Neoclassical Protagonists in Thomas Heywood’s Edward IV

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In early modern English drama, there is palpable tension between Christian moral ideals and the ethics inherent in the hierarchy of the monarchal order. Thomas Heywood’s play Edward IV, parts 1 and 2 (first performed in 1599) traces the domestic tragedy of Matthew and Jane Shore through the historic events of the War of the Roses and the rise of Richard III, ultimately linking the couple’s plight with the emergence of the middle class from the prosperity of early modern London. In the play, King Edward occupies a mimetically desired centre, around which the peripheral potential protagonists Matthew, Jane, and Falconbridge gather and threaten to become rivals. Though his royal status necessitates his desirable centrality, Edward is not immune to the lure of collectively desired centres, a fact which is illustrated in his fascination with the London Jewellers, Matthew and Jane Shore. Another example of the draw and potential permeability of centres of desire appears in the play’s rebellion plot, where the rebel Falconbridge is drawn to the metropolitan centre of London, which functions as a synecdoche for royal power. Employing Gans’s notion of the neoclassical aesthetic, I propose that Heywood’s play illuminates the early modern version of the originary scene in its positioning of the characters Falconbridge, Jane Shore, and Matthew Shore in relation to King Edward. Heywood’s play illustrates the influence of the Christian equality of souls in the class tensions of the early modern period by illuminating the dramatic trajectories of multiple protagonists emerging from the Christian moral ideal as it coexists with the ethics of feudal hierarchy.

In Gans’s account of the historical transition from the classical aesthetic to the neoclassical aesthetic of the early modern period, literary protagonists become increasingly aware of their peripheral position on the scene of representation. The neoclassical aesthetic and its stymied protagonist emerge via the problematic "integration of Christian ethical values into the classical esthetic" (Gans 1993: 150). In foregrounding tensions within the social hierarchy, Heywood’s Edward IV aesthetically manifests the ethical problems resulting from the sustained influence of Christianity on the fading classical aesthetic and its strict hierarchies. In Heywood’s neoclassical aesthetic, Mistress Shore takes on a sacral aura through her ambitious transgression of the centre, which prefigures her class-levelling beneficence, but also her tragic death. More’s brief account of the historical Mistress Shore, in his History of Richard III, contains the seeds of the tragic pathos, manifest in the Christian critique of scapegoating, that Jane’s literary character would foster throughout the 16th and into the 18th centuries. Another neoclassical protagonist appearing in part 1 of the play is Thomas Faulconberg—or Falconbridge—who is the bastard son of the 1st Earl of Kent, and a turncoat leader during the War of the Roses. In Edward IV, religiously propelled social levelling is complicated by the immediate reality of the monarch’s coercive dominance over subjects daring to recognize their spiritual equality with royalty. Paradoxically, the Christian ethic, which exacerbates a commoner’s resentment toward the elite and affects the disintegration of classical hierarchies, also provides the representational means of deferring the citizen’s potentially violent resentment. Gans argues that belief in religious revelation, language, and its associated moral awareness of total reciprocity are the repetition of the circumstances of the originary scene, which allows each individual in the community to mirror the group’s signification of an enduring sacred presence (1990: 26-27). (1)

In Science and Faith, Gans argues that Christian moral reciprocity resembles (while remaining distinct from) the rules governing the distribution of resources, or ethics. Gans explains: “Morality takes the originary scene as a self-sufficient model of human interaction, whereas ethics is concerned with its prolongation in
the economic life of the society. Signs are infinitely reproducible; things are potentially scarce, and access to them must be regulated" (95). Systems for the distribution of resources are traditionally hierarchical, whereas Christian notions of moral reciprocity posit a radical leveling of society, which occurs in the idealized realm of language. With their individuated but equal souls, each Christian subject is on the same moral footing before God, who forms the organizing centre of the Christian scene of representation.(2) However, this shared moral consciousness—which is founded on the reciprocal exchange of signs—does not obviate ethical rules and hierarchies, which govern the distribution of resources. The centre of such hierarchies is typically dominated by a big man or king, whose apportionment of the community's wealth establishes a social order and affords him a great deal of influence. In the Christian societies of the middle ages and early modern period, where the history of Edward IV and its re-enactment in Heywood's play take place, the ethical and the moral orders existed in tension with one another. Edward IV takes up and explores these tensions in its examination of both the relationship of various characters to King Edward and the manifestations of those characters' Christian moral awareness.

The action of the play depends on the draw towards England’s centre, King Edward, which is felt by the socially and politically peripheral protagonists Matthew, Jane, and Falconbridge. The play opens just after King Edward has married the commoner, Elizabeth Woodville, and when London is threatened by a siege led by the Lancastrian General, Thomas Falconbridge. The king is absent from London. Nevertheless, the city prepares to display its loyalty to the sovereign by denying the rebel army access to the city. Matthew Shore, a citizen-jeweller, successfully leads the city's defence. After the rebels' defeat, Edward returns and offers to knight Matthew as a reward for his efforts, Matthew declines, implying that he is either not worthy, or indifferent, to the honour Edward wishes to bestow. In the moments after Matthew's slight against the king, Edward's eye falls on Matthew's wife Jane. Eventually, the king seduces her. Matthew flees into exile to avoid the shame of his cuckoldning. However, wartime events bring him back to London under an alias. He is imprisoned and nearly sentenced to death. In the meantime, Jane uses her courtly position as the king's mistress to help the common people of London and plead for the lives of the recently imprisoned sailors, one of whom is Matthew, though Jane does not recognize him. As the play draws to its conclusion, the ailing Edward dies, allowing Richard (Duke of York) to take the throne from Edward's murdered sons. Richard, wishing to obliterate all remnants of Edward's reign, has Jane banished from the city, where she and Matthew are reunited and tragically die of starvation in each other's arms. Their deaths amplify the pathos of their shared prayerful repentance, definitively drawing the audience's attention away from the play's royal centre to foreground London's common citizens.

Though at the beginning of the play King Edward occupies the play's coveted central space, he is not immune to the machinations of mimetic desire, which tend to imbue rivals and the objects belonging to rivals (common or not) with, what René Girard describes as an illusory—or metaphysical—excess of being (Girard 1987: 295, 297). Edward is gripped with resentment when Matthew Shore declines his invitation to be knighted. As a warrior expressing intense loyalty to London, Matthew arouses resentment in Edward by refusing to swear fealty to the king. That Edward does not easily command Matthew Shore's obedience is clear when Matthew refuses to adopt the posture of humble deference assumed by the city fathers. Matthew excuses himself by saying: "Far be it from the thought of Matthew Shore / That he should be advanced with Aldermen, / With our Lord Mayor, and our right grave Recorder" (1.10.233-35). Matthew's excessive humility is a means of tactfully indicating his resentment for the king. Matthew's resentment is a response to Edward's claims on the city's wealth, but also his absence from the battle, which Matthew fought, partly, on Edward's behalf. Despite these possible criticisms of the king, Matthew gives no overt—or identifiably treasonous—indication that he resents the king. Nevertheless, Matthew's refusal of the king's offer is experienced by Edward as a diminishment of his royal prestige—or metaphysical being. Edward's resentment emerges in response to Matthew's evasion of his royal favour. It is upon his remembrance of this refusal at the Guildhall that Edward begins to fixate on Jane, who he wishes to control in order to re-establish his superiority over Matthew.(3)

The link between Matthew's slight against Edward and Edward's subsequent fixation on Jane is explicable in terms of mimetic desire. According to Girard, every subject desires according to the desire of another. The other is the model for the subject's desire. He designates objects for the subject. For the subject, attractive models are often those that demonstrate indifference toward the subject, since this posture indicates to the subject that the model is completely self-sufficient and therefore in possession of a wealth of metaphysical being (Girard 1987: 295, 297). In Edward IV, Edward is the subject and Matthew is the model. Matthew's
great wealth of prestige (or metaphysical being) derives from his contentment with the life and wealth of the city. The king can never really experience this wealth of being except by having his subjects submit themselves to his authority and affirm the superiority of the king's position. Matthew refuses to do this, so the king must find another way to appropriate the prestige Matthew embodies. Matthew's indifference to him propels Edward's desire for Jane.

Jane Shore's chastity functions as a symbol of both Matthew's material wealth and his public prestige. Coppélia Kahn illuminates this dramatic trope in her analysis of cuckoldry in *Cymbeline*: she characterizes the objectification of women in cuckold plots as a way to embody and represent the metaphysical notion of a male character's prestige. As Kahn explains, "Iachimo draws Posthumus into betting on his wife's chastity...thus reminding the hero that her chastity is valuable to him because his honor and his status depend on it" (126). The exclusive possession of the female body is analogous to wealth and the ability to defend it. Similarly, Edward's cuckolding of Matthew functions as a counter-attack in the battle for prestige, where Edward's ability to defend his ostensive holdings, London, is undertaken by a commoner, who subsequently refuses to accept the knighthood.

Accordingly, Edward's cuckolding of Matthew is revenge for Matthew's indifference to royal honour—Edward takes Jane in retaliation for Matthew's refusal to cede London via his fealty. In this case, the oscillations of mimetic rivalry extend beyond the realm of violence and may be manifest in "sexual activity" (Girard 1979:152). Edward's desire for Jane is mediated by Matthew, who represents the wealth and power of the city of London (4) as evidenced in the following exchange:

**Edward.** How? Mistress Shore? What, not his wife
That did refuse his knighthood at our hand.

**Mayor.** The very same, my lord, and here he is.

**Edward.** What, Master Shore? We are your debtor still,
But by God's grace, intend not so to die.
And, gentlewoman, now before your face
I must condemn him of discourtesy—
Ye, and of great wrong that he hath offered you;
For you had been a lady but for him.
He was in fault; trust me, he was to blame
To hinder virtue of her due by right. (1.16.84-94)

Even if the king's condemnation is an attempt at humour through hyperbole, there is tone of bitterness in the repetitious indictment of Matthew's refusal. The king says Matthew is discourteous; that he wrongs his wife; that he is at fault; that he is to blame; that he hinders virtue. The rapid iteration of his condemnation before Matthew's wife and the Mayor amounts to an insult. The king is taking advantage of a public scene to dishonour Matthew in return for the way he has been dishonoured by Matthew when the latter refused to be knighted. The king's insult is part of his attempt to allay his resentment over Matthew's prestige and apparent self-sufficiency. A few lines later, the king admits his attraction to Jane, asking, "Had ever citizen so fair a wife?" (114). This jealous resentment is manifest in the king's inner comparison of himself to Matthew, where he wonders "What change is this? Proud, saucy, roving eye, / What whisperst in my brain? That she is fair? / I know it, I see it. Fairer than my queen?" (120-22). Such a comparison between his own wife and a subject's wife implies that king and subject occupy the same sphere. In imagining Shore's superiority to himself, the king undercuts his nobility before the audience and himself. Recognizing his ignoble devaluation of the Crown, the king inwardly condemns himself in a stagey monologue: "Down rebel! Back, base treacherous conceit" (125). The king does not succeed in overruling his treacherous desire. Instead, his resentment manifests itself in his obsession with—and eventual seduction of—Jane Shore.

In Gans's account of the historical transition from the classical aesthetic to the neoclassical aesthetic of the early modern period, literary protagonists become increasingly aware of their peripheral position on the scene of representation. According to Gans the classical aesthetic embodies a hypothesis of origin that represents "the scenic center at the expense of the scene qua scene" (1993-132). The scenes created in the classical aesthetic depict a hero who dominates the center without becoming self-conscious regarding his position relative to the covetous periphery. Gans defines the classical aesthetic in contrast with the neoclassical aesthetic, in which the hero becomes aware of his position on the periphery of a scene of.
The classical hero stands alone in the centre, uncomprehendingly suffering the violence its contested space attracts. Unlike the classical hero, the neoclassical hero imaginatively projects himself into the sacred centre, self-consciously reflecting to the audience his desire for the centre along with his resentment of its inaccessibility. (5)

According to Gans, the classical hero's domination of the centre depends on the audience's recognition that they have "an imaginary but not a real place in the central agon" (148). The classical scene, with its focus on an embattled king or prince, is upended by the advent of Christianity, "with its foregrounding of the moral equality of all" (148). In this new world, Hamlet can draw the audience's attention away from Claudius, the royal centre of attention, with his melancholy bearing and ironic asides. It is in the neoclassical world—where equal yet peripheral souls surround the sacred centre—that the common citizens and denizens of London can be imaginatively launched from the spectators' pit onto the stage of stately affairs. On the same early modern stage where a pagan Julius Caesar breaths his last, the contemporary apprentices, guildsmen, women, and citizens of London may also (despite their lower social status) live and tragically die encircled by their fellow Christian souls. The plots of domestic dramas and London city plays provided numerous examples of this trend throughout the period. (6)

In foregrounding tensions within the social hierarchy, Heywood's Edward IV aesthetically manifests the ethical problems resulting from the sustained influence of Christianity on the fading classical aesthetic and its strict hierarchies. The neoclassical period's resentful peripheral characters appear in the first scenes of the play, which opens on the Duchess of York chastising her son, King Edward, for marrying below his rank. Thus, the play's first problem occurs when a peripheral character (the commoner Elizabeth Woodville) insinuates her way into the kingdom's sacred centre. By focusing on this tension between noble and common—especially in the Shore plot—Heywood highlights the trend of social levelling that emerges from the medieval Christian critique of classical hierarchy, which—in the early modern period—rapidly extended the ideal of Christian equality. As Edward observes to his exasperated mother: the Britain of his day "'tis a stirring world" (1.1.15). Later in the play, Matthew Shore, a citizen of London, will out do Edward in defending the realm and dare to abstain from swearing fealty to the king. This subtle display of resentment towards a king, who lowers the weight of civil defence onto the shoulders of Londoners, allows a mostly common audience a fanciful journey toward the coveted royal centre. A citizen of London watching Matthew Shore decline the King's offer with high reasons, but veiled distain, might be inclined to identify with the citizen-soldier, who is not so different from themselves. In the same way, Heywood's depiction of Jane Shore's seduction offers London's denizens an imaginative foray into the warm centre of courtly life. In this way, Heywood's theatre is, as Gans says of the neoclassical era, "characterized by a new consciousness of the reciprocity between center and periphery and a concomitant intensification of resentment" (150). This new consciousness in the early modern period is distinct from the classical understanding of the centre's inviolability, since—in the preceding classical aesthetic—no peripheral subject had been able to challenge the hero's domination of the scene's centre.

In Heywood's neoclassical aesthetic Mistress Shore takes on a sacrilegous aura through her ambitious transgressive movement toward the centre, which prefigures her class levelling beneficence, but also her tragic death. Considering that Heywood's Jane is a member of the wealthy merchant class growing up in London during this period, Richard Helgerson argues that Jane's tragedy is an important founding narrative in the emergence of England's bourgeoisie. Thomas More's mention of Mistress Shore, in his History of Richard III (1513), notes that she used her position to benefit the common people of London. In his analysis of More's history of Jane Shore, Helgerson claims that the Shores' story plays a small, but notable, role in the rise of the English middle class, as in it the historical figure of a tragic king is replaced with that of a tragic secular saint, with whom the majority of the audience might identify. Helgerson traces the history of Jane's pathos in poems and plays from More's History up unto Nicholas Rowe's Tragedy of Jane Shore (performed in 1714). Helgerson observes that Heywood's play creates out of the ditch in which Jane and Matthew Shore die a fanciful etymology for the suburban village of Shoreditch, where his theatre was located just to the north of London (2.23.71-4). This, Helgerson says, "associates the spectacle of Jane Shore's death with its theatrical re-enactment . . . . Watching the play, weeping over Jane Shore, Londoners in 1599 were made one with those beneficiaries of her merciful acts who, in defiance of King Richard's command, attempt to relieve her suffering" (467). Edward IV acts as a founding myth and appropriates Shoreditch as a memorial for Jane.
The aspirations of "Saint Jane" derive from the possibility of equality implicit in the Christian ethic, as evinced by her ambition along with her redistribution of royal privilege among the people. In order to keep Jane as pure as possible in the audiences’ eyes, Heywood does not depict her directly considering Edward’s adulterous proposal. Instead, Jane’s desire for the monarchical centre is expressed in the council of Jane’s confidant, Mistress Blage, whose advice Jane considers before leaving her husband for Edward. Expounding the potential benefits of Edward’s interest, Blage tells Jane, “you yourself, your children and your friends, / Be all advanced in worldly dignity / And this world’s pomp, you know is a good thing” (1.19.33-35). Invited by the king, Jane transgresses the sacred space of the monarchical centre, ultimately becoming a victim in the ongoing battle to secure it, while demonstrating the power of its draw for the peripheral neoclassical protagonist. By attending Heywood’s theatre, and engaging the various literary re-imaginings of Shore’s life, England’s middle class audiences pay homage to their saint, by whom they are at first scandalized and then partially constituted.

The literary tradition surrounding the rise and tragic fall of the historical Mistress Shore, to whom Heywood assigns the familiar appellative Jane, has its earliest version in an account authored by Thomas More. More’s brief relation of the fate of Mistress Shore appears in his History of Richard III and contains the seeds of the tragic pathos. This pathos is especially legible in More’s description of the humiliating penance assigned her by the new Protector, Richard. Heywood’s play also describes the scene, in which Jane (as a convicted adulteress) is required to walk, clad only in an undergarment, from Temple Bar to Aldgate carrying a taper, before her final expulsion from the city. More notes the humiliating circumstances of this sentence, but also indicates that not all of the onlookers, who condemned her for her adultery, took pleasure in seeing her shamed. He writes:

> even good people who hated her faults pitied her disgrace rather than joying in it, since they considered that it had been arranged by the Protector not out of any real interest in decency but out of hypocrisy and malice. (425)

The pity Mistress Shore evokes from even those who hate her speaks to the widespread awareness that she was being forced to play the role of a scapegoat in the concluding turmoil of the country’s long civil war. The performance of this penance, which is the prelude to her death in Heywood, is only the beginning of her destitution in reality. Shore was still alive at the time More wrote his history in 1513. It is likely he knew her, given the way he reflects on the great disparity between her former position as a royal courtesan and the poverty of her old age. Considering the generous way that she used her status to help the citizens of London, who approached her with petitions, More concludes his section on her by observing:

> [S]he was little inferior in authority and influence to any of those who at various periods had great power with their princes but who are known to posterity only for their crimes, the more scandalous their memory, the more lasting, as we record good deeds done to us in dust but the wrongs we have suffered in marble. But this very woman, so famous once . . . today ekes out a wretched existence by begging, although some are still living and pretending not to know her who would now be her partners in adversity had she not once salvaged their fortunes. (431)

These last lines highlight the generative nature that is attributed to the figure of the sacred victim. Such a figure is viewed before her expulsion as a corruption, contaminating the community with violence, and after as a life-giving benefactor. Girard terms this effect, in which new life seems to emerge from the death of an apparent criminal, a "double transference". The victims of ancient myth often become the gods that foster and watch over a nascent society (1986: 44). Jane’s victimization was productive of a body of literature, but also played a part in the emergence of early modern England’s middle class.

Another neoclassical protagonist appearing in part 1 of the play is Thomas Falconbridge, who is the bastard son of the 1st Earl of Kent, and a turncoat leader during the War of the Roses. Falconbridge is a type of Phaeton, who makes a speech referencing London’s mythic roots in the classical age, thereby highlighting the break between the hero of the classical aesthetic and the protagonist of the neoclassical aesthetic. His speech recalls the siege of Troy, in which he figures himself as the offended hero Menelaus come to retrieve a figurative Helen from New Troy (or London). He attempts to speak in the mode of a classical hero challenging his foe on the field of battle. However, there is something not quite classical in the way he
presents himself. His challenge, instead of focusing unselfconsciously on his own achievements and power, reflects on equality—questioning the legitimacy of hierarchal authority. Rallying his troops, Heywood’s Falconbridge imagines Mile End Green as the classical plains of Troy, saying:

Yet stand we in the sight of upreared Troy,
And suck the air she draws. Our very breath
Flies from our nostrils, warm unto the walls.
We beard her bristling spires, her patted towers,
And proudly stand and gaze her in the face. (1.9.1-5)

In these lines Falconbridge almost sounds like the heroic Achaean warriors, who are always certain of their own martial prowess and centrality. For instance, the rarely mentioned hero Euphorbus has no doubt of his pre-eminence. In a threatening speech against Menelaus he boasts:

I was the first Trojan, first of the famous allies
to spear Patroclus down in the last rough charge.
So let me seize my glory among the Trojans now
—or I'll spear you too, I'll rip your own sweet life away.
(Homer 17.15-17)

Despite not actually having killed Patroclus, the vaunting Euphorbus claims his glorious centrality with conviction. Euphorbus occupies the central sacred space surrounding Patroclus’s body with a certainty that does not require comparison with the other. He assumes his self-asserted dominance in a way that is rare in neoclassical protagonists, who are encumbered with the Christian notion of equality among souls. Falconbridge would sound more like Euphorbus if he did not articulate the overwhelming power of the city to dominate the centre, as it draws the air from the his and his army’s bodies. Critic Richard Rowland notes how London, despite being unoccupied by King Edward at the moment of Falconbridge’s attack, is still imbued with the presence of the King (102). This royal presence is a sacrosanct space, which the Lancastrian Falconbridge attempts to invade and usurp. In this way, the city is a synecdoche for royal power and centrality to which Falconbridge’s army is a desiring periphery. The neoclassical insecurity and resentment inherent in Falconbridge’s marginal position vis-a-vis Edward is more evident in the second part of the speech, where he says:

Look on me, and I doubt not ye imagine
My worth as great as any one of yours;
My fortunes, would I basely fawn on Edward,
To be as fair as any man’s in England.
But he that keeps your sovereign in the Tower
Hath seized my land, and robbed me of my right.
I am a gentleman as well as he;
What he hath got, he holds by tyranny. (1.9.6-13)

Rather than reinforcing the impression of his equality to the king, Falconbridge’s grasping self-comparison to Edward reminds the audience of his marginality. Falconbridge provides his listeners with an image of himself potentially fawning on the king, while he shrilly asserts his equality with the monarch. His attempts at confidence are troubled by his sense of equality, as when he wonders that Londoners don’t see his worth at par with their own. He resents this position outside the king’s presence and imagines a scenario where, after taking the city, “[t]he meanest soldier [will be] wealthier than a king” (1.9.21). These frustrated neoclassical sentiments, which conceive of the equality of each soul despite strict hierarchy, stand in contrast to the confident self-aggrandizement of even the most marginal heroes of Homer.

In Edward IV, religiously propelled social levelling is complicated by the immediate reality of the monarch’s coercive dominance over subjects daring to recognize their spiritual equality with royalty. When Jane Shore is wooed by Edward, part of her decision to give in to the King’s seduction derives from her concern that he might use his power to harm Matthew if he is denied and humiliated. Another example is the understandable impotence Matthew feels regarding the possibility of exacting revenge upon a man who commands the realm’s military and is constantly surrounded by a personal bodyguard. Realizing Edward has
seduced his wife, Matthew has no recourse but the language of the sacred to smother his resentment: "I cannot help it. A' God's name, let her go / ... / Where kings are meddlers, meaner men must rue" (1.20.77-79). Though Heywood positions Matthew in the sacred centre by casting him as the heroic vanquisher of the realm's enemies and imagining him degrade Edward by refusing his knighthood, Matthew's neoclassical heroism remains proscribed by the traditional ethics of hierarchy, which prohibit the violation of established worldly social orders.

Christianity's moral imperative, which exacerbates a commoner's resentment toward the elite and affects the disintegration of classical hierarchies, also provides the representational means of deferring the citizen's potentially violent resentment. Matthew's brief appeal to the name of God, as he recognizes his loss of Jane to the inaccessible royal centre, is a means of reproducing the structure of the originary scene, with its resentment-deferring effect. The invocation of the deity is repeated again in the Shores' final scene, where Matthew promises pray God's forgiveness on both his and Jane's sins:

    Jane. How can I look upon my husband's face,  
     That shamed myself, and wrought his deep disgrace?  
    Shore. Jane, be content. Our woes are now alike:  
     With one self rod thou see'st God doth us strike.  
     If for thy sin, I'll pray to heaven for thee,  
     And if for mine, do thou as much for me.  
    Jane. Ah, Shore, is't possible thou canst forgive me?  
    Shore. Yes, Jane, I do.  
    Jane. I cannot hope thou wilt:  
     My fault's so great that I cannot expect it.  
    Shore. I' faith, I do, as freely from my soul  
     As at God's hands I hope to be forgiven. (2.22.73-83)

Registering the shame that accompanies the resentment-producing transgression enacted by herself and Edward, Jane states her inability to initiate an exchange of signs with Matthew: "How can I look upon my husband's face." In order for Mathew and Jane's morally sanctioned reciprocal desire to be reinstated in the eyes of the community (here the audience), Matthew gestures toward the sacred centre, through which his and Jane's desires and resentments are mediated and deferred. As Jane admits the inimical quality of her erstwhile desire for Edward, so Matthew implicitly acknowledges the transgressive quality of his resentment: "If for thy sin, I'll pray to heaven for thee, / And if for mine, do thou as much for me." In the *quid pro quo* of penitent prayers, Matthew presents a possible reinstatement of enduring symbolic exchange between himself and Jane, which was interrupted when—mirroring her flight to Edward—Matthew chose to exile himself from English society in an attempt to become as the play's central victim—cast out by his wife's faithlessness. However, the central position in the play ultimately belongs to the Deity, whom Matthew imagines as a moral force meting punishment and forgiveness to himself and Jane, recognizing that they occupy equally peripheral and subjected positions relative to the sacred centre.

Gans argues that belief in religious revelation, language, and its associated moral awareness of total reciprocity are the repetition of the circumstances of the originary scene, which allows the community to conceive of an enduring sacred presence (1990: 26-27). He explains that "the ostensive sign is ambiguously directed both to the central divinity and to its worldly addressees, the other participants on the periphery. The repetition of the original sign designates the present divinity and thereby constitutes the central moment of the reproduced event" (1993: 92). Matthew's invocation of the divine ("'A' God's name, let her go") in the moment when he is most vulnerable to resentment does not function as an empty pious platitude. Rather, it constitutes a speech act, which contains the possibility of reinstating peace of the originary scene, where the non-violent reciprocity created by collective recollection and repetition of the first sign defers violent resentment. However, Matthew's initial self-expulsion, in his removal from England, indicates his inability to peacefully abide the appropriation of his cherished object. Beset with violent resentment, Matthew seeks a cathartic resolution to his angst and humiliation by tearing himself from his London community. In the pathetic but magnanimous grief occasioned by his cuckolding, Matthew becomes, briefly, another of the play's multiple protagonists.

In *Edward IV* the audience's attention is routinely redirected from supporting character to supporting
character, never resting for long on the play’s king. In part one scene thirteen, the King leaves London and encounters Hob, the Tanner of Tamworth. Edward conceals his identity in order to question Hob on his political leanings as they pertain to the power struggle occurring among the divided Plantagenet household. Considering the scene’s antecedents in Robin Hood and “king and the commoner” ballads, Rowland reflects that the King’s disguise can affect “an evanescent leveling fantasy,” wherein the noble is able to “converse on ‘equal’ terms with men of the same social status,” after which “the revelation of true rank produces temporary and comic trauma, followed by the reabsorption of the deceived into an unquestioned and benevolent hierarchy” (32-33). Though Hob does not displace Edward in the play’s centre, as Jane and Matthew do, he does enter into an evasive and playful dialogue with Edward, hinting that—through his clever use of language—he might vie in wit with the monarch and win. As in Rowland’s account of the familiar structure, however, Hob subjection is ensured by Edward’s provision of a royal pardon for Hob’s son. In a subtle movement of the neoclassical aesthetic, the focus of the play falls briefly on Hob but his resentment of royal centrality is never definitively articulated.

Throughout Edward IV the neoclassical aesthetic operates by foregrounding characters who in the classical aesthetic would be virtual nonentities, who exude far less metaphysical being than one of Sophocles’ heroes. When Edward begins an affair with the married Jane Shore, he acts as a competitor in a game of mimetic rivalry against his subject, thereby allowing Matthew and Jane to occupy the sacred royal centre, where royal precedence in the ethically constructed hierarchy ensures his success. However, the Christian moral critique of his actions manifests in the eventual reconciliation and reunion of Matthew and Jane, whose resentment, guilt, and angst make them the likeliest candidates for the play’s central character. In the cases of Jane, Matthew, and Falconbridge, desire for the centre is conflicted, as the centrality of deity and king entice them to a position of privilege, while simultaneously designating them as peripheral and equal. At the outset of the drama, Falconbridge’s attempt to usurp authority through classical posturing betrays his awareness that, in the Christian context, all claims to absolute sovereignty are dubious. Ultimately, the class tensions in Heywood’s play emerge from the dissonance between the ethics of hierarchy, manifest in the structure of early modern monarchy, and Christian morality, as it depends on the radical reciprocity existing between sign exchanging souls on the early modern stage.

**Works Cited**


Notes

1. In *Science and Faith*, Gans explains how the scripturally documented phenomena of moral revelation (particularly the Mosaic and Christian) proceed from the originary scene. He explains, "[w]hat is revealed in the originary event is the organization of the collective as a peaceful community on the scene of representation. This revelation emanates from the center and its ethical content is realized in actu each time that men reconstitute the scene around a new center--each time, in fact that they use language" (1990: 26). [back]

2. Gans explains: "An ethic maintains a social order; morality, on the contrary, is indifferent to any such order. Morality is a vision of human relations derived exclusively from the reciprocal exchange of signs on the scene of representation" (94). Gans further claims that the reciprocity of signs, as the foundation of the moral order, is radicalized in the Gospels: "The moral utopia of the Gospels is based on perfect equality and reciprocity; there are on superiors and inferiors. In such a world resentment will be abolished" (96). [back]

3. The dynamic of resentment expressed between these two individuals may also be considered a synecdoche of the resentment often latent between the wealthy city of London and the monarchy. Richard Rowland notes that in the poem by Michael Drayton, from which Heywood draws the Shore plot, "the Shores [operate] as a site of economic power which challenges the authority of the monarch" (46). It is interesting to observe that Jane, as the chattel of a citizen, is associated with the wealth of London, which was a taxable resource for the crown. [back]

4. Matthew's seeming embodiment of the city's prestige is due to his crucial, and successful, role in defending the city, in which Edward had no part (1.9.183-86). Matthew's wealth, which is analogous to the wealth of the city, is symbolized in his occupation as a goldsmith who owns his own shop (Rowland 46). [back]

5. In the tragedy of the classical aesthetic, Oedipus is heroic and doomed because, as king, he occupies the central position of the Theban community. In the tragedy of the neoclassical aesthetic, Hamlet is heroic and doomed, as he aspires to kingship from the periphery of Elsinore's court (152-53). Oedipus unselfconsciously struggles to maintain his position at centre, while Hamlet reflects at length on his inability to properly occupy the centre of the scene without nagging doubts about the legitimacy of his usurpation. [back]

6. City plays and domestic comedies and tragedies take middle and lower class subjects as their protagonists; examples include, among city plays: Thomas Heywood's *The Four Prentices of London* (1592), Thomas Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday* (1599), Francis Beaumont's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (1607), Thomas Middleton's *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* (1613), in domestic tragedies: Thomas Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness* (1603), and in domestic comedies: Ben Jonson's *Batholemew Fair* (1614 also a city play set in Smithfield) Dekker, Chettle, and Haughton's *Patient Grissel* (1599). [back]
There hath pass'd away a glory from the earth.

~William Wordsworth

1. Introduction

A belief in imminent Apocalypse was common during Shakespeare's life, and St. John's 
Revelations was read avidly as a guide to current events. Bernard Capp comments, "During the first 
half of Elizabeth's reign there developed a general consensus that the pope was the Antichrist and that the end of the world 
was at hand" (97). The defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 further fueled "apocalyptic excitement and patriotic fervor" 
(Capp 97), although this event was only the beginning of continued hostilities between the 
countries (Outhwaite 25). In what is called the "Great Dearth," England suffered "a disastrous sequence of 
harvest failures (1593-97) with economic depression, widespread poverty and high mortality from plague 
and starvation" (Clark 6). England's apocalyptic expectations turned out to be correct although not in the 
way they anticipated. The Protestant Reformation indeed brought an end to the medieval order, but rather 
than initiating Judgment Day and Christ's reign on earth, the unintended result was the emergence of 
Modernity. Shakespeare's mature drama is deeply informed by the demise of the feudal order and the birth 
of something new and as yet unimaginable. Shakespeare died in 1616, so he didn't live to see the English 
Revolution and the execution of King Charles I in 1649, but these spectacular events were the fruit of long-
term developments in which Shakespeare participated.

Shakespeare's final play that he wrote as sole author was The Tempest, which portrays Prospero the 
magician, an artist figure who renounces his magic or art in the latter part of the play. Shakespeare's 
termination of his retirement was the occasion for The Tempest, an artistic reflection on how and why the 
dramatic forms associated with Renaissance hierarchy were becoming increasingly problematic.

The relevant historical background to The Tempest is the transition to Modernity, an apocalypse which requires some explanation. From the perspective of René Girard's Fundamental Anthropology, the Medieval-
Renaissance period is characterized by sacrificial hierarchy, a hierarchy, moreover, that contains the seed of 
its own destruction, that is, Christianity (Theater 283). Christianity undermines so-called divine hierarchy by 
revealing its sacrificial root. When the New Testament revelation finally reaches fruition during the 
Reformation, the medieval order is destabilized, allowing for the development of Modernity.

According to Girard, Shakespeare's plays demystify mimetic desire and the scapegoating mechanism, but the effects of this demystification are rather ambivalent. On the one hand, Girard suggests that the mimic 
drive is weakened by its unveiling. In Girard's reading, Hamlet, for example, as a modern, is not really 
mimetic enough to take revenge immediately upon Claudius. Hamlet's desire must be first stimulated by the 
fifth-act graveyard fight with Laertes (Theater 274-8). Likewise, Girard sees Miranda, in The Tempest, as 
falling asleep out of boredom in the first act when her father Prospero recounts all the mimetic betrayals 
that led to his usurpation and exile (Theater 352-3). Girard ends his book on Shakespeare with this image
of Miranda bored with tales of betrayal and revenge. But on the other hand, in Girard's reading of Modernity, the disabling of the scapegoat mechanism unleashes a mimetic crisis, a "vizarding of degree" that Ulysses warns against in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*. According to Girard, this crisis of degree is "the context of all Shakespearean plays without exception" (*Theater* 351). So Modernity, for Girard, seems to be characterized by both hypermimeticism, as we lose the protection of the scapegoat mechanism, and a weakening of mimeticism, as we understand mimetic desire and it loses its fascination.

Girard is undoubtedly correct that the New Testament demystifies the scapegoat mechanism, and with corrosive effects on hierarchy. But the influence of the New Testament is actually more complicated. The public, ritual scene of sacrifice is critiqued, yes, but also opposed to the private scene of true faith. While his disciples apparently expected a political revolution, Christ proclaimed, "the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17.21). When you say your prayers or give alms, Christ commands, don't do it in public to gain praise before men; but rather, "pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly" (Matt. 6.6). The New Testament suggests that each individual has a personal, private relationship with God, and this relationship effectively authorizes the individual in opposition to traditional authorities. Being reliant upon God paradoxically makes one independent in a social context. For example, Martin Luther's private faith, nurtured by his Bible studies, empowered him in his public opposition to the medieval priestly hierarchy. Furthermore, each individual, in his or her relationship with God, becomes worthy of serious literary representation, thus giving birth to the realistic novel (the source of Girard's theory of mimetic desire).

The important influence of the New Testament on Modernity is egalitarian individualism as the necessary alternative to communal sacrifice and hierarchy. And this is where Girard's understanding of Modernity gets into trouble. Girard's mimetic theory can be accurately characterized as the most powerful critique of individualism ever made. Even the individual's most private and "sacred" desires are not his or her own but only an imitation of the model, so that the individual's core of identity is decentered by mimetic theory, inhabited by the desires of the Other. Girard demonstrates convincingly that the autonomous individual is a myth. Because Girard so resolutely critiques individualism, he doesn't really appreciate its positive, constructive power for Modernity. What matters is not that each individual is truly unique, but that this belief creates individual difference in practice. Medieval hierarchy depends on class difference to prevent conflict, but individual difference in the modern world also functions to mitigate the effects of mimetic competition. Furthermore, Girard's ethical critique of the scapegoat mechanism is based on the value of the individual, so his own theory demands a recognition of individual rights, which are the political foundation of Modernity. Shakespeare's play *The Tempest* recognizes individualism as the force that makes both Renaissance hierarchy and Shakespeare's art increasingly problematic. Shakespeare saw that the Renaissance cosmos, the divine order, was coming to an end, and that the kind of art that he practiced was coming to an end at the same time and for the same reasons.

### 2. The Storm

*The Tempest* opens with a storm at sea, a crisis which directly poses the problem of authority. Shakespeare tests the basis of traditional hierarchy in the face of a larger crisis, which is presented as "natural" but with obvious allegorical implications; we know that hierarchy, as a cultural phenomenon, is threatened by cultural forces, not natural. The scene contrasts the aristocracy of the passengers with the meritocracy of the ship's crew, who have presumably earned their authority, such as it is, through competence at their work. King Alonso and the other nobles emerge from belowdecks to chastise the mariners for their perceived incompetence in saving the ship. Gonzalo reminds the Boatswain, rather absurdly, "remember whom thou hast aboard" (1.1.18-19), as if the sailors would be more diligent protecting the lives of the aristocrats than their own lives. By interfering with the crew, the nobles only "assist the storm" (1.1.14), as the Boatswain points out. Aristocracy, the basis of English political order, is revealed as worse than useless in the face of a situation demanding the practical skills of the lower classes. The Boatswain tells Gonzalo:

> You are a councillor; if you can command these elements to silence, and work the peace of the present, we will not hand a rope more. Use your authority. If you cannot, give thanks you have lived so long and make yourself ready in your cabin for the mischance of the hour, if it so hap. (1.1.21-27)
The aristocrats are obviously unable to "command these elements to silence," and so Shakespeare makes clear here that human authority has no basis in nature, a recognition that seems obvious to us, but which directly contradicts Renaissance political theory, whereby the King's authority was justified by reference to a cosmic order both natural and divine. As the Boatswain exclaims, "What care these roarers for the name of king?" (1.1.16-17). The storm has no respect for names and by extension, words. Language, the primary human institution and the basic resource for a dramatic artist, has seemingly lost its traditional power and significance. The Boatswain's comments illustrate the necessary connection between representation and social order. Shakespeare's emphasis on hierarchy in this scene leaves little doubt that the storm represents the larger political and cultural crisis that traumatized Europe during the early Modern period, a crisis which, the events of the play suggest, can be traced to the forces of individualism, creating a widespread skepticism about the value of traditional authorities: political, cultural, and religious.

3. Shakespeare's Anatomy of Authority

The following scene with Prospero and Miranda provides quite a different perspective on the tempest. Miranda fears for the lives of those on board the ship, and asks her father to save them. But Prospero reassures her that the "direful spectacle of the wreck" is in fact "safely ordered" with "provision in mine art" (1.2.26, 28, 29). So it might seem that the crisis of authority during the storm is merely a façade, and that Prospero was in control the whole time, just as he controls the action throughout the play. We must not forget, however, that Prospero gives up his magic at the end of the play; so his time of power, such as it is, is coming to an end. Furthermore, the second scene, as I'll argue, skeptically analyzes his authority in relation to his daughter, Ariel, and Caliban. In this scene, the play moves from the larger crisis of authority to the closely-related problem of the artist's authority, the main issue of The Tempest.

The second scene of the first act is a long exposition that explains, through dialogue, how Prospero and Miranda came to the island, how Ariel came to be Prospero's servant, and Caliban their slave. The question for us is the basis of Prospero's authority for each of these figures, who represent on one level his audience. Marjorie Garber comments that Miranda's empathetic response to the shipwreck positions her as "the ideal spectator of tragedy and catharsis," and in her reception of her father's tale, "Miranda is the ideal audience, hanging on every word" (857). For Miranda, Prospero's authority doesn't appear problematic, since their relationship is based on mutual love and care, and Prospero claims without fear of contradiction that all his actions during the play are motivated by his love for Miranda (1.2.16-17). But Miranda is a modern girl with a lively sense of independence and great confidence in her desires. Introducing his account of their past, Prospero asks her, "Canst thou remember / A time before we came unto this cell?" (1.2.38-39). He immediately answers his own question without waiting for her reply, "I do not think thou canst, for then thou wast not / Out three years old" (1.2.40-41), revealing his authoritarian tendencies. Miranda, however, directly contradicts him—"Certainly, sir, I can" (1.2.41)—asserting her independence, her private, internal scene of representation, which opens onto "the dark backward and abysm of time" (1.2.50), a limitless abyss of selfhood.

Prospero claims that Miranda is "ignorant of what thou art" (1.2.18) and she indeed looks to him to tell her "what I am" (1.2.34). Rather than a paternalistic determination of her limits, however, he recounts for her their common aristocratic heritage, a legacy which he will recover through the events of the play. In a traditional society, one's family and birth indeed determine one's identity, but Miranda is a self-fashioner who goes beyond her father's injunctions, as in her romance with Ferdinand. She may seem passive during his account of her identity, but Prospero tells her the classic fairy-tale story that she is really a princess, though currently unrecognized by the world. Miranda, however, seems unimpressed by her noble heritage and more concerned with her father's sufferings.

A well-known crux of the second scene is Prospero's repeated accusations that Miranda "attend'st not" (1.2.87) while he recounts the story of their exile. He begins his narrative with an injunction to "be attentive" (1.2.38), a command which he repeats in various forms several times during his account (1.2.67, 117, 135, 171). At three points he goes beyond the general charge to pay attention and directly accuses her of not listening to him: "Dost thou attend me?", "Thou attend'st not"; "Does thou hear?" (1.2.78, 87, 106). At the end of his dialogue with Miranda he tells her, "Here cease more questions. / Thou art inclined to sleep. 'Tis a good dullness, / And give it way. I know thou canst not choose" (1.2.185-87), although
Miranda had not mentioned being sleepy. Later in the scene, after his dialogue with Ariel, Prospero wakes her, upon which she comments, "The strangeness of your story put / Heaviness in me" (1.2.309-10). On the above evidence, Girard claims that Miranda is "drowsier and drowsier" during this scene, due to her failed attempt to "absorb Prospero's obsession and play it back to him" (Theater 352); although Girard doesn't consider any of the problems raised by this interpretation. I will argue, in contrast, that Prospero's anxiety about Miranda listening to him signifies a vulnerability that points to the limits of his authority.

Apart from Prospero's accusations, what evidence is there that Miranda is indeed almost falling asleep during his account of their past? The story he tells concerns not just his personal "obsession," but their common history, her aristocratic heritage, a major turning point in their island life, and her very identity. Moreover, his story is hardly boring but rather a gripping account of betrayal and exile. Miranda's comments during his tale suggest not drowsiness but intense interest. She interjects apposite observations and questions throughout his narrative, and she rejects immediately his suggestions that she lacks attention. When he questions her for a third time, "Does thou hear?" she replies, "Your tale, sir, would cure deafness" (1.2.106). Indeed. But she is clearly asleep during his dialogue with Ariel, needing to be awakened before the appearance of Caliban. Miranda seems largely ignorant of Ariel and his role in the action, so it appears that Prospero has deliberately concealed Ariel from her.

We have to consider the possibility that Prospero puts Miranda to sleep using his magic, which is a traditional interpretation in performance. Early in the scene, as he begins his dialogue with Miranda, he asks her, "Lend thy hand / And pluck my magic garment from me. So, / Lie there my art" (1.2.23-25). Bevington, like most editors, adds the stage direction to these lines, "laying down his magic cloak and staff." Later in the scene, as he finishes talking with Miranda and begins his conversation with Ariel, he would require his magic (and hence his cloak and wand) in order to command a spirit. Editors often add a stage direction for Prospero to put back on his magic cloak (upon his words, "Now I arise" [1.2.170]) shortly before Miranda falls asleep. Presumably, then, Prospero waves his wand as he tells her, "Thou art inclined to sleep. . . . / I know thou canst not choose" (1.2.186-87).

So if Miranda is not drowsy, and Prospero indeed puts her to sleep with his magic, then why does he repeatedly command her to listen? The editors of the Third Series Arden edition, Virginia and Alden Vaughan, comment, "Prospero's demands for Miranda's attention here [1.2.78] and later in [lines] 87 and 106 need not imply that she is inattentive: they more likely indicate Prospero's increasing agitation as he recalls the circumstances of Antonio's treachery" (175, fn. 78). The Vaughans' comment is good advice for the actor playing Prospero, but it raises the question of why Prospero's agitation should take this particular form and not another. Prospero's anxiety about Miranda listening to him suggests, at the very least, his vulnerability as an authority figure in relation to Miranda. On one level, his repeated comments to Miranda are symptomatic of the weakness of his old age; but his old age itself has an allegorical dimension pointing to a real problem of authority, one that Prospero has internalized so that is shows even when there is no real threat. In allegorical terms, there is a significant tension, introduced by individualism, between the artist and even the most sympathetic members of his audience. Upon meeting Ferdinand later in this scene, Miranda will have her own story that is more compelling to her than any of her father's plots.

Shakespeare continues his anatomy of authority with Prospero's dialogue with Ariel. Upon Prospero's summons, Ariel begins by proclaiming his loyalty and obedience to Prospero, but as Prospero starts to give further orders, Ariel protests his servitude,

Is there more toil? Since thou dost give me pains, Let me remember thee what thou hast promised, Which is not yet performed me. (1.2.243-45)

Ariel demands simply, "My liberty" (1.2.246), that most modern of values, which trumps duty or obedience. In part, this exchange is a lead-in to Prospero's retelling of their history: how Prospero rescued Ariel from imprisonment in a tree in return for his services for a fixed period. Ariel impatiently awaits the freedom that is promised him.

It's possible to overemphasize the antagonism between Prospero and Ariel. Prospero refers to Ariel constantly with terms of endearment. Later in the play, Ariel asks Prospero, for no apparent reason, "Do
really call it authority at all, but rather some kind of mutually beneficent agreement. Quite radically, authority depends upon equality. And if authority is really completely equal, then it's not clear that we can themselves. Shakespeare's view on authority here is quite modern and democratic. The most effective scene, that there is no basis for authority in nature, no basis that is not inherent to those relationships more likelihood of violence. Shakespeare's argument follows naturally from the revelation in the opening relationship with Ferdinand. In the case of Ariel, their relationship is described as a mutually-beneficial, powerful magic of all.

The next relationship in Shakespeare's anatomy of authority is Prospero and Caliban. Prospero's connection with Caliban was initially characterized by mutual service not unlike Ariel's. At first, as Caliban relates, Prospero and Miranda treated him kindly, like a member of their family; "And then I loved thee / And showed thee all the qualities o'th'isle, / The fresh springs, brine pits, barren place and fertile" (1.2.339-41). According to Prospero, however, this idyllic relationship came to an end when Caliban "didst seek to violate / The honor of my child" (1.2.350-51), a crime which Caliban does not recognize as such, and for which he is unrepentant. Caliban is presented as incorrigible, beyond the effects of education and culture, although he does display a fine sensitivity to the music of the island and an aptitude for swearing. As a result of the attempt to rape Miranda, Caliban is enslaved by Prospero and forced to bring them wood and water. Although Caliban's actions have precipitated this turn in their relationship, Prospero justifies his enslavement weakly, telling Miranda, "We cannot miss him. He does make our fire, / Fetch in our wood, and serves in offices that profit us" (1.2.314-16). Shakespeare, if not Prospero, presents Caliban's enslavement as an artifact of Renaissance hierarchy, whereby aristocrats do not perform manual labor, rather than any kind of just punishment. There is no mutuality at all in their current relationship; the profit is all on the side of Prospero, and Caliban is tortured horribly by spirits if he fails to do as he is told. Significantly, Caliban has his own version of events, by which he is the rightful owner of the island that was stolen from him by Prospero. Unlike the stories of Miranda and Ariel, there is no prospect of agreement upon a common narrative. Prospero's authority for Caliban is the most primitive form of authority, the imminent threat of violence.

When we examine Prospero's three main relationships on the island, in terms of the basis of his authority, a pattern emerges. The key variable is reciprocity. In the case of Miranda, his authority for her is equal to her authority to him. Although he is ultimately the one who can give orders, his motive is to serve her more than himself. Their relationship is characterized by a mutual exchange of love and devotion. But even this wholly reciprocal relationship is problematic as Miranda asserts her independence, especially in her relationship with Ferdinand. In the case of Ariel, their relationship is described as a mutually-beneficial contract but one which is enforced by the threat of violence. Here there is considerable reciprocity and even affection, but Prospero is more powerful than Ariel, who desires freedom above all and is forced to serve Prospero. In this case, there is more open rebellion, and Prospero's language, if not his actions, is occasionally violent. With Caliban, there is no reciprocity, no agreement about their mutual history, and their relationship is characterized by violence, both the torture employed by Prospero and the attempted murder of Prospero by Caliban and his cohorts. Prospero has power over Caliban but no authority.

Shakespeare's anatomy of authority in the second scene demonstrates that authority in the modern world depends upon reciprocity. The less reciprocal and mutual each relationship is, the more fragile it is, and the more likelihood of violence. Shakespeare's argument follows naturally from the revelation in the opening scene, that there is no basis for authority in nature, no basis that is not inherent to those relationships themselves. Shakespeare's view on authority here is quite modern and democratic. The most effective authority depends upon equality. And if authority is really completely equal, then it's not clear that we can really call it authority at all, but rather some kind of mutually beneficent agreement. Quite radically,
Shakespeare rules out the unwilling service of an inferior such as Caliban. Where there is no reciprocity, authority is untenable.

Shakespeare is hardly a cynic, asserting that individuals are ruled by self-interest alone. Some individuals, such as Caliban, Antonio, and Sebastian are, but others such as Miranda, Ariel, and Prospero himself are capable of self-sacrificing love. Still, we see that authority depends solely on the immanent specifics of human relationships rather than any external cosmic order; ideally, authority depends on mutual respect, the only sure foundation. The threat of violence is the least effective form of authority, because as soon as one's back is turned, as soon as the immediate danger of punishment is lifted, all obedience immediately ceases and turns to its opposite. Especially in the agreement between Ariel and Prospero, Shakespeare's analysis anticipates the political theories of Hobbes and Locke, by which the public order is founded on a social contract in which each individual participates equally, turning over some liberties to the State in return for the reciprocal protection of basic rights. Prospero's relationships test the limits and basis of authority, because he is, in many ways, still an old-fashioned type of authority who rules by the "magic" of cosmic order, a form of authority rapidly becoming untenable in the modern world.

Many critics have tried to interpret Ariel and Caliban in allegorical terms. Girard, for example, sees Caliban and Ariel as aspects of Shakespeare's psyche as he developed as an artist. Caliban, in Girard's reading, represents Shakespeare's raw and dangerous mimetic process that he had to overcome in order to mature as an artist, while "Ariel represents the more refined, ethical, and noble literary mode that the later Shakespeare wants to substitute for Caliban" (347). Girard's interpretation is not that far from the traditional reading that Ariel represents spirit and Caliban earth as the twin sources of Shakespeare's artistic inspiration. In this reading, the whole play becomes, in effect, a psychomachia, a battle within Prospero's soul. Peter Greenaway, in his film version of The Tempest entitled Prospero's Books, was evidently inspired by this interpretation when he has John Gielgud, playing Prospero, speak the lines of all the characters in voiceover. Girard's interpretation assumes an anachronistic, romantic self-obsession on Shakespeare's part that is foreign to his fundamentally social artistic ethos. For Shakespeare, the artist is essentially a social figure, not the isolated romantic genius. The Tempest, like all great drama and narrative, has an allegorical dimension; Miranda, Ariel, and Caliban represent the artist-magician's audience. But they represent his audience precisely as individuals, not as personifications of ideas or types. Their relationship to Prospero categorizes them as his audience, but apart from that relationship, their characters are defined by their personal characteristics and history, as with all individuals. (4) The fact that Prospero depends upon each of them, in different ways, to enact his schemes illustrates the essentially dialogic nature of art and the collaborative spirit of drama especially, which depends so much upon the imagination of the audience, as the Chorus to Shakespeare's Henry V famously points out. As individuals, Miranda, Ariel, and Caliban resist any attempts to rigidly limit their identity.

4. The End of Romance

The problem with Shakespeare's dramatic magic, The Tempest suggests, is the necessarily hierarchical relationship between the artist and his audience. It might be objected here that the artist actually serves the audience rather than the other way around. This is true for the popular artist with no larger ambitions, and for this reason the popular artist is not generally a figure of resentment insofar as he or she succeeds in entertaining. Shakespeare is popular, no doubt, but his art constantly challenges the audience, expanding its knowledge and understanding of the human (which he considers in originary and historical terms). During the Renaissance, art was usually justified by its fidelity to nature and its moral functionality. "[T]he purpose of playing," in Hamlet's words, "is to hold as 'twere the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image" (Hamlet 3.2.20-23). By the same token, Prospero confronts the "three men of sin" (3.3.53)—Alonso, Antonio, and Sebastian—with their own moral depravity, although the latter two show no signs of repentance, again suggesting the limits of the artist's power. It's true, of course, that the Renaissance conceived of the playwright as a craftsperson rather than a Romantic genius, but this more limited conception hardly insulates the artist from resentment. The prevalence of defensive or apologetic, occasionally "armed," prologues and epilogues during this time period suggests that the artist was a vulnerable figure. The essential point is that a play is known to be and experienced as the product of the artist's vision. The artist is structurally the god of his creation, whose powers are indeed magical in relation to the world of the artwork. The power of the artist in relation to his audience, of course, is a great deal
more contingent and fragile—which is the theme of The Tempest. Nevertheless, the price of admission to the imaginative world of the play is submission to the artist’s vision. The Tempest suggests that the implied contract between artist and audience is breaking down. Shakespeare was to some extent anticipating future developments. Garber asks, quite recently, "Why should the audience prefer Prospero the magician and his daughter Miranda over Sycorax the magician and her son Caliban? Both Sycorax and Prospero keep Ariel in bondage" (868)—ignoring, of course, the material differences between Sycorax's unconditional bondage of Ariel and Prospero's reciprocal contract with him. Garber's point reflects that of a recent generation of critics who view Prospero as the colonial oppressor. As Shakespeare's audience, these critics reflect the hostility of Caliban, whom previous generations demonized, but who is now generally regarded as a tragic figure.

Shakespeare's retirement was undoubtedly a contingent event, not a conscious response to any problems of reception. But he was clearly anticipating his retirement as he wrote the play, and he used the occasion to reflect on the future of his kind of art. Art, of course, continues after Shakespeare's death. But successful artists after the interregnum took different strategies, in terms of both form and content, to mitigate the potential for resentment in the reception of their work. Shakespeare's turn to Romance in his final plays anticipates some of these future developments.(5)

In the epilogue, Prospero explicitly acknowledges his dependence upon the audience:

Now my charms are all o'erthrown,
And what strength I have's mine own,
Which is most faint. Now, 'tis true,
I must be here confined by you
Or sent to Naples. Let me not,
Since I have my dukedom got
And pardoned the deceiver, dwell
In this bare island by your spell,
But release me from my bands
With the help of your good hands.
Gentle breath of yours my sails
Must fill, or else my project fails,
Which was to please. Now I want
Spirits to enforce, art to enchant,
And my ending is despair,
Unless I be relieved by prayer,
Which pierces so that it assaults
Mercy itself, and frees all faults.
As you from crimes would pardoned be,
Let your indulgence set me free. (1-20)

Prospero notes his "charms are all o'erthrown," the passive voice and verb choice suggesting usurpation rather than a voluntary abdication of his magic, such as he promised earlier ("I'll break my staff, . . . drown my book" [5.1. 54, 57]). The two versions taken together suggest a more or less forced resignation: he renounces his magic in a recognition that it has lost its power without the audience's help, who now hold Prospero in their "bands" with a "spell," reversing the conventional relationship. Prospero claims that because he has lost his magic, therefore he is weak and dependent on the audience, their "prayer." But the play, taken as a whole, suggests that his magic always depended on the audience, and now, without their mercy, he is helpless, dependent on their "indulgence." The figure of the artist as a powerful mage is no longer applicable. Indeed, his "project" is now quite humble: merely "to please" his spectators.

Unlike his contemporaries Spenser, Sydney, and Jonson, Shakespeare left us no nonfiction statements about poetry. But his art constantly reflects upon itself and constitutes a profound and detailed exploration of the meaning, purpose, and limits of poetry in the Renaissance. Prospero's great elegies on his artistic career are among Shakespeare's most important statements in this regard. Late in the play, after abruptly ending the wedding masque for Miranda and Ferdinand, Prospero explains apologetically,
Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits and
Are melted into air, into thin air;
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep. (4.1.148-158)

The time of his art has come to an end—"Our revels now are ended." Not just this particular performance, not just Shakespeare's career, but, allegorically, the Renaissance era is drawing to a close and "all which it inherit." This ending is closely associated with the decline of traditional religion in the West, brought about by Judeo-Christian iconoclasm in the largest sense. The Tempest itself exemplifies such iconoclasm in that it skeptically deconstructs the sources of the artist's authority, even while giving tribute to his power and vision. This "apocalypse" affords the artist an insight into the nature of his project, its majesty and power: "this vision, / The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces, / The solemn temples, the great globe itself"—all dissolving into "air, into thin air." This is undoubtedly a great loss, but Prospero reassures his audience: "You do look, my son, in a moved sort, / As if you were dismayed. Be cheerful, sir" (4.1.146-7). However majestic, his art is finally a "baseless fabric," an "insubstantial pageant," which will fade and "Leave not a rack behind." In a characteristic gesture of humility, Shakespeare acknowledges that art is necessarily illusion, a gesture that anticipates and wards off any objections by the audience. The power of any particular artwork or form is temporary and functional, not essential or universal.

Prospero goes on to connect art to life itself: "We are such stuff / As dreams are made on, and our little life / Is rounded with a sleep." Not only art, not only the products of our imaginations are illusion, but our very life itself, comparable to a dream which vanishes upon waking. How can this leap from art to life be justified? Perhaps Prospero is speaking for himself as a performer in the play, whose identity ceases with the performance. Or he could be referring to the short term of our lifespan from a cosmic perspective. A third possibility is that our life shares certain essential characteristics with art, considered as illusion—an anthropological insight that is borne out but also qualified by Eric Gans's originary hypothesis.(6) The human species is distinguished by language, which, in Gans's hypothesis, originates to signify the sacred, similar, in this respect, to Prospero's magic. Language itself, therefore, includes an element of illusion, since the sacred is generated by human's mimetic tendencies (even as it transcends them), not anything supernatural. This originary heritage in the sacred, considered here as illusion, can be minimized but never completely eliminated.

The occasion for Prospero's speech above is his sudden remembering of "that foul conspiracy / Of the beast Caliban and his confederates / Against my life" (4.1.139-41), which, allegorically, represents the forces of individualism threatening his art. The beautiful and harmonious spectacle of the wedding masque, the music of the spheres, is giving way to the discordant jangle of Modernity, figured by the harsh baying of the hounds sent to harass Caliban and his gang. Ferdinand comments upon Prospero's reaction: "Your father's in some passion / That works him strongly" (4.1.143-44). And Miranda responds, "Never till this day / Saw I him touched with anger so distempered" (4.1.144-45). Prospero seems to be what we now call "projecting" when he says to Ferdinand, "You do look, my son, in a moved sort, / As if you were dismayed. Be cheerful, sir" (4.1.146-7), words that are apparently directed more to himself than his son and daughter. Anyone, of course, would be disturbed upon remembering a plot on his life which is nearing its aim. But in this case, Prospero's reaction seems excessive. With Ariel on the watch, and with Prospero's knowledge of the plot, there doesn't appear to be any serious threat from "Caliban and his confederates." A more inept conspiracy could hardly be imagined. As we noted above, however, what is at stake here is not just the happenstance of Caliban's plot, but rather what it represents in larger terms. By the same token, Prospero's exaggerated reaction signifies not just the contingency of a man becoming irritable and old (as Prospero excuses himself—"Sir, I am vexed. / Bear with my weakness. My old brain is troubled. / Be not disturbed with my infirmity. . . . / . . . A turn or two I'll walk to still my beating mind" [4.1.158-163]), but also the vulnerability of the artist, his dependence upon a fickle and increasingly independent audience.

Prospero's reflections upon his art are expanded in his famous farewell to the island's spirits, which, along with the epilogue, explicitly states his renunciation of magic:

Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and groves,
And ye that on the sands with printless foot
Do chase the ebbing Neptune, and do fly him
When he comes back; you demi-puppets that
By moonshine do the green sour ringlets make,
Whereof the ewe not bites; and you whose pastime
Is to make midnight mushrooms, that rejoice
To hear the solemn curfew; by whose aid,
Weak masters though ye be, I have bedimmed
The noontide sun, called forth the mutinous winds,
And twixt the green sea and the azured vault
Set roaring war; to the dread rattling thunder
Have I given fire, and rifted Jove's stout oak
With his own bolt; the strong-based promontory
Have I made shake, and by the spurs plucked up
The pine and cedar; graves at my command
Have waked their sleepers, oped, and let 'em forth
By my so potent art. But this rough magic
I here abjure, and, when I have required
Some heavenly music--which even now I do--
To work mine end upon their senses that
This airy charm is for, I'll break my staff,
Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,
And deeper than did ever plummet sound
I'll drown my book. (5.1.33-57)

Prospero gives no explicit reason during the play why he decides to abjure his magic, but this speech gives us some important clues. The elves and spirits he evokes are relics from England's past; he calls on them not as individual spirits, but rather collectively, and as such they are integral to the cosmic order, the same order and hierarchy which underlies his artistic vision. Their independent activities as he describes them are essentially playful and fanciful—making "midnight mushrooms," chasing the waves that lap the beach, making "green sour ringlets" in the pastures, rejoicing in nighttime revels—like the art itself of a bygone age, a golden age untroubled by Machiavellian politics—and like all golden ages, essentially mythic. His speech suggests that such spirits, as "weak masters," are in one sense dependent upon the artist, while he likewise depends upon them. At the artist's command, they perform terrifying spectacles of power—earthquakes, lightning, thunder, eclipse, and even the revival of the dead. Shakespeare here pays homage to the power of his "so potent art" and the faith of a dying age, which saw in such events the hand of God. He characterizes his art as "rough" or violent "magic"—the hierarchical order of the cosmos implies a certain violence; in Girardian terms, a sacrificial basis, which is to some extent expressed even in the relationship of the Renaissance artist to the general public. The awe-inspiring magical performances are ambiguously supernatural and unnatural—a violation of the natural order, suggesting their essential ambivalence within the play. The demise of his magic is presented as final and even apocalyptic. His staff he'll "break" and "drown" his "book," an ending without possibility of revival.

5. The Future

Prospero, sans magic, has little hope for the rest of his life, planning to "retire me to my Milan, where / Every third thought shall be my grave" (5.1.314-5); but the world will continue without him, and Prospero's attitude toward the future is relevant to the larger question of the shift to Modernity represented in the play. What comes after the Renaissance artist? Miranda and Ferdinand are the next generation, so their natures and their relationship hold the answer to this question. Prospero plans for Miranda and Ferdinand to fall in love, and their marriage will unite the kingdoms of Milan and Naples, ending their historic hostility. So their relationship might seem to confirm the authority of the artist and his power to shape the future.
But in fact, as I'll argue, Prospero is less important than usually recognized in this regard.

When Miranda and Ferdinand first meet each other, they fall in love literally at first sight. Prospero remarks in an aside, "At the first sight / They have changed eyes" (1.2.444-5). But Prospero immediately intervenes, commenting to the audience, "this swift business / I must uneasy make, lest too light winning / Make the prize light" (1.2.454-56). Things easily won are not highly valued, as every coquette knows, but Miranda is no coquette; so in her naïve lack of pretense, Prospero must introduce barriers that serve the same role. Girard argues that Prospero understands the mimetic nature of desire, and he sets up obstacles precisely in order to reinforce their love (Theater 350). Since there are no obstacles to their love, he must invent them, and so Prospero accuses Ferdinand of plotting to overthrow his island reign, confines him by magic, and sets him to work piling up "Some thousands of these logs" (3.1.10). The question is whether Prospero's interventions serve any constructive role, or if he is actually completely superfluous beyond his role in arranging their initial meeting. Later in the play, apologizing to Ferdinand, he says, "All thy vexations / Were but my trials of thy love, and thou / Hast strangely stood the test" (4.1.5-7). Prospero is not a Machiavellian schemer, arranging a dynastic match with no consideration for his child's feelings. The fact that Ferdinand is heir to the throne is important, of course, but Prospero wants to make sure that Miranda will be happy with him, and so a test of his resolve seems warranted. But as Prospero himself notes, "thou / Hast strangely stood the test," suggesting that Ferdinand has shown no inclination towards inconsistency.

Miranda's reaction to her father's interventions is also significant for understanding their role. When her father accuses Ferdinand of plotting, her first reaction is in line with the naiveté which is her most notable characteristic: "There's nothing ill can dwell in such a temple" (1.2.461). Events, however, bear out her initial estimation of Ferdinand's character, which is indeed completely faithful, courtly, and virtuous. Prospero, however, reacts harshly to her pleadings, "What I say, / My foot my tutor?" and forbids her to speak for him or to see him (1.2.472-3). This turn of events, of course, is part of his plan. What is important is Miranda's response. She refuses to be silent, and she disobeys him by visiting Ferdinand and helping him. During her visit, they exchange vows of true love and marriage. Her disregard for her father's commands confirms her independent nature; there is nothing of Ophelia's submissiveness in Miranda's positive confidence in her desires, which apparently owe nothing to her father's mediation. Her assurance in herself and in Ferdinand proves completely warranted in the play.

Some critics have assumed that Prospero's dire warnings against premarital sex must be somehow necessary, but there is no evidence for such in the text we have. In the fourth act, after acquiescing in their marriage, he warns Ferdinand sternly:

If thou dost break her virgin-knot before
All sanctimonious ceremonies may
With full and holy rite be ministered,
No sweet aspersion shall the heavens let fall
To make this contract grow; but barren hate,
Sour-eyed disdain, and discord shall bestrew
The union of your bed with weeds so loathly
That you shall hate it both: therefore take heed,
As Hymen's lamps shall light you. (4.1.15-23)

But Ferdinand is literally the perfect gentlemen, so what purpose does this warning serve, which Prospero repeats again soon after?

Look thou be true; do not give dalliance
Too much the rein. The strongest oaths are straw|
To the fire i'th' blood: be more abstemious,
Or else good night your vow! (4.1.51-4)

Indeed, the wedding masque itself quite pointedly excludes the interference of Venus and her son Cupid, who would presumably lead the couple into fornication. Prospero's persistent intermeddling into Miranda and Ferdinand's relationship is of the same order as his vexation upon remembering Caliban's plot: "Sir, I am vexed. / Bear with my weakness. My old brain is troubled. / Be not disturbed with my infirmity. . . . / . .
A turn or two I'll walk to still my beating mind" (4.1.158-163). Again we see that Prospero feels that his authority is vulnerable even when there is no immediate occasion. But the main point that Shakespeare makes with all of Prospero's anxious interfering is that he is completely superfluous to their relationship, which is good news since they represent the future. Miranda and Ferdinand's love for each other is all that is needed.

The one time that there is even any hint of discord between Miranda and Ferdinand comes in the final scene, when Prospero dramatically pulls back a curtain to reveal the couple playing chess. The shipwrecked nobles, including Ferdinand's father Alonso, had thought Ferdinand dead, so for them at least the scene seems to confirm Prospero's magical powers. But the royal couple are quite purposely independent here as throughout the play. They don't notice the onstage audience at first, so their conversation is presumably candid, directed solely at each other. Critics have noted that chess was rather exclusively "associated with royalty in Jacobean England, . . . and Naples was known as a centre of chess-playing" (Vaughan & Vaughan 296, fn.171). Garber, for example, sees this scene as anticipating their future rule, when they will be literally moving knights and bishops around their kingdom (869). But chess is also a game of war, so the scene hints at conflict simply by the choice of game. More seriously, Miranda accuses Ferdinand of cheating: "Sweet lord, you play me false" (5.1.173). The implication is that Miranda is perhaps losing and makes the accusation playfully, since Ferdinand immediately denies it: "No, my dearest love, / I would not for the world" (5.1.174-5). Miranda replies, "Yes, for a score of kingdoms you should wrangle, / And I would call it fair play" (5.1.176-77). Miranda's love is such that even if Ferdinand had cheated her out of a score of kingdoms, she would call it fair play anyway and forgive him without challenge. In contrast to her typical naïveté, Miranda here displays a sophisticated knowledge of the possibility of deceit and a fine comic irony in her teasing accusation. Ferdinand is perhaps the more innocent player, since he doesn't seem to catch Miranda's irony immediately. In both the game itself and Miranda's allegation, Shakespeare calls attention to the ever-present possibility of conflict, even Machiavellian scheming with the charge of cheating, such as resulted in Prospero and Miranda's banishment. How Miranda and Ferdinand deal with this possibility is key to Shakespeare's hopes for the future. On the one hand, conflict is sublimated through the game of chess and in the irony which Miranda displays in the possibility of losing. A couple who can deal with mimetic tensions through games and teasing is less likely to resort to actual violence or treachery. Without any romantic or idealistic delusions, they implicitly accept the inevitability of resentment. Furthermore, Miranda demonstrates the ability to overcome such resentment with unconditional love and forgiveness. Miranda's resourcefulness makes Prospero's magic unnecessary, providing a more realistic alternative for the new age dawning.

6. Conclusion

Prospero's magic represents Shakespeare's art; this is generally accepted. But his magic is also a token of Renaissance hierarchy, which was understood as a cosmic order. The connection between art and magic, therefore, is not a contingent analogy, but rather more intimate, together forming an organic whole, together depending upon a respect for authority which was declining due to the rise of individualism. Largely as a result of Protestantism, the private self was recognized as an independent center of sacrality, and no longer perceived as dependent upon the public scene. In Shakespeare's plays, such independence is generally limited to the upper classes. Caliban, after all, is for the most part a comic character and forced to repent at the end of the play: "I'll be wise hereafter / And seek for grace" (5.1.289-99). Such limits are among the reasons that the time of Shakespeare's art is drawing to a close. His plays and poems can be understood as a subversion of the public scene, the medieval, hierarchical order. Ironically, while his art depends upon hierarchy, he consistently undermines its sacred foundation, bringing about its own demise. At the end of his career, he turns his iconoclasm finally on himself or rather the figure of the artist as grand magician. Prospero undergoes, in effect, a ritual humiliation, one which he virtually arranges himself. The play begins with Prospero as the grand magician, orchestrating the awesome tempest with ease. But the events of the play reveal him as a weak and troubled old man, forced to beg for applause in the Epilogue, and superfluous to the new age dawning with Miranda and Ferdinand. Miranda's comment upon seeing the assembled crowd of shipwrecked nobles, "O brave new world / That has such people in't!" (5.1.185-86), is always taken as ironic on Shakespeare's part, since the group includes such villains as Sebastian and Antonio. Yet the larger group also includes Miranda herself, and her imagination and ingenuity are indeed tokens of a promising future. And so we should read her "brave new world" seriously, as Shakespeare's...
blessing upon the new age of modernity dawning.

Works Cited


Notes

1. On the popularity of commentaries on Revelations, see Capp 100-1. (back)


4. By the same token, Prospero is an individual yet representative dramatic artist rather than Shakespeare. There is no warrant for assuming that Prospero's foibles are common to Shakespeare. (back)


In this essay, I will look at two narratives by former Soviet writers, written about New York and London and thematizing walks through the two cities. The first is a novel by Edward Limonov, written in 1976, and the second is a short story by Zinovy Zinik, written in 1994. Both writers belong to the immigrant generation of the so-called Third Wave, which spanned the period between the seventies and eighties. This group of immigrants contained a relatively large percentage of professional and amateur writers and journalists who could not realize their talents in the Soviet Union and were induced or sometimes forced to leave. Many of these people opened newspapers, journals, and publishing houses. Others became active literary contributors. This became a vibrant and dynamic period of unprecedented literary activity. In retrospect, its literary output was probably more important for Russian literary history than the corresponding production of metropolitan literature in the same years. Those whose work was censored under the Soviet regime became published authors for the first time, among them the two authors I will present. Not only did they become known among fellow immigrants, but their books were smuggled back to the Soviet Union, where they achieved an underground cult status. They could not have dreamed of greater influence and popularity. Since the breakdown of the former Soviet Union, the vibrant émigré literary scene has all but ended its existence. As Zinovy Zinik expressed this, the metropolitan literature has reasserted itself and has since engulfed the periphery. But in the period between early 1970s and late 1990s, Third Wave writers enjoyed fame among their former compatriots and occupied a position of literary centrality, with Paris, Berlin, London, and especially New York acting as surrogates for the Russian literary centers of Moscow and Leningrad.

Thematically, I would like to focus on two literary treatments of walking around New York and London. In their wanderings through New York, the writers trace the remembered landscapes of origin (typically Moscow or Leningrad) over the topography of New York and London. For Zinik, it is Moscow. For Limonov, however, it is not only Moscow, the literary capital, where his coming-of-age as a poet took place, but his native Kharkov in Ukraine, where he had grown up and started on a criminal career, later interrupted by his move to Moscow. What interests me in these texts is two things: firstly, how this imaginary “double-exposure” between the new and the old home creates the necessary context for a metanarrative exploration of what constitutes the idea of narrativity and secondly, how these explorations amount to narratives of destiny, which I see as exemplary originary narratives.

Limonov’s autobiographical novel, It’s me, Eddie, (released by its American publisher under the subtitle of “The Fictional Memoir”), recounts his traumatic experiences soon after immigrating to the U.S., his year of being down and out in New York City. He meets with adversity when his model-wife leaves him for a rich man and he is fired from a Russian newspaper (for a politically incorrect editorial). After he tries his hand at bussing tables at a restaurant and realizes he cannot do it, he is subsequently reduced to surviving on welfare checks and occasional part-time jobs. The book gained a great deal of notoriety because of its sexual explicitness and bad language, as well as Limonov’s open embrace of homosexuality and leftist politics—a position that went against the grain of social norms and political allegiances within the socially and politically conservative Russian émigré community. Limonov calls himself a flâneur and dedicates several longs sequences in the book to his aimless walks through New York City, during which he observes other pedestrians and has homosexual encounters with black homeless men, all the while recalling his criminal past in Kharkov and fantasizing about a future communist revolution in the U.S., which he would help bring about and thus revenge himself on rich men, who steal poor immigrants’ wives. The section at which I want to take a closer look is the chapter that describes his various Manhattan itineraries and ends in Central Park by the sculpture of Alice in Wonderland.
Zinik's story, "The Double Act in Soho" is about another unsuccessful Russian immigrant. Unlike Limonov's alter ego, Eddie, who is a young man and a relatively new arrival, Alex, the protagonist of Zinik's story, is an older man, who has lived in London for a long time. He tries to make a living by writing articles for Russian immigrant publications, but is not very successful at it and can hardly make ends meet. While Eddie is an extremely fashion-conscious "dandy," who takes pride in his flashy clothes and high-heel boots that he manages to buy on his meager earnings (this is the only reason he takes part-time jobs), Alex is a slovenly dresser, pot-bellied and balding, who is keenly aware of his unkempt appearance and the, poor impression he must make on the opposite sex. Just like Eddie, but in a more profound and desperate way, he considers himself a loser. The story begins with Alex taking an interest and almost instantly falling in love with a young woman, Lena, whom he correctly guesses to be Russian, and following her around Soho's sex shops, where she is conducting marketing research on American pornographic videos. Alex, who has no idea why she keeps asking shop assistants about American videos and rummaging through American video sections, keeps revising the story he has created about her. After they finally introduce themselves, he suggests that they join forces and do the research together under a plausible excuse (as Russian tourists looking for a business venture) that would help them avoid detection, since they are supposed to keep their survey a secret. Eventually, Alex's slips of the tongue blow their cover. In the last part of the story, the direction of the narrative reverses. Instead of chasing the girl, Alex and Lena are now themselves chased by the thugs of the pornography mafia. The ending of the story, however, presents another misconstrual and reversal. It turns out that the mafiosi meant Alex and Lena no harm. They only wanted to make a counter business proposition, keeping it a secret from their boss.

The two narratives are very different in genre and character, one being a work of hyper realism, another, a postmodern pastiche. What unites them, in my eyes, is their use of city walking. The walks function not just thematically but as a rhetorical device. To show how, I would like first to turn to Michel de Certeau's Practice of Everyday Life, where he presents his analysis of walking in the city. De Certeau, quite intuitively, points to the similarity between walking and narrativity. Firstly, there is the dynamic component of movement, being caught in "the city's grasp," subjected to the gravitational pull of its field and carried along the "magnetic trajectories" of its arteries towards the vanishing points of its strange attractors. Secondly, the city walker does not make a completely free choice of itinerary, but plots it on a pre-existing map. In other words, his trajectory is limited to the existing grid of discreet spaces that are individually identifiable and addressable. De Certeau compares the city, with its house numbers and names of streets, shops, and cafes, to a text. Thus, the itinerant does not flow freely through uncharted space but moves from a specified location to a specified location, making his way through the "thicks and thins of an urban 'text'" (93). This can be seen as a framework for a very basic, pared down narrative—a movement through a textualized, semiotic space. The pedestrian himself writes this text without being able to read it, according to De Certeau. What he writes is a kind of travel story. In fact, a travel story is a paradigm for all stories, or in his words: "Every story is a travel story—a spatial practice" (115). I think, De Certeau is right in more ways than he intended, as I will show shortly.

Another important point De Certeau makes is that the narrative of walking is a kind of speech act, a concept we normally do not associate with writing, which we see as an artifact and not a performance. But I think de Certeau is quite correct in seeing walking as a "spatial acting out of the place, which has a rhetorical, "enunciative' function"—that of "appropriation of the topographical system on the part of the pedestrian" (97-98). I find the idea of appropriation both evocative and anthropologically accurate, insofar as it agrees with GA's theory of narrative performativity. In his "Originary Narrative" article, Eric Gans writes that "the minimal criterion of narrative is making the temporality of the sign a model for worldly action." But, at the same time, the "only action that we can consider ab ovo as equivalently human and significant is precisely that of the emission of the sign itself." What this implies is that "the story told by originary sign is, in the first place, that of its own emission." In the most minimal terms, it is the story of how the sign begins by intending an act of appropriation but is derailed into a gesture of designation. While the former exists in the sphere of immanence, the latter belongs to the space of transcendence (insofar as the object, as the new sacred, is no longer within reach). Thus, another way of summarizing the minimal narrative is as a story of "the generation of transcendence from immanence." This first, fundamental generative act contains within itself the original performativity. But as a performativity is a "way of doing things with words" (or language), does not the movement from immanence to transcendence occur in the direction from effectual to ineffectual (insofar as immanence represents the acquisitive gesture, and thus a possibility of...
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To Lena's surprise, he knew all Soho's ins and outs." The practical knowledge is a skill that is both appropriate through his pedestrian "speech act"? One way of metaphorizing this act of appropriation is through the figure of mastery (another metaphor for acceding to centrality). The walker masters the city by learning all there is to know about its ins and outs, its back alleys and short cuts, its alternative itineraries, and equipotential lines representing surfaces of equal potential. The difference in potential causes the movement of an object in such a force field from a higher to lower potential. The center can be thought of as "potential valley" or a "strange attractor" that creates a gravitational pull from one part of space to another. This pull exerted on a peripheral position by attracting it toward the center corresponds to the performative force of narrative desire. This model of differentiation is what I also associate with Gans's idea of the scenicity of representation: the separation of the stage from the auditorium constitutes an originary act of differentiation. As much is implied, I believe, by Gans in Originary Thinking, where he gives a different definition of originary narrativity, explaining it as "the coming of divinity" or a story that narrates the divinity's "approaching presence".

In other words, the originary narrative contains an inauguration of differentiation via an installing of the sacred center. A non-originary narrative simply wants to tell us a story of successful appropriation (105). Every successful appropriation signifies an act of narrative closure. Every narrative closure performs an act of transferring from the periphery to the center, of attaining the central position. To be more specific, a narrative comes to a stop when the protagonist achieves the goal of his quest or arrives at the moment of expanded knowledge, and thus obtains the culturally central status of a victor or an expert. Of course, the act of acceding to the center is imaginary and unstable because the desire of possessing a central object can only be predicated on its constitutional impossibility. And so a moment of narrative closure is necessarily an illusion that must be succeeded by another illusion, and another... But it creates a temporary narrative teleology, a factor of suspense, to accompany the movement from insignificance to significance, from the periphery to the center. I will return later to the significance of this trajectory from the periphery to the center.

To go back to walking and de Certeau's idea of appropriation, we can ask: what does the pedestrian appropriate through his pedestrian "speech act"? One way of metaphorizing this act of appropriation is through the figure of mastery (another metaphor for acceding to centrality). The walker masters the city by learning all there is to know about its ins and outs, its back alleys and short cuts, its alternative itineraries, to name just a few things. As Alex and Lena are being chased by the thugs, who seem to be gaining on them, Alex manages to "find an escape maneuver, a back door, or a communicating passage every single time. To Lena's surprise, he knew all [Soho's] ins and outs." The practical knowledge is a skill that is both of value to an immigrant and one that he can hone to perfection. It might take him many years to master the new language or become savvy about subtle cultural codes, but it takes a fraction of this time to develop expertise in the area of walking knowledge. In fact, it is not uncommon for the natives to become lazy or complacent and gradually limit their walks to streets in their immediate vicinity, and therefore be surprised and impressed by some relative newcomer's extensive knowledge of the city's nooks and crannies, its hidden treasures. "I have lived in this area all my life," one might say, "but I had no idea that this shop or museum or shortcut was here. You, on the other hand, have just come here, and you seem to know everything about the city. You put me to shame." This is, in fact, true of both protagonists. Eddie Limonov, for example, says about himself: "I am a man of the street. I have to my credit very few people-friends and many friends-streets. They, the streets, see me at all hours of the day and night; I often sit on them, press my buns to their sidewalks, cast my shadow on their walls, prop my elbow or my back against their lampposts. I think they love me because I love them and pay attention to them like nobody else in New York."
Alex's fear of gradually losing his coveted status as a pioneer and an expert on the West is indicative of the Third Wave literature's double perspective from which its protagonists' subject position is constructed. This notion of double perspective allows me to bridge Michel de Certeau's speculations, which concern both the actual, physical act of walking, which he compares to a narrative, and imaginary literary narratives about walking. The characters are walking in the city and writing their own narratives within the confines of the literary world. But we are reading their narratives as language and extracting their textual meaning. How can de Certeau's analysis help us in this task? I believe that the narrativity of walking creates a metanarrative context and lifts narrativity to the thematic level, making us focus on narrativity itself.

We can look at how Limonov's protagonist is self-consciously re-constructing his life-narrative as the story of a hero and a revolutionary by leaving behind his earlier identity as a poet. He tells the reader "I have established my poetic fate; whether or not it will last is no longer the issue; it's done, it exists. In Russia my life is already legend, and now I walk free, empty, and terrible in the Great City, amusing, saving, and distracting myself with its streets, and I seek the encounter that will begin my new fate." In "A Double-Act in Soho," a self-consciously postmodern story, references to narrative theory are woven into the text conspicuously and in humorous ways. Thus when Alex, trying to puzzle out reasons behind Lena's interest in American pornography, asks a shop assistant in one of the shops what is so special about American pornography, the salesman explains that it is more interesting to watch than German pornography. Why, asks Alex. Well, because American pornography tells a story, while German pornography is strictly functional. What do you mean, asks Alex. Don't you know the difference between the fabula and the syuzhet? asks the salesman. The narrative itself signals transitions and alludes to various recognizable plots with each new turn of events. One moment it's a quest, the next, an action story, yet the next—a burlesque romp with inverted intertextual references to Mikhail Bulgakov's Master and Margarita, a satirical Soviet classic.

This metanarrativity is partly an artifact of the text's double perspective that both creates and is heightened by their extreme (I would call it performative) self-consciousness. This double perspective derives from the third-wavers' unique position of having escaped from a country with closed borders. For the Soviet people, the feeling of being completely isolated or permanently cut off from the rest of the world, especially the West, was inversely proportional to the sense of longing they experienced about everything Western—from fashion to music—about which they could only form second-hand ideas. In other words, their desire for the West was predicated on the impossibility of its fulfillment. The fact that a few were expelled or allowed to emigrate in the 1970s was experienced both by those who left and those who stayed as something unprecedented, a one-in-a-lifetime occurrence. Thus everything felt unreal to the new Soviet immigrants in the beginning. As Sergei Dovlatov, another prominent writer and, briefly, a newspaper publisher, expressed this feeling of wonder in one of his editorials shortly after his arrival: "Everyone of us is experiencing a second birth. We can call it a process of adaptation or assimilation. But the meaning is the same—we are born again. . . . We are trying to comprehend the mysterious and incredible America. Amazing things are still happening to us. For example, you are walking along Broadway, thinking your thoughts. And suddenly you stop dead in your tracks . . . My God! Is it me myself walking along Broadway? Could it all be true? This bar, this black man, this shop. Are we really in America?" Coupled to this sense of wonder was the sense of an obligation Russian writers felt in taking upon themselves the seeing and processing of new impressions as envoys or representatives and on behalf of friends and colleagues who stayed behind. In another editorial, Dovlatov cites a letter from a friend (who could have been an aggregate of several people), which says "your emigration is not private matter. . . . You must remember us. We are many, and we are still alive." Because of the uniqueness of the situation, the Third-Wave writers thus consciously took
on a role of becoming the others' eyes, which gave their writings an added quality of a travelogue. In his article, "The 'Narrative is Travel' Metaphor," Kai Mikkonen makes a convincing case that all modern writing has characteristics typical of travel writing. But this is especially true of Russian Third-Wave narratives. As an example, we can consider Limonov's city walk narrative, which has a degree of detail, especially in describing things that various stores sell, that would be superfluous in a narrative addressing a Western reader.

Another instance of double-perspective is the double topography of the narratives, the discernible second layer of the invisible native city, which becomes manifest in flashbacks, moments of recognition, and the ongoing process of "translation"—the new environments and the new experiences are read through the old ones. It's Me, Eddie has especially many instances of such explicit translations. For example, when Eddie is observing the people in Washington Square, he says to himself that they "are absolutely the same. There are small, purely American differences, the colored tattoos on their skin, for example, and the fact that some of these people, the singers and those standing around them, are black. Nevertheless I recognize in many of them my faraway Kharkov friends, who by now have long since taken to drink. . . . I recognize our unchanging girlfriends, the girls from Tyura's dacha, Masha and Kokha, except that they are talking between themselves in English. . . . This man here with the black teeth is Yurka Bembel, who was shot in 1962 for raping a minor. . . . And this is the exemplary technology student Fima."

Similarly, in the midst of his chase through Soho, Alex, the "Double Act" protagonist, is suddenly transported in his mind to the Moscow of the 1970s. It is the dead of winter, and he is trying to sneak into the Dutch embassy with a heavy suitcase full of his unpublished manuscripts. His heart is pounding as he is imagining that he is followed and that, at any moment, a secret policeman will apprehend him and search his suitcase, containing "anti-Soviet" writings. But, luckily, he is wrong, and his mission is successful. His suitcase is left safely at the Dutch embassy and is returned to him after his escape to the West.

And finally, and most importantly, the doubleness that interests me is constituted by a convoluted forward-backward perspective of reading and understanding a narrative. Earlier I talked about narrative as a temporal and spatial progression from one point to another. But a simple journey towards a goal does not capture the whole of narrative experience. As Meir Sternberg explains in "Reconceptualizing Narratology," narrativity emerges out of the interplay between the temporalities of what he calls three narrative interests—those of prospection, retrospection, and recognition (or suspense, curiosity, and surprise). "Suspense arises from rival scenarios about the future." Curiosity involves manipulation of the past: "knowing that we do not know, we go forward with our mind on the gapped antecedents, trying to . . . bridge . . . them in retrospect." Finally, in surprise, the narrative "unexpectedly discloses to us our misreading and enforces a corrective rereading in late re-cognition" (48). According to Sternberg, the double perspective of prospective and retrospective orientation is something that is generally true for the way we read all narratives. But in this instance, I would like to transfer Sternberg's analysis of narrative interests from how we read to how characters read and write their narratives. Namely, I associate the future orientation of prospection with writing, and the backward orientation of retrospection with reading. I am not making a broader claim about the applicability of Sternberg's analysis to all narratives of city walking or all immigrant narratives. But his observation about the dual temporality of narratives is highly relevant for metanarrative stories, where protagonists are playfully aware of the narrativity of their accounts.

Narratives of walking foreground different narrative interests. A reading of a goal-oriented walk might coincide with Sternberg's future-oriented perspective of suspense. Am I really going to find a needed pharmacy in this maze of streets? Are they really going to have my medicine or will my quest be unsuccessful? But one could also meander around the city aimlessly in a mood of curiosity. Asking questions about where this or that alley leads to or what is behind this or that door is done from the perspective of retrospection with respect to the future goal of mental mapping and systematizing. In addition, one could walk around the city in the flâneur-like attitude of openness—observing and being observed, wanting to be seen and surprised, and yearning for all possible kinds of encounters. The narrative of walking self-consciously, being aware of one's walking, placing oneself on a scene of representation as a character in one's own story, and so on, makes for a hybrid genre or hybrid narrative structure of writing and reading. This is where writing meets reading. When one walks in this special conscious mode I described above, one creates one's own written narrative that one tries to read. In other words, one molds one's destiny. Thus, one could define destiny as a kind of a narrative configuration that involves reading.
The two protagonists of the novel and the short story are both reading and writing their respective narratives. In "A Double Act," Alex keeps projecting and revising the narrative he is reading. He first decides that the girl is a Russian tourist who has a penchant for American pornographic videos because in Russia, everything American is seen as glamorous. As Alex continues his pursuit of the girl, he revises his story. He observes the girl greeting a friend and overhears a few phrases they exchange. Based on them, he changes his mind about her. She is probably not a tourist but an illegal immigrant who is earning money by prostitution, and the reason she is interested in American videos is because many of her clients are American. They make each other's acquaintance after Lena confronts Alex and asks him to explain his stalking. When she introduces herself, she tells him that it was her father who helped her to get this job. Alex first thinks that the father has sold his daughter into prostitution, and re-writes his story about her as an immigrant's narrative of poverty and survival. Later he understands that the job concerns doing a survey about the percentage of American pornographic films on the London market, and he subsequently rebrands her as someone who has emigrated recently with her parents and is forced to take odd jobs. And eventually, Alex is disappointed to find out that Lena has lived in London as long as himself. This means that his fantasy of becoming her mentor and guide around London will not be realized, and he will have to invent another story for himself. But in the end, as they flee from the mafia, he ends up playing the role of a hero anyway. As he is first guiding Lena around Soho's shops and later arranges their last minute escapes, his perception of himself is gradually transformed. "Even in the shining of his bald spot, one could detect a certain purposefulness: as if the superfluous hair was blown away by the blustering wind in order not to impede his progress." Suddenly, he feels decisive, athletic, and courageous—a veritable superman. It is suggested at the end of the story that he and Lena will spend the night. In addition to being a conventional ending of the boy-gets-the-girl type (albeit in a playful, postmodernist way), it also represents a befitting closure for a narrative of destiny. The particular trajectory from the periphery to centrality that this narrative takes represents a providential reclaiming of his identity in a more powerful, more masterful, more central way. Being a writer, even an unofficial, underground writer, in the Soviet Union held a great deal of cultural cachet but is no longer a position of cultural centrality in his present life, and especially not in the eyes of this young and beautiful girl, who would have a greater appreciation for a hero than a literary has-been. But an even deeper reason is that being a writer in the present is a constitutionally peripheral position: as a writer you observe the center but do not occupy it. The act of claiming one's destiny as a hero, on the other hand, puts one in an unstable and unsustainable position of being the center of one's own narrative—a position that evacuates one's consciousness and therefore can only be occupied toward the end of the story.

In Limonov's novel, the opposing orientations of writing and reading are figured even more explicitly than in Zinik's story as components in the reciprocal structure of destiny. Eddie, who calls himself a flâneur, walks for the sake of an encounter. As he walks up and down New York streets and avenues, he asks himself why walking has become a compulsion. "Most of the time I walked as if just for fun, as if it were my heart's desire to take a stroll, yet in fact my goal was . . . to be honored with an encounter. . . . Whom did I hope to meet? A man? A woman? A friend, or love? Oh, the image I had in mind was very unspecific, but I waited, tremblingly waited."

I would like to finish by locating Sternberg's moment of recognition in the two texts. Again, for Sternberg, this is readerly recognition. This moment has to do with a misunderstanding or misprision, when the reader has misconstrued some elements of plot or narration and is forced to re-map his understanding of the text by shifting paradigms. In the narratives of destiny, this moment of understanding may happen on the part of the character who is reading his own story. And this is something we find both in It's Me, Eddie and A Double Act in Soho.

Alex experiences the moment of recognition when his new hero's self-consciousness is superimposed over the memory of smuggling the suitcase. When his suitcase is returned to him and he rereads his writings, he realizes that he can no longer relate to them. They belong to the past, to the life that is no longer his, and now, even worse, to the country that no longer exists. It strikes him, therefore, that his presence in the past no longer makes sense. He shuts down the suitcase, and with setting aside his writings, he leaves his identity as a Russian writer behind. But the symbolic act of closing the lid of the suitcase creates an
emptiness inside him—an emptiness nothing could fill until the moment of holding Lena’s hand. The feeling of her hand in his reminds him of the feeling of the suitcase’s handle. Thus, metonymically, Lena comes to fill the gaping hole left by the redundancy of his writings. Recognizably, “he was again in his right place, in his home, surrounded by enemies and saving friends.”

Finally, Eddie’s encounter ends up (perhaps predictably) being with himself. Here, once again, the moment of recognition is brought to the surface by the momentum of metonymic sliding. Eddie’s long walk comes to an end by the sculpture of Alice in Wonderland in Central Park. Watching children romping around it, he becomes fascinated by a boy with long hair, who reminds him of himself at the same age. Recalling some of his exploits, he suddenly realizes that he has not changed. All other people around him became grown-ups—dull, careful, complacent. But he remained as he had been as a child—an uncompromising and passionate extremist. "To this day, I am a pilgrim, I have not sold myself." This is a turning point in the narrative. His realization not only soothes him but functions, as in Zinik’s story, as a pivotal moment that allows him to put his legendary status as an underground Russian poet behind him and emerge a revolutionary. Just as Alex does, Limonov reconfigures himself as a hero of his narrative almost at its point of closure. He leaves the park singing a revolutionary song.

**Works Cited**


To wage war does not necessarily include the willingness to be martyred. Yet strong devotion to a cause may result in resigned submission to death. Desire for victory may incline warriors in the first Crusades toward sacrifice. The chansons de geste explore such feelings. The poems are set in the early IXth century, but they were written in their present form in the XIth century. Between these centuries the transition from the Carolingian to the Capetian kings marks a historical shift in France from monarchy to vassalage. The king retained the throne, but lost control of the land.(1) Perhaps for this reason the epics show a longing for a bygone era.

At times heroes encounter deceit and pursue a course of action in a role marginal to the acceptable cultural setting, such as William's betrayal by monks in the Moniage Guillaume.(2) A missed reward in the Charroi de Nîmes leads the hero to accept disguise as a battle tactic; and he even accepts the geographic move to another area of the kingdom in La Prise d'Orange.(3) In the Guillaume cycle William repeatedly experiences a measure of dishonor and misery. But the sacrifice of William in the Couronnement de Louis, serving a backward king, son of Charlemagne, seems slight compared to the sacrifice of Roland in the Song that bears his name.(4)

The Song of Roland has a greater tone of seriousness in contrast to other chansons de geste. The Chanson shares the rather naïve view of the struggle between Christians and pagans common to the genre. Saracens are portrayed as morally deficient. To battle Charlemagne, the emir relies on treachery; and the pagans’ chief counsel, Blancandrin, even advises sending their sons as guarantors of a false oath to Charles, knowing full well that they may lose their lives.(5) The Christian life is generally confined to belief in angels, use of relics, and spirited fulfillment of vows that often culminate in boastful oaths. However, there are long prayers before military encounters in Aliscans and the Couronnement which are not present in the Roland epic.(6) William flees when odds are stacked against him in battle and lives to fight another day. (7) Such behavior would be unheard of in our Roland. The ambush at Roncevaux makes The Song of Roland more tragic than any of the other chansons.

The higher level of suspense and intrigue is seen most notably in the rapport between characters. There is charm in the fantastic Rainoart’s relation to William as comrade.(8) We experience sorrow in Aliscans, and in the Chanson de Guillaume, when we grieve over William’s encounter with his dying nephew, Vivien; (9) but the melodrama of the hero who pulls through every tight spot throughout the remaining of the plot, together with the feasting ludicrously integrated into battle scenes, lacks the tragic intensity we witness in Oliver and Roland’s remarkable personality conflict.(10) The characters’ goal in the epic genre remains to defeat the enemy. But we sense that the jongleur of The Song of Roland has a more complex agenda than the oral poets in other chansons de geste. Roland's sacrifice becomes more important than the attainment of victory as the crucial factor in setting a primordial example for the best military leader. The uniqueness of The Song of Roland accounts for its endurance as the most popular chanson de geste of the Middle Ages.

In his Originary Thinking: Elements of Generative Anthropology (1993), Eric Gans develops the concept of a "neo-classical esthetic," where the protagonist is aware of his separation from the scene of representation on which he must find significance.(11) Roland’s basic instinct is to pursue glory; this desire drives him irremissibly toward Roncevaux, a scene of ostensive, self-confirming sacrifice. In contrast, Oliver grasps only the worldly imperative need to kill the enemy and win the war. Hence as one character’s behavior points out the central significance of Roncevaux, the other wishes to disengage himself from absorbed entanglement in a hopeless predicament. The measure of Roland’s valor is his pursuit of glory; and
This deferral of action delays resolution and increases violence in *The Song of Roland*. The battle at Roncevaux delays the eventual downfall of the Saracen army. Ambush through Ganelon’s treason provides the necessary motivation for plot development. But it is within the battle itself that we witness the key source for the final tragedy of the French rearguard: Roland’s refusal to sound the Oliphant in time. Roland’s delay provides the necessary deferral, after the rearguard’s separation from the Frankish host, to turn the Oliphant’s sound into an ostensive call that broadcasts awareness of events without requesting action, so that only later will Charlemagne and his army avenge the hero’s sacrificial death. Since Roland’s heroism subsequently inspires warriors in Charlemagne’s army, the hero’s sacrifice provides a crucial role model for future warfare. By losing a battle, the claim to glory becomes mounted on sacrifice. In *The Song of Roland* the main character’s martyrdom provides dramatic content and significant justification for prolonging the war. Deferral of victory is vital for development of the epic narrative.

In terms of military strategy, Oliver’s plea to sound the Oliphant is based on the obvious superiority in numbers of the Saracen host. By contrast, the French are few: “It seems to me, our Franks are very few!” [1050] Roland transposes the issue to an idealistic plane; the reason the hero gives for not sounding the Oliphant, when Oliver first asks, is fear of suffering from lack of glory, Medieval French *los*, in the future:

“Roland, my friend, it’s time to sound your horn,  
King Charles will hear, and bring his army back.”  
Roland replies, “You must think I’ve gone mad!  
In all sweet France I’d forfeit my good name.”

“Cumpaign Rollant, kar sunez vostre corn,  
Si l’orrat Carles, si returnerat l’ost.”  
Respunt Rollant: “Jo fereie que fols!  
En dulce France en perdreie mun los.” [1051-1054]

“Good name” is here the equivalent of *los*. As we shall see, the glorious name, or *los*, Roland is keen to protect will depend on his readiness to make the ultimate sacrifice, and on the delayed ostensive use of the horn in order to call attention to his stance in the sacrificial scene. This absolute need requires that he not use the Oliphant primarily as an imperative signal first; such obstinacy makes it impossible for other agents, Charles and his army, to prevent him from assuming his heroic role. No one can devalue the sacrificial scene of Roncevaux. The decision not to sound the horn at the instant in the plot when timely arrival of reinforcements seems possible distinguishes the two heroes.

A second time, Oliver reiterates his plea [1059-1060], only to get another justification for delay from the valiant chevalier:

Roland replies, “Almighty God forbid  
That I bring shame upon my family,  
And cause sweet France to fall into disgrace!  
I’ll strike that horde with my good Durendal.”

“Ne placet Damnedeu  
Que mi parent pur mei seient blasmet  
Ne France dulce ja cheet en viltet!  
Einz i ferrai de Durendal asez.” [1062-1065]

Roland abhors the thought that his lineage be tarnished by lack of courage. The hero intends to use his sword, Durendal, not the Oliphant. [13] Brandishing his sword is preferable to blowing the horn. Roland is not one to let a call for help take precedence over the warrior spirit:

“No man on earth shall have the right to say
That I for pagans sounded the Oliphant!"

"Que ço seït dit de nul hume vivant, 
Ne pur païen, que ja seïe comant!"[1074-1075]

No warrior on either side could blame Roland for seeking aid by sounding the horn too early. His intention is to achieve eternal glory, not safeguard mortal life. Salvation is in Heaven. In the context of the Chanson, the hero’s example of faith will give transcendental significance to his martyrdom within the epic world. In this sense, Roland turns his death into a scene of sacred representation.

As Oliver enters his third and final plea, trying in vain to get Roland to sound the horn, the same reason of uneven sides is brought forth: "Our company numbers but very few" [1087].(14) Roland at this point makes no reference to fear of losing glorious honor, los, but rather crowns his refusal by posing a direct comparative to the superiority in numbers of the Saracen army. He insists that vis à vis the huge host, his arduous courage is a superior force: "The better then we'll fight!" [1088](15) This could make Roland seem guilty of hybris for refusing to sound the Oliphant in time. In his rebuttal, however, the brave hero insists that France should not lose worth:

"If it please God and His angelic host, 
I won’t betray the glory of sweet France! 
Better to die than learn to live with shame- 
Charles loves us more as our keen swords win fame."

"Ne place Damnedeu ne ses angles 
Que ja pur mei perdet sa valur France! 
Melz voeill murir que huntage me venget. 
Pur ben ferir l'emerere plus nos aimet." [1089-1092]

We should pose, in counterpoint to excessive courage, a concern for displaying, through self-sacrifice, strict adherence to raw duty: the warrior must remain at his assigned post. When Oliver seems resigned to accept Roland’s refusal to sound the horn, after his third plea goes unanswered, his tone becomes mournful. He remarks that the rearguard is worthy of pity, "who would not pity them!" [1104](16) Roland answers this observation, declaring his sworn duty to remain in his post as leader of the troops guarding Charles’ return to France: "We’ll hold our ground; if they will meet us here" [1108].(17) A vassal must safeguard his lord at all costs in the spirit of sacrifice [1009].(18) To hold the rearguard in place becomes a strong mandate, as Oliver himself declares, even after perceiving the vast superiority in numbers:

"Frenchmen, my lords, now God give you the strength 
To stand your ground, and keep us from defeat."

"Seignurs Franceis, de Deu aiez vertut! 
El camp estez, que ne seium vencuz!" [1045-1046]

By remaining firm in its post, the rearguard exemplifies absolute loyalty to the King with blind patriotic zeal. Both peers’ loyalty to Charlemagne also brings out Ganelon’s opposite role as traitor and instigator of the tragic events in the plot. Ganelon’s later trial and execution broadcasts Roland’s death beyond Roncevaux and into epic myth by juxtaposing extreme loyalty to absolute treason, negating the supremacy of selfish gain over patriotic zeal.

Roland’s sacrificial stance is expressed by the hero twice:

"This is the service a vassal owes his Lord: 
To suffer hardships, endure great heat and cold,And in battle to lose both hair and hide."

"In his Lord’s service a man must suffer pain, 
Bitterest cold and burning heat endure; 
He must be willing to lose his flesh and blood."
A warrior must endure suffering for his King. The only condition that might prevent total sacrifice becomes the arrival of reinforcements. We should recall how, once the circumstances made aid futile, Oliver himself had accepted the consequences for failing to sound the Oliphant in time. Practical necessity required a readiness to fight, as the enemy closed in from all sides:

"They are very close, the king too far away. 
You were too proud to sound the Oliphant: 
If Charles were with us we would not come to grief. 
Look up above us, close to the Gate of Spain."

Oliver’s loyalty to King and Country is not affected by his regret over the King’s absence. Oliver and Roland both agree that they must stand their ground. The warrior-bishop Turpin joins the quest for glory through sacrificial martyrdom:

"My noble lords, Charlemagne left us here, 
And may our deaths do honor to the king. 
Now you must help defend our holy Faith!"

"Confess your sins, ask God to pardon you; 
I’ll grant you absolution to save your souls." 
Your deaths would be a holy martyrdom.

Joseph Bédier quotes line 1134 in his Commentaires to assert that the jongleurs, singers of tales, plied their trade on the byways along medieval pilgrimage routes. We concur that propagation of the Faith is meaningful enough, so that such a contention holds sway at the most tragic moment of the Chanson, during the destruction of the rearguard; for the theme of warfare for Christ must exist within a specific socio-cultural milieu. The present belongs to King and Country; the future belongs to God.

The hero’s obstinate insistence not to sound the Oliphant at the time reinforcements could save the rearguard turns him and his men into sacrificial victims, patriots willing to die for King and Country. It is only later on in the narrative, when approaching his end at the fierce battle in Roncevaux, that Roland finally acquiesces, "I’ll blow my horn, and Charlemagne will hear." Charlemagne hears, but he cannot arrive in time. Instead of calling the army back, the Oliphant announces the rearguard’s martyrdom. The issue of avoiding danger is no longer in question. Surrounded, the heroes are close to death. Oliver reverses his plea to blow the Oliphant because the instrumental cause for the call is gone:
Oliver says, "Then you'll disgrace your name. Each time I asked you, companion, you refused. If Charles were with us, we would not come to grief."

\[Dist\ \text{Oliver}: \ "\text{Ne sereit vasselage!}
\text{Quant jel vos dis, cumpainz, vos ne deignastes.}
S'il fust li reis, n'i oüsum damage." \[1715-1717]\]

Were Charles and his royal army present, there would be no defeat. The hour is late. The futility of the effort in effect invalidates the companion's reason in the original plea, repeated thrice \[1051,1059,1071]\. Regardless of vast superiority in numbers, a resistant stance is the only choice.

After the battle rages on fiercely for hundreds of lines, Turpin finally intervenes. The warrior-bishop brings to a conclusion the Roland-Oliver conflict about failing to sound the Oliphant with a realistic view of the situation:

"End your dispute, I pray you, in God's name. It's too late now to blow the horn for help, But just the same, that's what you'd better do. If the king comes, at least we'll be avenged."

\["\text{Pur Deu vos pri, ne vos cuntralïez!}
Ja li corners ne nos avreit mester,
Mais nepurquant si est il asez melz:
Venget li reis, si nus purrat venger." \[1741-1744]\]

Turpin's argument pairs the uselessness of the act, as death approaches, to the impossibility of Charlemagne's timely presence. Yet Charles' army must arrive, however late, at the Oliphant's call, so that the corpses will be respectfully buried \[1749-1751]\. Their martyrdom, with Roland at the center, has to be recognized. This ostension, distant in time and space, broadcasts a vital revelation to the community at large in establishing the significance of the original sacrificial scene.\(22\)

When at long last Roland blows the Oliphant for the first time, the horn's sound is loud and clear:

\[Count\ \text{Roland presses the horn against his mouth;}
He grasps it hard, and sounds a mighty blast.
High are the hills, that great voice reaches far-
They hear it echo full thirty leagues around.\]

\[\text{Rollant ad mis l'olifan a sa buche,}
\text{Empeint le ben, par grant vertut le sunet.}
\text{Halt sunt li pui e la voiz est mult lunge,}
\text{Granz .XXX. liwes l'oïrent il respundre.} \[1753-1756]\]

The acute, terrifying report is heard echoing loudly through a long expanse of land, a strong metaphor for the cultural power of the ostensive. This great distance encompasses dramatically the large measure of terrain the departing Franks must cover in doubling back to Roncevaux. The need for an attempt to arrive on time is not an issue to be debated. Yet actual deployment of the army in answer to the call is questioned by Ganelon \[1770-1784]\. The first and third Oliphant calls enclose the insolent speech in which Ganelon impudently attempts to turn the blowing of the horn into a frivolous gesture, "Just for a rabbit he'll blow his horn all day!" \[1780\]\(23\) Ganelon intends to invert Roland's sacralizing act, turning it into sacrilege. The audience senses that retribution hangs in the balance. The quintessential patriot stands as sharp contrast to the obdurate traitor. Before Ganelon's guilt engages the reader's attention at length, however, again we hear the horn blown a second time by Roland.

And now Count Roland, in anguish and in pain,
With all his strength sounds the great horn again.
Bright drops of blood are springing from his mouth,
Veins in his forehead are cracking with the strain.

Li quens Rollant, par peine e par ahans,
Par grant dulor sunet sun olifan.
Par mi la buche en salt fors li cler sancs.
De sun cervel le temple en est rumpant. [1761-1764]

The sound of the Oliphant, whose reach is vast, requires a painful, even fatal, effort by the dying warrior. Ganelon's assertion that Roland's lavish frivolity, "great pride" [1773],(24) is manifested in the Oliphant's call is clear indication of his guilt in the treacherous ambush. He urges the army on back to France, questioning the need to stop for a boastful braggart, "Now he is playing some game to please his peers" [1781].(25) But the call does not project a light tone. The response must be a direct consequence of its urgency. The jongleur explains the fatal consequence, as for a third time the Oliphant is blown from Roland's bleeding mouth:

Count Roland's mouth is crimson with his blood,
His temples broken by the tremendous strain.
He sounds the horn in anguish and in pain.

Li quens Rollant ad la buche sanglente.
De sun cervel rumpent en est li temples.
L'olifan sunet a dulor e a peine.[1785-1788]

Oliver's original plea equates the Oliphant's call to the urgent need for timely help. Near death, Oliver's potential imperative plea to Charlemagne's army, "Come and save us," cannot be answered in fact, so the value of the Oliphant's call as an instrumental act has waned. We even witness how the Oliphant eventually becomes a mere war mace used by Roland to bash in the skull of a treacherous Saracen [2288-2291]. Roland's use of the instrument is not a true distress call, but an ostensive sign informing that he is dying and must soon be buried [1750-1752]. That is, the Oliphant's function regresses from the worldly useful imperative, "Come back," to the ostensive proclamation, "Here we are, martyrs!" This contrast adheres to the theme of heroism central to the overall epic narrative of the Chanson. The main thrust of Roland's being is to attain immortal glory, los, through a heroic death. He does not wish to put down his sword and sound the call for aid.

To announce Roland's extreme bravery in battle is the Oliphant call's true ostensive value. In this manner, by pointing to a sacred scene of sacrifice, the call becomes a sign of perennial patriotism. Such is the actual sense of the famous line that distinguishes between the two peers: Rollant est proz e Oliver est sage /"Roland's a hero, and Oliver is wise" [1093]. Untrue to the Oliphant's principal, practical use, Roland dies. But, while the Oliphant's value as an instrument to produce a useful signal diminishes, epic tragedy increases. This transition within a "neoclassical esthetic," while problematizing the scene of representation as a locus within the work, encloses a self-contained diachronic analysis of the emergence of the elementary speech forms. The ostensive sign must first establish significant meaning before an imperative sign can perform its useful semantic function, even if in the worldly context reaffirming this priority spells doom.

Through meticulous analysis of the heroic motivation for deferring to sound the Oliphant, we may probe into what the sound means for plot development within the narrative. An emergency call from a great, courageous warrior could only mean that death approaches, hence his allies must exercise revenge against his foes. At Roncevaux the tragic hero reveals his true nature as model warrior in quest of glory. Gans explains: "The premature return of Charlemagne's army would have saved him at the price of abandoning the closure of the scenic locus to which his election had led him and on which he finds martyrdom, the source of ultimate significance."(26)

Enhanced by sheer distance from the listener, the call of the Oliphant sounds brutally clear and acquires instant discursive status. As a nonverbal sign the Oliphant's sound has multiple plausible meanings in the poem: "Enemies," and, consequently, the unavoidable cause for their presence must be "Treason," and,
hence, the conclusion becomes "Death."(27) This triple ostensive strikes an intensely tragic chord in the listener's mind. In the encompassing and climactic Oliphant's call we sense the condensed narrative of The Song of Roland, as the story of the rearguard's ambush, together with its cause and aftermath. Perceiving the striking sound of the horn, even in a silent reading of the poem, we sense the need to immediately grant the sacrificial victim sacred status as martyred hero.

Since the Oliphant is a musical instrument, our view of the central climax of the Chanson could in principle be reconstructed strictly from the acute psychological impact caused by its sound. The Oliphant's call is never described in the text; however, overwhelming sound is implied. In his La Chanson de Geste, essai sur l'art epique des jongleurs (1955), Jean Rychner explains the dramatic virtue of similar strophes by suggesting that repetition stops the action's narrative flow in order to create a lyrical, even musical, effect on the audience. The three instances when Oliver asks Roland to sound the Oliphant are matched by the latter's obstinate refusal.

The same lyrical effect resounds with tragic clarity during actual sounding of the horn.

1051 1059 1070
1052 1060 1071
1053 1062 1073

After line 1762 the two following verses describe the previously mentioned fatal consequence: blood gushes forth from the mouth of our hero with nearly bursting temples [1763-1764]. The third blowing of the Oliphant is performed by a dying warrior, bleeding from the mouth, who uses his last breath to proclaim his death before his temples burst from the effort [1786]; Roland thereby invests his last bit of energy into the production of a sign proclaiming permanent sacrificial significance.

The rising climax occasioned by the triple Oliphant's call is represented by Charlemagne's reactions as listener. First he recognizes the sign of a raging battle, "Our Franks are in a fight" [1758].(28) Followed by: "That is Count Roland's horn!" [1768](29) Awareness is crowned by final recognition of the tragic effort: "How long that horn resounds!" [1789](30) All three perceptive responses are introduced by the jongleur with the phrase, "then says the king" [1758,1768,1789]. Rychner remarks that the French army's response to the crisis at Roncevaux is acute, immediate, and also arranged by the singer of tales in triple series:

Each to the other pronounces the same vow.
There is not one who can hold back his tears.
Not one but grieves and bitterly laments.(31)

N'i ad celoi a l'autre ne parolt. [1803]
N'i ad celoi ki durement ne plurt. [1814]
N'i ad celoi n'i plurt e se dement. [1836]

These lines epitomize loyalty to the King. Once each warrior becomes a lethal "Roland," access to the privilege for attaining a glorious death in battle is lowered from the nobility on down to the common foot soldier in order to allow every warrior communal participation in the heroic code. The demand for pathos provides motivation that propels the dramatic action. Roland is no longer an elite warrior lord, nephew to the King, but an exemplum for all to follow. Consequently, the heroic sentiments of our multifaceted central character become emotionally accessible. We assume that, once a speaker extends his role and significance beyond speech and into action, Roland's desire for glory, if not glory itself, is more easily experienced by the audience.

The final feeble blowing of the horn by the moribund hero is intimately tied to the coming of Charlemagne
and his forces:

His temples broken from sounding his great horn,
Longing to know if Charles is on his way,
Weakly, once more, he blows the Oliphant.

Rumput est li temples, por ço que il cornat.
Mais saveir volt se Charles i vendrat:
Trait l’olifan, fieblement le sunat.[2102-2105]

This fourth and last blowing of the horn is pathetic and tragic. The dramatic impact cannot be overestimated. The next mention of the Oliphant in the text is as an object which Roland places under his body, together with Durendal, while he collapses, bowing to his promise to die a conqueror, facing the enemy [2359-2360,2363]. Rychner ends his structural analysis by indicating that the effect on the audience of syntactic repetition is strongly musical, paralleling perhaps a nostalgic rhapsody. Viewing the hero’s death as a sacrifice, we may consider the musical accompaniment of Gregorian chant, integral component for the medieval ritual of the Catholic Mass, as similar in effect to the lyrical tone Rychner suggests as backdrop for the Roland epic.

We may add to Rychner’s explanation the insight that line 1755, "High are the hills, that great voice reaches far," starts the mentioned sequence in laisse CXXXII; a parallel line, "High are the hills, and shadowy and vast;" [1830] ends the same sequence of six laisses [CXXXII-CXXXVIII]. These two lines are reminiscent of the line, earlier in the poem, outlining the separation of the rearguard, "High are the hills, deep valleys shun the light“ [814]. The rearguard is left forlorn in a plain shadowed by high cliffs. We remark how the same phrase appears, as variation on a theme, in the laisse where Roland exercises his last living prowess as he smashes the Oliphant on the head of the Saracen who had feigned death to surreptitiously capture Durendal after the rest of Marsilie’s forces had already fled the field of battle: "High are the hills and very high the trees" [2271]. The resounding line cements his tragic stance; from first to last the hero perishes as martyred warrior with his rearguard at Roncevaux, the sacrificial scene.

The Oliphant’s call impacts the present and future of the epic plot, creating verisimilitude. Without the scene of betrayal at the enemy camp, the ambush at Roncevaux would not take place. As previously mentioned, the Oliphant’s call, a triple ostensive, links the Saracen Enemies to Ganelon’s prior Treason and Roland’s subsequent Death. We sense the surging importance of the Oliphant’s sound throughout the narrative. Time and again the characters are roused into action by the memory of the horn’s sound. We recall how the trauma itself was succinctly summarized and tied to the narrative context of the Chanson by the noble old counselor Naimon at the time the horn is blown. Upon hearing the sound, the King’s peer offers his interpretation, and draws a vital meaning for the Oliphant’s progressively debilitating call:

Duke Naimon answers, "Great valor swells the sound!
Roland is fighting: he must have been betrayed -
And by that man who tells you to hang back."

Respont dux Neimes: "Baron i fait la peine!
Bataille i ad, par le men escïentre.
Cil l’at trait ki vos en roevet feindre."

The call proclaimed the surging Saracen attack that annihilates the rearguard. No longer a vague possibility, the result of the unmistakable threat rings clear: "We die." Henceforth Charlemagne knows how to view Ganelon:

"Here is a felon I’m leaving in your charge-
He has betrayed the vassals of my house."

"Ben le me guarde, si cume tel felon!
De ma maisnee ad faite traisun."
Roland's courage looms large over Ganelon's treason. Thus, the ostensive use of the Oliphant affects character motivation and overall plot development, by showing Charles that Ganelon's description of the scene is false. The delay in blowing the horn, a heroic act of great magnitude, makes it clear that Roland cannot be seeking help. Ganelon reads this as mere frivolity, whereas Charles understands the ostensive use of the horn as a sign of martyrdom.

After apprehension of Ganelon and pursuit of Marsile's fleeing forces, Charles and his men double back to Roncevaux. While the French tread among the corpses left at Roncevaux, the King tears his hair and the Army weeps. As twenty thousand men faint, absorbing vicariously the death of Roland's men, Naimon exorts the King's forces to avenge the loss and relieve the sorrow: "Let us avenge our grief!" A clear danger is that grief may impair the deployed army's ability to fight effectively.

In the Chanson the hero's sacrifice is an asymmetric gesture since no act by the avenging army is enough to bring back Roland, nor can Charlemagne's prowess match the uncompromising courage of his dead nephew. Due to Roland's ostensive gesture, the epic poem cannot become the "Song of Charlemagne," regardless of the hero's absence in the last third of the narrative. Roland feeds the plot as sacrificial victim, and therefore determines and dominates the scenic focus of the poem. The glory Roland reaches in death becomes an object sought by the army of Charlemagne through progressive reiteration of such warring spirit as is kindled by remembrance of the Oliphant's call. After Roncevaux, there follows directly in the text the chase and demise by drowning of Marsile's fleeing forces. The King prays that the sun should not set before revenge is carried out. The consequence is a deus ex machina: an angel comes and God performs a miracle. The sun finally sets after all pagans drown. Roland reaches Eternal Glory through a warrior's death while a guardian angel facilitates victory for the French army.

We see the Oliphant's sound as intensely climactic due to precise developments in the plot. The unfulfilled desire to help, no longer possible in response to the Oliphant's sound, is redoubled and infuses new strength into the French forces. The French host cannot save the rearguard, but every soldier in the army can run to battle willing to die valiantly on the rearguard's example and attain Eternal Glory. The protracted Oliphant's call spreads the deep significance of the quest for glory throughout the Frankish host. Every soldier is desperate to participate in the violence of war.

The unraveling sacrificial crisis defers the expectation for a victorious end to war and the narrative closure the reader may long for. This is war, not just a single battle. In terms of motivation, we sense that to die while fighting brings immortal glory through noble death. As Turpin explained during the thick of the fray at Roncevaux: "Better to die with honor on this field!" Heaven waits: "For you stand open the gates of Paradise." The reader senses in the Chanson a quest to transcend military and political renown in order to attain a self-justified system of sacred values. At Roncevaux Turpin repeatedly blesses warriors. He draws his sword, Almace, and causes havoc. Throughout, the bishop fights valiantly, and he eventually dies with arms outstretched, emulating crucifixion.

Before concluding our argument, we should consider briefly the sacrificial nature of Carolingian conquest. Just as Roland wishes to keep Durendal from enemy hands, Roland’s body is protected by Charles’ avenging forces. The French war-cry Montjoie, transformed on Roland’s example into an ostensive sign, is intimately tied to the concept of deriving victory from suffering, as seen in the etymological reference to Charles’ sword, Joyeuse. The mount, or hill, of joy recalls the place where the martyrdom of Saint Denis took place. Historically, the battle-cry Montjoie itself evolved from reference to "Mount Joy of St. Denis." Both swords, Joyeuse and Durendal, bear relics in the pommel establishing the representational value of sacrificial martyrdom. Both swords now have a new sacrificial narrative to carry them beyond their physical status as weapons. A fearless desire to undergo sacrifice takes central stage. To keep faith, the French army had to protect Roland's corpse from violation by Saracen forces upon arrival at Roncevaux. As the body of a saint, Roland's corpse became the object of a communal interdiction. Ancestral custom and natural law demand Christian burial. Roland deserves public reverence, for he endured martyrdom. Burial rites must be performed to answer the societal need for propriety. The individual’s dependence on the community for proper signification is absolute. Glory is realized through martyrdom, evidenced by a relic left to posterity.
At five instances during the course of the narrative the battle cry "Montjoie," *Munjoie*, is voiced by a character in direct discourse. The *jongleur* quotes Turpin directly as the bishop-warrior urges on the troops at Roncevaux [1350]; soon thereafter in the text the army shouts their war-cry during the furious infighting [1525]; finally, Oliver shouts out one last time as he dies [1974]. The increasing sense of doom strikes a tragic note as the ostensive Montjoie becomes a harbinger of death. The other two instances in the *Chanson* for the protracted battle-cry to appear in direct discourse occur as Charlemagne’s army approaches Roncevaux [2510]. And we again hear "Montjoie" voiced while the host witnesses the need to confront the forces of Baligant, the powerful emir from abroad who comes to avenge the dead Marsile [3092].

The deep significance of the Oliphant again surfaces as the French contemplate Charles’ encounter with Baligant:

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The clear-voiced trumpets ring out from every side-
Above the others resounds Count Roland's horn;
Then all the Frenchmen remember him and mourn.
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Sunent cil greisle e derere e devant;
Sur tuz les altres bundist li olifant.
Plurent Franceis pur pitet de Rollant. [3118-3120]
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Roland had died on line 2397. But, after the battle at Roncevaux, Roland’s memory has become significant enough to maintain continual warlike action. His Oliphant is a pervasive, phantasmagorical presence. Every trumpet sound harkens back to Roland’s awe-inspiring horn. The Oliphant’s call must retain its nature as supplemental war-cry despite the intense sorrow. The practical consequence of lamentation over Roland’s death must include an expansion of violent warfare. The King battles Baligant at the call of his own Oliphant, as Baligant himself tells his son Malpramis:

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"A valiant lord now sounds the Oliphant,
From his companion a trumpet call comes back."
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Cil est mult proz ki sunet l'olifant:
D'un graisle cler racatet ses cumpaignz." [3193-3194]
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A trumpet answers in support of the Oliphant’s call, enhancing the exchange. Throughout the *Chanson*, cause for sounding an Oliphant must be the need to kill. The Oliphant no longer needs to signal a new martyrdom; that meaning is already infused within its call as a rally to the army. The post-Roncevaux Oliphant call, intensified through Roland’s death, has become more threatening. The enemy is aware of such intensity, as well. Henceforth in the text, and through the ages, the French army becomes ferociously courageous in their charge against the enemy.

In fact, the phrase "high they are," *haltes sunt*, mentioned during discussion of the high pass leading to the Roncevaux valley, occurs again in the final mention of the King’s Oliphant, when last blown in the *Chanson*:

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The trumpets sound, their voices clear and high;
The Oliphant rings out above them all.
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Sunent cez greisles, les voiz en sunt mult deleres;
De l'olifan haltes sunt les menees. [3309-3310]
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By breaking through the tone of trumpets, an Oliphant’s call combines sound and scene through dramatic remembrance of Roland’s heroic death, coalescing military prowess into legend. The sound of an Oliphant encourages the forces of Charlemagne, as he prepares to encounter his nemesis, Baligant. In context, the phrase, "high they are," *haltes sunt*, referring to an Oliphant’s sound, recalls the rearguard’s fate at the sacrificial scene, since previously in the poem "high they are," *halt sunt*, had referred to the high cliffs at Roncevaux. The ambush site not only inspires awe, the locale also provides a setting for carrying the realistic echo of an Oliphant’s sound, and maintains our attention on the call’s climactic significance in
At the end of the Chanson, after Ganelon’s trial and execution, the Angel Gabriel comes to Charles to signal new troubles ahead [3994-3998]. As the Wheel of Fortune spins on, the King confesses his sorrow: “‘God!’ says the king, ‘how weary is my life’” [4000].(47) Since Charles takes on a more active role after Roland’s death, we must refer the Carolingian offensive to the Christian doctrine of redemption through sacrifice. Reward is otherworldly and in human life joy is temporary. In the context of Christian piety victory is delayed until the afterlife. The glory Roland attains is fame in this world, salvation in Heaven.

We recall that in his final moments at Roncevaux, Roland uses the Oliphant as a physical object to smash the head of a Saracen [2295]. We assume the horn as instrument survives the impact, since the object resurfaces twice in the later narrative [3119, 3310]. But possibly the King may have his own Oliphant, separate from Roland’s horn. The text is not specific in this regard. What is certain is that the effect of the Oliphant’s call endures beyond the instrument’s use. Its influence cannot be destroyed. We know the hero’s sword is indestructible; *Durendal* survives as emblem of destruction [2342]. As Roland dies heroically, his soul is carried to Paradise by a Cherubim, and by both Saint Michael, and Saint Gabriel [2393-2396]. He will not wield Durendal again, and the Oliphant will be blown by him no more. But his glory and heroism survive his demise. Since through self-sacrifice a Christian may strive toward Eternal Glory, we sense a movement from Christ to Christianity, or from Roland to the Crusades of ensuing centuries. At Roncevaux a center with an absent central figure opens up a potentially plural signification.

Careful reading of *The Song of Roland* discloses a sacrificial crisis caused by rivalry, and persistent, unmitigated violence, intensified by the Oliphant beyond literary language. The dramatic impact of the hero’s sacrificial death acquires greater symbolism through the delayed Oliphant’s call. Roland’s delay in blowing the horn, converting an imperative signal to an ostensive sign through sanctifying heroism, expands epic drama and suspense while conveying the real spirit behind a genuine call to arms from the distant past.

**Works Cited**


*Dictionnaire de la’academie française*. 8 ème édition. 1987-2010.

http://www.mediadico.com/dictionnaire/definition/mont-joie/1


### Notes

1. Ferrante 23. (back)

2. Ferrante 21, 288. In the context of this epic, *William in the Monastery*, the hero retires to a monastery, where he experiences the monks’ hypocrisy in flagrant breaches of their own rules of silence and attendance at services. In turn, William’s uncouth habits and large size appall the monks, who set him up to be robbed and killed by thieves; but the hero wins the fight. Eventually learning of the ruse, the disappointed hero leaves the monastery and becomes a hermit. (back)

3. Gégou 14-15. Ferrante 16, 18. The epics of the *Guillaume* cycle are interconnected. In *The Crowning of Louis* William travels back and forth from Paris to Rome, constantly saving King Louis and the Pope from enemies. Since the King forgets William when he distributes gifts at the beginning of the *Charroi*, in the *Couronnement* Louis offers lands to the hero outright; but the offered lands have heirs already. Incensed, William refuses to take them and decides instead to conquer lands held by the Saracens, first Nîmes, and then Orange. To enter Nîmes, William disguises himself. His skill in speaking Arabic comes in handy. Although he eventually is successful, he and his relatives become restless and leave for Orange. In *The Conquest of Orange* William feels especially enticed by possession of the magnificent palace and the beautiful queen Orable. Again disguised, William, with his brother Gilbert, and his nephew Guielin, enter the Gloriette castle, but they are eventually discovered. William sends Gilbert to bring Bertrand, his other brother, with help. After a stint in towers and subterranean passages, William is successful. Aided by Bertrand, he wins the city and marries Orable, who is baptized and takes the name Guiborc. (back)

4. Ferrante 33-35, 66. (back)

5. Terry 4-5. (back)


7. Ferrante 40. Bennett 93, 97. *La Chanson de Guillaume* presents a series of battles. Vivien, William’s nephew, is mortally wounded defending a hopeless position in the first battle. William hears about the battle at Archamp and leaves home with his own nephew Girard and his wife’s nephew Guishard. Both youngers die in the second battle, and William leaves the battlefield to return Guishard’s body to Guiborc, his wife. At home he is treated to a hearty meal and goes back to battle with reinforcements. Back at the third battle, William is victorious against the Saracen Derame, whom he slays with help from his nephew Gui, renowned for his small stature. William then finds the dying Vivien and gives him communion before he dies. William returns home and is not recognized by his wife until he shows her the famous wound to his nose. She urges him to seek aid from the King. He then leaves for court. There is intrigue at Louis’s court. William’s father, Nemeri of Nerbune, smoothes things down. After a huge feast, the army marches south joined by the powerful Rainoart, former kitchen helper. In the fourth battle the pagans are caught picnicking, so victory is swift. After further intrigue at court, Rainoart’s identity as Guiborc’s brother is revealed. The poem ends on this note. (back)

8. Ferrante 36. *Aliscans*, another name for Archamp, tells basically the same story as *La Chanson de*
Guillaume, except that the death of Vivien opens the poem; instead of extended battles, these come later; in addition, Rainoart's deeds are recounted in more detail. (back)


10. Ferrante 193. Bennett 85, 102. (back)

11. Gans 151. (back)

12. Line references and quotes in English are from the Patricia Terry translation, unless otherwise specified. In general, Terry's translation seems to follow the Gérard Moignet edition. Terry 43. "De nos Franceis mi semblent aver mult poi!" [1050] Moignet 94. (back)

13. Durendal was given to Roland directly by Charlemagne, perhaps in the knighthood ceremony. ...Durendal,/ Ma bonne espee, que li reis me dunat [1120-1121]. Farnsworth 48, 54. (back)

14. "Nus i avum mult petite cumpaigne" [1087]. (back)

15. The actual Medieval French reads: "Mis talenz en est graigne," literally, "My ardor is superior to that" (trans. mine). In his edition, Moignet notes: "Graigne, comparative form of granz; the usual form for the nominative case is, in Medieval French, graindre<grandior; the form graigne is reconstructed analogically from the oblique case graignur<grandiorem." (trans. Mine) Moignet 96. (back)

16. "Veeir poez, dolente est la rereguarde" [1104]. (back)

17. "Nus reemindrum en estal en la place" [1108]. (back)

18. The text reads: "Ben devuns ci estre pur nostre rei" [1009], literally: "We must hold ground here for our king." (trans. mine) Moignet 92. (back)


20. The route to Santiago de Compostela, a popular medieval pilgrimage site, passed by Roncevaux to continue on through to Northern Spain. Jotischky & Hull 61. (back)

21. "Jo cornerai, si l'orrat li reis Karles" [1714]. (back)

22. Such scenic source may be contrasted with a warning cry of "Fire!" which points to a communal danger and the decision to flee immediately, or fight the fire subsequently. In our Roland what is overtly designated is a sacred locus, Roncevaux. The esthetic effect is pronounced, as the close-up in a modern day cinematographic zoom-in secures enthralled participation by the audience. (back)

23. "Pur un sul levee vait tute jur cornant." [1780] (back)

24. "Asez savez le grant orgoill Rollant" [1773]. (back)

25. "Devant ses pers vait it ore gabant" [1781]. (back)

26. Gans 152. (back)

27. Ganelon's betrayal during his Embassy at the enemy camp leads to the rearguard’s separation from the Frankish host and makes possible ambush at Roncevaux by the emir's forces. (back)

28. ço dist li reis: "Bataille funt nostre hume!" [1758] (back)

29. Ce dist li reis: "Jo oi le com Rollant!" [1768] (back)

30. ço dist li reis: "Cel com ad lunge aleine!" [1789] (back)
31. Syntactic repetition is seen more obviously in the original text, since identical understatement heads all three lines. The phrase in question is, "N'i ad celoi," literally, "There is not one." Terry 70. (back)

32. Rychner 93-99. (back)

33. Forney and Machlis 82. (back)

34. Halt sunt li pui e la voiz est mult lunge [1755]. (back)

35. Halt sunt li pui e tenebrus e grant [1830]. (back)

36. Halt sunt li pui e li val tenebrous [814]. (back)

37. Halt sunt li pui e mult halt les arbres [2271]. (back)

38. The resentful relationship between Roland and Ganelon has a tradition extrinsic to the text of the Chanson. A Latin text from the 1100's, "Song of Ganelon's Betrayal," Carmen de prodicione Guenonis, narrates how Charlemagne, tired of fighting, wished to return to France; but Roland insists on sending an Embassy to Marsile in Saragoce demanding surrender before returning to France. Roland suggests that Ganelon should take the King's message to the Saracen emir. There follows a confrontation between Roland and Ganelon, where Charles intervenes. Ganelon goes to Marsile, who becomes enraged at the demand for surrender. Marsile's wife, Bramimonde, calms down the emir. At this point Marsile insinuates the ambush plot to which the frightened Ganelon agrees, later bringing back the lying promise of Saracen surrender to Charles. The King departs, leaving the rearguard behind, a decision which makes the ambush at Roncevaux possible. In the Latin poem, delaying warfare through Ganelon's resentment interrupts the train of narrative, as in The Song of Roland. The scene of betrayal at the enemy camp provides a backdrop to events leading up to tragedy at Roncevaux. Menendez Pidal 129-130. (back)

39. "Car chevalchez! Vengez ceste dulor!" [2428] (back)

40. Moignet quotes P. le Gentil: "Charlemagne avenges Roland. Therefore, the latter remains the character around whom the work holds together; yet, pursuing vengeance, the former remains at the height of his holy mission. Thus, the homage Charlemagne grants Roland ennobles the one, without diminishing the other. There is no Song of Charlemagne grafted on a Song of Roland; there is a Song of Roland, of powerful import, which surpasses the trauma to attain the level of myth." (translation mine). Moignet 249. (back)

41. This scene is reminiscent of Joshua 10:12-14. The Lord delivers up the Amorites before the children of Israel by delaying sundown for a whole day. The delay of nightfall allows the chosen of God to have revenge over their enemies. Scofield 279. (back)

42. "Asez est mielz que moerium combatant" [1518]. (back)

43. "Seint pareïs vos est abandunant" [1522]. (back)

44. Bédier considers "Almace" an unexplained name, nom inexpliqué, for Turpin's sword. Bédier 506. The etymology of the name is uncertain; but it may be derived from the Germanic, all macht, meaning Almighty. The Free Encyclopedia. en.wikipedia.org (back)

45. From the Annuaire des dictionnaires website we read: "The Mount Saint Denis Joy, or simply Joy Mount, used to be the name for the hill close to Paris where Saint Denis endured martyrdom; so named because the place of martyrdom was a site of joy for the saint who received his reward. The Mount Saint Denis Joy, la Mont-joie Saint Denis, means the Mount Joy of Saint Denis, le Mont-joie de Saint Denis, according to the old rule which rendered the Latin genitive by the ablative case. The name Joy Mount extended to all mounds and was used even figuratively. On the other hand, the French seized as war cry Mount Joy of Saint Denis, or, simply, Mount Joy (Montjoie); eventually this war cry became the name for the King's coat of arms in France." (trans. mine) Dictionnaire de L'academie Francaise. Mediadico.com (back)
46. *Durendal* has St. Peter’s tooth, part of a garment from the Virgin Mary, drops of St Basil’s blood, St. Denis’ hair [2344-2348]. *Joyeuse* has in the pommel part of the spear that wounded Christ; a direct reference to death and resurrection; it can conquer any foe [2503-2505, 2510]. Geoffrey of Anjou carries the oriflamme, which belonged to St. Peter, also called *Montjoie* [3092]. (back)

47. "*Deus, dist li reis, si penuse est ma vie!*" [4000] (back)
This issue of *Anthropoetics* contains articles by three attendees of the joint COV&R-GASC (and Japan Girard Association) conference last July in Tokyo. Both Peter Goldman's and Ben Barber's articles are taken from papers delivered at the conference. Peter, in his eighth *Anthropoetics* article, continues his Shakespearean reflections with the valedictory *Tempest*, treated as a historical farewell to the possibility of Shakespearean theater. Ben, after an earlier piece on Hunter Thompson, turns to classical English literature with an essay on the Shakespeare near-contemporary Heywood as chronicling the breakdown of the rigid social system of the Middle Ages, exemplified by a hitherto inconceivable rivalry between a commoner and the king. And Marina Ludwigs, in her sixth contribution, takes up the interesting phenomenon, largely confined to its own community, of Russian exile literature in the West, which she shows as creating a unique topography in Western cities such as New York or London, turning walking into a figure of narrative self-creation and self-reflection.

Finally, I am happy to present an article on *La chanson de Roland*, always one of my favorite works of literature, by Robert Rois, a UCLA PhD whom I have known for many years and who has recently begun taking an interest in GA. The ostensive/imperative contrast he describes in Roland's delayed blowing of his horn, the crux of the epic, shows the applicability of GA's linguistic concepts to the analysis of this seminal medieval work.

**About Our Contributors**

**Ben Barber** is a PhD student in the Department of English at the University of Ottawa, where he holds a Canadian Social Science and Humanities Research Scholarship for his research on the influence of Shakespeare's representations of mimetic desire upon the poetic vision of Lord Byron. In 2012 he received an MA in English from the University of Victoria, where his research focused on honor and mimetic rivalry in early modern drama.

**Peter Goldman** is Professor of English at Westminster College in Salt Lake City. He serves on the editorial board for *Anthropoetics* and is also a board member of the Generative Anthropology Society & Conference (GASC). Peter teaches classes on Shakespeare, Renaissance literature, and film studies. His publications include articles on Shakespeare, Reformation literature, film studies, Generative Anthropology, and Kafka. His current project is a book on Shakespeare and the problem of iconoclasm, for which the article here will be a chapter.

**Marina Ludwigs** teaches English Literature at Stockholm University. She has a PhD in Comparative Literature from UC Irvine and has worked with, and presented papers on, both Girardian theory and Generative Anthropology. She is currently writing a book on the anthropological structures of epiphanies.

**Robert Rois** occasionally teaches beginning Spanish language courses at Valley College in Los Angeles. Born in Havana, he left Cuba with his parents, first wave political refugees of the 60's. His alma mater is U.C. Berkeley. After a year at the École Normale Supérieure in Paris studying Medieval French, he finished a Ph.D. in Romance Linguistics and Literature at UCLA. He resides in California.