophical and aesthetic intentions.

Melville's choice of the name "Tommo" for his protagonist is not as haphazard as critics have come to believe. Nor are the other two alternatives, "Tommee" and "Tomma," entirely excluded from the narrative, and even if we never read them again, their phonetic presence is there every time the name "Tommo" is pronounced. It was conventional in fiction of the South Seas to give Polynesian names to protagonists who abandoned the Western world and became members of the native communities as Melville does in Typee. In *Omoo*, the natives use the name "Keekee" to refer to the American farmer Zeke whom the protagonists visit and whom the natives consider a resident. In *Polynesian Researches*, William Ellis points to the same habit the natives used to refer to Captain Cook, as "Kapena Kuke," either because they could not pronounce his English name, or because it was customary to give Polynesian names to long-time visitors (like Cook): "*Kapena Kuke* [Captain Cook] and *Taraiopu* our king were walking together towards the shore, when our people, conscious of what had been done, thronged round the king, and objected to his going any further." The footnote on the same page reads: "Captain Cook's name is thus pronounced by the natives" (Ellis 4: 131). The three variations on the English name "Tom" are constructed with autobiographical veracity in mind, but also with respect to Polynesian spelling rules for adopting foreign words, and all three appellations sound legitimate to Melville's Polynesian host, King Mehevi: "But I could not have made a worse selection; the chief could not master it: 'Tommo,' 'Tomma,' 'Tommee,' every thing but plain 'Tom.' As he

persisted in garnishing the word with an additional syllable, I compromised the matter

with him at the word 'Tommo;' and by that name I went during the entire period of my

stay in the valley" (*Typee* 72). The legitimacy of a name for the Polynesians, as well as

its veracity to the ears of an English-speaking audience, depends largely on its vowel

ending (as with substituting "Kapena Kuke" for "Captain Cook") which ends with a

linguistically illegitimate consonant, but most importantly on the accuracy and fullness

with which it describes in some way the person who bears it. According to my findings,

all three names —"Tommo," "Tomma," and "Tommee"— contain a measure of

legitimacy for King Mehevi, who uses all of them until he and the protagonist come to a

commonly accepted choice. Melville's choice of "Tommo" over the other two is

partially phonetic, that is, "Tommo" sounds more Polynesian as a hybrid than "Tomma,"

which is much closer to the English "Thomas," or "Tommee," which is also phonetically

closer to the English "Tommy." Someone with a rough understanding of the Polynesian

language would not be able to see the phonetic confusion the other two alternatives

could possibly create in the mind of an English-speaking reader. Melville's choice of

"Tommo" over the other two is a consciously aesthetic and artistic choice, and not an

anthropological one, despite the fact that the other two names are legitimate Polynesian

choices, and despite the fact that "Tomma" and "Tommee" are also hybrid names, each

with a Polynesian meaning that describes with uncanny accuracy the protagonist in some

particular way.

  The choice for "Tommo" is not only aesthetic, but also cultural, following the

Polynesian customs of naming. The protagonist enters the valley of Typee for the first

time and the deteriorating condition of his leg makes him slump and walk painfully. This first image along with a close observation of his wary and confused state of mind throughout his stay with the tribe make the name "Tommo," which means "to be brought low, as a ship or boat heavily laden, to be sunken, to be brought low, as a ship or boat heavily laden" (Davies 278), an appropriate choice. Its relevance is accurate not only because of the above definition, but also because "Tommo" carries the meanings of the other two alternatives, which is also relevant to the protagonist's idiosyncrasy in the narrative. "Tomma" refers to someone who is "divided in mind or affection, white, pale, faded, proud, vain" (Davies 278, Williams 161, Rabone 202), who is "in an extirpated state" (Davies 278), all of which are signifying characteristics. The same can be said for "Tommee," whose derivatives and compound parts signify someone who suffers from "redness of the skin, caused by eating stale fish, or by the sun" (Davies 278) or who has "a grudge, an envy, a displeasure" (Davies 143). One of the name's compounds can also be used to refer to the protagonist's injured leg as a bodily member that has been "shrunk, warped, as timber by the sun" (Davies 142), and the natives may have considered it to be the cause for the antisocial behavior the protagonist displayed toward them throughout his residence in their valley: "But my chief source of anxiety, and that which poisoned every temporary enjoyment, was the mysterious disease in my leg, which still remained unabated … It seemed as if I were destined to sink under the grievous affliction, or at least that it would hinder me from availing myself of any opportunity of escaping from the valley" (*Typee* 118-119).

On the other hand, the name "Fayaway" is a construct that has undergone editorial modification because in the manuscript leaf its spelling is unclear and confusing as the Northwestern-Newberry editors indicate: "spelling of this name is conjectural; it was altered to Fayaway" (*Typee* 369). The name however, is not Polynesian or even a Polynesian hybrid despite the fact this is someone who is a native to that culture. The choice for "Fayaway" suggests Melville's desire to make her more appealing to western eyes as part of his examination of Rousseau's theory of the "noble savage." The Romantic nature of the Polynesian girl is carried by the name "Fayaway," which suggests a paradisiacal quality in her person; she is a fairy-like "beauty far away." The manuscript contains an alternative spelling for the name, "Faawai," which is closer to the original and closer to Melville's intended spelling. According to definitions in Polynesian dictionaries, the name "Faawai" retains and even emphasizes her Romantic appeal to the narrator's eyes as a mythical, ethereal creature that complements the natural beauty of her surrounding environment; "Faa-vai" in the Tahitian dialect means "water valley" (Davies 60, 309), whereas the Hawaiian "Haa-wai" means "dancing water" (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 33, 128), and the Hawaiian "Haiawahine," "a concubine" (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 122). Melville uses the Polynesian definitions in a metaphorical, aesthetic, and artistic sense to describe a female character who serves his philosophical, political, and aesthetic intentions: "the easy unstudied graces of a child of nature like this, breathing from infancy an atmosphere of perpetual summer, and nurtured by the simple fruits of the earth" (*Typee* 86). The conjectural spelling adopted by the Northwestern-Newberry editors, a spelling that contradicts manuscript evidence or

historical linguistic practice, detracts from the mysticism of the original and substitutes an easily pronounceable, even conventional English equivalent for the semantically complex original in Melville's earliest known draft. As symbol of an unspoiled paradise, Fayaway serves Melville's political rhetoric against the unchecked corruption of a unique culture; the original "Faawai" is a useful juxtaposition with the hybrid "Tommo" as the two cultures come into contact and recognize and respect each other's uniqueness. "Faawai" also serves Melville's proto-philosophical, Rousseauistic examination of the ability of an "uncivilized" creature to retain and even surpass its animalistic tendencies and antagonize and surpass the qualities of a "civilized" person —"Faawai" must remain "Faawai" and not become corrupt into "Fayaway." The Hawaiian alternative "Haiawa (-hine)" which means "concubine, kept mistress" (Andrews, *Dictionary* 122), suggests the cultural uniqueness that the name carries; whether "Faawai" is a concubine or not may not matter in the long run, because what really stands out is the particular phenomenon of multicultural exchange that her name seems to indicate. Finally, in an aesthetic sense, "Faawai" is a more valid option because it reveals Melville's emphasis on the mystical qualities of words, and the value Melville placed on them as tools of literary creation. It is clear that the suggestive potential of "Faawai" is greater than its alternative "Fayaway" because the former is also a foreign word that conveys with greater accuracy Melville's intention to employ language on culturally metaphorical level and not a literal level.

The term "Typee" is an equally problematic one as it is related to cannibalism despite the fact that ethnologists or literary critics have not been able to completely

verify this. Charles R. Anderson quotes Abbé Boniface Mosblech's Marquesan

dictionary that identifies the term "as meaning 'ennemi' or 'peuple ennemi'" (Anderson

101). Anderson further suggests the metaphorical value of the definition to show that

Melville was probably as gullible in believing his sources as was the original French

lexicographer himself: "Just what the word 'Taipi' meant originally was perhaps

unknown even to the Marquesans; but, if it really was interpreted as meaning 'enemy,'

that designation could not have been applied to the tribe in question by themselves, but

only by the Teiis and those who got their information from them" (Anderson 101).

Anderson implies the possibility that Melville could have read Mosblech's definition as

interpretation and introspection and closes his lexicological examination with a general

comment: "Apparently the reputation and even the denomination of a people in the

Marquesas Islands —as in more civilized parts of the world— was considerably affected

by the source from which the information came" (Anderson 102). Anderson quotes

Charles Hale's etymological explanation of the term in one of his endnotes but does not

give much emphasis to its validity. I include the whole quote here to emphasize the

possibility that Melville knew both explanations and used them in *Typee*:

> Hale (in a work compiled from the volumes of Langsdorff, Krusenstern, Stewart, Porter, and Melville) discusses the two translations of *Taipii* as given by Melville and Krusenstern in a note (p. 10) as remarkable for its avowed prejudice as for its curious etymology: "These two explanations of the literal meaning of 'Typee' widely differ. In Langsdorff, *tai* is given as meaning 'sea,' and *pehipehi* 'to strike'; this word (spelt *pippee*) in *Typee*, means 'to kill'; from this might be derived *pih*, meaning a striker, killer, or warrior; these two words would give Krusenstern's meaning ['warriors of the ocean']. On the other hand, *akai* or *kaikai* means 'to eat.' *Kaipih* might mean 'eater-of-warriors,' and *kaipih* would easily be corrupted into *Taipih*. But as I do not believe that any of the inhabitants of Nukahiwa are cannibals, I prefer the former explanation." (Anderson 447)

Melville capitalized on the internal politics of Polynesia and the ensuing lexicological

confusion created by the Teiis, who were at war with the Typees and who probably saw

the whites as potential allies, in order to "con" his audience in return, just like the

visiting ethnographers had been conned by the Teiis. Melville used the lexical ambiguity

of "Typee" to promote his political and philosophical agenda: Tommo (or Tom) begins

his journey toward the valley of Typee with a similar frame of mind as that of the

unaware reader, wanting to escape from the tyranny of the western world into a

paradisiacal abode in search of the Rousseauistic purity of the human condition, the

"noble savage." The valley of Typee was ripe ground for Melville's intentions despite

the fact that he most probably ended there by mistake. The definition of the compound

word "Taipi," which is used to refer to someone who is "young, or unripe, as fruit;

immature, ignorant, unskillful" (Davies 196), suggests the Romantic qualities Tommo

was looking for and exhibiting himself —a clever technique to draw the equally naïve

reader into the narrative with the same naïveté— as he headed for the valley of the

Happars. As Anderson points out, the "Typees" were no more cannibalistic than the

Happars but the hermeneutical ambiguity is intentionally used both for narrative and

philosophical purposes. When Tommo and his companion, Toby, reach the outskirts of a

village and are approached by a group of natives they don't know and cannot distinguish

whether they have run into the friendly Happars or the cannibalistic Typees. Tommo and

Toby's predicament gets worse when the natives want to know where the two

companions' allegiance lies: "Typee or Happar? I asked within myself. I started, for at

the same moment this identical question was asked by the strange being before me. I

turned to Toby; the flickering light of a native taper showed me his countenance pale with trepidation at this fatal question. I paused for a second, and I know not by what impulse it was that I answered 'Typee'" (*Typee* 71). This play of words is all that sustains the narrative at this point and it is the metaphorical implications of their meanings that hold the essence of this life-threatening dilemma.

Melville is capitalizing on the power of language here, not only for narrative purposes —the wrong answer could bring an abrupt end to the narrative— but also because this dilemma hides a choice between the virgin world of "Typee" and the corrupt one of "Happa." From a philosophical point of view, the Happars were known for their benevolent attitude toward the whites, probably due to successful trading negotiations, but since they had come into contact with the western world, they had most probably been "tainted" by it. On the other hand, the "Typees" had been perceived as cannibalistic and therefore barbaric (no thanks to the political intentions of their enemies), and for that matter had probably been avoided by westerners and thus had retained their idyllic hypostasis. "Typee" as such is the natural answer as Melville intends to explore the implications of Rousseau's theory of the "noble savage." Melville knew the bipolar meanings hidden beneath the name "Typee," which had been the product of subjective manipulation and prejudice; all outsiders saw in the "Typees" a cannibal, whereas Melville needed to construct them as "noble savages." The association of the term with cannibalism remains a constant denominator upon which the life of the natives is measured throughout the narrative. However, it remains a fictional constant that the narrator/protagonist remains unable to anchor to some factual reality until the

end of the story. If the book is approached as autobiography, that is, if we perceive the meaning of the word "Typee" in a literal frame of reference, then Melville's definition of it is inaccurate as several critics and ethnographers have shown. If the book is read as fiction, where the meaning of "Typee" is not related factually to cannibalism, then Melville's definition is a clever lexicological invention, an interpretation similar to that of the Teiis, and therefore cannot be subjected to anthropological verification —John Bryant and Robert C. Suggs debate on this point in relation to Melville and Toby's route into the Typee valley. It is not Tommo's discovery of the human bones at the end that verifies the Typees' cannibalistic culture, but only his <u>interpretation</u> of that discovery. The contrived ambiguity of the term is again a useful invention that will allow the narrator to return to his world with the kind of experience and knowledge that we have come to expect from Melville's later works: that Rousseau's theory is as fictional as Melville's experience, and trying to verify the reality of the fiction, that is, that the "noble savage" truly exists, is as ambiguous as trying to verify the meaning of the word "Typee." In this sense, Melville underlines the ambiguity of language in both Descartian and Lockean theories of understanding, that is both the ideal and pragmatic views of language, and opens the ground for his eventual treatise on the fallacies of western philosophy and civilization that culminates with *Moby-Dick.*

"Taboo Kannakers": The Aesthetic Significance of the Beachcomber in *Omoo*

The titles of Melville's first two books, whether original terms or invented, convey the same metaphorical fear of cannibalism with a major difference: *Typee* is about the fear of destruction of a culture from without, whereas *Omoo* realizes the author's fears of the destruction of a culture from within. John Samson in his brief essay "Profaning the Sacred: Melville's *Omoo* and Missionary Narratives," which deals with the Calvinist echoes of the novel, admits that Melville's second book is the second half of the argument started in *Typee* regarding the dead-ends of both the Romantic and Empiricist views of a world that has been conquered and proselytized to fulfill the imperialist designs of its conquerors, who have abandoned the natives in a state of cultural limbo: "The profane world of *Omoo*, that is, is a Darwinian struggle without the corresponding evolution" (Samson 503). *Omoo* is not permeated by the same innocent ambience of *Typee*, and through the sarcasm which emerges out of Melville's metaphorical treatment of the Polynesian language, the novel exhibits elements of the same self-destructive spirit of denial and doubt which characterizes western civilization and which permeates the harsh landscape of *Moby-Dick*.

Of course, the aggressive editorial expurgations that *Typee* had suffered from (Parker 1: 405-406, 417, 433), rather than leading Melville toward a more conventional and publicly accepted aesthetic approach, instead drove him even closer to the necessity for implementing his new multi-cultural aesthetic. With *Omoo*, Melville had twice as difficult a task as with *Typee*: to mask more efficiently than in *Typee* his criticisms of western expansionism, while promoting his cosmopolitan vision for American cultural

identity. He found the solution to his cultural and aesthetic dilemma in the credible yet

fictively malleable image of the beachcomber. In the preface to *Omoo*, Melville explains

the meaning of the word "Omoo": "The title of the work—Omoo—is borrowed from the

dialect of the Marquesas Islands, where, among other uses, the word signifies a rover, or

rather, a person wandering from one island to another, like some of the natives, known

among their countrymen as 'Taboo kannakers'" (*Omoo* xiv).With this word as title for

his second book, Melville uses the narrative and symbolic type of the beachcomber to

develop the necessary aesthetic and cultural space for what Greg Dening identifies as

"an engagement with improvisation" (qtd. in Smith xx). Greg Dening identifies the role

of the beachcomber as a literary construct that can fuse Melville's cultural and aesthetic

visions: "The beachcomber's displacement into a radically different world leaves him

without symbols, but with the need to deploy them; as he needs also to produce relations

and invent rituals. Performances, in this context, are substantially unscripted" (qtd. in

Smith xx). The use of the beachcomber, that is, of the "Omoo[s]" or the "Taboo

kannaker[s]" is Melville's conscious adoption of a multi-cultural and multi-lingual space

that allows him to bring the political, philosophical, religious opposites of the West and

the South Pacific into conflict and be able to challenge and reinvent them according to

his own ideas.

Melville uses the beachcomber as metaphorical ground to reveal the limitations

of the cultural and linguistic preconceptions of his readers and to suggest the necessity

for developing an American multi-cultural ideology. The anecdote with the girl Loo and

Doctor Long Ghost's amorous advances is one such example of the breakdown of

communication both at a linguistic and a cultural level. With Long Ghost's punishment

by Loo, Melville exposes readers' preconceptions who saw Polynesian women as easy

prey and their sexual exploitation as part of Polynesian tradition. Even the literal

meaning of the girl's name, "comfortable, easy, pleasant to the sight, benign, contented,"

falls prey to Melville's aesthetic exploitation, who transforms her from a passive

recipient of western exploitation to a narrative, political, cultural, even linguistic trap for

demolishing those preconceptions that identified Polynesians as degraded savages, and

exposing the hypocrisy of alleged western moral superiority. With the beachcomber

Melville succeeds in challenging both the literal and metaphorical meaning of words and

customs, and especially those of his readers. It is curious why *Omoo* did not receive

greater resistance and harsher criticism than *Typee* when it was first published —

although a possible explanation rests with the fact that Melville criticized the French and

not the British or Americans for their "savagery" (Parker 1: 504). The novels' episodic

nature (similar to *Mardi*'s) is a narrative tool for Melville to expose "the provisional

nature of meaning and culture on the liminal ground of the beach … a site of loss as well

as gain and risk as well as profit," where "metropolitan values (of both the moral and

commercial kind) are likely to be prejudiced here" (Smith xx). Melville's desire to

expand the American identity to a multi-ethnic level involves the need for the American

aesthetic to become multi-lingual and multi-cultural, even at the cost of America

embarrassing itself by exposing its linguistic and cultural ignorance, prejudice, or sin

(just like Long Ghost). The two protagonists of *Omoo* embody the two opposite sides of

Melville's argument; Long Ghost remains unchanged and views the Polynesians with the

same prejudice until the end, whereas Paul, the narrator who represents young Melville, matures and goes on to write *Typee*, *Omoo*, and later *Mardi*. But how does Melville use the novel's hybrid linguistic constructs as an aesthetic and cultural solution and how does their use enhance our understanding of him as a Pacific writer? In the following paragraphs I will explain how the Polynesian (or half-Polynesian) terms, "Calabooza," "Keekee," and finally "Omoo" are manipulated by Melville to enforce his rhetoric against western colonialism, and to paint Melville's image of the Pacific as an aesthetic context that can empower his cosmopolitanism. With *Typee* Melville focused more on images of cultural purity and attempted to convey to the reader a sense of Polynesian linguistic and cultural identity. Through those images, he implied his objections to the systematic effort of Western Europe to assimilate the Polynesians by victimizing their dress customs, religious beliefs, and traditional dances or by forcing them to adopt, wittingly or not, all those western virtues (and vices) that made the Europeans look superior. However, Melville also showed how Western expansionism was slowly seeping into the linguistic medium, which, in my opinion, was the first and most important victim of western imperialism.

In *Omoo*, Melville focuses more on the contact of the Polynesian and Western civilizations and the catastrophic consequences this has for Polynesian culture and language. The various instances of Pidgin English, although seemingly a legitimate form of communication, indicate the power struggle between the two languages. Melville may have used the Polynesian based on memory, as he confesses in the preface to *Omoo*, but words like "calabooza" show how the Polynesian language is adopting a hybrid creation

of a foreign word, rather than creating something uniquely Polynesian. Implicit is the

cultural gap that the Polynesians had no knowledge of foreign prisons and therefore no

word for them —just like the English language had adopted the term "taboo"— but also

implicit is the relative meaning (or lack of) given to the term by the Polynesians. In the

relevant episode in *Omoo*, the narrator, who is a sailor aboard the ship <u>Julia</u>, and several

other crewmates protest when they are refused to dock at the harbor of "Papeetee,"

Tahiti. As a result, they are imprisoned by the French who had taken control of the

island, first on board the <u>Reine Blanche</u>, a French frigate, and later ashore at the

"Calabooza Beretanee," the British jail. Melville uses the Polynesian character "*Capin

Bob*" to introduce the term "Calabooza Beretanee" to his readers and also to subvert the

term's meaning and suggest the underlying cultural struggle and resistance of the natives

against the overwhelming white presence: "It [Calabooza] is still in use, however,

among the Spaniards in South America; from whom, it seems, the Tahitians have

borrowed the contrivance, as well as the name by which all places of confinement are

known among them" (*Omoo* 116-117). The scene of mock-imprisonment and the

ensuing humorous incidents in the prison provide Melville with the opportunity to

subvert the language and customs of that institution, which both the Polynesian and

European characters in this episode, either in their effort to absorb it into their culture, or

in their awareness of its meaninglessness and futility, have trivialized or ridiculed.

Melville introduces into his novel a ramshackle version of the Spanish prison, a hybrid

Tahitian-foreign construct in order to mock and satirize the institution and the

underlying political situation of the colonization process that brought the native

population in a state of cultural degradation:

> Though extremely romantic in appearance, on a near approach it proved but ill
> adapted to domestic comfort. In short, it was a mere shell, recently built, and still
> unfinished. […] The only piece of furniture was the "stocks," a clumsy machine
> for keeping people in one place, which, I believe, is pretty much out of date in
> most countries. […] These arrangements completed, Captain Bob proceeded to
> "hannapar," or secure us, for the night. […] This initiation was performed to the
> boisterous mirth of the natives, and diverted ourselves not a little. Captain Bob
> now bustled out, like an old woman seeing the children to bed" (*Omoo* 116-117).

With the "Calabooza" episode, Melville subverts both the meaning and the orthography

of the term in order to subvert its cultural implications. The satirical view of a

westernized Polynesia, as Melville summarizes it in this (Spanish-Polynesian) gibberish

of a word, embodies Melville's dark vision of a culture caught in-between cultures,

neither European, nor Polynesian, and therefore with no distinct identity. Melville's

rhetoric is centered on portraying the irony of the "civilized" white man as savage —the

mutinous crew of the "Julia"— and of the "savage" Polynesian as civilized ("*Capin*

Bob"), on criticizing the error of attempting to acculturate a people who in many respects

had a much better understanding of the meaning of civilization than whites. With the

metaphor of the "Calabooza," Melville presents more forcefully his case against the

worst kind of conquest; not only through the gradual elimination of a culture through

force, disease, indoctrination, alcoholism, and all the remaining vices of western

civilization that can be summed up in the word "piracy."

As explained earlier Melville uses the meanings of words to create characters

who then embody that meaning. Such practice was a common Polynesian custom that

seems to have extended beyond Polynesian cultural boundaries and into Melville's text.

One such instance in *Omoo* is the American farmer, Zeke, whom the Polynesians

address with the phonetic equivalent "Keekee." Melville confesses in the preface to

Omoo that "in the use of the native words, therefore, he [the author] has been mostly

governed by the bare recollection of sounds" (xiv). Although such trust to the phonetic

memory of language causes several discrepancies throughout the novel, in the case of

"Keekee" Melville is phonetically accurate. The term is used by Hawaiians to describe

something that is "crooked, twisted, incorrect, contrary to the rule of right, out of shape,

cross, petulant (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 67). According to Wilkes's (2: 1ff) and Ellis's (1:

98) accounts, most Polynesians considered abnormal any kind of hard work and

disdained having to toil any more than to procure the day's food, and for them Zeke and

his hard-working ethics embody that "unnatural" capitalist propensity. Both the narrator,

Paul, and his companion, Long Ghost, upon arriving at Zeke's abode are welcomed

under the condition that they have to work to earn their stay:

> We were much concerned at this [spirit of invincible industry]; for the prospect
> of their [Zeke and Shorty's] setting us in their own persons an example of
> downright hard labor, was any thing but agreeable. But it was now too late to
> repent what we had done […] Having treated us as guests thus far, they no doubt
> thought it would be wanting in delicacy, to set us to work before the compliments
> of the occasion were well over. The next morning, however, they both [Zeke and
> Shorty] looked business-like, and we were put to. (*Omoo* 205)

With "Keekee" Melville creates a contrast between the Polynesian and western work

ethics and criticizes the latter, in the spirit of his book, for the futility of the whole

endeavor: "as for the soil of Martair, so obstructed was it with roots, crossing and

recrossing each other at all points, that no kind of a plough could be used to advantage"

(*Omoo* 205). Melville uses the image of the uninviting land and the hard-working settler

to criticize the effort to create a new Plymouth Plantation in a land that does not need

cultivation. The American Zeke, or "Keekee," is another "Omoo," a beachcomber, who

is there to pick up the fruits of his toils without considering the damage he may be doing,

for example, to the native economy or agriculture, with a capitalist mentality that Long

Ghost abhors and Paul barely tolerates. After a series of chapters (52-60) where the

protagonists live and work with Zeke, and although doctor Long Ghost constantly tries

to find excuses to eschew work, both Paul and Long Ghost finally succumb to the

realization that they can no longer bear the conditions by which they are allowed to stay

with Zeke and Shorty: "Presently, the sun rose over the mountains, inducing that deadly

morning languor, so fatal to early exertion in a warm climate. We could stand it no

longer; but, shouldering our hoes, moved on to the house, resolved to impose no more

upon the good-nature of the planters, by continuing one moment longer in an occupation

so extremely uncongenial" (*Omoo* 232). Zeke's hospitality is turned down because it is

conditional, because it is hypocritical, and because it is contrary to the Tahitian spirit of

crude but unconditional hospitality. The name "Keekee" that the Polynesians use is an

accurate phonetic imitation of the English name Zeke, but also an accurate metaphor for

the "twisted, incorrect" European effort to marginalize Polynesians from economic

growth, which Melville, through the Polynesian term, saw as unethical, as "contrary to

the rule of right."

Both of the above examples illustrate, through their metaphorical qualities, how the term "Omoo's" definition of "beachcomber" has two meanings. In the first place, Melville wanted to develop an aesthetic device that would allow him to explore various aspects of Polynesian culture and, at the same time, criticize European depredations of it. However, Melville wanted to do this from a multi-cultural perspective, that is, from a mix of European and Polynesian voices that would also accentuate his cosmopolitanism. Melville realized the limitations of, say, an explorer or a missionary character as a multi-cultural aesthetic tool that could fulfill both of his aims. The term "Omoo" fulfills Melville's need for a multi-lingual voice. At the same time, the definition "beachcomber," in its aesthetic capacity which Greg Dening identifies as an innovative literary space that allows for the play of many voices from different cultural backgrounds, provides Melville with a character that can function both as aesthetic tool and as embodiment of Melville's critique. The second meaning of "beachcomber," is that of "rover, pirate," and is more directly perceptible in the novel as a (multi-) cultural tool for Melville's critique of unrestrained western colonialism, as the "Keekee" example suggested above.

Melville uses the Polynesian term, "Omoo," because the English word, "beachcomber," does not embody Melville's multi-lingual aesthetic. Drawing from his experience with the reception of *Typee*, Melville intends to anticipate any criticism of the title's veracity or accuracy and explains that irrespective of its adherence to Polynesian orthography or not, the term "Omoo" and the use of its definition are his own aesthetic choices that serve his own cultural views. My research has shown that the

process of verifying the title "Omoo's" veracity or accuracy based on dictionaries is very

hard and can only be approximated from words which have a similar meaning or a

similar sound because the word itself does not appear in any dictionaries. On the other

hand, as the term describes something unique that only Melville perceives and considers

adequate material for his book, it is safe to extrapolate the reasons for its unique

appearance both from instances in the text and from Melville's observations in his 29

January, 1847 letter to the publisher John Murray. In there, Melville provides a thorough

explanation about the "propriety" of his second work's title. In the letter he focuses on

the uniqueness of the book's title and confesses that the title is a matter of poetic license:

> The title of the work, may be thought a curious one — but after reading the
> narrative no one will doubt its propriety as explained in the Preface. — It might,
> however, be advisable to add to the title as it now stands, the following: —
> "Including Some Account of a Sojourn on the Island of Tahiti" — But whether
> this be added or not, I desire the title (as it now appears) to remain untouched —
> its oddity, or uniqueness, if you please conveys some insight into the nature of
> the book. It gives a sort of Polynisian [sic] expression to its "figure-head." — At
> any rate, no one questions the right of a parent to dub his offspring as he pleases;
> — the same should be accorded to an author. (*Correspondence* 78)

Aside from its aesthetic effect, the title "Omoo" also summarizes the second

meaning of its definition as "beachcomber," who becomes a symbol of social

victimization by western imperialist ideology and a victimizer of the native culture

through his parasitical "'man about town' sort of life" (*Correspondence* 78). The term

"Omoo's" omission from dictionaries was probably due to its scarcity of use, which in

turn was the result of the un-Christian-like implications of its definition as

"beachcomber," which neither the missionary compilers of the dictionaries nor the

resident ethnographers considered prudent or pertinent to include in their texts —Ellis,

for example, considered "beachcombers" to be pirates (Ellis 3: 208), and the *OED*

defines the term "rover" as "pirate." In chapter 21 of "Omoo," the implicit irony beneath

the knife-wielding sailor Salem's "honest" confession to the British consul Wilson, on

the <u>Julia</u>, is fraught with the spirit of rebellion against the unbearable living conditions

aboard nineteenth century ships:

> "I'm nothing more nor a bloody *beach-comber*," retorted Salem, stepping
> forward piratically and eying him […] "There's no 'spectable, gray-headed men
> aboard," returned Salem; "we're all a parcel of mutineers and pirates! […] Each
> one for himself denied the legality of what he [the mate Jermin] proposed to do
> [continue with the trip than dock at Papeetee]; insisted upon the necessity for
> taking the ship in; and finally gave him to understand, roughly and roundly, that
> go to sea in her they would not" (*Omoo* 81-82).

It is that spirit which drives the narrator and Long Ghost to abandon the <u>Julia</u> and which

spawns beachcombers in the first place, especially when these people saw the

paradisiacal images of Polynesia and the natives' laid-back way of living and compared

it with their own.

The metaphorical meaning of the term "Omoo" also allows Melville to re-

examine the philosophical dimensions of the "noble savage" from the realist aspect of

post-modern urbanization where the "white savage" prevails because he mimics the

ironically inverted rules of the jungle. In "Omoo," Melville is able to invert his

definition of the "other"; it is not the white who fears the native cannibal, but the native

who fears the territorial cannibalism of the Europeans, as this is exemplified both by the

explicit image of the French frigate at the harbor of Papeetee and by the implicit image

of the book's beachcomber protagonists (as well as with the Zeke episode). In the

preface (xiv) of the book, Melville uses the Polynesian phrase "Taboo kannakers" to

define the term "Omoo," which means "men who are taboo, sacred" (Andrews,

Vocabulary 64, 66) and therefore cannot be harmed. Several sources that Melville uses,

such as Charles Wilkes (3: chapter 8), contain historical events and situations of total

violence (direct or indirect) against Polynesians whose villages and lands were destroyed

for minor and major offences, such as thefts of various items or murder. In this sense,

Melville does not use the term "taboo" from a religious perspective, as the Polynesians

did with other articles of their culture and with the whites when they had first made

contact —by the time Melville arrived in Polynesia, the natives had ceased to believe

that the Europeans were demigods and therefore "taboo." He uses the term "taboo" in a

metaphorical sense, and from a white person's perspective. The phrase "Taboo

kannakers," "sacred men," implies the Polynesians' fear of white retaliation against any

form of resistance by the natives. As such, the beachcomber (and the missionary and the

white man) becomes "taboo" because his removal from Polynesian lands is a political

liability for the natives —William Ellis (4: 385) identifies both religious and political

hues in the term "taboo"; by touching any white man or woman in any way, the natives

risked the wrath of their European conquerors. And so, Melville transforms the

beachcomber into a metaphorical symbol for the unopposed victimization of the

Polynesian civilization by the Europeans both through military presence, the piratical

plundering of natural resources, and through the missionary efforts to proselytize the

Polynesians by first destroying the natives' cultural identity. The titles of Melville's first

two books, whether original terms or invented, convey the same metaphorical fear of cannibalism with a major difference: *Typee* is about the fear of destruction of a culture from without, whereas *Omoo* realizes the author's fears of the destruction of a culture from within.

"That Play of Freedom & Invention": Aesthetics and Cosmopolitanism in *Mardi*

In his 15 July, 1846 letter to John Murray, Melville confessed his desire to utilize the Polynesian hybrid "Typee" as the title for his first novel in any future editions. In the letter he stresses the uniqueness of the term as the signifying cause for its appropriateness as title for the book: "'Typee' is a title *naturally suggested by the narrative itself*, and not farfetched as some strange titles are. Besides, its very strangeness & novelty, founded as it is upon the character of the book — are the very things to make 'Typee' a popular title" (*Correspondence* 57). Despite the harsh criticism on the veracity of his Polynesian references, Melville did not abandon Polynesia in his third book; on the contrary, *Mardi* was the most "Polynesian" of all three because it did not pretend to claim authority on any matter of cultural or factual authenticity. With *Mardi* Melville was writing "a romance of Polynesian adventure, and publishing it as such" (xvii) because that is what he intended to write from the beginning. In his 25 March, 1848, letter to Murray Melville disavowed the first two books as romances and confessed that "a *real* romance of mine is no Typee or Omoo, & is made of different stuff altogether" (*Correspondence* 106). Although as the final product shows, its focus still remains on Polynesia, the third book was a reaction to conventional aesthetic rules

even more so than *Typee* and *Omoo*. Melville was not done with the richness of that culture and his fascination with the plasticity and metaphorical quality of its language had a strong effect on him as he confessed in that same letter to Murray: "Polynisia [sic] furnished a great deal of rich poetical material that has never been employed hitherto in works of fancy; and which to bring out suitably, required only that play of freedom & invention accorded only to the Romancer & poet" (*Correspondence* 106). With *Mardi* Melville's intention was not to write another "narrative of facts" (106), or use the Polynesian language, which he so respected as an aesthetic medium, in a frugal manner and for the same political, philosophical, and cultural arguments as in the first two books. With *Mardi* Melville attempted an aesthetic (albeit personal) revolution on a multi-lingual and multi-cultural level and he used the Polynesian language as the main linguistic medium to challenge past philosophical, political, and cultural ideas, and create a new identity for America. That identity would be founded on the multi-ethnic elements (linguistic and cultural) that his Pacific experience had taught him.

The significance of language in *Mardi*'s narrative digression from convention is part of Richard H. Brodhead's discussion in "*Mardi*: Creating the Creative," as language allows Melville to effect the shift from the factual to the fictional. According to Brodhead, *Mardi* is about the process of creating an original text (and not another *Typee* or *Omoo*) and about the process of formulating his philosophical investigations rather than merely offering their results: "the real object of its quest is nothing his characters seek but the mental world he himself discloses through the act of creating his book" (39). Brodhead narrows his identification of the disclosed mind by placing emphasis on

the originating potential of Melville's imagination to develop meaningful language. However, Brodhead projects his own mystification about the relation between Melville's language and symbolism, suggesting that Melville was not writing because he had something new to say, but because he wanted to experiment with a new way of articulation: "although he has not yet connected his images with his metaphysical preoccupations, he is forging the means for their mature expression" (46). *Mardi*, according to Brodhead, is the necessary preparatory groundwork upon which Melville's philosophical and artistic genius will flourish in later texts but nothing more. Brodhead considers the Polynesian language in *Mardi* (whether compounded or original) without significant meaning beyond the artistic —I avoid using the term "aesthetic" because, as I explain above, the meaning of this term involves the interaction of both linguistic and cultural elements in the creation of meaning: "He has got so far as to link Polynesian tattooing, wrinkles, hieroglyphics, and the deciphering achievements of Champollion and Sir William Jones, but he appears unaware of the symbolic content the resultant image could carry — the undecipherable hieroglyph has yet to become his preferred figure for a cosmic mystery that invites but perpetually thwarts the human effort to solve it" (44). Brodhead sees in *Mardi*'s Polynesian "restricted images, images that have not undergone such a genuinely metaphorical development" (45), thus severing the link between Melville's previous works and this one. Brodhead overlooks the specifically linguistic potential of the Polynesian language —a potential that Melville struggled to illuminate in his first two works because popular attention was drawn to the accuracy of his facts and not to the aesthetic quality of his fictions—as a significant means of

Melville's aesthetic rebirth. Initially, *Mardi* seems to stand out (and alone) from both

Melville's previous and later works not only due to its fractured narrative but also due to

its mystifying language, a language that seems to have no other origin than its creator's

imagination. Yet, careful examination of the following lexical samples will show two

things: how the lack of closely examining Melville's Polynesian insertions limits

Brodhead's view of *Mardi* as an aesthetic revolution; and second, that the

experimentations with the language of *Typee* and *Omoo* have not just seeped in trickles

in the new work (as they did in the two previous novels), but they have forcefully

asserted Melville's intention to use the Polynesian language as the main conduit for his

newfound, original, hybrid aesthetic.

One such example of Melville's new aesthetic is the name "Ady" which the love-

smitten Ozonna, in chapter 193, uses to refer to his long-lost beloved maiden:

> "Camel-like, laden with woe," said Ozonna, "after many wild rovings in quest of
> a maiden long lost—beautiful Ady! and after being repelled in Maramma; and in
> vain hailed to land at Serenia, represented as naught but another Maramma;—
> with vague promises of discovering Ady, three sirens, who long had pursued, at
> last inveigled me to Flozella; where Hautia made me her thrall. But ere long, in
> Rea, one of her maidens, I thought I discovered my Ady transformed […] And
> even, when after hard wooing, I won her again, she seemed not lost Ady, but
> Rea. Yet all the while, from deep in her strange, black orbs, Ady's blue eyes
> seemed pensively looking:—blue eye within black: sad, silent soul within
> merry." (*Mardi* 648)

This is a typical example of Melville's creative intervention on the Polynesian language

and suggests the level of manipulation a term underwent before appearing in its final

form. Although "Ady" is no "Faawai" (that is, the term does not have a clear-cut

Polynesian equivalent), "Ady" still personifies several of the characteristic elements of

Polynesian women that Melville had experienced through "Faawai" in *Typee*. Both

Porter and Stewart lingered on the physical beauty of Polynesian women, several of

whom were compared with their most attractive European counterparts: "But, judging

from those seen on this occasion, I am fully persuaded they are [beautiful], particularly

in the female sex. Many of these present were exceedingly beautiful; the impression of

features has more of an European mould, than most uncivilized people I have seen"

(Stewart 162). The feelings of desire and love that such females evoke have been

encompassed inside the Hawaiian "Ake," "to desire," or the Tahitian "Ati," "to cling or

adhere to a person, to join," and "Ady's" other dialectal variations. The Tahitian term

"Ati," "to be enclosed or entangled," allows Melville to include in "Ady" Ozonna's

feelings of imprisonment or confinement, which seem to be reflected back to him

through the "pensively looking" blue eyes of the maiden; her look suggests the fear of

the female for the possessive tendencies of the male, as well as Ozonna's thralldom.

"Ady's" fear implies the impossibility of a co-existent relation between herself and her

lover because the meanings of their names are contradictory. Ozonna seeks a feeling,

something as elusive and transient as "the phantom of Ady" because it is that feeling

which will complement his own nature —the term "Ozonna" is another Melvillean

hybrid that means "to cry, to weep." The loss of desire and love then, produces the

opposite effect, pain and suffering, and with both characters Melville personifies the

juxtaposition of these sentiments, which remain constantly in a partial state of existence

because they can never co-exist and they can never self-exist. Both characters are

incomplete, flawed, and their names represent half-truths because that is the limit of their

nature, because the language that gives meaning to their existence and is the only means of reuniting them has created an irreconcilable division between them; one feeling, one word exists because of the other, but they can never be apart and they can never be together. The language of the story of Ozonna and Ady summarizes the psychological and philosophical dilemma of Taji who cannot give up the search for Yillah even if it can never be fulfilled because that is his nature: "And why put back? is a life of dying worth living o'er again?—Let *me*, then, be the unreturning wanderer" (*Mardi* 654). Through the hybrid Polynesian names of "Ozonna" and "Ady" and their respective meanings, Melville is able to devise an episode that symbolizes the psychological turmoil of Taji and presents readers with a parallel to Taji's story whose ending foreshadows that of Taji's quest, the tortured existence of a broken, incomplete self.

The story of the Polynesian woman, "Annatoo" and her adventure aboard the "Parki, of Lahina" is another example of Melville's new aesthetic. From chapter 19 until 27, the "first, second, third and fourth acts of the Parki drama" are told, where "Annatoo" and her husband "Samoa," are left as the only survivors aboard the ship after a vicious attack against the rest of its crew at an island during an oyster fishing trip. The two Polynesians manage to steer the ship away from their pursuers but with very little navigational skills they are left stranded in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. The anonymous (until then) narrator and Jarl luckily spot the ship and decide to board it in search of supplies and possibly a better and faster way to reach some hospitable island. The four of them become the protagonists of the "fifth and last" act of the frame story of the "Parki." The role of the Polynesian woman "Annatoo" aboard the ship "Parki" is tied

to her relationship with her husband "Samoa" the narrator, and Jarl. She constantly

tortures Samoa: "Like the valiant captains Marlborough and Belisarius, he was a

poltroon to his wife. And Annatoo was worse than either Sarah or Antonina" (*Mardi* 75).

Merrell R. Davis explains that Melville needed a European equivalent to provide his

readers with a frame of reference for her role in the narrative: "Melville might himself

have coupled these historic personages to emphasize, as he does, the shrewishness and

immodesty of Annatoo and the submissiveness of her husband Samoa as well as his

blindness to her infidelity" (53). Davis provides a valid explanation for Melville's

narrative plan but the allusions provide no equivalence for Annatoo's kleptomania.

Chapter 35 in *Mardi* is an exposition on the typical behavior of any Polynesian upon

coming into contact with the fantastic surprises of the western world that Melville had

probably witnessed himself but had also read in the accounts of at least Ellis, Wilkes,

and Stewart. The Polynesians were notorious for their thievery, and every time the

whites came into contact with them, acts of thievery were bound to happen (Ellis vol. 3,

125). The narrator in *Mardi* can find no particular reason for Annatoo's behavior, nor

does he seem capable of relating Annatoo's conduct to that Polynesian character trait of

taking other people's things without permission: "What sane mortal, then, would forever

be committing thefts, without rhyme or reason. It was like stealing silver from one

pocket and decanting it into the other. And what might it not lead to in the end?" (*Mardi*

114). Although Melville creates a narrator who expresses the perplexity of any western

visitor to Polynesia (at least at the early years of exploration), who has no prior

knowledge of the natives' behavior, Melville himself knew about the Polynesians'

kleptomania and the lack of punishment from within the system other than the placement of a "taboo" upon certain items which due to such unchecked pilfering became rare and valuable. Annatoo, from a white's perspective, is the sum of all evils to the ignorant narrator who exclaims: "Ah! Annatoo: Woman unendurable: deliver me, ye gods, from being shut up in a ship with such a hornet again" (*Mardi* 115). Of course, to someone with Melville's knowledge of Polynesian language and custom, Annatoo is exactly what her name suggests, "a woman with a desire to possess other people's objects" (Davies 22), as well as "a woman who has lost her affection" that Merrell R. Davis points out (Davis 117-118). Her loss of affection for Samoa and her insatiable desire for material objects illustrate how quickly and how easily she became tired, she "lost affection," with things as well as with people whom she saw as things. From a political perspective the "Parki" is a metaphor for the real world of Polynesia where thievery and immodesty are prevalent. But it is more than that; Melville employs the five-act incident to revisit the world of *Typee* and *Omoo* and criticize again western imperialism. These chapters, and the character of Annatoo, serve as a political and moral indictment of western imperialism for providing the Polynesians with the means for their own self-destruction, under the pretense of enculturation: Annatoo's kleptomania is a liability for herself and the others but only aboard the "Parki," which symbolizes western civilization and all the deceptive temptations to which she falls victim. The efforts of the three men to control Annatoo fail and her uncontrollable desire leads to the sinking of the brigantine and her death as well as everything she represents. The brilliant incident with Annatoo on board a western ship, besides its political foreshadowing purposes, functions also as a narrative

transition from the world of Polynesian reality to that of Polynesian fantasy. After these episodes, the literal use of the Polynesian language is abandoned (as it has been destroyed in the person of Annatoo), and Melville begins using the Polynesian language in its figurative sense or as a basis for his hybrid Polynesian-English creations.

Finally, the example of Media dynamically embodies the multi-cultural relation inherent in Melville's neologisms. It is with this name that Melville shows how the Pacific language can function as a bridge that can bring into conflict or establish complementary semantic relations among different cultures. In chapter I, I explain how the word "Media" combines the meanings of the Polynesian "Mea-tia" or "Metia," "keeper, parent, intercessor, guardian" with the Latin "Medius," "mediator" to create a multi-lingual aesthetic that allows the manipulation of cultural elements to produce new meanings in Melville's text. My analysis offers readers a much larger aesthetic understanding than the purely etymological insights of previous critics. Here, I intend to show how Melville's term's Polynesian nature embodies not only the linguistic divergence that was established in chapter I, but also his cultural convergence.

Several critics of *Mardi* have identified and catalogued the name "Media" as belonging to a specific Asian culture. As Kathleen Kier explains in her *Melville Encyclopedia*:

> The fictional king in *Mardi* takes his name from an ancient west-Asian country bounded on the north by the Caspian Sea, on the west by present-day Armenia, on the south by Persia, on the east by Parthia. Originally called Aria, it took its name from Medus, the son of Medea. The Medes overthrew the Assyrian empire about 600 B.C. Conquered by Cyrus, Media became part of the Persian Empire in 550 B.C., later part of Parthia, and then part of the Roman Empire. (pt. 2, 656)

Merrell R. Davis quotes approximately the same information but unlike Kier, whose quest for objectivity disallows her any subjective comment, he provides a short critical (and almost dismissive) comment on the validity of the source in relation to the *Mardi* character: "no proof exists for Melville's choice of these names [*Mardi* and *Media*], but the combination is striking, even if he changed 'Media' to designate a king rather than a country and applied 'Mardi' to an unknown island archipelago rather than an Asiatic people" (77n). Davis does not consider Melville's confession in the Murray letter (25 March 1848) that he intended to write a "Romance of Polynisian [sic] Adventure" as an indication of Melville's intention to use the Polynesian culture and language to develop a multi-ethnic aesthetic for the new book. But I contend that Melville wrote the book in this spirit and that a significant amount of his bizarre neologisms has a Polynesian linguistic basis. Although the orthographic equivalence between Melville's spelling and his alleged Asian source is significant —although there is no study that shows how the Asian context of the name might have influenced Melville's adoption and use of it— it is my belief that the relation of "Media's" meaning to its use in *Mardi* reveals a closer root in the Polynesian language and culture than in Asian culture.

"Media's" identifying characteristics in *Mardi* are that of king and demigod. His position defines his relation with the rest of the group as well as his attitude toward the philosophical and political discussions between the traveling companions. Merrell R. Davis relates his demeanor to his position: "A king as well as a demigod, the terms being sometimes interchangeable, he stands for authority" (Davis 164). The conceptual nature of the name contains within itself the potential for mediating interjections that are

founded on the power of authority that a king/representative of the gods manifests in the political government, as William Ellis explains:

> Their government […] was closely interwoven with their false system of religion. The god and the king were generally supposed to share the authority over mankind. The latter sometimes personated the former, and received the homage and requests presented by the votaries of the imaginary divinity, and at other times officiated as the head of his people, in rendering their acknowledgments to the gods. (Ellis 3: 94)

Throughout *Mardi*, Media exhibits the power to effect what his name suggests, that is, the ability to act as a "middle voice" in several metaphysical debates among the members of the group during their visits to the islands of the Mardian Archipelago. The frequent exercise of the powers and duties of high priest, allowed the king to combine not only the metaphysical but also the secular dimension of his divine nature with his political office. Ellis explains: "The office of high-priest was frequently sustained by the king—who thus united in his person the highest civil and sacerdotal station in the land" (Ellis 3: 94). It is possible that Melville borrowed from William Ellis' explanation of the role of the priest among Polynesians in order to imbue his character with the necessary (narrative and aesthetic) elements: "and the priest was a more important personage, in time of sickness, than the physician. Native practitioners, who were almost invariably priests or sorcerers, were accustomed to apply such healing remedies as the islands afforded; and an invocation to some spirit or god attended the administration of every medicine" (Ellis 3: 36). Melville uses Media to provide psychological and abstract healing to the group of travelers, and thus combines in the character of Media the Polynesian belief in the divine nature of the king who also had the healing powers of a

priest. From the beginning until the end of the voyage in *Mardi*, Media, just like a priest, is a proponent of the happiness that lies with ignorance and pre-lapsarian innocence. In chapter 185, Media stands firm, in his priestly capacity, against the clouds of desperation that seem to hang over Babbalanja and the rest of the group's minds: "'Croak no more, raven!' cried Media. 'Mardi is full of springtime sights, and jubilee sounds. I never was sad in my life'" (*Mardi* 620). And in the last chapter of the book, Media is called back to his island of Odo to "heal" the wounds of rebellion among his people.

The recognition of the king's power also affected the language used to describe him; just as with king Pomare, the name "Media" is unique in that it cannot be used in any other situations except those referring to the king and his role. William Ellis explains how the adopted name of a king could affect the language of his minions: "even the sounds in the language, composing their [the kings'] names, could no longer be appropriated to ordinary significations. Hence, the original names of most of the objects with which they were familiar, have from time to time undergone considerable alterations" (3: 101). This suggests that the name "Media" is not the king's own but resembles mostly a title. He is a "Metia" or "Medius," an "intercessor" and a "judge" whose title passes on from one hereditary ruler to the next and which is used to describe the king and his person through exposing the king's political and religious role. In this sense, all past and future kings are the same: "I am Media, the son of Media" (*Mardi* 166). In chapter 60, "Media" acts out the meaning of his name: "For at high noon, Media was wont to don his dignity with his symbols of state; and sit on his judgment divan or throne, to hear and try all causes brought before him, and fulminate his royal decrees

[…] 'Subjects! So long as I live, I will rule you and judge you alone'" (*Mardi* 182, 185).

Melville has appropriated here not only the semantic significations of the Polynesian

"Metia" and the Latin "Medius" but also their cultural backgrounds. In *Mardi* Melville

uses both the meanings of the words and their cultural implications to describe a

character (Media) whose role is to act as linguistic and cultural bridge —in this sense

Media is similar to Taji; he comes from the sun just as Taji, and, for that matter, he is as

white as Taji and Taji is as Polynesian as Media.

With the name "Media" Melville develops an aesthetic device that allows him to

illustrate how the combination of linguistic and cultural similarities from different

worlds can form a unique artistic medium for expressing the cosmopolitan nature of the

American (and the human) mind. "Media" as symbol of that mind, becomes a bridge and

a connecting link that allows for the languages and cultures of many different worlds and

different time periods to find a new, uniquely American voice. Through the semantic

qualities of "Media," that is, of "mediator" and of "host, parent, guardian" who keeps,

for the first time since he left his kingdom, an open-mind to different, even rebellious

opinions (chapter 135), "Media" symbolizes the potential of the American culture to

discover a unique voice in that cosmopolitanism.

Savage Beachcomber: Queequeg's Role in Melville's Cosmopolitan Aesthetic

In *Moby-Dick* Melville's aesthetic maturation comes through the Euro-

Polynesian character of Queequeg who embodies the full force of Melville's

manipulation of the English and Polynesian languages and cultures. In the multi-ethnic

context of the <u>Pequod</u>, Queequeg functions as a powerful linguistic and cultural hybrid that Melville uses to "unfold" his revolutionary cosmopolitan vision of the future of American cultural identity. Although corrupted by the illusions of European cultural superiority, Queequeg retains his uniquely Polynesian sense of innocence, that Melville first spoke about in *Typee*: "He seemed to take to me quite as naturally and unbiddenly as I to him; and when our smoke was over, he pressed his forehead against mine, clasped me round the waist, and said that henceforth we were married; meaning, in his country's phrase, that we were bosom friends; he would gladly die for me, if need should be" (*Moby-Dick* 51). Such a welcoming behavior in so unwelcoming a place as the Spouter-Inn magnetizes Ishmael who embraces Queequeg's Polynesian mentality —of which Melville recorded glimpses in Tamai in *Omoo*— and Melville's multi-cultural aesthetic: "'And what is the will of God?—to do to my fellow man what I would have my fellow man to do to me—*that* is the will of God. Now, Queequeg is my fellow man. And what do I wish that this Queequeg would do to me? Why, unite with me in my particular Presbyterian form of worship. Consequently, I must then unite with him in his; ergo, I must turn idolator" (*Moby-Dick* 52). In the following paragraphs I intend to show what are those elements that make up the Euro-Polynesian identity of Queequeg, how they combine to form Melville's aesthetic, and how Queequeg's role and identity embody Melville's cosmopolitan ideology.

Queequeg appears to the eyes of his readers through his name, a hybrid, both (and neither) European and Polynesian. In the "Biographical" chapter in *Moby-Dick* Queequeg rebels against his own authority and from king he becomes servant in an

effort to learn from western civilization the things necessary to improve the situation of his people, to save them essentially from those elements of their culture that keep them what the whites call "savages." He stealthily climbs aboard a "Sag Harbor ship," and refuses to leave unless he is allowed "to visit Christendom" and fulfill his plan: "For at bottom—so he told me—he was actuated by a profound desire to learn among the Christians, the arts whereby to make his people still happier than they were; and more than that, still better than they were" (*Moby-Dick* 56). Queequeg transforms himself into a Polynesian missionary who, unlike western missionaries, will attempt to save his people without destroying their uniqueness. His decision to abandon his canoe for the deck of the whaler is more than a simple act of youthful rebellion, it is an act of abdication. According to William Ellis, "the most singular usage, however, connected with the established law of primogeniture, which obtained in the islands, was the father's abdication of the throne on the birth of his son. This was an invariable, and it appears to have been an ancient practice" (Ellis 3: 99). If we follow Ellis' observation, then we can easily deduce that the act of Queequeg's sinking of the canoe is a symbolic, premature resignation of his kingly duties. His decision to "kue," to go "contrary to authority," is a truly rebellious act, not only because he rejects his own authority, but also because his abdication leaves the island without a future king (Queequeg had no heirs and we don't know if he had any siblings) and thus in a political predicament. Further than that, Queequeg explains to Ishmael that such a decision was not haphazard, but he "disdained no seeming ignominy, if thereby he might haply gain the power of enlightening his untutored countrymen" (*Moby-Dick* 56). Therefore, his decision to "kue" was an *a*

posteriori one. After seeing the damage done to his people by the missionaries, he decides to take on a mission of salvation himself, to "kuokoa," to "deliver" his people because he "*kuee'*d" he "disagreed, was opposed to" the missionary method of enlightening his people even though he valued Christian knowledge.

The experience of Christendom, however, betrays his expectations and directs his rebellious "kue" spirit against the world he so admired, and for that his rebellious self is now complete: "Thought he, it's a wicked world in all meridians; I'll die a pagan" (*Moby-Dick* 56). Queequeg is transformed into a universal castaway, into a rebel against the hypocrisy of the western world, and he finds in Ishmael another rebel, a kindred spirit. Finally, both of them connect with Ahab's rebelliousness and find in the Pequod their destiny. Queequeg's unique position in the world makes him a "kuewa" or "kuea," a "wanderer" who defines himself within the boundaries of his solitary primitive uniqueness: "here was a man some twenty thousand miles from home, by the way of Cape Horn … thrown among people as strange to him as though he were in the planet Jupiter; and yet he seemed entirely at his ease; preserving the utmost serenity; content with his own companionship; always equal to himself" (*Moby-Dick* 50). Queequeg allows Melville to revisit the romantic isolation of the Polynesia of *Typee*, and dilute, through the symbol of Queequeg's name, the vision of pre-lapsarian naiveté with the impossibilities, the dead-ends of an idealized reality actualized upon western ideals. Queequeg cannot return to the "paradise lost" because he is the Miltonic outcast who, unlike Satan, in his self-imposed humility considers himself unfit to enter the Paradise he left behind, unfit to be saved until he regains in an ironic way his lost "savagery." Pip

describes him as a beachcomber stranded on the savage shores of civilization: "Poor rover! will ye never have done with all this weary roving? where go ye now?" (*Moby-Dick* 479). Queequeg can never return to his homeland because, just as his name is a hybrid of Polynesian and English letters, he becomes like most of his own people, a compound of the savage and civilized with no identifiable cultural or linguistic identity. He does not represent Polynesia anymore the way he intended: "he was fearful Christianity, or rather Christians, had unfitted him for ascending the pure and undefiled throne of thirty pagan Kings before him" (*Moby-Dick* 56). His passive life in the western world is symbolic of a mature Polynesia that is no longer fascinated by the fantastic trinkets and contrivances of the west. Unlike Annatoo, this cosmopolitan Polynesian accepts with a stoic unwillingness his fate as a victim of his own desire for a vision of cultural rejuvenation that is not only unattainable, but also harmful to those who attempt to embrace it. Further than that, Queequeg represents a condemned Polynesia that simply survives but does not prosper. He has been on a path to self-destruction ever since he stepped aboard that whaler, or even earlier, ever since the idea to improve his people formed in his mind. He is caught in a vicious circle of constant struggle to regain his innocence by living among the sinful, among those who can only further corrupt him.

Queequeg is aesthetically similar to several of *Mardi*'s characters, only Melville applies more conscious control, linguistic and cultural, over the construction of his character and of his role in the ideological direction of the book. On a linguistic level, it is worth noting how Melville applies the English letters *q* and *g* at the beginning, middle, and end of the name. At the same time, the double *e*'s suggest the name's Polynesian

root and complement, along with the consonants, the hybrid sense of the name. In its broken down form, the name *q-uee-q-ue-g* is neither English nor Polynesian, for each letter reflects only one aspect of Queequeg's Euro-Polynesian nature and is therefore incomplete, a half-truth. Only as a unified hybrid do the letters of his name coalesce into a complete, (yet delusively) meaningful whole. On a cultural level, the "Biographical" chapter in *Moby-Dick* attests to his mistake that leads him to become a hybrid Euro-Polynesian king with the accumulated virtues and vices of both worlds. His double nature represents, according to Richard Hardack, both transcendental unity —all nature coalesces in one self— and Melville's emphasis on the divisive implications of that unity —Queequeg's split personality.

Melville uses Queequeg as a basic means for embodying his rewriting of American cultural identity based on his cosmopolitan vision. *Moby-Dick* shows how Queequeg is both the blessed and cursed spawn of two worlds and the hybrid nature of his name and cultural heritage illuminates his fragmented identity. His (Queequeg's) fragmented existence is a metaphor for the "sort of half-and-half" truth, the incomplete existence of American culture if it ignores its multi-ethnic reality or remains a cultural vassal to Western Europe. His knowledge of the evils of both the Polynesian and European cultures makes him an authority on the multivalence of American cultural heritage. However, Queequeg also represents Melville's unifying aesthetic; like the conquered Polynesia that cannot change its situation, Queequeg is an example of the consequences of aesthetic fragmentation (or isolation) as well as an example of the need for linguistic and cultural plurality. Melville chooses to show that through the

Polynesian language, and its symbolic manifestation in the tattoos on Queequeg's body.

These are the only inheritance that seems to have remained unspoiled because it is

written, it is historical, and thus the only part of him that can be saved and that he can

bequeath to the world:

> And this tattooing, had been the work of a departed prophet and seer of his island, who, by those hieroglyphic marks, had written out on his body a complete theory of the heavens and the earth, and a mystical treatise on the art of attaining truth; so that Queequeg in his own proper person was a riddle to unfold; a wondrous work in one volume; but whose mysteries not even himself could read, though his own live heart beat against them; and these mysteries were therefore destined in the end to moulder away with the living parchment whereon they were inscribed, and so be unsolved to the last. (*Moby-Dick* 480-481)

The only redemption Queequeg can achieve for himself and his people is through

art, through sculpting his language and its unique aesthetic onto his only unalterable

canvas, his body and later his coffin, which along with Ishmael (who represents

Melville's authorial voice) are the only survivors of the destruction of western

civilization with the sinking of the Pequod. In chapter 110, Queequeg chooses not to die

because "at a critical moment, he had just recalled a little duty ashore, which he was

leaving undone" (*Moby-Dick* 480), which of course was the act of authoring, the act of

using a prototypical language to record the greatest truths of his civilization. The

metaphor of transcribing "all manner of grotesque figures and drawings … to copy parts

of the twisted tattooing on his body" (*MD* 480), allows Melville to comment on his own

writing method, which requires the use of a prototypical, invented, created, multi-faceted

language, like the Polynesian, because only that language can tell Melville's kind of

truth: At the end of *Moby-Dick*, the narrator, the new aesthetic, and Melville's vision of

an original voice for America survive because of that mystical canvas and its Polynesian hieroglyphics. In this sense, Melville validates language, and especially this kind of prototypical, mystifying language, which blends western and non-western semantic and linguistic elements, as the only means that can guarantee a future for American cultural identity.

From Beachcomber to Castaway: Points of Aesthetic and Cultural Progression

In the four books I have discussed in this chapter, Melville experimented, developed, used, and expanded an aesthetic approach to literary composition that involved the manipulation of the Polynesian language on a linguistic (morphemic) and semantic level. I do not examine *Redburn* and *White-Jacket* here because there are very few instances in either book of Polynesian words being manipulated at a similar level of linguistic and cultural complexity. Of course, this does not mean that Melville did not use the same aesthetic methodology with other elements of his language, such as his nautical terms. My interest here is focused only on the function and role of the Polynesian language, in the aesthetic capacity it was manipulated by Melville, in order to realize his vision of a cosmopolitan identity for nineteenth century America. *Typee* was a heuristic step in the process of discovering the new aesthetic, although Melville exhibited a multi-cultural awareness in the form of the book's sparse Polynesian linguistic and cultural adoptions. In the second book, Melville uses the metaphor of the "Omoo," or the beachcomber, to solidify his perception of the Polynesian language and culture as an integral part of his new aesthetic as well as of his rhetoric on the need for a

new American cultural identity. With *Mardi* Melville puts the new aesthetic, that is, his

multi-lingual and multi-cultural inventions (of Polynesian origin), into full use in order

to promote as forcefully as possible his vision for the need for a cosmopolitan America

that will embrace (rather than suppress or annihilate) its multilingual and multicultural

identity. In *Moby-Dick* finally, Melville exercises greater control over his Polynesian

insertions, but those that make it into the book are fraught with meaning. "Queequeg" is

yet another transformation of the beachcomber metaphor; he is a Polynesian castaway

with no means of getting home but, unlike *Omoo*, this time the world the protagonists

inhabit and their place of origin are switched. Queequeg is the strongest example by

which Melville shows how the need for embracing a universal language entails the need

for embracing a new American aesthetic and cultural identity.

CHAPTER IV

HERMAN MELVILLE'S POLYNESIAN DICTIONARY

A

Abrazza

"Abrazza, Yoomy, is a fine and florid king: high-fed, and affluent of heart; of speech, mellifluent. And for a royalty extremely amiable. He is a sceptered gentleman, who does much good. Kind king! in person he gives orders for relieving those, who daily dive for pearls, to grace his royal robe … Sweet lord Abrazza! How he pities those, who in his furthest woodlands day-long toil to do his bidding. Yet king-philosopher, he never weeps; but pities with a placid smile … save his royal pity all else is jocund round him. He loves to live for life's own sake. He vows he'll have no cares" (*Mardi* 589).

Society Islands

Apaa: n. a sort of thick cloth made by men, (not by women as usual,) of the *aute* bark, and worked by night, to be sacred to the gods, and was used to cover them during certain ceremonies (Davies 27)

Apaa: n. the name of a fishhook made of scaly pearl shell (Davies 26)

Ata: v. to laugh (Davies 41)

Ata: n. the shaded or ornamented part of a mat called *vane* (Davies 41)

Ata: v. to laugh (Davies 41)

Ataata: adj. laughable, contemptible (Davies 41)

Sandwich Islands

Aba: n. a father (Hebrew) (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 14)

Apaapa: n. one who frequently changes his situation (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 13)

Apaapa: adj. unsettled, unstable, irresolute, without truth (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 13)

Apa: adj. slow, tardy (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 13)

Apa: adj. meddling, officious, busy, mischievous as a child (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 13)

Akaaka: v. to laugh (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 7)

Akaaka: v. to laugh (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 7)

Tonga Islands

Abaaba: n. the master of the ceremonies in a cava party; the Alofi of the Tuitonga's cava

party (Rabone 5)

Maori Islands

Apa: n. fold, layer (Williams 12)

Apa: n. slave (Williams 12)

Ata: v. simulate by gesture, pretend (Williams 18)

This is probably a compound word made up of the term "apa/apaa" and the term

"azza" which in the Polynesian language becomes "ata/aka" because the letter *z* does not

exist either as a sound or as a letter in any Polynesian dialect. Melville's interjection of the letter *r* complicates things for the English-speaking reader since the combination of two consonants is contrary to Polynesian phonetic grammar. Melville translates the prolonged *a* into an *r* for two reasons: one, it must follow Polynesian grammar which dictates that a vowel must follow a consonant, and, two, no other word in any Polynesian dialect (as far as I have checked) has a meaning close to Melville's description of his character in *Mardi* except for the ones where the *r* replaces the vowel *a*. The original is then closer to the compound "apaata" or "apaaka" or "ataata" or "abaaba" where the letter *b* is replaced by its equivalent *p* or *t* (for the Sandwich or Society islands dialects respectively) according to Polynesian orthography (of Davies and Andrews). Abrazza then can be someone who laughs a lot, someone who is laughable or contemptible, unstable and mischievous, whose identity is wrapped into (the layers or folds of) his ornamented clothing, and finally a master of drinking feasts, characteristics which Melville uses to describe *Mardi*'s peculiar king.

Adeea

"In the house of the chief Adeea, frequent discussions took place, concerning the ability of the island to cope with the French: the number of fighting men and muskets among the natives were talked of, as well as the propriety of fortifying several heights overlooking Papeetee" (*Omoo* 124).

Society Islands

Ateau: n. a war term signifying chiefs, warriors, leading or principal men (Davies 43)

Sandwich Islands

Akiukiu: v. to act the part of a spy; to search into; to penetrate (Andrews, *Dictionary* 28)

Kiu: v. to spy, to act the part of a spy (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 69)

After 1826 the consonant *d* was replaced by the consonant *k* in transcriptions of the Hawaiian dialect (Silva and Schütz, preface to Andrews, xii). At approximately the same time (1823) Davies' *Tahitian Dictionary* established the letter *t* as the equivalent for *d* in Tahitian dialects. The above definitions indicate that Melville may have consulted either Davies's or Andrews' dictionary on this character, or he may have known or heard about him, and he may well have intended him to be simply a "war leader," an "Ateau" or a "spy," an "Akiu." The double *e* is pronounced as in the word "need," it is a prolonged *e* that is hard for a foreigner to distinguish from the other *e* which is transcribed with the letter *i*. Although the Tahitian word, "Ateau," is not pronounced as Melville wrote the word (with an prolonged *e*) it is included as a possible explanation to Melville's spelling. Melville may have also heard the Hawaiian "Akiukiu" which is also a viable explanation according to its definition.

In terms of orthography, the letter *d* in the Hawaiian dialect does not exist and the closest alternative is the letter *t* which the Hawaiians cannot pronounce but replace with the letter *k*. As such, "Akiu" is close enough both semantically and grammatically

to Melville's choice —with only the vowel *u* being the object of conjecture. Melville

may have intended for this character to play a more historically accurate role in his

fictional book than other characters. As Ellis explains, naming someone based on an

arbitrary decision without any significance other than an incidental one, which was the

norm among Polynesians for naming their children (Ellis 3: 26-28).

Adondo

"Departed the pride, and the glory of Mardi/ … Adondo was a legendary hero" (*Mardi*

453).

Society Islands

 Atoa: adj. fearless, athletic (Davies 44)

Toa: n. a warrior, a valiant man

adj. courageous, valiant (Davies 275)

Sandwich Islands

Koa: n. a soldier (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 71)

adj. brave, bold as a soldier (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 71)

Melville may have replaced the consonant *n* with the vowel *a* to create the above

term which supports Babbalanja's description of the character as "legendary hero"

(*Mardi* 453) and to make the name break Polynesian phonetic rules (but adhere to his

own style of hybridization). In the Tahitian dialect, the consonant *n* is a possible alternative for the consonant *r* (Davies 2) which so often in Melville's language replaces the vowel *a*. I believe this is the case here with the consonant *n*. The Hawaiian term which uses the letter *k* in place of the Tahitian *t* only corroborates the second part of the meaning of what seems to be a compound word.

"The military title of Toa, or head warrior, is distinct from that of Hekaiki, or civil chief, though they are often united in the same individual" (C.S. Stewart 170).

"Society Isles; native name aito or toa —this word is employed in common language by the Society Islanders, to express strength or durability; and is often thus applied to persons who though aged, are active and robust" (Bennett 2: 372, 372n)

Ady

"'Camel-like, laden with woe,' said Ozonna, 'after many wild rovings in quest of a maiden long lost—beautiful Ady … with vague promises of discovering Ady, three sirens, who long had pursued, at last inveigled me to Flozella; where Hautia made me her thrall. But ere long, in Rea, one of her maidens, I thought I discovered my Ady transformed … I found but the phantom of Ady, and slew the last hope of Ady the true" (*Mardi* 648).

Society Islands

Ati: n. a faithful friend that will cling to a man in distress

v. to cleave or adhere to a person; to join

v. to be enclosed or entangled

n. a name applied to the bird *otaha* when of one colour (Davies 43)

Aataina: n. the strong desire or longing of the heart

v. to have a strong desire or longing; to have gratification (Davies 4)

Sandwich Islands

Ake: v. to desire, wish for a thing, to pant after, to wish to do a thing, to be willing

(Andrews, *Dictionary* 8)

Ake: n. a falsehood (Andrews, *Dictionary* 8)

Aki: locks of long hair remaining after a part of the head is shaven (Andrews,

Vocabulary 8)

Fiji Islands

Adi: a prefix to the names of women of rank, madam, lady (Capell 1)

Rarotonga Islands

Ati: a fracture: the breaking of any hard body, the breach or part broken (Savage 49).

The name of Ady or Rea (which seem interchangeable or at least confused by the

protagonist Ozonna) and the relevant myth appearing in *Mardi* allude to the book's main

story and to Taji's quest. The young Ozonna, who is seeking a maiden that like Taji once

possessed but then lost, finds himself in the island of Queen Hautia enchanted by the promise of finding his "Holy Grail." Entrapped by Hautia's enchantment, Ozonna sinks in desperation and misery while the prospect of attaining his most valued prize is forever lost. In that prison Ozonna discovers hope (or the illusion of hope) in the person of one of Hautia's enchantresses, a maiden called Rea, and the cycle of his (tragic) life begins again only to end very soon and very abruptly with the disappearance of Rea. It is possible the Melville adopted several meanings of the word "Ati/Aki" or "Ake" when creating this elusive figure —Andrews' editors have interjected the following comment under one of the versions of "Aki": "Some of the meanings of *aki* are similar to *ake*" (Andrews, *Dictionary* 28). As described in the text, Ady is constantly, persistently, passionately desired and sought after by Ozonna and yet she doesn't seem to exist anywhere but only in his mind and, in tragic twist of fate, in the maiden Rea. Ironically then, it is not Ady who clings to Ozonna but the other way round. Yet, one could also claim that his persistence indicates that her idea is still with him, still clings on to him with a similar potency. Ady is none other than Ozonna's other half, previously joined with him but now only a "phantom" that is eventually destroyed by her own lover. Ozonna is caught with a piece of hair from Rea's head, the Hawaiian name of which is "Aki," and provides Hautia with the incriminating proof that reveal to Ozonna the tragic cycle of fate: in his distress at the elusiveness of his beloved Ady, that is, in his desperate and impossible effort to unite with the other half of himself, he kills Hautia's maiden, Rea, and with her "slew the last hope of Ady the true" (*Mardi* 649). Ozonna, like Taji (and like Ahab), is a doomed figure because he has, beyond anyone else, realized his fate

and has not accepted it.

The Rarotonga myth of "Ati" and "Tapairu" (Andersen 119-121) bears several similarities with Ozonna's tale. Melville reversed the roles of the protagonists and altered several details from the original myth to create a version similar to that of the story of Taji and Yillah, with an ambiguous if not altogether bleak ending. In the original myth, for example, the fairy "Tapairu" (in Melville's myth she is *Ady*) asks her husband, "Ati," to "cut the child from her side" (Andersen 120) when her time had come to give birth. In Ozonna's tale, at some he "revealed what had passed to the maiden, who broke from my side," whereas at another "Rea was torn from my side by three masks" (*Mardi* 648). In the original myth the king loses the fairy, just like Ozonna, and in both stories the protagonists are severely distraught by the loss. The Tahitian dialect translates Ozonna as "Otona," someone who has been crying and lamenting (see "Ozonna"). The progeny of "Ati" and "Tapairu" is called "Ati-ve'e" —Ati the Forsaken (Andersen 121), a description that fits well Melville's Ozonna if not Taji.

Aeorai

"One of these, delivered by an aged warrior, who had formerly been at the head of the celebrated Aeorai Society" (*Omoo* 125).

Society Islands

Arioi: n. a certain fraternity of players, that traveled through the islands, and observed peculiar customs (Davies 138)

Melville is probably referring to the Areoi (or Arioi) society of Tahiti. The spelling of the term is either Melville's or the printer's error since it does not appear in this spelling anywhere else in this or the following books of the author.

"They were a sort of strolling players, and privileged libertines, who spent their days in traveling from island to island, and from one district to another, exhibiting their pantomimes, and spreading a moral contagion throughout society" (Ellis 1: 234)

Aimata

"Pomare II. Dying, in 1821, was succeeded by his infant son, under the title of Pomaree III. This young prince survived his father but six years; and the government then descended to his elder sister, Aimata, the present queen, who is commonly called Pomaree Vahinee I., or the first female Pomaree. … The reputation of Pomaree is not what it ought to be. She, and also her mother, were, for a long time, excommunicated members of the Church; and the former, I believe, still is. Among other things, her conjugal fidelity is far from being unquestioned. Indeed, it was upon this ground, chiefly, that she was excluded from the communion of the Church" (Omoo 302-303). "Though Pomaree Vahinee I. be something of a Jezebel in private life, in her public rule, she is said to have been quite lenient and forbearing" (Omoo 305).

Society Islands

Ai: v. to copulate, applied to both sexes (Davies 14)

Mata: v. to begin any thing (Davies 136)

Ai: interj. of disapprobation, ah! (Davies 14)

Mata: n. the face of any creature (Davies 136)

Ai: v. to eat (Davies 14)

Mata: n. the eye (Davies 136)

Sandwich Islands

Ai: v. to have sexual intercourse, applied to both sexes (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 2)

Aia: n. an unprincipled, or ungodly person, ungodliness (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 2)

Maka: n. the eye, face, countenance (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 94)

The name is a compound word and it is possible that it was a symbol of what everyone knew, including Melville and any other visitors, regarding the queen's licentiousness and her difficult idiosyncrasy. The incident that Melville chooses to describe in *Omoo* illuminates the overtly critical nature of her character, something that the natives probably knew already from her name. Aimata's second marriage, the first one "proving an unhappy alliance" (*Omoo* 303), was, as Melville describes, a torture for the husband who received the treatment of a slave rather than a man: "The Tahitian princess leads her husband a hard life. Poor fellow! he not only caught a queen, but a Tartar, when he married her" (*Omoo* 303). It was due to his wife's demeaning behavior

that "Pomaree-Tanee," "Pomare's man," lost control of his temper one day, after "an illicit vender of spirits" (*Omoo* 304), and attacked and almost strangled her to death, and before he could be stopped, he destroyed a significant portion of her belongings. As far her licentious tendencies were concerned Melville's description is corroborated by several western accounts. Charles Anderson uses Fitzroy's account to claim that her name "signified 'eye-eater,' the eye being the offering made to the sovereign at the time of human sacrifice" (Anderson 312). Fitzroy's explanation is silently based again on the assumption that her name is a compound word, consisting of the words "Ai" and "Mata" as explained above. Fitzroy's (and Anderson's) definition is correct but the compound word is also used to refer to someone who "begins to copulate," to someone with no or very few principles of conduct. Despite the fact that Fitzroy's interpretation is filtered through his western, Christian perspective to life and religion, it agrees with Polynesian public opinion regarding the attitude and behavior of their sovereign.

"At the age of fourteen, Aimata married Tapoa, or Pomare, the son of the royal chief of Tahaa; but the connexion [sic] proved neither happy nor of long continuance" (Bennett 1: 74-75).

"During the early period of her career, as sovereign of Tahiti, the character this lady supported was not calculated to inspire respect. Casting aside all restraints, she shared unblushingly in the licentiousness for which this island is so notorious" (Bennett 1: 75-76).

"Mr. G. Pritchard … officiated to a large congregation of natives, including the queen,

Aimata, and her husband. The conduct of the two latter personages was not, on this occasion, calculated to set a good example to their subjects. The queen was playful and inattentive; and her husband did not enter the church, but, seated on the threshold, amused himself during the time of service with cutting sticks, playing with children, or in the enjoyment of passing events in the road without" (Bennett 2: 51-52).

Alanno

"Now coming close to Alanno, we found, that with incredible volubility, he was addressing the assembly upon some all-absorbing subject connected with King Bello, and his presumed encroachments toward the northwest of Vivenza. One hand smiting his hip, and the other his head, the lunatic thus proceeded; roaring like a wild beast, and beating the air like a windmill: … Awake! oh Vivenza. The signs of the times are portentous; nay, extraordinary; I hesitate not to add, peculiar! Up! up! Let us not descend to the bathos, when we should soar to the climax! … This chieftain, it seems, was from a distant western valley, called Hio-Hio, one of the largest and most fertile in Vivenza, though but recently settled. Its inhabitants, and those of the vales adjoining,—a right sturdy set of fellows,—were accounted the most dogmatically democratic and ultra of all the tribes in Vivenza" (*Mardi* 517-518).

Society Islands

Ara: adj. awake, wakeful, watchful (Davies 31)

Araa: v. to be raised or lightened, as a vessel in the water, or as a thing that was sunk; to

be raised to prosperity from a degraded state (Davies 31)

Anoano: n. the height of a place; awe; that which causes bashfulness

adj. high or distant, so that an object cannot be discerned; terrible or frightful because of

height; fearful or bashful in entering into a company (Davies 24)

Sandwich Islands

Ala: v. to wake from sleep, to watch, keep from sleep, to rise up from a sleeping posture.

Hoo —to cause one to rise, to lift up, to rise from the dead (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 9)

Ano: v. with *hou* to change the form or appearance of a person or thing, *e ano ae* to

become new (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 12)

Ano: v. hoo—to boast, glory. Hoo —*hou* to transform, to change the external appearance

(Andrews, *Vocabulary* 12)

Ano: n. moral quality of an action, the moral state of the heart (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 12)

       Melville names his character after his traits, he is what he does, a creature that

defines its identity by its role in society, i.e. a political creature. Alanno (again the

doubling of the *n* is illegal) is the representative of those who are watchful, who prevent

the people from becoming politically inert and constantly strive to cause them to rise. He

is the representative of "the most dogmatically democratic and ultra of all the tribes in

Vivenza; ever seeking to push on their brethren to the uttermost" (*Mardi* 518). As in the

ancient democracy, he is like a Greek Socrates or Diogenes —after he finishes his

passionate speech "cold coble-stones were applied to his temples" (*Mardi* 518). On

establishing the significance and meaning of the second part of his name (Ano), Alanno intends through his speech to instill the desire for eternal vigilance and the need to rise to the occasion: "The signs of the times are portentous; nay, extraordinary; I hesitate not to add, peculiar! Up! up! Let us not descend to the bathos, when we should soar to the climax!" (*Mardi* 517). Further, Alanno is one of those people who also want to promote change, both internal and external: "Like strong new wine they worked violently in becoming clear" (*Mardi* 518). He considers himself the voice of conscience and integrity although probably equally tormented by doubt.

Aleema

"The old priest, like a scroll of old parchment, covered all over with hieroglyphical devices, harder to interpret, I'll warrant, than any old Sanscrit manuscript. And upon his broad brow, deep-graven in wrinkles, were characters still more mysterious, which no Champollion nor gipsy, could have deciphered. He looked old as the elderly hills; eyes sunken, though bright; and head white as the summit of Mont Blanc" (*Mardi* 130).

Society Islands

Arii: n. a head or principal chief, a king (Davies 37)

Ma: adj. clean, not soiled or polluted (Davies 122)

Ma: n. a mark in a target, a butt or mark (Davies 122)

Maa: used sometimes as an *article*, as *maa taata rahi*, a big man (Davies 122)

Sandwich Islands

Alii: v. to act the chief, to rule over, govern. Hoo—to crown one a chief, to make one a king, to make one's self a king (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 10)

n. a chief, a king, ruler (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 10)

Ali: n. a scar on the face (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 10)

Aliaii: adj. white, as snow or paper (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 10)

Ma: v. to fade as a leaf or flower, to wilt, blush, to wear out as a person engaged in too much business. Hoo —to fail, perish (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 90)

Maori Islands

Ari: adj. white (Williams 15)

Ma: a. white, and b. pale, faded (Williams 161)

Melville was probably influenced, when creating the story of Taji and Yillah, by a similar event described in Charles Wilkes' narrative (3: 434-438). According to Wilkes' account, the victim (Smith) of the pseudonymous Tagi was a white man who was in quest for a female bride: "Tagi stated as follows: that when Smith first landed, he (Smith), accompanied by a white man, came to procure a female, having an American axe and a jacket as the reward for purchase of her services. Smith procured a little girl, a virgin, from his family." The girl, however, seemed to constantly avoid him for fear of being sexually hurt: "The next day a report reached the family, that the girl had cried all night; and the cause of her crying was, that the white man had hurt her … Smith never

beat the girl, but she was not come to the years of puberty" (Wilkes 3: 436-437). The

Polynesian man with the name Tagi (alias Vave) killed G. Smith in fear of losing the

family's property. Tagi confessed the following to his court, according to Wilkes: "I was

afraid he [Smith] would steal all our property. It was my determination to kill him

outright" (Wilkes 3: 437). Although Smith, a white man, was murdered by a Polynesian

with the name Tagi, and Aleema, a Polynesian, was killed by a white man with the

appelation Taji, both stories share one common element. Both murders take place as part

of an effort to protect and possess a virgin girl. Besides the common denominator of the

virgin, Yillah or Maitland, both Aleema's position (he acts like an *arii* on his canoe —he

is a high priest after all) and his head, which is "white as the summit of Mont Blanc"

(*Mardi* 130), that is, "ma" or "aliaii" or "arima," are indications of further similarities

between the two myths: both victims are white.

"Each valley is under the dominion of an Ariiki, or chief, who maintains a feudal

independence" (Bennett 1: 319)

Alma

"Alma, it seems, was an illustrious prophet, and teacher divine … each of his advents

had taken place in a comparatively dark and benighted age. Hence, it was devoutly

believed, that he came to redeem the Mardians from their heathenish thrall; to instruct

them in the ways of truth, virtue, and happiness; to allure them to good by promises of

beautitude hereafter; and to restrain them from evil by denunciations of woe" (Mardi

348).

Society Islands

Aama: v. to be burning bright and vehement, as a large fire

adj. bright, shining; clear as a lamp or fire burning (Davies 3)

Sandwich Islands

Ala: v. to wake from sleep, to rise up from a sleeping posture, to cause one to rise, to lift

up, to rise from the dead (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 9)

The name breaks yet again the rule of adjacent consonants suggesting that either

Melville altered its original form or that the word is not Polynesian at all. Nathalia

Wright in the endnote section of the Hendricks House edition of *Mardi* (note 208.24)

suggests that the origin of the name is European, specifically Italian and means "soul or

spirit." Wright explains that "the character of Alma is drawn from that of Jesus, and thus

presumably the episode to which Babbalanja refers is the raising of Lazarus, as

recounted in John 11:1-44." However, a Polynesian origin is not impossible exactly

because the slightly altered form of the term —a common practice for Melville— in the

Hawaiian dialect, "Ala," points to the same allusion, the resurrection of Lazarus by

Jesus. The change to the word may have been made with the European term in mind, but

Melville may have intended to combine the religious myths of both worlds, just as he

does with several other words in *Mardi*. The Tahitian alternative, "Aama," stresses the

"illustrious" and "divine" nature of the great prophet.

Ananna

"There, they must decay, in honor of the god Ananna; for so this dead tree was

denominated by Mohi."

"'This,' began Pani, pointing to the idol of stone, 'is the holy god Ananna who lives in

the sap pf this green and flourishing tree.'

'Thou meanest not, surely, this stone image we behold?' said Divino.

'I mean the tree,' said the guide. 'It is no stone image'" (*Mardi* 336-337).

Society Islands

Anaana: n. small pieces of coral or shells thrown upon the shore by the sea (Davies 22)

Anaana: a. indented with small holes, as the coral rocks in the sea (Davies 22)

Ara: n. a species of hard, black stone (Davies 31)

Sandwich Islands

Ana: n. a cave, a den (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 11)

Anaana: n. a kind of sorcery or prayer used to procure the death of one (Andrews,

Vocabulary 11)

Ala: n. a round smooth stone, such as has been worn by water (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 9)

Alana: n. a present made by a chief to procure his prayers; an offering of free will for

any religious purpose, a sacrifice (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 9)

The confusion in providing a relevant definition to the Polynesian name is a semantic one as the two interlocutors use the same signifier (Ananna) to refer to a different signified (tree or stone image). The guide's physical blindness has led him to worship the container, the outer cover, the "leafless and dead to the core tree" (*Mardi* 336) rather than the contained, the stone image that lies at the feet of the tree. This philosophical dilemma however is further mystified by the boy's abjuration, who is also the guide's opponent in this argument: "Oro is but a sound … they call the supreme god, Ati, in my native isle; it is the soundless thought of him, oh guide, that is in me" (*Mardi* 337). With this Melville adds a Socratic dimension to the semantic problem: do we believe in the shadow on the wall, since we cannot look at the source of the shadow, or do we reject the shadow and believe in something even more intangible even more incomprehensible, even more confusing and dubious? Do we believe in the signifier no matter what its signified may be? And what will that do to our faith which is so dependent on the signified, that is, on the multiple definitions of God? Melville provides an answer to this as well: "To believe is a haughty thing; my very doubts humiliate me. I weep and doubt; all Mardi may be right; and I too simple to discern" (*Mardi* 338).

The change from *n* to *r* [as in "ara"] is acceptable in the dialect of the Society Islands because both consonants were often interchangeable (Davies 2). Because, however, there is no sound *r* in the Hawaiian dialect, the letter *l* replaces the Tahitian consonant to produce a word that (consequently) sounds different but essentially has the same meaning. It is possible that Melville knew this rule and changed the word "Arana,"

which means "a species of hard, black stone indented with small holes," a definition that

Melville adapts in describing the statue as having "hollow cheeks, and hollow eyes"

(*Mardi* 336), into "Ananna" in order to encompass the meaning of the Hawaiian

"Alaana," which also means "a round smooth stone, such as has been worn by water,

which has a cave, a den." The letter *n* that Melville chooses to use is the only one that

allows for both the Hawaiian and Tahitian alternatives. This lexical pantheism is used by

Melville to subvert his own discussion on the Socratic dilemma of the shadow in the

cave (not the light that casts the shadow —that is beyond human comprehension), and

underline the limiting nature of language: god is god no matter what the words to

describe him.

"and the area within the enclosure was covered with small fragments of white branching

coral, called anaana, and found on the northern shores of the bay" (Ellis 2: 360).

"but the most general is the kuni ahi, broiling fire, a kind of anaana, or sorcery" (Ellis 4:

293).

Annatoo

"In order to a complete revelation, I must needs once again discourse of Annatoo and her

pilferings; and to what those pilferings led … she was possessed by some scores of

devils, perpetually inciting her to mischief on their own separate behoof, and not hers;

for many of her pranks were of no earthly advantage to her, present or prospective …

what sane mortal, then, would forever be committing thefts, without rhyme or reason"

(*Mardi* 113-114).

Society Islands

Anaanatae: n. strong desire after an object; the going out of affection (Davies 22)

Natu: v. to pinch with the thumb and finger (Davies 152)

Natu: b. a scratch or mark of pinching (Davies 152)

Na'u: poss. pron. A contraction of *na au*, mine (Davies 153)

Sandwich Islands

Ana: v. to praise much and covet another's wealth (Andrews, *Dictionary* 40)

Ana: v. to be satiated; satisfied, as the eye with seeing; to have a sufficiency of property (Andrews, *Dictionary* 40)

Pu: v. to call; to call out; to proclaim (Andrews, *Dictionary* 492)

Pu: v. to come forth from, to come out of as words out of the mouth (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 123)

Naku: v. to seek, search for, to look after (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 106)

Na'u: pron. adj. mine, of me, by me; an oblique case of *au*.

Tonga Islands

Too: v. to take, to carry in the hand, to open (Rabone 196)

There are several possibilities regarding the Polynesian origin of the name, all of

which are directly or indirectly related to "infatuated" (*Mardi* 92) Annatoo's pathological possessiveness. The first is that Annatoo's name is phonetically and semantically conjugal to "Anaanatae," that is, it has a single-word origin. The second is that it is derived from a Hawaiian compound word —something usual for Polynesian onomatology— made up of the terms "Ana" and "pu," which in Hawaiian would be roughly translated as "to proclaim that you covet one's wealth": "that whatever she wanted, that same would she have" (*Mardi* 75). The Tahitian "Natu" — the letter *A* as a prefix to verbs is used to denote the imperative mood (Davies 1)— is also a possible source in that it alludes to Annatoo's romantic advances toward Jarl: "Pulling at the ropes with us, she would give him sly pinches, and then look another way, innocent as a lamb" (*Mardi* 114). Further, the word "pinch" is has two uses relevant to Annatoo's character; on the one hand it means, "to steal, to purloin (a thing)" (*OED*) and "to find fault with, blame, reproach, reprove" (*OED*). Not only, then, does she physically annoy the Viking, but she is also "a Tartar, a regular Calmuc, and Samoa —Heaven help him— her husband" (*Mardi* 75). Finally, the suffix of the name refers to the Tahitian possessive pronoun "na'au" which again substantiates the claim that she was named after her qualities.

"During an eclipse, the moon is said to be natua, bitten or pinched, as well as swallowed" (Ellis 3: 171).

Apo

"the wonderful child now tarried in the sacred temple of Apo, buried in a dell" (*Mardi* 138).

"At other times, Yillah being immured in the temple of Apo, a band of men entering the vale, surrounded her retreat, dancing there till evening came" (*Mardi* 154).

"Now at the head of the vale of Ardair, rose a tall, dark peak, presenting at the top the grim profile of a human face; whose shadow, every afternoon, crept down the verdant side of the mountain: a silent phantom, stealing all over the bosom of the glen. At times, when the phantom drew near, Aleema would take Yillah forth, and waiting its approach, lay her down by the shadow, disposing her arms in a caress; saying, 'Oh, Apo! dost accept thy bride?' And at last, when it crept beyond the place where he stood, and buried the whole valley in gloom; Aleema would say, 'Arise Yillah; Apo hath stretched himself to sleep in Ardair. Go, slumber where thou wilt; for thou wilt slumber in his arms" (*Mardi* 155).

"The bud was torn from the flower; and, by our father Aleema, was carried to the Valley of Ardair; there set apart as a sacred offering for Apo, our deity … when, foreseeing that the holy glen would ere long be burst open, he embarked the maiden in yonder canoe, to accelerate her sacrifice at the great shrine of Apo, in Tedaidee" (*Mardi* 308).

Society Islands

Apo: n. a hollow place in a rock (Davies 29)

Po: n. night

n. the unknown world, or hades; the place of punishment in the other world

n. antiquity, unknown, ancient date (Davies 199)

Apoo: n. a pit, hole, grave, aperture (Davies 30)

Ato: v. to thatch; to rip or pluck off; to pluck leaves or flowers (Davies 44)

Sandwich Islands

Po: n. night, the time opposite to *ao* day, darkness, chaos, the period of a day. Note Hawaiians count time by nights rather than by days (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 119)

Po: v. to darken, to become night (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 120)

Ako: v. to cut with scissors, to clip off, to pluck as fruit or flowers (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 8)

"Apo" is probably used to refer to the dark shadow that covered Yillah's glen, a shadow that was cast down from the mountain during the day, and especially the early hours, thus leaving the valley almost to a state of perpetual night. The letter *A* must have been added by Melville. Melville must have also known that the letter *p* is commonly replacable by the letters *t* or *k* in the Tahitian and Hawaiian dialects respectively. As such the alternative words and their meanings, "Ato" (Tahitian) and "Ako" (Hawaiian), acquire significance in the context of the myth. "Apo" is, then, a multifaceted concept that Melville managed to use with almost all of its varied meanings. "Apo" has a temple in a dell, in a "hollow place in a rock," a "pit, hole, aperture" where Yillah is held captive, her flowery nature waiting to be plucked according to Polynesian rites by the

priest Aleema for the sake of his god, in this case, he becomes "Ato" or "Ako." "Apo" is not only a god but also his manifestation, he is a prison for the living, a perpetual cycle of offerings and blessings, and an oppressive truth that holds captive the psyches of all, priests, victims, and innocent bystanders.

"They represent the tenth, or most remote from the earth, and the abode of the principal gods, as *te rai haamama no tane*, &c. the opening or unfolding to the *po*, or perpetual darkness" (Ellis 3: 169).

"The Hawaiian traditions, like those of the ancients, refer to night, or a chaotic state, the origin of the world, and almost all things therein, the greater part of their gods not excepted … They speak of creation as a transition from darkness to light: and, when they wish to express the existence of any thing from the beginning, they say it has been so *mai ka po mai*, from the night, or state of darkness or confusion, till now" (Ellis 4: 247n).

"In the Po, the place of the dead, the god Oro was represented as employing this shell" (Tyerman & Bennet 2: 121).

Ardair

"In the verdant glen of Ardair, far in the silent interior of Amma, shut in by hoar old cliffs, Yillah the maiden abode. So small and so deep was this glen, so surrounded on all sides by steep acclivities, and so vividly green its verdure, and so deceptive the shadows that played there; that, from above, it seemed more like a lake of cool, balmy air, than a

glen: its woodlands and grasses gleaming shadowy all, like sea groves and mosses

beneath the calm sea" (*Mardi* 154).

"Lower down, these crevices gave an outlet to the waters of the brook, which, in a long

cascade, poured over sloping green ledges near the foot of the wall, into a deep shady

pool … in this pool, Yillah would bathe" (*Mardi* 155).

Society Islands

Araia: n. the middle of the space between two islands; the place or boundary from which

fish or birds return to their usual haunts (Davies 32)

Arai: n. pearl shell brought from a certain place in the small islands to the eastward of

Tahiti, called *Arai*, hence the name (Davies 32)

Ata: n. a cloud, a shadow

n. the twilight

n. a bait thrown to fish (Davies 41)

Aia: n. a country or place where one makes his abode (Davies 14)

The name that Melville invents breaks two rules, one being the familiar

combination of consonants and the second the consonant ending of the word, which was

again a phonetic impossibility for the Polynesians. By removing the problematic letters *d*

and the last *r* from the word, we are left with the Tahitian "Arai" which Melville could

have heard but could not remember, like with many other words, its exact pronunciation.

One the other hand, by removing the first *r* and replacing the second *r* with its common

substitute *a* and by replacing the *d* with the Tahitian equivalent *t*, we come up with the

compound "ata-aia," which means "a shadow country," or "a place of twilight," or "a

place that acts as bait, a trap." These three definitions may have been consulted by

Melville when he created "Ardair," the golden prison of Yillah.

It is possible that Melville had in mind images from the island of Raiatea which

contains, beyond its series of mountain ridges and rocky walls, a number of glens unseen

by those approaching its shores: "The rocks rise nearly perpendicular in some places on

both sides, and the smooth surface of the ocean extends a mile and a half, or two miles,

towards the mountains. The shores of this sequestered bay are covered with sand, shells,

and broken coral" (Ellis 2: 332). Another possibility is that Melville had in mind the

cluster of Pearl Shell islands called "Arai" in the Tahitian dialect, a place that was the

destination of the Parki (*Mardi* 68). Finally, it is also possible the Melville was inspired,

in creating the mythical place, by Wilkes's description of the volcanic formation of

Apolima: "Apolima, on the most cursory examination, is evidently the crater of an

extinct volcano. Perpendicular cliffs rise from the sea around its whole circuit, except as

a single point on its northern side. Here the lip of the crater is broken down, and admits

the water of the sea into a small bay, which affords a safe harbour for boats" (Wilkes 2:

108).

Arheetoo

"I heard a curious case of casuistry … whether it was right and lawful for any one,

being a native, to keep the European Sabbath, in preference to the day set apart as such

by the missionaries, and so considered by the islanders in general" (*Mardi* 163).

"He wished to have manufactured a set of certificates, purporting to come from certain

man-of-war and merchant captains, known to have visited the island; recommending him

as one of the best getters up of fine linen in all Polynesia" (*Mardi* 165).

Society Islands

Aritu: n. a person who seizes his prey in time of war (Davies 38)

Ahitu: n. a company of idolatrous priests, a sort of Nazarites, residing in a sacred house

in a *marae*, and observing peculiar customs, such as not shaving, not cutting the hair,

etc. (Davies 11)

The name is again a violation of Polynesian phonetic law that prohibits the use of

two contiguous consonants. If this is the case, then the *h* must be a silent one probably

used to give emphasis to the sound *ee* that follows. Melville may also have had in mind

the term "Ahitu" —as the letter *r* seems to be constantly inserted in Polynesian words to

create (his) words that break the rules of Polynesian phonetics. The pronunciation and

syllabication of words like "Arheetoo," "Arfretee," and several more should adhere to

Davies' claim that "each vowel has its own distinct sound" (3). This means that each of

these words should have a pronounced *e* as in "letter" and not a combined pronunciation

that produces a different sound as happens here (*ee* is pronounced as in the word "meet"

and *oo* as in the word "moon"). The counterargument is that Melville seems to have

adopted the western (the missionaries') mode of pronouncing doubled vowels which

creates an altered sound and syllabication. In any case, the name suggests someone who

has been very cunning and very opportunistic in his efforts to secure the very best for

himself.

Arva

"Besides the individuals I have mentioned, there belonged to the household three young

men, dissipated, good-for-nothing, roistering blades of savages, who were either

employed in prosecuting love-affairs with the maidens of the tribe, or grew boozy on

'arva' and tobacco in the company of congenial spirits, the scapegraces of the valley"

(*Typee* 85).

"The word 'arva,' as here employed, means brandy" (*Omoo* 173).

"At once reminded of the morsel of Arva-root in his mouth, a substitute for another sort

of sedative then unattainable, he was instantly illuminated concerning the purpose of the

nut" (*Mardi* 246).

Society Islands

Ava: n. the juice, or liquor made of the *ava* plant; also all kinds of spirituous and

intoxicating liquors (Davies 52)

Sandwich Islands

Awa: n. a plant from which an intoxicating liquor is made, the intoxicating liquor itself

expressed from the root of the plant (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 13-14)

The consistency with which Melville repeats the misspelling suggests his "misheard" understanding of the original Polynesian.

"This spirit is sufficiently strong, and bears some resemblance to whisky. The natives name it *ava* (a second, and more figurative name, occasionally applied to this liquor, is *pape pepe*, or the water that flogs), after the intoxicating drink" (Bennett 1: 125).

"The root which they term cava, and by which name the plant producing it is also called, belongs to a species of the pepper plant: it is known by the same name at the Fiji islands; but at the Navigator's islands, (which the Tonga also visit), at the Society Islands, and at the Sandwich islands, it is universally called *ava*" (Mariner 2: 173).

Ati

"Chief among the trees of the plain on this island, is the '*Ati*,' large and lofty, with a massive trunk, and broad, laurel-shaped leaves. The wood is splendid. In Tahiti, I was shown a narrow, polished plank, fit to make a cabinet for a king" (*Omoo* 214).

"'Be not impious,' said Pani; 'pronounce not Oro's sacred name too lightly.' 'Oro is but a sound,' said the boy. 'They call the supreme god, Ati, in my native isle; it is the soundless thought of him, oh guide, that is in me'" (*Mardi* 337).

Society Islands

Ati: n. the *tamanu* tree, see *tamanu*: the name of a large timber tree (Davies 43, 247)

Melville had an accurate memory of something as popular as that type of tree.

This simple name, however, is at the center of the semantic confusion in *Mardi* where

the blind guide, Pani, argues with "the willful boy who would not have Pani for his

guide" (*Mardi* 337) about the weight that a god's name should carry as a religious

symbol. The blind man is a representative of orthdox worship where all religious

symbols and signs are to be taken with the utmost seriousness and without questioning,

he is a proponent of the Catholic and Orthodox dogma of "belief without doubt." The

young boy stands for the more inquisitive, dissenting, Protestant approach that places

emphasis on the spiritual value of religion and disregards the majority of earthly symbols

as unnecessary. His answer to Pani that the name "Oro" does not exist in his land, but

instead the name "Ati" is used to refer to God, is significant of the non-conformist

approach.

"Calophyllum *inophyllum*. —This tree is the tamanu or *ati* of the Society Islanders"

(Bennett 2: 354).

"But let us resemble the *ati* and the *miro*, and the *purau* trees, which have not only a

sound appearance, but are firm and solid throughout" (Tyerman & Bennet 2: 145).

Azzageddi

"'Many things I know, not good to tell; whence they call me Azzageddi.' 'A very

confidential devil, this; that tells no secrets. Azzageddi, can I drive thee out?' 'Only with

this mortal's ghost: —together we came in, together we depart.' 'A very terse, and ready devil, this. Whence come you, Azzageddi?' 'Whither my catechist must go—a torrid clime, cut by a hot equator.' 'A very keen, and witty devil, this. Azzageddi, whom have you there?' 'A right down merry, jolly set, that at a roaring furnace sit and toast their hoofs for aye; so used to flames, they poke the fire with their horns, and light their tails for torches'" (*Mardi* 419-420).

Society Islands

Ata: a cloud, a shadow

Ataa: a. split, much divided; rent asunder (Davies 41)

Te: the definite article *the* (Davies 263)

Tii: an image; a demon or wicked spirit, a class of beings supposed to be different from men and gods (Davies 269)

Sandwich Islands

Aka: the shadow of a person (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 7); the figure or outline of a thing; a similitude or likeness (Andrews, *Dictionary* 25)

Ke: the definite article *the* (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 66)

Kii: an idol, statue, picture, image of a thing (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 68)

The name cannot exist as a Polynesian name in the form that Melville gave it, but it still has some possible roots with Polynesian language. None of the consonants exists

in Polynesian vocabulary which should make the reader wonder which ones could

Melville have replaced. Surprisingly, the letter *t* is the one that replaces all three (*z*, *g*, *d*),

according to both Davies's (1) and Andrews's (xxvi) dictionaries —in Andrews's case

the consonants (*z*, *g*, *d*) are all pronounced as in English, and so their replacement by

original Hawaiian consonants is done by extrapolation.

The resulting combination is the word "Ata-te-ti(-i)," which in the Tahitian

dialect means "the shadow image, the shadow demon" and in the Hawaiian "the shadow

of a person, idol, statue, picture, the shadow image of a thing, a similitude image of a

thing." Such a word does not exist in any Polynesian dialect, as far as my research has

shown, which again increases the possibility that Melville created a hybrid compound

word that reflected the meanings of their respective Polynesian parts and fit his purpose.

The process of breaking up the word "Ata-te-ti" into its component parts produces two

conclusions: that the word is a compound and that the two parts are connected with the

definite article *te*. Using this simple method and Melville's manner of bringing forth, out

of the shadows of Babbalanja's ego, the character of Azzageddi, I came up with the

above conclusion as to how Melville created Babbalanja's demonic alter ego.

B

Babbalanja

"The second was Babbalanja, a man of a mystical aspect, habited in a voluminous robe.

He was learned in Mardian lore; much given to quotations from ancient and obsolete

authorities: the Ponderings of Old Bardianna: the Pandects of Alla-Mallola" (*Mardi*

197).

"Returning, we espied Babbalanja advancing in his snow-white mantle. The fiery tide

was ebbing; and in the soft, moist sand, at every step, he left a lustrous foot-print"

(*Mardi* 632).

"Silent replied my soul, for voice was gone,—'This have I learned, oh! spirit!—In things

mysterious, to seek no more; but rest content, with knowing naught but Love'" (*Mardi*

633).

Tonga Islands

Babalagi: a foreigner; foreign manufactures, such as cloth, linen, etc. (Rabone 26)

Babala: Diseased with the *Bala*, a disease, a sore (Rabone 26-27)

Papalangi: white people; Europeans: also European manufactures, such as cloth, linen,

etc. (Mariner 2: 22-25 and *Dictionary* n. pag.; Wilkes 2: 74)

Society Islands

Papaa: n. a foreigner, formerly applied to the inhabitants of the *Paumotu* islands before

Europeans visited them, but since to all foreigners; in some islands it is *papalangy*

(Davies 185)

I have included the Tongan spelling to create greater emphasis on the similarity

between the actual term and Melville's transformation. The letter *b* does not exist in most of the dialects of Polynesia which use the letter *p* instead. The term "Papalanja" then (the doubling of the second *p* is omitted since it breaks the grammatical rule of the single consonant), is phonetically much closer than any other term, to the name the Polynesians used to refer to white people and also to foreigners. Babbalanja, through his alter ego, Azzageddi, is a "foreigner" to himself, he is "diseased with the *Bala*," his is the split personality of the white European and the "savage" Polynesian. This split personality is symbolic of the identity crisis the Polynesians faced when they realized that their white counterparts were not gods but equally frail and human to them, especially after they were introduced to the hardships of colonization and the cynicism western societies introduced into their virgin view of the world. Babbalanja personifies this cynicism and the acute sense of victimization the Polynesians had to cope with.

At the same time, his philosophical dilemma on the origins of the ego is played through his constant investigation of sources from all Polynesian Letters, which he manages to externalize through his bookish personality and the endless discussions with the rest of the traveling company on all subjects. The mocking Azzageddi is there to point out the futility of the endeavor to discover "the everlasting mystery" (*Mardi* 634), which "mystery Oro guards; and none but him may know" (*Mardi* 635). Babbalanja, whose name can also be interpreted as a pun on the English word "babble on," one of his signifying character traits, can only find peace in ignorance and in accepting the limitations of the human mind, and the dead-ends it creates for itself in its quest for something it can never attain. In this sense, Babbalanja personifies the vanity of

exploration of the delusively advanced white European civilization, as it tries to find impossible answers to the mysteries of the universe and refuses to see past its own limitations. In chapter 188 of *Mardi*, Babbalanja is saved from himself, from Azzageddi, through divine intervention, thus allowing Melville to leave open a small window of salvation for the self-deluded human race.

"In the canoes were several chiefs, who came to request Finow to return on shore, as the people were greatly alarmed lest he should form a determination of going to Papalangi (land of white people)" (Mariner 2: 22).

Bardianna

"The truest poets are but mouth-pieces; and some men are duplicates of each other; I see myself in Bardianna" (*Mardi* 397).

Society Islands

Pa: n. a term of reverence answering to father, and commonly used by children in addressing their father, and common people their chief (Davies 177)

Ria: n. a vision in sleep, a phantom (Davies 227)

Ana: poss. pron. of or belonging to him, her, or it (Davies 21)

The division of this undoubtedly compound word follows the phonetic rules obeyed by most Polynesian dialects (and explained earlier). An entirely Polynesian root-

word is unlikely, but I have divided it into parts whose meaning, when combined, suggests the peculiar relation that Babbalanja had with his "mentor." As such, the meaning of *Pa-ria-ana* is equivalent to that of "the ghost of my father." Equally likely (if not more) is the possibility that this is an English-Polynesian hybrid, "Bard-*i-ana*," which roughly translates into "my Bard." Melville follows the pattern of writing English words with a "Polynesian accent," a pattern he used in *Typee* and *Omoo*. By adding an *i* at the end of the English word he creates a "hybrid" imitation —"hybrid" because it has not been entirely acculturated into the Polynesian language— of a Polynesian pronunciation; "Bard" thus, becomes "Bardi," and so on.

Bembo

"Bembo, the New Zealand harpooner, held little intercourse with any body but the mate, who could talk to him freely in his own lingo. Part of his time he spent out on the bowsprit, fishing for albicores with a bone hook; and occasionally he waked all hands up for a dark night dancing some cannibal fandango all by himself on the forecastle. But, upon the whole, he was remarkably quiet, though something in his eye showed he was far from being harmless" (*Omoo* 13).

Tonga Islands

Be: adj. only or alone (Rabone 29)

Bo: v. to seize; to catch (Rabone 31)

Bo: n. night (Rabone 31)

Society Islands

Pe: v. n. to be disengaged, to be off (Davies 193)

Po: n. night (Davies 199)

Melville added the letter *m* either because he never knew the exact spelling of the name and he was extrapolating when he wrote it, or because a different spelling was necessary to the fictional nature of the book. The meaning of the New Zealander's name agrees with his role aboard the "Julia," he is, in other words, "the only one who can catch," or "quiet as a lonely night."

Borabora

"It was true, he said, that the queen entertained some idea of making a stand against the French; and it was currently reported, also, that several chiefs from Borabora, Huwyenee, Raiatair, and Tahar, the leeward islands of the group, were at that very time taking counsel with her, as to the expediency of organizing a general movement throughout the entire cluster, with a view of anticipating any further encroachments on the part of the invaders" (*Omoo* 287).

"The portly, pleasant old monarch, seated cross-legged upon a dais, projecting over the bow of the largest canoe of the six, close-grappling to the side of the Sea Elephant. Was he not a goodly round sight to behold? Round all over; round of eye and head; and like the jolly round Earth, roundest and biggest about the Equator … He was all hilarity; full

of allusions to the feast at Willamilla, where he had done royal execution. Rare old

Borabolla! thou wert made for dining out; thy ample mouth an inlet for good cheer, and

a sally-port for good humor" (*Mardi* 285-286).

"Lounging in a canoe, there is nothing more pleasant than to float along—especially

where Boraborra and Tahaa, the glorious twins of the Society group, rear their lofty

masses to the ever vernal heights, belted about by the same zone of reef—the reef itself

being dotted with small islets perpetually thick and green with grass" (*Piazza-Tales*

415).

Society Islands

Ponaponao: n. insatiable appetite (Davies 201)

Sandwich Islands

Polapola: n. a sense of fullness in the stomach (Andrews, *Dictionary* 486)

adj. well; healthy; bright, as the face of one recovered from sickness; full; flowing, as a

garment (Andrews, *Dictionary* 486)

Bola: English n. a bowl; a dish

Poapoapola: v. to eat greedily; to swallow down food rapidly (Andrews, *Dictionary*

477)

Tonga Islands

Bolobola: n. a large basket made of the nut leaf (Rabone 32)

Orthography on this word suggests that Melville used either a transformed version of the English "bowl" (i.e. Bola), or a duplication of the Polynesian "Pola" or "Pona" which implies someone "very full, healthy" or someone with an "insatiable appetite" —the repetition of a particular word, such as in "Polapola," is used for emphasis in the Polynesian language. Although Melville alternates between the letters *r* and *l* (the *n* of the Tahitian word is a legal substitute by virtue of the grammatical rule that allows the interchangeability of the consonants *n* and *r*), thus validating the interchangeability of the two consonants in the English translation, in the Hawaiian dialect only the letter *l* is an acceptable choice (the same applies for the letter *b* which must necessarily be pronounced and written with a *p*).

All of the above definitions are indicative of his "portly" physique and accentuate his idiosyncracy as one "made for dining out." Melville is obviously inspired by the island with the same name, and especially its mountainous geography, to create the expansive, over-shadowing physiology and political attitude of the king.

According to myth, Borabora valley was on the island where the first of the Areoi society found a wife for their god, Oro (Andersen 432-433). The island was also known by the name "Bolabola" (Andersen 283) and "Polapola" (Andersen 284).

"Attachment only to the kings of Borabora (the term for the Society Islands)" (Ellis 4: 471).

"On reaching Mr. Nott's house, we found there the king of Borabora, whose name is Mai" (Tyerman & Bennet 1: 123).

"Where an intelligent half-caste woman, the offspring of a female of Borabora and an Irishman, was principally to be distinguished from the ordinary natives by her strongly-marked Hibernian features" (Bennett 1: 32n).

C

The letter *c* does not exist in the Polynesian alphabet as such, but is replaced by the letter *k* as in "cake."

Calabooza

"The ground next the road was walled in by a low, rude parapet of stones; and, upon the summit of the slope beyond, was a large, native house, the thatch dazzling white, and, in shape, an oval. 'Calabooza! Calabooza Beretanee!' (the English Jail), cried our conductor, pointing to the building" (*Omoo* 116).

Charles R. Anderson quotes Wilkes and Lucett to establish a reliable source for Melville's reference: "At the time of the second visit of his expedition in January, 1841, accordingly, it was found that his [Wilkes's] suggestion had been acted upon in earnest, and that a virtual curfew law had been enacted: 'We learned that the police regulations were such that any seaman would be taken up and put in the Caliboose [*sic*] if seen out

after 8 P.M.' More specifically, Edward Lucett, upon his first arrival at Pepeete in January, 1842, refers to a 'caliboose [*sc*], or lock-up, supplied with stocks to fetter the limbs of the drunken or disorderly' which, he adds, was about three-quarters of a mile down the Broom Road from the village" (Anderson 213). It is possible that the change of the spelling Melville made on his version is much more accurate than the one referred to in Wilkes' narrative; the "Calabooza" is a Polynesian derivative of the Spanish "Calabozo" which means "dungeon," and relative to the "Negro French (of Louisiana) calabouse [*sic*]" (*OED*).

"The natives on shore seemed transported with the idea of men coming purposely from Prētane to settle among them" (qtd. in Smith 146).

Cokoo

"I ate sparingly from one of Tinor's trenchers of poee-poee; which was devoted exclusively for my own use, being mixed with the milky meat of ripe coca-nut. A section of a roasted bread-fruit, a small cake of 'Amar,' or a mess of 'Cokoo,' two or three bananas, or a Mawmee apple" (*Typee* 150).

Society Islands

Koku: a creamy preparation of the breadfruit (Hale 6)

It is possible that Melville was referring to some other dish but used the wrong

name because the "Koku" is a cosmetic mixture of the "soap-berry tree," which "is

employed by the natives as an ingredient in the turmeric cosmetic they smear over their

persons" (Bennett 2: 348). Bennett claims that it is found only in Santa Christina and the

Marquesas.

D

The Polynesian language does not have the letter *d* but instead replaces it with *t*, *p*, or *l*.

Recognizing, however, the fact that Melville thought of English words written in the

Polynesian language, I decided to include the letter *d* into the dictionary.

Demi

"In the middle of this hall in the hill was incarcerated the stone image of one Demi, the

tutelary deity of Willamilla. All green and oozy like a stone under water, poor Demi

looked as if sore harassed with sciatics and lumbagos" (*Mardi* 234).

Society Islands

Mimi: n. urine

v. to make urine (Davies 143)

Sandwich Islands

Mi (or *Mimi*): n. urine, water from the bladder

Mi: to void or pass urine, as man or beast (Andrews, *Dictionary* 394)

Mimi: v. to void urine (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 101)

Mimi: n. urine (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 101)

The name is a compound from the words "te" and "mi" —the Polynesians use the word "mimi," and not just "mi" because urination is a recursive action. The word "te" has two meanings, the definite article "the," and the pronoun "I." Melville uses this name almost in its literal form, to mean "the one who makes urine," i.e. an old man who cannot control his bladder like he used to. What makes this definition more plausible is Melville's description of the statue, "all green and oozy like a stone … sciatics and lumbagos" (*Mardi* 234). Sciatics is a form of neuralgia that is related to "exposure to cold or damp" and is attributed to "any source of pressure upon the nerve within the pelvis, such as may be produced by a tumour or even by *constipation of the bowels*" (emphasis mine) (Britannica 11th ed., vol. 19, 427). Lumbago is a similar rheumatic ailment, its intensity suggesting "the existence of inflammation in some neighbouring internal organs, such as the kidneys, bowels, etc." and "sometimes it follows a strain of the muscles of the loins" (Britannica 11th ed., vol. 17, 121). Melville's creation then, is very much Polynesian, referring to an old man who seems to be stuck in a crouched position as if suffering from rheumatics and cannot stop urinating.

Diranda

"'The land of clubs and javelins, where the lord seigniors Hello and Piko celebrate their famous games,' cried Mohi" (*Mardi* 435).

"As previously hinted, those very magnificent and illustrious lord seigniors, the lord seigniors Hello and Piko, who between them divided Diranda, delighted in all manner of public games, especially warlike ones; which last were celebrated so frequently, and were so fatal in their results, that, notwithstanding the multiplicity of nuptials taking place in the isle, its population remained in equilibrio" (*Mardi* 439).

Society Islands

Raa: adj. sacred, consecrated, devoted to a sacred purpose (Davies 218)

Ta: n.v. to strike (Davies 236)

Maori Islands

Rakau: n. weapon (te rakau) (Williams 321)

Fiji Islands

Raka: v. to be struck by the strength, etc. of a person (Capell 199)

Melville created this original compound out of the article "Te" (which he changes to "Di") and the words "Raa" and "Ta" which when combined create the rough term "Te-raa-ta" which means "the sacred strike," the hit that has been consecrated and is thus justified. The interjected *n* possibly functions as an Anglicized replacement for the double *a* of "Raa," which, in its Polynesian spelling, does not conform to English language spelling rules. Melville used the letter *d* as a legal replacement of the Polynesian *t*. The compound "Te-raa-ta" does not exist in any Polynesian dialect in this form and is a purely Melvillean creation. Finally, another possibility is that Melville created and English version of the Polynesian transliteration of the word "Tirant-a," a pun on the word "tyrant" which illuminates the true character and condition of Diranda and its leaders.

Doleema

"Next we came to a large image of a dark-hued stone, representing a burly man, with an overgrown head, and abdomen hollowed out, and open for inspection; therein, were relics of bones. Before this image we paused. And whether or no it was Mohi's purpose to make us tourists quake with his recitals, his revelations were far from agreeable. At certain seasons, human beings were offered to the idol, which being an epicure in the matter of sacrifices, would accept of no ordinary fare. To insure his digestion, all indirect routes to the interior were avoided; the sacrifices being packed in the ventricle itself" (*Mardi* 336).

Society Islands

Tari: v. to hang or suspend (Davies 256)

Maa: n. food, provisions of any kind (Davies 122)

Toa: n. a rock, a stone (Davies 275)

Ri: v. to hang or suspend (Davies 227)

Tonga Islands

Toli: v. to gather, to pluck, to take off (Rabone 201)

Ma: n. bread (Rabone 156)

The letter *t* replaces here the non-Polynesian *d* and the double *e* is a missionary invention used as a substitute for the letter *i* (Andrews, *Dictionary* xxvi). The possibility that Melville made such changes emphasizes his awareness of the differences between local dialects that may have also seeped into Melville's writing. This possibility also stresses Melville's understanding of the cross-cultural (if we can call it that) similarities between different tribes, which although Melville may not have visited, he must have heard about or even had some experience with one or more of their members.

The compound result is again indicative of how Melville manipulates the spelling of a word in order to camouflage its meaning in his text. The word is a compound that Melville may have constructed out of the words "Toa-ri-maa" which roughly translate "to hang food from or for a rock." The Tonga compound creates a better impression of

the function of the stone image as that of a "food gatherer." Melville's altered compound

betrays the possible influence of the Tahitian or Tongan compounds.

Donjalolo

"Drawing near, it revealed a slender, enervate youth, of pallid beauty reclining upon a

crimson mat, near the festooned arch of the bower … the pupils of his eyes were as

floating isles in the sea … poor prince: this was one of those crazy conceits, so puzzling

to his subjects … and soon the king unconcernedly gazed; his monomania having

departed as a dream" (*Mardi* 226-227).

Sandwich Islands

Ona: n. state of intoxication

adj. intoxicated, drunk (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 27)

Ona: prep. of him, his, belonging to him or her (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 27)

Lolo: n. the palsy, lunacy, epilepsy

adj. crazy, insane, palsied (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 88)

Lolo: n. the palsy; feebleness or disuse of one's limbs (Andrews, *Dictionary* 349)

Lolo: adj. a person very awkward at doing anything as though he had not the use of his

limbs (Andrews, *Dictionary* 349)

Tonga Islands

Tona: n. a native disease resembling small pox (Rabone 202)

Lolo: a disease of which many die (Rabone 153)

As with most of his Polynesian words, Melville's altered word is a compound made of two parts, possibly "tona" or "ona" and "lolo." In the case of the Hawaiian dialect, Melville probably added the *d* (as he also did the *j*) in order to create the hybrid Euro-polynesian name. With the first, the European part of the name, Melville accentuates Donjalolo's effeminacy, as it is allusive of the Spanish word "doña" (lady), a term that can also be used to explain his nickname, "Fonoo" (see the relevant entry). The Polynesian "tona" or "ona –lolo" has two comparable meanings in the Hawaiian and Tongan dialects, which suggest that the young king is "intoxicated with lunacy" or that he is "intoxicated to avoid his palsy." Both definitions, aside from their accuracy, also emphasize both the physical and spiritual elements of the young king's ailment as is also indicated in Melville's text.

Doxodox

"Somewhere, beneath this moss, lurks the mystic stone Mnizuris; whereby Doxodox hath attained unto a knowledge of the ungenerated essences. Nightly, he bathes his soul in archangelical circumlucencies … but seated on a green bank, beneath the shade of a red mulberry, upon the boughs of which, many an owl was perched, he seemed intent upon describing divers figures in the air, with a jet-black wand … Oh wise Doxodox! Drawn hither by thy illustrious name, we seek admittance to thy innermost wisdom" (*Mardi* 562-563).

Sandwich Islands

Lololo: v. to think; to reflect; to reason; to turn over in one's mind (Andrews, *Dictionary* 349)

Lolo: n. the brains, marrow (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 88)

Lolo: n. the palsy, lunacy, epilepsy (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 88)

Lo: n. the fore part of the head; a small black insect (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 87)

Society Islands

Roro: n. the brains of mankind, not of beasts (Davies 232)

Ro: n. an ant, of which there are may species (Davies 230)

      The Polynesian language contains within the word "lolo" two contrary notions; on the one hand, the word means "the brain, the marrow" which is also used to describe logic (from which comes the verb "lololo"), and on the other, it means "the palsy, lunacy, epilepsy," which is used to refer to a disease of the mind, to lunacy —this is also the second part of the name of the effeminate king Donjalolo as explained above. Melville's hybrid name, Doxodox, contains within its ironic repetition of the Polynesian "lo" or "ro" (Melville replaced with the letter *d* either the Hawaiian *l* or the Tahitian *r*) the European (Greek) "doxa," a term that suggests both the "doctrinal" and the "dogmatic" acceptance of a particular truth. Doxodox's incomprehensible categorizations conflict with Azzageddi's (or Babbalanja's) theory of truth and the

ensuing debate between Babbalanja and Doxodox, which culminates with the sophistic

tale of shark, is typical of the ancient Greek debate between Platonic and Sophistic

philosophy. The Polynesian sources words for Doxodox's name reveal the extremes that

the human mind can reach, on the one hand, absolute, dogmatic logic, and on the other,

madness, thus embodying the impracticalities and the dead ends of philosophical

thought.

E

Emio

"Many of the Tahitians were at first disposed to resort to arms, and drive the invaders

from their shores; but more pacific and feebler counsels ultimately prevailed. The

unfortunate queen, Pomare, incapable of averting the impending calamity, terrified at the

arrogance of the insolent Frenchman, and driven at last to despair, fled by night in a

canoe to Emio" (*Typee* 18).

Sandwich Islands

Eimeo: One of the Georgian Islands (Ellis 1: 7).

The spelling mistake could have been made by either Melville or one of his proofreaders, but with no one being familiar with the language at the time of its first printing the correction was never made, just as with several other words.

"He [Pomare] was still, indeed, an exile in Eimeo, excluded from his paternal dominions, and, consequently, had less power than formerly either to protect them from danger, or to aid their endeavours for spreading civilisation among his subjects" (Russell 154).

F

Fanna

"But the third pilgrim, one Fanna, a hale matron, in handsome apparel, needed no asking to bestow her goods … and wound round and round Pani, fold after fold of the costliest tappas; and filled both his hands with teeth; and his mouth with some savory marmalade; and poured oil upon his head; and knelt and besought of him a blessing (*Mardi* 329).

Society Islands

Faana: v. to pacify a child; a pacifier, one that pacifies (Davies 70)

Faafanau: v. to perform the duties of a midwife (Davies 64)

Faa: a causative prefix, common to most, if not all the Polynesian dialects; in the

Tahitian it is *faa* or *haa*, and in some instances *ta*; but in other dialects *faka*, *haka*, *aka*,

and *hoo*. It is prefixes to nouns, adjectives, and verbs neuter, by means of which they are

turned into verbs active (Davies 60)

Na: adj. quiet, applied to a child that has ceased crying … see *faana* (Davies 150)

Na: v. to present, to offer (Davies 169)

Ana: v. to present, to offer; when in the imperative, or when the verb is by way of

entreaty, but commonly contracted into *a* or *na* (Davies 22)

Sandwich Islands

Hanau: v. to be born, to bring forth; to cause to be born, to beget as a father, to bring

forth as a mother (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 38)

Haa: used frequently for the causative *hoo*. See *hoo* (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 33)

Hoo: the causative prefix of verbs … often continues though the word becomes a noun,

adjective, or adverb (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 44)

Na: v. to be quiet … to be pacified as a child (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 104)

Tonga Islands

Fanau: v. to bring forth, to give birth (Rabone 89)

Fanafanau: adj. old, aged, applied to a woman that has borne several children (Rabone

89)

Na: adj. respectful (Rabone 175)

The substitution of the Tahitian *f* for the Hawaiian *h* is normal and grammatically correct according to Davies: "the letter F frequently occurs in Tahitian, it is discarded in some of the Polynesian dialects, and the *h* is substituted; others discard the *h* altogether" (Davies 60). In this sense both words are possible as their pronunciation is legal and interchangeable. Since the prefix "faa" or "haa" is commonly used without significant change to the parent word, it is possible for the parent word to exist without the prefix. In this case, the Melvillean "Fanna" could be perceived as a rough compound from the prefix "faa" and the parent word "na" or "ana."

The word "Fanna" (or "Fana" in Tahitian) is defined as "a mast; to shoot as with a gun or bow" (Mariner *Dictionary* n. pag.). In this form, it is difficult to associate the name with Melville's description. However, the word "Fanow" means "pregnancy; childbirth; progeny; offspring; to bring forth young" (Mariner *Dictionary* n. pag.), which brings us closer to Melville's intended meaning.

Andrews compares the letter *h* to the English aspirate (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 33) which implies the possibility of a misspelled word. Although Melville wrote "Fanna," he may have meant "Anna" or "Na" since the prefix "Faa" or "Haa" ("faka" or "haka") was very frequently used to put emphasis to the meaning of a word. Melville describes the woman as "a hale matron" who "needed no asking to bestow her goods" (*Mardi* 328). It is obvious that with the name and the following description, Melville creates a mother-figure who treats Pani almost like a child, showering him with the most exquisite and expensive gifts, without neglecting to give him money, feed him, and care for his hair.

Of course, her motherly behavior is tempered by her pleading disposition toward the

demigod she never forgets she addresses. Finally, she seems to treat everyone as her

child according to Melville: "But the sad-eyed maiden, removing her upper mantle,

threw it over the naked form of the beggar" (*Mardi* 329).

"*hanau*, to bear, or bring forth" (Ellis 4: 366).

Farnoo

"I have devoted much time and attention to the study of pipe-bowls, and groped among

many learned authorities, to reconcile the clashing opinions concerning the origin of the

so-called Farnoo, or Froth-of-the-Sea … may it please you, then, my right worshipful

lord, this Farnoo is an unctuous, argillaceous substance; in its natural state, soft,

malleable, and easily worked as the cornelian-red clay from the famous pipe-quarries of

the wild tribes to the North. But though mostly found buried in terra-firma, especially in

the isles toward the East, this Farnoo, my lord, is sometimes thrown up by the ocean; in

seasons of high sea, being plentifully found on the reefs. But, my lord, like amber, the

precise nature and origin of this Farnoo are points widely mooted" (*Mardi* 373).

Sandwich Islands

Nou: v. to blow hard as a gale of wind (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 108)

Nou: v. to throw or cast a stone, to strike as the rays of the sun (Andrews, *Vocabulary*

108)

Nou: v. to puff; to fill with wind (Andrews, *Dictionary* 425)

Nou: n. a puff or blast of wind (Andrews, *Dictionary* 426)

Melville's translation of the name as "froth-of-the-sea" is probably conjectural if perceived through a strictly lexicological aspect. The Tonga dialect uses the word "Coa" to describe the "froth-of-the-sea" (or any other fluid) (Mariner *Dictionary* n. pag.), the equivalent of which is "huwa" (or "huahua") in Hawaiian (Andrews, *Dictionary* 212). The letter *f* is easily interchangeable with *h* and it is possible that Melville heard *f* instead of *h*, just as it is probable that the middle *r* replaced the doubled *a*. The resulting compound, "faanou" or "haanou" has the same meaning as the term "nou" since the "faa/haa" prefix is used emphatically or to convert a word into a verb —that is why I do not include it here.

The word "nou" means "to blow hard, as a gale of wind; to puff; to fill with wind" (Andrews, *Dictionary* 425). The indication that Melville is punning with the word "nou" comes from Media's urge for Mohi to proceed with his explanation of the term "Farnoo": "Well, then, my old centenarian, give us the result of your investigation. But smoke away: a *word* and a *puff*: go on" (italics mine) (*Mardi* 373).

Farnoopoo

"Upon my comrade's arms, then, were hanging Night and Morning, in the persons of Farnowar, or the Day-Born, and Farnoopoo, or the Night-Born" (*Omoo* 256).

Society Islands

Fanau: v. to be born; to bring forth (Davies 80)

Po: n. night (Davies 199)

Sandwich Islands

Hanau: v. to be born, to bring forth (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 88)

Po: n. night (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 119)

The letter (and sound) *f* in Hawaiian can be legally replaced by the letter *h*: "The letter F frequently occurs in Tahitian, it is discarded in some of the Polynesian dialects, and the *h* is substituted; others discard the *h* altogether, but in Tahitian both are used, and in some instances are mutually interchanged, as in the causative prefix *faa* and *haa*" (Davies 60). Further, the illegal *r* is deleted from the Polynesian equivalent, just like the last *o* in *Poo*, which sounds redundant based on the intended meaning, thus leaving us with the compound word "Hanau/Fanau-Po," which very accurately refers to someone who has been born during the night.

"*hanau*, to bear, or bring forth" (Ellis 4: 366).

"all the souls of the departed went to the *Po*, place of night" (Ellis 4: 366).

Fayaway

"Her free pliant figure was the very perfection of female grace and beauty … I may

succeed, perhaps, in particularizing some of the individual features of Fayaway's beauty,

but that general loveliness of appearance which they all contributed to produce I will not

attempt to describe. The easy unstudied graces of a child of nature like this, breathing

from infancy an atmosphere of perpetual summer, and nurtured by the simple fruits of

the earth … this nymph of the valley" (*Typee* 85-87).

Society Islands

Faa: n. a valley; a low place among the hills (Davies 60)

Vai (or *Wai*): n. water (Davies 309)

Sandwich Islands

Haa: v. to dance (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 33)

Wai: n. a liquid, fresh water in disjunction from *kai* salt water (Andrews, *Vocabulary*

128)

Haiawahine: n. concubine; a kept mistress (Andrews, *Dictionary* 122)

Tonga Islands

Fakavai: v. to soak, to wet, to liquefy (Rabone 87)

Faka: used very frequently in forming compound words, being prefixed cheifly [*sic*] to

nouns, adjectives, and verbs, signifying after the manner of; also, to cause (Rabone 38)

Based on the manuscript page (*Typee* 369), the unaltered name "Faawai" makes

more sense in the Polynesian than the changed English one. According to the manuscript name then, Melville saw in the Polynesian woman a "valley of water" (or "dancing water") thus personifying his desire for a Paradisiacal escape. Her figure is ideal for dancing and her countenance is similar to that of a "nymph" (*Typee* 87), a creature of nature that lives close to "groves, by springs and rivers, in valleys and cool grottoes" (Britannica 11th ed., vol. 19, 390). The letters *h* and *f* are interchangeable and the Tongan "faka" is equivalent to the Tahitian/Hawaiian "faa" or "haa."

The name of Tommo's female companion is indeed a challenge to both critics and editors; was she a true love to Tommo, or was she simply a "Haiawahine" (Hawaiian for concubine, kept mistress—"Haiawa-hine" is very close phonetically and semantically to Melville's Faiawa-*y*)? In either case, the omitted "Faawai" contains enough semantic references to constitute its re-examination a significant critical step.

Fenooa Pararee

"They come from 'Beretanee, Fenooa Pararee' (Britain, Land of Wonders)" (*Omoo* 151).

Society Islands

Fenua: n. land, country; the earth (Davies 85)

Parare: v. to spread wide (Davies 197)

Piri: n. a wonder, a curiosity, a puzzle (Davies 198)

Melville is accurate with the first part of the phrase, "fenua," and the double *o* of his word imitates accurately the sound of the letter *u* in the original. Melville is approximating the pronunciation of the second word with his peculiar orthography, but it is also possible that his translation was mistaken and not the word "pararee" —thus the correct would be "wide, great land" and not "land of wonders."

Flozella–a–Nina

"As if Mardi were a poem, and every island a canto, the shore now in sight was called Flozella-a-Nina, or The-Last-Verse-of-the-Song" (*Mardi* 642).

"'However that might be,' murmured Yoomy, 'young Nina bewailed herself a widow, whenever Arhinoo, her lord, was absent from her side'" (*Mardi* 488).

Society Islands

Hope: v. to be finished, ended, concluded (Davies 108)

Ora: n. life (Davies 170)

orero: n. language, speech, oration (Davies171)

A: prep. belonging to (Davies 2)

Sandwich Islands

Hope: adj. ending; last (Andrews, *Dictionary* 211)

Hope, *Hopena*: n. the end or beginning of a thing, the finishing, the close of a period of time, the time of death (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 53)

Ola: adj. alive (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 25)

Ola: n. life; the period of one's life (Andrews, *Dictionary* 86)

A: prep. of, belonging (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 1)

Nana: v. to be quieted or consoled as a child (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 106)

Neanea: adj. lonely, desolate (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 106)

Ninau: v. to ask a question, to inquire concerning a thing, to interrogate (Andrews,

Vocabulary 108)

Minamina: v. to grieve for the loss of a thing, to be sorry on account of the consequence

of an event, to be sorry at sad intelligence, to be weighed down with sorrow, to spare,

save from punishment (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 101)

The phrase Flozella-a-Nina which Mohi translates from the Polynesian as "The-

Last-Verse-of-the-Song" (*Mardi* 642) is a combination of Polynesian compounds that

have been transformed to sound as Spanish as the last word, "niña." As far as the

spelling of the first word is concerned, Melville added the letter *l* after the *f* and doubled

the second *l*, in violation of Polynesian spelling conventions, to create something

completely unrecognizable in comparison to the original. The letter *z* does not exist in

any Polynesian dialect and is dismissed by Polynesian lexicographers as foreign.

Melville inserted the *z*, in place of the more Polynesian *p*, in order to bring the first part

of the phrase (flozella) in harmony with the second (niña). Furthermore, he changed the

original *h* to an *f* (a perfectly legitimate change even for Polynesian standards) in order

to be able to combine the consonants *f* and *l* in a Spanish-speaking environment.

Melville must have invented the term based on phonetic memory, and added the consonants *f*, *l* and *z* to adjust the term to (his) western standards. The original Polynesian, "hope-ola" or "hope-ora," means "the end of life," which Melville could have translated, poetic license of course, as "the last verse," that is, "the end of life for the story."

There are two places in *Mardi* where the word "Nina" appears, both separate and distinct from each other in their meaning. The word that is part of the phrase flozella-a-nina bears no Polynesian equivalent that means "song," "hymn," "poem" or "tale." The Hawaiian "Ha' ina" is used to refer to the "two or more last verses of a song" (Pukui & Elbert 529) but there is no clear indication how modern to Melville's time this term was. The second "Nina" must also refer to a non-Polynesian legend, and describes a woman who cried, who "minamina-*ed*," who grieved for the loss of her husband.

Foni

"headed by Foni, an upstart prophet, a personage distinguished for the uncommon beauty of his person … a frightful figure, doubled with age … from his ineffaceable tatooing, it was proved that this was no other than Foni, the false prophet; the splendid form he had carried into the rebel fight, now squalid with age and misery" (*Mardi* 342).

Society Islands

Honae: adj. withered, faded as a cut branch (Davies 108)

Honea: adj. sharp, quick, applied to the voice (Davies 108)

Honi: v. to bite (Davies 108)

Hohoni: v. to bite (Davies 107)

Honihoni: v. to gnaw, to bite by little and little (Davies 108)

Sandwich Islands

Oni: v. to move, to turn the body in a restless mood (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 27)

Oni: adj. uneasy (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 27)

Onionio: adj. of an unstable mind changeable in purpose (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 27)

Although an obvious pun to the English "phony" this term has a Polynesian root. Although Melville verifies Foni's name with his qualities, the Polynesian equivalent or source word provides us with insight as to Foni's true character. The letters *f* and *h* are interchangeable in several Polynesian dialects, without of course excluding the possibility that the aspirate *h* (or *f*) is in fact a silent one.

Fonoo

"His comeliness, however, was so feminine, that he was sometimes called 'Fonoo,' or the Girl" (*Mardi* 216).

Society Islands

Fanaua: n. what is brought forth; the young of any animal, man, beast, bird, or fish (Davies 80)

Sandwich Islands

Hanau: v. to be born, to bring forth (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 38)

Hanau: n. child birth (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 38)

Tonga Islands

fanau: n. children; offspring (Rabone 89)

It is possible here that Melville is approximating with his translation the correctness of the name and its spelling, as he is basing it on the king's "comeliness" (*Mardi* 216). If "Fonoo" is Polynesian, then Melville intends to describe the king as a child when he describes him as a girl, since all children display a higher degree of effeminacy. The aspirates *f* and *h* are interchangeable.

"*hanau*, to bear, or bring forth" (Ellis 4: 366).

G

This letter does not appear in and is not pronounced by the majority of Polynesian dialects, but is instead replaced by the letter *t*. I have included it here in accordance with Melville's spelling.

Gaddi

"Among the crowd was a bustling somebody, one Gaddi, arrayed in much apparel to little purpose; who, singling out Babbalanja, for some time adhered to his side, and with excessive complaisance, enlightened him as to the people assembled … beginning with Gaddi himself, who, she insinuated, was a mere parvenu, a terrible infliction upon society, and not near so rich as he was imagined to be" (*Mardi* 409).

Society Islands

Tati: v. to taunt, insult (Davies 258)

Sandwich Islands

Kaki: adj. cross, angry, petulant (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 62)

Kake: n. a kind of artificial language; it is used both in speaking and writing; it is used mostly, if not always, for vile, lascivious purposes (Andrews, *Dictionary* 245)

According to Davies the English *g* and *d* replace the Polynesian *t* in the pronunciation and orthography of relevant foreign words (Davies 1). Based on this assumption, the Polynesians would have used "Tati" to refer to the same foreign word. The Hawaiian "Kaki" or "Kake" is the product of the transposition of the letter *t* into that dialect. Although Andrews (or his editors) claims that foreign letters such as *g* and *d* where pronounced as such and not changed in the Hawaiian dialect, I have provided the reader with the Hawaiian extract of the transposed "Tati" in order to emphasize the

semantic similarity of the two dialects and suggest the possibility that Melville

transposed back into English the already filtered and distorted (through the Polynesian)

English word "Gaudy" which has a similar meaning to the Polynesian: "full of trickery;

brilliantly fine or gay, highly ornate, showy; said of immaterial things, *esp*. of diction"

(*OED*).

H

Hamo

"'In-this-re-publi-can-land-all-men-are-born-free-and-equal' … 'Except-the-tribe-of-

Hamo'" (*Mardi* 512-513).

"and there, under a burning sun, hundreds of collared men were toiling in trenches, filled

with the taro plant" (*Mardi* 531-532).

Society Islands

Amo: v. to carry on the back (Davies 20)

Sandwich Islands

Amo: v. to carry on the shoulder, to bear a burden, to bear, bring along, carry; to put

upon the shoulders of another, to carry on the back (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 11)

Tonga Islands

Fakamoi: v. to command others to do that which the party ordering does not like to do (Rabone 74)

Maori Islands

Hamo: *hamo pango*: n. black head (i.e. head turned in flight), coward (Williams 33)

Although the aspirate *h* is euphonic, it is possible that Melville added the *h* to "amo," since in the majority of the Polynesian dialects "hamo" has little relevance to Melville's descriptions. The interchangeability of the letters *f* and *h* has also been considered as an alternative spelling of the term.

It is possible that Melville was influenced by the Polynesian word used to describe the particular way of carrying royal persons or dignitaries as described in Ellis' *Polynesian Researches*: "This mode of conveyance was called *amo* or *vaha.* It could not have been very comfortable even to the riders, while to the bearers it must have been exceedingly laborious" (Ellis 3: 103).

Also, with the name, Melville creates a multicultural link between Polynesia and ancient Egypt and Africa which had the same name, according to the *Genesis*, and was "used in the Psalms in reference to the sojourn there of the Children of Israel" (Hastings 361). The root Ham comes from the three sons of Noah and its application to slaves is based on Noah's curse of Ham's son, in Canaan (Genesis 9: 22-25).

Hamora

"This rocky islet passed, the sea went down; once more we neared Hamora's western shore … Poor land! Curst of man, not Oro! how thou faintest for thy children, torn from thy soil, to till a stranger's" (*Mardi* 554).

Society Islands

Amo: See Tahitian *Hamo* above

Ra: adv. Of time or place implying distance with reference to either (Davies 218)

Sandwich Islands

Amo: See Hawaiian *Hamo* above

La: It is used also with nouns and adverbs and seems to have a slight reference to place (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 81)

This is a compound word, made up of the terms "amo" (see above "hamo") and "ra," which combined would mean "the place [of those who] carry on the back, the land of the slaves."

Hannamanoo

"On the other side of the island [La Dominica or Hivarhoo] was the large and populous bay of Hannamanoo, where the men sought might yet be found … On gaining the end of the channel we rounded a point, and came full upon the bay of Hannamanoo. This is the

only harbor of any note about the island, though as far as a safe anchorage is concerned it hardly deserves the title" (*Omoo* 26).

Charles R. Anderson identifies the place with the parenthetical reference "Hanamenu" in the island of Hiva Oa: "The conjecture that Melville got his information from Langsdorff and that he met no such adopted chief as Lem Hardy is strengthened by the fact that Radiguet (pp. 44-46) in his full account of a visit to Hanamenu only two months before makes no mention of any white man living there with the natives" (Anderson 461).

Happar

"Immediately adjacent to Nukuheva, and only separated from it by the mountains seen from the harbor, lies the lovely valley of Happar, whose inmates cherish the most friendly relations with the inhabitants of Nukuheva. On the other side of Happar, and closely adjoining it, is the magnificent valley of the dreaded Typees, the unappeasable enemies of both these tribes" (*Typee* 24).

Society Islands

Hapa: adj. a deviation from a rule; a missing of a mark; error, sin, crime (Davies 98)

Haapa: v. to begin an attack, to seize a person (Davies 91)

Sandwich Islands

Hapa: n. an indefinite part, a few, a small part (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 38)

Hapa: n. of mixed blood, person of mixed blood (Pukui & Elbert 58)

Tahitian tribe described by C. S. Stewart as follows: "They [their canoes] were filled with men of the Hapa tribe, who, the moment they descried the ship, began hauling in their lines and fishing-tackle, in readiness to board us … Some of these were entirely naked, and in this respect a degree more barbarous than most of the Sandwich Islanders I ever saw; but all appeared as good-natured and jovial as could be. It was soon ascertained from them, that their tribe and the Taipiis were, as usual, at war; and that only two days previously there had been a sea-fight between them near the spot at which we then were" (136-137). Charles Anderson uses Porter's and Dupetit-Thouars' accounts as sources to document the existence of the "Happas" (Anderson 95, 97). The definition of the name suggests either a corrupt people through contact with white colonists, or a degraded people, possibly in comparison to the purist and isolated Typees.

The Hawaiian "hapa," which meant "part" or "of mixed blood" and possibly referred to a people of mixed heritage, was probably used as a racial slur by the Typees for their mortal enemies.

Hautia

"the maidens of Hautia are all Yillahs, held captive, unknown to themselves; and that Hautia, their enchantress, is the most treacherous of queens … malicious triumph in her

eye" (*Mardi* 648).

"As their last exhoes died away down the valley, Hautia glided near;—zone unbound, the amaryllis in her hand. Her bosom ebbed and flowed; the motes danced in the beams that darted from her eyes" (*Mardi* 650).

"'Lo! Taji; all these amy be had for the diving; and Beauty, Health, Wealth, Long Life, and the Last Lost Hope of man. But through me alone, may these be had'" (*Mardi* 651).

"Strange languors made me droop; once more within my inmost vault, side by side, the Past and Yillah lay:—two bodies tranced;—while like a rounding sun, before me Hautia magnified magnificence; and through her fixed eyes, slowly drank up my soul. Thus we stood:—snake and victim: life ebbing out from me, to her" (*Mardi* 652).

Society Islands

Hau: n. peace, government, reign (Davies 99)

Tia: n. an advocate, or intercessor (Davies 265)

Au: v. to pursue (Davies 46)

Auau: v. to hunt or pursue (Davies 47)

Fautia: n. a medicinal plant (Davies 84)

Sandwich Islands

Hau: n. name of a tree or large bush (Andrews, *Dictionary* 125)

Haui: n. the title or epithet of a chief, as noble, a descendant of kings (Andrews, *Dictionary* 125)

Kia: n. one who entraps or catches birds or fish (Andrews, *Dictionary* 267)

Tonga Islands

Au: pron. I, me; n. a current; n. the sugar cane leaf (Rabone 4)

Fauhia: v. to have possession of; to seize and keep firm hold of (Rabone 37)

The name is familiar to several of those who documented their travels in the South Seas. Despite the fact that the historical figure was a man and not a woman, he still held a high position in the Tahitian royal court. Melville could have been inspired by any one or more sources which corroborate his existence. It is possible of course that the name is a fabrication based on the original true character and name, and enriched with the linguistic peculiarities of several Polynesian dialects. It is possible for example that Melville created her flowery idiosyncrasy based on the term "Fautia" (the *f* and *h* were frequently interchangeable and indistinguishable) and her ability to transform her victims and drain their life slowly, as the Tongan "Fauhia" implies. It is also possible that as a compound word it has numerous meanings, such as "an advocate of peace" which she offers to Taji at the end of his voyage. It could also mean "an advocate of pursuit," in other words a hunter, while her ability to delude her victims through her seemingly healing powers can been inferred through the name, "Fautia."

The Hawaiian "Haukia" or "Hauikia" suggests a chief or a plant that entraps or catches birds or fish. This particular attribute is corroborated by Ellis' account: "This kind of fishing was followed not only as a means of procuring food, but as an

amusement. The chiefs were exceedingly fond of it, and often strove to excel. Hautia was celebrated for his skill and strength in taking some kinds of fish" (Ellis 1: 142).

"One of this kind [salmon net] was made by Hautia, the governor of Huahine, soon after our arrival" (Ellis 1: 140-141).

"on the present occasion, we beheld Hautia, the governor of the island, and others of high rank, sitting by the side of the humblest peasants of the land" (Ellis 3: 25).

"The brilliant scarlet flowers of this plant … a tuft of large petals" (Bennett 2: 359-360).

"Next came Hautia, another princely personage … prime minister to the queen —in fact he is regent, and governs on her behalf" (Tyerman & Bennet 1: 137)

Heeva

"Hail, holy nakedness of our dancing girls! —the Heeva-Heeva!" (*Moby-Dick* 176).

Society Islands

Heiva: n. a dance, an assembly for dancing (Davies 101)

Tonga Islands

Hivehiva: v. to chime, to sing (Rabone 128)

Melville probably read about one of these popular dances in Cook's *Voyages*: "These dirges proper, dancing-festals, reed-matches, and death-talks were all

comprehended under the general name of *eva*, called by captain Cook *heava*" (Andersen 336). Also, it is not impossible that he may have witnessed one himself while living with the Typees.

Melville includes the same word with an alternative spelling, "hevar," (but same meaning) in *Omoo*: "and you would suppose them just from an old-fashioned 'hevar,' or jolly heathen dance" (*Omoo* 175-176).

"Freed in a great degree, so far as the means of subsistence were concerned, from anxiety and labour, the islanders were greatly devoted to amusement, for which *heiva* was the general name, though voyagers have restricted that term to their dances. By the natives, *heiva* was applied to most of their amusements, hence they spoke of the *heiva-maona*, wrestling, *heiva-moto*, boxing, *heiva-vivo*, flute-playing, *heiva-ude*, singing, *heiva-haapee uo*, kite-flying, and *heiva-tea*, archery" (Ellis 1: 204).

Hello

"And the lord signiors, Hello and Piko, finding their interests the same, came together like bride and bridegroom; lived in the same palace; dined off the same cloth; cut from the same bread-fruit; drank from the same calabash; wore each other's crowns; and often locking arms with a charming frankness, paced up and down in their dominions, discussing the prospect of the next harvest of heads" (*Mardi* 440-441).

"Now, those very magnificent and illustrious lord seigniors, the lord seigniors Hello and Piko, lived in a palace, round which was a fence of the cane called Malacca, each picket

helmed with a skull, of which there were fifty, one to each cane. Over the door was the

blended arms of the high and mighty houses of Hello and Piko: a Clavicle crossed over

an Ulna" (*Mardi* 443).

"And thus they were used to play merrily all day long; beheading the gourds of claret by

one slicing blow with their sickle-shaped scepters" (*Mardi* 444).

"Informed, however, that none of the party were professional warriors, their majesties

looked rather glum, and by way of chasing away the blues, called for some good old

stuff that was red" (*Mardi* 444).

"It seems, this soliciting guests, to keep their spears from decaying, by cut and thrust

play with their subjects, was a very common thing with their illustrious majesties"

(*Mardi* 444).

Sandwich Islands

Helo-helo: adj. to be red like the ohelo (Andrews, *Dictionary* 148)

Helu-helu: v. to con over and over (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 40)

Helu: adv. reciting or proclaiming the virtues of a deceased person (Andrews, *Dictionary*

148)

Tonga Islands

Hilo: n. the anus (Rabone 128) (Mariner *Dictionary* n. pag.)

In his description of the two characters, Melville accentuates two identifying

traits in the character: they love for (violent) sports and their desire to celebrate then

through contant drinking bouts. The emphasis on the word "red," the color of wine and

the color of blood, symbolizes their desire for both and is as a symbol of their reign and

their demeanor. The word "helo" is used in the Hawaiian dialect to describe something

red, whereas the variation of the word, "helu," alerts the reader to their insidious plan.

The meaning of the word "Hilo," which is a transcription of an alternative pronunciation,

is connected to "Piko" (the end, the navel) (see "Piko" for commentary). In any case,

both words are somewhat associated with the concept of "hole," "opening," and the

western notions of "hell" and "abyss." Interestingly enough, both names refer to a

central part of the body.

"It is a low rigid bush; its leaves alternate and serrated; its flowers pendulous, bell-

shaped, and red … native name *ohélo*" (Bennett 2: 350-351).

"He objected strongly to our going thither, as we should most likely be mischievous, and

offend Pélé or Nahoaarii, deities of the volcano, by plucking the *ohelo*, (sacred berries)"

(Ellis 4: 207).

Hevaneva

"Ere coming in sight of Uma, we put into a little bay, to pay our respects to Hevaneva, a

famous character there dwelling; who, assisted by many journeymen, carried on the

lucrative business of making idols for the surrounding isles. Know ye, that all idols not

made in Maramma, and consecrated by Hivohitee; and, what is more, in strings of teeth

paid down for to Hevaneva; are of no more account, than logs, stocks, and stones. Yet does not the cunning artificer monopolize the profits of his vocation; for Hevaneva being but the vassal of the Pontiff, the latter lays claim to King Leo's share of the spoils, and secures it" (*Mardi* 353).

Society Islands

Heva: n. the name of a foolish custom (Davies 102)

Hevaheva: n. a person not himself through violent passion (Davies 102)

Hivahiva: n. abundance, a large quantity, or number (Davies 106)

Nevaneva: adj. wild, unsteady; wandering, applied to the eye (Davies 154)

Nivaniva: adj. unsteady; see *nevaneva* (Davies 155)

Sandwich Islands

Hewa: n. sin, wrong, error, vice (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 41)

Hewa: v. to condemn, reprove, rebuke; to accuse, to find fault, complain (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 41)

Hewa-hewa: v. to forget one's appearance or name, to mistake one person for another, to be deranged in mind (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 41)

Hewa-hewa: n. derangement of mind from sickness (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 41)

Hewa-hewa: adj. crazy, insane (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 41)

Hiwa-hiwa: adj. to be greatly loved (Andrews, *Dictionary* 156-157)

Hiwa-hiwa: adj. acceptable, desired by any one, meek, docile (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 42)

Ewa: v. to mock, vex, trouble (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 16)

Ewa-ewa: adj. unequal, unjust (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 16)

Newa: v. to reel; to stagger, as one drunk

adj. to be dizzy, as one under the influence of vertigo (Andrews, *Dictionary* 421)

Newa-newa: n. a vertigo; a dizziness in the head (Andrews, *Dictionary* 421)

Newa-newa: adj. reeling; staggering; intoxicated; having a vertigo (Andrews, *Dictionary* 421)

Maori Islands

Hewa or *hewahewa*: be deluded, be under a false impression (Williams 47)

Included in the definitions are both aspirate and silent versions of the word "hewa" to underline the possibility that Melville heard or read one of these versions. The final product is a compound of the terms "hewa" (or "h-ewa") and "neva" and it can have several meanings, most of which have the same semantic basis. Although we do not get any direct image of him being "crazy, insane" or "dizzy, intoxicated," some glimpses of a profiteering, faithless character slip through the cracks of his words: "When I cut down the trees for my idols … they are nothing but logs … and when all complete … even then they are logs. Nevertheless, when I handle the pay, they are as prime gods, as ever were turned out in Maramma" (*Mardi* 354).

According to Hawaiian history, "Hewahewa" was a priest who had supported the current king, "Liholiho" ("Rihoriho"), to completely destroy religion in his kingdom:

"He ["Liholiho"] was abetted by the high priest Hewahewa, and in a few weeks temples, altars, images, and a priesthood which had held rulers in awe for centuries were swept away" (Andersen 467).

"Orders were issued to demolish the heiaus, and destroy the idols; temples, images and sacred property were burnt; the flames consumed the sacred relics of ages. The high-priest, Hewahewa, who was the first to apply the torch … resigned his office" (Jarves 198).

"and capsicums, called by the natives *néva*" (Bennett 1: 345).

Hivohitee

"It was reported, furthermore, that Hivohitee, one of the haughtiest of Pontiffs, purposely treated his angelical guests thus cavalierly; in order to convince them, that though a denizen of earth; a sublunarian; and in respect of heaven, a mere provincial; he (Hivohitee) accounted himself full as good as seraphim from the capital; and that too at the Capricorn Solstice, or any other time of the year. Strongly bent was Hivohitee upon humbling their supercilious pretensions. Besides, was he not accounted a great god in the land? supreme? having power of life and death? essaying the deposition of kings?" (*Mardi* 333).

"At the ordination of a Pontiff, the ceremony was not deemed complete, until embarking in a barge, he was saluted High Priest by three sharks drawing near; with with teeth turned up, swimming beside his canoe" (*Mardi* 334).

Society Islands

Hio: v. to whistle; to blow, as a person out of breath (Davies 104)

Hiohio: n. a spy, a soothsayer (Davies 104)

Hiohio: v. to observe, notice the affairs of people (Davies 104)

Hiohio: v. to whistle (Davies 104)

Hiu: adj. glutted; satiated (Davies 104)

Fiu: adj. tired, glutted with food; wearied (Davies 87)

Hiti: n. a monster, or whatever is deformed at birth (Davies 105)

Ohiti: v. to pluck off, or pluck out (Davies 161)

Hivahivatau: adj. abundant, plenteous (Davies 106)

Sandwich Islands

Heo: adj. haughty, proud (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 40)

Hio: n. a howling confused noise (Andrews, *Dictionary* 152)

Hiohio: to eat in a hurry; to draw in the breath as in eating a hot potatoe (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 41)

Hio: to dream; to sleep soundly; to blow; to rush violently, as a strong wind (Andrews, *Dictionary* 153)

Hiu: to practice sorcery (Andrews, *Dictionary* 152)

Hiki: to take an oath; to affirm a thing or event as true; to vow, to consecrate; to set apart; to promise a thing especially to a god; to set apart as sacred (Andrews, *Dictionary*

153)

Hiwa: adj. acceptable, desired by any one, meek, docile (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 42)

Hiwahiwa: v. to be pleased, satisfied as a god with an offering (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 42)

Hiwahiwa: n. a person or thing greatly beloved (Andrews, *Dictionary* 157)

Hiwahiwa: adj. very precious; greatly esteemed (Andrews, *Dictionary* 157)

Tonga Islands

Hiva: v. to sing (Rabone 128)

Hivehiva: v. to chime, to sing (Rabone 128)

The name Melville invents is a compound of the Polynesian terms "hivo" or "hio" or "hiu" and "hiti," "ohiti" or "hitee" (the double *ee*'s are pronounced *i*, as in "see") or "hiki." The most problematic part of the word is the letter *v* which yields no known words (at the time) when combined with the other three of the first term. As such, the letter *v* may be one of Melville's changes to create the necessary ambiguity as to its meaning; the transformation of the *v* into a *u* creates a different set of words than the transformation of the *v* into a *w*. The outright omission of the *v* may also be possible because the Polynesian term *hivo* does not exist, thus implying its potential interpolation.

The name then, may have been the product of such compounds as "hiohiti," "hiuhiti" ("fiuhiti"), "hiuohiti," "hiohiki," "hiwahiki" and so on. The variety of meanings that are produced out of the romanticized Hivohitee also attests to the character of the

Pontiff as Melville depicts it; he is a glutton with a puffed up ego, the meaning of his words is no more comprehensible than the chirping of ordinary birds, a monster of a man who rules like a shark (another monster), based on the fearful, prejudiced worship of his weak followers.

Hohora

"Little worthy of mention occurred, save this. Happening to catch a glimpse of the white even teeth of Hohora one of our attendants, King Peepi coolly begged of Media the favor, to have those same dentals drawn on the spot, and presented to him. Now human teeth, extracted, are reckoned among the most valuable ornaments in Mardi. So open wide thy strong box, Hohora, and show thy treasures. What a gallant array! Standing shoulder to shoulder, without a hiatus between. A complete set of jewelry, indeed, thought Peepi" (*Mardi* 205).

Society Islands

Hohora: v. to open what was shut or closed, to spread out (Davies 107)

Sandwich Islands

Hohola: v. to spread out or down as a mat or garment (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 51)

Tonga Islands

Fofola: v. to unfold; to spread out; to extend (Rabone 113)

Maori Islands

Hora: adj. displayed, spread out (Williams 59)

Although the name is obviously associated with white, pearly teeth, Melville chose to create a name based on the act of displaying those teeth, i.e. opening the mouth rather than their beauty and quality.

Hoolah

"In the midst of the wood was the hallowed 'hoolah hoolah' ground —set apart for the celebration of the fantastic religious ritual of these people" (*Typee* 91).

Society Islands

Hura: n. a native dance or play (Davies 114)

Sandwich Islands

Hula (or *Hula-hula*): n. music, dancing, singing, etc., a play in which numbers dance, while a few sing and drum (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 55)

In Hawaii "the *hula* dance was semi-religious in its nature, and appealed very widely and powerfully to the Hawaiian emotions and imagination. It was combined song or recitative and dance, the songs and recitations relating to mythology" (Andersen 445).

Melville describes the "hoolah ground" (*Typee* 91) very precisely as the stage —
an open area— where all the dances took place. The "halau" (Ellis 4: 320) —for which
Melville uses the term "pi-pi"— functions as the staging area for the preparation of the
dancers.

"The hura was sometimes a pantomimic exhibition, with dancing at intervals during the
performance" (Ellis 1: 215).

"Dances, *hula*, were of various character, sometimes interspersed with chants relating to
the achievements of the past or present rulers, or in honour of the gods" (Jarves 65).

Hooloomooloo

"And now for the Isle of Cripples, —even Hooloomooloo … Averse to the barbarous
custom of destroying at birth all infants not symmetrically formed; but equally desirous
of removing from their sight those unfortunate beings; the islanders of a neighboring
group had long ago established an asylum for cripples; where they lived, subject to their
own regulations; ruled by a king of their own election; in short, forming a distinct class
of beings by themselves" (*Mardi* 569).

Sandwich Islands

Hooloulou: v. to bend over; to stoop in grief or sorrow; to be afflicted (Andrews,
Dictionary 186)

Loo: v. to be taken sick (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 87)

Lu: n. that which is thrown away or scattered (Andrews, *Dictionary* 351)

Moo: n. a lizard, reptile, hence a serpent (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 102)

Mu (or *Mumu*): v. to be silent; not to answer (Andrews, *Dictionary* 407)

The word is possibly a compound each of which adds its own meaning to the whole to create a motley group of words, just like the inhabitants of the strange island. If Melville refers to the area of "Wooloomooloo" in Australia, then it is possible that the Mardi Archipelago includes at least Australia as well, and that the island's inhabitants were indeed a satire on aristocracy and intermarriage, as the quotation below from Wilkes suggests. Furthermore, if this is possible, then at this point the narrative goes beyond the Polynesian cultural, political, and historical boundaries. As such, the name is most probably a hybrid of native Australian and Polynesian dialects worth further investigation.

"After leaving the government domain [in Port Jackson], it enters Wooloomooloo, a region covered with the country-seats and cottages of the higher classes, which although originally little more than a barren rock, has been brought into a high state of cultivation by its occupants" (Wilkes 2: 165-166).

Hotoo

"In the same grove as the '*Ati*,' you may see the beautiful flowering of '*Hotoo*;' its pyramid of shining leaves diversified with numberless small, white blossoms" (*Omoo*

214).

Society Islands

Hotu: v. to bear fruit, as a tree (Davies 110)

Hutu: n. the *Barringtonia*; its fruit is a large nut the shape of a heart, and the kernel is used for intoxicating fishes (Davies 115)

Sandwich Islands

Hopue: n. the name of a tree, the bark of which is used like the *olona*, and made into strings, cords, etc. (Andrews, *Dictionary* 211)

Maori Islands

Hutu: n. Ascarina lucida, a tree (Williams 73)

The change of the first *o* to *u* in researching the approved pronunciation of the term was based on the assumption that Melville heard or remembered this word the way he wrote it and probably could not verify its correct spelling —this is common for many of his "misspellings." As such, Melville misspelling suggests that he had one of two possible alternatives in mind instead of a fixed one.

"This is a sturdy umbrageous tree, often growing on the sea-shore, at the water's edge. Its leaves are large, entire, and obovate … it intoxicates fish, and thus facilitates their

capture" (Bennett 2: 358-359).

Huwyenee

"and it was currently reported, also, that several chiefs from Borabora, Huwyenee,

Raiatair, and Tahar, the leeward islands of the group, were at that very time taking

counsel with her" (*Omoo* 287).

Melville is probably referring to the island of "Huahine" ("Huaheine") which

belongs in the Society Islands along with the other islands he mentions (and not Hawaii

as the pronunciation of the word might suggest). My main interest with this, and all other

popular geographic locations, is mainly lexical, that is focused on the particular spelling

Melville adopts for the place. This explains how he wrote from memory but also that he

did not care enough for historical accuracy to bother checking its orthography.

"This island, (which is the easternmost of the Society group,) is composed of two insular

mountain lands, closely approximated to each other" (Bennett 2: 26).

"In the intention of Captain Finch to have touched at Huahine, the most eastern of this

group" (C. S. Stewart 255).

"At daybreak we neared Huahine. The island, which is irregularly oval, much resembles

Eimeo in its aspect to the eye, though the eminences are neither so high nor so peaked as

those of the latter, and are wooded even to the summits" (Tyerman & Bennet 1: 135).

Hytyhoo

"With this intention, we were now shaping our course for Hytyhoo, a village on the island of St. Christina —one of the Marquesas, and so named by Mendana" (*Omoo* 15).

Melville probably wrote the name of the islands out of memory but Russell's account verifies its existence and pronunciation. Ellis refers to the island of Santa Christina as Tahuata.

"Passing over the brief visit of Le Marchand in 1784, we proceed to mention, that, in March 1792, the Daedalus store-ship, on her voyage from England to join Vancouver, arrived at Santa Christina, or, as it is not unusually denominated Ohittahoo" (Russell 184).

I

Imeeo

"Two or three hours before sundown, a small schooner came out of the harbor, and headed over for the adjoining island of Imeeo, or Moreea, in plain sight, about fifteen miles distant" (*Omoo* 95).

Melville is referring to the island of "Eimeo" or "Emio" (his spelling) here.

Unfortunately, Charles R. Anderson makes no reference to the association between the

two spellings. The conjecture that this is the place Melville visited is based on the

French spelling of the word ("Eimeo") which also shares the same suffix with

Melville's.

"On the 19th of March we approached closely the shores of Eimeo, or Moorea —an

island situated to the Westward of Tahiti, from which last it is separated by a navigable

strait, fourteen miles in breadth" (Bennett 2: 33).

Ita

"I say, you *ita maitai* (no good)" (*Omoo* 99).

Society Islands

Aita or *Aipa*: adv. *Of negation*, *past time*, no, not (Davies 18)

The inclusion of this particular term is intended to show that Melville understood

the Polynesian language much better than originally thought. The word "ita" is a

meaningful term despite the fact that some critics have dismissed it as pure nonsense.

The spelling is of course Melville's but it is not very far from the original.

"*Aita; Tahiti maitai*," — "No; Tahiti is good" (Tyerman & Bennet 1: 110).

J

Ji-ji

"The catacombs surveyed, and day-light gained, we inquired the way to Ji-Ji's, also a collector, but of another sort; one miserly in the matter of teeth, the money of Mardi. At the mention of his name, Oh-Oh flew into scornful philippics upon the insanity of that old dotard, who hoarded up teeth, as if teeth were of any use, but to purchase rarities" (*Mardi* 386).

Society Islands

i: v. to pick out, to choose, to select (Davies 116)

Sandwich Islands

Ii: adj. covetous, close, niggardly (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 17)

Ii: v. to collect; to gather up, as small things; to bring together. See *noii* (Andrews, *Dictionary* 60)

Ii: n. a person hard-hearted, cruel and selfish

Noii: v. to glean, to collect together little things (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 108)

Tonga Islands

Jiji: v. to charge, to command (Rabone 133)

The letter *j* does not exist in the alphabet of the Tahitian or Hawaiian dialects. The Tonga use the letter but the meaning of the word does not pertain to Melville's context. For this reason, Melville may have used the letter *j* to distinguish the double *i* which would have been an awkward construction for any western tongue. The double *i* is the most probable Polynesian replacement for the western *j* not only because the meaning of the word "ii" is conjugal to the context where it appears, but also because it is the closest phonetic representation within the linguistic parameters of the Polynesian language.

Juam

"A dark pile of cliffs, towering some one hundred toises; at top, presenting a range of steep, gable-pointed projections; as if some Titanic hammer and chisel had shaped the mass" (*Mardi* 216)

"All round, embracing a circuit of some three leagues, stood heights inaccessible, here and there, forming buttresses, sheltering deep recesses between … but opposite, brooded a somber shadow, double-shading the secret places between the salient spurs of the mountains. Thus cut in twain by masses of day and night, it seemed as if some Last Judgment had been enacted in the glen" (*Mardi* 217).

"'What! shall I be a king, only to be a slave? Teei's girdle would clasp my waist less

tightly , than my soul would be banded by the mountains of Willamilla. A subject, I am free. No slave in Juam but its king; for all the tassels round his loins'" (*Mardi* 221).

Sandwich Islands

Iu: n. name of a particular kapu relating to females (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 18)

Iu: adj. prohibited; sacred; tabooed; applied to everything within the reach of the kapu (Andrews, *Dictionary* 62)

Iu: n. a consecrated place (Andrews, *Dictionary* 62)

ama: adj. grieved (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 11)

amaama: v. to reveal secrets, to tell another's faults, to slander (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 11)

amo: v. to carry on the shoulder, to bear a burden, to bear, bring along, carry (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 11)

This is probably a compound word. Melville probably replaced the letter *i* with the English *j*, whereas the suffix *am* is a derivative of the Polynesian "ama" or "amo" because Polynesian words do not end in a consonants. Melville omitted the last vowel of "Am(-a, -o)" in accordance with his tactic of Anglicizing Polynesian terms. "Iu-am(a)" then would stand for "the place where secrets are revealed," a very appropriate description for the tragedy revealed in chapter 72. The original Polynesian compounds also means "consecrated place," that is, a taboo place where certain people are barred from for a period of time.

It is also possible that Melville did not have in mind any Polynesian island but instead had as his model the island of Guam in the Mariana Group in the North Pacific. Also, the name bears close similarity with that of *Iva* which is an abbreviation for *Nukuhiva*, which in some dirges was referred to as the "Land of the Spirits" (Andersen 315).

K

Kaahumanu

"At the Sandwich Islands, Kaahumanu, the gigantic old dowager queen—a woman of nearly four hundred pounds weight, and who is said to be still living at Mowee—was accustomed, in some of her terrific gusts of temper, to snatch up an ordinary sized man who had offended her, and snap his spine across her knee" (*Typee* 186).

Sandwich Islands

Kaahumanu: n. ph. The feather mantle (Jarves 196n)

"Many of these nobles were remarkable for their corpulency. Some weighed from three hundred to four hundred pounds. Others were of herculean [*sic*] stature and strength, and well proportioned" (Jarves 196).
"But the king, and Kaahumanu, wife of the old Tamehameha, a woman of great

influence in these islands, were so much pleased with the conduct of their visitors, that they gave them a strong invitation to continue with them, and not go to the Marquesas" (Tyerman & Bennet 2: 37).

"since we left the Sandwich Islands, queen Kahumanu, with her husband, Tamuri, being on a visit at Oahu, attempted to revive idolatry there" (Tyerman & Bennet 2: 174).

Kamapiikai

"As Ponce de Leon hoped to find in Florida the fountain of perpetual youth, so the mystic Kamapiikai left the western shore of the island of Hawaii, where he suffered with his restless philosophy, hoping to find the joy-giving fountain and the people like to the gods" (*Piazza Tales* 417).

Sandwich Islands

Kama: n. children generally, that is male and female (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 63)

kama: n. child (Ellis 4: 394)

pii: v. to ascend, go up (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 118)

pii: v. to run/climb (Ellis 4: 394)

kai: n. the sea, also sea water (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 57)

kai: n. the sea (Ellis 4: 394)

The editorial appendix in the *Piazza Tales* has a different spelling of the Hawaiian name along with the corrected version (in brackets) but does not mention how

exactly the correction was made: "The Polynesians themselves have ideas of the same nature. Every one has heard of the voyage of Ponce de Leon to Florida to find the fountain of perpetual youth. Equally poetical, and more unfamiliar, was the adventure of Cama Peccai [*i.e.* Kamapiikai], who set sail alone from Hawaii to find the fount of eternal joy, which was supposed to spring up in some distant island where the people lived in continual joy and youth. Like all who go to Paradise, he was never heard from again" (*Piazza Tales* 772). I include Ellis' text which I believe Melville used to correct the misspelling: "One of these accounts the natives call, 'The Voyage of Kamapiikai,' in which they state that Kamapiikai … was priest of a temple in Kohala, dedicated to Kanenuiakea … many were induced to accompany this priest to the country he visited, for the purpose of bathing in the life-giving waters" (Ellis 4: 394-395).

Kamekamehaha

"This was about the year 1835, when the present king, Tammahamaha III. was a lad" (*Omoo* 211).

"Still iving in Oahu, are many old chiefs, who were present at the famous obsequies of their royal old generalissimo, Tammahammaha, when there is no telling how many pounds of ivory were cast upon his grave" (*Mardi* 206).

"for it is a love legend of Kamekamehaha, Tahiti" (*Piazza Tales* 418).

"of the war-canoes of the Polynesian kings, Tammahammaha and Pomare—ay! One and all, with Commodore Noah for their Lord High Admiral—in this abounding Bay of Rio these flag-ships might all come to anchor, and swing in concert to the first of the flood"

(*White-Jacket* 212).

Society Islands

Tamehameha: first king of the Sandwich Islands, his name later adopted as title by his progeny (Ellis 2: 68)

Sandwich Islands

Kamehameha: n. the lonely one (Jarves 196n)

Alternate spellings in Melville's works are: "Kammahammaha, Kammehammaha, Tammahamaha, Tammahammaha, Tammahammaha**.**"

The first Hawaiian king of the Sandwich Islands, mostly referred to by the missionaries by the name Tamehameha, was distinguished for his adoption of Missionary policy. His name is spelled in various ways. Several of his successors adopted the same name for public appearances.

Tamehameha the first was also known by the name "Iolani": "On public occasions, he was sometimes called Tamehameha, after his father, though names are not always hereditary. Besides these, he had a variety of other names, the most common of which was *Iolani*" (Ellis 4: 446).

"Upon the demise of Taraiopu, about the year 1780, his nephew Tamehameha (an enterprising chief who had much influence with his countrymen) usurped the sovereign

power" (Bennett 1: 228).

"Pomare was distinguished by laborious and patient perseverance; Tamehameha, by bold and daring enterprise" (Ellis 2: 69).

"a messenger announced the readiness of his majesty Kauikeaouli, or Tamehameha III., to receive us" (Stewart 308).

Kannaka

"The word 'Kannaka' is at the present day universally used in the South Seas by Europeans to designate the Islanders. In the various dialects of the principal groups it is simply a sexual designation applied to the males; but it is now used by the natives in their intercourse with foreigners in the same sense in which the latter employ it" (*Typee* 74n).

"A word generally used by foreigners to designate the natives of Polynesia" (*Omoo* 174n).

Sandwich Islands

Kanaka: n. a man, the human species in distinction from brutes, a common man in distinction from a chief, the people generally, mankind (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 64)

Kanaka: n. in a vulgar, low sense as sometimes used by foreigners, a Hawaiian, a native, in distinction from a foreigner (Andrews, *Dictionary* 253)

Melville is correct on both comments on the term with the exception of his

misspelling of it —the double *n*, as any double consonant, is prohibited in the Polynesian language.

"and, should Missionaries come to live at Waiakea, perhaps the land would ultimately become theirs, and the *kanaka maore* (aborigines) cease to be its occupiers" (Ellis 4: 319).

"and handed it to one of the Kanakas, or common people, who were sitting close around us" (Wilkes 2: 67).

Karakikova

"At Karakikova, the scene of that tragedy, a strip of ship's copper nailed against an upright post in the ground used to inform the traveler that beneath reposed the 'remains' of the great circumnavigator" (*Typee* 234).

Sandwich Islands

Kealakeakua: n. Path of the gods (Beckwith 39)

Charles R. Anderson inserts the correct spelling of the term in his quotation of Melville's phrase (Anderson 328), but does not provide a source for the explanatory term (Kealakekua) or a comment for its spelling or transformation. Martha Beckwith's explanation is clearer as to the context of the word: "Rono [Lono], Etooah [akua or god] of Hawaii, in ancient times, resided with his wife at Karakakooa [Kealakekua or Path of

the gods] (Beckwith 39).

Ellis uses the term "Karakakooa" (Ellis 4: 51) which is closest to Melville's spelling but he (Ellis) does not denote the word's meaning. This is the name of the location in Hawaii where Cook was killed and his monument erected.

"On the 17th of January, 1779, he [Cook] came to anchor in Kealakeakua, in the district of Kona, the reputed spot of the landing of Spanish adventurers two centuries before" (Jarves 101).

"Hence, when the *ee* is employed to express a lengthened sound of *e*, as in Owhyhee, and *oo* to signify the sound of *u* in rule, as in *Karakakooa* [italics mine], which is generally done by European visitors, it is not possible to express by any signs those native words in which the double vowels occur, which are invariably two distinct syllables" (Ellis 4: 51).

Karakoee

"Looking in the direction of the sound, I perceived, to my indescribable joy, the tall figure of Karakoee, an Oahu Kannaka, who had often been aboard the 'Dolly,' while she lay in Nukuheva … I now remembered the Kannaka had frequently told me that his person was tabooed in all the valleys of the island, and the sight of him at such a moment as this filled my heart with a tumult of delight" (*Typee* 249).

Society Islands

Tara: v. to use enchantments (Davies 254)

Tara: n. a remedy, some expedient used for deliverance, when in difficulty (Davies 254)

Toe: v. to remain, or be left as a remainder; to be left out, not included (Davies 276)

Sandwich Islands

Kala: v. to loosen, to untie a string or rope, to absolve from a contract, to put away, to take away, to forgive as a sin or a crime, to pardon (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 62)

n. a person whose business it is to summon people and chiefs to meet together in time of war in a great assembly with lights and torches, etc.; a crier (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 62-63)

Koe: v. to remain, to be over and above; to cause to remain; to save from destruction, to spare, save (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 71)

Koi: v. to urge, to tempt, to entreat one, to compel by entreaty, to drive, urge with violence, to compel by force, to toss; to insist on a thing; to ask or invite one to go in company with him, to ask a favor, to take aside (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 71)

     The meaning of this name is uncertain. What is difficult about this name is that it combines both Tahitian (the letter *r*) and Hawaiian (the letter *k*) elements. As such, it is an amalgam of Tahitian and Hawaiian and at the same time neither one nor the other — this was typical of the Marquesan dialect. I have included all the possible meanings of the compound word, "kara-koee," with special emphasis on explaining the reasons why

this person was "tabooed in all the valleys of the island" (*Typee* 249), as well as on how

his name is related to the meaning of the word "taboo." As such, "Karakoee" could be

used to refer to someone who "uses enchantments [and is] not included," or someone

who "remains and absolves from a contract," who "pardons and saves from destruction,"

or someone who "entreats one to forgive." All names describe, in one way or another,

his mediating role among the Polynesians.

Karhownoo

"No way petrified by the sight, and pursuing the usual method adopted by these divers in

such emergencies, Karhownoo, splashing the water, instantly swam toward the stranger.

But the shark, undaunted, advanced: a thing so unusual, and fearful, that, in agony of

fright, the diver shot up for the surface. Heedless, he looked not up as he went; and when

within a few inches of the open air, dashed his head against a projection of the reef. He

would have sunk into the live tomb beneath, were it not that three of his companions,

standing on the brink, perceived his peril, and dragged him into safety … the skull

proved to be very badly fractured; in one place, splintered" (*Mardi* 294-295).

Society Islands

Taa: v. to strike (Davies 236)

Taa: v. to fall from a rock, or a high place (Davies 237)

Tarao: n. the name of a fish, called also maraao (Davies 254)

Tara: n. a certain mode of enchantment (Davies 254)

Ono: n. the name of a large savage fish (Davies 165)

Oru: n. a swelling (Davies 174)

Sandwich Islands

Kaa: v. to be sick, to lie or be confined with sickness (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 56)

Ka: v. to strike, dash, overthrow; to finish or end a thing; to destroy, cause to perish (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 56)

Ka: n. a collision (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 56)

Hono: n. the back of the neck (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 53)

Onu: n. a swelling, a won [sic] on the neck or head (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 27)

Although the story is too vague to imply the meaning of its protagonist's name (if he is considered to be the protagonist and not Samoa), there are some elements, such as his bashed head, the religious observance of meeting a shark in the water, etc. that attest to its definition. The Tahitian lexicon is less likely to have influenced Melville's invention since there is no letter or sound *k* in that dialect. Also, the letters *r* and *n* are occasionally interchangeable (Davies 149, 218) and the possibility that he remembered it with a different spelling should at least be considered. The Hawaiian spelling comes closer to Melville's for what seems to be a compound word. Since the letter *r* exists in the Tahitian dialect but not in the Hawaiian, there is a transgression here that is most probably due to the fact that he wrote the name based on memory and not some specific source (or that wrote in Marquesan which sometimes combined elements from both the

Tahitian and Hawaiian dialects). Melville probably based the insertion of the letter to the

duplication of the vowel *a*, which happens in both dialects, and which was possibly

confused in Melville's mind with the letter *r* as in several other of his words. The *w* is

also a similar transgression, probably based on the sound of the long *o*, which is also an

aspirated sound as the inserted *h* suggests.

Thus, the Polynesian word that probably passed through Melville's ears was

something closer to "Kaahonu" where the *h* signifies the aspirated sound of the *o* rather

than an orthographic spelling. If that is the case, his name means "to strike a swelling"

("Taa-oru"), or "the name of a fish that falls from a rock" ("Taa-ono") which would

justify his role a a diver. It could also mean "to be sick at the back of the neck or head,"

or "to destroy the back of the neck or head," or "a collision at the back of the neck or

head."

"Many of the people connect his death [by the shark] with their old system of religion;

for they have still a superstitious veneration for the shark, and this veneration is

increased rather than diminished by such occurrences as these" (Ellis 1: 226).

Karhowree

"and, no doubt, strangers from the distant villages were taken to see the 'Karhowrees'

(white men), in the same way that countrymen, in a city, are gallanted to the Zoological

Gardens" (*Omoo* 127).

Sandwich Islands

Ka: the definite article, the (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 56)

Haole: n. a foreigner (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 34)

Haole n. a person with a white skin; hence, a foreigner —the foreigners who arrived first at the islands were white persons (Andrews, *Dictionary* 125)

This is yet another compound that Melville probably constructed from memory. The first part, "kar," is as problematic as the "kar" of "Karhownoo" above; here, however, we do have apt proof that Melville had the term "white" in mind when he wrote this word. As such, the "kar" of this word is most probably a misspelled "ka" because there is no "kaa" that could serve, through its meaning, the demands of its Melvillean context.

The second part, "howree," is much closer to the familiar "haole" or "haore" of Andrews and Ellis, after the appropriate change of the Tahitian *r* to the Hawaiian *l*. The double *ee* is probably a phonetic representation of the single *e* of the correct word, whereas the awkward "how" (there can be no *w* and *r* next to each other) is a perfect phonetic match for the "hao" of the original word. Melville obvoisuly recreates from memory, but the basic phonetic elements to reconstruct the word to its original spelling are there.

"Others said, it was very well for the *haore* (foreigners) to believe it" (Ellis 4: 288).

Karky

"The idea of engrafting his tattooing upon my white skin filled him with all a painter's enthusiasm: again and again he gazed into my countenance, and every fresh glimpse seemed to add to the vehemence of his ambition" (*Typee* 219).

Sandwich Islands

Kaha: v. to scratch, to write, to make marks, to mark indefinitely (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 60)

Kii: n. an idol, statue, picture, image of a thing (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 68)

Since the middle *r* violates both phonetic and spelling rules, it is interjected and necessarily replaceable by a phoneme that imitates the duplication of the previous letter that the *r* probably represents in Melville's mind. The "Kaha" comes closest to fulfilling this demand, especially when the middle *h* is a silent one. The *y* of the second part does not exist as a letter in the Hawaiian dialect, and is replaced by the double *i* to imitate the protracted sound of the *y*.

The name, "Kaha-kii," then, means "to scratch, to make marks of images, pictures" which suggests the process of tattoing where pictures could be perceived as the geometric shapes "printed" on one's skin, and which may not separately be pictures, but they most certainly form one when perceived as a whole.

"the natives requested us not to *kaha*, *a heru ka one*, strike, scratch, or dig in the sand"

(Ellis 4: 239).

Kea

"Pelee, the terrific goddess of the volcanoes Mouna Roa and Mouna Kea —perhaps the most remarkable volcanoes in the world" (*Omoo* 210).

Sandwich Islands

Kea: n. white; the name of a mountain on Hawaii (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 66-67)

Among other explorers that Melville mentions in the relevant footnote in his text (*Omoo* 210), Ellis refers to the mountain, Mouna Kea, both in historical and geographical/ geological terms: "On these occasions, the elevated summit of Mouna Kea, or Mouna Roa, has appeared above the mass of clouds that usually skirt the horizon, like a stately pyramid, or the silvered dome of a magnificent temple, distinguished from the clouds beneath, only by its well-defined outline, unchanging position, and intensity of brilliancy occasioned by the reflection of the sun's rays from the surface of the snow" (Ellis 4: 5). The mountain is double-peaked which would also explain the double name. The first mountain, Mauna Kea, was named after its snowy peak.

"In Cook's Voyages, Captain King, speaking of Mouna-Kaah, (Kea,) remarks, that it 'may be clearly seen at fourteen leagues' distance'" (Ellis 4: 5).

"Before the call from aloft was made, my eyes had been fixed for some minutes on what I believed to be the summit of Mounakea" (Stewart 273).

Keekee

"Upon being informed of our acquaintance with Zeke, they were delighted; and one of them recognized the boots worn by the doctor. 'Keekee (Zeke) maitai,' they cried, 'nuee nuee hanna hanna portarto'—(makes plenty of potatoes)" (*Omoo* 256).

Sandwich Islands

Keekee: adj. crooked, twisted, incorrect, contrary to the rule of right, twisted, out of shape, cross, petulant (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 67)

The description Melville provides for the character, Zeke, is a guide toward under-standing why he chose to use the name "Keekee," that is why he chose the letter *k* instead of any other alternative for *z*. Based on the above definition it is easy to deduce why the Hawaiians had named him after his distinguishing characteristics. To them, his diligence and persistence were indeed out of the ordinary, "contrary to the rule of right," unfamiliar to their haphazard mode of life. The name may also provide an indication of his physical appearance, a man who constantly works on the field is constantly bent, "crooked, twisted": "But Zeke was no beauty. A strong, ugly man, he was well adapted for manual labor; and that was all" (*Omoo* 204). Charles R. Anderson has cross-

referenced and verified the existence of the two farmers Melville had met, as well as their peculiarity of character and body: "An equally unflattering after-picture of Zeke also survives, as will be seen shortly … Zeke of the homespun strength of will and redoubtable industry" (Anderson 290, 308).

Keevi

"One object of interest in Ohonoo was the original image of Keevi the god of Thieves … and here stood Keevi, with his five eyes, ten hands, and three pair of legs, equipped at all points for the vocation over which he presided. Of mighty girth, his arms terminated in hands, every finger a limb, spreading in multiplied digits; palm twice five, and fifty fingers" (*Mardi* 277).

Sandwich Islands

Iwa: n. a thief, from *Oiwa* a notorious thief who lived many years ago (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 20)

This is probably a compound word that Melville invented out of the terms "ke" and "iwa" which translates as "the thief," with "ke" being the definite article despite the fact that Hawaiian grammar does not permit the use of the article "ke" with words beginning with *e*. The second part of this seemingly compound word bears no equivalent in the Hawaiian (or any other) dialect with a meaning close to what he wanted and, as such, it must be a construct from some other term, possibly the one included here

because it had such an impact on Hawaiian society.

Kokovoko

"Queequeg was a native of Kokovoko, an island far away to the West and South. It is not down in any map; true places never are" (*Moby-Dick* 55).

Society Islands

Toto: n. blood (Davies 282)

U: v. to be damp, moist, or wet; to run against a thing (Davies 296)

Oto: v. to cry, to weep (Davies 175)

Sandwich Islands

Koko: n. blood (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 72)

U: to drip or drizzle, as water; to ooze or leak slowly (Andrews, *Dictionary* 101)

Oko-oko: adv. Ragingly; heatedly (Andrews, *Dictionary* 85)

Maori Islands

Koko: n. bay, recess (Williams 130)

The word "koko" is popular enough in several dialects (although written slightly differently in each one), but it is the second part of the island's name that perplexes the process of discovering its meaning or even its true location. The term "voko" does not

exist as an independent concept but must be a compound of the ambiguous *v* and the term "oko" which is easily explicable. The letter *v* is at the heart of the problem because it is a Tahitian letter in a seemingly Hawaiian word, thus suggesting the possibility that the word was both Tahitian and Hawaiian —the Marquesan dialect had elements from both. It is not improbable that Melville may not have intended (or even written) for that letter to be there and that a possibly original *u* could have been misread as a *v*. With this in mind, I have changed the middle *v* into a *u* to accommodate the possibility of discovering the source word of an otherwise problematic and allegedly fictitious name.

However, it is also possible that the *v* is correct if the word is taken to have Tahitian roots. The initial *r* of the copy-text edition (*Moby-Dick* 910) suggests the same possibility for a Tahitian word, which Melville changed from its Hawaiian spelling in the English edition to its new (Tahitian) spelling in the American edition. In either case, both words are legitimate because the letters being replaced are the corresponding alternatives in the Marquesan dialect. Frederick Debell Bennett corroborates the claim: "The Marquesan language affords a link between the Tahitian and Hawaiian dialects, and has also some striking peculiarities. It differs from the Tahitian, in being deficient in the letter *r*, and in the letter *k* being prominently employed; and from the Hawaiian, in possessing the letter *f*, as well as in the deficiency of the *r*" (Bennett 1: 335). The NN editors have adopted the English spelling of the word, but have silently dismissed what appears to be a perfectly legitimate alternative.

In defining the name, Kokovoko or Rokovoko, it seems that Melville has in mind the human heart when he describes Queequeg's native place. The name is probably a

compound one, meaning "blood oozing heatedly," and there is no other place in the human body where everything is in such turmoil and that is as alive and transcendent of physical boundaries as the heart. Such a definition is plausible because Melville's brief description indicates the non-material nature of Queequeg's island and guides the reader to search for it in the same way that he searches for the truth, in other words in the heart. Queequeg's escape then is from his savage, passionate heart which has been his home since he was born; his escape is toward the world of the mind, the western world, where logic has apparently prevail over instinct, and has created the inspiring wonders of civilization and culture. He does not have to return to his island again because as soon as he witnesses the hypocrisy of urbanization and the degradation it has brought to the human condition, he goes back to his true home, his heart, and accepts its truth: "it's a wicked world in all meridians; I'll die a pagan" (*Moby-Dick* 56).

It is also possible that Melville was inspired for the name of his imaginary island by at least two possible geographic locations with a name similar to the fist part of the word ("Koko"). The first one is Coco Island, which is an uninhabited island southwest of Costa Rica, and the second are the Cocos Islands or Keeling Islands, a group of 27 small coral islands in the Indian Ocean, southwest of Java. These islands were discovered in 1609 and acquired by Great Britain in 1857 (*WGD*).

Kolory

"He was a noble looking man, in the prime of his life, and of a most benignant aspect. The authority this man, whose name was Kolory, seemed to exercise over the rest, the

episcopal part he took in the Feast of Calabashes, his sleek and complacent appearance, the mystic characters which were tattooed upon his chest, and above all the mitre he frequently wore, in the shape of a towering head-dress, consisting of part of a cocoa-nut branch, the stalk planted uprightly on his brow, and the leaflets gathered together and placed round the temples and behind the ears, all these pointed him out as Lord Primate of Typee. Kolory was a sort of Knight Templar —a soldier-priest" (*Typee* 174).

Society Islands

Toa: n. a warrior, a valiant man (Davies 275)

adj. self conceited, proud (Davies 275)

Orero [korero, olelo]: n. language, speech, oration; an orator, or public speaker (Davies 171)

Rorirori: adj. hard, tough; difficult to solve;

adj. difficult to open or unravel, as a matter or speech (Davies 232)

Sandwich Islands

Koa: adj. brave, bold as a soldier (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 71)

Lole: v. to change one's mind (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 88)

Loli: v. to turn over, to change, alter (see *lole*)

Olelo: v. to speak, to say, to converse, to teach (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 26)

Again, this name contains both Tahitian (*r*) and Hawaiian (*k*) elements thus suggesting the possibility that Melville's construct was a variation on a compound from two dialects. The parts of the word suggest someone who is brave and rhetorically apt, someone who has the ability to be both a physical and a rhetorical/political force in Polynesian society, a leader.

Koo-loo

"It was obvious, now, that the whale had at length become aware of his pursuers. All silence of cautiousness was therefore no longer of use. Paddles were dropped, and oars came loudly into place. And still puffing at his pipe, Stubb cheered on his crew to the assault … 'Ka-la! Koo-loo!' howled Queequeg, as if smacking his lips over a mouthful of Grenadier's steak. And thus with oars and yells the keels cut the sea" (*Moby-Dick* 284).

Society Islands

Too: v. to pull, or drag along (Davies 279)

Ru: adj. hasty, hurried (Davies 233)

Sandwich Islands

Koo: v. to push off as with an oar or setting pole (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 72)

Loo: v. to take, to be taken, to be overtaken to possess, to fall upon one as fear

(Andrews, *Vocabulary* 87)

Lu: v. to dive or plunge in the water (Andrews, *Dictionary* 351)

Ku-lu: v. to drop as water (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 78)

Ku-lu-a: v. to flow down; to run, as water (Andrews, *Dictionary* 312)

The double *oo* is pronounced as the English *u* in the Hawaiian dialect (Andrews, *Dictionary* xxvi) thus suggesting the possibility of the double orthography of probably a compound word. Despite the different spelling, it is surprising how both words share similarities in their meanings. Combined with the phrase "Ka-la," which means "to loosen, to untie a string or rope" (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 62), Queequeg is here ordering his oarsmen to "let loose the ropes and cast off."

Kooloo

"Among others, Kooloo was a candidate for my friendship; and being a comely youth, quite a buck in his way, I accepted his overtures … Kooloo, running over his qualifications as a friend, first of all informed me, that he was a 'Mickonaree,' thus declaring his communion with the church … Kooloo's professions turned out to be worthless. He was, alas! as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal; one of those who make no music unless the clapper be silver" (*Omoo* 157).

Sandwich Islands

Ku-lou: v. to bow the head, to bend forward, to stoop down, to bow with reverence, to worship, to bow down with grief (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 78)

The double *oo* is pronounced as the English *u* in the Hawaiian dialect (Andrews, *Dictionary* xxvi). "Kulou" or "Kooloo" then is "a worshipper, a supporter," someone who shares the same religion as the missionaries, but not a leader. He is someone who follows for his own reasons as the protagonist/narrator soon discovers, in a sense a sharp criticism on the missionaries who used religion to destroy a culture and a people.

Kory-Kory

"Kory-Kory, though the most devoted and best natured serving-man in the world, was, alas! a hideous object to look upon … His head was carefully shaven, with the exception of two circular spots, about the size of a dollar, near the top of the cranium, where the hair, permitted to grow of an amazing length, was twisted up in two prominent knots, that gave him the appearance of being decorated with a pair of horns. His beard, plucked out by the roots from every other part of his face, was suffered to droop in hairy pendants, two of which garnished his upper lip, and an equal number hung from the extremity of his chin" (*Typee* 83).

Sandwich Islands

Ko-li-ko-li: v. to cut off frequently; to cut off; to cut short; to trim (Andrews, *Dictionary* 289)

Koli: v. to pare; to shave off little by little; to whittle; to shave or cut the hair (Andrews, *Dictionary* 288)

Konikoni: adj. ardent; active; busy (Andrews, *Dictionary* 292)

Maori Islands

Korikori: v. move, wriggle; bestir oneself (Williams 142)

This is yet another problematic term in that it combines elements of both the Tahitian (*r*) and Hawaiian (*k*) dialects. The equivalent of the Tahitian *r* is the Hawaiian *l* which in this case properly replaces the "misplaced" *r*. The name probably suggests "the shaven one" and Melville depicts him as a typical "savage": "his head was carefully shaven, with the exception of two circular spots" (*Typee* 83). The term "konikoni" is included here because the Tahitian *r* according to Tahitian orthography is frequently replaced by the consonant *n* (Davies 149, 218). Although this is a Hawaiian name, the interjected *r* is not Hawaiian but Tahitian and could, for that matter, follow the orthographic rules of that dialect. In this sense, Melville's Kory-Kory is easily translatable to "Koni-Koni," which signifies someone who is unlike the rest of his people, someone vibrant and active.

L

Lahainaluna

"In the Missionary College at Lahainaluna, on Mowee, one of the Sandwich Islands, I saw a tabular exhibition of a Hawaiian verb, conjugated through all its moods and tenses" (*Typee* 225).

"The vessel was the Parki, of Lahina, a village and harbor on the coast of Mowee, one of the Hawaiian isles, where she had been miserably cobbled together with planks of native wood, and fragments of a wreck, there drifted ashore" (*Mardi* 68).

Sandwich Islands

Lahaina: n. port on the island of Maui (Ellis 4: 8)

La: n. the sun, a day, a drought (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 81)

Haina: v. to reject, destroy (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 34)

Luna: adj. upper, higher, above (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 89)

The name of the port means "sun that destroys" in essence referring to the harsh droughts that affected the area from time to time. The second part of the name suggests that the town was divided into at least two sections, the hilly area and the port, although at the time the distance was too great to consider the hilly section as part of the town. The printing house was located at the hilly part of town, as Charles Wilkes's account

suggests: "I visited, in company with some of the officers, the seminary of Lahainaluna, which is, as I have before said, situated on the hill behind the town, and about two miles distant from it" (Wilkes 4: 245). Charles R. Anderson confesses that proof of Melville's presence in Lahaina is scarce and uses Melville's own word to substantiate his claims that Melville had visited the island of Maui and its port: "Without better evidence to draw upon, therefore, it is reasonable to conjecture that Melville did begin his residence in the Sandwich Islands at this port, probably sometime in February or March 1843, though how he occupied himself and how long he stayed there it is impossible to say" (330). The alternate spelling in *Mardi* refers to the same place. Melville has omitted the *a* here in comparison with that in *Typee*. The island has been known in Hawaiian mythology by the name "Lele": "In his day [Kakaalaneo's, the ruling chief's] the old name of Lele became attached to Lahaina" (Beckwith 384).

"We entered Maui Bay, and cast anchor off the settlement of Lahaina" (Bennett 1: 274).

Loo

"They called her Loo: a name rather pretty and genteel, and, therefore, quite appropriate; for a more genteel and lady-like little damsel there was not in all Imeeo … she was a cold and haughty young beauty though, this same little Loo" (*Omoo* 278).

Sandwich Islands

Olu: adj. comfortable, easy, pleasant to the sight, benign, contended (Andrews,

Vocabulary 26)

The inserted *o* at the beginning of the word is frequent in the Hawaiian dialect: "this letter is prefixed to nouns, both common and proper, as well as to pronouns, to render them emphatic or definite … it is used in particular-izing [*sic*] one or more persons or things from others" (Andrews, *Dictionary* 71). Melville probably remembered the word correctly but without the "emphatic *o*," which is still an acceptable addition whether done intentionally or not.

Lory-Lory

"Such is the Lory-Lory, I think they call it; the dance of the backsliding girls of Tamai" (*Omoo* 242).

Society Islands

Roru: n. a sort of chorus, or repetition in a native song (Davies 232)

Sandwich Islands

Luli: v. to vibrate, to change, to vary, to rock, to roll as a ship in a storm, to be tossed about, to be unsteady (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 89)

Loli: v. to turn over, to change, alter; see *Lole* (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 88)

Lole: v. to turn inside out, to unfold to view (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 88)

Maori Islands

Ruri, *ruriruri*: song, ditty, generally of an amorous nature, accompanied by gestures (Williams 352)

The name that Melville uses to define the dance is somewhat ambiguous since he confesses his inability to recall its exact spelling. Charles R. Anderson (294) has not found any information or specific sources on the name of the dance either, but Melville's description is detailed enough to suggest several alternatives to his spelling. The letter *r* does not exist in the Hawaiian dialect, an indication that either Melville's spelling is wrong or that this is not a Hawaiian name.

M

Mahinee

"We went to see Mahinee, the old chief … indeed, so long as it remained thus furnished, the native courts of the district were held there [Calabooza Beretanee]; the judge, Mahinee, and his associates, sitting upon one of the chests, and the culprits and spectators thrown at full length upon the ground, both inside of the building, and under the shade of the trees without" (*Omoo* 151).

Society Islands

Mahine: n. moon (Hale 7)

Mahinei: n. fruit somewhat like a chestnut (Hale 7)

Sandwich Islands

Ma: The syllable is formative of many nouns, in which case it seems to imply fullness,

solidity, addition, etc., to the original word (Andrews, *Dictionary* 357)

Hine: adj. strutting; proud of one's appearance (Andrews, *Dictionary* 156)

Hini: v. to be small; thin; feeble (Andrews, *Dictionary* 156)

Tonga Islands

Mahinehina: adj. white in appearance (Rabone 161)

Since Melville provides very little information pertaining to the character or

physical appearance of the "old chief," it is uncertain what exactly might have been the

meaning of his name. For that matter it is equally uncertain whether this is a single or a

compound word because neither the Hawaiian nor the Tahitian dialect have a word that

comes close to Melville's spelling and pronunciation —the name is probably

Marquesan, thus encompassing elements from both dialects. It is not improbable that

Tyerman & Bennet's "Mahine" refers to the same chief as Melville's since the date of

his visit to the Marquesas (1842) is not far from that of Tyerman & Bennet's (1821-

1829): "On Mahine's return to this island, after the war, as he leaped on shore, he

exclaimed, 'The idolaters were conquered by prayer'" (Tyerman & Bennet 1: 137).

Maitai

"I say you *ita maitai* (no good)" (*Omoo* 99).

Society Islands

Maitai: n. goodness, holiness, blessedness, all kinds of happiness

adv. good, holy, happy, blessed (Davies 128)

Sandwich Islands

Maikai: adj. good, handsome, excellent, correct (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 91)

This is a common word in most Polynesian dialects with slight changes in the

middle consonant *k* or *t*, depending on the regional differences. Melville's spelling is

correct as well as his translation. This is one of those rare occasions where Melville can

be trusted as a narrator and where his stories acquire historical significance.

"'Mittionari, mai-tai, mai-tai'" (Wilkes 1: 340).

"Also a girl, *Taata-maitai*, *a good man*" (Tyerman & Bennet 1: 108).

"'*Nui roa maitai* … It is greatly good'" (Ellis 4: 201).

"'*Maitai! maitai!*'—'Good! good!'" (Stewart 265).

"Their language has no word beyond *maitai*, good, to acknowledge the receipt of a

kindness" (Bennett 1: 108).

Maneeka

"He evinced a great desire to be enlightened with regard to the customs and peculiarities

of the far-off country we had left behind us, and to which under the name of Maneeka he

frequently alluded" (*Typee* 79).

Society Islands

Manika: n. America (Hale 7)

Sandwich Islands

Me: prep. with, accompanying (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 100)

Nika: n. a negro; see *negero* (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 108)

Nika: adj. black; deep blue; dark colored (Andrews, *Dictionary* 423)

At first glance one could transliterate the term as follows: the Polynesians

omitted the letter *a* of "America" probably for reasons of easier pronunciation, and

ended up with the word *Merika* (the *k* replaces phonetically and orthographically the

non-existent *c*). As already stated earlier, the letters *n* and *r* where interchangeable in the

Tahitian dialect, which of course suggests an arbitrary selection of the *n* over the *r*, but

nonetheless legal. As a result of this change the term "Menika" is the closest Polynesian original that could be pronounced by the lips of the natives. Melville, who wrote from memory, might have misspelled the Polynesian version and ended up with "Maneeka," but in either case the significance of the term lies with the implicit dialectic between the two languages originally in the Polynesians' transliteration of the term into their language and later in Melville's transliteration of the changed term back into his (its original) language.

Hale, of course, copies Melville's explanation in his dictionary, and unfortunately there is no other source to corroborate Melville's transliteration. It is also worth studying whether this is a new term that the Polynesians coined to describe Melville's homeland as a place "with negroes," or "accompanied by negroes." The term could also refer to the uniforms, or national colors of the United States where the "deep blue" was used to identify them as Americans. If this definition stands, then the term's significance is beyond the field of lexicology, as it hints at a deeper understanding by the Polynesians of the problem of slavery and the racial problem that plagued the United States at the time of Melville's residence in Polynesia. It is also possible that the definition "with dark colored" refers to the Americans as the true allies of the Polynesians in a place were alliances were forged according to financial conditions and not according to the desire to learn about each other.

Maramma

"Now, excepting this same peak, Maramma is all rolling hill and dale, like the sea after a storm; which then seems not to roll, but to stand still, poising its mountains. Yet the landscape of Maramma has not the merriness of meadows; partly because of the shadow of Ofo, and partly because of the solemn groves in which the Morais and temples are buried. According to Mohi, not one solitary tree bearing fruit, not one esculent root, grows in all the isle; the population wholly depending upon the large tribute remitted from the neighboring shores. 'It is not that the soil is unproductive,' said Mohi, 'that these things are so. It is extremely fertile; but the inhabitants say that it would be wrong to make a Bread-fruit orchard of the holy island … and broad Maramma lies one fertile waste in the lagoon" (*Mardi* 324).

Society Islands

Marama: n. the moon, a month; see *avae* (Davies 134)

Avae: n. the moon, also a lunar month (Davies 52)

Sandwich Islands

Malama: n. a month (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 96)

Malama: n. a solar month in distinction from *mahina*, a moon or lunar month (Andrews, *Dictionary* 379).

Maori Islands

Marama: n. moon (Williams 180)

Marama: n. a month (Williams 180)

The doubling of the *m* is probably an error on Melville's part; any double consonant is redundant (and ungrammatical) to Polynesians. The word has two opposite definitions based on the temporal measurement methods of each particular culture. The metaphorical use of the term in *Mardi* is influenced by the Polynesian imagination which infused the word with such compelling attributes. In this sense, the use of the original word's meaning is metaphorical, it is a holy place, an unreachable place, a taboo place, which explains the high concentration of deities or deity-like creatures on the island. The association of western monotheistic religion with Polynesian idolatry, through the name "Maramma," is typical of Melville's manner of satirizing all religion as one form or another of idolatry. This is especially true of the priestly figures that inhabit the island and are worshipped as gods.

Davis suggests that Melville was inspired by the Dantean "Maremma" in the construction of the name, which is a possible alternative to the Polynesian: "The name suggests Dante's marshy and 'pestilent fen' called 'Maremma' in the *Inferno*, xxix, 46-49, which is also placed in opposition to 'Sienna' (could this be Melville's Serenia?) in the *Purgatorio*, v, 132" (Davis 150n).

"Their ideas of the moon, which they called *avae* or *marama*, were as fabulous as those they entertained of the sun. Some supposed the moon was the wife of the sun; others, that it was a beautiful country in which the *aoa* grew. I am not aware that they rendered divine homage either to the sun or moon—theirs was a far less rational and innocent system than the worship of the host of heaven: they, however, supposed the moon to be subject to the influence of the spiritual beings with whom their mythology taught them to people the visible creation; and to the anger of those spirits, they were accustomed to attribute an eclipse" (Ellis 3: 171).

"The Hawaiian traditions … the present state they call the *Ao marama*, Day, or state of light" (Ellis 4: 247).

"I availed myself of our return to this island, to visit the *Ofai marama* (moon-stone) of the natives" (Bennett 2: 53).

"It is called by the natives *Marama ofai*, or the Moon-stone, on account of its resemblance in shape at one end to an half-moon" (Tyerman & Bennet 2: 189).

Marbonna

"But Marbonna was just the man for this —large and muscular, well made as a statue, and with an arm like a degenerate Tahitian's thigh" (*Omoo* 307).

Society Islands

Mana: n. power, might (Davies 129)

Mara: adj. hard, seasoned (Davies 133)

Pona: n. a joint of the finger or toe (Davies 201)

Sandwich Islands

Mala: v. to swell (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 96)

Mala: v. to swell; to swell up; to grow large (Andrews, *Dictionary* 378)

Pona: n. the joints, as of the spine and fingers; the spaces between the bulbs or joints of

bones (Andrews, *Dictionary* 489)

This is a compound word made up of the words *mara* and *pona* which are used in

conjunction to characterize their owner for his imposing physique. The *r* (or *n* because

these Tahitian consonants are often interchangeable) of the misspelled first part is not a

duplicated *a* in this case (as it is in many others) but the second syllable ("ra") of the

word —the *r* is replaced by the *l* in the Hawaiian dialect. The double *n* in the second part

of the word is another misspelling and the *b* is possibly a replacement for the Polynesian

p. The resulting original, "mara-pona," "mana-pona," or "mala-pona" means "power,

might of the joint or finger," or in the Hawaiian dialect, "swollen joints, as of the spine

and figners" a possible refence to those suffering from elephantiasis.

Furthermore, it is not impossible that the name is an amalgam of Polynesian and

English with the first part being the former and the last part a Polynesian adaptation of

the English word "bone."

"Mara is a very hard and enduring timber" (Tyerman & Bennet 1: 218)

Mardi

"My surprise at these things was enhanced by reflecting, that to the people of the Archipelago the map of Mardi was the map of the world" (*Mardi* 176).

"Full before me, lay the Mardian fleet of isles, profoundly at anchor within their coral harbor. Near by was one belted round by a frothy luminous reef, wherein it lay, like Saturn in its ring … But how tranquil the wide lagoon, which mirrored the burning spots in heaven!" (*Mardi* 178).

 "Yoomy, standing where the spicy spray flew over him, stretched forth his hand and cried—'The dawn of day is passed, and Mardi lies all before us: all he isles, and all her lakes; all her stores of good an evil" (*Mardi* 200).

"there are those who have measured Mardi by perch and pole, and with their wonted lead sounded its utmost depths … Then, the last volcano burst; rent the whole mass; upthrew the ancient rocks; which now in divers mountain tops tell tales of what existed ere Mardi was completely fashioned … Thus Nature works, at random warring, chaos a crater, and this world a shell" (*Mardi* 417).

"Mardi is alive to its axis. When you pour water, does it not gurgle? When you strike a pearl shell, does it not ring?" (*Mardi* 458).

"Were all the isles gold goblets, set in a quicksilver sea, all Mardi were then a desert" (*Mardi* 547).

"Part and parcel of the Mardian isles, they formed a cluster by themselves … With compass and lead, we had not found these Mardian Isles. Those who boldly launch, cast

off all cables; and turning from the common breeze, that's fair for all, with their own

breath, fill their own sails" (*Mardi* 556).

"As if Mardi were a poem, and every island a canto, the shore now in sight was called

Flozella-a-Nina, or The-Last-Verse-of-the-Song" (*Mardi* 642).

"We clove the air; passed systems, suns, and moons: what seem from Mardi's isles, the

glow-worm stars" (*Mardi* 633).

Society Islands

Maa: adj. small, a little part or quantity (Davies 122)

Tai: n. the sea, salt, salt water (Davies 244)

Maa: used sometimes as an *article*, as *maa taata rahi*, a big man (Davies 122)

Ari: n. the boundless deep; a bog of an unknown depth; anything boundless in depth,

height, or extent; also applied to the emptiness of the body (Davies 37)

Ari: adj. empty, as the stomach; waste, as the land forsaken by its inhabitants; frightful,

as a place in battle (Davies 37)

Sandwich Islands

Makai: adv. *ma* and *kai* the sea; at or towards the sea, in distinction from *maaka* inland

(Andrews, *Vocabulary* 94)

The name that Melville invents has probably no equivalent in Polynesian thus

imposing the necessity to study its compound parts. Melville probably constructed this

word out of the words "maa," where the *a* replaces the *r*, and "tai" or "kai," where the

letter *d* is replaced by its equivalent Tahitian or Hawaiian consonant. The letter *i* is

pronounced here as in the word "mine" and not as in "sit." The resulting compound

means "small sea" in Tahitian and "at or towards the sea" in Hawaiian, both of which

terms describe Melville's *Mardi* as a watery realm.

The other alternative is that Melville created a compound out of the words

"maa," with its second meaning as an article, and "ari," "the boundless deep," which

results in the term "maa-ari," whose definition is "the boundless deep, the emptiness, the

frightful." The second alternative betrays Melville's desire to use the word

metaphorically as well as literally (which the first compound reveals).

The addition of the consonant *d* suggests Melville's intention to westernize even

more a word that even in its second Polynesian spelling, "maa-ari," came quite close to

the Latin "mare." It is also possible the Melville was instead influenced by a reference in

Ellis' *Researches*: "To the southward of the Marquesas, innumerable clusters and single

islands … cover the bosom of the ocean … low narrow islands, of coralline formation …

sometimes they rise, like a perpendicular wall, from the depths of the ocean to the level

of its surface … they generally form a curved line, sometimes bent like a horse-shoe …

the Pearl Islands … the Dangerous Archipelago" (Ellis 3: 303-304).

Finally, Davis' observation that the term may be related to the "people of Asia,

near the northern frontiers of Media" (Davis 77n) validates Melville's insertion of the

consonant *d* in the word to create a multi-ethnic myth.

"These numerous islands, like those of Tetuaroa to the north, are of coralline formation" (Ellis 2: 227).

"The local situation of the Sandwich Islands is important … due west, the Marian islands" (Ellis 4: 26).

Marhar– Rarrar

"She with the tresses, was very appropriately styled Marhar-Rarrar, the Wakeful, or Bright-Eyed" (*Omoo* 256).

Society Islands

Maraa: v. to bear, rise up, bear up (Davies 133)

Mahara: adj. clear or vacant (Davies 124)

Ra: n. the sun (Davies 218)

Sandwich Islands

Malealea: adj. clear, serene, pleasant (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 96)

Mala: v. to swell; to swell up; to grow large; to puff up, as a swelling (Andrews, *Dictionary* 378)

Lala: v. to be hot, as the sun (Andrews, *Dictionary* 327)

Tonga Islands

Malaelae: n. open; free from obstructions, like a *malae* (Rabone 162)

Lala: n. a bitch when in heat; also the state of being so (Mariner *Dictionary* n. pag.)

Laa: n. the sun; drought; dry weather (Rabone 145)

Maori Islands

Maraha: adj. lying open, extended (Williams 180)

Maranga: v. arise from sleep (Williams 181)

Ra: n. sun (Williams 319)

The last *r*, just like with "Marhar," breaks the rules of Polynesian grammatical and is probably a replacement for the phonetic duplicate of the last *a*. The Tahitian compound, "maraa-ra" or "mahara-ra" refers approximately to "the sun that rises up" or "the clear sun" which Melville could have used in a metaphorical sense, to refer to the increasing brightness of the woman's eyes as she opened them wide. A similar inference can be made for the Maori compound.

The Hawaiian word, "malealea-lala," suggests something that is "clear and hot, as the sun" or the act of "swelling up, growing large, like the sun." Again, Melville uses the metaphorical implications of the combined words, to parallelize the woman's eyes to the swelling sun that becomes hotter and brighter the more it swells.

Finally, the Tonga word, "malaelae-lala" or "malaelae-laa" could be used to describe something "open, free from obstructions like the sun" as well as "extreme heat and dry weather." In a metaphorical sense these definitions could have been employed

by Melville to compare the brightness of her eyes to the openness of the sun in dry, clear weather.

Marharvai

"At last, a tall old gentleman, by name Marharvai, with a bald head and white beard, took us each by the hand, and led us into his dwelling. Once inside, Marharvai, pointing about with his staff, was so obsequious in assuring us that his house was ours, that Long Ghost suggested, he might as well hand over the deed" (*Omoo* 256).

Society Islands

Maraehaava: n. a wise person, one well furnished with the knowledge of things (Davies 133)

Marara: adj. dispersed, scattered abroad (Davies 134)

Mahara: adj. clear or vacant (Davies 124)

Maa: used sometimes as an article (Davies 122)

Maa: adj. small, a little part or quantity (Davies 122)

Haa: n. work of any kind (Davies 87)

Faa: n. a valley; a low place among the hills (Davies 60)

Vai: n. water (Davies 309)

Haava: n. an old resident; a wise man (Davies 88)

The combination of the consonants *r* and *h* and *r* and *v* is illegal according to

Polynesian grammar. As happens with several other words, Melville inserted the letter *r*

or replaced other vowels with it because that is probably how he remembered it. I have

included both alternatives if the letters *r* or *h* were removed and added the vowel *a* after

the second *r* to legalize the compound word "marara-vai" or "mahara-vai." Replacing

the first *r* with an *a*, in case Melville had used the first *r* as a duplicate of the letter *a*,

produces only two particles "maa" and "haa," which Melville could have had in mind as

the middle of the three-part compound word, "maa-haa-vai." The morpheme "faa," is

included here because the *f* was interchangeable with the *h*. In either case the original

compound, "maa-haa-vai" or "maa-faa-vai" could be used to refer to "the little water,"

or the somewhat cryptic "the water that works," or "the valley of water." Finally, it is

very probable that Melville inquired about the meaning of the person's name, and was

given the definition of the first word, "maraehaava," "wise person."

Marheyo

"The father of my attached follower was a native of gigantic frame, and had once

possessed prodigious physical powers; but the lofty form was now yielding to the

inroads of time, though the hand of disease seemed never to have been laid upon by the

aged warrior. Marheyo—for such was his name—appeared to have retired from all

active participation in the affairs of the valley … but despite his eccentricities, Marheyo

was a most paternal and warm-hearted old fellow, and in this particular not a little

resembled his son Kory-Kory" (*Typee* 84).

Society Islands

Maheu: v. to be coming into notice, or be knowable (Davies 124)

Mahei: adj. full, applied to a fishing basket or net (Davies 124)

Sandwich Islands

Maa: adj. accustomed to, used to (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 90)

Haiole: adj. stubborn, unyielding, hard (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 34)

Hao: n. iron (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 34)

Heo: adj. *haa*—haughty, proud (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 40)

Heu: n. a young man, a youngster (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 40)

There is little relation between the name of Melville's character and his intrinsic characteristics as presented in *Typee*. This is a common phenomenon in the first two books, as Melville was writing mostly by memory and not by imagination (as happens in *Mardi* and onwards). For this reason it is difficult to exact a definition based on Melville's information. I have included several alternatives in order to address the variable spellings of a misheard or misremembered name, which may suggest a possible influence on Melville's process of reconstructing the Polynesian's name.

The Hawaiian compounds come closest to Melville's description of the father of his servant. The word "maa-haiole," for example, means "accustomed to [being] stubborn, unyielding, hard," whereas the word "maa-hao" describes someone hard-working, who is "used to, accustomed to [like] iron." The combination "maa-heo"

suggests someone who is "accustomed to [being] haughty" and the word "maa-heu," a person "accustomed to [being] young," or simply "a young person."

The Tahitian words can be taken independently to describe him as either someone famous or someone "full," probably suggesting the fullness of his stature.

Marjora

"In those days, the wildest superstitions concerning the interference of the gods in things temporal, prevailed to a much greater extent than at present. Hence Marjora himself, called sometimes in the traditions of the island, The-Heart-of-Black-Coral, even unscrupulous Marjora had quailed before the oracle. 'He bowed his head,' say the legends. Nor was it then questioned, by his most devoted adherents, that had he dared to act counter to that edict, he had dropped dead, the very instant he went under the shadow of the defile" (*Mardi* 220).

Society Islands

Maa: used sometimes as an *article* (Davies 122)

Ara: n. a species of hard black stone (Davies 31)

The interjection of the letter *j* is highly problematic because it is a crucial letter and yet nonexistent in any Polynesian dialect. This suggests that the word may not be Polynesian at all but it does not exclude the possibility that this is a compound word of Polynesian and English derivation, meaning "the hard black stone."

"Our forefathers … have been seeking the *ora roa* (enduring life)" (Ellis 4: 307).

Marlena

"A land of shades and streams, / A land of many delights … Land of Dreams" (*Mardi* 314).

Sandwich Islands

Moe: v. to dream; to dream a dream (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 101)

Aina: n. land, island, country, farm, a field (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 3)

Lanai: n. name of one of the Hawaiian islands (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 83)

Malanai: n. the gentle blowing of the N. East wind, one of the names of the trade wind (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 96)

The word is divided into two parts, "mar" and "lena," with both parts being variations of the Polynesian "moe" and "lanai." The first part of the word is a different word than Melville's but it has the same meaning as that which Melville describes ("mar" for "moe"). The second part is closer to Melville's original but makes reference to a specific location whereas Melville's song refers to an imaginary place.

Marnoo

"The stranger could not have been more than twenty-five years of age, and was a little above the ordinary height; had he been a single hair's breadth taller, the matchless symmetry of his form would have been destroyed. His unclad limbs were beautifully formed; whilst the elegant outline of his figure, together with his beardless cheeks, might have entitled him to the distinction of standing for the statue of the Polynesian Apollo; and indeed the oval of his countenance and the regularity of every feature reminded me of an antique bust. But the marble repose of art was supplied by a warmth and liveliness of expression only to be seen in the South Sea Islander under the most favorable developments of nature" (*Typee* 135).

Society Islands

Manu: n. a general name for all sorts of birds, fowls, winged insects; also sometimes an animal of any kind

n. a scout, a spy in time of war (Davies 131)

Maru: n. a devotee to a particular god

adj. soft, gentle, easy; also affable (Davies 135)

Maa: used sometimes as an *article* (Davies 122)

Nunu: n. one delicately brought up, and of a quiet inoffensive disposition (Davies 157)

Sandwich Islands

Manoo (or *Mano*): n. a shark (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 99)

Manu: 1. n. the general name for fowls and birds

2. n. name of two gods at the gate of Lono's yard (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 99)

Maloo: v. to dry, to wither as a tree (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 97)

Malu: 1. v. to be comfortable, to be in a state of peace with others, to be favored, to have

many enjoyments and privileges, to be fruitful, to be blessed (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 97)

Maa: n. ease of manners; politeness gained by experience (Andrews, *Dictionary* 358)

Noo-noo: v. to reflect, to consider in order to give an opinion, to meditate, to think, to

think of the past (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 108)

Tonga Islands

Manoo: adj. small in the middle; puckered and bulged (Rabone 166)

Manu: n. animals, birds, beasts (generic term); the tooth ache (Rabone 166)

Malu: adj. mild, milder, applied to the wind; easy; free from pain (Rabone 164)

Maori Islands

Manu: n. bird; person held in high esteem; generally used with an epithet (Williams 176)

This name seems to contain a multitude of meanings each of which is relevant to

Melville's description, thus constituting the term a ubiquitously accepted one. I have

also included those words which form part of a potentially compound name (Tahitian or Hawaiian) with the *r* being a substitute of the double *a* of the original word and the double *oo* being replaced by a *u* or left in the original spelling. The few compounds that can be constructed describe the easy-going, polite traits of his character. Ellis refers to one "Manu," defining him as "bird," as well as an early convert to Christianity, a former member of the infamous Areoi society: "One of these, whose name was *Manu*, bird, resided at Bunaauĩa, in the district of Atehuru" (Ellis 2: 171).

Martair

"We were in the valley of Martair; shut in, on both sides, by lofty hills. Here and there, were steep cliffs, gay with flowering shrubs, or hung with pendulous vines, swinging blossoms in the air. Of considerable width at the sea, the vale contracts as it runs inland; terminating, at the distance of several miles, in a range of the most grotesque elevations, which seem embattled with turrets and towers, grown over with verdure, and waving with trees. The valley itself, is a wilderness of woodland; with links of streams flashing through, and narrow pathways, fairly tunneled through masses of foliage" (*Omoo* 201).

Society Islands

Mata: n. the first beginning of anything (Davies 136)

Ea: n. a rod or pathway, a ladder (Davies 56)

Following Ellis' spelling, the first *r* is replaced by the duplicated *a* of the original whereas the *ea* diphthong of the second part substitutes the "air" of Melville's word. The meaning of the word suggests that this valley is the beginning of the island, a landing point.

 "At Maatea I landed about twelve o'clock and walked through the district of Haume to Afareaitu… the people of Afareaitu erected the printing-office; and those of Maatea, a neighbouring district, my dwelling" (Ellis 2: 215, 218).

Matavai

"After stretching across the bay, the barrier extends on toward Point Venus, in the district of Matavai, eight or nine miles distant" (*Omoo* 98).

Society Islands

Mata: n. the first beginning of anything (Davies 136)

Vai: n. water (Davies 309)

This word is one of the few occasions where Melville's spelling is accurate and Charles R. Anderson confirms Melville's visit to the bay: "Matavai Bay was selected for anchorage because it was easy of access and the stay was to be short. Melville does not record any previous visit to this particular bay, but only eight or nine miles to the eastward lay the harbor and village of Papeete, the capital of the island, where so much

of the action of *Omoo* takes place. Connecting the two ports was the famous Broom Road, and, granted the opportunity, Melville would certainly have revisited this sylvan thoroughfare, so crowded with memories for him, and the village of Papeete and the Calabooza beyond, where he had spent six weeks in semi-confinement" (351). There are numerous sources that verify the spelling of the name, some of which I incorporate here.

"This space is divided into several districts, of which the principal spots and villages (as we proceed westward from Point Venus) are Matavái, Papáoa, Táone, Taonóa, Pápeéte, and Bunaauía" (Bennett 1: 62).

"This morning … we set out to ascend the valley of Matavai. This valley lies north-west and south-east. Towards the sea it opens into a rich champaign of considerable extent, covered with groves of bread-fruit and cocoa-nut trees" (Tyerman & Bennet 1: 100).

Media

"Upon this the old king fell back; and his place was supplied by a noble chief, of a free, frank bearing. Advancing quickly toward the boat, he exclaimed—'I am Media, the son of Media. Thrice welcome, Taji. On my island of Odo hast thou an altar. I claim thee for my guest" (*Mardi* 166).

"For at high noon, Media was wont to don his dignity with his symbols of state; and sit on his judgment divan or throne, to hear and try all causes brought before him, and fulminate his royal decrees" (*Mardi* 182).

"Pointing out the apparition to Media, I intreated him to take means to fix it, that my suspicions might be dispelled, as to its being incorporeal" (*Mardi* 186).

"In my delirium I rushed upon the skeletons, as they landed—'Hide not the maiden!' But interposing, Media led me aside; when my transports abated" (*Mardi* 306).

"But I turned; and instantly the three canoes had been reversed; and full soon, Jarl's dead hand in mine, had not Media interposed" (*Mardi* 364).

"'No more a demigod,' cried Media, 'but a subject to our common chief. No more shall dismal cried be heard from Odo's groves. Alma, I am thine'" (*Mardi* 630).

"'Before thy people act the things, thou here hast heard. Let no man weep, that thou may'st laugh; no man toil too hard, that thou may'st idle be. Abdicate thy throne: but still retain the scepter. None need a king; but many need a ruler" (*Mardi* 637).

"Behind the avengers, raged a stormy mob, invoking Media to renounce his rule. But one hand waving like a pennant above the smoke of some sea-fight, straight through that tumult Media sailed serene: the rioters parting from before him, as wild waves before a prow inflexible" (*Mardi* 653).

Society Islands

Metia: n. the modern word for a parent (Davies 143)

Mea: n. a thing, a person, any thing mentioned (Davies 142)

Tia: n. an advocate, or intercessor (Davies 265)

Tiai: n. a keeper; one that waits or watches (Davies 266)

Sandwich Islands

Mea: n. a person (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 100)

Kia: n. a standing idol; *kia hoailona* a standing image of worship (Andrews, *Dictionary* 267, *Vocabulary* 68)

Kiai: n. a guard, a watchman (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 68)

The Melvillean *d* has substituted the letter *t* or *k* in the original Tahitian or Hawaiian word. Besides this slight change, the word is transposed intact from the Polynesian. I have included here both possible versions of the word's derivation; the Tahitian "Metia," which is based on the name of an infamous priest (see the quote from Ellis below), and the elements of a compound word whose multiple meanings are indicative of Media's personality and role in the novel. The textual references are indicative of a personality that manifests itself through brief glimpses throughout the book. Essentially, then, Media acts out what his Polynesian name stands for: he is a "metia" to the group, that is, "a parent," taking care of their physical needs throughout the voyage. Furthermore, he is a "mea-tia," that is, "a person [acting as] an advocate, an intercessor" for the group, whose presence allows Taji's quest to proceed and reach its end. In this sense, Media is a tool that allows Melville to maintain the narrative because he uses his position and power as king, in other words as "mea-kia," "a living idol or image for worship," to protect the group from all sorts of danger, he is a "mea-kiai" or a "mea-tiai," "a person who guards, who watches." At the same time, his role is to instigate discussion over various subjects; he is used as a "medium" for Melville to bring

forth his views on philosophical, political, ideological, aesthetic and various other topics that he (Melville) feels he needs to address in the book. This way, Melville allows the name's Latin roots to be exposed to the reader (something that would probably be more immediately observed by a reader with European cultural roots) without compromising Media's name's Polynesian roots.

Ellis describes the historical personage with the similar name with some vague detail which might have formed the basis for Melville's multi-layered creation: "by Metia, a prophet of Oro, and a celebrated sorcerer, who had sometimes been known to threaten even the king himself with the effects of his indignation. 'Give up, give up,' was the language he on one occasion employed, when addressing the king, 'lest I bend my strong bow;' in allusion, it is supposed, to his pretended influence with the demon" (Ellis 1: 366).

Wilkes's reference related the name to something different: "In the evening I stood for Metia Island, to the southward … on the morning of the 9th of September we were in sight of Metia or Aurora Island … a coral island uplifted" (Wilkes 1: 337).

"his illness and death were occasioned by the incantations of Metia, a priest of Oro, a famous wrestler and sorcerer, whose influence, ceremonies, and prayers, had induced the evil spirits to enter into the young prince, and destroy him" (Ellis 2: 64-65).

Mehevi

"But that which was most remarkable in the appearance of the splendid islander was the elaborated tattooing displayed on every noble limb … the warrior, from the excellence of his physical proportions, might certainly have been regarded as one of Nature's noblemen, and the lines drawn upon his face may possibly have denoted his exalted rank" (*Typee* 78).

"In the endeavor I was not repulsed; for nothing could surpass the friendliness he manifested towards both my companion and myself. He extended his sturdy limbs by our side, and endeavored to make us comprehend the full extent of the kindly feelings by which he was actuated" (*Typee* 79).

Society Islands

Mehoi: n. the power and dignity of a god (Davies 142)

Sandwich Islands

Me: prep. with, accompanying (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 100)

Hoi-hoi: n. joy, gratification (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 44)

This is a name, whether a single or a compound word, that only Melville knew since, and as far as my research has led me, there is no historical record that mentions it.

The word is Marquesan, which means that both a Tahitian and Hawaiian relation is possible (the Marquesan dialect was influenced by both dialects), despite the fact that the letter *v* does not exist in the Hawaiian dialect. I have included two possible candidate terms, one from the Tahitian and one from the Hawaiian, in order to show how the Marquesan could be related with either or both of these dialects. The difference of meaning between the Tahitian and Hawaiian could have inspired Melville, or Mehevi's "godfather" to create a name that encompasses both traits. The *Typee* narrative shows how Mehevi is both a dignified (thus the Tahitian influence) and a friendly (thus the Hawaiian influence) king.

Midni

"Midni was of opinion that day-light was vulgar; good enough for tarot-planting and traveling; but wholly unadapted to the sublime ends of study. He toiled by night; from sunset to sunrise poring over the works of the old logicians … He read in the woods by glow-worm light; insect in hand, tracing over his pages, line by line. But glow-worms burn not long: and in the midst of some calm intricate thought, at some imminent comma, the insect often expired, and Midni groped for meaning … so Midni sprang to his feet, and parchment under arm, raced about among the sloughs and bogs for another glow-worm. Often making a rapid descent with his turban, he though he had caged a prize … And thus he forever went halting and stumbling through his studies, and plunging through his quagmires after a glim" (*Mardi* 504).

Society Islands

Miti: n. [from the Eng., Mr.] Master, Sir (Davies 143)

Nee: v. to crawl, or creep, as insects (Davies 153)

Neenee: v. to crawl or move repeatedly (Davies 153)

This apparently compound word is made up of two parts, "miti," which is a Polynesian adoption of the English "master" or "sir," and the word "nee," which when combined with the first part makes up the word *miti-nee*, or *miti-neenee*, which means "Mr. crawler," a fitting appellation for the anecdote's main character. Melville here takes a formerly English word (Mister or Master) in its changed Polynesian form and transforms it even further rather than bring it back in its original spelling. This way, he maintains the romantic essence of his language as expected from a South Seas travel narrative. Furthermore, the meaning of the Polynesian compound seen through the metaphor of the story, clearly describes someone who is constantly crawling, both physically (looking for insects) and mentally, as he is never able to acquire a meaningful whole at once, and thus progressing at the speed of an insect that crawls in his studies. Melville's name, Midni, ingeniously combines the meaning of the Polynesian original with the metaphorical implications of the English word "midni-ght," which here describes both the physical and mental state of the character. Physically, he is studying (more like crawling) in the middle of the night, and mentally he lives in constant midnight as he constantly "groped for meaning."

Minda

"In a certain quarter of the Archipelago was an island called Minda; and in Minda were many sorcerers, employed in the social differences and animosities of the people of that unfortunate land. If a Mindarian deemed himself aggrieved or insulted by a countryman, he forthwith repaired to one of these sorcerers … And full soon, by certain peculiar sensations, this individual, discovering what was going on, would straightway hie to his own professor of the sable art, who, being well feed, in due time brought about certain counter-charms, so that in the end it sometimes fell out that neither party was gainer or loser, save by the sum of his fees" (*Mardi* 462).

Society Islands

Miimii: n. a grudge, an envy, a displeasure (Davies 143)

Mitamita: v. to murmur, or scold to one's self (Davies 143)

Ta: v. to strike; also to write (Davies 236)

Taa: adj. settled, or dismissed, as the subject of a discourse; also let go (Davies 237)

Sandwich Islands

Minamina: v. to grieve for the loss of a thing, to be sorry on account of the consequence of an event, to be sorry as sad intelligence, to be weighed down with sorrow (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 101)

Ka: at the close of a sentence; sign of a strong assertion with disapprobation; used also on the discovery of a mistake, or in expressing opposition of sentiment (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 56)

Ka: v. to curse, to express anger at any one by wishing evil from God, a low kind of swearing (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 56)

Ka: v. to destroy, cause to perish (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 56)

This compound, invented word besides the obvious disregard for Polynesian grammar, also bears close resemblance, phonetically and orthographically, to the English "minder," "one whose business is 'to mind' or attend to something" (*OED*). This suggests that the island is full of people who are employed at attending at certain things, and in the case of Minda, other people's grievances. The Tahitian "miimii-ta" means "to write a grudge, envy, displeasure" or "to strike a grudge, envy displeasure," thus suggesting the secretive means of adjudicating grievances. The term "miimii-taa" expresses exactly that: the "settling of a grudge, envy, displeasure."

The Hawaiian compound "minamina-ka," which Melville could have shortened to "Minka" (he could do the same with the Tahitian), suggests "to grieve and curse for a loss," "to grieve with a strong assertion of disapprobation," or "to grieve and destroy." All three possible compounds suggest the particular mode of spell-casting by the island's sorcerers: "who, for an adequate compensation, set to work with his spells, keeping himself in the dark, and directing them against the obnoxious individual" (*Mardi* 462).

In either case, Melville emphasizes the destructive potential these words can have on the sorcerers' customers, in a manner similar to the destruction caused by the implicit rhetoric of the legal system.

"Under the influence of these opinions, when any one was suffering from incantations, if he or his friends possessed property, they immediately employed another sorcerer. This person was frequently called a *faatere*, causing to move or slide, who, on receiving his fee, was generally desired, first to discover who had practiced the incantations which it was supposed had induced the sufferings: as soon as he had accomplished this, he was employed, with more costly presents, to engage the aid of his demons, that the agony and death they had endeavoured to inflict upon the subject of their malignant efforts, might revert to themselves—and if the demon employed by the second party was equally powerful with that employed by the first, and their presents more valuable, it was generally supposed that they were successful" (Ellis 1: 369-370).

Moa Artua

"This funny little image was the 'crack' god of the island; lording it over all the wooden lubbers who looked so grim and dreadful; its name was Moa Artua" (*Typee* 175).

"The word 'Artua,' although having some other significations, is in nearly all the Polynesian dialects used as the general designation of the gods" (*Typee* 175n).

Society Islands

Moa: adj. sacred, devoted to the gods (Davies 143)

Atua: n. God, the general name for a Diety [sic] (Davies 45)

Etua (same as *atua*): priest, god, white man (Hale 4)

Sandwich Islands

Akua: adj. the Deity, God, any supernatural being, an object of religious homage, applied

to artificial objects, the nature or properties of which Hawaiians do not understand

(Andrews, *Vocabulary* 8)

Maori Islands

Atua: n. God, demon, supernatural being, ghost (Williams 20)

Samoan Islands

Atua: n. God (as revealed in Christ); God (heathen) (Milner 29)

Tonga Islands

Otua: n. God (Rabone 20)

      This is a typical example of Melville's "misheard" spelling that includes the

letter interjected *r* in place of another vowel (usually) or without a necessary

replacement, and is the cause of the phonetic and grammatical paradox present in so many of his Polynesian words. Although Charles R. Anderson claims that Melville followed Porter's description of the peculiar custom of the baby-god (177ff), and although, as Anderson claims, Melville's almost certain reliance on an unreliable Porter may have damaged his (Melville's) own credibility about this religious icon, there is still the problem of the name that Melville uses and that does not appear in Porter or any other source that Anderson quotes (as far as my research is concerned). Where then did Melville come up with the name and, if this is a real name for a real deity, why is it that Porter and the others do not mention its name? Such a problem may also leave a small probability that Melville may have had access to another, previously undocumented source, such as Davies' dictionary which contains both terms. Unfortunately, I have not been able to verify the existence of the term "moa" with Davies' meaning in any other Polynesian dictionary, current to Melville's time or modern. This suggests that the term is native to only the Marquesans who in turn were influenced by the Tahitians in their adoption of the term. The word "atua" ("artua"), which Melville claims is used by almost every Polynesian dialect in the same way, appears with a different spelling in the Tongan dialect but not in the Fiji (as far as my research has shown).

"We now found ourselves near the *Ava Moa*, Sacred Passage" (Ellis 2: 313-314).

"The word Atua, the appellative of the first class, with scarce a modification, is the term used in all the Polynesian dialects to designate the ideal beings worshipped as gods, in the system of polytheism existing among the people" (Stewart 171).

"One for *te atua*, the god" (Ellis 2: 336).

Moee

"'ah! moee moee mortarkee' (ah! sleep very good)" (*Typee* 88).

"after sundry injunctions to 'moee-moee,' and be 'maitai' —in other words, to go to sleep, and be good boys" (*Omoo* 117).

Society Islands

Moe: v. to sleep; also to lie down (Davies 144)

Moe: n. knee (Hale 7)

Sandwich Islands

Moe: v. to lie down, to fall prostrate, to lean forward on the hands and knees. Hence, to sleep, etc. (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 101)

Despite the characteristic orthographical error, Melville's translation is accurate here, thus indicating that in *Typee* and *Omoo* he was consciously trying to write from memory without at the same time avoiding the use of his imagination wherever he deemed necessary, and not only when he was not writing based on memory. The existence of the term in both the Tahitian and Hawaiian dialects once more corroborates the influence both had on the linguistic medium of the Marquesans.

"There is another kind of cloth, called *tapa moe*, (sleeping cloth)" (Ellis 4: 111).

Mohi

"The first was Mohi, or Braid-Beard, so-called from the manner in which he wore that appendage, exceedingly long and gray. He was a venerable teller of stories and legends, one of the Keepers of the Chronicles of the Kings of Mardi" (*Mardi* 197).

Society Islands

Ohi: v. to gather fragments; to glean, pick up firewood, or any small things (Davies 160)

Sandwich Islands

Moo: n. a connected story, a history (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 102)

Ohi: v. to gather up, to collect

n. a collecting with difficulty (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 23)

The Tahitian and Hawaiian dialects contain some elements that could suggest that this name is not entirely invented and that Melville's inspiration for the name could possibly have been founded on a Polynesian word. Both the Tahitian and Hawaiian terms describe the act of collecting, either small things (as in the Tahitian dialect) or stories (as in the Hawaiian). Because the word's pronunciation and orthography contain Polynesian linguistic elements and because the character appears as part of an assembly

of Polynesian personas, the possibility of his name having a semantic equivalent in some Polynesian dialect is increased.

Bennett uses the terms "Mohihi" and "Mohii" to describe two plants that have the ability to grow very long. I have included this quotation in order to draw a parallel between the image of the long plant, which Melville may have seen while there, and the image of Mohi's long beard.

"This is a delicate climbing herb, its gyrations proceeding from left to right; leaves and stalk covered with long yellow hairs. Flowers white. Sandwich group; native name *kahulu* or *mohihi*" (Bennett 2: 341).

"A climbing plant, affecting mountain-land. It attains the height of eight feet, and bears splendid clusters of scarlet papilionaceous flowers.—Oahu, Sandwich Isles (rare); native name, *mohii*" (Bennett 2: 361-362).

Mondo

"So sudden and profound this precipice, that you seem to look off from one world to another. In a dreamy, sunny day, the spangled plain beneath assumes an uncertain fleeting aspect. Had you a deep-sea-lead you would almost be tempted to sound the ocean-haze at your feet. This, mortal! Is the precipice of Mondo. From this brink, spear in hand, sprang fifty rebel warriors, driven back into the vale by superior force. Finding no spot to stand at bay, with a fierce shout they took the fatal leap" (*Mardi* 278).

Society Islands

Motia: n. boundary, termination, or limit (Davies 147)

Toa: n. a warrior, a valiant man (Davies 275)

This is a compound word but no letter is removed or substituted; Melville probably removed the middle vowel that connects the consonants *n* and *d* in order to create an Anglicized version of the French term for "world" (*OED*). The Polynesian words quoted here only approximate the meaning of Mondo, for which Melville may have used one Polynesian word (or part of).

Monee

"I had almost forgotten Monee, the grinning old man who prepared our meal. His head was a shining, bald globe. He had a round little paunch, and legs like a cat. He was Po-Po's factotum —cook, butler, and climber of the bread-fruit and cocoa-nut trees; and, added to all else, a mighty favorite with his mistress; with whom he would sit smoking and gossiping by the hour" (*Omoo* 279).

Sandwich Islands

Moni: v. to swallow, to consume (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 103)

Monimoni: n. a fast eater; (metaphorical) one who receives instruction greedily (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 103)

Maori Islands

Moni: adj. consumed (Williams 208)

Melville may be repeating here the name given (by the Polynesians) to someone who eats a lot. The description he (Melville) provides for the character suggests this possibility.

Moo

"After a sufficient quantity has been thus collected, the oil undergoes a purifying process, and is then poured into the small spherical shells of the nuts of the moo-tree, which are hollowed-out to receive it" (*Typee* 230).

"Of the thunder-riven Moo-tree made: / Tall tree, couched on the long mountain Lana! / No staves for gray-beards! no rods for fishermen! / Tempered by fierce sea-winds, / splintered into lances by lightnings, / Long arrows! Heart seekers! / Toughened by fire their sharp black points! " (*Mardi* 436).

Society Islands

Moo: n. taro shoots, or strips for planting (Davies 146)

Sandwich Islands

Mu: a kind of tree with round nuts (Hale 8)

Kalo: n. the arum esculentum; a well known vegetable of these islands (Andrews,

Vocabulary 63)

I have used Davies' definition to find the equivalent term in the Hawaiian dialect.

Melville is most probably referring to the taro plant here.

"This aquatic vegetable is most largely cultivated at the Sandwich Islands, where the

natives subsist almost entirely upon its nutritious esculent root. Society and Sandwich

Isles; native name *taro*.—Marquesas, (rare), *ta'o*" (Bennett 2: 379).

Morai

"but there are other and larger erections of a similar description comprising the 'morais,'

or burying-grounds, and festival-places, in nearly all the valleys of the island" (*Typee*

155).

"Yet the landscape of Maramma had not the merriness of meadows; Partly because of

the shadow of Ofo, and partly because of the solemn groves in which the Morais and

temples are buried" (*Mardi* 324).

Society Islands

Marae: n. the sacred place formerly used for worship, where stones were piled up, altars

erected, sacrifices offered, prayers made, and sometimes the dead deposited (Davies

133)

morai: n. burying-place (Hale 8)

Meae: n. a temple (Hale 7)

Charles R. Anderson claims Porter, Stewart, and Linton as Melville's most probable sources for the term although he gives more credit to Porter due to the more precise spelling: "Another circumstance which points out Porter as Melville's most likely source in the discussion of these monumental stone platforms is the fact that they are the only two [Linton? –*mine*] who give the name of these structures as 'morai,' instead of the more correct form *me'ae*" (159). Anderson, however, does not quote either Wilkes or Bennett, who also spell the word as "morai," as possible sources for Melville. Ellis uses both "marae" and "morai" in his *Researches*.

"they passed the ruins of an old heiau, the morai mentioned in Captain Cook's voyage … the space within strewed with animal and human bones, the relics of the sacrifices once offered there —a scene truly affecting to a Christian mind" (Ellis 4: 66).
"None of the valleys, however, possess any *morais* or other buildings devoted to religious purposes, nor any public idols" (Bennett 1: 322).
"there stands, close to the sea, an ancient *morai*, —a colossal pile of coral blocks, originally of square form, but now ruinous" (Bennett 2: 38).
"This chief stated that it had not been used as a place of sepulture or as a morai … that a morai of quite a different character exists within a mile or two of this mound" (Wilkes 2: 31, 32).

Mortarkee

"'Mortarkee,' the latter being equivalent to the word 'good'" (*Typee* 69).

"'Happar keekeeno nuee,' he exclaimed; 'nuee, nuee, ki ki kanaka!—ah! owle

motarkee!' which signifies, 'Terrible fellows those Happars!—devour an amazing

quantity of men!—ah, shocking bad!'" (*Typee* 102).

"Ah! Typee motarkee! … which, liberally interpreted as before, would imply, 'Ah,

Typee! isn't it a fine place though!'" (*Typee* 103).

Society Islands

Maitai [maitaki, meitaki]: n. goodness, holiness, blessedness, all kinds of happiness

(Davies 128)

Sandwich Islands

Motaki: (probably the same as metaki) adj. good; excellent; handsome; kind; humane

(Hale 8)

Maikai: adj. good, handsome, excellent, correct (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 91)

      Melville was probably thinking of a derivative of the term "meitaki" or

"maitaki," with the inserted *r*'s substituting the *i*'s in this case, thus the word

"moitaikee." The word "Motarkee" that Melville uses elsewhere in *Typee* (102, 103) has

the same meaning as "Mortarkee" here; it is uncertain whether the difference in spelling between the two words was intentional or an editorial error.

"*Nui roa maitai! ...* It is greatly good!" (Ellis 4: 201).

"Their language has no word beyond *maitai*, good, to acknowledge the receipt of kindness" (Bennett 1: 108).

"'*Maitai! maitai!'*—'Good! good!'" (Stewart 265).

Motoo-Otoo

"Right in the middle of Papeetee harbor is a bright, green island, one circular grove of waving palms, and scarcely a hundred yards across. It is of coral formation; and all round, for many rods out, the bay is so shallow, that you might wade anywhere … The island is called Motoo-Otoo; and around Motoo-Otoo have I often paddled of a white moonlight night, pausing now and then to admire the marine gardens benetah" (*Omoo* 162).

"Of Taji, Bello sought to know, whether his solar majesty had yet made a province of the moon; whether the Astral hosts were of much account as territories, or mere Motoos, as the little tufts of verdure are denominated, here and there clinging to Mardi's circle reef" (*Mardi* 477).

Society Islands

Motu: n. an island, a low island, in opposition to *fenua*, where there is high land (Davies 147)

Otue: n. a promontary [*sic*], or head land jutting into the sea

Otue: n. peaks or tops; the ends of the fingers

Otu: n. see *Tu*, the name of a god, and of the late king (Davies 175)

Uta: n. the shore, or land, in opposition to *tai*, the sea; the parts toward the interior (Davies 304)

Outu: n. a promontary [sic]; see *otue* (Davies 176)

Sandwich Islands

Moku: n. a division of country, state, district, a small island separate from the main land, a ship, so called from the supposition that it was an island (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 102)

v. to divide, to cut, to cut off as a member of the body, to break asunder as a rope or chain, to cut off as with a sword at a single blow (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 102)

Motoo: island, rock (Hale 7)

okuu: n. name of a great sickness throughout the islands when multitudes were swept off, a pestilence; in referring to it the people say *kuu okuu*, the time of pestilence (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 25)

Uka: n. the shore, the country, the direction opposite to the sea (Andrews, *Vocabulary*

30)

Tonga Islands

Motu: n. an island (Rabone 174)

Otu: n. a row or line; a range; a rank; the sign of the plural, applying to lands (Rabone 20)

According to Charles R. Anderson's research (219-220), Melville may have noticed F. D. Bennett's account of the small island outside Papeete, but there were other sources that Melville may have known of or even consulted that Anderson does not cite, without of course excluding the possibility that Melville may have visited it himself. The use of the term in *Mardi*, with a similar meaning as in *Omoo*, suggests the cultural and linguistic significance of Melville's early Polynesian experience in his later work.

"Near the entrance to Pápeéte harbour there is a low coral islet, covered with cocoa-nut and other litoral [*sic*] trees, and named by the natives *motu uta* or the islet near the shore" (Bennett 1: 67).

"Several young and interesting females … reside upon the secluded *motu* at the mouth of Pápeéte harbour" (Bennett 1: 78).

"The ship they called *motu*, an island, probably supposing it was an island, with all its inhabitants" (Ellis 4: 439).

"*moku*, an island" (Ellis 4: 366n).

"On our way we touched at two small *motus* (incipient islands) composed of coral rock, and scarcely above the level of high water" (Tyerman & Bennet 1: 83).

"They were called *moku* (islands), a name which vessels of every description have since retained" (Jarves 90).

"In front, the little coral island of Moto-utu forms an embellished foreground, and serves to break the regularity of the line of the harbour, while by concealing its extent, it gives it an air of greater magnitude than it really possesses" (Wilkes 2: 41).

Mow-Mow

"Still, however, I refused to comply, and was retreating before him, as in his importunity he pressed upon me, when I felt a heavy hand laid upon my shoulder, and turning round, encountered the bulky form of Mow-Mow, a one-eyed chief, who had just detached himself from the crowd below, and had mounted the rear of the pi-pi upon which we stood. His cheek had been pierced by the point of a spear, and the wound imparted a still more frightful expression to his hideously tattooed face, already deformed by the loss of an eye" (*Typee* 236).

Society Islands

Muoo: v. to be full of anger or displeasure (Davies 148)

Maumau: interj. an exclamation of triumph (Davies 141)

Sandwich Islands

Mau: adj. obscured, as the sun by a cloud (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 92)

Maumaua: v. to obtain often without reward and without labor, as the chiefs formerly obtained their property (Andrews, *Dictionary* 366)

Mu: n. a person employed to procure human victims when a heiau was to be dedicated or a new house built (Andrews, *Dictionary* 405)

Tonga Islands

Mowmow: to break; to spoil; to render useless; to waste; to consume (Mariner *Dictionary* n. pag.)

Melville inserted the *w* to imitate the phonetic representation of the two-syllable word "muoo" or "maumau." *Typee* does not devote too much time or space describing this person although from Tommo's interaction with Mow-Mow we can perceive that this is someone who has lived the savagery of combat and for that matter is austere and unforgiving. The quote from Mariner below, along with the definition of the word, provides an instance of the word's use that Melville, in his description of the Polynesian, clearly suggests: this man's face has been "spoiled" by the savagery of combat.

"The man who considered it his property exclaimed *mow-mow* (spoiled!), and made a hissing noise, expressive of disappointment" (Mariner 1: 58).

Mowee

"At the Sandwich Islands, Kaahumanu, the gigantic old dowager queen—a woman of

nearly four hundred pounds weight, and who is said to be still living at Mowee—was

accustomed, in some of her terrific gusts of temper, to snatch up an ordinary sized man

who had offended her, and snap his spine across her knee" (*Typee* 186).

"The vessel was the Parki, of Lahina, a village and harbor on the coast of Mowee, one of

the Hawaiian isles, where she had been miserably cobbled together with planks of native

wood, and fragments of a wreck, there drifted ashore" (*Mardi* 68).

Society Islands

Maui: n. the name of a certain prophet, or wise man, mentioned in Tahitian traditions —

Maui was a priest, but afterwards deified, he being at one time regarded at the *marae*,

and the sun getting low while his work was unfinished, he laid hold of the *hihi*, or sun

rays, and stopped his course for some time (Davies 141, 141n)

Sandwich Islands

Maui: n. one of the Hawaiian islands (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 92)

According to Ellis' *Polynesian Researches* and Bennett's *Whaling Voyage*

Melville's variant spelling is accurate, a fact that proves his (Melville's) desire to be

historically accurate with historical terms. In this case, of Mowee, Melville is not

fictionalizing about the geographic location, and the inclusion of the term in *Mardi* suggests what many critics agree on, that the first part of *Mardi* begins as a travel narrative in the manner of the earlier novels *Typee* and *Omoo*.

"Separated from the northern shore of Hawaii by a strait, about twenty-four miles across, the island of MAU-I (Mowee) is situated in lat. 20. N. and long. 157. W" (Ellis 4: 7).

"The archipelago known as the Sandwich Islands lies chiefly between 19° and 22° N. lat., and 155 and 160 W. long. It is principally composed of the eleven islands, Hawaii, (Owhyhee, Cook) Maui, (Mowee,) Ranai, Morokai, Tahaurawe, Oahu, (Woahoo,) Tauai, (Atooi,) Nihau, Oreehoua, Morokini, and Taura" (Bennett 1: 192).

"At daybreak on the 2nd of October, the island of Maui was seen in the distance" (Bennett 1: 273).

"A man-god, named Maui, who had one large head and eight little ones upon his shoulders, once being hard at work for the priests on one of the maraes, perceived that the day was declining … he laid hold of the sun, and bound him" (Tyerman & Bennet 182).

"The first god was Maui, who fished up the earth out of the sun" (Wilkes 401).

Mowree

"Even the three junior mates who had headed the whale boats were gone; and of the four harpooners, only one was left, a wild New Zealander, or '*Mowree*,' as his country men are more commonly called in the Pacific" (*Omoo* 10).

Society Islands

Maori: adj. indigenous, not foreign (Davies 132)

Maori Islands

Maori: adj. normal, usual, ordinary; native or belonging to New Zealand, Maori

(Williams 179)

Melville's reference to the New Zealand native who plays the role of the

harpooner is significant for the development, later in *Moby-Dick*, of the character of

Queequeg, whose place of origin (the island Kokovoko) is also the New Zealand area.

The term "maori" was used in legends to distinguish "ordinary" mortals from deities.

N

Nadam

"For Nadams (Nadam presides over love and wine), there has also been urgent call; it

being the time of the grape; and the maidens growing frolicsome withal, and devotional"

(*Mardi* 353).

Society Islands

Na: prep. of, belonging to a person (Davies 149)

Na: v. to present, or to offer (Davies 149)

Tama: n. the name of a Tahitian god; a child, male or female (Davies 246)

Tama: v. to wash, cleanse, purify (Davies 246)

Tamuri: n. the name of a Tahitian god; the name of a plant (Davies 247)

The fact that the word ends in a consonant suggests the possibility that Melville left out one or more letters in this seemingly compound word. The letter *a* of the word "Na-tam-a," "of a Tahitian god," or "to present, to offer [to] a Tahitian god" is one possible alternative, just as the word "Na-tam-uri," which again is used to refer to another Tahitian god. It is possible that Melville is referring to the dance "tamure" which was known in the Tahitian dialect as "ori" (Davies 172), a close spelling of the suffix "–ure," the missing suffix of Melville's word. The dance was full of sexual innuendos and its predecessor, the "upa" dance, was banned by the missionaries. As such the term, "na-tam-uri," describes a god "of dance.

"Ori is the native word for dance, but each kind of dance had a distinct name … The hura was sometimes a pantomimic exhibition, with dancing at intervals during the performance; but the most decent and respectable was that which consisted principally of dancing … There were many others, but they were all too indelicate or obscene to be noticed" (Ellis 1: 215).

Narmo-Nana-Po-Po

"So, when Jeremiah came to the font, and gave his name as Narmo-Nana Po-Po (something equivalent to The-Darer-of-Devils-by-Night), the reverend gentleman officiating told him, that such a heathenish appellation would never do, and a substitute must be had; at least for the devil part of it" (*Omoo* 277).

Sandwich Islands

Mana: n. spirit, energy of character (Andrews, *Dictionary* 384)

Nana: v. to look at when a thing is in sight, to see, to view a thing (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 106)

Nana: v. to bark; growl or snarl (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 106)

Po: n. night, the time opposite to *ao* day, darkness, chaos, the period of a day. Note Hawaiians count time by nights rather than by days (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 119)

Charles R. Anderson claims (quite vaguely) that the name given to Melville's host is accurate enough "to anyone familiar with Polynesian names and missionary ingenuousness" (298). It is however true that anyone who knows the basic rules of Polynesian orthography would immediately recognize the spelling mistake of the two adjacent consonants *r* and *m* in Narmo. A more detailed search for a potential substitute for the letter *r* (or *m*) reveals no synonym for Melville's word, thus suggesting the possibility of further corruption of the original name (possibly by Melville). Anderson's

research does not go any further than acknowledging the Polynesian identity of the word.

Melville has transposed correctly from the original almost all the name; the first word, narmo, is the most problematic of the three, not only due to its ungrammatical orthography, but also because its meaning (if it were broken down to some grammatical parts) does not correspond with Melville's liberal translation. My research has shown that Melville misspelled the original "mana" to "narmo" most probably due to bad memory. The whole phrase-name, "mana-nana-po-po," does imply someone who "growls at spirits at night" and therefore supports the majority of Melville's transposition.

"We often experienced a degree of confusion in our ideas connected with their use of the term *po*, night or darkness, and its various compounds" (Ellis 3: 169).

"in the Po, the place of the dead, the god Oro was represented as employing this shell" (Tyerman & Bennet 2: 121).

Narvi

"'Your clubs and javelins,' said Media, 'remind me of the great battle-chant of Narvi—Yoomy!' … 'My lord Media, 'tis but a rude, clanging thing; dissonant as if the north wind blew through it" (*Mardi* 435-436).

"To the fight, men of Narvi! / Sons of battle! Hunters of men!" (*Mardi* 437).

Society Islands

Na: v. to present, or to offer (Davies 149)

Avi: v. to grind the teeth; to show the teeth as one dog to another (Davies 54)

Avii: v. to gnash with the teeth (Davies 54)

Sandwich Islands

Nawe: v. to shake; to be agitated (See *Naue*) (Andrews, *Dictionary* 418)

Naue: v. to shake, to move to and fro; to tremble, to vibrate (Andrews, *Dictionary* 411)

This is probably Melville's Polynesian transformation of the English "nerve" or "nervous" although the adjacent consonants *r* and *v* are contrary to Polynesian orthography. The Polynesian words describe bodily movement or facial expressions that suggest an aggressive stance.

Noojona

"Metropolitan gentlemen have their club; provincial gossipers their news-room; village quidnuncs their barber's shop; the Chinese their opium-houses; American Indians their council-fire; and even cannibals their *Noojona*, or Talk-Stone, where they assemble at times to discuss the affairs of the day" (*White-Jacket* 386).

Society Islands

Nunaa: n. speech (Davies 157)

Unania: n. the name of a stone god (Davies 300)

Unuunu: n. an ornament in the marae (Davies 301)

Sandwich Islands

Unu: n. small chips of stones for propping up large ones in laying stones in a building, a

prop or a wedge; same as *makia* (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 32)

Unu: n. a place of worship; same as *heiau* a temple (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 32)

Unu: v. to prop up; to help hold up (Andrews, *Dictionary* 115)

     Melville claims that this word means "talk-stone," a kind of central podium

wherefrom chiefs could voice their opinions. The term is probably constructed by

phonetic approximation since there is no sound or letter *j* in Polynesian. The Hawaiian

"unuunu" may be the phonetic distant relative of Melville's phonetic approximation

since its meaning is somewhat pertinent to Melville's "Talk-Stone." The Tahitian

"unuunu" could also be describing that "podium" although I have not been able to verify

which "ornament" Davies meant with the term.

Nora-Bamma

"Hours pass; and full before us, round and green, a Moslem turban by us floats—Nora-

Bamma, Isle of Nods … And high in air nods Nora-Bamma. Nid-nods its tufted summit

like three ostrich plumes; its beetling crags, bent poppies, shadows, willowy shores, all

nod; its streams are murmuring down the hills; its wavelets hush the shore. Who dwells

in Nora-Bamma? Dreamers, hypochondriacs, somnambulists; who, from the cark and

care of outer Mardi fleeing, in the poppy's jaded odors, seek oblivion for the past, and

ecstasies to come" (*Mardi* 265).

Society Islands

Noanoa: adj. fragrant, of a pleasant smell (Davies 155)

Noa: adv. a word of frequent use, and implying some negative idea (Davies 155)

Faanua: n. a sluggard (Davies 71)

Faanuanua: v. to be indolent, sparing one's self (Davies 71)

Sandwich Islands

Noa: n. the lower degraded class of people (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 108)

adj. intermission from *kapu*, applied to any thing that has been kapu but the kapu has

been taken off (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 108)

v. to be released from restraint (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 108)

Noanoa: a common man; a countryman; a laborer (see *Noa*) (Andrews, *Dictionary* 425)

Bama: n. balm, an odoriferous plant (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 132)

Pama: adj. Eng. of, or belonging to a palm tree. See *palama* (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 115)

Maori Islands

Noa: adj. free from *tapu* or any other restriction

adv. denoting absence of limitations or conditions, to be translated variously according

to the context (Williams 222)

Tonga Islands

Noa: adj. dumb, random, trivial, worthless, undersigned, disengaged (Rabone 177)

The word, as it stands in the text, does not present any opportunity for interpretation through its lexicological characteristics. The duplication of the vowel *a* as replacement for Melville's inserted *r* (i.e. "Noaa") does not yield any Polynesian term with a meaning close to what Melville describes in *Mardi*. Then, the most probable change that has taken place here is the arbitrary interjection (by Melville) of the consonant *r*, a habit that he indulged into several times before.

The second word of Melville's construct, "Bamma," has most probably been adopted by the Polynesians from the English language and then transformed according to Polynesian phonetic rules. The letter *l* of the word "palm" cannot exist and cannot be pronounced in combination with the consonant *m*, which in this case prevails over the *l* with the latter being replaced by the vowel *a*. The resulting word, "bama" (the double *m* is reduced to a single *m*), is still somewhat problematic mainly because the consonant *b* is not native to most Polynesian dialects (with the exception of the Tongan), thus making necessary its replacement with the letter *p*.

The meaning of Melville's construct borrows some elements from the meaning of the restored original, "noa-pama." The Polynesian original, however, is not used in its entirety by all dialects. Only by the Hawaiian contains both words, and even here the second part of the word remains somewhat problematic when combined with the first to

produce a phrase that, liberally read, means "a degraded palm." It is most probable that

Melville used the name of the plant to create a new word that could have been

influenced by the liberal translation of the original.

"but the present state of things is called *Ai Noa*, eating generally, or having food in

common" (Ellis 4: 386).

Nuee (-Nuee)

"The repast over, my attendant arranged the mats for repose, and, bidding me lie down,

covered me with a large robe of tappa, at the same time looking approvingly upon me,

and exclaiming, 'Ki-Ki, nuee nuee, ah! moee moee mortarkee' (eat plenty, ah! sleep very

good)" (*Typee* 88).

"'Ah! me *sabbee*,—me know— you *pirate*(pirate)—see you long time, but no me

come—I *sabbee* you—you *ita maitai nuee* (superlatively bad)'" (*Omoo* 99).

"PEKEE-NUEE-NUEE, *Fegee*" (*Moby-Dick* xvi).

"PEHEE-NUEE-NUEE, *Erromangoan*" (*Moby-Dick* xvi).

Society Islands

Nui: adj. great, large (Davies 156)

Nui: adj. fat, great, much, very, a large number (Hale 8)

Nuinui: very fat, very great, very much, etc. (Hale 8)

Sandwich Islands

Nui: adj. large, great, many, much (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 109)

n. multitude, greatness of a thing, the size of a thing (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 109)

Melville is using the term with the various meanings or variations of one meaning that he gives it. The *Typee* term means "plenty," whereas the *Omoo* one "superlatively." The inclusion of the term in *Moby-Dick* is intended to suggest either something big, or something with plenty of flesh. This variation depends on the meaning of the word "pekee" or "pehee" which does not mean "fish" (that would be the logical conclusion at least) but "a type of fish" (in the Tahitian dialect). The Hawaiians do not use the term "pehee" or "pekee" in their language to mean either, but the word "fish" is designated by the seemingly irrelevant term "ia." Melville defines the term in *Typee* (206) as meaning "fish" but his definition is somewhat arbitrary as it receives partial corroboration only from the Tahitian dialect (partial because of difference in orthography between his text and Davies's dictionary entry). The Maori use the term "peke" to refer to a "univalve mollusc [sic]" (Williams 276), a type of shell-fish and hardly anything whale-like as Melville interprets it.

"'*ke pahi nui manawa!*' '… is the great man-of-war canoe!'" (Stewart 239).

"'*Nui roa maitai!*' … It is greatly good!" (Ellis 4: 201).

"*nui*, great" (Ellis 4: 445).

Nukuheva

"Among the adverse tribes dwelling about the shores of the other bays, and by all voyagers, it is generally known by the name bestowed upon the island itself—Nukuheva" (*Typee* 11).

"At the island of Nukuheva he left his vessel, which afterward sailed without him" (*Omoo* 3).

Sandwich Islands

Nuku: n. a bill, a snout, a tunnel, the nose of a pitcher (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 109)

Nuku: n. the mouth (Andrews, *Dictionary* 430)

Nuka: adj. large, full, grown, plump (Andrews, *Dictionary* 430)

Hewa: sin, wrong, error, vice (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 41)

Hiwa: adj. black, applied only to animals or whatever was used in sacrifice (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 42)

Hiwahiwa: adj. acceptable, desired by any one, meek, docile (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 42)

Hiwahiwa: v. to be pleased, satisfied as a god with an offering (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 42)

Awa: n. a harbor, a landing place, an entrance between two reefs (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 14)

Charles R. Anderson provides a significant account of the island of Nukuhiva or Nukahiva (71ff) with an equally meticulous correlation to Melville's text. The spelling

of the word is somewhat problematic as it yields different semantic results according to which word is used as source. Melville's spelling does not produce a term with a significant meaning, but following Stewart's account and spelling ("Nukuhiwa") which, according to Anderson (71), Melville used systematically, the word means "black bill, snout, or mouth." The change of the *i* and *w* to *e* and *v* respectively is probably a result of the unchecked spelling practices at the time of publication. The modern definition of the term "Nukuawa" is "entrance to a harbour" (Pukui, Elbert 272), and it is possible that despite being heard and spelled differently, this was the meaning of the name at the time of publication.

"Captain Waldengrave … had previously visited Noukahiva or Martin Island, which he describes as being of volcanic origin, and possessing a fertile soil" (Russell 191). "Nukahiwa … consists chiefly of naked, craggy, and, in general, inaccessible mountains, among which are interspersed, here and there, small, but well-watered valleys" (Hale 4). "the islands of Nukahiwa … was bordered by steep and abrupt masses of rock, alternately terminating in naked peaks, and in broken craggy summits … had very much the appearance of having been subjected to the action of fire (Langsdorff 88-89).

O

Oahu

"The republican missionaries of Oahu cause to be gazetted in the Court Journal, published at Honolulu, the most trivial movements of 'his gracious majesty' King Kammehammaha III., and 'their highnesses the princes of the royal blood'" (*Typee* 188).

"Still living in Oahu, are many old chiefs, who were present at the famous obsequies of their old generalissimo, Tammahammaha, when there is no telling how many pounds of ivory were cast upon his grave" (*Mardi* 206).

"Some eighteen or twenty years ago Commodore J— then commanding an American sloop-of-war of the first class, happened to be dining with a party of whaling captains, on board a Nantucket ship in the harbor of Oahu, Sandwich Islands" (*Moby-Dick* 207).

Sandwich Islands

Oahu: name of the most populous of the Hawaiian Islands and the seat of Honolulu. The name has no meaning (Pukui, Elbert 275)

O: n. an enclosure, or a garden, where things are cultivated (Davies 157)

Ahu: v. to throw up or huddle together a heap of things (Davies 12)

The name of the island means "an enclosure used to huddle together a heap of things" but it is uncertain whether Melville knew its definition.

"O-a-hu, the most romantic and fertile of the Sandwich Islands, resembling, in the varied features of its natural scenery, several of the Society Islands, lies nearly west-north-west of Morokai, from which it is between twenty and thirty miles distant" (Ellis 4: 11).

Odo

"Upon at last drawing nigh to Odo, its appearance somewhat disappointed me. A small island, of moderate elevation … Odo was no land of pleasure unalloyed … Odo, in whose inmost haunts, dark groves were brooding, passing which you heard most dismal cries, and voices cursing Media … Odo was but a little isle, and must the living make way for the dead, and Life's small colony be dislodged by Death's grim hosts … no more shall dismal cries be heard from Odo's groves" (*Mardi* 168).

Society Islands

Oto: n. weeping, crying; the noise of the sea on the reef; the singing of birds, insects, etc. (Davies 175)

Oto: n. grief, sorrow; v. to cry, weep, lament, grieve (Davies 175)

Sandwich Islands

Olo: n. a lamentation, a wailing (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 26)

Melville's construction although probably a pun on the English word "odd," echoes the meaning of the Polynesian words in some degree and in some instances in

Melville's text. This is an island of "grief" and "dismal cries, and voices cursing Media" probably due to the harsh living conditions imposed by the island's king on his people. The consonant *l* replaces *d* in the Hawaiian dialect (Andrews, *Dictionary* xii).

Ofo

"'Tall peak of Ofo!' cried Babbalanja, 'how comes it that thy shadow so broods over Mardi; flinging new shades upon spots already shaded by the hill-sides; shade upon shade!'" (*Mardi* 323).

Society Islands

O: adv. of place, either here, or there (Davies 157)

O: prep. of, belonging to (Davies 157)

Po: n. night (Davies 199)

Ohu: n. a cloud settled on the top of the mountains (Davies 161)

Ofai: n. a general name for a stone as used at present in the Tahitian dialect (Davies 159)

Sandwich Islands

O: n. a place, but indefinitily [*sic*] (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 21)

Po: v. to darken, to become night (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 120)

This is probably a compound word consisting of the two one-syllable words referenced above. It is uncertain whether Melville visited or saw or read about this place.

The change of the *f* to a *p* is based solely on Melville's description of the mountain peak ("fo" has no meaning but "po" comes closer as a possible source word), a place that seems to overshadow everything. The term "ohu" is included here because the letters *f* and *h* are often interchangeable in the Tahitian dialect (Davies 60), whereas the change of the *o* to *u* is based on the alternative pronunciation of the *o* as in the word "hope."

Oh-Oh

"One, famous as a venerable antiquarian: a collector of objects of Mardian vertu; a cognoscenti, and dilettante in things old and marvelous; and for that reason, very choice of himself. He went by the exclamatory cognomen 'Oh-Oh'; a name bestowed upon him, by reason of the delighted interjections, with which he welcomed all accessions to his museum" (*Mardi* 378).

Society Islands

Oh: a name (Hale 8)

Ohi: to gather fragments; to glean, pick up firewood, or any small things (Davies 160)

Sandwich Islands

Ohi: v. to gather up, to collect together and carry away (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 23)

Ohi: n. a collecting with difficulty (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 23)

Ohi: n. a collecting, as of money or property, implying difficulty (Andrews, *Dictionary* 80)

The addition of the vowel at the end of the word suggests that Melville's creation may have had a Hawaiian origin. Of course, the name is a pun on the English exclamatory remark "oh" which symbolizes empty admiration for things that are devoid of meaning or value without the human mind.

Ohiro-Moldona-Fivona

"The old begum went by the euphonious appellation of Ohiro-Moldona-Fivona; a name, from its length, deemed highly genteel; though scandal averred, that is was nothing more than her real name transposed; the appellation by which she had been formerly known, signifying a 'Getter-up-of-Fine-Tappa.' But as this would have let out an ancient secret, it was thought wise to disguise it" (*Mardi* 405).

Society Islands

Hiro: the god of thieves; Hiro was a man who lived ages ago, according to tradition, he was a famous voyager and robber. A rock in *Huahine* is called *Hiro's paddle*, and on the top of another rock is a *marae*. He was deified after his death, and was reckoned the god and the patron of thieves (Davies 105).

Hiro: v. to twist, to spin a thread, or line; to exaggerate in speech (Davies 105)

Motoro: v. to make use of some means to awake and entice a person out of the house, in the night, for base purposes (Davies 147)

Motoi: v. to give a present, or bribe, to gain an end (Davies 147)

Na: v. to be quiet or still (Davies 150)

Hiohio: v. to observe, notice the affairs of people (Davies 104)

Hiu: adj. glutted, satiated; also tired (Davies 106)

Fiu: adj. tired, glutted with food; wearied (Davies 87)

Ona: v. to recur, as a thought, or sickness (Davies 165)

Oona: adj. consuming, increasing, as a disorder (Davies 167)

Sandwich Islands

Hilo: v. to make cordage, to twist on the thigh, to twist with the thumb and fingers (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 42)

Molowa: adj. indisposed to make an effort, inactive, lazy, unwilling to do, tiresome to one's patience (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 103)

Kona: v. to despise, to dislike, to disregard, to contemn (Andrews, *Dictionary* 291)

Hiona: n. personal appearance; face, countenance —*hio* and *ana* (Andrews, *Dictionary* 152)

Hio: v. to lean over; to slant; to incline from a perpendicular (Andrews, *Dictionary* 152)

Ona: n. a state of intoxication, as produced by alcohol, tobacco, and *awa*; dizziness of the head (Andrews, *Dictionary* 94)

     The *O* in this word could be redundant as in the word Otaheite, which later was corrected to Tahiti. The remainder is consistent with the suggestive nature of the name implied by such phrases as "ancient secret" and "scandal." The Hawaiian equivalent

does not imply a metaphorical use in its definition but such a possibility could have been recognized by Melville. The name most probably symbolizes the hypocrisy of a tyrannical aristocracy that lives in arrogant self-satisfaction.

The combination of the consonants *l* and *d*, in the word "Moldona," makes it hard to deduce the word's Polynesian basis. Furthermore, the ungrammaticality of the combined consonants imposes the interjection of a vowel in order to separate them, or the omission of one. In the tradition of the term "Fivona" (the last part of the name), I have included here all those words that could possibly indicate something that needs to remain hidden and that if it were discovered would cause a scandal. The resulting "motoro-na," which means "to entice quietly for base purposes," or "motoi-na," "to bribe quietly" suggest the necessity for secrecy. Despite their significant differences in approaching similar terms, both the Tahitian and Hawaiian dialects offer a word whose meaning amplifies the polysemous nature of Melville's name.

The definition of the name, "Fivona," is a compound of three different words, all of which are compound themselves, each with a distinct meaning. Melville's definition of the transposed order of words confuses even more the process of finding a correct definition. The combination of the three words does not produce the meaning that Melville professes, but most probably the meaning that Melville hints at with the last phrase (see quotation above). If the letter *v* has been changed from the original *u*, then most probably the word is either Tahitian or not Polynesian at all. I have included those meanings of those compound parts that could possibly hint at the "scandal averred."

"He was called Hiro, and among his votaries were many of the cleverest men, not from the lower ranks only, but even some of the principal chiefs. The arts and contrivances which these resorted to, in order to obtain the property of their neighbors and strangers, proved that this strange representative of Satan was served with more than ordinary devotion" (Tyerman & Bennet 1: 67).

"informs us that *Hiro*, the patron divinity of thieves, was devoutly worshipped here and throughout these islands" (Tyerman & Bennet 1: 186).

"Hiro, the god of thieves, being served with scarcely less devotion than Oro, the god of war" (Tyerman & Bennet 2: 161).

"It is called by the natives *tona*, (a name which they also apply to syphilis)" (Bennett 1: 154-155).

"A relic of that loathsome disease which is the scourge of licentiousness" (Tyerman & Bennet 1: 251).

Ohonoo

"Ohonoo was its destination, in other words the Land of Rogues. So what but a nest of villains and pirates could one fancy it to be … The men of Ohonoo were ah honest as any in Mardi. They had a suspicious appellative for their island, true; but not thus seemed it to them. For, upon nothing did they so much plume themselves as upon this very name. Why? Its origin went back to old times; and being venerable they gloried therein; though they disclaimed its present applicability to any of their race; showing that

words are but algebraic signs, conveying no meaning except what you please. And to be called one thing, is oftentimes to be another" (*Mardi* 269).

Sandwich Islands

Puuhonua: n. a place of refuge, place of safety in time of war, a refuge (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 125)

Honua: n. flat land, land of an even surface, in opposition to mountains; the earth generally including the sea; a foundation, resting place (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 53)

O: n. a place, but indefinitily [*sic*] (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 21)

Puu: v. to heap or pile as stones, to collect, to cast lots, to divide a country by lot (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 124)

Noa: v. to be released from restraint (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 108)

Noa: v. to be out from under restraint or law (Andrews, *Dictionary* 424)

Tonga Islands

Fonua: n. a land or country; used figuratively of a person or thing trusted in or rested upon (Rabone 114)

The first Hawaiian term, "puuhonua," is referenced based on the extracted middle of the word, "honua," aside from the prefix and suffix. The affix of the word "puu-honu-a, puu," which means "to divide a country by lot," suggests that Melville's description of the island in *Mardi* is an interpretation of pre-Revolutionary United States.

At the same time, the prefix "noa" suggests a place of freedom, or lawlessness, or revolution, all of which are characteristics of Melville's imaginary island. This is the island where the oppressive rule of the taboo holds no sway, a place that is naturally deemed piratical by those supporters of the taboo.

"and the rest fled to the mountains or the adjoining puhonua (place of refuge)" (Ellis 4: 147).

"When routed in the field, some fled to the *pahu tabu*, sacred enclosure, called also *puhonua*, or place of refuge" (Ellis 4: 160).

Omoo

"Encircling his temples was a bandeau of the twisted leaves of the Omoo tree, pressed closely over the brows to shield his feeble vision from the glare of the sun" (*Typee* 79).

"The title of the work—Omoo—is borrowed from the dialect of the Marquesas Islands, where, among other uses, the word signifies a rover, or rather, a person wandering from one island to another, like some natives, known among their countrymen as 'Taboo kannakers'" (*Omoo* xiv).

"'Typee' and 'Omoo' give scarcely a full idea of them except, perhaps, that part which tells of the long captivity in the valley of Typee" (*Piazza Tales* 418).

Maori Islands

Oma: v. to run, to move quickly (Savage 201)

Charles R. Anderson has very little to say about its origin: "Melville had possibly gone by the name of 'Omoo' during his actual residence on the island, long before the book had been conceived" (Anderson 309). Most probably this was a localized term that did not go outside the Marquesas, without excluding the possibility that the name was used to describe Melville himself and no other. Melville's use of the Polynesian "Taboo kanakers," that is men who are taboo, who cannot be touched or harmed, has no semantic relation with the word *Omoo* or any possible alternative, such as "moo, mu, oomoo, oomu, umu, omu,or umo."

Oro

"Majestic-looking chiefs, whose fathers had hurled the battle-club, and the old men who had seen sacrifices smoking upon the altars of Oro, were there" (*Omoo* 170).

"They said that Oro, the supreme, had made a cemetery of the sea" (*Mardi* 192).

"Oro, to all, is Oro the unknown" (*Mardi* 337).

"But in all things Oro is immutable" (*Mardi* 426). "

"Is not Oro omnipresent—absolutely every where?" (*Mardi* 427).

Society Islands

Oro: n. the god of war, the great national god of Tahiti, introduced there from Raiatea (Davies 172)

Melville has taken the myth of Oro intact from Tahitian mythology and uses the name to refer to "god" in all his qualities.

"Not only was it declared that Oro, the god of war, was the father of the king, but his houses were called the clouds of heaven, his canoe was denominated the rainbow, his voice was thunder, the torches in his palace were styled lightning, and his movement from one district to another, though on the shoulders of a porter, was expressed by the metaphor of flying through the air" (Russell 58).

"My forefathers worshipped *Oro*, the god of war, and so have I; nor shall any thing that you can say persuade me to forsake this way" (Tyerman & Bennet 1: 55).

"Among the communicants, this day, was a man who had been a priest and a prophet of Oro, the god of war—and not the Mars only, but the Moloch of Polynesia—so cruel and abominable were the rites with which that representative of Satan was worshipped" (Tyerman & Bennet 1: 106).

"Oro, the son of Taaroa, desired a wife from the daughters of Taata, the first man" (Ellis 1: 231).

Oroolia

"She declared herself more than mortal, a maiden from Oroolia, the island of Delights, somewhere in the paradisiacal archipelago of the Polynesians … And hardly had the waters of Oroolia washed white her olive skin, and tinged her hair with gold, when one day strolling in the woodlands, she was snared in the tendrils of a vine" (*Mardi* 137).

Sandwich Islands

O: n. a place, but indefinitily [*sic*] (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 21)

Loo: v. to overtake; found only in the passive *loohia* (Andrews, *Dictionary* 346)

adj. cool, refreshing, comfortable, easy, pleasant to the sight, benign, contended

(Andrews, *Vocabulary* 26)

Lia: n. a strong desire; a desire to obtain or possess something, like *kuko* and *iini*;

restlessness from something on the mind (Andrews, *Dictionary* 339)

Lea: adj. pleasing, delightful, agreeable (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 84)

Kuko: v. to desire strongly, to hope, to expect, to lust after, to covet (Andrews,

Vocabulary 77)

Iini: n. a strong desire (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 17)

The Tahitian *r* and the Hawaiian *l* suggest Melville's desire to mix elements from both dialects in the construction of his terms. The meaning of Melville's compound is "a place that overtakes you with a strong desire," "a place that overtakes you with feelings of contention, pleasure, delight," and for that reason is "desirable." Yillah is a natural resident of that place (even if taken from her place of birth), which (oroolia) also gifts her with her albino traits, and therefore becomes a highly sought and prized creature for Aleema.

Ozonna

"'Camel-like, laden with woe,' said Ozonna, 'after many wild rovings in quest of a maiden long lost—beautiful Ady!" (*Mardi* 648).

Society Islands

Oto: v. to cry, weep, lament, grieve; see *tai* (Davies 175)

Na: pron. contraction of *ana*, third person singular (Davies 149)

Since Ozonna and Taji share a common past and a common fate, I have tried to look for similarities in their names. In the Tahitian dialect, the *z* is always pronounced as *t* (Davies 1); Melville's compound name is based on the Tahitian compound "oto-na" which means "he who weeps, he who laments, he who cries."

P

Pani

"He [Pani] now made known, that he officiated as guide in this quarter of the country; and that as he had renounced all other pursuits to devote himself to showing strangers the island; and more particularly the best way to ascend lofty Ofo; he was necessitated to seek remuneration for his toil … 'What I seek is but little:—twenty rolls of fine tappa; two score mats of best upland grass … you are a large company but my requisitions are

small' … 'You are extortionate, good Pani,' said Media. 'And what wants an aged mortal like you with all these things?' 'I thought superfluities were worthless; nay, sinful,' said Babbalanja … 'I am but a lowly laborer,' said the old man, meekly crossing his arms, 'but does not the lowliest laborer ask and receive his reward? and shall I miss mine?—But I beg charity of none. What I ask, I demand; and in the dread name of great Alma, who appointed me a guide" (*Mardi* 327).

Society Islands

Pana: v. to search or feel for a thing by means of some instrument (Davies 182)

Sandwich Islands

Panai: v. to give a substitute (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 116)

Pani: v. to supply a deficiency (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 116)

Possibly a pun on the classical "pan" (Greek for "everything"), the term may have a Polynesian basis in the above entry. According to the Hawaiian term then, Pani's definition suggests the desire for material things (thus the Greek "pan"), a desire that needs to be constantly fueled with new substitutes.

The Tahitian word through its definition, describes someone who is either blind or who temporarily cannot see at the place he wants to search. The meaning of the Tahitian word, when applied to Melville's story and character, exposes Pani's ignorance

and puns on the Latin definition of his name, he is someone who knows nothing because he is blind both mentally and physically.

Papeete

"The frigate, immediately upon coming to an anchor, got springs on her cables, and with her guns cast loose and her men at their quarters, lay in the circular basin of Papeete, with her broadside bearing upon the devoted town" (*Typee* 18).

"With all our light sails wooingly spread, we held on our way, until, with the doctor's glass, Papeetee, the village metropolis of Tahiti came into view. Several ships were descried lying in the harbor, and among them, one which loomed up black and large; her two rows of teeth proclaiming a frigate" (*Omoo* 69).

Society Islands

Pape: n. water; see *vai* (Davies 187)

Papepape: n. cotton; see *vavai* (Davies 187)

Ete: n. the name of a small basket; also a small bag or pocket (Davies 59)

Vai: n. water (Davies 309)

Vavai: n. the native cotton (Davies 312)

Papeete: port of Tahiti (*NGD*)

Charles R. Anderson provides a more complete historical context for Melville's second visit to the bay: "It was with more equanimity that he now looked out on her

black hull and bristling broadsides from his own safe berth on board a similarly warlike

American frigate and watched the operations of the French on shore. They were

establishing a colony of settlers on their new possession—four hundred convicts planted

in the Happy Valley! Melville's heart must have sunk within him" (Anderson 351). The

meaning of the bay is "water basket" or "cotton basket" possibly inspired by the

"circular" shape of the bay. It is possible that Melville knew of the meaning of the name

but did not bother to mention it or use it in any particular way.

"We all sailed to Papeete in the Tuscan, where our property was landed, and lodged on

the premises of Mr. Crook, at that station" (Tyerman & Bennett 1: 49).

Parki

"Her appellative had been bestowed in honor of a high chief, the tallest and goodliest

looking gentleman in all the Sandwich Islands" (*Mardi* 68).

"The strong breeze came from astern now filling the ill-set sails, they bellied, and rocked

in the air, like balloons, while, from the novel strain upon it, every spar quivered and

sprung. And thus, like a frightened gull fleeting from sea-hawks, the little Parki swooped

along, and bravely breasted the brine" (*Mardi* 71).

"Try the pumps. We dropped the sinker, and found the Parki bleeding at every pore. Up

from her well, the water, spring-like, came bubbling, pure and limpid as the water of

Saratoga. Her time had come" (*Mardi* 119).

"To a seaman, a ship is no piece of mechanism merely; but a creature of thoughts and fancies, instinct with life. Standing at her vibrating helm, you feel her beating pulse. I have loved ships, as I have loved men. To abandon the poor Parki was like leaving to its fate something that could feel. It was meet that she should die decently and bravely" (*Mardi* 120).

Sandwich Islands

Paki: v. to ooze through, as water; to leak, as a barrel

v. to move along, to slip or slide (Andrews, *Dictionary* 447)

Paki: n. the dividing of water by a ship, ploughing the main (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 114)

Paakai: n. sea water (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 110)

Paa: adj. tight, fast, secured, immovable (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 110)

Kia: n. a pillar or inner post which supports the ridge of a house, hence a mast of a ship (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 68)

There are two versions of this Hawaiian word. The first one, "Paki," as a single, undivided word, must have inspired Melville in his development of the story of the ship as one that constantly leaked water as well as Melville's critique of western civilization. The second word, "paa-kia," suggests something that is strong and steadfast despite all adversities, "a pillar or mast that is immovable, tight fast." Melville, who may have had access to either or both of the word's parts, could have used either part to emphasize the

ironic implications of his critique of a civilization whose stubborn orthodoxy could lead it to self-destruction.

It is also possible that the name of the ship, "Paa-kia," is also descriptive of the character after whom it was named, a person who was a "steady supporter" of the government.

Partoowye

"Upon the shore of the bay stands the village of Partoowye, a missionary station. In its vicinity is an extensive sugar plantation—the best in the South Seas, perhaps—worked by a person from Sydney" (*Omoo* 246).

Society Islands

Pape: n. water (Davies 187)

Toa: n. a rock, a stone; coral rock (Davies 275)

Toaaau: n. the rocky coral reef (Davies 275)

Toaati: n. a round mass of coral (Davies 275)

This is probably the harbor of Papetoai although Melville's spelling of this apparently compound word is misleading as the interjected consonants *r* and *w* attest — without which the word "patooye" would be much closer phonetically to the original word. The meaning of the original Polynesian word is "coral reef" possibly due to the coral formation surrounding the area. Charles R. Anderson (299-301) confirms with a

variety of sources that Melville's awkward spelling refers to the village of Papetoai all of which corroborate Melville's description of the bay, village and missionary establishment.

"In one of the visits which Mr. Nott made to the residence of Taaroarii, for the purpose of preaching to his people, he was followed by Patii, the priest of the temple in Papetoai, the district in which the Missionaries resided" (Ellis 2: 109).

Peepi

"Presently, Peepi, the ruler of Valapee drew near: a boy, hardly ten years old, striding the neck of a burly mute, bearing a long spear erect before him, to which was attached a canopy of fice broad banana leaves, new plucked" (*Mardi* 201).

"But there was something so surprisingly precocious in this young Peepi, that at first one hardly knew what to conclude" (*Mardi* 202).

"Taking all these things into consideration, then, no wonder that this wholly irresponsible young prince should be a lad of considerable assurance, and the easiest manners imaginable" (*Mardi* 204).

Society Islands

Pipi: n. a disciple, a learner, or pupil (Davies 197)

Pee: v. to follow after a person (Davies 193)

Pi: n. young, or unripe; immature

v. ignorant, unskillful (Davies 196)

Maori Islands

Pipi: adj. half-grown, not matured (Williams 278)

Most probably this is a compound word, its two Tahitian parts, "pee-pi," summarizing the characteristics of an "ignorant, unskillful disciple, learner," or "a young follower" whom Melville describes as a "wholly irresponsible young prince" (*Mardi* 204). The Maori alternative rounds up accurately the possible influence these two original words could have had in the creation of Melville's character.

Piko

"And the lord seigniors, Hello and Piko, finding their interests the same, came together like bride and bridegroom; lived in the same palace; dined off the same cloth; cut from the same bread-fruit; drank from the same calabash; wore each other's crowns; and often locking arms with a charming frankness, paced up and down their dominions, discussing the prospect of the next harvest of heads" (*Mardi* 440-441).

"We found our hosts Hello and Piko seated together on a dais or throne, and now and then drinking some claret-red wine from an ivory bowl, too large to have been wrought from an elephant's tusk. They were in glorious good spirits, shaking ivory coins in a skull" (*Mardi* 443).

"And thus they were used to play merrily all day long; beheading the gourds of

claret by one slicing blow with their sickle-shaped scepters. Wide round them lay empty

calabashes, all feathered, red dyed, and betasseled, trickling red wine from their necks,

like the decapitated pullets in the old baronial barn yard at Kenilworth, the night before

Queen Bess dined with my lord Leicester" (*Mardi* 444).

"Pierre is a peak in the heart of Time, as the isle-peak, Piko, stands unassaultable in the

midst of waves" (*Pierre* 304).

Sandwich Islands

Piko: n. the end; the extremity of a thing in cases as follows: *piko o ke kuahiwi*, the top

or summit of a mountain; *piko o ke poo*, the crown of the head (Andrews, *Dictionary*

471)

Piko: n. the navel, the end of a rope, the crown of the head (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 119)

Too many references to the concept "head" in *Mardi* are associated with the

name which is used in Hawaiian mythology to refer to the extreme part of a thing

whether that is the navel of the world or the equator: "When they arrived at the Piko-o-

Wakea (the equator) … here is the navel of the earth (*ka piko o ka honua*)" (Andersen

41, 278). Melville uses this particular semantic quality of the word to develop a

character that embodies his discourse on the physicality and allusiveness of the head.

Pimminee

"A long sail over, the island of Pimminee came in sight; one dead flat, wreathed in a thin, insipid vapor" (*Mardi* 401).

"In Pimminee were no hilarious running and shouting: none of the royal good cheer of old Borabolla; none of the mysteries of Maramma; none of the sentiment and romance of Donjalolo; no rehearsing of old legends: no singing of old songs; no life; no jolly commotion: in short, no men and women; nothing but their integuments; stiff trains and farthingales" (*Mardi* 413).

Sandwich Islands

Pi: adj. parsimonious (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 118)

Nini: v. to cheat (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 108)

Melville may have been influenced by the original compound, "pi-nini," which means "to be parsimonious" and "to cheat." He may have used the meaning of the word to develop his story of the hypocritical world of the aristocracy.

Pi-pi

"A narrow space, however, was reserved in front of the dwelling, upon the summit of this pile of stones, (called by the natives a 'pi-pi') which being enclosed by a little picket of canes, gave it somewhat the appearance of a verandah" (*Typee* 81).

Society Islands

Pae: n. a block, stone, or any thing put under to fix and support the joists under a floor, sill, threshold, &c. (Davies 179)

Sandwich Islands

Pipipi: adj. thickly, near together (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 119)

Pipi: v. to be multitudinous or many; to stand thickly together; to be a multitude (Andrews, *Dictionary* 475)

Pae: n. a cluster, a few (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 111)

Paepae: n. any substance upon which another lies to keep it from the ground, a stool, threshold, supporter, a prop (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 111)

Paepae: v. to hold, support, sustain (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 111)

Maori Islands

Pipi: n. heap, pile (Williams 282)

Pae: place where things are heaped up (Williams 245)

The term means basically two things depending on how it is pronounced: the word "pipi," which means "a heap, a multitude" is related to how Melville uses it in his text because he indirectly translates it as "this pile of stones." The word "pae-pae," which is pronounced like the word "pie" and means "a stone," "a prop," or "a place where things are heaped up," also contains semantic elements that Melville was

repeating with the repetition of the phrase "pile of stones." In essence then, the Polynesians used the word to refer to "a pile" or to "a stone" but of which are accurate depending on the context of use. In Melville's text, the difficulty is that since we do not know the correct pronunciation, and since Melville's implicit translation contains elements from both definitions, we do not know which particular definition he had in mind.

I include here Charles R. Anderson's translation of the term as "stone platforms or *pae-pae*" (156) which does not fully explain Melville's original. There is undoubtedly a similarity in meaning between the two terms but I will leave it up to the reader to decide whether Melville meant *pi* or *pae*.

Pirohitee

"From the great central peaks of the larger peninsula —Orohena, Aorai, and Pirohitee— the land radiates on all sides to the sea in sloping green ridges" (*Omoo* 65).

"not greener the nine thousand feet of Pirohitee's tall peak, which, rising from out the warm bosom of Tahiti, carries all summer with it into the clouds" (*Mardi* 492)

"Hear I the roaring streams from Pirohitee's peak of spears, when they leap down the crags and drown the villages?" (*Moby-Dick* 176).

Society Islands

Pitohiti: n. a protruded navel (Davies 199)

Melville's spelling is almost accurate here. The *r* that has taken the place of the original *t* is characteristic of Melville's somewhat "safe" tactic of using *r*'s wherever he could not remember the original spelling. This is one of the three mountain peaks that delineate the Tahitian sky.

"From the summit of Aorai they had a magnificent view; to the south, it was speedily bounded by the peaks of Orohena and Pitohiti" (Wilkes 2: 52).

Poee (-Poee)

"One was brimming with the golden-hued 'poee,' or pudding, made from the red plantain of the mountains" (*Omoo* 258).

"Immediately the attentive chief addressed a few words to one of the crowd, who disappeared, and returned in a few moments with a calabash of 'poee-poee,' and two or three young cocoanuts stripped of their husks, and with their shells partly broken" (*Typee* 72).

"So, that in Valapee the very beggars are born with a snug investment in their mouths; too soon, however, to be appropriated by their lords; leaving them toothless for the rest of their days, and forcing them to diet on poee-pudding and banana blanc-mange" (*Mardi* 206).

Society Islands

Poe: n. a species of food made by mixing fruits or baked roots, as *pia*, *taro*, etc. (Davies 200)

Popoi: n. a preparation of the breadfruit like pudding: food: (as a verb) to eat (Hale 9)

Sandwich Islands

Poi: n. the paste or pudding made of *kalo*, potatoes, or breadfruit. It is made by baking the above articles and afterward peeling and pounding them with more or less water and when fermented it is eaten cold with the fingers (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 120)

With the exception of orthography, Melville is accurately portraying the odd mixture. His reference is primarily to the Tahitian mixture since the Hawaiian is prepared differently.

"The principal food is bread-fruit, which they eat in the form of *poë*" (Bennett 1: 316).

"a large wooden bowl of poë, a sort of thin pastemade of baked taro, beat up and diluted with water" (Ellis 4: 56-57).

Puarkee

"But nothing gained so large a share of admiration as a horse, which had been brought from Valparaiso by the Achille, one of the vessels of the squadron … This performance was sure to be hailed with loud plaudits, and the 'puarkee nuee' (big hog) was unanimously pronounced by the island to be the most extraordinary specimen of zoology that had ever come under their observation" (*Typee* 17).

Society Islands

Puaa (puaka): n. the general name for the swine species; and perhaps the name will apply to all the larger animals that have hoofs, whether cloven or not, and that the term *uri*, may be applied to all other quadrupeds that have claws, except the mouse, rat, etc. (Davies 205)

Sandwich Islands

Puaa: n. a hog, swine, the flesh of a hog (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 123)

The term applied to the horse by the Polynesians (that Melville here repeats) verifies the pre-existence of a linguistic and cultural equivalent among the Polynesians for such a unique sight. The myth that Ellis includes in his *Researches* suggests a possible previous encounter with a horse, an event that with the passing of time and its corruption by the oral nature of Polynesian story-telling became a myth.

"We were told that several attempts had been made to drive them off the islands, and that once they were nearly overpowered by Tamapuaa, child of a hog, from *tama* a child, and *puaa* a hog. He was the *Centaur* of Hawaii, a gigantic animal, half hog and half man" (Ellis 4: 250).

Puerka

"At one moment reclining sideways upon the mat, and leaning calmly upon his bended arm, he related circumstantially the aggressions of the French—their hostile visits to the surrounding bays, enumerating each one in succession —Happar, Puerka, Nukuheva, Tior,—and then starting to his feet and precipitating himself forward with clenched hands and a countenance distorted with passion, he poured out a tide of invectives" (*Typee* 137).

"I inquired of him from whence he had last come? He replied from Pueearka, his native valley, and that he intended to return to it the same day" (*Typee* 240).

This is probably a spelling mistake as there is no documented area with this name. Its altenrative spelling in *Typee* is "Pueearka." Melville was probably referring, by phonetic approximation, to two potential locations, either "Puaoa" or "Uapou."

"This fertile border is in some places a mile in breadth, and forms the valuable district of *Puaoa* [in Huahine]" (Tyerman & Bennet 1: 156).

"There are three [islands] in number—Huahuka, Nukuhiva or Nuuhiva, and Uapou—

forming a triangle, by their relative position to each other, the points of which are

included within the parallels of 8° 38` and 9° 32` S. latitude, and 139° 20` and 140° 10`

W. longitude, from Greenwich. Huahuka is the most eastern of the three; Nukuhiva lies

about twenty miles directly west of it; and Uapou thirty miles south of the central parts

of Nukuhiva" (Stewart 128).

Q

Queequeg

"Queequeg was a native of Kokovoko an island far away to the West and South … even

then, in Queequeg's ambitious soul, lurked a strong desire to see something more of

Christendom than a specimen whaler or two. His father was a High Chief, a King; his

uncle a High Priest; and on the maternal side he boasted aunts who were the wives of

unconquerable warriors. There was excellent blood in his veins—royal stuff; though

sadly vitiated , I fear, by the cannibal propensity he nourished in his untutored youth …

Queequeg was the son of a King, and Queequeg budged not. Struck by his desperate

dauntlessness, and his wild desire to visit Christendom, the captain at last relented, and

told him he might make himself at home … For at bottom—so he told me—he was

actuated by a profound desire to learn among the Christians, the arts whereby to make

his people still happier than they were; and more than that, still better than they were …

Thought he, it's a wicked world in all meridians; I'll die a pagan " (*Moby-Dick* 55-56).

Sandwich Islands

Kue: v. to be opposed to, to be contrary, strange, contrary to authority (Andrews,

Vocabulary 75)

Kuee: v. to disagree, to contend in words, to do contrary to, to oppose (Andrews,

Vocabulary 75)

Kuokoa: v. to stand aloof, to cast off the authority of a king, to rebell [*sic*], to set free,

deliver (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 76)

Koe: v. to remain; to save from destruction, to spare, to save (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 71)

Koe: adj. enduring, lasting (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 71)

Tonga Islands

Kui: adj. blind (Rabone 144)

Kuikui: adj. small-eyed (Rabone 144)

Maori Islands

Koeke: n. old man, adult

adj. matured, adult (Williams 123)

The English *q* is phonetically representative of the Polynesian *k* (or *t*), whereas the Polynesian double *e* can most probably be duplicated in English either by *e* or *i*. I have included here all the combinations of these six letters (*k*, *t*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*), which Melville could have replaced, to underline the possibility of a compound term that is the result of a varied combination of letters —if this is a compound word, it has been carefully concealed under the uniform shape of the Melvillean transliteration. The suffixed *g* is an addition to the Polynesian word since Polynesian orthography prohibits consonant endings and because this particular consonant is very rarely used.

The Hawaiian compound "Kue-kuee" or "kuee-kue" is used to describe the act of being "opposed to, contrary to, contrary to authority" of "disagreeing or contending in words," definitions which Melville may have known during the construction of his Polynesian character an especially his emphasis on Queequeg's rebelliousness against the status quo of his country. The term "kuokoa" shows a much closer and clearer relation to Queequeg's symbolic act of abdication when he sinks his canoe and refuses to leave the whaler's deck. The term "koe" is suggestive of the young prince's desire to "save from destruction" his people, to "spare them" the wrath of imperialist colonization.

The Tonga "kui" and "kuikui" are used to describe someone who is "blind" or who has "small eyes," words whose metaphorical value in Melville's text is obvious in Queequeg's short-sighted and innocent intentions to save his people through adopting the illusively elevating virtues of the Europeans. The Maori word "koekoe" on the other hand, signifies someone "mature," someone who has grown old. The term possibly

reflects Melville's desire to create a "spent" character, one, that is, whose soul has grown old and decrepit from the corruption that has tainted it for so long.

R

Raiatair

"Among these was Tooboi, the heir of Tamatoy, King of Raiatair, one of the Society Isles" (*Omoo* 153).

Society Islands

Raiatea: n. a clear, fine, open sky (Davies 219)

Melville is almost accurate with the orthography of the word. Again the intrusive *r* is suggestive of a phonetic represtantative of another sound (and letter) from the Polynesian vocabulary (in this case the *a*).

"*Ioretea*, the Ulitea of Captain Cook, or, as it is now more frequently called by the natives, Raiatea, is the largest of the Society Islands" (Ellis 2: 331).

Rarmai

"'Rarmai' (it will do; it is easy), he murmured at last, and signed to be replaced in his

hammock" (*Moby-Dick* 479).

Society Islands

Raa: adj. sacred, consecrated, devoted to a sacred purpose (Davies 218)

Mai: prep. towards the speaker (Davies 126)

Mai: prep. from (Davies 126)

Sandwich Islands

Laa: adj. sacred, holy, devoted to sacred purposes (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 81)

v. to sanctify, to be sanctified, devoted, to be set apart as sacred, to make sacred, holy to

revere (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 81)

Mai: prep. from a person place or thing spoken of; towards the person speaking

(Andrews, *Vocabulary* 91)

Mai: adv. almost, nearly, near to (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 91)

     The middle *r* most probably substitutes the duplicated *a* of the word "raa" or

"laa." This is a compound word used to characterize something that is adequate for a

purpose. Being a devout person, Queequeg uses the term to denote "from the gods" or

"sacred to (toward) me," a phrase whose metaphorical meaning as "something that is

blessed by the gods is acceptable or appropriate" is a free translation by Melville of the

original Tahitian "Raa-mai" or Hawaiian "laa-mai" that Melville conveys successfully in the English context with his free translation.

"the sacrifice for the *mau raa titi*, commencement or fastening on of the sacred maro" (Ellis 3: 108).

"when we were answered that it was a *fare bure raa*,—a house of prayer" (Tyerman & Bennet 1: 93).

"and the most I could get from her was *'Mai iau,'* 'I am sick'" (Stewart 214).

"it has been so *mai ka po mai*, from the night, or state of darkness or confusion, till now" (Ellis 4: 247n).

Rartoo

"Now the prospect of seeing an old-fashioned 'hevar,' or Tahitian reel, was one of the inducements which brought us here; and so, finding Rartoo rather liberal in his religious ideas, we disclosed our desire. At first, he demurred; and shrugging his shoulders like a Frenchman, declared it could not be brought about—was a dangerous matter to attempt, and might bring all concerned into trouble. But we overcame all this, convinced him that the thing could be done, and a 'hevar,' a genuine pagan fandango, was arranged for that very night" (*Omoo* 239).

Society Islands

Raa: adj. sacred, consecrated, devoted to a sacred purpose (Davies 218)

Raa: n. the name of one of the chief tahitian gods (Davies 218)

Tu: n. an advocate, supporter, pleader for another (Davies 283)

Too: n. a piece of wood forming the body of an idol (Davies 279)

n. the man at the head of a wandering dancing party (Davies 279)

Sandwich Islands

Laa: adj. sacred, holy, devoted to sacred purposes (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 81)

Koo: v. to support, prop up, to brace one's self, to push off as with an oar or setting pole

(Andrews, *Vocabulary* 72)

Ku: v. to stand, to stand up

v. to hit, to strike against, to pierce as a spear, to stumble, to come to anchor as a ship

(Andrews, *Vocabulary* 74)

The second *r* in the middle of the word replaces probably the double *a* of

"Ra(a)"; the combination of the two consonants (*r* and *t*) is obviously a grammatical

phenomenon that breaks the rules of Polynesian orthography and requires amendment

(as a Polynesian word). On the other hand, *Omoo* gives very little information about this

character, besides his association with organizing a "'hevar,' a genuine pagan fandango"

(*Omoo* 239). It is possible then that his name is related to this forbidden religious

practice and the open-mindedness required to organize something as controversial as this

dance at a time when Christianity had imposed a strict "taboo" on the religious practices

of the past.

Ravavai

"We sail from Ravavai, an isle in the sea, not very far northward from the tropic of Capricorn, not very far westward from Pitcairn's island, where the mutineers of the Bounty settled. At Ravavai I had stepped ashore some few months previous; and now was embarked on a cruise for the whale, whose brain enlightens the world. And from Ravavai we sail for the Gallipagos, other wise called the Enchanted Islands, by reason of the many wild currents and eddies there met" (*Mardi* 3).

Society Islands

Rai: n. the sky; also heaven (Davies 219)

Vai: n. water (Davies 309)

Raivavai: n. high island; one of the principal Austral Islands (Ellis 3: 375; Tyerman & Bennet 1: 60)

Charles R. Anderson does not use the spelling found in either Ellis or Tyerman & Bennet, but instead presents the word with a different spelling that is very clost to Melville's: "This completes the conjectured route: the 'Leviathan' sailed from Papetoai to Rurutu, touched at Ravaivai in the same group—a few hundred miles due south of Tahiti—then cruised along the tropic of Capricorn past Pitcairn Island, and finally turned northward to the Encantadas" (Anderson 326). The definition provided by the two sources (but not by Anderson) is only partially verifiable by Davies' dictionary.

"In the year 1820, he visited Raivavai, or High Island, lying about four hundred miles southyward of Tahiti, where, notwithstanding its distance, his authority was acknowledged" (Tyerman & Bennet 1: 60, 112).

"Raivavai, or High Island, is one of the most important of these islands, and is situated about six degrees to the north-west of Rapa" (Ellis 3: 375).

"About six degrees to the north-west of Rapa stands Raivavai, or High Island, which was discovered by Lieutenant Broughton of the Chatham, in the year 1791" (Russell 207).

Ravoo

"His mandates were intrusted to one Ravoo, the hereditary pontifical messenger; a long-limbed varlet, so swift of foot, that he was said to travel like a javelin" (*Mardi* 351).

Society Islands

Raa: adj. sacred, consecrated, devoted to a sacred purpose (Davies 218)

U: v. to run against a thing (Davies 296)

Ravarava: adj. tall, slender, and handsome (Davies 224)

The division into two words and subsequent identification of this name as a compound one (at least in its sources) shows that Melville may have created this character from the meaning of the original word, "raa-u," which means "sacred runner." I have approximated its origin to the combination of the above Tahitian words —the

letters *r* and *v* were a guide to specifying the dialect he most probably used, with every caution, of course, since this is a changed word.

Rea

"But ere long, in Rea, one of her maidens, I thought I discovered my Ady transformed … And even, when after hard wooing, I won her again, she seemed not lost Ady, but Rea. Yet all the while, from deep in her strange, black orbs, Ady's blue eyes seemed pensively looking:—blue eye within black: sad, silent soul within merry … It was only Rea, not Ady, who at stolen intervals looked on me now … That night Rea was torn from my side by three masks; who, stifling her cries, rapidly bore her away; and as I pursued, disappeared in a cave" (*Mardi* 648).

Society Islands

Rearea: n. joy, gayety, mirth (Davies 224)

Rea: n. ginger, turmeric (Davies 224)

Maori Islands

Rea: v. spring up, grow

n. fresh spring growth of vegetation (Williams 333)

Rea: murmur, make a low sound (Williams 333)

The flowery nature and origin of the maiden is depicted through her name which retains its original Polynesian spelling. Melville didn't have to try very hard for this one since he only needed another flower's name to associate the three lost maidens (Yillah, Ady, Rea) in the floral world of Hautia. F. D. Bennett identified two plants with the name "area," which may have been a possible source for Melville's maiden.

"It is six or eight inches in height, and composed of a spike covered with imbricated *bractae*, each *bractea* inclosing a yellow flower. The entire plant has an aromatic odour … The Society Islanders make no use of the plant; but the Marquesans cultivate it carefully, and employ the root as a cosmetic. Habitat.—Pitcairn Island; Society Isles, native name *aréa;* Marquesas, *héna;* Sandwich group, *oréna*" (Bennett 2: 327).
"In growth and height this species resembles the preceding [*area*]. Its leaves are broad and pinnated. Flower-spike compact; bractae red; flowers pale-yellow, and without odour. The root resembles that of the official ginger, and has also a very aromatic smell; but it is bitter, has little or no pungency, and consequently is not applicable to the same uses as the ginger in commerce … Habitat.—Plains and low hills, Society Isles, native name *area;* Marquesas, *anaváhu;* Sandwich Isles, *ava púe*" (Bennett 2: 328).

Roa

"Pelee, the terrific goddess of the volcanoes Mouna Roa and Mouna Kea, was supposed to guard all the passes to the extensive valleys lying round their base" (*Omoo* 210).

Society Islands

Roa: adj. Long in measure, time, distance

adj. in comparing qualities, it signifies a greater or longer degree (Davies 230)

Sandwich Islands

Loa: n. length (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 87)

Loa: adj. long, either of time, distance or measure (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 87)

Melville quotes the Tahitian spelling of the volcano which later changed to the Hawaiian Mouna Loa, in order to bring it closer to the spelling of its sister mountain, Mouna Kea —the Hawaiian equivalent of the Tahitian *r* is the letter *l*.

"The planning of a trip to the volcano at the base of the mountain Mounaroa" (Stewart 283).

"The mountains of Hawaii, unlike the peak of Teneriffe in the Atlantic, the mountains of Eimeo, and some other islands of the Pacific, do not pierce the clouds like obelisks or spires, but in most parts, and from the southern shore in particular, the ascent is gradual, and comparatively unbroken, from the sea-beach to the lofty summit of Mouna Roa" (Ellis 4: 5).

Roo-ne

"The din and tumult now became tenfold, and I perceived that several of the priests were on the spot, all of whom were evidently urging Mow-Mow and the other chiefs to prevent my departure; and the detestable word 'Roo-ne! Roo-ne!' which I had heard repeated a thousand times during the day, was now shouted out on every side of me" (*Typee* 249-250).

Society Islands

Ru: n. impatience, violent haste, or great hurry (Davies 233)

Na: intj. Lo! See! Behold! (Davies 149)

Rore: v. to wrench, or pinch, to put into a vice (Davies 231)

Maori Islands

Rona: v. bind, confine with cords, etc. (Williams 346)

Ronarona: v. strangle (Williams 346)

It is very possible that Melville heard the right word because the context within which it appears shows how this word seems to have had a significant impact on him since his arrival. The Tahitian phrase means something like "arrest him now, arrest him quickly" which shows the fear and anxiety of the natives at losing their "tabooed" guest. The Maori alternative "ronarona" suggests a more violent behavior than the word "rona" which is very similar in meaning to the Tahitian. Of course, neither Melville nor any

other source can verify the meaning of this "detestable word," and therefore the possibility of a misspelling or a misunderstanding on Melville's side should not be excluded.

Ropo

"This island, although generally called one of the Marquesas, is by some navigators considered as forming one of a distinct cluster, comprising the islands of Ruhooka, Ropo, and Nukuheva; upon which three the appellation of the Washington Group has been bestowed" (*Typee* 11).

Society Islands

Rapa: island between New Zealand and Tahiti (Ellis 3: 362)

Judging by its geographical placement in the text, Melville probably had in mind the island Rapa with his misspelling.

"About seven degrees nearer the equator than New Zealand, and thirty-six farther to the eastward, the lofty and many-peaked island of RAPA is situated" (Ellis 3: 362). "Southward of the Society Isles lies a group to which, from a reference to their position, the epithet Austral has been applied by a distinguished geographer … Rapa, the most distant from the equator, was observed by Vancouver in December 1791, on his passage from New Zealand to Otaheite" (Russell 206).

Ruhooka

"This island, although generally called one of the Marquesas, is by some navigators considered as forming one of a distinct cluster, comprising the islands of Ruhooka, Ropo, and Nukuheva" (*Typee* 11).

Society Islands

Uahuga: n. one of the Marquesas islands, very close to Nukahiwa

It is most probable that Melville is mistaken here because he is associating three islands that do not form any special group, and only the two, Nukuheva and Ruhooka or Uahuga are close enough to each other. It is uncertain which "navigators" Melville had in mind when he referred to the three islands as a cluster or if he simply wanted to sound authentic without the necessity to substantiate his claims.

"By nine, Riou's Island, or Uahuga, was in sight; its naked aspect, its rugged, steep, and peaked rocks, did not appear to us extremely attractive" (Langsdorff 87).

S

The letter *s* does not exist in the majority of Polynesian dialects. I have included it here to incorporate a brief discussion on Melville's character, Samoa.

Samoa

"But no more of Samoa; only this: that his name had been given him by a sea-captain; to whom it had been suggested by the native designation of the islands to which he belonged; the Saviian or Samoa group, otherwise known as the Navigator Islands. The island of Upolua, one of that cluster, claiming the special honor of his birth, as Corsica does Napolenon's, we shall occasionally hereafter speak of Samoa as the Upoluan; by which title he most loved to be called" (*Mardi* 99).

Samoan Islands

Samoa: n. Samoan custom, ways, and traditions

v. cut a pig into the traditional named joints (each of which has a certain ceremonial value and is considered to be the rightful portion of a particular person or group of people within each community) (Milner 199)

The Samoan dialect uses the word to describe the action of cutting a limb from a pig. A similar scence exists in *Mardi* when Samoa the character cuts off his badly injured arm. It is ironic that Melville's character embodies both meanings of the word, thus suggesting the possibility that Melville knew of the second and more obscure one of dismembering an animal.

"The name of the one is Satia-i-le-moa [Obstructed by the Chest], the meaning of which

is this: the boy seemed as if he would not be born, because he was caught by the chest"

(Andersen 388).

"the two largest of the islands, Upolu and Savai, are about ten miles distant from each

other; war was raging between them" (Ellis 3: 406-407).

T

Taboo

"At that time I was ignorant of the fact that by operation of the 'taboo' the use of canoes

in all parts of the island is rigorously prohibited to the entire sex, for whom it is death

even to be seen entering one when hauled on shore" (*Typee* 14).

"receiving along with the damsel as her portion, one thousand fathoms of fine tappa,

fifty double-braided mats of split grass, four hundred hogs, ten houses in different parts

of her native valley, and the sacred protection of an express edict of the Taboo, declaring

his person inviolable forever" (*Omoo* 28).

"True, they had plenty of gold; but to the natives it was anathema—taboo—and, for

several hours and some odd minutes, they would not touch it" (*Omoo* 125).

"With sundry winks and horrible giggles peculiar to the dumb, the vegetable demijohn

was now tapped; the old fellow looking round cautiously, and pointing at it; as much as

to intimate, that is contained some thing which was 'taboo,' or forbidden" (*Omoo* 272).

"I would direct the gas to be turned down, and repeat in a whisper the mysterious rites of the 'taboo,' but the relation would so far transcend any of Mrs. Radcliffe's stories in the element of the horrible that I would not willingly afflict any one with its needless recital" (*Piazza Tales* 419).

Society Islands

tapu: n. a restriction; the word is obsolete in Tahiti, though much used in some islands

adj. sacred, devoted, but this sense is nearly obsolete in Tahiti, although retained in other dialects

n. an oath or a certain solemn engagement to perform, or not to perform certain things

v. to bind one's self, or another person, with an oath to do, or not to do a thing; to adjure

n. a sacrifice to the god Oro, commonly a man killed for the purpose, but this tapu, or taputapu, was generally called ïa or fish (Davies 253)

Sandwich Islands

kapu: n. a general name of the system or religion that existed formerly on the islands, and which was grounded upon numerous *kapus* or restrictions, keeping the common people in obedience to the chiefs and the priests. The word signifies prohibited, forbidden, sacred, devoted to certain purposes (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 66)

Tonga Islands

tabu: n. prohibition, embargo; the sign of prohibition (Rabone 185)

tabu: adj. forbidden, consecrated, sacred (Rabone 185)

Maori Islands

tapu: adj. under religious or superstitious restriction; a condition affecting persons,

places, and things, and arising from innumerable causes

adj. beyond one's power, inaccessible

adj. sacred

n. ceremonial restriction, quality or condition of being subject to such restriction

(Williams 385)

Fiji Islands

tabu: adj. forbidden, prohibited, implying a religious sanction, but now used also for a

legal prohibition, such as "no admission"; sacred, holy, unapproachable (Capell 246)

Samoan Islands

tapu: v. be forbidden (Milner 243)

Rarotonga Islands

tapu: n. formal ceremonial or religious interdiction: that which is sacred or sanctified or

holy; that which is set aside by solemn religious ceremony especially in a good sense, or

that which is set apart for religious use; that which is opposed to secular; ceremonial

restriction, the quality or condition of being ubject [*sic*] to such restriction; interdicted,

prohibited, under formal religious restriction; sacred, set aside or dedicated; inviolable, that cannot be profaned, etc (Savage 354)

The definition of the term reflects several of the observations made in Charles R. Anderson's work both about the accuracy of the belief itself and Melville's account of it. As Anderson claims, Melville could have borrowed the information from almost any credible source of the time, which suggests that Melville was trying to provide his readers with as many and varied instances of the application of taboo as possible: "A score of the specific operations of the "tapu" are described by Melville, all of which are confirmed by the most authoritative modern ethnologist of the Marquesas Islands; practically all of this information, however, he could have gleaned from the volumes of Langsdorff, Porter, and Stewart alone" (Anderson 167). Melville admits to his ignorance of the custom but does not refrain from using several terms to describe or define it, such as "prevent," "inviolable," "strictest privacy" (*Omoo* 20, 28, 31). It is possible that Melville witnessed some of these cases of the taboo, but he realized that the more he could incorporate in his text, and the better he could incorporate them, the more credible his account would be of his actual experience there. Charles R. Anderson would disagree with this view and provide the Fayaway in the canoe incident —something considered "taboo" by the natives— and Melville's alleged permission to exclude her this once from the "taboo" as proof of Melville's attempt to romanticize rather than historicize. This may be true, but the fact that Melville requested permission (whether granted or not) for

Fayaway to climb into the canoe with him is a clear indication that Melville knew of that particular intricacy of the custom.

At the same time, Melville used current lexicons and ethnographies both to corroborate his claim to factual truth but also to strengthen the fantastic element of his adventures. The frequency and variety of contexts (in Melville's works) within which the term appears, in conjunction with Melville's professed lack of narrative accuracy in the use of the Polynesian language and the lack of a systematized record of the word's meanings, allowed Melville to mix fact with fiction and exploit the semantic instability of the term. This created a semi-mythical environment for the term, thus heightening the fictional value of his book without compromising significantly its veracity. His readers were as mystified about the term as the missionaries who lived in Polynesia, but also equally aware of its significance both for the natives and for Melville's text.

I provide here the most representative definitions that existed during Melville's time to underline the fact that the missionaries had perceived the significance the term had for the Polynesians. Because there is little evidence, besides the works themselves, how Melville discovered several of the different uses of the term, it is important to show how it was employed in different areas of Polynesia hoping to show that some of these Melville may have known (and thus used) one way or another.

"and withal it has acquired the epithet of sacred, *taboo*" (Mariner 2: 77).

"and were told that such trees were *tabu*—set apart as private property and that all persons, except the owners, were thus prohibited from climbing or gathering fruit from them" (Tyerman and Bennet 1: 61).

"The *ai tabu* [restricted or sacred eating] was one of the perpetual restrictions imposed by their idolatry on all ranks of the people, from their birth until their death" (Ellis 4: 127).

Tahar

"It was true, he said, that the queen entertained some idea of making a stand against the French; and it was currently reported, also, that several chiefs from Borabora, Huwyenee, Raiatair, and Tahar, the leeward islands of the group, were at that very time taking counsel with her, as to the expediency of organizing a general movement throughout the entire cluster, with a view of anticipating any further encroachments on the part of the invaders" (*Omoo* 287).

Society Islands

Tahaa: adj. naked, without clothes or covering (Davies 240)

Tahaa: n. one of the Society Islands (also spelled *Taha*) (Tyerman and Bennet 1: 136)

Otaha: n. the man of war bird (Davies 174)

Melville is geographically accurate in his association of this island with the rest of the group. He may have gleaned the information from a number of sources (some of which I include here) or from personal experience.

"we could discern, towards the north-west, the adjacent islands of Raiatea, Tahaa, and Borabora" (Tyerman and Bennet 1: 136).

"In the course of this voyage, he discovered Tethuroa, Huaheine, Raiatea, Otaha, Bolabola, Maurua, and Rurutoo" (Russell 133).

"Taháa is mountainous, though smaller and less elevated than Raiatea" (Bennett 1: 356-357).

Tahiti

"And it was only by keeping the pumps clanging, that she managed to swim into a Tahitian harbor, 'heave down,' and have her wound dressed by a ship-surgeon with tar and oakum. This ship I met with at sea, shortly after the disaster" (*Mardi* 105).

"Ah! low valed, high palmed Tahiti! I still rest me on thy mat, but the soft soil has slid!" (*Moby-Dick* 176).

"As a roving sailor, the author spent about three months in various parts of the island of Tahiti and Imeeo, and under circumstances most favorable for correct observations on the social condition of the natives" (*Omoo* xiv).

"She shyly started. Like some Tahiti girl, secreted for a sacrifice, first catching sight, through palms, of Captain Cook" (*Piazza Tales* 8).

"Ellis, in his 'Polynesian Researches,' gives some interesting accounts of the abortive attempts made by the Tahiti Mission to establish a branch Mission upon certain islands of the group" (*Typee* 6).

Society Islands

Tahiti: n. the name of the largest island in the Georgian groupe [*sic*], discovered by Wallis, in 1767 (Davies 242)

v. to transplant; to remove a thing from its original place (Davies 242)

The term's significance lies with the definition provided by Ellis: "In the language of the Georgian and Society Islands, the word *Tahiti* also signifies to pull up or take out of the ground, as herbs or trees are taken up with a view to transplantation, and to select or extract passages from a book or language, to be transplanted into another" (Ellis 4: 431). Davies's dictionary corroborates its meaning and indicates that one of the primary concerns of the missionaries in writing the Polynesian lexicons was to provide both geographical and cultural information about the islands. It is possible that Melville knew the meaning of the word "Tahiti" and used it as a metaphor for establishing his discourse on the philosophical, political, cultural, and ideological implications of the "transplantation of various cultures" onto the Polynesian canvas, the colonization, that is, of the islands.

Taiarboo

"But on the side next Taiarboo, or the lesser peninsula, it sweeps through a narrow, secluded valley, and thus crosses the island in that direction" (*Omoo* 114).

"The first blood shed, in any regular conflict, was at Mahanar, upon the peninsula of Taraiboo" (*Omoo* 32).

Society Islands

Taiara: n. a road, tract, or way (Davies 244)

Pu: n. the interior of a country (Davies 204)

Taiarabu: n. district in Tahiti near that of *Matavai* (Tyerman and Bennet 1: 62)

Melville is quite accurate at the orthography of the term. The term appears spelled as "Taraiboo," but the Marquesans probably used the Tahitian (or Hawaiian) *p* instead of the unpronounceable *b*.

"I'll tell you what I have been thinking:—there are many parts of this island, especially Taiarabu, that have no teachers" (Tyerman and Bennet 1: 62).

"In the reign of the first Pomare, under Tomatiti, they even attempted the conquest of Tahiti, and succeeded in overcoming the small peninsula of Taiarabu" (Wilkes 1: 343).

Taji

"He now entreated me, at the first opportunity, to announce myself as Taji: declaring that if once received under that title, the unbounded hospitality of our final reception would be certain; and our persons fenced about from all harm" (*Mardi* 164).

"'But wherefore comest thou, Taji? Truly, thou wilt interfere with the worship of thy images, and we have plenty of gods besides thee. But comest thou to fight?—We have plenty of spears, and desire not thine. Comest thou to dwell?—Small are the houses of Mardi. Or comest thou to fish in the sea? Tell us Taji' … 'Taji comes, old man, because it pleases him to come. And Taji will depart when it suits him. Ask the shades of your sires whether Taji thus scurvily greeted them, when they came stalking into his presence in the land of spirits. No. Taji spread the banquet. He removed their mantles. He kindled a fire to drive away the damp" (*Mardi* 166).

Society Islands

Tai: n. weeping, sorrow, a cry

v. to weep, cry, grieve, to be sorrowful (Davies 244)

Tonga Islands

Tagi: n. a cry

v. to cry, to weep (Rabone 187)

Samoan Islands

Tagi: v. cry, weep, make a noise, utter a cry, ask for, beg for, request (Milner 228)

Fiji Islands

Tagi: v. to give out sound: of humans, to cry, weep, lament (Capell 250)

The letter *j* does not exist in the Polynesian alphabet although there is its equivalent *g* which in the ears of Melville's audience would probably sound the same. The meaning of the word in most dialects reflects the mourning nature of the pursuer of Yillah as he himself is pursued by the mourning followers of Aleema. Taji is not the only one who laments his loss; at the island of Flozella he sees a reflection of himself in the face of the "laden with woe" (*Mardi* 648) Ozonna. Although the story is different from Melville's, one possible source for the name is in Wilkes' narrative, where the roles are reversed and the savage native kills "the man of God": "Tagi, alias Vave, being duly questioned, whether he had murdered the person, G. Smith: Did he or another kill the white man? He, Tagi, answered, 'I did'" (Wilkes 3: 436).

Taloo

"After obtaining from the planters all the information which was needed, we decided upon penetrating to the village; and after a temporary sojourn there, to strike the beach again, and journey to Taloo, a harbor on the opposite side of the island" (*Omoo* 235).

"Taloo, the only frequented harbor of Imeeo, lies on the western side of the island, almost directly over against Martair" (*Omoo* 246).

Society Islands

Taloo: n. bay of *Opunohu* (Stewart 253)

Anderson mentions only Stewart and Ellis as possible Melville sources. I have included Wilkes' and Tyerman and Bennet's accounts for cross-referencing purposes and to complement Anderson's sources.

"On reaching the north end of the island, for which we steered on leaving Matavai, we entered within a reef skirting it at a distance of a quarter of a mile, and passing by the mouth of the bay of Paopao, or Cook's harbour, at present uninhabited, reached the missionary settlement at Papetoai, at the bay of Opunohu, or Taloo, a few miles farther west, early in the afternoon" (Stewart 253).

"In the forenoon we embarked on board of the General Gates, and sailed for Eimeo, where we landed, in the course of five hours, in Taloo harbor. This is one of the most secure, capacious, and beautiful ports in the world" (Tyerman & Bennet 1: 127).

"Taloo harbour is an inlet about three miles in depth, situated in a glen enclosed by precipitous sides rising in places to the height of two thousand feet" (Wilkes 2: 56).

Tamai

"The doctor was all eagerness to visit Tamai, a solitary inland village, standing upon the banks of a considerable lake of the same name, and embosomed among groves … Besides all this, in Tamai dwelt the most beautiful and unsophisticated women in the entire Society group. In short, the village was so remote from the coast, and had been so much less affected by recent changes than other places that, in most things, Tahitian life was here seen, as formerly existing in the days of young Otoo, the boy-king, in Cook's time" (*Omoo* 234).

Society Islands

Tamai: n. war, dispute, quarrel, contention (Davies 247)

Ta: n. the stalk of the banana that supports the fruit (Davies 237)

Mai: adj. watery, withered, applied to taro, yam, &c., when injured by the sun or dry weather (Davies 126)

Melville is correct both with the geographic and lexical information of the location, probably because it had a significant impact on him during his stay there. Charles R. Anderson uses Ellis' account to substantiate Melville's impression of the village's pristine beauty: "Melville was indeed struck by their health, beauty, and hospitality—all of which he attributed to the fact that their primitive purity was as yet little tainted by the deplorable evils of civilization which he had found so abundant at Tahiti" (Anderson 292).

"On the north-eastern side of Eimeo, between the mountain and the sea, is an extensive and beautiful lake, called Tamai, on the border of which stands a sequestered village, bearing the same name" (Ellis 1: 19).

Tammaree

"Whenever I made my appearance he invariably rose, and, like a gentleman doing the honors of his mansion, invited me to repose myself whenever I pleased, and calling out 'tammaree!' (boy), a little fellow would appear, and then retiring for an instant, return with some savory mess, from which the chief would press me to regale myself" (*Typee* 158).

"I asked Tonoi how long it was since any one had lived here. 'Me, *tammaree* (boy)—plenty *kannaker* (men) Martair," he replied" (*Omoo* 214).

Society Islands

Tamaroa: n. a boy, a male (Davies 247)

Tamarii: n. children (Davies 247)

Tamariirii: n. little children (Davies 247)

Sandwich Islands

Kamalii: n. *kama* and *lii* small, little; children either male or female, friends, a word of endearment; used both in the singular and plural (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 64)

Melville is phonetically accurate despite the orthographical disparity which attests to Melville's habit of writing phonetically at times without heed to orthographic rules (existent or not).

"We were told that several attempts had been made to drive them off the islands, and that once they were nearly overpowered by Tamapuaa, child of a hog, from *tama* a child, and *puaa* a hog" (Ellis 4: 250).

Tanee

"Doubtless, in thus denationalizing the Tahitians, as it were, the missionaries were prompted by a sincere desire for good; but the effect has been lamentable. Supplied with no amusements, in place of those forbidden, the Tahitians, who require more recreation than other people, have sunk into a listlessness, or indulge in sensualities, a hundred times more pernicious, than all the games ever celebrated in the Temple of Tanee" (*Omoo* 183).

"The Tahitian princess leads her husband a hard life. Poor fellow! he not only caught a queen, but a Tartar, when he married her. The style by which he is addressed is rather significant— 'Pomare-Tanee' (Pomaree's man). All things considered, as appropriate a title for a king-consort as could be hit upon" (*Omoo* 303).

Society Islands

Tane: n. the male of mankind; a husband; a disorder of the skin (Davies 248)

This is one of the founding gods of Polynesia who had numerous temples and names through all the major islands.

"As they approached Karuakoi, a small valley on the side of one of the mountains in Morokai, they were surprised at beholding a clump of trees, where there had been none before, the gods having caused them to grow up in the course of the preceding night. Into these trees, Tane, and some other gods, are reported to have entered" (Ellis 4: 93).

Tappa

"While this was going on, some one removing my tappa cloak slipped on a blue frock in its place" (*Omoo* 6-7).

"As they drew nearer, and I watched the rising and sinking of their forms, and beheld the uplifted right arm bearing above the water the girdle of tappa, and their long dark hair trailing beside them as they swam, I almost fancied they could be nothing else than so many mermaids:—and very like mermaids they behaved too" (*Typee* 14).

"It was a plaited turban of red tappa, radiated by the pointed and polished white bones of the Ray-fish" (*Mardi* 182).

Society Islands

Tappa: n. (a Sandwich Islands word) native-made cloth (Hale 11)

Tapa: n. the groin (Davies 250)

Sandwich Islands

Kapa: n. the cloth made of bark, hence cloth of all kind, clothes generally (Andrews,

Vocabulary 65)

Samoan Islands

Tapa: n. the general name of native cloth made from the inner bark of certain trees

(Savage 350)

Ellis' comment below on the word is an interesting, indirect comment on the

nature of the compound name "Ohiro-Moldona-Fivona" in *Mardi* which Melville

translates as "a Getter-up-of-Fine-Tappa" (405). With the word *tappa*, Melville probably

had in mind Ellis' definition (i.e. groin), and not only the "cloth" which Davies or

Andrews refer to. By using the term with this, second meaning, Melville is also able to

refer to the implicit scandal behind the woman's probable prostitution. According to

Charles R. Anderson, Melville used Ellis' *Polynesian Researches* to substantiate his

references to the term "tappa."

"Cloth made with the bark of a tree … the Sandwich Island word *tapa*, is, we believe,

never used in this sense, but signifies a part of the human body" (Ellis 1: 179).

Tara

"And soon we crossed a bridge of boughs, spanning a trench, thickly planted with roots of the Tara, like alligators, or Hollanders, reveling in the soft alluvial" (*Mardi* 225).

"Our bows! Our bows! / The thousand bows of Narvi! / Ribs of Tara, god of War!" (*Mardi* 436).

Society Islands

Tara papa: n. pine-apple (Tyerman & Bennet vol. 1: 102)

Taro: n. the root *arum esculentum*, of which there are many varieties (Davies 256)

Sandwich Islands

Kalo: n. the arum esculentum; a well known vegetable of these islands (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 63)

Kalo: n. one of the class of gods called akua noho (Andrews, *Dictionary* 249)

This is probably a misspelling of the plant "taro" which was prevalent in both the Society and Sandwich islands, where it had various uses. Melville's use of the term with the second meaning, that of a god of war, suggests that he probably had read or heard the term being used as such.

"Our path led us through several fields of mountain taro, (a variety of the arum,) extensively cultivated in many parts of Hawaii. It was growing in a dry sandy soil, into which our feet sunk two or three inches every step we took" (Ellis 4: 193).

"We found the tara papa, or pine-apple, growing wild, on which the rats feed deliciously" (Tyerman & Bennet 1: 102).

Tararroa

"The monarch claimed to be a sort of bye-blow of Tararroa, the Saturn of Polynesian mythology, and cousin-german to inferior deities" (*Omoo* 305).

Society Islands

Taaroa: (Tangaroa, Tanaroa) n. the great god of the Polynesians in general, he was said to be the father of the gods, and creator of all things, yet was scarcely reckoned an object of worship (Davies 238)

The atypical orthographical correctness suggests that this is information that Melville could have possibly gotten from Ellis' *Polynesian Researches*: "and their idols, especially their great god, Taaroa, were among the most singular we have met with in the Pacific" (Ellis 3: 394). The possibility of him remembering correctly some oral source is of course not excluded. The orthography of Melville's term breaks Polynesian spelling rules in the presence of the double *r* which the slightly anagrammatized original has replaced with an extra vowel.

"'*Taaroa* (the great idol) —or principal god— brought me faith'" (Tyerman & Bennet 2: 109).

"They narrate that in ancient times Taaroa, their principal deity, being angry with men on account of their wickedness, overturned the earth into the sea" (Russell 64).

Taro

"A basket of baked 'taro,' or Indian turnip, was brought in, and we were given a piece all round" (*Omoo* 117).

"And herein, fed by oozy loam, and kindly dew from heaven, and bitter sweat from men, grew as in hot-beds the nutritious Taro" (*Mardi* 191).

Society Islands

Taro: (talo, tao) n. the root *arum esculentum*, of which there are many varieties (Davies 256)

Sandwich Islands

Kalo: n. the *arum esculentum*; a well known vegetable of these islands (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 63)

Again, this is a term that Melville remembered with the same vividness as words like "tappa" and "tattoo," most probably through personal experience. It is possible that

Melville created the orthographic difference between "taro" and "tara" intentionally to accommodate the different meaning of "tara."

"The taro, or arum, is the most valuable article of food the natives possess … the natives subsist principally on the roots of the *arum esculentum*, which they call *taro*" (Ellis 3: 363; 4: 25).

Tattoo

"But that which was most remarkable in the appearance of the splendid islander was the elaborated tattooing displayed on every noble limb. All imaginable lines and curves and figures were delineated over his whole body, and in their grotesque variety and infinite profusion I could only compare them to the crowded groupings of quaint patterns we sometimes see in costly pieces of lacework" (*Typee* 78).

"The 'Lora Tattoo,' or the Time of Tattooing, will be long remembered" (*Omoo* 32).

"The sound of a hundred hammers, / Tapping, tapping, tapping / The shark teeth" (*Omoo* 32).

"The coloring matter is inserted by means of a shark's tooth attached to the end of a short stick, which is struck upon the other end with a small mallet of wood" (*Omoo* 32).

"In mid Pacific, where life's thrill / Is primal—Pagan; and fauns deck / Green theatres for that tattooed Greek / The Polynesian" (*Clarel* 3.16. 230-233).

Society Islands

Tatau: n. the marks or points on the human skin; not *tatoo* [*sic*], as it has been called

v. to mark, or point on the skin (Davies 258)

Sandwich Islands

Kakau: v. to write, to write with a pen or pencil, to *tatoo* [*sic*], to write upon, put down (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 62)

Kakau: n. a writing, the act of writing down names. Hence taxing (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 62)

The spelling Melville uses is a modernized version of what existed in Davies' and Andrews' dictionaries. It is possible that Melville borrowed the orthography of the term from another source, such as Ellis' *Polynesian Researches*. Charles R. Anderson (152-156) attributes Melville's information to Langsdorff's (and not Ellis') account although there are several important details that are left unexplained for even by him (Langsdorff). Davies indirectly corrects Melville's spelling which he (Davies) believed it did not fully realize the term's phonetic qualities.

"One of the earliest and singular usages to which they attended was that of tatauing or marking the skin" (Ellis 1: 262).

Tedaidee

"And, in pursuance of a barbarous custom, by Aleema, the priest, she was being borne an offering from the island of Amma to the gods of Tedaidee" (*Mardi* 131).

"Moon after moon passed away, and at last, only four days gone by, Aleema came to her with a dream; that the spirits in Oroolia had recalled her home by the way of Tedaidee, on whose coast gurgled up in the sea an enchanted spring; which streaming over upon the brine, flowed on between blue watery banks; and, plunging into a vortex, went round and round, descending into depths unknown. In this whirlpool Yillah was to descend in a canoe, as last to well up in an island fountain of Oroolia" (*Mardi* 138).

"'Yillah, the time has come to follow thy bird; come, return to thy home in Oroolia.' And he told her the way she would voyage there: by the vortex on the coast of Tedaidee" (*Mardi* 157).

Society Islands

Te: the definite article (Davies 263)

Tai: n. the sea, salt, salt water

n. weeping, sorrow, cry (Davies 244)

Tii: n. an image; a demon or wicked spirit, a class of beings supposed to be different from men and gods (Davies 269)

Tii: (*tiki*) n. the name of the first man according to Tahitian tradition (Davies 269)

Taitea: n. the shallows near the shore where the sea is not dark (Davies 246)

Tetea: n. a person who remains always in the shade, and thereby becomes white; also a phantom said to appear at a spring of water (Davies 265)

Maori Islands

Taitea: adj. pale, white (Williams 365)

The replacement of the western *d* with the Polynesian *t* suggests that Melville was focusing on the acoustic quality of the word, which translates into "Tetaitee," a compound word that at least phonetically alludes to Tahiti ("Te Tahiti").The definition of the compound word probably means "the crying demon" or "the sea demon" in the Tahitian dialect (possibly implying the "vortex" of *Mardi*) or "the white, the pale." I have included the Maori entry for comparison purposes (with the Tahitian equivalent "Tetea" and indirectly "Taitea"), but also to stress the possibility of an alternative influence that makes sense in Melville's context —the gods of Tedaidee being white (possibly some foreign presence) just like Taji, whose interference does not seem to change Yillah's destiny as she is eventually in some sense sacrificed. Andersen's book traces the name "Tiki" ("Tii"), which forms the last part of the compound "te-tai-tii," to Maori mythology: "Again, Tiki himself is said to have been a deity and to have made the first man … In a variant of the Maui'-Raukura-Tuna-roa legend Tiki, the first man, takes the place of Maui'" (Andersen 412).

"A *tii*, or carved image, fixed on a high pedestal, and placed by the road-side, at a short distance from the dwelling, marked the boundary of the sacred soil" (Ellis 3: 106).

Teearmoar

"Of like import, was the prediction of Teearmoar, the high-priest of Paree; who lived a hundred years ago" (*Omoo* 192).

Society Islands

Te: the definite article (Davies 263)

Ea: n. salvation, health, liberty, escape; also a saviour or deliverer (*faaea*) (Davies 56)

Mo'a: adj. sacred, devoted to the gods (Davies 143)

The prefix "tee" is defined as the definite article "te" ("the") in all dialects and therefore all dictionaries point to the word after "tee" for meaning. The consonant *r* is possibly interpolated by Melville as it breaks the rules of Polynesian orthography that prohibit two consonants together (*r* and *m*). Therefore, the compound word that seems to come close to Melville's meaning is one without the interjected *r*'s, "teeamoa," "the sacred savior," a prophet-like figure with which Melville seems to associate in declaring the destruction of the Polynesian civilization by western intrusion. Charles R. Anderson recognizes the role of the Polynesian priest in divining the future of his world through a known tradition that spoke of the doom of the Polynesians a long time before the arrival of the Europeans: "Melville reaches back a century into heathen Tahiti and, taking his

jeremiad out of the mouth of a priest of Oro, finds its fulfillment in the depopulation

brought by a Christian civilization of which this 'Teearmoar' never dreamed … to the

tribulations of the prophet who is unhonored in his own country must be added the

affront of being misinterpreted abroad" (Anderson 282-283).

Teei

"Long torn by this intestine war, the island acquiesced in the new sovereignty. But at

length a sacred oracle declared, that since the conqueror had slain his brother in deep

Willamilla, so that Teei never more issued from that refuge of death; therefore, the same

fate should be Marjora's; for never, thenceforth, from that glen, should he go forth"

(*Mardi* 220).

Society Islands

Te: the definite article (Davies 263)

Hei: v. to entangle and catch fish in a net

v. to be in a state of entanglement, as fish in a net (Davies 101)

Sandwich Islands

Ke: def. art. The (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 66)

Hei: v. to entangle in a net, to be full of fish as a net (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 39)

Maori Islands

Te: particle used with verbs to make an emphatic statement (Williams 409)

Hei: v. be bound or entangled (Williams 44)

This is a compound name comprising its article and the main verb where the aspirate *h* is silently omitted in the process of merging the two words. The name, which is Melville's invention out of a combination of the separate terms "te" and "hei," i.e. "tehei," is descriptive of the curse of life in captivity bestowed upon by the person who died a captive. In this sense, Marjora becomes "te-(h)ei," "the entangled, the imprisoned," the one truly defeated in inheriting the first prisoner's, "Teei's," curse.

Tomma

"I hesitated for an instant, thinking that it might be difficult for him to pronounce my real name, and then with the most praiseworthy intentions intimated that I was known as 'Tom.' But I could not have made a worse selection; the chief could not master it: 'Tommo,' 'Tomma,' 'Tommee,' every thing but plain 'Tom'" (*Typee* 72).

Society Islands

Toma: v. to be in an extirpated state (Davies 278)

Tomaa: v. to be divided in mind or affection (Davies 278)

To: pre. of, belonging to (Davies 275)

Maa: adj. cloven, divided (Davies 122)

Tonga Islands

Toma: adj. proud, vain (Rabone 202)

To: n. a fall, the act of falling (Rabone 196)

Ma: adj. capable of, able (Rabone 156)

Maori Islands

To: v. drag, haul (Williams 428)

To: adj. calm, tranquil (Williams 428)

To: definitive particle used with pronouns, nouns, and proper names to indicate

possession (Williams 428)

Ma: adj. white; pale, faded (Williams 161)

      This is a name that is rejected as an option for the narrator of *Typee* possibly

because it makes little sense or has small correlation with either the narrator's situation

or character. The possible meanings coming out of the combination of the monosyllable

words do not provide a cohesive enough appellation for him, where cohesion means the

combination of traits or elements that provide a fitting (i.e. within the parameters of his

appearance, situation, or character) description. The double *m*'s are typically excessive

and redundant for a language that subsists on the vowel-consonant combination.

Tommee

"I hesitated for an instant, thinking that it might be difficult for him to pronounce my

real name, and then with the most praiseworthy intentions intimated that I was known as

'Tom.' But I could not have made a worse selection; the chief could not master it:

'Tommo,' 'Tomma,' 'Tommee,' every thing but plain 'Tom'" (*Typee* 72).

Society Islands

Tomea: n. redness of the skin, caused by eating stale fish, or by the sun (Davies 278)

To: pre. of, belonging to (Davies 275)

Miimii: v. to grudge, envy, murmur

n. a grudge, an envy, a displeasure (Davies 143)

Mee: adj. shrunk, warped, as timber by the sun (Davies 142)

This alternative is mostly founded on the injured leg with which the narrator

introduces himself to the natives and the consequent displeasure brought up himself and

the people that are assigned to care for him. It is probably rejected due to the limited

application it has to the whole of the narrator's person, without excluding the possibility

of phonetic awkwardness.

Tommo

"I hesitated for an instant, thinking that it might be difficult for him to pronounce my

real name, and then with the most praiseworthy intentions intimated that I was known as

'Tom.' But I could not have made a worse selection; the chief could not master it:

'Tommo,' 'Tomma,' 'Tommee,' every thing but plain 'Tom'" (*Typee* 72).

Society Islands

Tomo: v. to enter, as at a door; to go into the vallies [*sic*] the first time in the season for

mountain plantains

v. to be brought low, as a ship or boat heavily laden

v. to be sunken; to sink altogether, as a ship, boat, or canoe (Davies 278)

Tonga Islands

Tomo: adj. longer, taller (Rabone 202)

Maori Islands

Tomo: v. be filled (Williams 435)

This appellation is chosen most probably based on two observations: the

narrator's condition and his physical appearance, a somewhat robust sailor who slumps

because of an injured leg. The choice is obviously arbitrary and based on the personal

preference of the native "godfather" but it is the one that combines the most observed

elements of the narrator's person. In any case, it seems that all three attempts to provide

the narrator with an appropriately Polynesian name are based on the premise that the

name must reflect at least some signifying characteristics of the individual, and all three seem to do that to a certain extent.

Tooboi

"Save the cut, there was no further allusion to the matter than the following:—'This day, being calm, Tooboi, one of the Lahina men, went overboard for a bath, and was eaten up by a shark. Immediately sent forward for his bag'" (*Mardi* 94).

"Among these was Tooboi, the heir of Tamatoy, King of Raiatair, one of the Society Isles" (*Omoo* 153).

Society Islands

Too: n. a pole to push a canoe along

n. the man at the head of a wandering dancing party

v. to pull, or drag along (Davies 279)

Tu: n. an advocate, supporter, pleader for another (Davies 283)

Poi: n. a season, the time of birth or death

v. to fasten, or tie fast, such as the out rigger of a canoe (Davies 200)

Tonga Islands

Tooboo: v. to spring up; to grow; to yield; a shoot; a sprout; a bud (Mariner *Dictionary* n. pag.)

In the case of these two different characters, Melville is referring to two different people, one taken from historical records and the other probably imagined. The difficulty of ascertaining the existence of the historical figure lies in the lack of source material that could corroborate Melville's claim. The orthography of the name alludes to the Tonga dialect since the consonant *b* is pronounced mainly by them. It is possible that Melville used a Tonga name to refer to Tahitian characters, or that he once again misspelled the name which should have had the consonant *p* in place of the *b*.

Toorooloo

"Whereupon, the old croakers, each with a quinsy, sang thus in cracked strains:— Quack! Quack! Quack! / With a toorooloo whack" (*Mardi* 448).

Society Islands

Tururu: n. a frightful noise by the mouth to astound the other

v. to be put in fear by a startling noise (Davies 293)

Tuiroo: adj. famous, noted, warlike (Davies 287)

The word combines Tahitian letters (*r* and *t*) with the Hawaiian *l* which is obviously impossible, unless it is an obscure, uncatalogued Marquesan word that only Melville could have remembered (without excluding the possibility of a misspelling). I have chosen the prevalent phonetically Tahitian as the most probably intended pronunciation and orthography with the *l* being a repetition of the middle *r* —the *r* is the

only Tahitian substitute for the *l* (Davies 218). The double *o*'s are also phonetic

substitutes for the Tahitian sound *u* (Davies 296). I believe that Melville's "toorooloo" is

most probably an invented word but the Tahitian "tururu" suggests a trace of influence

from the Polynesian in the description of the combat and the sound of the weapons

striking their victims.

Tooroorooloo

"The Jaw-bones of Tooroorooloo, a great orator in the days of Unja (Somewhat

twisted)" (*Mardi* 379).

Society Islands

Tururu: v. to put off a thing as useless

n. a frightful noise by the mouth to astound the other

v. to be put in fear by a startling noise (Davies 293)

Totoorooro: v. to speak laconically (Davies 282)

    Just like with "Toorooloo," this is a word that was probably invented, using a

mix of Tahitian and Hawaiian letters. The parenthetical comment suggests someone who

talks a lot or who talks forcefully, possibly a pun on "totoorooro," his greatness

amounting to his silence.

Tyohee

"It has three good harbors on its coast; the largest and best of which is called by the people living in its vicinity 'Tyohee,' and by Captain Porter was denominated Massachussets Bay" (*Typee* 11).

Society Islands

Taiohae: port in Nukuheva, known as Anna Maria Bay (Langsdorff 104)

The *y* in Melville's spelling replaces the diphthong *ai* of the original and suggests the lack of control or authority, at the time, over the issue of grammatical correctness in transposing the Polynesian language into an English text. In this sense, Melville's use of the *y* is legitimate and authoritative, but highly problematic when an agreed-upon format for transcribing Polynesian into English finally came into effect.

"The distance from Tower Bluff to the entrance of Taiohae, or Massachussets Bay, as Commodore Porter called it, is about eight miles" (Stewart 138).

Typee

"The present narrative necessarily begins where 'Typee' concludes, but has no further connection with the latter work. All, therefore, necessary for the reader to understand, who has not read 'Typee,' is given in a brief introduction" (*Omoo* xiv).

"These celebrated warriors appear to inspire the other islanders with unspeakable terrors. Their very name is a frightful one; for the word 'Typee' in the Marquesan dialect signifies a lover of human flesh. It is rather singular that the title should have been bestowed upon them exclusively, inasmuch as the natives of all this group are irreclaimable cannibals. The name may, perhaps, have been given to denote the peculiar ferocity of this clan, and to convey a special stigma along with it" (*Typee* 24).

"I have some authority for this statement, as one day from my mat in the Typee valley I saw a native maiden, in the precise attitude of the Venus, retreating with the grace of nature to a friendly covert" (*Piazza Tales* 403).

Society Islands

Ta: prep. of, or belonging to, applied to certain things, such as food, arms, speech, &c. (Davies 237)

Te: the definite article (Davies 263)

Ai: v. to eat (Davies 14)

Piaa: adj. fat and fleshy, as a barren sow (Davies 196)

Taipihs: n. warriors of the ocean (Hale 10)

Taipis: n. lovers of human flesh (Hale 10n)

As far as my research is concerned, there is no lexicographical evidence to support Melville's semantic claim. Anderson claims (120-121) that the basis for this name is possibly of an ethnological or cultural nature. However, Melville was also a

lover of words, especially invented ones, but for which he borrowed extensively from outside sources. As such, the name may be invented or based not only on cultural facts, but also on a lexicological tradition that emphasizes the creation of compound words and names. *Typee*, then, could be a compound name from the Tahitian "Ta-ai-piaa" that indeed means "of eating flesh," or "te-ai-piaa" which refers to the person, "the flesh-eater." Melville either modified or misspelled the name which became (accidentally or not) more appealing to his western audience than the more awkward "ta-ai-piaa" or "te-ai-piaa," without of course losing its romantic feel.

Hale's definition is partially based on Melville's descriptions and comments and I have included it here mainly for its first meaning, "warriors of the ocean," which does not necessarily suggest a cannibal but a noble people with a long-standing marine history.

"A belief has gone extensively abroad among this tribe, the Teiis, that we shall certainly join them in their war with the Taipiis" (Stewart 157).

Tyty

"For among these people of Odo, the matter of eating and drinking is held a matter of life and death. 'Drag away my queen from my arms,' said old Tyty when overcome of Adommo, 'but leave me my cook'" (*Mardi* 175).

Society Islands

Ta: prep. of, or belonging to, applied to certain things, such as food, arms, speech, &c.

(Davies 237)

Ai: v. to eat (Davies 14)

Sandwich Islands

Ka: prep. of; marks relation or possession and is used before nouns and pronouns,

similar in meaning to *a* but used in a different part of the sentence (Andrews,

Vocabulary 56)

Ai: v. to eat, consume (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 2)

Maori Islands

Ta: definitive particle used with pronouns, nouns, and proper names to indicate

possession (Williams 355)

Kai: v. eat (Williams 85)

      Possibly an invented word, this name has its root in several Polynesian dialects.

The English *y*, which Melville uses in several words that are spelled in a similar way,

represents the phonetic equivalent diphthong *ai*. In essence, the word "ta-ai" is a

compound name that means "of, or belonging to eating," a very appropriate

characterization for the culinary tendencies of its (the name's) owner.

U

Uhia

"'From that time forth,' said Braid-Beard, 'young Uhia spread like the tufted top of the Palm; his thigh grew brawny as the limb of the Banian; his arm waxed strong as the back bone of the shark; yea, his voice grew sonorous as a conch. And now he bent his whole soul to the accomplishments of the destiny believed to be his. Nothing less than bodily to remove Ohonoo to the center of the lagoon, in fulfillment of an old prophecy running thus—'When a certain island shall stir from its foundations and stand in the middle of the still water, then shall the ruler of that island be ruler of all Mardi' … this faith it is, that robs his days of peace … he upbraids the gods for laggards, and curses himself as deprived of his rights … most miserable of demi-gods" (*Mardi* 275-276).

Society Islands

U: v. to prevail or conquer; to run against a thing (Davies 296)

Hee: v. to be in a discharged or banished condition, as one turned out of his place (Davies 101)

Hia: *an affix* to verbs, denoting the passive form (Davies 102)

A: an affix to verbs to signifiy they are used as nouns (Davies 1)

A: verb aux. denoting the continuance of the action or of the things mentioned (Davies 2)

Sandwich Islands

Uhi: v. to cover over as a cloud over the sky, or over a mountain, to cover as a sin, i.e. to

forgive, to veil, cover with a veil as the face, to blind fold; to spread over a cover, to

conceal (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 30)

Uhea: n. the cover of a pot. Note— this may be an erroneous orthography for *uhia*, a

contraction for *uhiia*, covered (Andrews, *Dictionary* 106)

Tonga Islands

Uhie: n. an ill omen (Rabone 22)

Again, this is most probably an invented name with at least part of it being

Polynesian, although even that has been somewhat modified. Melville presents someone

who has been suffering from illusions of megalomania and who tries to fulfill them no

matter their impossibility or absurdity. In this sense, Uhia is overcome by his desire to

elude his fate and fulfill his destiny, an irony by itself as these are essentially one and the

same. He will always be struggling to conquer ("uheea") but will always remain

"covered, blind folded, concealed" ("uhia, uhea").

V

Vahinee

"Aimata, the present queen, who is commonly called Pomaree Vahinee I., or the first female Pomaree" (*Omoo* 302-303).

Society Islands

Vahine: n. a woman (Davies 308)

Sandwich Islands

Wahine: n. a female in distinction from *kane* a male, applied to men and animals; a woman, a wife (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 129)

This is information that Melville had gathered from his own experience and which he could have supplemented with any serious source of that time. His spelling of the term indicates Melville's almost typical habit of doubling vowels in order to increase (both visually and phonetically) the word's Polynesian origin.

"We have just learnt that Pomare, before his demise, nominated his son, an infant of eighteen months, to be his successor; and also appointed the queen (the boy's mother), her sister, Pomare Vahine, and five principal chiefs of Tahiti to be a regency during the long minority to come" (Tyerman & Bennet 1: 144).

Valapee

"Valapee, or the Isle of Yams, being within plain sight of Media's dominions, we were not very long in drawing nigh to its shores … one prayed for abundance of rain, that the yams of Valapee might not wilt in the ground" (*Mardi* 201, 345).

Society Islands

Uara: n. the Hawaiian species of sweet potato (Davies 297)

Pi: n. young, or unripe, as fruit; immature (Davies 196)

Sandwich Islands

Uala: n. the sweet potatoe, the large muscles of the arm (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 29)

Opiopio: v. to be young, tender as a plant or tree (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 28)

The lack of a manuscript for *Mardi* deprives us the ability to verify whether the first letter is actually a *v* or a *u*. Even if it were a *v*, though, still Melville would have changed it to make the word more familiar to his readers who would have trouble pronouncing the vowel combination *ua*. Nathalia Wright provides the same information regarding the possibility of a change in the first letter of the word: "*Vala* or *uala* throughout Polynesia means sweet potato, a tuber which was introduced into the islands by the Spanish. The yam (*uhi* throughout Polynesia), similar to the potato, is a staple food in tropical climates, where it is native" (Wright 177.6n). In this sense, the word

means "the young potatoe," an echo of its ruler whose name also carries the same

meaning as his land (see *Peepi*).

Varvy

"It must have been at least the tenth day, reckoning from the Hegira, that we found

ourselves the guests of Varvy, an old hermit of an islander, who kept house by himself,

perhaps a couple of leagues from Taloo … But with a variety of uncouth gestures, he

soon made us welcome; informing us, by the same means, that he was both deaf and

dumb" (*Omoo* 272).

Society Islands

Ua: a *verb of being*, or a prefix to verbs and adjectives, affirming the present existence

of the *quality*, or that the act existed, or had taken place, but implying a former absence

of the act or quality affirmed (Davies 296-297)

Ua: v. to scream; to bray, applied to the ass (Davies 296)

Vi: n. a sound in the ear

v. to be subdued, brought under; to have a sound in the ear (Davies 314)

Ui: n. a ringing noise in the ear (Davies 298)

Essentially the name describes the symptoms of someone who is "both deaf and

dumb," someone, that is, who speaks like an animal, with incoherent sounds ("Ua"), and

who is suffering from a constant ringing in the ears that makes it impossible to hear

anything else ("ui"). Although Melville probably did not know the meaning of the name, there is a Polynesian (Tahitian) root to it.

Vavona

"In many points the works of our great poet Vavona, now dead a thousand moons, still remain a mystery. Some call him a mystic; but wherein he seems obscure, it is, perhaps, we that are in fault; not by premeditation spoke he those archangel thoughts, which made many declare, that Vavona, after all, was but a crack-pated god, not a mortal of sound mind … Vavona seemed a solitary Mardian; who seldom went abroad; had few friends; and shunning others, was shunned by them" (*Mardi* 395, 592).

Society Islands

Vanaa: n. an orator, one fluent with words (Davies 310)

Vanaanaa: n. eloquent speeches

v. to think with anxiety (Davies 310)

Ona: v. to recur, as a thought or sickness (Davies 165)

Vivovivo: *vinivini*: v. to speak with ease and volubility (Davies 314)

Sandwich Islands

Wa: v. to reflect, reason, think, to seek, to wish, to say one's self, to ponder, to resolve in one's mind (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 128)

Ona: n. state of intoxication (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 27)

The consonant *v* limits the word to the Tahitian and Tongan islands while presenting the reader with a difficult situation; the combination "vo" is rarely used in the dialects where the letter *v* is available. This however suggests the possibility of a different spelling in its original parts, one that could possibly be expanded to all Polynesian dialects. In this sense, Melville may have substituted the letter *v* for its Hawaiian counterpart *w*. The word "wa-ona" means "to reflect, to think [in] a state of intoxication," a definition that suggests the existence of a fine, almost imperceptible, line of distinction between the unreachable thoughts of a genius and the incomprehensible babble of a drunk.

Melville's name is probably an invented word but with a Polynesian root in both parts. The Tahitian compound "vanaa-ona" or "vanaanaa-ona," which Melville changed of course, is a compound term that refers to someone who has recurring eloquent thoughts, suggesting either a poet or someone mentally unstable.

"some of our people told us they were not *ona i ka ruma*, (intoxicated or poisoned with rum)" (Ellis 4: 309).

Vee-Vee

"Among various other offices, it was the duty of little Vee-Vee to announce the advent of his master, upon drawing near to the islands in our route … calling for Vee-Vee our page" (*Mardi* 200, 487).

Society Islands

Vea: n. a messenger (Davies 312)

veve: adj. bare, poor, destitute, ragged, ill attired

v. to be in want, having no property (Davies 313)

vi: v. to be subdued, brought under (Davies 314)

vivi: n. a grasshopper (Davies 314)

vivivivi: v. to chirp (Davies 314)

uiui: n. a person that is skillful in work (Davies 299)

Sandwich Islands

Wiwi: adj. poor, slender, feeble (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 131)

Although this is probably another invented term, the Tahitian dialect contains terms whose meaning can be used to describe the duties and situation of the young page. The Hawaiian word is included to suggest the possibility of an alternative spelling, especially in relation to the consonant *v*. It is uncertain whether this was the boy's real name or simply a nickname that Melville invented as a comical or satirical counter-point to his more serious discussions. In Vee-vee are visible the first traces of the more somber and tragic figure of Pip.

"This day, in the course of our ramble, we caught a *vivi*, a giant of a grasshopper, which measured nearly five inches in length" (Tyerman & Bennet 1: 182).

W

Waiurar

"The Polynesians carry their hospitality to an amazing extent. Let a native of Waiurar, the westernmost part of Tahiti, make his appearance as a traveler at Partoowye, the most easternly village of Imeeo; though a perfect stranger, the inhabitants on all sides accost him at their doorways, inviting him to enter, and make himself at home" (*Omoo* 254).

Society Islands

Oweiuru, *Waiuru*, *Vaiarua*: area in Southern Tahiti, the Taraibu district (Wilkes 2: 38ff), (Ellis 2: 1)

Melville remembers the word without the often redundant *o* at the beginning (as in *Otaheite*). Wilkes (2: 39) includes a map of Tahiti that includes the name of the area but does not provide any more information about it. Ellis also has a map of the island that includes the name with a different spelling ("Waiuru") as well as a reference to the port of "Vaiarua" in the district of "Taiarabu" in Tahiti: "and a Spaniard, who had saved

his llife by escaping from Langara's ship, while it was lying at anchor off Vaiarua, in Taiarabu, in March 1773" (Ellis 2: 5).

Wee-Wee

"'This is a very good feast,' said the reeling old man, 'and the wine also is very good; but you evil-minded Wee-Wees (French), and you false-hearted men of Tahiti, are all very bad" (*Omoo* 125).

"Jimmy seemed to know them very well, and stopped for a while, and had a talk about the 'Wee-Wees,' as the people of Nukuheva call the Monsieurs" (*Typee* 270).

Society Islands

uiui: v. to ask questions repeatedly (Davies 299)

Sandwich Islands

Ui: v. to ask a question, to enquire of (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 29)

This is possibly a pun on the French declarative "oui" although it is uncertain whether this is a Polynesian or a Melvillean invention, and neither its intended meaning. The Polynesian language uses the term to describe someone who asks many questions a characterization that could befit the French occupants of Tahiti.

Whaiherea

"Concerning the singular ignorance of the natives respecting their own country, it may be observed, that a considerable inland lake—Whaiherea by name—is known to exist, although their accounts of it strangely vary. Some told me it had no bottom, no outlet, and no inlet; others, that it fed all the streams on the island" (*Omoo* 114n)

Society Islands

Waiherea: n. lake in central Tahiti on Mount Orohena (Wilkes 2: 5, 25)

With the exception of the silent *h*, Melville's spelling is accurate. The note format of the entry suggests that Melville was concerned with the accuracy of his allusions, so long as they served his literary intentions. With this note, Melville makes a pseudo-ethnological observation which he associates with the romantic appeal of a country. Despite the increasing colonization efforts, Tahiti still retains a portion of its secret paradisiacal character.

"athough no active volcano exists, nor any well-defined crater, unless Lake Waiherea can be considered as one" (Wilkes 2: 47).

Wymontoo

"There were various opinions as to a suitable appellation … while Doctor Long Ghsot remarked, that he ought, by all means, to retain his original name,—Wymontoo-Hee, meaning (as he maintained), in the figurative language of the island, something analogous to one who had got himself into a scrape" (*Omoo* 34).

Society Islands

Uau: v. to scrape off the skin or surface (Davies 297)

Motu: n. a cut, breach, or rent (Davies 147)

Sandwich Islands

Uao: v. to interfere (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 29)

Uwao: n. a peacemaker (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 32)

Muku: v. to wrangle, to blackguard (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 103)

Again, most probably a compound name with the initial combination "wy" being phonetically analogous to the original "uai" and the second part of the word analogous to "motu" or "muku." Melville inserted the *n* which should be removed from the original to make the word comply with Polynesian orthographical parameters. I have been unable to find a Polynesian term where the *n* remains and some other letter is replaced or where the *n* is replaced by another letter, most probably a vowel.

Melville used the metaphorical implications of the original word's meaning, especially in the Hawaiian dialect where the meaning of the combined original words, "uao-muku" or "uwao-muku," "to interfere [and] wrangle" or "to blackguard a peacemaker," could be read metaphorically. The Tahitian dialect does not contain as evocative terms as the Hawaiian, but the compound "uau-motu," which means "to scrape a cut," could have been perceived (and used) in a metaphorical sense by Melville to suggest that which the Hawaiian implies.

This is one of the few cases where the literal meaning of a word from one dialect carries a similar metaphorical meaning in another. It is highly uncertain that Melville knew of trans-dialectal potential of certain words or phrases, but he may have suspected it out of his own experience with Latin-based languages, especially Italian and Spanish or French.

X

The letter does not exist in any Polynesian dialect and therefore is difficult to find the correct equivalent with some preciseness. It is possible that since the *x* is pronounced as *z* in the English language, then the *x* could be represented by the consonant *t* which (*t*) is the Polynesian equivalent of the *z*.

Xiki

"For swift on their track sped the hereditary butler of the insulted god, one Xiki, whose

duty it was to provide the sacrifices" (*Mardi* 341).

Society Islands

Tii: n. an image; a demon or wicked spirit, a class of beings supposed to be different from men and gods (Davies 269)

Maori Islands

Tiki: n. a personification of primeval man; a rough presentation of a human figure on the gable of a house (Williams 417)

The replacement of the *x* with the *t* is based on the phonetic equivalency between the phonetic representation of the English *x*, which is pronounced like the letter *z*, and the transplantation of that phonetic representative into the Polynesian dialect. Melville is vague regarding the meaning of the word which by approximation refers to an inferior deity that sacrifices the chosen victims for the superior deity.

"They varied in size, some being six or eight feet long, others not more than as many inches. These, representing the spirits they called *tii*" (Ellis 1: 337).

Y

This letter does not exist in the Polynesian language in a written form, but its phonetic

representation does exist, mainly through the diphthong "ai."

Yillah

"She declared herself more than a mortal, a maiden from Oroolia, the Island of Delights,

somewhere in the paradisiacal archipelago of the Polynesians … Her name was Yillah

… And hardly had the waters of Oroolia washed white her olive skin, and tinged her hair

with gold, when one day strolling in the woodlands, she was snared in the tendrils of a

vine. Drawing her into its bowers, it gently transformed her into one of its blossoms,

leaving her conscious soul folded up in the transparent petals" (*Mardi* 137).

"The gentle Yillah was a seraph from the sun" (*Mardi* 166).

Society Islands

Ira: n. a mole or mark on the skin (Davies 120)

Ai: adv. the word seems to be idiomatic, and to have no exact correspondent in English;

it is often connected with a query, and the reason demanded or given (Davies 14)

Ui: n. a single woman who never had a child (Davies 298)

Ui: v. to ask questions, to enquire (Davies 298)

Ra (*la*, *a*): n. the sun (Davies 218)

Raa: adj. sacred, consecrated, devoted to a sacred purpose (Davies 218)

Sandwich Islands

Ilaa: n. a dark stain on the skin (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 18)

Ii: adj. mortified or humbled by the overbearing conduct of another, restrained

(Andrews, *Vocabulary* 17)

Ai: verbal dir. has reference generally to a preceding noun, verb, or adverb, expressive of

cause, manner, or instrument (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 2)

Ui: v. to ask a question, to enquire of (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 29)

La: n. the sun (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 81)

Laa: adj. sacred, holy, devoted to sacred purposes (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 81)

Tonga Islands

Ila: n. a mark; a spot on the body (Rabone 17)

Laa: n. the sun (Rabone 145)

Maori Islands

Ira: n. freckle, mole, or other natural mark on the skin (Williams 79)

Ui: v. ask, enquire; question (Williams 466)

Ra: n. sun (Williams 319)

     Melville's character in all its essence is spread out throughout the book making

impossible (and inadvisable) any effort to pinpoint some significant or identifying

moment. As such, the meaning of the name is also spread throughout the book as the

fated narrator struggles vainly from island to island to regain her (and the reader to understand her). Although the name begins with a vowel that does not exist in the Polynesian language and ends with a consonant, an ungrammatical choice for this particular language, there is a Polynesian root word or two that could have influenced Melville's conception of her. The first instance, where the name is seen as one unified whole ("ira/ila/ilaa"), is relevant to her character and her (darker) origin before she is transformed into an albino: "Yillah, I have a lock of your hair, ere yet it was golden: a little dark tress like a ring. How your cheeks were then changing from olive to white" (*Mardi* 143).

The consonant *y* may not exist as such in any Polynesian dialect but it is obvious from the spelling of the rest of the word, and especially the terminating *h*, that Melville's spelling is an effort to imitate the pronunciation of the word rather than its orthography. As such, the consonant *y* is pronounced in the same manner as any previous *y* in Melville's pseudo-Polynesian spelling, mainly as the diphthong "ai" (see "tyty"). We can see throughout the book that Yillah is not only a mystery that remains unsolved, but also the solution to that mystery; her discovery will lead to an explanation as to her disappearance. This similarity is apparent also with the syllable /ui/ where the grammatical *u* has replaced the foreign *y* for the "more Polynesian" result "Uila" (the double *l* is an easily corrected "mistake"). This second spelling also functions to retain the phonetic uniqeness of the *yi* combination — both the *yi* and the *ui* retain the guttural /j/ sound. As a compound word, the name has several meanings (or several combinations

of meanings), each of which illuminates one particular aspect of her character. She is a maiden from the sun ("Uira"), a sacred maiden ("Uiraa"), a captive ("Ii") several times.

Yoky

"Deaf and dumb he was; and save arms, minus every thing but an indispensable trunk and head. So huge his all-comprehensive mouth, it seemed to swallow up itself. But shapeless, helpless as was Yoky,—as king of Hooloomooloo, he was competent; the state being a limited monarchy, of which his Highness was but the passive and ornamental head" (*Mardi* 570).

Sandwich Islands

Ai: v. to eat, to consume; figuratively to devour, as by fire (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 2)

Oki: v. to be miserable, destitute, hungry (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 25)

Okuu: n. name of a great sickness throughout the islands when multitudes were swept off, a pestilence (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 25)

Maori Islands

Oke: n. invalid, sick person (Williams 239)

The initial *y* is again an addition by Melville which complements the meaning of the second part of the word, "oki." The derivation of the Hawaiian *ai* from the Melvillean *y* is based on a phonetic equivalency. As such, the compound "ai-oki," which

Melville transcribed with a *y*, describes someone who "eats because he is hungry, miserable, and destitute." The Maori "oke" and the Hawaiian "okuu" were used to refer to someone sick, or an invalid.

Yoomy

"Third and last, was Yoomy, or the Warbler. A youthful, long-haired, blue-eyed minstrel; all fits and starts; at times, absent of mind, and wan of cheek; but always very neat and pretty in his apparel; wearing the most becoming of turbans, a Bird of Paradise feather its plume, and sporting the gayest of sashes. Most given was Yoomy to amorous melodies, and rondos, and roundelays, very witching to hear. But at times disdaining oaten reed, like a clarion he burst forth with lusty lays of arms and battle; or, in mournful strains, sounded elegies for departed bards and heroes" (*Mardi* 197).

Society Islands

I: v. to speak, but the word is obsolete (Davies 116)

Ooma: n. the human heart (Davies 166)

Oo: v. to sound, as water near boiling (Davies 166)

Oo: v. to cluck, as a hen; make noise, as a lizard (Davies 166)

Sandwich Islands

I: v. to speak, to call, to name, to call for one (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 17)

Oo: n. name of a species of bird found in great numbers on Hawaii (Andrews,

Dictionary 76)

Umauma: n. the breast, the bosom (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 31)

Maori Islands

Uma: n. bosom, chest (Williams 467)

The initial *y*, based on Melville's use of the term and its equivalency in the

Polynesian language, was used by him to imitate the letter *i* as well as the diphthong "ai"

(although this was done through the *i* and not the *y*). Melville used the *y* in place of the *i*

in order to pun on the interpretative complexity of the resulting compound, "y-oo-my."

The name is suggestive of the binary opposition "you" and "me," but since the *y*

conceals a second *I*, a second "me," the name retains its self-centered nature, "I-you-

me."

Of course, the original Polynesian word expresses only a part of what Melville

achieves through its transformation. The Polynesian root-words for "Yoomy," "i-

ooma/uma," mean "to speak the human heart or the bosom," while the double *o* is used

by the Polynesian language to imitate the singing of birds, which Melville expresses

both with the double *o* of "Yoomy" and with the nickname "warbler."

Yoomy appears like the Romantic poet who can transcend beyond the limits of

his own psyche, beyond the "me" and explore the "you" that lies beyond the mundane,

beyond the real, beyond the rational. By absorbing the divine essence of the "you" into

himself and transforming it through his art, the other "you" becomes "me," it becomes part of himself, a process by which he can comprehend himself. In this sense, Yoomy is living through "the other," he finds himself through the myths, stories, and poems of others.

Z

The letter *z* is replaced by the letter *t* in the Tahitian dialect, although the Hawaiian considers the *z* a foreign letter and offers no replacement for it. All references to Hawaiian terms here are carried out by approximation between the Tahitian and Hawaiian dialects.

Zeke (Keekee)

"The voice of Zeke, the Yankee, had a twang like a cracked viol … But Zeke was no beauty. A strong, ugly man, he was well adapted to manual labor; and that was all. His eyes were made to see with, and not for ogling. Compared with the Cockney, he was grave, and rather taciturn; but there was a deal of good old humor bottled up in him, after all … 'Keekee (Zeke) maitai,' they cried, 'nuee nuee hanna hanna portarto'—(makes plenty of potatoes)" (*Omoo* 204, 256).

Society Islands

Tete: v. to make noise as the beaten shells; to be noisy, as a great talker (Davies 265)

Sandwich Islands

Kee: adj. crooked (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 67)

Kekee (*Keekee*): adj. crooked, twisted, incorrect, contrary to the rule of right, twisted, out

of shape, cross, petulant (Andrews, *Vocabulary* 67; Andrews, *Dictionary* 265)

Maori Islands

Ke: adj. strange, extraordinary (Williams 111)

Keke: adj. obstinate, stubborn

v. refrain from speaking, sulk (Williams 113)

      This is an American name but with a Polynesian alternative because the natives

had no *z* sound. The replacement letter *k* is valid by extension because the Tahitian

language has an equivalent for *z*, the letter *t* (Davies 1). The Georgian Islands equivalent

for the Tahitian *t* is *k* (Andrews, *Dictionary* xii), and so, by extension, the name

"Keekee" reflects accurately the Georgian Islands perception of the English Zeke and

the Tahitian "Tete."

      There are several elements in the character's personality and physical appearance

that, coincidentally or not, seem to be reflected by the Polynesian adoption of his name.

He is called "Keekee" because he is "crooked," that is, "ugly," because he speaks with a

twang, reverberating the sound of his own words in a sense, and thus he sounds strange

to native ears, and finally, he is quite persistent in his effort to cultivate the harsh land

and make a profitable living out of something that the natives perceive as a waste of time

and toil.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The dictionary is not exhaustive in its inclusion of Melville's terms; there is a large number of entries that have not been included mainly for reasons of space and time. Further, it is not within the scope of this work as this is intended to be a reader's guide to Melville's methodology and not a panacea. If readers wish to conduct more exhaustive research on this subject, they are encouraged to contact the author of this dictionary who is more than willing to share his findings.

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